

ORAL HISTORY - B

Transcriber's initial: T

P1: I grew up with my grandmother. We were twelve kids together with her. And our moms, parents were married so we all grew up with our grandma, in the same house. And with grandmothers you have to be patient because they won't be... When you want attention from them, they won't give it to you because you are a lot. A house like this, and twelve people would be sleeping in there together with the grandmother. Boys one side and girls one side, and granny in the middle.

We used to play hide and seek. And we also used to play, like a rope... people would hold the rope, two turn and one would play...

P2: Skipping rope?

P1: Yes. You know, it's very nice to be a child because you don't take everything to mind. Like maybe you fight... you forgive each other at the end of the day.

In our tribe we get married early. Depending on your body, sometimes your husband will just come take you. They will get engaged to you, like "I want to marry you" when you're about two years old. It's when they come to start talking about... they want a lady to marry, like a girl to marry from the family. So, when you are two years old you are already engaged. When you are maybe 16, 17, you go to your husband's house and it depends on the husband, how the husband is... Sometimes they will take you to school, and you continue with your school. Sometimes they will just make you a mum, so you get pregnant.

A community school is just someone that knows, like... maybe once went to the cities and they come back knowing a bit of English. So, when they come down, they will teach people in

English, and so... It's just under the tree. You bring your own stone, like push your stone there and you sit on. And someone will stand there and start talking, like maybe tell you what to write.

And we also used to have a garden, but not... The garden was a bit far from the houses, because we have animals like lions, elephants... And elephants are too keen, they like... When you have a garden close to your house, it's you inviting elephants. Because in the garden you have to put pumpkins and sweetcorns. And elephants, they like sweetcorns, they like pumpkins. So, if you want to be safe, four or five hours between where the garden is and where you are. So, to go there, to the garden, you have to walk...

P2: Four or five hours?

P1: Yeah. So that time of you looking after the garden, maybe five, six kids, they will move from home to the garden, that time of looking after the garden. And you stay there, you build a small house there. Then you come back when it's someone else turn, because we used to give each other turns.

When a girl got her periods for the first time... Yeah, there would be like something where people would be dancing, singing, eating, but it's only for ladies. And there's also a time when babies are getting, like...

P2: Circumcision?

P1: Yes, that would be just for boys. There won't be girls. And there would be also a time, like marriages, when people are getting married, people would be dancing. There's also meat that people eat when you are married, and there's also meat that people don't eat when they are married. We use black pots to cook in outside. So, when you are married, like newly married, you don't touch the pots or they don't come to your room. Until you've... they have to make a small party for you to start touching those things.

Yeah, there's certain food that some people don't eat, and there's certain food that people eat... And when you've lost your husband, only people that lost their husbands will eat certain... like, will prepare food for the person that lost their husband at this time. And the others will not eat that food or will not cook for that person because you'd... you are not yet married. Or let's say, when you are not yet married you can do it but when you are married you can't.

In our culture we'd be dancing, we'd be clapping hands and jumping down and up, like...
[Sounds shared by B from a video on her phone].

So, we don't make instrument, our hands are our, like our own instruments.

So, when they're even proposing you, like a man asking you out, they don't... If they don't tell you grandmother or your mum they will be doing that dance. They'll come to your ear and say that, "I want you". So, you have to dance back and say "Yes" or you have to dance back and say "No.". It depends.