
File Name	: Haji 060701
Diarist	: Haji Daniel
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Typist	: Mwendo Communication & Business Bureau

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It was on Saturday afternoon after I came back from the field around 16:45 hours when I dropped out of the Let's Chat Hiace minibus then went to the trading centre.

I found a lot of young men busy selling food items like bananas, chips maize, meat etc then when they saw the research team in lets chat T/shirt the young men started talking about the research team saying that one of the men Mr. Andileya said that Aa!.

This year there are a lot of Chewa interviewers if they come to buy here they are greeting us in Chichewa but there is always rumours that they employ Yao interviewers so we wonder there are a lot of Chewas.

Then one of the men said that Aa! You know these days there are favours for employ people but always they say they need Yao proper speaking people but they end up employing Chewas that's a problem.

Then off he went then Mr. Bisweck. came and said that why should they say they need Yao interviewers?

Mr. Andileya. said that Aah! You know what this area is pure Yao speaking people so the interviews must be conducted in Yao for easy communication and easy comfortability because I heard that most of the questions which are asked are sexual related questions sensitive and also they ask about sexual behaviour, kachilombo questions so it is better to ask in mother language.

Then one of the vendors a Chewa of about 25 years old Mr. Chitenje commented that A everybody in Malawi currently speaks Chichewa and understand the Chewa.

Mr. Andileya came again and said the question is not understanding or speaking but being open to the sensitive questions of sexual behaviour do you think if they ask you how many sexual behaviour do you have, how many times have you slept with? Do you respond this in a different language? Everybody is open when one talks in mother language.

Then another man Mr. Eginazio asked Mr. Andileya that how do you know the questions which the Lets Chat people ask?

Mr. Andileya said that 'I am a 42 year old person married and they started asked me since 1998 I come from Mkono village this year I have already been asked twice I received soap an the 2nd trip they have given me sugar a kg of white sugar.

A fellow Yao interviewer came we communicated nicely hence he asked me in my mother language.

Then Mr. Eginazio. asked that but Mkono village is composed of the Ngonis and majority speaks Chichewa and majority are Christians now were they communicated?

For the Chewa speaking people it is not a problem hence the interviewers speaks both Yao and Chewa while the Chewa interviewers speaks only Chichewa they do not speak or hear Chiyao interviewers they both have an advantage of conducting the interviewers for both Chichewa and Yao while the Chewa interviewers only have to conduct the interviews in Chichewa only that's the way I can answer you Mr. Eginazio.

Mr. Eginazio said oh I understand now you are right Mr.

Then I left the place and went to eat roasted meat just next to the place where we stood.

While eating the meat a certain meat seller Mr. Francinsco said that Oh ASUNGU WAKUNGALANGO AICHE SONI EE! KANGA CHAKA ACHINO AICHILE KWAPI?

He said that <Oh the white people are back Let's Chat while [white] people I mean those who were putting up to Luka forest I do not know this year where they are putting up? Where are they staying now.>

Then one of the young men who was selling the green maize said that Aa! But the minibuses comes from Mwendo every morning they seem to have been coming from Mwendo side.

Are they also staying in tents in a forest like what they did in 2004?

They employed watchman cooks all the Let's Chat team was there except the interviewers.

Then around 18:30 hours, I went back to where I was putting up within the trading centre.

Then around 19:00 hours I went to one of the restaurants for supper within the trading centre, one of the listeners was in uniform of Let's Chat / T/shirts the owner of the restaurant said that Eee! You are back that was the Proprietor a woman of about 50 years old said that you are back she repeated what the

vendors were talking about the forest staying of the Let's Chat bosses in 2004 but she informed the listeners that Eee! You Let's Chat people the woman who was employed as a cook for Nkhalango cook in 2004 was very sick since 2005 and currently you can not know her she has been sick for a long time and the lister asked the proprietor that what was wrong with her?

The proprietor of the restaurant said that Aaa! She was coughing too much and she has been sick for a long time but currently she has recovered but you can not know her she has a bit changed health wise.

After I finished eating around 20:00 hours we all went out of the restaurant.

02-07-06

It was on Sunday morning when I went to the stage in the morning of this day that was the Bus stage and I stood by a mini-shop where they sell groceries drinks.

There were girls passing by the road about 6 girls were in a group going to one of the churches around Vingula and one of the men at the grocery Mr. Lenson said that Aaa! Those girls who are passing by here going to church the two of them are prostitutes but today they have taken Bibles going to praise GOD.

He continued to say that aaa! These kachilombo carriers are going to repent at the Church, But this evening they will be prostituting at Vingula spreading the kachilombo.

Then one of the men Mr. Makina said that Aa! What's wrong there? Why not going to church there is no choice everybody must praise GOD whether you are a prostitute or not. You call them a prostitute because you get them in bars in beer places.

Then another man Mr. Nicks said that prostituting is seen when one is found in a bar or bottle store but rankly speaking most of the men here in Vingula are prostitutes they leave their spouses and go for sex with other partners but you gonna not call them that they are prostitutes but for a lady she is not respected.

Most of us men here at the Trading Centre have lots of sexual partners changing now and again but since we hide we are not seen that we are womanizing hence we do this privately.

All the men laughed.

Then Mr. Makina. came again and said that aaa! When a man is married us Yaos when getting married a man can have sex with 3 or 4 girls before he gets married and after getting married when dying he can have slept may be with more than 10 sexual partners as we can compare men and women for the men the

frequency can be high in comparison so automatically the men do sex too much than women so do not mock the girls.

Mr. L. said that Aa! These two girls go for Sugar dads here at Vingula they are prostitutes do not favour them they will die very soon due to kachilombo they think they are enjoying soon or later they will start losing their weight rapidly and their hairs will be like they are using curlkit chemicals while it is a sign of kachilombo.

All the men laughed.

Then one of the Moslem girls came at the Mini-shop to buy bread and sugar she dressed in a Moslem gear a wrapped face long skirt covering the whole body she was of about 23 years old she bought and went off the T/A residence.

Mr. Nicks said that Oh way this is a good lady you will never see her mongering with men she is very respectful and the way she is dressed and the way Moslem dress he said I mean real Moslem who believe in Allah he mentioned Allah these girls can be safe to kachilombo because the way they dress up nobody no man can propose them they look more spiritual and presentable.

Then Mr. Lenson. asked that ah! Do not cheat us they are the very same Moslem who have their Yao expression when doing sex they deny to use condoms and they say sweet jwangelira mchipepala!

Everybody laughed Haaaa! Haaa! Eee! This is common here at Luka it is not new they say sweet is not eaten while it is wrapped in a plastic paper meaning they do not demand for condoms they like plain.

You Yaos like sex too much then Mr. Nicks. said aaa! Sex has no choice of denomination or ethnic group even you Christians die of kachilombo.

Mr. Lenson. said Aaa! But there is a slight different you Yaos you like sex too much we Chewas at least we are better off! Au the Yaos they were about 4 started mocking Mr. Lenson hence he was the only Chewa who stood there. They told him that the Chewas do not know how to clean themselves while Muslims clean themselves daily.

Mr. Lenson said No! I can not hear that you like sex too much that's why you marry a lot of women / polygamous up to 4/3 wives that's why you spread the kachilombo what can you feed all the free women's with you are not employed but you marry 3 wives that's why if the spouses starve they get (afisi)< some sexual partners to cope up with the situation a poor man with a grass thatched roof house you burnt brick house marrying three wives.

You Yaos you do not know what you do. Do you think all the 3 women you marry can be straight they end up spreading the kachilombo because they lack love from the husband so they end up bringing other men.

The house ending up catching the kachilombo! Then Mr. Nicks said that a[n] uninitiated person you Chewa you do not anything you are a blind man!

Mr L Said aaa! That's why you start doing sex at the age of 13 why do you rush for instead of abstaining you marry at the age of 15 or 16! Then the three men only 2 left and Mr. Makina said that Eeeeh! He has talked a lot .then he said that but kachilombo has no choice whether you are Chewa or Yao everybody catches it.

Then Mr. O who was with Mr. Makina left at min shop commented that Eeeeh I support some of the statements said by the Chewa meaning Mr. Lenson, that we Yaos especially women are loose they just accept men as they are proposed by men whether they still accept but not all women but majority do that they like sex too much.

Then another man who has a small scale business of frying chips just next to the mini shop commented that I also come from Ntcheu I am a Ngoni but I have heard what you all have been saying mocking one another the fellow Chewa Mr. Lenson to some extension was right particularly now see how Manganje dances have started at night <manganje meaning initiation ceremony preparation dances as they are close to go for this initiation ceremony people dance>.

He continued to say that Eee! I attended that Manganje Ee! Girls are loose and when coming back to see them pairing with boys men ending up doing sex do you think kachilombo can be prevented there its gets widely spread because of such behaviours so if you Yaos if people do criticise [criticize] you sometimes you must accept and change the bad sexual behaviour all the people do the bad behaviour but for the Yaos some cultural traditions like the Manganje especially when being conducted at night Eee! There are bad sexual behaviour which are done on these days especially young girls what they do last night doing sex with big people big men elderly men so such events end up increasing the spread of kachilombo on such events.

Then the owner of the mini-shop said that but kachilombo is for everybody whether Yao, Chewa, Ngoni, Tumbuka, Sena, Lomwe regardless of an ethnic group and has no choice on religion so everybody is dying of kacholombo. Ngoni man said that yes the kachilombo has no choice but, if they can make a statistics on kachilombo how it has affected different ethnic groups you can see that among the ethnicity the Yaos can beat a lot of the groups more yaos are loose on sex to say the fact.

The other people laughed.

Then another Moslem girl about 20 years came to the shop, people started laughing to the girl she got surprised and asked the men at the shop what was wrong?

Then the owner of the mini-shop disclosed that these people are saying that Moslems and the Yaos are loose as far as sex is concerned and are contributing to the spread of kachilombo too much!.

This Moslem lady got surprised and responded to the shop owner that Aa! Not all of us some of us are tough going we are not loose it depends with the type of the girls not all of us!

She said that it must be true because a lot of Yaos in the villages particularly girls drop out school earlier that's why people have advantages of mocking the Yaos they rush for early marriages and because of polygamous people conclude that we are loose on sex let them say whatever they think is right but as far as I know all the groups are getting infected to kachilombo whether Yao, Chewa Tumbuka we are all getting infected and right now with the free primary education this situation has improved to good most of the Yaos have started enrolling in high numbers in schools so there is an improvement but formerly long time yes I can agree with you we were left behind but currently its all the same with the Chewas we are all spreading, the kachilombo its all the same then she bought soap and left for home just near the trading centre.

Then I left then went to Vingula Catholic Parish around 9:00 hours in the morning.

While there I went to the Church where there was a mass around 9;30 hours during service the Reverend father read a Pastoral letter from the Episcopal Conference of Malawi but I just jotted only issues related to kachilombo and the title of the kachilombo message was about **ABOLISHING SOME CULTURAL BELIEFS AND SOME BAD SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS.**

He started by a prayer then started reading the pastoral letter like this:-

“even we say that and advice people that they must be faithful to their spouses and follow the Good traditions.

I think it is the responsibility of the congregational leaders, the chiefs and some political leaders and others who can assist.

It is the duty of getting rid of some cultural practices among the people the cultural practices which are leading to the spread of kachilombo.

He the reverend father continued to say that some of the cultural practices which are encouraging people to spread the kachilombo the beliefs are like he said in Chichewa like this:-

Kuchotsa fumbi: Doing sex when a spouse dies with somebody a one day hit and run.

Kulowa fisi: Doing sex with the woman in presence of the spouse.

Chokolo: remarrying of a person from a relative of the deceased.

Polygamous:

The father continued to say that as Catholics our belief if we can follow properly and follow some good cultural beliefs which are allowed currently and pray hard to GOD and if we can be able to stop believing in some bad sexual beliefs which can lead us to the spread of kachilombo and death.

And as Catholics we should be able to criticize bad cultural practices among the people as described in some past pastoral letters bad cultural practices among the people as described in some past pastoral letters which were written some time back.

We are repeating to say that Catholics believes that the only ways of preventing the virus that causes AIDS are the following.

Those who are married should be faithful to their spouses.

Those who are not married must be abstaining.

He continued to say that those are the only 2 ways which we believe that can totally prevent the spread of kachilombo.

Then the Catholic Priest started talking about different issues about natural resources prevention and etc.

Then after the mass I went back to Vingula trading centre but while on the way back we were in a group of about 12 people while the people were discussing the issues of what the Catholic Priest was talking about and one of the girls while on the way going she said that aa! The Catholic priests do not mentioned about condom use last year in Balaka Boma at Montfort Media Church they talked about the same issue on prevention of kachilombo its only abstinence for the youth and unmarried people and those who are married is being FAITHFUL to their spouses why do they run away on condom use?

The other young man of about 26 years said that aaa! They believe that condom use is a sin as far as Catholics are concerned and they discourage their followers not to use them.

Another girl came back Miss Rodo and commented that we do use them though we are Catholics and though it is prohibited to use them do you think you should die or get infected while you see the protector in front of you!

I can not die for that and she said a proverb in Chichewa that “wamkulu sauzidwa!” All the people laughed and said its true the proverb referred to <An adult person is not advised, he / she knows what to do!>

Then this girl Miss Rodo continued to say that these pastors do not think people are getting infected the Catholics are dying of kachilombo but they advise for from the truth! Do you think married couples can be faithful to each other? How? Why both men and women are busy having sex with other sexual partners apart from the spouses.

If people the Catholic followers can be strict not to use the condoms this will lead to the great spread of kachilombo why can they tell the people the truth about the prevention of kachilombo being faithful to each other that can work to rich people who have everything they do not lack any household asset foods etc not a poor person like me we are poor here in Balaka rural areas all the other friend laughed.

Then another girl of about 22 years old commented that aa! Who doesn't know about a condom currently even a 10 year old child knows about a condom why hiding behind temples some churches encourages people to use condoms on condition that they are having sex with somebody except spouses why do Catholics and Moslems beat around the bush they run away from the truth?

Another boy of about 20 years also asked also Moslems beat around the bush of condom use, then he came again and said that there are several denominations who run away from the condom use they say it is a sin to use condoms.

Then when we reached the trading centre of Vingula people started going in their various households.

Then we were 3 people left among the 12 persons one of them Francisco said that Oh yes I was thinking too much when the Catholic Priest was reading the pastoral letter and when he was talking about the kachilombo prevention I was depressed hence he did not mention about condom use I was referring to a funeral which we had in January a certain man died of kachilombo as the cause of that death was that man or his spouse faithful? Why did he die I thought their Catholic priest believe that they depend on being faithful to each other?

Then Francisco came back again and said that the Catholic Priest do not care since they are not allowed to marry that is why they confuse their followers

The other 2 guys laughed and said that Eee! You are mocking the Priest now you people.

He continued to say that why do they not tell the people in Churches that if they are not faithful to their spouses they can use condoms with other partners for being safe to the spread of the kachilombo.

Then another woman of about 30 years said that, that can be nice because the people now have bad sexual behaviours even if they go to church.

There are very few people who are be faithful to each other on sex.

Then all the 2 people left went in their household and I also went for lunch since it was around 13:00 hours.

When I arrived at the restaurant I ordered food there were 4 men drinking tea and also there were 5 women also drinking tea at lunch hour.

When I was nearly finishing hence there was a radio on while turning radio 2 Fm there was an advert of kachilombo saying that a clever person walks with condom always because he never know what to meet whenever he goes.

So one of the women soon after this advert she laughed and said that Aaa! This is the end of the world see how radios are advertising about condom use this is encouraging the youth to use condoms and keep themselves busy with sex so the end up contracting the kachilombo before they get married you see daily on the radios advertising about condoms.

You see a young child asking parents about the condoms this has encouraged sex in Malawi.

The other man Mr. Hassan commented that Oh yes I think you are right sometimes the adverts are heard while children are there so these children try to test the Manyuchi condoms!

All the people laughed and one of the women Mrs. Itimu said that oh yes the advert of condoms must be overlooked hence everybody is heard about this but practically most of the people in the villages do not demand for them they like plain and we like plain meat to meet the men laughed and said oh up to that extent.

One of the men Mr. Yuda said that Mrs. Itimu do you say meat to meat that's why kachilombo is being spread rapidly because of you women you deny condoms.

The other woman Mrs. Juao said that aa! Women are always losers in everything you see women prostitutes have a lot of nicknames like:-

- Mahule
- Zimbayambaya
- Anamasupuni
- Mabichi

- Bargirls etc.

She continued to say that all these names are given to women you will never see a man even if he is womanizing he is never nicknamed but for a women a lot of names are, are given yet both men and women are busy doing sex and what you should know is that men do propose the women but the bad names are given to the women because what you should know is that a man who is positive to the kachilombo can infect more than 20 women so the causes of the kachilombo spreading are the males.

She continued to say that a man can have sex with up to even 20 females by the age of 50 while women may be she can sleep with 3 men at the same age for a normal person.

You see a married man having a lot of sexual partners men are not satisfied with their wives you see a man marrying up to 4 women but for us women we marry only with a husband that is 1 only.

All the men laughed and said Ee! You have talked.

Mrs. Juao. came again and concluded by saying that even when a man in caught doing sex the hearing just can be no conflicts in the family But if a woman is caught with a sexual partner except a spouse I tell you most of them are given divorce Certificate right away so we females are under treated we are not cared for.

One of the men Mr. Hassan said that oh yes women are not supposed to do sex with anybody except spouse that's our tradition as for as Yaos are concerned you are supposed to be careful with that you are always the losers!.

The women said that Aa! That's not fair!

How do you women can stay that causers are men please if also the men are caught having sex disciplinary action must be taken as how women do, this can reduce cases of sex on marriages because both parties can be avoiding this.

Then the people finished taking their meals and started going out one by one until all went out.

Then I also went out of the restaurant and went away.

That was around 15:00 hours in the afternoon.

29 – 07 – 2006

it was on Saturday the above mentioned date when I went for field work at Playe village since morning around 7:38 when I reached there.

When it was around Lunch hour I went to the newly constructed maize mill where there were a few men who work there and a free customers women about 8 who were at the maize mill.

One of the women Mrs. Tabiya said that the Let's Chat people are having choice on their respondents we need to be interviewed but they are needing photographs this year there are tough measures which are prohibiting people to attend the interviews so this year they are clever enough only those who were sampled will be interviewed formerly a lot of people were being interviewed for 1 name so a lot of people ere interviewed and received gifts like sugar, salt and soap but not there are special restrictions of photographs so this has made the interviewers to identify the recommended respondents.

Then one of the men said that Aaa! Do you go that was Mr. Vinicent he said that he asked Mrs. Tabiya that do you go for the gift or the interview?

Mrs. Tabiya said that people go for the gifts because the interviews take too long they take hours so if they were for free I do not think that the respondent can waste all those hours listening to the interview but the questions are very useful so people go for both gifts and the interview.

But frankly speaking people go for the gifts sugar and soap Mr. Vinicent said Oh!

Then one of the lady's [ladies] Mrs. Philip said that but the Playe AIDS Toto Youth Club is now very weak the group is almost dead.

It is almost dead this group was strengthening the questions which Let's Chat people ask because the Let's Chat people ask about kachilombo and ways how one thinks can prevent the kachilombo so people every year if the Let's Chat people come for the interviews people do think of kachilombo prevention, condom use and voluntary counselling and testing but the AIDS Clubs of Playe have stopped making dramas nowadays.

Another woman Mrs. Remoson responded that you know why the AID Club weak the club was active before and there were a lot of girls in the club and a few boys but the leaders were proposing their fellow members they were people who were advising the people in dangers of kachilombo but the very same advisors were also proposing their fellow members so this discouraged the girls who were proposed to drop and stopped everything so this has contributed to the death of the AIDS Club.

I have never seen them currently doing anything as an awareness of kachilombo among the people of group village Playe but there are few who are still with the Playe AIDS Toto Club but they are just staying loafing since the members of the club dropped because of bad sexual behaviours of the club these leaders what is needed for the chiefs to encourage the boys and girls to continue strengthening the club and criticize or barn the leaders or suspend them and erect new

members who can run the AIDS Club nicely without proposing each other so that s the stand of the club currently.

Then lastly one of the men Mr. Umani said that but the Let's Chat project indeed will and has made people to change bad sexual behaviour to a good one because I heard from my brother who is among the respondents of Let's Chat but currently he has now completely changed his sexual behaviours.

Then I left the maize mill area and went at the chief's residence while I was waiting for the min-bus late in the afternoon.

THE END