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I: Thank you for your time and agreeing to be part of this discussion.

Can you tell me what types of illness/problems do you treat provide services for in this community?

R: The problem that I treat, is like epilepsy, I put the drugs in the water, and put in the nostril, or I can take a little that is like ash, and blow it to get into the nostril, and when you treat that epilepsy and it's gone. There is another drug that I put here (respondent points at the back of the neck) with a razor, so that the illness doesn't stiffen you again.

I: Epilepsy is one of the illnesses you treat, can you explain to me what other illnesses do you treat before we come back to epilepsy?

R: I treat those who cannot give birth, there are many types of illness like for, it's called *mioyo* or what... like ulcers, this that eats the chest? That I treat, there are mouth with sores, if there is a man without strength, I give them medicine, if they don't have enough strength, I treat many things

I: Those many illnesses are what I wanted to hear, although you have mentioned few of them like for women who cannot give birth...

R: I also do midwife services, if the baby in a woman's womb is not in a good position, or she gives birth and the placenta comes out first, there is a drug we apply, on it and goes back inside to give the baby room to come out, but if it comes out and it's in the hospital, you must go for surgery, because if it blocks the baby, and it cannot come out, but there are traditional herbs to take it back.

I: Any other?

R: Drugs are many types; you know there are those that have their secrets, everyone has their own problem if they come

I attend to them.

I: I also heard you saying that you attend to epileptic patients, what names are used in this community to refer to epilepsy?

R: In dholuo language?

I: Any that they use...in this community.

R: *Ndulume*

I: What is the meaning of *ndulume*?

R: It means epilepsy. And there is a type of epilepsy that makes a person fall down, in a fire, and it's not easy to treat compared to the one that did not fall in the fire.

I: Going back to *ndulume*, what exactly does the word mean, or what is derived from?

R: Even me I found it being called that.

I: And apart from that *ndulume*, is there any name they use to refer to epilepsy?

R: No, I just know that one for dholuo.

I: There is no other name you know they use to refer to epilepsy?

R: When it's starting to develop, in a child it was called *funia*.

I: And do you know the meaning of the name, *funia*?

R: That one comes from people of Siaya, Ugenya: *ndulume* is from south Nyanza.

I: And what does it mean?

R: It means *ndulume*.

I: And apart from those dholuo names are there any other that are used in the community? Even by other people who are not luos?

R: No, those are the ones I have heard.

I: And you said you don't know what they both mean?

R: Yes, because I found our grandfathers calling them that. Even this traditional healing job was left to me by my grandfather. He also used to treat people.

I: As we continue, with this epilepsy, what do you think is the main cause of epilepsy?

R: I cannot tell because there is that for passing by the road someone throws it at you, and also there is that one that starts like malaria, and if no treatment was sought for that, it advances to epilepsy.

I: The one which you said is from the roadside you don't know what causes it?

R: Someone will take it from themselves and throw it to someone else that is passing by, and he will pick it and will start to faint and he was not fainting before.

I: And why would someone throw it to another person?

R: So that it can leave them to go disturb another one.

I: Previously when you mentioned names used to refer to epilepsy, you had said there is that one type of fire?

R: You know epilepsy makes you fall on a fire or in water, and if you fall on the fire and don't get burned, its easier to treat than that one who fell on fire and got burned.

I: So you are saying there is epilepsy for fire and another for water, why is that?

R: Because that is where you fall, either in water or on fire.

I: Why is that so?

R: That one I don't know...But I just know water and fire.

I: You have said you do not know what the main cause for epilepsy is, but what do you think are the other causes of epilepsy?

R: Like long time ago, we were told that epilepsy comes from clans, illnesses were from clans, if your relative had that illness, you will give birth to a child with that illness, even twins were given birth from clans.

I: When you say if your person had it, what do you mean?

R: For example your family, like if your grandfather had it, or whoever had it...it was a must you get it, but now it has become so much.

I: Again when you mentioned the types, like the one for roadside, fire, water, you also said there is one that start like Malaria?

R: Yes, there is that...it starts in a child like malaria, the child gets stiff, and the mouth starts frothing.

I: I get you correctly, is it that its malaria that causes it or?

R: It's like malaria causes it because if it's a child, he gets stiff and the mouth froths. If you do not take immediate action to seek treatment, it will get severe and become epilepsy.

I: So it will turn out to be epilepsy?

R: Yes because you delayed to get treatment, and it gets worse, you will see the child getting stiff.

I: And now this epilepsy types, let's start with the one for fire and water, what is their difference?

R: This is just that epilepsy will either make you fall on fire or in water, and that's what makes it kill you, but now if you fall and there is a good samaritan near and he rescues you and you will be taken to hospital. Now they used to say that if you didn't get burnt, it was easy to

treat you.

I: And why was it easy and this other one was not easy to treat?

R: The elders would say that: it was easy to treat the one who is not burned, but the one who is burned...It is difficult.

I: Did they say why this was so, that it's easy to treat the one who hasn't fallen on fire than the one who fell on fire?

R: They did not say why...

I: What is the difference between the one that is thrown at you and the one for water?

R: Yes there is that one where you are just fine then somebody decides to throw it at you, when you passing by the road, you find those things have been thrown by the roadside, and that's when it leaves the other person and gets into you.

I: What kind of things?

R: You can find like money thrown on the road and if you pick it, the illness gets into you, so it's like bait, you may never know what they have done. You just pick money because you have seen money in front of you, only that you just get epilepsy.

I: So If I pick the money from the epileptic person I also get it? That is how it's thrown, through money?

R: Yes.

I: And what else can they use to throw it at me, apart from money?

R: It's just money, mostly they use money.

I: What is the reason for using that money?

R: Because they use charm on that money...and declare that

whoever picks this money first, may the illness leave my child and get into them.

I: Now let us come to the difference between these one and the one for Malaria.

R: The one for malaria comes if you leave the malaria untreated and it worsens and become epilepsy, because you are supposed to rush the child to hospital. There is water that is drained from here (*shows back of the neck*). Once they drain that water the child will be okay.

I: Now let talks about the other one, that you had mentioned it's passed from one generation to the next.

R: Yes that one is traditional, from one generation to the next...

I: When you say tradition, generation to generation, could you tell me more?

R: If your father had the illness, he will have children, but you might not give birth to children with it, but your children can be the ones that will produce children with epilepsy.

I: And there are those that are for spiritual, I don't know if you have heard of them?

R: Spiritual how?

I: I don't know if to call them religious, spiritual causes?

R: Those requires religious people, the Holy Ghost Churches and those ones are difficult.

I: Could you tell me how you understand it, or what you might have heard?

R: So they tell you that epilepsy is caused by spirits or what? What I heard is that they go to pray for you and

those spirit for epilepsy are exchanged with *Dhoch*, I heard they say it exchanged with *lockiny dhoch*.

I: What does the word *lockiny dhoch*, mean?

R: It means exchanging for someone.

I: What do they exchange? From what to what?

R: Like now, let me say that you don't have epilepsy, and you are an adult who has never had it, all over sudden you realize you have epilepsy, that's what they say, *lockiny dhoch*, they have exchanged for you...

I: From not having the illness to having it?

R: Yes.

I: Do you know any other cause of epilepsy?

R: No.

I: Only those you have mentioned?

R: Yes.

I: Please tell us about some of the cases of epilepsy you have treated?

R: There is that type that stiffens a child, older ones, and for that I give the medicine that is put in water since it's in powder form, I sieve the water for a while. The medicine is dried and then grounded to make a powder, I mix with water if it's for a child, then use a clean piece of cloth to put the medicine in the child's nostril drop on each side. And also it can be for an adult, but for adults I can use the powder, all they do is breath in the powder through the nostril.

I: I would like for you to tell us some of the case of epilepsy you have treated.

R: The most recent case of a patient I treated was from

Kayole, the child was 10 years old, he had started stiffening, the child was brought by another lady who was directed to my place through a phone call from upcountry, since I just stay by the roadside, she was directed to come and ask for (name mentioned) she came with the child and I treated the child, he got well and he even now goes to school.

I: Maybe you tell us more about the child stiffening?

R: The child would get stiff even while at school, foaming from the mouth and his eyes...and urinating on himself.

I: You said that's the most recent, any other case?

R: The others are just foam from the mouth and urinating on themselves.

I: How old was this child?

R: He was 10 years old.

I: Is there any other case you have treated?

R: The others are small children, and there is a Legion person I treated.

I: Maybe you can tell us more about that legion person?

R: That legion person also used to get fits

I: And when you say legion person, what do you mean by Legion?

R: Legion is Legion of Mary Church, the person goes to that church, they put long robes and they sing "ooh ooh samariaaaa"

I: How was the treatment, can you tell us?

R: For that one, it was difficult but God helped me and I treated him.

I: Why do you say it was difficult...can you tell us?

R: There are some illnesses that are difficult..

I: **For him was it another illness or epilepsy?**

R: It was epilepsy...and it was difficult because I don't know if he was possessed by spirits or what...?

I: **Why do you say he was possessed by spirits?**

R: Now I used some medicine that when I put it in water it turns and looks like ribena, I used it on him, he was to bathe with the water and also drink it.

I: **You say the medicine looks like ribena?**

R: The medicine has the color of ribena, and I mix it with another one. I gave him this first, to bathe and drink..

I: **What color is this ribenas?**

R: Ribena has a color like this one.. (*Points to a bag on the table that is red in color*)

I: **Color red?**

R: Yes, that's what I gave him first then I treated him, but He got well.

I: **You gave him to drink and bath?**

R: Yes he baths with it for 4 days, and drink for 4 days, Then I also make a small cut at the back of the neck and put the medicine.

I: **Are you the one who makes the medicine? and why is it red in color? Is there a reason?**

R: I have all kind of medicines, and each medicine is for a particular illness, when you come to my place you can see sacks of medicines, you should know even when you go the forest, that you are picking this, to treat this, you should not be brought for.

I: **So you have a variety for many illnesses, and for epilepsy, do you have various types or its one particular herb?**

R: I have several for epilepsy, another is in the form of seeds...

I: **So how many types are there for epilepsy?**

R: I have many types...

I: **And you had said the other one is used for bathing?**

R: Yes but this one is a different type...

I: **Okay, going back to where we were, you had said the treatment was difficult, that the person had spirits, can you tell us more?**

R: When he was brought to me he said he is seeing his grandfather, and I don't know his grandfather, now the medicine I gave is for exercising the spirits. The grandfather he sees is a person that died long time ago, but you don't know.

I: **So he said he was seeing...?**

R: He sees his grandfathers, now I asked myself, grandfathers in a situation like this, and he was getting fits, I had to give him that medicine to use in bathing and drinking, then treated him. After that, I also treated another lady from Dandora, she was a university student, I don't know if she picked it? she was a luhya, and she was brought to me.

I: **What did she pick?**

R: She picked that illness, because she didn't have it before, when she was in class, that's when she started to get fits, foaming from the mouth and urinating. So the father brought her to me, and I treated her and she got well. She even lives near Undugu in Dandora, do you know Undugu?

I: **The lady from university, you also gave her for bathing or?**

R: Yes I gave for bathing and drinking.

I: Is the medicine for bathing still the same with that she drinks?

R: Yes you give a mixture of several medicine put in 2 litre bottle, so when they go home they will mix with water when bathing, but will put it aside for drinking. When bathing with it you don't use soap, you wash the face and even the head..

I: And how many days does she use to bathe with it?4 days?

R: 4 days for bathing and 4 days for drinking for males, but for females it's 3 days.

I: Why is it 4 days for male and 3 days for females?

R: It's different because just like after giving birth, it takes 4 days before male children can be taken outside, and 3 days before a female child can be taken outside, to bask in the sun. It's just nowadays that people have done away with those practices. Long time, in upcountry, 3 days after giving birth, the child would be taken outside, around 9a.m or 10a.m, and you shave their hair, then buy food, old women come and cook, and eat.

I: If I got you correctly, so it's just like in the olden days when a male child was born, and it took 4 days before they could be taken outside, so these 4 days are still the same like for the epileptic patients that you give the medicine for bathing and drinking, and 3 days for a female?

R: Yes 4 days for males and 3 days for female, bathing and drinking the medicine, and the university lady got well also.

I: And is there any other?

R: No.

I: Is there anything else maybe you did not mention about your experience while treating epilepsy?

R: No that's all.

I: Why do you think it's important for people with epilepsy to come and seek treatment from a traditional healer such as yourself?

R: For me, I have seen those that I treated and they got well referring others to come and get help from me, they even give them my cell phone number to call me and bring their children for treatment.

I: And the people referring others to you are they within your community or they are outside?

R: Outside the community, from Kisumu and even from Narok, Kikuyu, Githunguri and other places.

I: So they refer other because of the treatment they got from you?

R: Yes, you know let's say, I get help from here, when I hear someone with a similar problem I will refer them, and tell them where to find and give the contacts, in case they are not able to take you there. They can even call me and inform me that they have sent someone to me and they give me that person's number.

I: And apart from those referrals, why do you think its important for people with epilepsy to come to you for treatment? Any other than the one for those who came to you and you treated them and they got well?

R: Because they get help from me.

I: Would you tell us about the specific things or objects you use to treat epilepsy? Yes, you had mentioned medicine, but other specific objects?

R: Medicine or?

I: Anything, or any object you use.

R: One, medicine I said I put in a bottle, I take a clean piece of white cloth, and use it to put a drop of the

medicine in one nostril, and another drop in the other nostril.

I: Why do you use the white piece of cloth?

R: So that the powder in the medicine doesn't pass through, and gets direct into the nostril. I use a cloth like this one, I use a spoon to put the medicine.

I: Is the medicine in powder form or a solution?

R: It's in powder form, but for a person who it doesn't get in quickly, I use it in water, I put in a medicine bottle, add a little water, sieve and I put it for you.

I: And do you have to use a white cloth?

R: No, just any clean piece of cloth.

I: So you put the medicine in the...

R: Yes I put the medicine in the morning when sun rises and in the evening.

I: Why put it in the morning, when the sun rises?

R: Because when the sun is too hot... (*Speaks in dholuo*) it makes one sneeze a lot and they can nose bleed.

I: So you don't give when the sun is hot?

R: Yes when the sun is too hot its makes one to sneeze, but a time like now the sun is still young you put, and it removes that...

I: Any other object that you use? you have mentioned medicine, piece of cloth? How do you make the medicine or what do you use to make them?

R: I grind them, I use a traditional grinder to grind, and I go to upcountry... who knows the traditional grinder? I spread something and kneel down on it, the grinder is a stone that was used long time ago, and I grind the dried herbs until soft then I filter.

I: I have heard you also use the grinder, is there any other object you use?

R: No...but there are herbs I have to dig deep in the ground, and other I just use the bark... for the ones I dig, I dry them since they are thick, I get them from the bushes. There are some which are as big as this table, I dig and cut just a part you cannot carry it all since its heavy, you dig with a garden hoe.

I: You have told me about where you get the herbs and what you use there, now what about here, where you treat people, is there anything else you use?

R: Yes there is also medicine I cook, people take it while it's prepared...

I: How do you prepare it?

R: I use firewood and a big sufuria to boil it, but in the upcountry I would use a pot. Long time we used pots to cook githeri, or even ugali.

I: Is there anything we might have forgotten you wanted to say about the objects you use?

R: No.

I: Okay, thank you for that.

I2: You said that you boil some herbs, could you tell us the ones that you use on epilepsy?

R: For epilepsy I just use the grounded one, the one for bathing with, the dried one, when you put in water it turns to the colour like for ribena...

I2: So for epilepsy you use the one for bathing and...?

R: The dried one that is in powder form.

I2: And where do you put those ones?

R: I soak in a bucket and then put in small bottles, like the ones for drugs.

I: Those are the ones you give for drinking?

R: For putting in the nostrils on both sides, for bathing it's in a 2 litre bottle.

I: And you mix it with water?

R: Yes.

I: The ones that you boil, are they for epilepsy?

R: No, those are for different illnesses, like ulcers.

I: For epilepsy you do not boil?

R: No I don't.

I2: When you were speaking you said you give for bathing and also drinking, that is not while you are treating epilepsy?

R: That when they are seeing things, like spirits, being possessed, you exorcize them of that before you treat them.

I: So the seeing of spirit is not for epileptic people? Because you also said for those who you treated for epilepsy, they would say they are seeing spirits of their grandfather?

R: Yes he was seeing his long time dead grandfather, and I don't even know him.

I: And that was epilepsy?

R: Yes it came with epilepsy.

I: It's okay and thank you for that.

You talked about the referrals how people are referred from Narok, Kisumu...describe to us how the demand for your service to treat epilepsy has been in this community.

R: When I treated epilepsy for one person and he benefited,

if he sees another person with the same problem, he refers them also to get treatment.

I: And how has the demand been? Do they come a lot or they don't come at all?

R: They have been coming a lot...

I: When you say a lot, please tell me more...like maybe how many per week, or per month?

R: In a month I can treat like 3.

I: And are they all from this community of korogocho?

R: If you are a doctor from within people will not accept you, they don't see as if you can treat, so for me the people I treat come from far.

I: Why do they think that the one who is near will not treat them? Tell us the reason

R: For that I don't know...I cannot tell if they are jealous, or what.

I: So people from within the community don't come?

R: Yes...like there is another lady, who had something in their stomach, she had been referred to me from Kisumu, and she was also pregnant, she was to be taken to the theatre, she came I gave her medicine and now she is okay and very smart.

I: And going back to epileptic patients, people from within the communities do not come for treatment?

R: There are those who come to get the medicine, if you want to buy I also sell medicine, because there those that come when their children start getting fits, and shaking their heads, so I sell medicine for them. So I give direction on what they will do, and I also ask how old the child is, and I direct them how they will go to use on the child.

I: And for epilepsy you treat children from which age?

R: For children it starts from 1 year and above.

I: So you said people from within do not come often?

R: They just come to buy medicine.

I And you said the reason is because they either don't think you can treat, or they are jealous? What other reason?

R: I don't know...maybe they have their own people to treat them.

I: Do they appreciate your services?

R: Yes they do...

I: What makes you say they appreciate it, or how do you know?

R: They appreciate because someone can go and stay for some times, then when they come back they bring some shopping to me and tell me that they have come to say thank you. There is even one who bought a dress and a wrapper for me, and said that she had come to say thank you for what I had done for her. I told her that is God's doing, he is the one who gave me this job to be helping people.

I: What else show that they appreciate your work apart from the gifts?

R: If someone has not gotten well from your treatment he cannot bring even one single packet of flour for you, or even a quarter kilogram of sugar.

I: So they buy gifts for you, I know you had mentioned that they refer other people to you; give out your contacts...

R: Yes they tell other people too, and that's a way of bringing more customers. They can call me and ask if I am there and say that they are sending someone over to me, and they gave them my number so they can come to be treated.

I: Apart from that giving of contacts and directing them to you, bringing gifts, is there any other way you can tell

they appreciate your services?

R: I believe because when I treat someone they get well, and once they get well I thank God, because he is the one who gave me that job, and even the medicine was not mine, its Gods.

I: How do you know when they get well?

R: They come back to tell me that they got well.

I: How do you know when a particular case of treatment has failed?

R: For me God has helped me, because there has not been any instance that I failed, even for the ones trying to get pregnant, they come back when they are heavily pregnant, and I also like to feel the pregnancy to know how the baby is positioned.

I: You have said pregnant women, are they also epileptic patients?

R: No, those aren't epileptic.

I: I was asking for epileptic patients?

R: If there had been a failed treatment I would not be getting referrals, the way I do.

I: What if you failed, how would you know?

R: I pray to God, and he helps me, because he is the one who gave me the job.

I: So there has never been any instance you failed in a treatment?

R: No.

I: What happens when someone with epilepsy dies?

R: If they fall and die because of epilepsy?

I: Just dying due to epilepsy

R: In the olden days it was said that if an epileptic person fell, you should not touch them, even if they fell in

water.

I: Why, what was the reason?

R: It was said you would also get the disease, that's was when I was young, I don't know why they said so, I didn't ask my grandfather.

I: Are there any rituals that are done if a person dies of epilepsy? maybe because of his spirits?

R: He is just buried; I don't know... I have never seen.

I: Is there anything else you would like to add about your experience with epilepsy treatment?

R: No, me I thank God that all my services have been successful, I have never failed and once I start treatment it ends well, I thank God even if I wake up at 6 am I pray.

I: I hear you say now and then that you never failed because you pray to God, so is it because of God or the medicine you use, that's why you have never failed?

R: You know even if you are using medicine, even when you go to hospital you must pray to God so that the medicine works, he is the one who created those medicines and even gave you the treatment job, even the knowledge to identify those medicine, you cannot just know which herb is for which illness.

I: So you treat but God come first also...let my colleague seek some clarification she has.

I2: For me I just want to ask one thing, there was a time when you started talking you said you cut...you used a particular name, *kuchanja* or I don't know what?

R: I incise, after giving you the medicine for like 2 months, I incise you with some medicine at the back of the neck, so that you don't get fits again.

I2: You do that to epileptic patients?

R: Yes.

I2: What do you use to incise?

R: I use a razor blade, I just do a small cut and put on the medicine

I2: What does that medicine do?

R: That one now enters inside, and you don't get the fits again.

I: When you say you incise here...for someone listening they wouldn't know where exactly...so it's behind the neck?

R: Yes...

I: Is a razor also another object you use in treatment of epilepsy?

R: Yes.

I: And also for the one you give the medicine to drink, how many days do they take it?

R: Those that are seeing objects and things that I don't see, they are the ones I give that one first, before I give them the one for the nostril, and then I put the one I incise at the back of the neck.

I: And you said you incise after 2 months of treatment, so that means all your patients they must come back after 2 months for the incisor?

R: Yes, and you also have to tell me the day you are coming back how the child has been, not just waiting and then you come after the months.

I2: You don't incise on the first visit when a patient comes?

R: No, they have to tell if they have been okay, then that's when I incise.

I: So the one you are told is okay, when they come and tell you that they are okay, is when you incise on the neck, and for the one who comes and says they are not okay, you will still wait for 2 months?

R: Yes

I: Why do you have to wait for 2 months?

R: Yes, there is a reason for that, and its tradition, but I don't know how to say it...

I: Just say it in that language we can get a translator.

R: *Juogi*... (speaks in dholuo)

I: So it's because of *Juogi*, what does *juogi* do, or why can't it wait for a week or so?

R: No that has to wait until its say, even for the medicine I use before I treat someone I must see it in a dream, if it's a small child you want her to go and get you the medicine, it should be one who has not received her menses, she has no knowledge of many things, if it's a small child you go and throw money at the place you want to get the herbs, because you can even get a snake there, where you want to get the herbs for treating the person...

I: So you have to go with a child to get you the herbs?

R: When I was still menstruating I would go with them, but now since I don't any more I just go by myself.

I: Why is it that it has to be a child that has not started menses, is not aware of many things is the one who can only get the herbs?

R: Because she has not sinned, and is not dirty, for big people they might have gone to husbands, that is not good.

I2: Let me ask, if the small child goes to get the herbs, the snake cannot be seen anywhere there?

R: No... and it cannot even harm them.

I: And when you used to go with a child, do you go with your own child or other peoples?

R: I would go with my own child, and it can be a girl or a boy, so long as they have not sinned, haven't gone to be with men, or haven't seduced girls...

I: For boys since they don't have mensens, can you go with any age?

R: Young boys only, like from the age of 5 years and below.

I: But boys do not have mensens; why not go with even older ones?

R: No, they know a lot, even more than you.

I: And this is also epileptic medicine?

R: Yes.

I: Thank you for that, I don't know if colleague has any other issue?

I2: I am just curious, now this medicine that you give to be taken for 4 days and 3 days to female, after that then what?

R: They continue with the one they put in the nostril...

I: And for the nostril is for how many days?

R: Morning and evening, for one week.

I: And the epilepsy goes?

R: Yes it does.

I: What if they do all this and it still doesn't go?

R: It goes, there hasn't been one that didn't go.

I2: Then why come back after 2 months?

R: So I can incise them.

I2: **So that it doesn't reoccur?**

R: Yes.

I: **Thank you for your time.**

[End of audio]