

Respondent: ID#45506

Interveiw: Davie Chitenje

Date: 17 July 1999

District: Mchinji

I found F busy shelling maize a few minutes before lunch. I joined him and we all started shelling. In the course of shelling maize, I introduced myself, that I am Davie Chitenje, I was with my friends who were by then in a village next to D [village], so I wanted to wait for them while chatting with him. Before we chatted further, his wife welcomed us to lunch. I refused and the man went to have his lunch. I continued shelling. Within 20-30 minutes the man returned, and we continued our chat.

I continued by asking him what his tribe was. He replied by saying that his father is a Ngoni and his mother Chewa. Then I asked him to tell me differences in terms of cultural beliefs between these tribes. I just guided him by giving him topics which I wanted him to tell me. The first topic was how the people of these two tribes marry, what are the processes like? He then briefed me mainly about the Chewa because it's the tribe which is known by. He said when a man has found a girl to marry, before you take your wife to live at your house you have to pay money to her parents, which they call *nkhuku*. Failing to pay the money, you are not allowed to take a wife. It's unlike Ngoni culture, whereby *lobola* is paid (wealth paid to the wife's parents so that all the children belong to the husband)

On the second issue, I asked him what people in that area can do when a woman has new baby? I started by telling him what people of my tribe (Yao) do, so as to make him more comfortable. I told him that among the Yao, when a woman has a child the couple do not sleep together until six months pass by. Now I told him that I could be much happier if he told me of his tribe so that we should know one another better. F, looking more composed, started by telling me there is a big difference between Yao and Chewa tribes because, he said, in the Chewa tribe they stay for 3-4 months only. After that, the husband is free to sleep with his wife. I then continued by assuring him that as far as a man is concerned, I think it's impossible to stay for that long without having sex. At this point, I asked him how he managed that? The man cleared his throat and started telling me that he has two children, but since then he has never slept with any woman except for his wife, giving AIDS as an excuse. I then probed by saying that since he is afraid of AIDS, why can't he try with condoms. In his reply, he said he will never believe in condoms, according to what he heard from his friend. He was told that condoms sometimes burst in the course of sexual intercourse, thereby exposing you to danger. At this point I went straight to my point by asking him that "does it mean that you have never slept with any woman for the past two years?" He openly told me that no. I then bade him farewell and we parted.