**Transcription of Interview with Woman from Cameroun (CM)**

**I = Interviewer**

**CM = Interviewee from Cameroun**

**M: Maggie from the Bridges Programmes**

**I: Okay, so first of all, I’m just gonna ask you some general information and then we’re going to talk more deeply. Ok? So, just to know, where are you originally from?**

CM: I’m from Cameroun.

**I: Cameroun. And what is your native language?**

CM: It’s Bamileke.

**I: Can you spell that?**

CM: It’s B-a-m-e… no no no, m-i- sorry… l-e-k-e

**I: Bamileke?**

CM: Bamileke yeah. I’m [reading] Bamileke and French so…

**I: Ok, it’s and French?**

CM: Yeah that’s right.

**I: How long have you been in the UK?**

CM: I just thought seven.

**I: Since 2007?**

CM: No, I just thought seven years so since 2005, march 2005.

**I: And how long have you been in Glasgow?**

CM: Seven

**I: Seven? So you came to Glasgow immediately?**

CM: Yeah.

**I: What is your status?**

CM: I’m British now. I was refugee but after three years I’ve done British though. I’m British now.

**I: So you’ve been British citizen for four years?**

CM: Yeah.

**I: And when you came – you were an asylum seeker first?**

CM: No, I wasn’t. My husband was asylum seeker.

**I: Your husband was asylum seeker, ok. So you had the status as?**

CM: I came as family reunion.

**I: Ok, right. Can I ask you how old you are?**

CM: Do you really need to?

**I: It’s kind of a part of it, but if you don’t want to.**

CM: Right ok, let’s keep it to myself.

**I: Ok, that’s fine. How many children do you have?**

CM: Two.

**I: Two. And how old are they?**

CM: Three and six.

**I: Three and six. Are you a single parent?**

CM: No.

**I: No, you’ve got a husband?**

CM: Yeah

**I: You’re living with him?**

CM: Yeah. Sorry it’s just to get them on tape even though I know some of the answers.

**I: Where do you live?**

CM: At the moment Gorbals.

**I: In what type of accommodation?**

CM: It’s a flat. It’s three apartments. Do you see the flats, not the high building, those flat with three apartment. There’s the ground floor, the middle one and the third one.

**I: Ok**

CM: So I live in the ground floor.

**I: Ok, and you like it?**

CM: Yeah, it’s good.

**I: Is it private accommodation or?**

CM: It’s a new Glasgow Association House [Editor’s note: Glasgow Housing Association].

**I: Do you receive any benefits?**

CM: At the moment, not after [unclear] tax credit because my husband is working.

**I: Ok, so you’re not getting any income support or?**

CM: No no, not at all.

**I: Ok. Do you have a job?**

CM: No, I don’t have any.

**I: Again, to get it on tape. Have you had a job in Glasgow?**

CM: When I was studying I had a few one with ENC like cleaning, packaging. The last one I did was in December was doing Christmas job with [unclear] in Springburn, the post office.

**I: Ok**

CM: Yeah, I was working there just to sort the letters during December and half of January. So that was my last job. And I’m doing some voluntary job at the moment. Just to increase my skill on the telephone. I struggle a lot with the telephone so. It’s not [unclear] very, very good but hopefully I will get there some day.

**I: Yeah. So how come you don’t have a job?**

CM: They always said to me that since I finished my HND, they always said to me that I don’t have experience in the UK so.

**I: You don’t have experience in the UK?**

CM: Yeah, I don’t have experience in the UK, so I’m trying to do a lot of voluntary now to have skills – what they need, actually need, but I still can’t get a job so I don’t know…

**I: So you’ve done an HND here in Glasgow?**

CM: Yeah, I did an HND in Glasgow. The City of Glasgow, college… Yeah, I start with an NQ, HNC and HND. I also start uni to see a bit, but SAAS [Editor’s note: student support] refused to pay the fee so I just dropped back. They sent a letter that says they are not going to pay my fee because I was doing my second year. I have to go to third year. Because HND and second year is the same level so it’s just repeating the class. So I dropped. And also they refused to give me a loan. They gave me 900 for the loan. That’s not enough to live. No it’s not. So I just dropped the two reasons.

 **I: So what did you do it in? What was the education in?**

CM: It was in accounting.

**I: Accounting? Yeah ok. Did you have any education in your home country?**

CM: Yeah, I did like similar to HND as well. I was planning to go to uni, but my father had a, it was like a family business. He was like sewing – sew clothes – [unclear] clothes and he had a shop at the market, so he would sew it and then I would go to do the sell. And then sometimes I work at home as well. So I was kind of helping… it’s like everyone in my family did that. So it was like a family business.

**I: Okay. So he was a tailor?**

CM: He was a tailor yeah.

**I: Okay, so that was also the job you had in your home country?**

CM: No, I did a lot but… I did a lot when I was studying. I work in the bank, like [unclear] bank back home when I was studying. When I stopped studying so that’s when I do the family business on full time. I was helping with the finance service as well, to sort all the finances, because he did nothing. He didn’t have any knowledge so I was helping here as well so… And I did… when my husband came here, I still continued to work with him until he got his status here – that’s when I decided to move here.

**I: Okay, let me just get that again. You got your husband in your home country?**

CM: My husband – we met in my country, we married there, but because of the politics or… he was a politic anyway, for politic reason he had to drop back, drop out of the country. So that’s when he travelled from – not travelled – just with his friend and then he end up here in the UK.

**I: Ok, and then you came some?**

CM: Yeah, after four years of asylum seeker for him he got his status. Then next year I tried to apply for the family reunion and that’s when I came here.

**I: Right. Would you just like to tell me a bit about yourself? How do you see yourself? How would you** **describe yourself?**

CM: Yeah, in UK or in general?

**I: Yeah, just in general.**

CM: I don’t know what to say.

**I: Just say what comes to mind.**

CM: I’m a lady, sometimes lack of confidence. I know that’s me, I always say lack of confidence, I don’t have, I’m not courage at all, I’m always shy – I don’t know why. And I’m glad to help people if I’ve got the power to help them, like money or maybe sometime being intelligent – if I can help them to my mind I’ll do it. But I also like being friendly with everyone. Ah, what I’m saying…!

**I: It’s fine, it’s fine.**

CM: You need to delete that.

**I: No no no no, don’t worry about it. I’m only gonna use the best…**

CM: Ok, uhhh.

**I: Just relax, this is not like a job interview or anything.**

CM: I know, I’m just thinking what to say. I’m quiet lady.

**I: So maybe you can say – what’s most important in your life?**

CM: Ah right, at the moment, it’s my kids. Their health. Anyway, they are my priority at the moment. If they are ok, I’m ok, even if I not got a job. If their health is good and if I take care of them properly, that’s me, I’m ok. If my husband is happy, I’m happy as well, I’m ok. That’s the main problem about me, I don’t think about me, I always think about others. It’s not good at all, isn’t it?

**I: Not always at least.**

CM: I often never think about me. I always think about other people. That’s what my mum always say to me ‘you need to think about’ – yeah, I’m thinking about me, [unclear] think about me, but I don’t have it, so. I’m [unclear] about and I have... I’ve got this problem, I don’t like too much friends, I always like to be on my own – not actually lonely, but. Back home I used to have friends and have [unclear] with them. They were girls like me. Back home when I was still young, I had a lot of big big problem and my dad was so angry at me, so I decided to be just my own. I don’t have – I’m not gonna lie, I don’t have any friend in Glasgow.

**I: You don’t have any friends in Glasgow?**

CM: Not really. Not really. I’m just always scared to have friend and then it turn back to the way it was in the past because in the past what happened, I was like, I don’t know what to call it, you speak to someone about myself, I’ll talk to you, but you not [unclear] if you’re going to talk to other one and other one go and tell …. I don’t know what you call in English.

**I: Gossip.**

CM: Gossip, yeah, that’s the one I’m looking for. Gossip. And then, my father didn’t actually like it and it was like a huge problem at that time so now I’m so afraid to be friendly, allowing someone… I’m friendly with people, I’ve got a friend, it’s just, I’ve got a limit. I can’t be into, really be into – I always get that barrier to move from me that. I don’t know why, I’m just scared.

**I: Ok. Try to imagine that you were – if you were a white Scottish person how do you think you would** **describe you?**

CM: Ahh, white scot. Ahh, I don’t know what to say.

**I: How would that person look at you?**

CM: If I was white I’ll be – not all white people are very very kind, most of them that are racist and some are good. Sometime when you walk on the streets, someone will say to you ‘oh fucking black, what are you doing here, go back to your country’. You feel like stranger to yourself.

**I: Ok. Have you experienced that?**

CM: Yeah, I remember the last time I was doing the course here, I was going back home. I was with one of the ladies from the course and there was a lady, a Scottish lady, she was [unclear], and she said that to us and the I turned and looked at her and then I wanted to ask her ‘why did you say that to me?’, and all my friends said to me ‘no, don’t say nothing. If you say [unclear]. Just keep yourself, go home’. It was like, it really was the first time something like that happened to me. And I was so shocked – I even get scared. And then the second time, it’s not far away, just like month ago, I was going to a bus. I was with – not at friend, yeah a friend actually – right, we went to a bus. She had a buggy with a baby on it and there was a disabled man standing there. We came there before him – I know he’s disabled, he got priority before us and then we let him to get into the bus, then he wouldn’t let us put the buggy because there was a space in there as well for us to put the buggy, but he said ‘no, you can’t get into it, there’s no space’. And the driver came and said ‘why? There’s a space there, she can use it’ and he started to assault us; ‘oh fucking black’. It was like, maybe because he’s disabled, I don’t know, I didn’t ask for him to be disabled. It’s not my fault if he’s disabled, is it my fault?

**I: No.**

CM: So, I don’t know. It was like shock. What did I do wrong? So, sometime not happy – yeah, trust me I’m not, but my husband like living here so, my kids were born here, so I have to like it as well. It’s difficult. Now you’ve finished at school, you pretend you’re finished because I don’t want to get to uni. I always have problem at home with my husband, problem with money sometimes. You know, when men are working and you are not working, just like you depend on him. Every time you use a five penny, it’s like you finished his money, so you need to earn your own money. So that’s why I decided definitely I don’t want to go to uni anymore. I will like to do maybe voluntary work as [unclear] anyway. In one year maybe I’ll get a job somewhere. It’s a start. But it’s not working as I want so. Just gonna stay, praying.

**I: Why do you think people say these things to you?**

CM: I don’t know. I think some people… I’m not on benefits. Some people feel that maybe lots of black people are on benefits. See, they don’t like… Congolese people they don’t like to work, they always want to stay at home, get benefits money. I’m not on benefits. I always try to do something since I’ve been here. I always… If I’m not working during my study, I will work during a summer time. I always earn money. It’s not like… it’s not proper jobs, it’s just agencies and stuff – because they start and finish so… so I’m not the sort of person who can just sit down, get benefits maybe, ask for increasing benefits, no I don’t do that. No, I don’t know, maybe they just think, maybe we just came here to eat their money, I don’t know.

**I: Yeah, I don’t know.**

CM: For me, I think so. It’s so sad sometimes, but I feel sorry for my kids. Sometimes. Because my son, he doesn’t actually – he knows that he’s black. He doesn’t agree he’s black, he always says ‘I’m brown, I’m not black’. I always say to him ‘you’re black’, he say ‘no mummy, I’m not black, I’m brown’. So when we go somewhere, like the last time they invite him to a birthday party – it was a Scottish lady, she was five, she’d done five – they invite him so I went there with him. He was the only black there and then I left him there for just two hours – I stay for one hour. The way they were treating me was like – he doesn’t mean to be there, but he’s a kid. I’m not gonna force him or make him understand that’s the way it works. He has know and learn from what actually happen to him. He’s just a kid. I’m not gonna tell him ‘no, don’t like white people’, no, I’m not gonna. No, I don’t have to. He knows that he’s black, but he doesn’t really… but I don’t want him to make that difference. No. I just want him to be simple, just I am as well, so… I don’t care if he’s black – it’s not your fault. I don’t care if you’re black or white.

**I: No, so you just want to be seen as a person?**

CM: Just like a human being, that’s all.

**I: So do you think you would have described yourself differently in your home country?**

CM: If I were in my home country I would be maybe better more than here. Because you see back home you got family around you, you got your family, you can share a lot with them. You have a relationship for job – here we don’t have it. I don’t have anyone. Like maybe charity like this here, let’s say I have some woman sitting there maybe will help me to get it, I don’t have it.

**I: You don’t have someone to help you here?**

CM: Some people like you, yeah. Other than like charity or – no I don’t have it. Because some people got a job from a relationship, isn’t it. Yeah, I don’t have no one here so.

**I: Ok. Right, I would like to talk to you a bit about equality. Can you explain to me what equality means to** **you?**

CM: When something is equal – what is it ‘equality’?

**I: Yeah**

CM: It’s meant to be at the same - we share everything at the same level, I think so. Yeah, we share everything together. We don’t have to – maybe because I’m black, you don’t like for example, if you’ve got like sweeties to divide, to share with someone. If you give me like two sweeties and then, because I’m black I need to have two and because you’re white you need to have three. It’s not fair, isn’t it? I think we’re all human being, it’s just the colour that’s different. And it’s something people say that blood we came from Africa is poisonous.

**I: Yeah, they don’t know.**

CM: Yeah, I had that when my son was sick – he had surgery. It was last December so we went for hospital. He needed blood transfusion and then I asked them ‘can you use my blood, if it’s the same blood type with me?’ They said ‘no, you came from Africa, isn’t it?’ I said ‘yes’, and they didn’t say that to me that my blood was poisonous, but the way they treated me was like my blood was poison.

**I: Yeah, that’s probably because it could be infected with something.**

CM: Yeah, I know…

**I: I know, it must be an uncomfortable experience.**

CM: I know, but we do that in Africa if we have someone injured we can use mother or sister to use to blood transfusion, we do that. Because I think it’s good when you came from some relative than from someone actually you don’t know. But anyway, he didn’t take that anyway so he was fine. They would just take, they were just saying in case he got worse anyway, but he was fine, so he didn’t need it.

**I: Okay, that’s good. Do you know what’s meant by equal opportunities?**

CM: Yeah, equal opportunity, yeah. It’s how long [unclear] to get a job, it’s just the same thing. You got a job, maybe you go for an interview and maybe they are looking for five or six people – because you’re black, they will say maybe English is not your first language – like I struggle because English is not my first language, but I can try and speak so I can make someone understand what I’m trying to say. But if you refuse me to get a job, to prove myself some way, then how am I’m gonna do it? Because I remember last interview I went, the guy actually wanted to offer me the job, but because – I don’t know, because I’m black or I don’t know why – he keep saying to me that English is not your first language. I said ‘no, English is not my first language’, but I did the study, I’m trying to explain myself now – I don’t need to, I need to – I hate interpreters. Since I came here, I haven’t used it, I didn’t use it. I always try to explain myself because my [unclear] will be like bilingual. Where I’m from, the French part, so my English wasn’t good at all when I first came here, but [unclear]. Yeah, I know [unclear].

**I: But do you, so you don’t feel like you have equal opportunities here?**

CM: Erm no, I don’t feel that.

**I: And why not?**

CM: Why not?

**I: I know you’ve already said a bit about it but…**

CM: At the last job I did apply, because [unclear] what I’m saying now for an application form, you have to fill – you see those equality – why do you need to fill? For me, you don’t have to. You don’t have to get a job according to that, isn’t it?

**I: No, actually that has nothing to do with the job application. They don’t even see it, the ones…**

CM: Really?

**I: Yeah, that’s just to keep statistics and stuff like that. It’s actually to find out if people, if the jobs do as** **they are supposed to – that they do give equal opportunities.**

CM: Ah right.

**I: So you don’t have to worry about that part.**

CM: Oh really? Because the last job – I applied for a job, it was on Friday, it was an [unclear] job about administration – it was in Paisley. And then, you see, I tried to fill it, but one of the [unclear] they asked about if you – how long have you been here and what’s your first language and… It’s just, I don’t know, it just frustrates me sometimes.

**I: Yeah, so it feels like you are disadvantaged from the beginning?**

CM: Yeah yeah, from the beginning yeah. It just makes you sometimes – they don’t want to pick me because French is my first language. But I think if French is my first language, it should be actually a big opportunity for you, isn’t it? But it’s not. I didn’t… I didn’t want to be born in Africa or I didn’t want to come here, but if you come here and if they want people to get a job, at least… And there’s one thing as well, for example, you go to the job centre – because you’re not on benefits, you can’t have work placement. I think they should give chance to everyone, not, this is not because I’m black, I think this is for everyone who actually is not on benefits. But for me I think that if you really want to get a job they should help you to get it, isn’t it? It doesn’t really matter if you’re on benefit or not. Because some people are on benefit, they don’t want to work. I’m not on benefit, I want to earn money, but they don’t want me to work so I don’t know what to do. I don’t – I hate sitting at home, trust me, I hate it.

**I: Let me ask you, have you ever heard about something called the Equality Act or the Public Sector Equality Duty? Have you heard about these things?**

CM: No. What is that?

**I: Well, it’s actually, like I said before, it’s an act that says that everyone should have equal opportunities,** **so… do you think you have better opportunities here compared to in your home country?**

CM: I think, yeah. You can have a better job here, if they allow you.

**I: Yeah, if they allow you.**

CM: Back home there’s a lack of opportune. You know what I mean corruption?

**I: Yeah.**

CM: There’s a lot and back home you need to have a relation to get a proper job, so I don’t know.

**I: No. Do you know what rights you have?**

CM: Yeah, I know my rights yeah, I know my rights. Sometime I actually know my right, sometime I get scared to really act like a… what do you say? When you want to use a right, what do you say?

**I: When you want to…**

CM: Applicable…

**I: Yeah, apply your rights.**

CM: Apply your right, yeah, that’s the word. Sometime like what I did in December, I was working for two months. And that company was supposed to [unclear] in Springburn. They didn’t even recognise my [unclear], they didn’t want to pay my wages. So I keep arguing with them on telephone for nearly two weeks before they pay my wages and they… I keep – my husband keep arguing with me at home; ‘you have to scream at them’. I say ‘it’s not screaming at them that’s gonna solve the problem. It doesn’t solve the problem. I know my right, I know they have to pay my money, but I don’t have to scream at them for them to pay my money’. Because when he knows his right, he gets so upset and angry, but he doesn’t solve the problem. No, he doesn’t. And he always say to me I’m too soft. I say yes, I’m too soft, because I think the system in this country, when you are [unclear] when you are too soft they forget you. I think so. Because I also bought steam equipment, it was April last year and it broke down. It broke down after five months. It was in Argos. Then after it broke down I phoned them, I told them that that thing is not working anymore. They said ok, they’re gonna send someone. I said I need to [unclear], they’re gonna send someone to come and collect it. And they didn’t, I waited for one month, trust me. They keep telling me that oh, they’ll send someone to come and collect them. I was so – after one month I went back to Argus. I said ‘I don’t understand it. I bought something – it’s been like five months, I’ve got guarantee for two years, so they should solve the problem’. They said ‘ok, go home and Monday they’ll phone you, they’ll come and deliver and new one’. And Monday no one came, I phoned them, they told me that they knew what I wanted is not on stock. I need to wait two months to be delivered. I said, this is a nightmare. I bought something, they got my money and I got guarantee on it so they need to give me a new one. And then he, my husband get all [unclear] ‘you’re too soft on them. You need to stand up for yourself’. That’s when I wake up on Saturday morning – I went back to Argos. I said – I went back with the [unclear] because I’m not gonna take the [unclear] equipment anymore. Either you solve the problem or you give me a new one or you return my money back. That’s when they said to me ‘ok, leave the equipment here. We’re gonna send you a new one on Tuesday’. And on Tuesday they sent me new one.

**I: Ok, that’s good. So you had to be rough.**

CM: So I think that when you are too soft, they are soft on you as well. But when you know your rights, no matter what colour you are, you can solve the problem. I know that, I learned a lot of lesson from that. I learned a lot.

**I: Sounds like it. So let me just ask you, do you think it’s easier for your husband as a black man than it is for** **you as a black woman?**

CM: I think, it’s [unclear], he’s more into… I don’t know how to say it. He’s more into the society than me. Because he is a person who knows his rights, no matter who stand in front of him. If he got his right, he stand up for himself. But me, it’s not the same. If you stand in front of me and then maybe you are like my manager or my supervisor, I think if you shout at me I will just get let down, but he doesn’t get down. If you got your rights you stand up for yourself. You see, he is – I think he’s good.

**I: Okay, so it’s not because he’s a man, it’s just because of the person he is.**

CM: I think it’s because he’s a man as well, because I think ladies are too shy as well. I think so, ladies are too shy, calm. Men are powerful. I know some ladies are powerful, but if you got to – 70 % of women will be shy. Yeah, more calm. And if you shout at them, they just go down. I guess they get scared. With men – some men as well are scared, some I know – most of his friends they get scared for nothing, but he will say no. You got to stand up for yourself. No matter who stand in front of you. If you got a right, you need to. They’re not gonna kill you if you got right. That’s what he is. He is good… [unclear].

**I: Right, would you mind telling me about your everyday life in your home country? What was like?**

CM: Hmm, my home country. What I used to do. What I would do, I used to help my dad a lot, the family business. And I was working like Monday to Saturday. I didn’t have any free time. My free time was just on Sunday. So I was like working, taking care of my mum. She’s not sick – just taking care, because I came in a big family. My mum had seven children, so I’m just the third, so… I had a big brother and a big sister, big brother married, sister married, so just in the middle… that time, because those two were married, I was the older at home, so I’d just take care of her. And then I got sister and brothers who are behind so the oldest will do like the older lady will so just take care of her, do some housework and work as well.

**I: So very busy.**

CM: That’s all. I didn’t have any friends back home as well. No, no one.

**I: So do you think you experienced any inequalities in your home country?**

CM: Erm yeah, even back home there’s no equality as well. Because back home we have like, because you see that Bamileke we have like tribes, like 52 back home, and sometimes when you go into an office looking for a job, if you speak the same language as him, he might give you a job. But if not, and some time your name as well can tell that you’re not the same village as me or the same tribe as me so I’m not gonna give you that job. It’s the same thing even back home. I think it’s the way the world is. It’s just sad that even back home you’re not safe, even here you’re not, but I think better here than back home. Yeah, I think so. Because back home we are able to tell you are not from my – you are not my relative so I’m not gonna help you. I remember even when I was coming here to UK, I went to the embassy, the British embassy back home. There was a lady – black African from my country, she was actually speaking the same dialect like me – with another old woman. And then I was lucky, I said ‘oh, I’m lucky. She speaks the same language as me. Maybe she will be [unclear] for me’. No that was a nightmare. When I came there I wanted to speak my language – my dialect with her and she started to speak French at me, with me. I was so surprised. Two minutes ago you were speaking our mother language with that other lady. Why suddenly you change to speak French with me? I didn’t understand why. And she got all my documents and she said to me ‘all your documents is all good. What I need is a proof like a photo from you with your husband somewhere in marriage. I told her we didn’t have any celebration for a big marriage so we didn’t have [unclear]. So she just confiscate all my documents, asked me to go back home. I was very very upset and sad. I said ‘why do you, why are you doing that for? If you don’t want me, just return my paper back to me. If you don’t need them. I’ll just go back home’. She said ‘no, I’m going to take it’. I didn’t understand why she took it. Then I just – I phoned my husband. My husband said to me ‘ok, just leave it there. Go back home’. I don’t know. By the time I was going back home, after like three-four hours she phoned me and she told me that ‘ok, we got an interview for you on Thursday. Can you come on Thursday for interview?’ I said ‘ok, I’ll be there on Thursday’. I didn’t understand why suddenly she just change so…

**I: I don’t know.**

CM: It’s just, it’s everywhere, isn’t it? Just here it’s other way. [unclear] [38.50] back home I’m black, all people are black so it’s everywhere. It’s not just here. No, it’s not just.

**I: Do you think it’s easier to be a man than a woman in your home country?**

CM: Erm, a man? Er, no. No no.

**I: It’s the same?**

CM: It’s the same.

**I: Okay. Right, can you tell me a bit about your everyday life here in Glasgow then?**

CM: Everyday life, everyday life. When I wake up in the morning, I’ll just show my kids to school. Sorry. When I come back home I just if I don’t have nothing to do I’ll just maybe do a prayer or search job on the computer, but if I have something to do I’m just gonna do it. If I got a lot of voluntary work, I’m just gonna do it. And then when I come back – because I always like, I like – I have a timetable for a week. I always do that. Because when I have a timetable for a week, I’m more safe. See like, African men they’re not like European men. They don’t help their wives at home. No no. No, trust me. They will wake up in the morning, like now, when I came here, I wake up at eight o’clock, make their breakfast, maybe tidy the house and then try to arrange what I’ll cook after – maybe the dinner or try to find something for the lunch. What he was doing – sleeping. You see. They are always like that. Men from yeah… I know that – someone told me that even men from UK, they don’t help their wife, but trust me, African men are ten time worse. No, they don’t. I remember when I was doing my study last year – that’s even the reason why I drop as well, because everything was me. I will wake up, drop the kid to the nursery, go to school, collect them, come back home, [unclear]… do that during the week, come back home, cook dinner and sometime in weekend if I got a job, I’ll go and do it. If I don’t have, ok, I’ll stay home with my kid, maybe we’ll go somewhere together. But what he would do, he would just wake up – he would study as well – he would take his time, wake up, go to school, if he got a job after the college he’ll just go to work. Then he’ll come back, eat his dinner, that’s him go to bed. He would do that Monday to Friday. On Saturday when he wake up, have his breakfast, sit in front of the TV, six o’clock eat his dinner, that’s him finished, ten o’clock go to bed. They don’t help at all. So it’s… I don’t – last year I had a lot of problem and my pressure, my blood pressure was so high because I was trying to control everything. I want everything to be tidy. I want everything to be perfect. My mum keep telling me ‘you don’t have to do that every, every time. Take everything step by step. Try to make a timetable. Try to do it. If your kitchen is dirty and you feel that you can’t make it today, leave it for tomorrow. It’s not an obligation’. I say ‘if I don’t do it today, he will say to me I’m too dirty’. That’s all he said to me, always said to me I was dirty. But I don’t know what to do, so what I do now is try to do a timetable. One time he will go the fridge and find out that the fridge is dirty. He say ‘oh [interviewee’s name], the fridge is dirty, you didn’t clean it’. ‘So I’ll clean it but actually I don’t have time to do it today’. ‘Why don’t you do it?’ ‘I’m too tired’. So ‘Ok, you’re tired. Ok, we’ll leave it dirty’. ‘When I’ll be free, I’ll do it’. Just so sad sometimes but… It’s very sad. Sometime you want to be a single mum, but it’s not good to be a single mum. No, we need men, and men need us. I get that – we need men. Because sometimes, sometime you can’t do everything by yourself. Like now I’m out, he’s at home with them. He’s at home with them, but maybe if he wasn’t there I’ll be maybe walking all about the place with them. At least to be home they’ll be safe. So I know they don’t actually help but we do need them.

**I: It doesn’t really sound like you need them.**

CM: It doesn’t sound like it, but sometimes he help. Sometimes he really help, sometimes not really. Because I remember last year when I was doing my study and then I have to drop the kid to the nursery and then I arrive to the nursery, they told me now there was something at the nursery so the nursery was closed in the morning. I was stuck there with the kids and I had an assessment at ten o’clock. Then what can I do, here now? Half past eight, I can’t go back home and then go. I can’t make it at all. What I did, I phoned my husband – he was at home sleeping. I phoned him ‘please, can you come and collect the kid?’ You know what he did? He shut the phone.

**I: Really?**

CM: He shut the phone. I was so… I even started crying.

**I: Yeah, I can understand that. I would be so angry.**

CM: He shut the phone. I was like, I don’t know what to do. What I did, there was a cash machine there, because I didn’t have any cash, there was a cash machine over there. I saw cash machine, ok I got my card. What I’ll I do, I cash money, I took a taxi, I took a black one. Just take them home, because it wasn’t far. It was just 20 minutes – it wasn’t far. I just cashed the money, took a black cap, I dropped them at home, I took at taxi to college, and he was sitting at home. I was meant to do something that [unclear] bad to him. Because one day he went to work as well and he forgot his badge and I was at home and he phoned me ‘please, can you bring my badge to me’. I was meant to refuse him, I said – I told him I’m not gonna do it, and then because I’m always soft, I always said no, if I do that, maybe he’ll get penalized at job, maybe he will lose the job. What I did, I took it, took the taxi and go and drop. And my mum said to me ‘you should not do that because you have to be listen to you the next time, he will be more sensible like you’. But I can’t do it. No, I can’t do it.

**I: Do you think that it’s a problem that you have children if you would like to get a job?**

CM: It’s not – for me it’s not a problem. No, it’s not. Because since six months, they’ve been at a nursery since age of six so it’s not a problem.

**I: Ok, how do you pay for that?**

CM: No because I study, the college paid for that. So it was no problem.

**I: Ok, so, but what if you got a job then?**

CM: If I got a job, at the moment, he’s working – he’s doing the dark shift so he start at four, finish at ten. So he’s at home with the wee ones so… But he goes to the council nursery so he can do everything. I’m okay on that bit at the moment. Because it’s free. So for two years, he will go to the council nursery for two years.

**I: He will go to the?**

CM: The council

**I: The council**

CM: Ah, council, yeah the sound.

**I: Ok.** *[Someone comes in the door and says sorry]* **That’s ok. I was just thinking about something. So you think you** **experience discrimination when you’re trying to get a job? That they don’t want to hire you because you** **are black? Is that right?**

CM: Some

**I: Some?**

CM: No, I think for me, it’s a lack of experience as well.

**I: Lack of experience?**

CM: Yeah.

**I: So you think if you had more experience you would be able to get a job?**

CM: I think so. I think so. It’s a lack of… I don’t know why they just put the stuff of experience. Because if they actually – if you don’t start somewhere, how do you get experience?

**I: Yeah, that’s true.**

CM: You have to start somewhere. And it’s, if you accept somewhere, even they gave you money [unclear], that’s fine for me. It’s fine for me, just try to get experience somewhere [unclear]. But if no one is able to allow you to do it, how are you gonna do it? Even if you’re doing a work placement, the last work placement I was doing, what – the first day I came there, the lady was there didn’t actually explain me how everything is working. She just give stuff to do and she didn’t explain me how I should – I know how to do it, but when you study at school it’s quite different what you do at work. She didn’t explain that to me. I end up making mistakes. Everytime I asked her she was very very [unclear] with the finance account for the company, so I couldn’t bother her. So the next day I came, it was on Friday, they’ll say [unclear], she find out I made a lot of mistakes. And the lady from the work actually had on Thursday told her that it was my mistake, I meant to explain that to her very well, but I didn’t have time, so I was like. Why did I come here? I came here to learn something, isn’t it? If you’re not able to help me, so why is – why am I doing it anymore? They should at least try to explain me calm – I think so. Because even if you got a job somewhere for the first day, they’re not gonna give you just stuff to do without explaining how it’s working, isn’t it? They have to explain it to you. Because I think everyone, if you got a job, at least one week of training or two or three days – I don’t know some people it’s five weeks, some people I don’t know. The last one I had an interview was for the [HM – unclear], they were trying to give me the job, it was far away it was in Edinburgh, I couldn’t do it. So they told me because it’s far away you will struggle a lot and I said I know that I will struggle a lot. So we can’t do it, because what they tried to explain to me – when you get a job, they give you a training for five weeks there from the… you actually from the first week, you know what actually you are meant to do. But the first day I came, she just give me work to do, she didn’t explain me nothing at all. I was really, I thought I was doing the right thing, because actually what I learned was doing what I actually learned from school, but it’s not the same.

**I: No that’s true.**

CM: So I was like, I was very very sad on my first day. Yeah, very sad, but after that I was ok because from that mistake I learned a lot. So I don’t know.

**I: So have you got any help trying to find a job?**

CM: Just you guys.

**I: Yeah, from here [Bridges Programmes]**

CM: Yeah, and [unclear]. No, no one, because I went to the job centre, they said they won’t help me so..

**I: They won’t help you.**

CM: No, they refused to help me, so I’m just trying to get a job by myself. I always tried to do a driving. Because if I have my driving I’ll just go to the police, trust me. But the driving is so difficult to have. I failed the test two weeks ago.

**I: Oh, sorry.**

CM: I have the next one in two weeks, at the end of the month. So I hope I’ll pass that.

**I: Ah, you’ll be fine.**

CM: Ah, I hate that stuff. Because if I had it I’ll just change direction, I’ll just change it. Because I know that someone told me that to get a police job is so difficult as well.

**I: Yeah**

CM: Really?

**I: I don’t know.**

CM: Someone told me that. Liz told me that it’s very difficult, but they are actually looking for a lot of black people so that’s why I said ‘ok, I might try over the’ – I’m ok to do the physique work, I’m ok to do gym or, I’m ok to do that, I don’t mind about it. What I need is a job somewhere.

**I: So do you think that you have other needs than… you know there are different people looking for work, so do you think you have specific needs if you were looking for help to get work? Do you think you have other needs than for instance white people or?**

CM: No, at the moment what I need is – because what I did to my [unclear] for policeman what she said to me, what the lady said to me, my telephone communication is very lack. It’s the only thing I need at the moment, so.

**I: So it’s really also to improve language and communication?**

CM: Communication on telephone yeah. That’s what she said to me. She say ‘speak in college, you speak very well’. It’s just when you speak on the phone, some people when you say ‘please, can you just repeat what you just said’, it does them angry. I don’t know why.

**I: Yeah, there’s no need to do that.**

CM: I don’t know, my [unclear] I said ‘ok, can you just repeat what you just said’, they just get angry and when they get angry they’ll shut the phone. They just, it’s not polite. Some people are trying to – someone is trying to get what you are trying to say, but if you just do that, how will they know? It’s not good at all.

**I: Do you think they get angry because they can hear that you don’t speak English as a first language?**

CM: I think so. I think so. I think so. Because I had another one, this, the last day, she phoned three times. I keep picking the phone, I keep asking her ‘what are you looking for’. She always said to me ‘is Lorraine there?’ I said ‘no, she’s not in. Can I just leave them a number so that she’ll…’ She’ll say ‘no, I phone back later’. She just get angry for nothing. It’s not even your fault. How can I get something… and the voice was so small, I can’t…

**I: Yeah, you can’t hear.**

CM: So, I don’t’ know. It just make me [unclear] sometimes. I’m ok with the telephone, because where I do the voluntary work, I use the telephone a lot so I was so surprised it happened to me so… I don’t know. That’s life.

**I: Just one last question here. What do you think the future holds for you?**

CM: I don’t know. How do you know?

**I: How I know? I don’t know what you…**

CM: I don’t know. I don’t know. Okay, if I got a job, ok, my life will be different. I’ll go maybe travel back home to visit my family. That’s my priority at the moment if I got a job. Because my mum haven’t seen my kids since they were born. And when my dad passed away, we didn’t actually see them. So that’s my priority at the moment. If I got a job, I’ll work one year, take a holiday, go back home. I was wanting to it this summer, but I haven’t got a job yet so. Just hope I’ll find work somewhere so I don’t know. Anyway…

**I: Well, I think that’s it. Do you have anything you’d like to say?**

CM: No, if it’s ok…

*[Maggie enters]*

*M: Oh, we were just about to have our lunch.*

**I: Yeah, we’re finished so that’s alright.**

CM: If that’s ok for you that’s fine for me.

**I: Yeah ok, good. Thank you.**

CM: I hope I wasn’t rubbish at all.

**I: No no no, not at all. It was very helpful.**