

Indicative list of interview questions

Interviews with experts and practitioners in will-making

NB These are intended as starting questions – the range of wills practitioners and experts (e.g. in law firms, NGOs, trust companies) means that such starting points will lead in somewhat different directions depending on research participants' work and knowledge.

1. What is your professional title and role in wills and estates?
2. What do your duties involve?
3. How did your organization begin working with wills?
4. What other institutions do you see as key figures in will-making in South Africa?
How does the work of your organisation relate to that of these other institutions?
5. How does the process of making a will work?
6. What advantages do you see in making a will?
7. What risks do you see in making a will?
8. What clientele do you cater to?
9. How might their concerns be representative of a wider spectrum of South Africans, or atypical?
10. Do you see patterns in who is making wills in South Africa today? How would these compare to the past?

Interviews with will-makers

NB This list is preliminary, as the design of the project explicitly involves collaborating with the experts and practitioners above, and seeking guidance on how best to approach key research areas. While it includes some specific questions, it also lists areas for conversation that would in fact represent involved conversations in themselves – in these, the precise approach and wording will be determined by sensitivity to situation and local dynamics, as is the hallmark of ethnographic research.

1. Life histories – working through the research participant's biography on their own terms.
2. Mapping kinship – drawing up kinship diagrams based on the research participant's account, again in conversations on their terms.

Based on this broader context:

3. How have you been able to plan for your family's future? (This is intended to reach much wider than will-making.)
4. Have particular relatives or non-relatives been especially central in these plans?
5. Have you made a will? (In some cases, because of research context, the answer to the question will be obvious.) Either way, could you explain why?

6. Have you been approached with advice about will-making by a financial organisation or NGO? Could you describe this?

On will-making specifically:

7. For you, what are the most important possessions to think about in making your will? How have you decided / are you deciding what will happen to them? (This question marks an important theme, but how to address it will be developed with wills experts.)
8. How have you decided / are you deciding the executor of your will? (The point immediately above applies.) Have you received professional advice about this?
9. Have you spoken to any relatives or non-relatives about the process or decisions involved in making your will? What form did this take?
10. From your experience, what advantages or challenges do you see in having a will versus not having one?