

Respondent: ID#17517
Interviewer: Christopher
Date: 5 July, 1999
District: Balaka

Found respondent weaving baskets/chairs with four friends. I asked about the prices of single/couple chairs and was told. Asked if they sell at U, they said people do come there to buy. I asked who M was among the group and he identified himself, I asked if he could spare some time for a chat with me. He said welcome and let's sit down, he wanted to get me a chair. I told him we could just sit down under a tree nearby since it wouldn't take that long. I introduced myself and told him that I wanted to chat with him on some issues while I was waiting for my friends who had questionnaires.

I asked him to explain for me so that I knew for my interest on the hyena issue. He said hyenas exist in the community and this occurs when a man has a young baby who died and they want to resume sleeping together. It also occurs when a man has extramarital sex and this causes the woman's body to swell. First, when the baby dies the *ankhoswe* (marriage counselors from both sides) come together and identify a man in the village who should sleep with the woman at night. The husband is told to sleep elsewhere since the woman has to be "cleansed" before sleeping together. If they sleep together without the hyena going to sleep with her first, she can die. Second is a woman who has a young child and the woman's body starts to swell. The counselors call the man and tell him that his wife is swelling because he himself has been involved in extramarital sex elsewhere, and they tell him to say the truth lest the woman dies and he shall be summoned. If he reveals that he has indeed gone and moved around "in the bush", they arrange for a hyena and the woman is told to get ready at night for whoever comes and that she should not shout since the hyena comes at night. After sleeping with her, the following morning the man and woman wash in water which has medicine; after that they can safely sleep together. Asked if the hyena continues secretly sleeping with the woman, he said sometimes that can continue but this depends on the attitude of the woman, if she's loose she continues secretly with the other man. However, he said he has never heard of such a case in this community.

I said that he had said that hyenas come when a man is involved in extramarital sex when his wife has a young baby, so does this occur in the community, that some men indulge in extramarital sex? He said, "ya, it's very common". I asked him why he thinks people do that. He said most young men have "fire/heat in their trousers", and this "fire/heat" is what makes them go for different women. He said that some men do that to show that they are champions, and when one does not do that they say "ah, that one is cold" and not worth a man. He said the young men leave their wives and go for other women because of lust, it's natural, he said, and continued that even in the Bible Adam had Eve as his wife so marriage is natural, but men find their wives unsatisfactory sometimes and sleep with other women. Asked if this occurs in the community he says it's common, and it's common even between married men and married women. Some women are loose, he said, they go to a borehole and leave their bucket and go elsewhere within the village and meet their lovers, or to the maize mill or market and meet their lovers, and they return looking innocent. This he said occurs, and he knows a number of women who do this. Asked to mention not the names but the number of men who do this, he said they are more than women who do that. There are certain women in

the community who are single and survive by moving around with other wives' husbands. They want money, he said. Asked if, since he said extramarital affairs were common, if he himself has ever had it, he said it was five years ago when he was married to his ex-wife. He was going out with his present wife when he was married to the ex-wife. He said he was doing that because he was hearing from other people that "your wife is going out with such, such", but he couldn't believe it since he had no proof. Then he saw changes in behavior in the household, she started being rude, going to her mother's village every now and then, that's where she was meeting the other men. So he himself thought it wise to propose another woman, and then they had one child. He proposed another woman and was having secret affairs with her because he felt his wife was not honest, so he was doing the same. He impregnated the other woman and this wife heard and they quarreled and separated. He married the other woman who is his wife now, and insists he has not had an affair ever since they got married (5 years ago).

He says he avoids that because he is afraid of gonorrhea, buboes and AIDS. He explained that as of now he stays in N in his father's village and the wife is away at her mother's village in K. He is temporarily here because that's where he makes basket chairs this season, but still he does not indulge in an affair. I asked him if he ever has lust or desire for other women, he said, "ya, he does", but he avoids sleeping with them. I asked if he has ever asked for sex with another lady, he said, ya, he has done so, a lady who bought chairs on credit and was not willing to pay and kept on saying "I've no money so just do anything you want on me, you may come home tonight", and at that time he was tempted and asked her for sex, she agreed. But he never went there because he says he knows her behavior: she's a lady who moves around. I asked him what's wrong with her? Does she not look healthy? He said she does, but she might have a virus (*kachiroombo*). I asked him if it's possible to know that a woman has a virus or not and what advice he could give me if I wanted to propose for marriage in this village. He said it's really difficult to know that a woman has AIDS or not, until she starts showing signs. The only thing you can do to choose a partner in the village is by going/meeting young men in the village and chat with them, asking them "I have seen a nice lady in the village and I want her to be my partner", and these can tell you that the lady is worthy of being or partner or that she moves around too much. It is the young men of the same village who can know about the lady since they stay with her.

I asked him if he drinks beer, he said yes, and I asked him if one enters a bottle store at U and immediately meets bar girls, how can one know that the lady has AIDS or not before choosing one for sex. He laughed and said it is difficult unless she has clear signs of AIDS. He continued that some bar girls do not have AIDS and some do, but it is difficult to know. I asked him if he knows any of his friends who have slept with a bar girl, he said a number of them using *Chishango* (condom). I asked him if he had also used *Chishango*, he said he hasn't and he has never slept with a bar girl. He emphasized that nowadays we young men should learn to control ourselves. I told him that's true, but it is natural and I do use condoms if I have extramarital affairs, since it's natural to do so, especially we young men. He said it's true and good to use condoms and I asked him if he remembers back if he has never used them, he said no, never. I asked him if when he had extramarital sex she was the only one, he said yes she was the only one and he has over these five years never had extramarital sex. I then asked him to escort me to the car as we finish our chat. He showed me the place where his father lives in the village and we bade farewell.