



**Concurrent Sexual Partnerships in Zambia:
A Qualitative Study**

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Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ARVs	Antiretrovirals
CSP	Concurrent Sexual Partnerships
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
HCP	Health Communication Partnership
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
MCP	Multiple and Concurrent Sexual Partnerships
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SFH	Society for Family Health
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS
VCT	Voluntary Counselling & Testing
ZCCP	Zambia Centre for Communication Programmes
ZDHS	Zambia Demographic and Health Survey

Executive Summary

Despite a slight overall decline in the HIV prevalence rate in Zambia, the country continues to grapple with a generalized HIV and AIDS epidemic. With 14 percent of the adult population infected with HIV—12 percent of men and 16 percent of women ages 15-49—Zambia remains one of the hardest hit countries (*2007 Zambia Demographic and Health Survey (ZDHS): Preliminary Report, 2008*). Although the determinants of HIV acquisition are complex, multi-faceted and interwoven, and include biological, behavioural and structural factors, there is increasing consensus that Concurrent Sexual Partnerships (CSP) are a major factor in the rapid spread of the epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa, including Zambia.

This study sought to understand the terms that people in Zambia use to discuss sexual concurrency, the reasons that people choose to engage in CSP, community support for monogamy, risk perceptions on CSP and HIV acquisition, condom use and Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) in the context of CSP, as well as people's understanding of sexual networks and the "window period" for HIV transmission.

Methods

The study was carried out in rural, peri-urban, and urban communities in the districts of Mpongwe (rural, Copperbelt Province), Luanshya (urban, Copperbelt Province), and Kazungula (peri-urban, Southern Province). A total of 14 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were held with married and unmarried men and women aged between 18 and 49 years. Separate FGDs were conducted with men and women; each group comprised between 6 and 12 participants. All FGDs were audio-taped (along with hand-written notes), transcribed, and translated into English. The data were reviewed for main themes and then coded by theme and sub-theme using Atlas.ti.

Key Findings

This study reveals that CSP seems to be quite common in Zambia and cuts across geographical boundaries, age, sex, and marital status. It also reveals that the determinants of CSP are complex and can vary depending on the type of partnership. Many are motivated by structural causes, specifically poverty, and relationships are frequently transactional, wherein women tend to expect financial or material gain, while men use money to attract women into these relationships. Other determinants of CSP include problems within primary relationships such as sexual dissatisfaction, infidelity, or inability to have children. Peer and family pressure are also primary motivators of CSP.

There is no specific term for CSP in local languages; however, there is a large vocabulary of names for people who engage in CSP. Names for men tend to have positive connotations, while those for women tend to be derogatory. Names also differentiate between primary and secondary partners in some instances.

The study reveals that it is common for those involved in CSP to have unprotected sex and many only used condoms during the initial stages of a relationship. It is usually the male partner who determines whether and when condoms are used. Within marriage, condoms are rarely used and tend to be associated with infidelity and disease.

Poor communication between partners was common, and both married and unmarried partners in concurrent relationships generally find it difficult to go for VCT and disclose their sero-positive status to each other for fear of repercussions such as abuse, accusations of infidelity, and divorce. Findings on the relationship between knowledge of one's sero-status and CSP behaviour were mixed. For some, testing negative would encourage them to adopt monogamous behaviors, whereas some of those who test positive may purposefully go on to infect others.

Overall, there was limited knowledge and a great deal of confusion and misinformation regarding the "window period." Generally, respondents seemed to know that having multiple sexual partners increases risk of HIV infection. However, it remains unclear to what extent respondents truly understood and appreciated the risks associated with concurrent sexual partnerships and resulting sexual networks in terms of HIV transmission. This is evidenced by the fact that for some participants, once these risks were explained in detail using visual aids, the information appeared to be new. Furthermore, most participants (both those that claimed to be aware of the risks associated with sexual networks and those that did not) highly appreciated the explanation of sexual networks and their role in HIV transmission using the visual aids. Overall, discussion on sexual networks and HIV transmission, and the role that CSP plays, revealed a gap in knowledge and the need for more in-depth interpersonal communication on these issues (or, at the very least, a demand for it). However, respondents said that knowledge about the risks of HIV alone was not necessarily enough to result in positive behaviour and social change because people have come to accept CSP as a norm, particularly for men.

Recommendations

Communication campaigns that seek to reduce HIV transmission by lowering the level of CSP in Zambian communities can use these findings to develop effective messaging that meets the needs and realities of people's lives. Specifically, it is recommended that communication campaigns:

1. Challenge social norms that make CSP not only acceptable but even expected.
2. Encourage partner reduction by emphasizing not only the risks associated with CSP but also the benefits of monogamous relationships.
3. Seek to improve communication between partners around issues of sexuality, sexual fulfilment in a monogamous relationships and the need to be more responsive to a partner's needs. Communication should include issues of trust and how it relates to condom use.

4. Provide alternative avenues of action for those that discover a partner's infidelity and highlight the risk of taking revenge through engaging in CSP oneself.
5. Encourage peers, particularly young women, to support each other in rejecting social norms around money, wealth and consumable goods and their acquisition through transactional sex. Instead, promote love, faithfulness and support as desirable qualities in a relationship.
6. Encourage parents and other adults to recognize their position as role models and acknowledge their power to affect the behaviour of children and young people in their families and communities.
7. Educate the population in an in-depth manner about sexual networks and the associated risks of HIV transmission, including an explanation of the window period.
8. Promote the use of condoms at all times and not just at the beginning of a relationship. Messages must specifically address the reasons that people stop condom use, provide benefits to continuing the behaviour, and encourage VCT and discussion with one's partner about mutual faithfulness before stopping condom use.
9. Facilitate VCT for couples and promote open discussion around disclosure of sero status and what they will do if either partner tests positive.
10. Emphasise how knowledge of HIV status can be empowering by informing decisions about current and future sexual behaviour as well as access to and use of Antiretrovirals (ARVs). Messages should also address the fatalism that many people feel about HIV acquisition, especially those with prior risky behaviours.
11. Address those who intentionally try to infect others by informing them about the risks of re-infection by other strains of HIV and their ethical responsibility to their families and communities.
12. Empower women to reject norms around CSP for men and give them skills to confront men about their roles and responsibility in unfaithfulness, sero-positive status and infertility. Encourage men to support their female partners on these issues.
13. Tailor messages based on gender, age and the different types of relationships, such as casual relationships, long-term partnerships and marriage.

Introduction

Despite a slight overall decline in the HIV prevalence rate in Zambia, the country continues to grapple with a generalized HIV and AIDS epidemic. With 14 percent of the adult population infected with HIV, Zambia remains one of the hardest hit countries (2007 ZDHS: *Preliminary Report*, 2008). Among people ages 15-49, 16 percent of women and 12 percent of men are HIV positive. The proportion of HIV positive people rises from 5 percent among those ages 15-19 to a high of 24 percent in the 35-39 age group, before falling slightly among those in their 40s. HIV prevalence is twice as high in the urban as in the rural areas – 23 and 11 percent, respectively. (2007 ZDHS: *Preliminary Report*, 2008).

Although the determinants of HIV acquisition are complex, multi-faceted and interwoven, and include biological, behavioural and structural factors, there is increasing consensus that Concurrent Sexual Partnerships (CSP) are a major factor in the rapid spread of the epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa. This is because sub-Saharan Africans tend to have more partners at the same time than Europeans and North Americans, even though their number of lifetime sexual partners is lower (Epstein, 2007). The distinction between having sequential versus concurrent partners is crucial in relation to risk for HIV infection. Individuals newly infected with HIV experience an initial surge in viral loads for approximately three to six weeks. Standard antibody-based HIV tests provide negative results during this “window period.” This high viral load greatly increases the likelihood that the newly infected individual will infect his/her sexual partners during this period (Wawer, 2005), allowing the virus to be transmitted more efficiently through a sexual network. In a country like Zambia where there is a generalized HIV epidemic, sexual networks consisting of adults with long-term concurrent partnerships, may provide an entry point for HIV infection. When the number of overlapping or concurrent partnerships is high, HIV can spread quickly among existing sexual networks (Watts and May, 1992; Morris and Kretzschmar, 1995, 1996, 1997, 2000). Mathematical modelling demonstrates that concurrent partnerships can amplify nascent HIV epidemics by as much as tenfold (Morris and Kretzschmar, 1995, 1997; Watts and May, 1992), especially in high-prevalence settings (Finer, Darroch & Singh, 1999).

By 2006, an expert meeting by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) identified high levels of CSP, compounded by insufficient and incorrect condom use as well as low levels of male circumcision, as the key drivers of the HIV and AIDS epidemic in Southern Africa. The meeting called for member states to invest efforts in reducing CSP within the SADC region and advocated for mass campaigns designed to sensitize the public on the risks associated with CSP (SADC, 2006).

As a follow up to this meeting, consultations commissioned by the *National HIV/AIDS Council* of Zambia recommended that efforts to reduce CSP should be founded upon a comprehensive behavioral and social change campaign with the active involvement of different sectors and partners and that lessons from similar efforts from countries such as Uganda, Kenya and Zimbabwe should inform efforts in Zambia.

Uganda's "zero grazing" campaign in the late 1990s, for example, promoted having only one partner but also recognized that people had multiple long-term partners, and is thought to explain why Uganda was an exception among the soaring HIV rates in sub-Saharan Africa at the time (Epstein, 2007). The impact of partner reduction has also been seen in other African countries, including Zimbabwe and Kenya, where even though condom use was increasing, it was not until multiple partners declined that the HIV rate declined as well (Epstein, 2007).

Despite this recognition, a recent literature review revealed a number of gaps in existing knowledge and understanding of CSP and its link to HIV risk (Skinner, 2008). First and foremost among these is the lack of a standard definition for CSP. Various terminologies are used in the literature to describe concurrent sexual partnerships, including Multiple and Concurrent Partnerships (MCP), sexual concurrency, multiple sexual partners, overlapping relationships, non-monogamy, extramarital sex, and non-monogamous sexual behaviour. In general, CSP is usually defined as having two or more sexual partnerships that overlap in time, though the terminology, timeframe and focus on regular versus casual partners varies considerably in the literature, making cross-comparisons difficult. In this report, the term CSP is used to refer to having two or more sexual relationships that overlap in time.

The literature review also revealed that much of the research to date has focused on the United States and there is a significant lack of knowledge on the prevalence of CSP and its determinants in sub-Saharan Africa, including Zambia. Of the 51 studies reviewed, only two touched upon the prevalence of concurrency in Zambia, and both were limited in either geographic scope or definition of concurrency (Kimuna and Djamba, 2005; Lagarde, 2001)¹.

According to the 2007 ZDHS, two percent of women and 20 percent of men ages 15-49 reported having had two or more sexual partners in the year prior to survey (2007 ZDHS: Preliminary Report, 2008). It is not clear from these data, however, what portion of the partnerships overlapped and what portion represented serial monogamy with a time gap between the partnerships. Nonetheless, the fact that one in five men reported two or more sexual partnerships within a 12-month period implies a fairly high level of concurrency. Recently, formative qualitative research for programmatic purposes conducted in Zambia by Society for Family Health (SFH, an affiliate of Population Services International) and the Zambia Center for Communication Programs (ZCCP), found CSP to be rather common (SFH, 2008; ZCCP, 2008). While neither study can be generalized to Zambia as a whole, the two reports confirm and complement the 2007 ZDHS' preliminary findings.

If we are to develop successful communication campaigns to reduce the risks of HIV transmission in Zambia, it is vital for health communicators to understand the culture and dynamics of CSP so as to design appropriate risk awareness campaigns. This study

¹ The Lagarde study took place in only one Zambian city (Ndola) (n=1730); the Kimuna and Djama study examined only extra-marital sex among men.

therefore sought to understand the terms that people use to discuss sexual concurrency, the reasons that people choose to engage in CSP, community support for monogamy, risk perceptions on CSP and HIV acquisition, condom use and Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) in the context of CSP, as well as people's understanding of sexual networks and the "window period" for HIV transmission.

Research Goal and Objectives

The objective of the study was to gain a better understanding of the correlates and determinants of CSP in Zambia. The study also investigated how CSP is defined, what terms are used to describe CSP in the Zambian context, and what the population knows about the risks associated with CSP as it relates to HIV transmission. Specific research questions included:

- What words or phrases do people use to describe CSP?
- What are the different definitions of sexual relationships and how do these relate to CSP?
- What risks, if any, does the general population associate with CSP?
- Is there any geographical dimension to CSP, i.e. rural vs. urban?
- How does condom use factor into CSP?
- Does knowing one's HIV status have a bearing on CSP?

Methodology

Study Setting

The study was carried out in rural, peri-urban, and urban communities in the districts of Mpongwe (rural, Copperbelt Province), Luanshya (urban and peri-urban, Copperbelt Province), and Kazungula (peri-urban, Southern Province). The study sites were selected in an effort to reach native speakers of two of the most widely spoken Zambian languages – Bemba (Mpongwe and Luanshya) and Tonga (Kazungula).

Data and Methods

A total of 14 focus group discussions (FGDs) were held with married and unmarried men and women ages 18-49. Recruitment of FGD participants was carried out with the assistance of Health Communication Partnership (HCP) Zambia staff who work in the districts and purposively selected participants according to the selection criteria. Recruiters tried to ensure that a range of educational and occupational groups were included.

Before the discussions commenced, the research team introduced themselves, explained the purpose of the study, and read the consent form to the group as a whole. Participants were given the opportunity to opt out; the FGDs were held with those who orally consented. Separate FGDs were conducted with men and women; each group

comprised between 6 and 12 participants. The research protocol and consent forms were approved by the Internal Review Board at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and by the Biomedical Research Ethics Committee at the University of Zambia.

All FGDs were audio-taped (along with hand-written notes), transcribed, and translated into English. The data were reviewed for main themes and then coded by theme and sub-theme using Atlas.ti.

Study Limitations

A few challenges were faced regarding recruitment of FGD participants. In a few cases, participants recruited beforehand did not all convene, forcing data collectors to recruit a new group. In some instances, FGD participants actually knew each other and this may have inhibited their responses. These problems with recruitment led the research team to recruit two more groups than were initially planned.

Despite consistent attempts to focus discussion around CSP by moderators, respondents tended to conflate the issue of CSP with multi-partnering in general, which could include casual and commercial sexual partners as well as long term, trusted partners. As a result, there is a possibility that certain responses were not limited to CSP and referred to multiple partners in general. Where possible, this limitation is identified in the findings section of this report.

The primary methodological limitation to this study is that it is not generalizable since the participants were not randomly selected. Moreover, the study was conducted in only two of Zambia's nine provinces—Copperbelt and Southern—representing only two ethnic groups. While many social norms are widely shared across ethnic groups in Zambia, generalizations cannot be drawn without appropriate random representation.

Findings

Prevalence of CSP

CSP was reported to be very common in urban, rural, and peri-urban areas. Many participants reported knowing friends or family members who were engaged in CSP. It was reported that one indicator of the prevalence of these relationships is the large number of children that are born out of wedlock.

“A lot of people have relationships with more than one person. Sometimes it can be our sister-in-laws or even our neighbours who are involved in these relationships.” (Peri-urban single female, Luanshya)

“In many cases, we see men who have children with different women. This openly shows [that CSP] is very common.” (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

“My own cousin was going out with two people at the same time and when she got pregnant she named the man who was not responsible for the pregnancy [as the father] because the real father could not manage to support the baby.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

Number of Concurrent Sexual Partners

While the number of concurrent partnerships that an individual might have varies considerably, having three or more partners was reported to be quite common.

“Single women normally have more than one partner; sometimes even three but in different places. They just divide their time between them.” (Peri-urban single female, Luanshya)

“Women also [engage in CSP]; they may have four men at the same time. Some treat it like a business.” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

“Single women sometimes go after married men...Even married women sometimes have up to five boyfriends. It happens in this community.” (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

“You will find that a person could be going out with a person who could also be seeing a different person. These young people have up to four partners each and that’s why disease keeps moving from one person to another.” (Urban married male, Luanshya)

Who is Involved in CSP?

Everyone seems to be involved in CSP, including married and single, old and young, and employed and unemployed men and women.

“Some girls even go to the extent of saying if the married women can enjoy their husbands, why shouldn’t the single women. They say they also need support from these married men. How can HIV be avoided with such attitudes?” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

“It is also very common for single men to go out with many girls. They actually say ‘after all I am not married to any of you.’” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

“It’s very embarrassing because some [of those involved in CSP] are very elderly people who are not even supposed to involve themselves in such things.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

“In this community even older women go out with these young men. Sometimes, young people don’t have relationships with each other. It’s either older men with younger girls or younger men with older women.” (Peri-urban single female, Kazungula)

“It’s not just unemployed women who engage in CSP, even employed women engage in CSP. A woman may have four partners and will sleep with one on Friday; another on Saturday;

the other on Sunday; and will sleep with another one when she's off duty." (Urban married female, Luanshya)

"These relationships are usually not monogamous because a single female will have two or more married men as boyfriends." (Urban married female, Luanshya)

Predominantly, respondents felt that it was women in need of money, and men with disposable income who engaged in CSP.

"[Men] have the money which women are in need of. Because we don't have money; the young girls go for the married men because these men have money. We do have girlfriends but the people with money grab our girls." (Peri-urban single male, Kazungula)

"Many women have boyfriends that give them money which is used to sustain their families. Women do not even fear HIV because they are in great need of money." (Peri-urban married male, Kazungula)

Beautiful women were reported to be highly sought after and therefore more likely to engage in CSP.

"The single men here tend to exchange women. This is because many of the women here are ugly. There is a saying here that goes, 'The beautiful ones we share, the ugly ones we marry.'" (Peri-urban single male, Kazungula)

Duration of CSP and Determinants of Duration

Concurrent partnerships were reported to last from one week up to a lifetime. A prominent determinant of the duration of these relationships was reported to be the extent of financial and material support provided by the male partner. Women continue to stay in relationships as long as their partners sustain financial support. However, they may also be actively searching for men who are able to provide even greater support.

"Some relationships last for as long as the man is giving money to the girl. When the money finishes then the relationship ends." (Urban married female, Luanshya)

"These relationships take one month or two weeks because of lack of money. If another guy has more money than me and he happens to like my girl, she will leave me for him since she is in need of money...Mostly it depends on whether one has money or not." (Peri-urban single male, Kazungula)

Some of these relationships become de facto marriages, while others do actually result in marriage (either polygamous marriage or where the wife is replaced by the girlfriend). Relationships last longer when the couple (whether or not they are married) has a child

together. Love (which can be enhanced through love potions and aphrodisiacs) also helps relationships last longer.

“Sometimes these relationships become like marriages in that a man spends money on the other partner(s) just as he does on his wife. And some men even divide their time to spend with the other partner(s) even though they are scared of their wives’ reactions in the event that they are discovered.” (Peri-urban single male, Luanshya)

“There are some couples that continue to see each other regularly for a long time; others even lead to polygamous marriages that are eventually acknowledged by the man’s wife.” (Peri-urban married male, Luanshya)

“[They] last years and years because some end up with children; not from their spouses and without their [spouse’s] knowledge.” (Peri-urban single female, Kazungula)

“[It depends on] how well you relate with each other because if you love each other, it will take maybe even a year.” (Urban single female, Luanshya)

“Some [women] will even put some love potions on a piece of chicken so that they alone will be loved . . .” (Rural married female, Mpongwe)

Perceptions of faithfulness, geography, and marital status also play important roles in determining the duration of concurrent partnerships. Some relationships last as long as a person remains unaware of the infidelity of their partner. Alternatively, some relationships last longer due to the fact that the partners live in different areas (or towns) and are unaware of their partner’s other relationships. Married men and women tend to be more secretive about their relationships, which is why their concurrent partnerships could potentially last a long time.

“Some men will have a girlfriend for as long as the wife doesn’t know. Once the wife knows then the man ends the relationship with the girlfriend... Such a relationship can even last for years.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

“Some of [the relationships] last long because one man can have three women who don’t stay near each other. It becomes difficult to know that he has sexual relationships with all three. The relationships will go on for a long time.” (Urban single female, Luanshya)

“In the case of married [men and women], the relationship lasts long because it remains a secret, unlike with single [men and women’s relationships] about which everyone knows.” (Peri-urban single female, Kazungula)

Relationships may end if one partner moves out of a particular residential area, (however, if the partners meet again, the relationship may resume). Some relationships end when a partner marries someone else.

"In my case, I have had several girlfriends, but the relationships end temporarily when they go away. When we meet again, the relationship continues." (Rural single male, Mpongwe)

"A woman can have a 'Sugar Daddy,' and a young boyfriend for marriage. The 'Sugar Daddy' is for financial support and the boyfriend for marriage. If she gets married; that is the only time maybe that she can leave the 'sugar daddy.'" (Peri-urban single female, Luanshya)

Relationships also tend to be ended by men when they discover that a female partner has been engaging in CSP and is HIV positive (see sections on *Reactions to Discovering that a Partner is Engaging in CSP, Disclosure of HIV Status and CSP Behaviour and Knowledge of Sero-Discordance*).

Names for Concurrent Partnerships and Partners

Although respondents found it difficult to assign specific terminology to concurrent partnerships, a number of names emerged, including *ubupulumushi* ("promiscuity"), *ubuhule*² ("prostitution"), *ubulalelale* ("sleeping around") and *ubuchende* ("fornication").

*"I don't think there is a specific name for such a relationship since it is not marriage. [Sometimes they] are called *impulumushi*³ because the man or the woman may be married but still have other partners."* (Urban married female, Luanshya)

*"If two people are not married but have sexual relations, it should be called *ubupulumushi*, and that is the term commonly used in Luanshya."* (Urban married male, Luanshya).

There is a large vocabulary of names for concurrent sexual partners. Different names are used for different reasons. Some names are more specific to CSP, while others can be used more loosely to describe any kind of multi-partnering (including concurrent partnerships, one-night stands, commercial sex, etc.).

Names with negative connotations that could be applied to both men and women included *umupulumushi* ("fornicator"), *ihule* ("prostitute") or *umuchende* ("promiscuous person"). Sometimes these words are also used as terms of endearment. A main partner, for instance, could be referred to as *ihule likalamba* ("main prostitute" or "my prostitute") or *umuchende umukalamba* ("main fornicator"). Thus, a name like "prostitute" can be used affectionately to describe a girlfriend.

Names that specifically implied the presence of concurrent sexual partners included "side plate," "spare wheel," and *mai nini* ("junior mother/wife").

² Respondents used the term *Ubhule* to refer to both men and women.

³ *Impulumushi* is the plural of *Ubupulumushi* or "Fornicator." The term was used interchangeably with *Ubuchende* or "Fornication."

Names for men engaged in concurrent partnerships (which could also be used for men with multiple casual and commercial partners) tend to extol their sexual prowess. Examples of such names include “sniper” and *katya* (“player”).

Another category of names indicates a hierarchy within concurrent sexual partnerships. For example, “plot 1” and “plot 2” and “*mai gulu*” (“senior mother/wife” – a term used to describe the first wife in a polygamous marriage which is also used in the context of concurrent sexual partnerships that are not polygamous marriages) and “*mai nini*” (“junior mother/wife” – also derived from polygamous marriages but used in the context of concurrent sexual partnerships that are not polygamous marriages).

“*The wife is the “mai gulu” and those other partners are called “mai nini.”* (Urban single female, Luanshya)

Some partners are given names otherwise used to refer to a spouse, parent or grandparent: *abalume* (“husband”), *ba-shifwe* (“our father”), *ba-daddy* (“daddy”), or *ba-shikulu* (“grandfather”) for males and *mayo* (“mother”), *ba-nakulu* (“grandmother”), or “*madam*” for females.

Some names imply love or fondness. Examples of such names include *chi-sweetheart* (“sweetheart”), and *ba-mulatiwa* (“loved one”).

Some names reflect the kind of support provided by the partner. For instance, in the case of men, names reflect the financial and material support provided to female partners: “tycoon,” *maulu abona* (“my legs”), *kazali* (“money”), “lotion man,” and “talk-time man.” In the case of women, names reflect the emotional support provided: *kafwa* (“helper”) or *mayo waluse* (“kind mother”).

Some names for secondary female partners implied their role as providing sexual satisfaction only (or someone who a man only visits as a last resort, when he is desperate for sex). These names include *uwakwisha nankwe* (“for ‘chatting’ with”), *uwakutushisha* (“for ‘resting’”), *mwakupwishishako ichilaka* (“for ‘quenching thirst’”). “Comforter” was used in a similar context by women to describe secondary male partners.

Some secondary male partners are given disparaging names such as *chi-gonena* (“hanger on”), *akachabechabe* (“useless person”), *ba-benchi* (“substitute”) and “time waster.” Disparaging names for secondary female partners include “sperm chamber,” *ntomba ndeya* (“fuck me so I can leave”), and *ndelyakofye* (“I am just ‘eating’”). Sometimes the derogatory prefix *chi* is also used to describe secondary male and female partners (e.g. *chi-sugar daddy*). These names indicate a lack of importance given to the partner for whom the name is used. The diminutive prefix *ka* may also be used for secondary male and female partners (e.g. *ka-guy* [“small guy”] and *ka-brother* [“small brother”]), and carries a disparaging connotation.

Some names are used as secret codes amongst friends when discussing sexual partners so that those within earshot cannot understand. Code names for sexual partners include

“Cousin,” *ka-brother* and *shikulu* (“grandfather”) for males and *ulusonga* (a type of tree) or *kabudo* (a term used by adults to refer to a boy or girl) for females.

One category of names indicated cross-generational relationships. Names for these relationships included “sugar daddy” and “sugar mummy.”

Finally, some names were used to indicate “trust” or the “long-term” nature of the relationship. Examples of such names included “Trustee” (used for both males and females who are believed not have other sexual partners), *zemwine* (“owner” – used for males only), *uluchetekelo* (used for women who are believed no to have other sexual partners).

“I have been in a relationship with my girlfriend for seven years now. She even knows that I am zemwine [‘the owner’]; the main partner.” (Rural single male, Mpongwe)

For a complete list of names and their meanings in different Zambian languages (coded by category) see Appendix A.

Characteristics of Primary and Secondary Sexual Partners

There are many characteristics that determine a partner’s status as “primary” within a hierarchy of concurrent partnerships. In the case of female partners, the wife may be automatically considered the primary partner because she takes care of the household and because marriage is perceived to be the longest-term relationship. However, primary status can also be given to the partner who is perceived to be the most faithful or trustworthy (whether or not she is the wife) or is the newest.

“For men who are married but have some extra girlfriends, no matter what happens, the wife will always be the main partner because she’s the one who cooks and washes clothes.” (Urban single female, Luanshya)

“If a man is married and has three or four girlfriends, then the wife is the main partner because those other relationships with the girlfriends can end any time.” (Rural married female, Mpongwe)

“Some sexual partners are considered as ‘main’ because of the way they conduct themselves. You could be a married man but among all the sexual partners, you would prefer her because she behaves well.” (Peri-urban married male, Kazungula)

“[The main partner is] one who respects and loves you very much...because a man can confide in her if need be; love and trust her very much.” (Rural single male, Mpongwe)

“The [main partner is the] kind of partner that you always find alone [without another male partner]. They become ‘trusties’ and sometimes we call them ‘chaliyichindika’ [well behaved].” (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

“The newest partner becomes the favourite; the wife is even forgotten; she is now bitter, they don’t even want anything to do with her anymore... Whatever the wife says; no matter how nice she may be; he won’t listen to her anymore. Instead, he will listen to his new girlfriend.” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

Yet, the primary partner may be determined by factors other than marriage, perceived fidelity or the novelty of the relationship. Other factors were being special or the most beautiful. In some instances, a woman who gives her male partner money when he needs it is considered the primary partner.

“The main partner is special and the others are just for sex.” (Peri-urban single female, Kazungula)

“[The] main partner is usually...the most beautiful among the partners.” (Peri-urban single male, Luanshya)

“Sometimes, the main partner is the one who...when you do not have money at a certain times, she is able to help.” (Urban married male, Luanshya)

Women indicated that the primary male partner is usually the one who provides the most financial and material support or the one she loves the most.

“Other women use the word ‘chikwilili’ [“person with a lot of money”] to refer to their main partner, especially when he supports her financially and has a lot of money.” (Peri-urban single female, Luanshya)

“Even we women sometimes consider an extra partner as the main partner because of the money he gives you.” (Rural married female, Mpongwe)

“Even women have men they consider main partners; mostly they are called ‘batata’ [father]; the one who takes care of me...Some women might have other boyfriends, but there is only one that they love.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

Motivations for CSP

A variety of motivations for CSP were identified by participants including structural factors, such as poverty and resources; social and cultural pressures, including normative beliefs and peer pressure; couple factors, such as, sexual dissatisfaction, negative attributes of partners, reproductive needs, and long separations; and individual needs, such as looking for a spouse .

a. Structural Factors

Predominantly, respondents believed that poverty (especially for women) was the primary motivation for women to engage in CSP. Other structural causes such as lack of recreational facilities (in the case of young adults) were also mentioned, though less prominently, as motivations for engaging in CSP.

“The poverty levels here are high. Women have many sexual partners as a way of survival; so I don’t think they can change.” (Rural married female, Mpongwe)

“Even men have extra martial affairs for [financial] support. Nowadays women give men money because there are not enough men around.” (Per-urban single female, Luanshya)

“There are no youth [recreational] activities in our community...It is better to talk to girls than do nothing in your spare time.” (Peri-urban single males, Luanshya)

The transactional nature of sexual relationships is a prominent incentive to engage in CSP among women. Some women (such as single mothers, young orphans who are heads of households, or wives or fiancées whose husbands or fiancées either were unable to or refused to meet their financial needs), engage in CSP for financial and material support to care for their families. Other women engage in CSP for consumables such as clothes, jewellery, and “talk-time” (for cell phones). In both cases, increasing the number of sexual partners leads to an increase in the financial and material support received. Sometimes, each respective male partner fulfils a distinct portion of the household budget or meets a specific material ‘need.’

“Others want financial support. This is especially true of orphans left to take care of siblings. Without a job, they resort to multiple sexual relationships in order to have money to support their family.” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

“The poverty levels here are high and women are having many sexual partners as a way of survival.” (Rural married female, Mpongwe)

“Married women leave their husbands at home to go and sleep with younger men in the quest to feed the family...Even married women have different sexual partners; one is for buying them ‘talk-time;’ the other for buying them clothes.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

“Some women have more partners. One that they love and one that is just there to support them, because in most cases the man who is committed to a woman and about to marry her does not give her money. Instead the other men are more likely to give her money.” (Rural single female, Mpongwe)

“Sometimes a woman has many sexual partners because she needs financial support. The more men she has, the more money she will make.” (Peri-urban single female, Luanshya)

Some women view concurrent sexual partners as a kind of “insurance policy” or a “spare wheel.” If one partner failed to provide financially or were to leave (or die), the women could turn to other partners for support.

“My own cousin was going out with two people at once and when she got pregnant she pointed at the man who was not responsible for the pregnancy because the real father could not manage to support the baby.” (Urban married female, in Luanshya)

b. Couple-Level Factors

Lack of sexual satisfaction was prominently reported as a key driver of CSP for both men and women. Some seek other sexual partners when their spouse either cannot or does not want to have sex with them. Such situations could arise when a man or woman is tired and not in the mood for sex. Some men, especially those that have been married for a long time, seek other partners because they no longer feel attracted to their wives.

“Men stop having sex with you. Whenever it’s time to have sex, they will give numerous excuses such as, ‘I am tired, I overworked myself at work today, and I’m not in the mood for sex.’” (Urban married female, Kazungula)

“You also know why we get married! To have sex! Therefore, when every day your male partner denies you sex and you consequently develop a craving for sex...[then] you look for another man.” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

“Sometimes we men are foolish, we just get carried away by the physical appearance of a woman; especially if you have been married for a long time and have lost some interest in your wife.” (Peri-urban married male, Kazungula)

“Some men have got less sex drive. You will find that you are enjoying sexual pleasure but before a woman nears orgasm, he will be tired and panting; leaving her hanging and yearning for more sexual pleasure and action.” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

“Men have a higher sex drive [than women] and sometimes the wife gets tired. In order to calm or relieve themselves, [men] end up with many partners.” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

“Lack of enough pleasure from one partner makes them seek for pleasure elsewhere hence gets caught up in a web of concurrent sexual partnerships.” (Peri-urban single female, Kazungula)

“A housewife will refuse to sleep with the husband every now and then. When the wife should be cleaning the house at seven hours the man wants sex; at 9 hours he wants more sex. The wife won’t accept that and therefore the man will go looking for another person to have sex with.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

Some male partners are able to provide the necessary material and financial support but are unable to sexually satisfy their female partners. These women may look for other men to satisfy them sexually, while holding on to the partner that is able to provide financial and material support. Thus, different men may serve to fulfil different needs of women.

“Among the many partners a woman has, some are specifically for sex and these are very good at sex. The others are simply for financial support... [Married] women [also] tend to have extra partners if the husband at home cannot sexually satisfy them.” (Urban single female, Luanshya)

Some people use traditional herbs to enhance their sexual desire and/or performance and this can lead to CSP.

“Some [CSP] is because of concoctions. [The men] have been bewitched so [CSP] becomes their lifestyle...[the concoctions] trouble them...[As a result] their sex drive is very strong and sometimes their wives get tired. So, in order to calm or relieve themselves, they end up with many partners.” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

“Women also use traditional medicine that makes men enjoy sex very much. Once a man has sex with such a woman, he could even end up leaving his wife for her.” (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

A couple that is courting may not have sex before marriage on religious or moral grounds. In such cases, one or both partners may seek other partners for sex. Some single women may also not want to have sex too soon in a new relationship, causing their partners to seek sex elsewhere out of frustration.

“These relationships are based on sex. That is why they have many partners in addition to the ones they are courting.” (Peri-urban single female, Kazungula)

“Some women refuse to have sexual intercourse even after knowing [their partners] for as long as two months. In such a situation, you look for another partner to have sex with while still holding on to the first partner until she agrees to have sex.” (Peri-urban single male, Luanshya)

c. Individual-Level Factors

In couples that are unable to conceive, one or both partners may turn to other partners in order to have children (under the assumption that their partner is the one who is infertile).

“Men don’t understand. They may be the ones who are infertile. They will try different women in the hope of being told they have made her pregnant.” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

“Some women...also know that they are barren and know that their husband needs children. I have seen this from my cousin. He has been married for 18 years without children with his wife but has six children from other partners.” (Urban single female, Luanshya)

CSP is also considered, by some, to be a strategy of finding the right partner to marry. Women, especially, view CSP as a way of insuring that if one partner terminates the relationship, they can still have another partner to go to.

“Single men like us have the right to have concurrent sexual partners because it is from among those partners that a potential wife can be chosen.” (Rural single male, Mpongwe)

“What causes a person to have many partners is emotional security. In case one boyfriend dumps you, you still have another one to comfort you.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

For some men and women, CSP is part of their sexual exploration.

“Sometimes it’s just inborn, people, be it men or women, can’t just have one sexual partner. Some people want to sleep with different people so as to know what it feels like.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

“Married men say they want variety...they want to taste all types of women, light dark; they want to see all the vagina types.” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

d. Negative Characteristics of Partner

Some people seek additional relationships because of what they perceive as negative attributes of their current partners. For instance, some men find their female partners to be uncaring and/or unattractive, while some women believe their male partners are inadequate providers, spend too little time with their families, and/or are unfaithful.

“Sometimes it is because of appearance. You may find that before you married her, she looked good every time. After marriage, she cannot even clean the home or herself.” (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

“[Other sexual partners] treat these married men better than their wives. They cook nice food and warm water for them. The women carry their men on their back when taking them to the bathroom, and actually bathing them. They are very gentle with these men.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

“Sometimes it’s the way you are treated. [For example] if you expected good cooking from your wife and you discover later that it’s not the case, you could look for someone that cooks good food. It is not always that people engage in extra marital affairs simply for sex.” (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

“Sometimes men [engage in CSP] because their wives are barren.” (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

“That’s why women also start behaving the same way; when husbands deny them money and yet give to prostitutes.⁴” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

“Some men don’t spend time with the spouses and over time women start eyeing other men and start having other partners.” (Peri-urban single female, Kazungula)

e. Familial, Social and Cultural Pressures

Peer pressure also seems to be a strong factor in motivating people of both sexes to engage in CSP. For men, the pressure is to have concurrent partners like their friends. For women, the pressure is to “have” the things that their friends have, and often the way to achieve this is through concurrent sexual partnerships.

“There are two types of pressures that us young men experience: The first one is pressure within us [sexual feelings] and the second is pressure from friends to have [concurrent] girlfriends like they do.” (Peri-urban single male, Luanshya)

“I want to say something about women. They like to compare what their boyfriends give them with what other women are given. For example, one would say to a friend: ‘How can you accept ten thousand Kwacha from your man? I was given one hundred thousand Kwacha by mine!’ Therefore, the person given the lower amount would be pressured into looking for a man with more money.” (Peri-urban single male, Luanshya)

“The only problem is that some people, especially women, like to compete, they would like to possess what their friends have that they don’t and that’s why they engage themselves in sexual relationships with men.” (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

In some cases, parents are involved in CSP and this serves as an impediment to behaviour change for their children. Some families may also encourage children to pursue concurrent sexual relationships.

“Sometimes it is the parents who discourage a lot of people [from monogamous relationships] because they are sleeping with a lot of women [themselves].” (Rural married female, Mpongwe)

⁴ Here the term “prostitute” is being used to refer to concurrent sexual partners and not commercial sex workers.

“When some families don’t like their male relative’s wife, they push him to divorce that one and if he doesn’t, they tell him to have other women besides his wife. They feel good when he has other partners since they hate his wife. They will even encourage him to marry the girlfriend.” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

“You will find that some parents complain when their child is just seen with one [man]. They would even shout at you, saying, ‘Is that man alone going to manage you?’” (Urban single female, Luanshya)

Other participants blamed women’s scanty dressing for CSP because it compelled some men to want to have sex with such women, and this could result in the onset of a long term relationship.

“Some women’s [scanty] dress code is so tempting for men such that they can’t help it and propose to them.” (Rural married female, Mpongwe)

Gender norms also played an important role in fuelling CSP. Some men feel entitled to have multiple and concurrent sexual partners and believe that it is a sign of masculinity and manhood. Some women may also accept this gender norm and become complacent in the face of infidelity by male partners.

“Men feel that they are men if they can sleep with 10 or 50 women. If [a man] decides to do so in a week, it has to be done because he won’t rest until he has done just that.” (Peri-urban single female, Kazungula)

“Like what they say: ‘The infidelity of a man does not break a home, but that of a women does.’ I don’t think there is a man that can continue to be with a woman after finding out that she has another partner. But a man is entitled to two wives. That is why even when a woman finds out about the extra marital affair of her husband, they do not separate.” (Urban married male, Luanshya)

Facilitating Factors

Alcohol can facilitate finding sexual partners as some relationships commence in bars when one or both partners are intoxicated. Men who drink regularly also fail to sexually satisfy their wives, causing them to seek sexual satisfaction elsewhere.

“What is contributing to that kind of behaviour in women is alcohol. Once a woman leaves her husband’s home for the bar, she is bound to meet a man who will buy her beer and when that happens, their relationship becomes strong.” (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

“If your man is always too drunk to have sex with you, then it’s better for you to find one that you can have sex with.” (Peri-urban single female, Luanshya)

Cell phones were identified as important facilitators of CSP. They allow people to easily save and access contact information for concurrent partners, coordinate liaisons, and keep these relationships secret by facilitating discrete communication.

“With the cell phones we have; [people] even give each other phone numbers so that they can always be in touch.” (Peri-urban married male, Kazungula)

“Especially with the cell phone era we are in; we talk [discretely] any time [to other partners]; more than the husband ... [laughter] and meet somewhere [with them].” (Rural married female, Mpongwe)

“‘Fifty-fifty’⁵ is what happens today. Each one is busy on his or her own phone. This has become the lifestyle here, whether married or single.” (Peri-urban single female, Kazungula)

“Men are just in the habit of having sex with anyone. You’ll find that there are many names [saved] in the phone, not one permanent [girlfriend] at the same time, but many.” (Peri-urban married male, Kazungula)

“Many use cell phones to communicate with other partners. One day, my auntie gave me her phone because there was this other man that wanted to see her. I kept on lying that she had left the phone with me when she went for work. However, I knew that she had another man in her room... The man on the phone got angry and knew that she was lying.” (Urban single female, Luanshya)

“With the coming of phones, a woman can make an arrangement secretly on the phone to meet with the boyfriend.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

On the other hand, cell phones, also allowed some people to uncover the infidelity of their partners (see section on *Knowledge of Partner’s Other Sexual Relationships* for more information).

Gender and CSP

The role of gender as it relates to CSP has come up throughout this report. Social and cultural norms are seen to give men the license to engage in CSP, compel women to accept their male partners’ infidelity, and illicit strong negative reactions against women who engage in CSP (see also sections on *Familial, Social and Cultural* motivations for CSP and *Reactions to Knowing a Partner is Engaging in CSP*). However, women are also seen by some to have a great deal of agency in initiating and ending concurrent sexual partnerships – particularly those engaging in CSP for financial and material reasons.

⁵ “Fifty-fifty” in this context means that both men and women are engaged in CSP.

“For women who sleep around for financial gain, if a man just wants to sleep with her without giving her money, then that relationship won’t last. The woman is key to ending the affair, if a woman chases a married man, and tells him to go back to the wife, then the man will go. So women are the promiscuous ones.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

Some men accuse their female partners of infertility and use this as a justifiable pretext to engage in CSP, when in fact it could be the men who are infertile. In such cases women seemed powerless to do anything about their husbands’ behaviour for fear of repercussions such as divorce or separation.

“But some women don’t react [to their husband’s CSP] because they also know that they are barren and know that their husband needs children. I have seen this from cousin, his been married for 18 years without children from the wife but, has six children from other partners. If the wife tries to complain, he threatens to divorce her because she’s unable to have children for him.” (Urban single female, Luanshya)

Compared to females; males engaging in CSP find their sexual prowess and masculinity extolled (see section on *Names for Concurrent Partnerships and Partners* for a comparison of names used to describe men and women who engage in CSP).

Knowledge of Partner’s Other Sexual Relationships

Friends, neighbours, or relatives can play a big role in informing a person about his or her partner’s infidelity.

“And in most cases our friends warn us to say, ‘Be careful! If you want to find out what your wife is doing then make plans to catch her red handed.’ That way you discover that she has another partner.” (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

“From personal experience; I did not know that my wife had another partner until her relative informed me.” (Peri-urban married male, Luanshya)

Women seem to find it easier to tell when their partners are unfaithful. Ways to tell include: Frequency of sex decreases, volume of his ejaculation decreases, he’s caught with condoms, he does not eat the food cooked for him, his schedule changes and he begins to spend more time outside them home, he stops providing as much financial and material support as he used to, or when his other partner becomes pregnant.

“A lot of men do not know, but women do...In fact, they know much faster [than men.]” (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

“Some are always full and don’t want to eat usually. Even if they agree to have sex, the sperm would have already finished.” (Peri-urban single female, Kazungula)

“Women know, mostly through the changes in the man’s behaviour; he starts coming home late, sometimes with condoms that he doesn’t use with you.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

“Often, they start coming back home late. If they used to come at 17 hours, they start coming at 20 hours, then at midnight, two hours, four hours and eventually, they start spending nights, weeks or even months out.” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

“We women know when the man’s behaviour changes. Sometimes, they stop buying things they used to for the house; they just become less responsible for you as a wife and for the children... Sometimes they just start using bad language on you; calling you all sorts of names, that you are a finished or a wet⁶ woman.” (Rural married female, Mpongwe)

“It is because of the cases of pregnancy that we find out. We come to know when the [male partner] accepts responsibility [for the pregnancy].” (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

Men reported that they could tell if their partner is being unfaithful when she resists sex, ceases to be as affectionate and caring as before, no longer takes good care of the household, or becomes disrespectful.

“We men can know that our wives of girlfriends have another guy just by how they behave when having sex. Some show signs of resistance.” (Peri-urban married male, Kazungula)

“You can tell from a sudden change in behaviour that she is having an affair. For example, no more warm bathing water for you as was the case before, and also general disrespect towards you.” (Urban married male, Luanshya)

In the case of both men and women, becoming very possessive about their cell phones or reducing the frequency of calls to a partner as well as claiming to be too busy to meet were also considered tell tale signs of infidelity.

“Some men become very secretive with their mobile phones... You’ll find that initially, you could read his messages and take his calls. However, when he is seeing someone else; you can’t touch his cell phone. He would rather go outside to answer a call and if you ask him about it, he will get upset.” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

“You begin to suspect [that she has another partner] when her behaviour towards you changes. For example, each time you visit her, she will tell you that she is busy and yet this was not the case before.” (Peri-urban single male, Luanshya)

⁶ This is a reference to the traditional practice of “dry sex,” where women use herbs to dry out their vaginas to enhance sexual pleasure for men. Thus, in this context, calling a woman “wet” means she is sexually undesirable.

To the extent possible, both men and women try to ensure that their partners do not discover that they have concurrent sexual partners. However, women (both married and single) and married men go to greater lengths to conceal CSP. Women may do so by maintaining respect for the primary partners. Some men warn their girlfriends against any behaviour that would reveal the relationship to their wives. Men may also try to ensure they reach home early, never sleep outside the home, keep liaisons with other partners to a minimum, and that their primary partner or family is well provided for.

“For people who are married, it takes a bit of time to be known because once the other partner knows that there is an extra affair somewhere, then that marriage will end there and then.” (Peri-urban single male, Kazungula)

“It is easy for a woman to know, no matter how a man pretends...When a woman has an affair, the husband can't even know because she will still show respect.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

“If a man has sexual relations with a woman he is not married to...it takes several days before they see each other again. This is to avoid violence in case the wife found out as a result of frequent meetings...Some men even tell their girlfriends that they still love their wives and even warn them not to cause trouble with their wives.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

“Some men are really good at keeping extra marital affairs a secret. Some women even refuse to believe...that their husband is having an affair because of the good treatment they receive from their husbands. Some men even give the whole salary to their wives so that they don't suspect that the man could have money to spend on other women.” (Rural single female, Luanshya)

It was also reported that some people do not try to conceal concurrent partnerships from their primary partners. Some married men even complain about their wives' cooking, compare them to their girlfriends, and/or bring their girlfriends home.

“Some [men] know because...the wife will simply tell him off and say that she has another partner because he doesn't manage to take care of her.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

“Some men are foolish and are always comparing their wives with other women. Such comparing remarks make their partner realise that they are being cheated on.” (Peri-urban single female, Luanshya)

“Some men even take these extra sexual partners home. That brings a lot of problems when the wife discovers what is happening.” (Urban married male, Luanshya)

The further the partners stay from one another, the less likely they are to know if their partner has concurrent sexual partnerships.

“Some of them last long, because one person can have three women and they don’t stay near each other, so you will find that it is difficult to know his behavior...so with all the three...the relationship will still be on for a long time.” (Urban single female, Luanshya)

In order to conceal knowledge of concurrent sexual partnerships from their wives, some men return home early from work, stay at home more often, or address their primary partner in affectionate terms such as “honey.” However, some women are weary of such behaviour and believe that it does not necessarily imply fidelity.

“Some men pretend to their partners to be very faithful. He might even be coming home very early. I know of a neighbour who we all thought was faithful because he was always at home - but he made someone pregnant.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

“Tadpoles always follow each other when they are moving in water. Relationships...don’t work like that. Just because you always move together or he calls you ‘honey’ all the time doesn’t mean he is very faithful.” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

Reactions to Discovering that a Partner is Engaging in CSP

When a person discovers their partner is engaging in CSP, he or she may become violent and abusive toward their partner and/or his or her concurrent partners. Males were reported to be less reconciliatory and forgiving towards females, and more likely to terminate the relationship.

“Some [men] just beat you up, and then chase you. They actually start by beating up the other man and then come home and beat you up in order to cool down. Finally, they will chase you...[If] they reconcile, then that issue will always be talked about in the house; it will be evoked often for any mistake you make.” (Rural married female, Mpongwe)

“[Women] forgive us but they exchange [angry] words with the other partner afterwards...Some women also become violent towards their partner. After a long time of ‘sweet talk,’ they let us get away with it; but with a warning against our behaviour.” (Peri urban single male, Luanshya)

“Once he discovers [his wife has another partner], he will chase her from the matrimonial home or divorce her because a cheating wife is considered more of a disgrace than a cheating husband... Some don’t divorce their wives but will stop trusting them. Even when the woman stops sleeping around, the man will always think she’s still doing it.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

It was very prominently reported that many females who discover that their partners have other sexual partners take revenge by engaging in CSP themselves.

“Revenge is the most common reaction by women here in our community. When a man decides to have an affair, it means that he has discarded and disrespected you. So what do you do? You also find somebody else.” (Peri-urban single female, Luanshya)

“Men are just immoral. If a man marries you, puts you in his house and together you raise your kids, it is rare that a woman would have other sexual partners. But when she sees her husband’s behaviour, then she thinks, ‘After all, I can also do it.’ That’s why women also start behaving the same way.” (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

“We are only forced to do so by our husbands because of the things they do to us...they show you that they are unfaithful. Therefore, you also decide to do the same...we too want someone who also loves us and cares for us.” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

A few study participants indicated that revenge is not the sole province of women.

“What happens here is chishole [revenge]. You may see people taking revenge, either men or women, because their partner has another partner.” (Rural married female, Mpongwe)

In some cases, some women apply various sanctions against their unfaithful partners. These include denying them sex, refusing to cook for them, or refusing to prepare warm bathing water. Some women resort to using love potions in the hope that their male partner would love them more than his other partner(s). Still others opt for prayer or seek counsel or take the matter to court.

“For me, I deny him sex. Why should he have a double share?” (Peri-urban single female, Kazungula)

“[Women whose partners engage in CSP] become very angry and stop preparing food and warm bathing water for you.” (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

“Some women resort to ‘smoking’...These are ‘love potions’ so that you do not leave them for the other partner.” (Peri-urban single male, Luanshya)

“For me, what I used to do when I discovered that my husband was cheating on me was to pray. After some time, I asked him why he was not leaving money at home anymore, coming late, not spending time at home, he defended himself by saying that everything was okay, just that business was down. So I told him that I would one day catch him and he refused. I only used to pray to God. So, one evening, my friend called me to a certain house where I found them red handed. He then knelt down to plead to me and the girlfriend was shocked. I didn’t say anything, I just went back home and he followed me and kept pleading all the way.” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

“Sometimes they begin to sleep in a different room or take the matter to the courts of law.” (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

Others who learn of their partner's unfaithfulness either threaten to kill or actually kill their partner, threaten to commit or actually commit suicide, or die of depression.

"I know of a man who killed his wife after he discovered she was cheating on him with another man. The man took the woman to the field and chopped off the wife's head and also shot himself with a gun. Both of them died." (Peri-urban single female, Luanshya)

"Women become depressed and die because they love too much... What troubles us is that we love men whole-heartedly so we can't take in the pain. Hence we end up in hospital and eventually die." (Peri-urban single female, Kazungula)

Not all men who learn that their partner has another partner do something about it. In some cases men depend on their female partners for financial support, in other cases they are impotent and therefore feel they cannot object to their partner engaging in CSP to seek sexual satisfaction. In some instances, there is not enough proof of infidelity to do anything, while in other cases a man might simply deny that his female partner may be capable of such a thing (see also section on *Perceptions of Faithfulness*).

"Some [men] don't react because they depend on the woman for survival. So even if they discover the wife is cheating, they won't do anything... [One husband] eventually confronted the wife, who didn't deny the accusations. But the husband still refused to leave her...if you ask such couples; they say they are happy in their marriages." (Urban married female, Luanshya)

"And some men do nothing because they are impotent and they know that their wife needs sex. Therefore, they will just be quite about it because they realize they are the ones with the problem." (Urban single female, Luanshya)

"They know but they fail to speak out because of lack of evidence. The only proof they have is information from people....Even after they discover the truth, some men don't have the courage to end the relationship saying they are already in the relationship after all." (Rural single male, Mpongwe)

"One woman in our community has another partner. When the husband was told about it, he refused to believe and said that his wife could not do that. Therefore, he considers her faithful because she has kept it a secret from him." (Rural married female, Mpongwe)

For single women, the expectation or promise that their male partner will marry them encourages them to tolerate his behaviour. Similarly, married women are tolerant of their husbands' infidelity because they are afraid of divorce.

"Some married women are just used to their husband's behaviour. In the case of some of the single women; they do not react because they would want to get married." (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

“If you tell yourself that he can’t have other partners; then you are cheating yourself. It happened to my friend who used to think it wouldn’t happen to her. She came crying to us and we told her to learn to live [with it] the way we do.” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

“Most of the time, women know that their husband is cheating around. They are jealous but are scared to react because the husband might divorce them.” (Peri-urban single female, Luanshya)

There was little spontaneous mention among the participants of HIV in relation to how they would react if they knew that their partner engaged in CSP. For instance, termination of the relationship or refusing sex seemed to be primarily due to the partner’s unfaithfulness rather than fear of HIV infection. Those that did mention HIV said that they would end the relationship in order to prevent HIV acquisition, go for VCT to know their status, fear they might end up engaging in unprotected sex with another partner as revenge, or discuss the negative effects of CSP with their partner (including the negative effect of HIV on the family).

“If I discover that my partner has another partner, the only sensible thing to do is to end the relationship because not doing so could lead to my death [from HIV]. It is the same thing with reasonable women, when they discover that their partner has another partner, they end the relationship.” (Rural single male, Mpongwe)

“First, I would go for VCT to find out my HIV status. Then I would take the matter to court for the marriage to end and for compensation from the man. I might decide to forgive my wife if I tried hard enough.” (Peri-urban male, Luanshya)

“...If as a woman you are not careful, you may decide to seek revenge and even have sex elsewhere without a condom. This is because it is really a traumatizing time. You need patience and understanding.” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

“[If your partner has other partners]...talk to him nicely. Tell him how diseases creep in. Remind him that you have a responsibility towards your children who need you and if you live your life recklessly, they’ll end up as orphans and I’m sure that’s not what you want for your dear children.” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

Perceptions of Faithfulness

Generally, a person engaging in CSP is considered to be unfaithful to his or her partner. Respondents felt that an unfaithful person should feel guilty even if their primary partner never finds out about his or her concurrent partners.

“That is a straight forward thing. You can’t consider yourself faithful just because your partner or wife doesn’t know. This is because you know it yourself. Why should you think you are being faithful?” (Peri-urban married male, Kazungula)

“I would feel guilty even if my primary partner does not find out. Therefore, I would not consider myself to be faithful...I would consider myself to be unfaithful.” (Peri-urban married male, Luanshya)

Others felt that a person engaging in CSP could be considered faithful as long as the primary partner remains unaware of the relationship and continues to be treated with respect. One may also be considered faithful as long as he or she does not realize that he or she is hurting his/her partner by having concurrent sexual partners.

“I would consider myself to be faithful because I am not exposed. Even when somebody tells my wife about it, she might not believe him or her. When I have an extra sexual partner, the most important thing would be to keep the affair a secret and respect my wife.” (Urban married male, Luanshya)

“One woman in our community has another partner. When the husband was told about it, he refused to believe and said that his wife could not do that. Therefore, he considers her faithful because she has kept it a secret from him.” (Rural married female, Mpongwe)

“There are those who do not realize that what they are doing is hurting their main partner. They consider themselves to be ‘faithful.’ Then there are those that know that what they are doing is hurting their main partner, they do not consider themselves ‘faithful’ but cannot stop the relationship.” (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

Support for Monogamy

Generally, participants had little to say about what families and communities could do to discourage those engaging in CSP and encourage and support those in monogamous relationships. Some felt that families and communities could support monogamy through religious teachings and by encouraging single men and women to get married. Others felt that every family is different as some actually encourage their children to engage in CSP.

“Communities encourage [those in monogamous relationships] to continue with their lifestyle and start going to church.” (Rural single male, Mpongwe)

“Some parents encourage single men or women to get married.” (Peri-urban single male, Luanshya)

“Some families really support but some don’t because, you will find that some parents complain when their child is just seen with one, they would even shout at you that “is that man alone to manage to you? ...[laughter] but again some families are so supportive once you just tell them that I have decided to stick to one partner, then they would even start praying for you and encourage you basing everything from the bible, it just depends with your family ...” (Urban single females, Luanshya)

Some felt that social support for fidelity would not result in behaviour change.

“Most of the time, society preaches fidelity but people do not just heed.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

Respondents also noted that people generally resent comments from others about their lifestyles and that, in most cases, people are left to engage in whatever kinds of sexual relationships they desire.

“People are scared of each other. If I go to advise my friend, she may react badly.” (Peri-urban single female, Kazungula)

“There is no advice from parents or family members when it comes to any relationship issue here. Everyone does what they want.” (Peri-urban single males, Kazungula)

Risk Perception Associated with CSP and Resulting Behaviour

Although respondents said that they knew engaging in CSP could increase risk of HIV, it remains unclear whether they truly understand and appreciate the risks of sexual concurrency. They reported that knowledge about the risks of HIV alone was not necessarily enough to result in positive behaviour and social change because people have come to accept CSP as a norm. Respondents did believe behaviour and social change were possible, but they would not necessarily be easy to achieve.

“Yes the risk is there if you have many partners and your partner might also have other people besides you, so that way the disease is actually spread at a faster rate.” (Rural single female, Mpongwe)

“You could find this person going out with that person who is also seeing a different person. These young people have up to four partners each and that’s why diseases keep moving from one person to another.” (Urban married male, Luanshya)

“People here know about the main sexually transmitted infections including HIV. It has become part of the nature of life; they won’t change even if someone that suffered the negative consequences of having many sexual partners tries to sensitize them. It has become their way of life.” (Peri-urban single male, Kazungula)

“People can change, even though it is difficult because they have become used to their lifestyle of multiple sexual relationships.” (Rural single male, Mpongwe)

Some respondents said that it is only when one was tired of sex or had grown old, does he or she eventually stop engaging in CSP. While others argued that desire for sexual pleasure and therefore CSP only increase with age.

"[If he stops engaging in CSP], then it means he is really tired. They only change because they are tired." (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

"Most men only change after they grow older; in their fifties or late forties. That is when some begin to talk about their promiscuity when they were young." (Urban married female, Luanshya)

"But others stop [engaging in CSP] or change because of counseling, while for others it becomes worse with the belief that sex is sweeter in old age." (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

Fatalism was cited as an impediment to behaviour change. The notion of HIV infection has been normalized and respondents said that everyone is destined to eventually die, with or without HIV.

"Some people do not change their behaviour saying that they will die one day anyway. If death has to be due to HIV, let it be so because [HIV] came for people." (Peri-urban single males, Luanshya)

Respondents said that some would change behaviour through sensitization on the risks of CSP, after seeing the suffering of people infected with HIV, or personally being infected with HIV.

"With a lot of sensitization and awareness about HIV and AIDS, some people are able to change... Some people who are already on ARVs still sleep around just because they are already infected after all. However, if they knew about re-infection; they would be scared to sleep around." (Peri-urban single female, Luanshya)

"Others change after seeing the health of an AIDS patient deteriorate. They get scared and decide to change." (Rural single female, Luanshya)

"Some get really sick from AIDS and then, by the grace of God, when they start ARVs, they improve. They swear never to [engage in CSP] again. They will stick to one partner in order to live a bit longer than if they continued their old lifestyle." (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

"Some only change after knowing that they are HIV positive." (Urban married female, Luanshya)

Condom Use and CSP

Most respondents emphatically reported that condoms are not used in concurrent sexual partnerships. Proof of this lay in the fact that many couples engaged in such relationships were bearing children.

“One thing you need to know is that people here in Kazungula know that having multiple partners increases their chances of contracting HIV. However, people here do not use condoms, I don’t know why! [Girls] get pregnant; which for me is an indication that they never used a condom when they were having sex.” (Peri-urban single male, Kazungula)

Most respondents agreed that condom use was limited to the first few days, weeks or months of a new relationship. Once “trust” is established, people cease to use condoms. There was little spontaneous mention of VCT before abandoning condom use.

“At the beginning, most people use condoms but stop at a later stage once they become comfortable with their partner and forget about the risks.” (Peri-urban single female, Luanshya)

“It can take days or a week for them to stop having sex with condoms...because they would have started trusting each other and stopped worrying whether one would infect the other.” (Peri-urban married male, Kazungula)

A “trustworthy” person was defined as someone who is faithful to you and/or has been in a relationship with you for a long time. It is usually the men who decide when “trust” has been established and it is therefore the men who are more likely to determine whether or not condoms should be used.

“If a man has never heard anything to suggest that his partner is seeing someone else, he would have a chat with his partner about stopping condom use.” (Urban married male, Luanshya)

“[Trust is] when someone has been seeing a woman for a month, for example, and each time he visits her, he does not find her with another man.” (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

“When relationships become two weeks or months old, men say they have known the woman long enough and so they can suspend condom use.” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

Although lack of condom use was reported among both single men and women as well as married men and women, it was considered far more difficult and problematic to use condoms within marriage. Married men and women are afraid to suggest condom use because the mere mention of condoms could imply that either the person or their partner is unfaithful. This may hurt the partner and cause problems.

“According to our tradition it is a ‘crime’ to use condoms in a marriage because you would be suspected [of extra-marital sexual relationships]. You would be questioned about why you want to start using condoms now when you had not been using them before.” (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

"We married people do not use condoms because our wives might suspect us of having extra marital affairs. There are those that do not use condoms because their partners would take it to be a sign of mistrust. Their partners would say 'Why do you want to use condoms, do you suspect me of having HIV?' So to avoid this, the man will just do it like that [have unprotected sex]." (Urban married male, Luanshya)

For similar reasons, condom use may be abandoned once a couple decides to get married.

"Many people stop using condom when they have finally decided to get married. Some stop (using condoms) once they have gone for an HIV test and are planning to get married." (Urban single female, Luanshya)

The most prominently reported reason for not using condoms with concurrent sexual partners is that they are perceived to reduce sexual pleasure.

"Some say: 'How can you bathe with a jacket on?' Implying that how can one have sex with a condom? Meaning sex with a condom is worthless because one won't enjoy the act." (Peri-urban single female, Luanshya)

"Some say, they don't enjoy sex when they use condoms...Most prefer skin to skin...Some people say, 'How can you eat a sweet with its plastic [wrapper]?' While others say, 'If you want to eat sugar, why put it in plastic and then start chewing the plastic?' You are better off eating the sugar directly or putting the sugar in a cup of water to drink to taste the sweetness." (Urban married female, Luanshya)

"Some men don't feel much sensation; hence feel less pleasure." (Peri-urban single female, Kazungula)

"Some just want 'metal to metal.' Others say, 'terminal to terminal' or 'skin to skin.'" (Rural married female, Mpongwe)

Other factors that contribute to unprotected sex include the desire to have children (among both single and married men and women) as well as lack of awareness about how to use condoms and the importance of doing so.

"If you are single but would like to have a child, we do not use condoms." (Rural single male, Mpongwe)

"When a woman's parents think that you can look after their daughter because you are doing well [financially], they encourage their daughters to deliberately become pregnant." (Peri-urban single male, Luanshya)

"Lack of condom use is as a result of ignorance. They don't know the beauty of using condoms. If they knew, they would surely use them." (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

Some people reported side-effects of using condoms, such as pain, rash or itching on the penis or vagina. Some women also reportedly use charms on men, which do not allow them to have an erection or ejaculate quickly enough when using condoms. This compels men to opt for unprotected sex.

"Some feel condoms crush their testicles [while] some men say they feel pain on the penis." (Peri-urban single female)

"Others don't use condoms because they think condoms itch." (Peri-urban single female, Luanshya)

"Some women say that condoms cause a rash on their private parts." (Peri-urban single female, Kazungula)

"Some women use charms such that when a man use condom on they he won't climax or won't have a strong erection unless he removes the condom." (Urban married female, Luanshya)

Less frequently reported barriers to condom use included: Structural barriers such as high cost or inaccessibility; shyness to purchase condoms in public; the desire to have sex quickly, leaving no time to obtain condoms; not having enough condoms; the belief that condoms do not guarantee HIV prevention; the belief that condoms cause wetness in the vagina; the suspicion that condoms may spread HIV; the belief that you can tell by the physical appearance of a sexual partner whether or not condom use is necessary; and the belief that condoms are meant for younger people.

"Some do not collect [free] condoms from health centres because they are shy...Some people prefer 'direct' [sex without condoms] while others do use condoms. However, the problem is that condoms are costly." (Peri-urban married male, Luanshya)

"They [have sex] in a hurry and have no condom...Maybe the husband is out for a short time and the boyfriend wants to have sex. They won't look for [a condom] but just have sex 'direct' [without a condom]." (Peri-urban single male, Kazungula)

"Sometimes there are situations when you are forced to do without [condoms]. For example, if you carry only two and in the middle of the night, they run out due to the woman's good sexual performance." (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

"If a man uses a condom, the vagina will always be watery and men would not be enjoying sex with such a woman." (Rural married female, Mpongwe)

“One may come across a beautiful, healthy-looking woman; brown in complexion...and end up not using a condom [with her]. The other thing is that some men believe a condom...has a virus.” (Peri-urban married male, Kazungula)

“Some young people of this generation do use condoms...to protect themselves against diseases...Our generation does not use condoms because of tradition.” (Urban married male, Luanshya)

Reasons cited for using condoms in concurrent sexual partnerships included prevention of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, prevention of pregnancy, or when the female partner is menstruating.

“We can use a condom for protection against other STIs and AIDs as well as unwanted pregnancy.” (Peri-urban single male, Luanshya)

“We also use condoms when a lady is attending her monthly period but you feel pressed as a man and for protection from diseases such as syphilis.” (Peri-urban single male, Luanshya)

“Many people use condoms. I also use them and when I don’t have any, I avoid women because I don’t trust them. I use condoms with my wife for family planning because I would like my child to grow [before having another]...Sometimes, we men use condoms when our women are having their monthly periods.” (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

“Sometimes, [condoms are used] because many men tend to refuse responsibility after making you pregnant. Therefore, many women prefer to use condoms until she is sure that if she gets pregnant, the man would accept all the responsibility.” (Urban single female, Luanshya)

Voluntary Counselling and Testing and CSP

Generally, respondents said that they would not be any more likely to go for VCT if their partner was found to be engaging in CSP or if they themselves had concurrent partners. Many individuals and couples find it difficult to go for VCT because they believe that they are already infected (due to high risk behaviours) and that an HIV test would merely confirm this.

“People don’t use condoms. [Therefore], many suspect that they are HIV positive. What they don’t want is to go [for VCT] so that the hospital can confirm this.” (Peri-urban single male, Kazungula)

“Because of the number of partners people have gone out with, they tend to conclude that they are [HIV] positive...I think we are sick [infected with HIV], but as for the issue of testing; I am not strong enough to withstand that knowledge [confirmation of HIV positive status].” (Rural married female, Mpongwe)

Many are afraid of going for VCT because they fear they will die quicker either from depression or suicide. Even knowledge that a partner is HIV positive was believed to quicken one's own death.

"Many people feel that it is better not to know one's HIV status because he or she would die early... They are afraid [because] many get depressed once they are told that their HIV status is positive." (Peri-urban single male, Kazungula)

"Many people wouldn't [go for VCT]. They say that once they are found with HIV, they would die. Therefore, they wouldn't get tested because people commit suicide." (Rural married female, Mpongwe)

It was perceived to be very difficult to go for VCT as a couple or to encourage one's partner(s) to go for VCT. Partners may get annoyed by the mere suggestion of VCT. As a result, many people feel it is futile to discuss VCT with their partners.

"It's very hard because I have tried it before. When I encouraged my partner [to go for VCT], he refused. Two days after I went, I reminded my partner to go as well and he promised he would go the following day. Today, that is history [he still has not gone for VCT] and we have even forgotten about the subject." (Urban single female, Luanshya)

"Encouraging people is difficult in the case of VCT. Some people would simply say, 'I am negative; if you are bothered about HIV, go for VCT yourself!'" (Urban married male, Luanshya)

In the context of CSP, it was difficult to go for couples VCT for fear that your spouse might find out about your other relationships.

"The problem is that if you visit the hospital [for VCT] frequently with your girlfriend, your wife could get wind of it, which would be bad." (Urban married male, Luanshya)

VCT is associated with infidelity and HIV infection. Therefore, a partner who suggests VCT would be accused of these things. For this reason, some individuals go for VCT without the company or even knowledge of the other partner.

"In my case, I told my [girlfriend] to go with me for VCT. She refused saying, 'You go alone!' So I suspected her of having had a shady life in the past." (Peri-urban single male, Luanshya)

"The reason why some people would not encourage their partner [to go for VCT] is that the partner would accuse them of being responsible of their [HIV-positive] status even before going for VCT." (Rural single male, Mpongwe)

“Sometimes your partner will...accuse you of having many sexual partners. He believes that whoever wants to get tested must be HIV positive.” (Urban single female, Luanshya)

Some people exhibit a fatalistic attitude towards HIV and do not perceive the need to go for VCT. Others do not want to go for VCT because they attribute illness to factors such as witchcraft and not HIV.

“Some people choose to ignore the disease saying, ‘This disease [HIV and AIDS] evolved for people and not dogs.’” (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

“I know of another woman who believed the husband was bewitched. The man died after discovering he had HIV. To date, the wife still refuses to go for VCT believing her husband was bewitched.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

Respondents believed that women are keener on going for VCT than men. However, they are afraid of their male partners’ reaction to finding out that they went for VCT or that they are HIV positive.

“Women may want to get tested but are afraid to go alone without their partners. If the husband discovers, it brings a lot of confusion in the house...Some men tell their female partners who decide to go for VCT to keep the results to themselves. Therefore, women are more eager to know their HIV status; especially during pregnancy.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

“It’s very difficult to...go for testing because sometimes the woman might be negative and the man positive. I have a sister who is positive but the husband is negative and this has brought about unrest in the house. They always fight and the woman is now in hospital.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

“Some people do not do that [encourage their partners to go for VCT] because they are afraid of being depressed in case she is found to be HIV positive.” (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

Knowledge of HIV Status and CSP Behaviour

Respondents held mixed views about knowledge of HIV status and resulting behaviour. For those who test negative, it was believed that they would adopt positive behaviour change such as partner reduction, monogamy and condom use to remain negative.

“[If I test HIV negative], no matter how attractive the lady might be; I would stick to my [main] partner or wife.” (Rural married male, Mpongwe).

“If I had multiple sexual partners and discover that I am [HIV] negative, I would definitely do away with my multiple sexual partners.” (Urban married male, Luanshya)

“Especially for married couples who have been tested negative; it can be a good chance for them to advise each other and change their behaviours if one of them was having other partners.” (Urban single female, Luanshya)

“Where you were not using condoms; you would start using them and would have only one sexual partner.” (Peri-urban single female, Kazungula)

People who test negative would also encourage their partners to get tested, and may even refuse to get married or have sex until they do so. A person’s whose partner is HIV negative would also want to get tested to confirm his or her own HIV negative status.

“If, as a woman, I am [HIV] negative and I want to get married; I would ask the man intending to marry me to go for a test with me.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

“If one partner tests negative; even the other is confident to go for an HIV test because he or she thinks his or her results will be negative as well...The partner whose HIV status is negative will refuse to have sex with his or her partner until that partner also goes for an HIV test.” (Peri-urban single female, Luanshya)

Some people perceived risk in marriage and said that if they were HIV negative, they would avoid marriage to stay negative.

“If I test negative before getting married, I wouldn’t even want to get married at all. I would know I am healthy and stay away [from marriage].” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

Some participants also reported that those who test HIV negative would experience behavioural disinhibition and continue or increase risky behaviours.

“Sometimes people [that have tested HIV negative] get excited and start misbehaving. But this is dangerous as one may still be in the ‘window period’ when it is impossible to find the virus in the body.” (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

Respondents said that those who test HIV positive may go on to intentionally infect others. Some may even change residence to an area where people do not know they are HIV positive so that they can continue to have unprotected sex and engage in CSP.

“Some people, when they get tested and find they are HIV positive, spread the disease intentionally. They just want to infect others as well, and these are the majority.” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

“I was talking to a certain old man a few days ago and he said to me: ‘If I were to become HIV positive, I would not stop engaging in sexual relationships because I was just infected [by

someone]. Therefore, I would also start spreading the disease.” (Rural single male, Mpongwe)

“Some even change their residence once they test HIV positive. After some time, because of ARVs, they will look healthy such that you cannot even know that they are infected. They will then start to infect others since they are not known [in their new residential area].” (Rural married female, Mpongwe)

ARVs were reported to act like aphrodisiacs and increase sex drive, making it difficult for those on ARVs to change their high risk behaviours.

“A lot of them would not change [their behaviour] because...these ARVs are making them very sexually active. They will continue having many sexual partners until they are so sick that everyone is able to recognize this. That is when they will be faithful to their wife at home.” (Rural married female, Mpongwe)

“I think what causes HIV positive people to sleep around is the medication. I hear people on ARVs have bigger sexual appetite.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

Disclosure of HIV Status and CSP Behaviour

Those that have been for VCT do not often reveal their status to their partners for fear of stigma and discrimination, lack of confidentiality, being suspected or accused of infidelity, being accused of infecting their partner with HIV, and termination of the relationship. Others are concerned about their inability to attract sexual partners if it is known that they are HIV positive. It is also difficult to disclose to a spouse that one’s concurrent partner is HIV positive.

“Many would not tell the partner in fear of the partner leaving them since they are now positive.” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

“Many wouldn’t disclose for the fear of being told they brought the disease in the home. They fear to be asked how they got it and why they had decided to go for VCT alone. Therefore, they would rather keep it to themselves.” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

“Usually, the negative partner feels the positive one was irresponsible, misbehaving and unfaithful...A husband will fear that his wife will leave him since he is infected. The wife will also be afraid that she will be divorced. People start fighting with each other and it’s not a pleasant experience.” (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

“It’s not easy to disclose their status once they know they are positive. Once people know, they start calling you names like ‘ba people’...If you tell your boyfriend you are HIV positive...he will tell other people that you are sick and they will start calling you names. So why disclose?” (Rural single female, Mpongwe)

⁷ “Ba people” is a term of respect that is being used sarcastically in this context.

“Very few have gone for an HIV test. The majority refuse. They are scared of losing their partner or just that their marketability with regards to men would be gone. No man would openly sleep with someone who is HIV positive.” (Urban single female, Luanshya)

“What is difficult is if you and your ‘extra’ partner go for VCT and it is established that she [the ‘extra’ partner] is positive. How do you disclose that to your wife?” (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

Knowledge of Sero-Discordance

Respondents said that they did not understand how a couple can continue to have unprotected sex yet remain sero-discordant.

“I have heard of such misconduct [i.e. sero-discordant] couples...I don’t understand why it’s like that. Even their newly born child is not infected. I don’t know the explanation behind this but maybe the uninfected one is simply lucky.” (Rural single female, Mpongwe)

“[Sero-discordance] must be happening...especially among those that are married. I just don’t know why one is negative if the two are having [unprotected] sex.” (Peri-urban single male, Kazungula)

Some respondents suggested that sero-discordance was a result of differences in blood groups – some blood groups being “stronger” than others, while other blood groups being “weaker,” and therefore more susceptible to HIV. Others attributed discordance to divine intervention.

“[Sero-discordance] is because of different blood groups. For example, group ‘O’ is stronger than ‘B’. Therefore, a person with blood group ‘O’ will not be infected as quickly as the other with blood group ‘B.’” (Rural single male, Mpongwe)

“[Sero-discordance] is due to the different blood groups, but we are not sure...Blood differs in that some types of blood are easily attacked by diseases while others are not...That [sero-discordance] does happen but we do not know how. Maybe it is the power of God.” (Urban married male, Luanshya)

In the case of discordant couples, the HIV positive partner will be stigmatized and discriminated against by the sero-negative partner. Participants’ responses suggest women are victims of such behaviour more often than men. Women were reported to be verbally and physically abused, and, if married, were subject to divorce (see also section on *Disclosure of HIV Status to Partners and CSP Behaviour*).

Often, when the male partner is the one who is sero-negative, he will terminate the relationship, whereas, if the female partner is sero-negative, she will not leave her HIV positive partner.

“When it’s the woman that is infected, men tend to chase them out. If it’s the man who is infected, the woman will stay on with him. This is what I know. Men are a problem!” (Urban married male, Kazungula)

“If the man is positive and the woman negative, the woman will take care of the man so that he lives a bit longer. But if a man is negative and the woman is positive, the relationship will end right there at the clinic...parents usually encourage their [sero-negative] daughters to stick to their [sero-positive] husbands.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

“It is not easy when one is positive and the other is not. There is a lot of uncertainty as to how this happened. If I decide to live with an HIV positive woman, my relatives would advise me to leave her.” (Urban married male, Luanshya)

While most men with HIV positive female partners would not be interested in taking care of them, some would be supportive and not separate from them.

“Some men won’t be interested in nursing the wife and would send her to her parents for nursing.” (Peri-urban single female, Luanshya)

“I recently heard about...a woman [who] was found to be HIV positive while the male partner was not. The sad thing about this is that the lady is now sleeping in the children’s bedroom.” (Peri-urban married male, Luanshya)

“I cannot let her go just like that...I’ve seen a lot of women in our community that stand by their husbands in sickness until death; there are very few [women] that leave their [husbands]. There are also some men who do not chase their wives. The most important thing is to stop having sex [to avoid infection].” (Urban married male, Luanshya)

“If it were my wife [who is HIV positive], I would look after her as I vowed to do so on our wedding day.” (Peri-urban married male, Luanshya)

Knowledge of “Window Period”

The “window period” refers to the first few weeks or months after HIV infection when the body has not had a chance to produce an immune response and the virus is allowed to rapidly multiply. This is one of the most highly infectious stages of HIV infection. The most commonly available antibody-based rapid diagnostic tests produce negative results during this period. In order to test understanding of the “window period,” respondents were asked to describe at which point in time an HIV positive person is most infectious.

There was significant confusion, misinformation, and lack of understanding about when an HIV positive person is most infectious. Some respondents said that the virus begins to multiply one month after infection and that an HIV positive person could not infect anyone during this first month. Responses for when a person is most infectious ranged from immediately after being infected to six months after being infected. Some participants felt that a person is most infectious when symptomatic, while other felt a person is most infectious when asymptomatic. Still others said that a person is most infectious when they have developed full blown AIDS. Some respondents were clearly guessing.

"I think [the most infectious period is] just after a person has contracted the disease and hasn't started taking medication." (Urban married female, Luanshya)

"I think [the most infectious period] is after that person has finished taking his medication because then, they look healthy...After (medication), no one can tell that the person is infected." (Urban married female, Luanshya)

"I think the most infections stage is when the person has signs and symptoms of HIV. At this stage he or she is more likely to infect a lot of people." (Peri-urban single female, Luanshya)

"When you are infected the first day, you can't infect your partner because the virus has not yet grown or matured. It takes three months for it to increase and after this, infection can take place. The virus will start multiplying after a month and it is at this time that infection is more likely to take place. By three months, the virus will have increased even more." (Peri-urban single male, Kazungula)

"[A person is most infectious] after three months of the last sexual encounter, because the disease might not be detected a week or a month after contraction. But after three months, it is possible." (Rural single male, Mpongwe)

"...[The most infectious period is] after six months." (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

"Sometimes [infection] can [occur] about thirty minutes after contracting the disease and having sex with another partner that is negative." (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

"[The most infectious period is] before one starts to look sick; before HIV becomes AIDS." (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

"If someone is HIV positive and not on ARVs, I think such a person is more infectious because the virus is multiplying rapidly in the body and the person will infect whoever they have sex with." (Peri-urban single female, Luanshya)

"[Infection would take place] immediately [after] I sleep with that person. If for example I am infected today, and I sleep with my girlfriend or wife, they will immediately get infected." (Peri-urban single male, Kazungula)

Some respondents pointed out that it is possible to contract HIV at any time, and did not think there was any stage at which an HIV-positive person could be more or less infectious.

"I think infection happens at all stages. That's why infected people are encouraged to use condoms at all times...There is no stage or period which is most infectious to pass the virus. As long as one sleeps with an infected person, they will get infected at any time." (Urban married female, Luanshya)

"[Infection can take place] just any time if they meet without using a condom." (Peri-urban single female, Kazungula)

While the term "window period" was not used by facilitators, some respondents did spontaneously bring it up; however, they only partially defined what it meant to them. Some respondents described it as the amount of time it takes the virus to multiply (i.e. become strong enough to be detected by a diagnostic test).

"And there is what is called 'window period,' when it is impossible to find the virus in the body." (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

"'Window period' refers to the time when there is only one virus in your body or blood and it is hiding. After three months, it will have multiplied and you will be able to see it clearly." (Peri-urban married female, Kazungula)

"Maybe the 'window period' could be a stage when the virus has not yet multiplied [increased] in number(s) and it is difficult to spot/find it, but after three months the virus increases in number and is therefore easily detected." (Rural married male, Mpongwe)

These responses demonstrate a lack of understanding that the most commonly used HIV tests are anti-body based and not antigen-based.

Some people understood that during the 'window period,' HIV tests will show negative results and there is a need to be re-tested after some period of time. However, there was misunderstanding about why tests showed negative results. Respondents believed it was because the virus was not yet strong enough in the body to be detected.

"Sometimes people get excited and start misbehaving but this is dangerous as one maybe still be in the 'window period' hence the need to wait for a re-test to avoid infection." (Peri-urban single female, Kazungula)

"After three months, the disease could have advanced more; hence making it easy for the health workers to detect it." (Peri-urban single male, Kazungula)

Sexual Networks and HIV Transmission

In order to further explore participants' knowledge about the risks posed by CSP and sexual networks as well as about "window period," at the end of each FGD facilitators explained these concepts using visual aids (see Appendix C for visual aids). Participants in every focus group discussion were generally very attentive and interested in these explanations. Participants seemed to follow and understand the explanations. This was reflected in their responses when they were asked to explain what they had just learned in their own words.

"The diagrams show that HIV spreads faster in concurrent sexual relationships than in exclusive relationships. In the concurrent sexual partnerships, 16 people were infected from December to August, while in the serial monogamy diagram, only three people were infected over the same period." (Urban married male, Luanshya)

"The diagrams have explained that the disease spreads much faster when people engage in concurrent sexual relationships but not in exclusive relationships and that there is a period when it can easily be transmitted to other people." (Urban married male, Luanshya)

Participants said that the visual aids enhanced their understanding of the "window period" and why CSP is risky. They appreciated having gained this knowledge. Participants also highly appreciated the format of the interpersonal communication.

"There is lack of information about certain things. If other people are educated like we have been, I am sure [CSP] can be reduced like in that picture." (Single married male, Mpongwe).

"It has taught me that sticking to one sexual partner is good... What has been taught here is different [from what others teach us]. This is proper." (Peri-urban married male, Luanshya)

"Let me remind you about something, for example, we have been taught about why it is possible to have an HIV positive person and possible to be negative among a couple; that we did not know before. I have [also] learned that... there is a time when HIV may not be transmitted." (Peri-urban married male, Luanshya)

"What the drama groups teach is different from what we have been taught today because sometimes they just dance around and leave. This was detailed, deep and easy to understand." (Peri-urban married male)

"You know what? AIDS is like the national anthem, even when you know the song, you don't really know the meaning. The same applies to HIV; people know about it but are not changing. Therefore, they should just stop performing drama and begin to design posters and start having one-on-one discussions just like we are discussing here, because some people take those drama as just entertainment to sensitizations." (Peri-urban single male, Kazungula)

“It has taught me that sticking to one faithful sexual partner is good and we should let other people to know as well. It could have been even better if we were to be given copies at the pictures so that other people get to see them.” (Peri-urban married males, Luanshya)

Respondents widely agreed that the sexual networks represented by the visual aids reflected the situation on the ground in their communities.

“Such chains are there in our neighbourhood and we see them.” (Urban married female, Luanshya)

“If a girl with a lot of boyfriends gets sick, even the boyfriends get sick. So that is something that we have seen happen in our community.” (Rural single female, Mpongwe)

When asked whether the information conveyed using the visual aids was “new,” respondents had mixed responses. Some said they knew about sexual networks and their role in HIV transmission. Others said they knew that people can be connected to sexual networks; however, they did not realize sexual networks could speed up HIV transmission. While for some, all this information was entirely new.

Conclusion

This study reveals that CSP seems to be quite common in Zambia and cuts across geographical boundaries, age, sex, and marital status. It also reveals that the determinants of CSP are complex and can vary depending on the type of partnership. Many are motivated by structural causes, specifically poverty, and relationships are frequently transactional, wherein women tend to expect financial or material gain, while men use money to attract women into these relationships. Other determinants of CSP include problems within primary relationships such as sexual dissatisfaction, infidelity, or inability to have children. Peer and family pressure are also primary motivators of CSP.

There is no specific term for CSP in local languages; however, there is a large vocabulary of names for people who engage in CSP. Names for men tend to have positive connotations, while those for women tend to be derogatory. Names also differentiate between primary and secondary partners in some instances.

The study reveals that it is common for those involved in CSP to have unprotected sex and many only used condoms during the initial stages of a relationship. It is usually the male partner who determines whether and when condoms are used. Within marriage, condoms are rarely used and tend to be associated with infidelity and disease.

Poor communication between partners was common, and both married and unmarried partners in concurrent relationships generally find it difficult to go for VCT and disclose their sero-positive status to each other for fear of repercussions such as abuse,

accusations of infidelity, and divorce. Findings on the relationship between knowledge of one's sero-status and CSP behaviour were mixed. For some, testing negative would encourage them to adopt monogamous behaviors, whereas some of those who test positive may purposefully go on to infect others.

Overall, there was limited knowledge and a great deal of confusion and misinformation regarding the "window period." Generally, respondents seemed to know that having multiple sexual partners increases risk of HIV infection. However, it remains unclear to what extent respondents truly understood and appreciated the risks associated with concurrent sexual partnerships and resulting sexual networks in terms of HIV transmission. This is evidenced by the fact that for some participants, once these risks were explained in detail using visual aids, the information appeared to be new. Furthermore, most participants (both those that claimed to be aware of the risks associated with sexual networks and those that did not) highly appreciated the explanation of sexual networks and their role in HIV transmission using the visual aids. Overall, discussion on sexual networks and HIV transmission, and the role that CSP plays, revealed a gap in knowledge and the need for more in-depth interpersonal communication on these issues (or, at the very least, a demand for it). However, respondents said that knowledge about the risks of HIV alone was not necessarily enough to result in positive behaviour and social change because people have come to accept CSP as a norm, particularly for men.

Recommendations

Communication campaigns that seek to reduce HIV transmission by lowering the level of CSP in Zambian communities can use these findings to develop effective messaging that meets the needs and realities of people's lives. Specifically, it is recommended that communication campaigns:

1. Challenge social norms that make CSP not only acceptable but even expected.
2. Encourage partner reduction by emphasizing not only the risks associated with CSP but also the benefits of monogamous relationships.
3. Seek to improve communication between partners around issues of sexuality, sexual fulfilment in a monogamous relationships and the need to be more responsive to a partner's needs. Communication should include issues of trust and how it relates to condom use.
4. Provide alternative avenues of action for those that discover a partner's infidelity and highlight the risk of taking revenge through engaging in CSP oneself.
5. Encourage peers, particularly young women, to support each other in rejecting social norms around money, wealth and consumable goods and their acquisition through transactional sex. Instead, promote love, faithfulness and support as desirable qualities in a relationship.

6. Encourage parents and other adults to recognize their position as role models and acknowledge their power to affect the behaviour of children and young people in their families and communities.
7. Educate the population in an in-depth manner about sexual networks and the associated risks of HIV transmission, including an explanation of the window period.
8. Promote the use of condoms at all times and not just at the beginning of a relationship. Messages must specifically address the reasons that people stop condom use, provide benefits to continuing the behaviour, and encourage VCT and discussion with one's partner about mutual faithfulness before stopping condom use.
9. Facilitate VCT for couples and promote open discussion around disclosure of sero status and what they will do if either partner tests positive.
10. Emphasise how knowledge of HIV status can be empowering by informing decisions about current and future sexual behaviour as well as access to and use of ARVs. Messages should also address the fatalism that many people feel about HIV acquisition, especially those with prior risky behaviours.
11. Address those who intentionally try to infect others by informing them about the risks of re-infection by other strains of HIV and their ethical responsibility to their families and communities.
12. Empower women to reject norms around CSP for men and give them skills to confront men about their roles and responsibility in unfaithfulness, sero-positive status and infertility. Encourage men to support their female partners on these issues.
13. Tailor messages based on gender, age and the different types of relationships, such as casual relationships, long-term partnerships and marriage.

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Appendix A: Glossary of Names for People Engaging in CSP

While all names listed below were mentioned in the context of CSP, it is possible that some can also be used to refer to casual and commercial sexual partners.

Some words may have other meanings and uses besides those mentioned below, however, only meanings and uses that emerged during the FGDs have been listed.

Most of the words listed below can be used to refer to any male or female sexual partner (including spouses).

Notes on prefixes:

1. *Ba* (or *a*, *bo*, or *ma*, depending on language and context) denotes respect and is often used to address an older person.
2. *Chi* is a demeaning and derogatory prefix that means “huge.”
3. *Ka* means “small” and is the antonym of *chi*. It is a diminutive that can have derogatory or demeaning connotation.

Key:

Sex	
M	A name used for males
F	A name used for females
B	A name used for both males and females
Languages	
B	Bemba
T	Tonga
E	English
L	Lozi
I	Ila
N	Nyanja
La	Lamba
A	All Zambian languages

Prostitution/Fornication (Not always Derogatory)			
Name	Sex	Lang.	Meaning
<i>Umupulumushi</i>	B	B	Promiscuous person
<i>Ihule</i>	B	B	Prostitute (can be used with fondness)
<i>Umuchende</i>	B	B	Fornicator
<i>Ba-Namankwenkwe</i>	F	B	Prostitute
<i>Umuchende Mukalamba</i>	F	B	Chief fornicator
<i>Ihule Likalamba</i>	F	B	Chief prostitute
<i>Kadobelela-Mazhandu</i>	B	T	A person who allows anyone to have sex with him/her
<i>Mazhandu Family Bus Services</i>	B	B	A person who allows anyone to have sex with him/her
<i>Mucimbani</i>	F	L	Prostitute
<i>Bakambwe</i>	F	La	Prostitute

Confirming Existence of Other Sexual Partners			
Name	Sex	Lang.	Meaning
Spare Wheel	F	E	An extra sexual partner
Spare	F	E	An extra sexual partner
Side Plate	F	E	An extra sexual partner
<i>Mai Gulu</i>	F	A	Senior mother or senior wife
<i>Mai Nini</i>	F	B	Junior wife
<i>Abakashi Baiche</i>	F	B	Junior wife

Names Connoting Pride/Sexual Prowess for Men			
Name	Sex	Lang.	Meaning
<i>Kateya</i>	M	B	Player
Danger	M	E	A man who can get any woman he wants (and has many)
Sniper	M	E	A man who can get any woman he wants (and has many women)
<i>Ba-Swipa</i>	M	B	A man who can get any woman he wants (and has many women) , a man who "sweeps" up all the women
Towing Bar	M	E	A man who tows many women along

Names Reflecting Importance of Partner			
Name	Sex	Lang.	Meaning
<i>Bwana</i>	M	A	Refers to one of superior status (often to do with wealth or importance)
<i>A-Balume</i>	M	B	Husband
<i>Ba-Shifwe</i>	M	B	Our father
<i>Ba-Daddy</i>	M	B	Father
<i>Ba-Shikulu</i>	M	B	Grandfather
<i>Biggy</i>	M	A	Connotes respect/status
<i>Ba-Mayo</i>	F	B/E	Mother
<i>Mayo Wachibili</i>	F	B	Second mother or second wife
<i>Mai Gulu</i>	F	A	Senior mother or senior wife
<i>Ba-Nakulu</i>	F	B	Grandmother
Madam	F	E	Wife, or any female partner
<i>Ubuteko</i>	F	B	Government
<i>Ba-Mami</i>	F	B/E	Mother
Mummy	F	B/E	Mother
<i>Batata</i>	M	B	Father

Connoting Transactional Nature of Relationship			
Name	Sex	Lang.	Meaning
Tycoon	M	E	Is rich/provides a lot of money
<i>Maulu Abona</i>	M	L	My legs (provides money)
<i>Maulu Antonda</i>	M	L	Meaning not known
<i>Kawilo</i>	M	L	A wheel (provides money)
<i>Ka-Zali</i>	M	B	100 Kwacha note
Talktime Man	M	E	Provides money for pre-paid units for cell phones
Lotion Man	M	E	Provides money to buy lotions, creams
<i>Kafwa</i>	F	B	Helper
<i>Mayo Waluse</i>	F	B	Mother is kind (always willing to provide sexual relief or comfort)
<i>Chikwilili</i>	M	B	Person with a lot of money
Sugar Mummy	F	E	An older woman who provides financial support
Sugar Daddy	M	E	An older man who provides financial support
<i>Chi-Sugar Daddy</i>	M	B/E	Used with disdain

Providing Relief (all connote sexual relationships)			
Name	Sex	Lang.	Meaning
Pillow	M	E	Providing sexual comfort
<i>Uwakwisha Nankwe</i>	F	B	Someone to "chat" or "pass time" with (implies sex)
<i>Wakutushisha</i>	F	B	One with whom I can have some "rest" (implies sex)
<i>Mayo Waluse</i>	F	B	Mother is kind (always willing to provide sexual relief or comfort)
Comforter	M	E	Used to avenge a male partner's infidelity

Love or Friendship			
Name	Sex	Lang.	Meaning
Boyfriend	M	E	Boyfriend
<i>Ba-Boi</i>	M	B	Boy
<i>Ba-Chibusa</i>	M	B	Friend
<i>Ba-See</i>	F	B	Friend
<i>Inkeche</i>	M	B	Colloquial similar to “chick” or “babe”
<i>Chi-Sweetheart</i>	M	B/E	Sweetheart
Dearest	F	E	Dearest
My love	F	E	My love
Girlfriend	F	E	Girlfriend
<i>Bo-Mulatiwa</i>	F	L	Loved one
<i>Mulatiwa Wahae</i>	B	L	His/her beloved

Cross-Generational Relationships			
Name	Sex	Lang.	Meaning
Sugar Mummy	F	E	An older woman who provides financial support
Sugar Daddy	M	E	An older man who provides financial support
<i>Chi-Sugar Daddy</i>	M	B/E	Used with disdain
<i>Chi-Mudala</i>	M	B	Man (used with disdain)

Trust or Permanency			
Name	Sex	Lang.	Meaning
Trustee	B	E	Trusted to provide support (male) and to be faithful (female)
<i>Zemwine</i>	M	A	Owner (the man does not have other sexual partners)
<i>Uluchetekelo</i>	F	B	Trusted to be the only female partner
<i>Chaliyichindika</i>	F	B	Well behaved (i.e. faithful)

Code Names			
Name	Sex	Lang.	Meaning
<i>Shikulu</i>	M	B	Grandfather
Cousin	M	E	Cousin
<i>Ka-Brother</i>	M	B	Brother (derogatory diminutive)
<i>Ulunsonga</i>	F	B	Type of plant
<i>Kabudo</i>	B	B	Small girl/boy

Secondary/Peripheral/Unimportant Status			
Name	Sex	Lang.	Meaning
<i>Lila Bayi</i>	B	B	Not seen very often, not cared for much
Sperm Chamber	F	E	Used only for sex
<i>Ndelyako Fye</i>	F	B	Am only "eating" and will leave after that (implies sex)
<i>Ba-Ntomba Ndeya</i>	F	B	Fuck me so I can leave
<i>Ihule Lyandi</i>	F	B	My prostitute
<i>Ba-Chende Bandi</i>	F	B	My fornicator
<i>Mwakutushisha Fye</i>	F	B	Only for "resting" (implies sex)
<i>Wakupuishishako Ichilaka</i>	F	B	Just for "quenching thirst" (implies sex)
<i>Mai Nini</i>	F	B	Junior wife
<i>Gwasha Ma-Ila</i>	F	I	Help the Ila ⁸ (with sex)
<i>Tusabulozi</i>	F	L	Help the Lozi ⁹ (with sex)
Comforter	M	E	Used to avenge a male partner's infidelity
<i>Ba-PabENCHI</i>	M	B	Substitute (sits on the bench in a football game)
<i>Akachabechabe</i>	M	B	Worthless person
Timewaster	M	E	Not worth the time or effort
<i>Akakabwe</i>	M	B	Worthless and will not sleep with him if not in mood
<i>Ba-chacha</i>	M	B	Other people have used and left it/worthless
<i>Chigonena</i>	M	B	Hanger on
<i>Abakashi Baiche</i>	F	B	Junior wife
<i>Ka-Guy</i>	M	B	Small guy (diminutive)
<i>Ka-Brother</i>	M	B	Small brother (diminutive)

⁸ Ethnic group

⁹ Ethnic group

Other Names			
Name	Sex	Lang.	Meaning
<i>Chidugude</i>	M	?	Meaning not known
<i>Chitantoleshamo</i>	M	B	Meaning not known
<i>Munkombwe</i>	M	L	Meaning not known
<i>Umukambule</i>	F	L	Meaning not known
<i>Mazibe</i>	F	?	Meaning not known
<i>Kalungu Kamoyo</i>	F	?	Meaning not known
<i>Lichompi</i>	F	?	Meaning not known
<i>Chimbwi</i>	F	B	Hyena (coward)
America	F	E	Beautiful woman but also dangerous because she kills by infection (derived from killings of e.g. Iraqis by America)
Imitations	M	E	Meaning not known
<i>Kashioli</i>	F	L	Thief
<i>Igo-Igo</i>	F	A	Derived from men that sell wares in the streets to make a living
<i>Shaambai Joe</i>	M	?	Meaning not known
Dubai	F	E	Beautiful woman but also dangerous because she kills by infection
<i>Tushioli</i>	F	L	Thief (plural of <i>Kashioli</i>)

Appendix B: Discussion Guide

Focus Group Discussion Guidelines: Concurrent Sexual Partnerships

“Thanks for coming, we are doing some research on AIDS. It’s a big problem here and we are trying to understand it better so we can try to help. One thing we know is that a lot of people are getting HIV through sex, and so we want to ask you some questions about sexual relationships around here. All information will be kept confidential, and we are not interested in who is having sex with whom, but rather in the general patterns of behaviour/relationships and so on.”

Defining and ‘naming’ concurrent sexual partnerships (CSP) in the context of the types of relationships people are seen/ known to have in Zambian communities:

1. A lot of people here are married, right? Tell me about married relationships—is it always one man-one woman, or are there sometimes more than one partner each? Do people who are married have sexual relationships with people they aren’t married to? Tell me about these relationships. What about sexual relationships involving people who aren’t married, does that ever happen? Do people who are not married have sexual relationships with more than one person at a time? Tell me about these relationships.
2. For each relationship mentioned, ask:
 - a. What is the local name(s) for such a relationship?
 - a. How long does this sexual relationship last?
 - b. Is this typically an exclusive/monogamous relationship?
 - c. How likely is someone to use a condom in this relationship? Why? If not, why not? If they do, when do they use them? When do they usually stop?
3. [Ask this question only if no one has brought up CSPs] Does it ever happen that a man or woman has sexual relationships with two people at the same time? Are their names for that? How long do the relationships typically overlap?

How much CSP is perceived to be going on? Who is seen to be involved?

4. Are [use local terminologies for CSPs] common in this community? Who is mostly involved? If a man has two or more partners, is one of them considered the “main” partner? Who is usually the “main” partner and what is she called? Who are some of the “other” partners and what are they called? If a woman has two or more partners, is one of them considered the “main” partner? Who is usually the “main” partner and what is he called? Who are some of the “other” partners and what are they called?
5. How many of you know at least one person—please don’t tell us who—in your circle of family and friends who is involved in such a relationship? *Ask people to raise their hands.* How many of you know two or more people in

your circle of family and friends who are involved in such relationships? *Ask people to raise their hands.*

6. Does a man usually know if his partner has another partner? How would he react if he found out? Does a woman usually know if her partner has another partner? How would she react?
7. Would a person consider themselves “faithful” to their main partner if that partner never found out about their other sexual relationships?

Motivations for CSP and monogamy

8. Why do people engage in [use local terminologies for CSPs]? Anything else?
9. If people knew that having more than one partner (or having a partner who has other sexual relationships) is likely to increase their risk of HIV, would they change their behaviour? How and why? Would they use condoms more? Why or why not? Would they get tested for HIV? Why and how often? Would they encourage their partner(s) to get tested and/or disclose their HIV status?
10. Would knowing you are HIV positive affect whether you had more than one partner? If so, why? If not, why not? Would knowing you are HIV negative affect whether you had more than one partner? If so, why? If not, why not?
11. Would knowing your partner was HIV positive affect your relationship with him/her? If so, how? If not, why not? Would it affect your behaviour in general? If so, how? If not, why not? Would knowing your partner was HIV negative affect your relationship with him/her? If so, how? If not, why not? Would it affect your behaviour in general? If so, how? If not, why not?
12. What, if anything, could friends, family members or communities do to support people who choose to have just one partner at a time?

CSP risk perceptions:

13. Do you think [use local terminologies for CSPs] can put one at risk of getting HIV? Why? Why not? When are such relationships more or less risky?
14. Does it ever happen that a man or woman is HIV positive, but his/her partner is not? [Get agreement that this does happen.] Does anyone know why? When someone is infected with HIV, when do you think that person is most infectious or most likely to pass the virus on to their sexual partner(s)? Why? What are some other factors that can contribute to increased chances of passing HIV from an HIV-positive person to an HIV-negative sexual partner? [Facilitator should then explain the “window period” and how sexual networks lead to exponential HIV transmission using visual aids. He/she will be provided the necessary training prior to the field work and given visual aids to explain.] Can you explain to me in your own words what is going on in this picture? Do you think this is the

situation in your community/area? Why or why not? Did you know that people might be connected in this type of sexual network before today?

Appendix C: Visual Aids

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