



Growing up in a time of AIDS: Abaqophi basOkhayeni Abaqinile Children's Radio project

Ukukhuluma ngqo /Straight talk

Promise, 9 years old, 2007

Promise: Igama lami ngiwuPromise, ngineminyaka ewu-9, ngisaphethe oka-10, oka-10 ngizowuhlanganisa ngoSeptember. Ukuthi mina, ngi-dark ngifana noJabu ebusweni kodwa uJabu umpofu. UJabu usisi ongilamayo.

My name is Promise. I am 9 years old, almost 10. I will be 10 in September. I am dark and my face looks like Jabu's, but Jabu is lighter-skinned than I am. Jabu is the sister I come after.

Mina into eyangiphatha kabi ukuthi abasheshanga ukusitshela ukuthi ubaba uyagula. Sasilokhu sizwa nje umama alokhu aphaatheke kabi enhliziyweni yakhe kanti ubaba uyagula. Mina futhi abangitshelanga ukuthi ubaba useshonile Ngezwa ngabogogo nabobabomkhulu bekhuluma. Kwasuke lapho kwaba umngcwabo. Ekhaya ngakusasa umakaNontando wangincenga ngoswidi kwazifanela. Bathi asambe siyophosa igabade, kwasuke lapho thina sakhala.

The thing that really upset me is that they did not tell us in time that my father was sick. We used to hear that Mama was feeling bad in her heart because my father was sick. Also, they did not tell me once my father had died. I heard it about it in passing when my grandmother and grandfather were talking. The next day was his funeral at home. Nontando's mother tried to persuade me with sweets to go to the graveside to throw soil into the grave [pay my last respects]. After that we cried.

SFX: Umsindo wenkukhu – *chickens clucking*

Promise: Ngihlala nomama, nobhuti, nogogo, nosisi, nabomzala. Lapha ekhaya kunezimbuli, amakati, ikati nezinkukhu, nenja. Kunezindlu ezingu-8. Kulo-round kulala ugogo.

I live with my mother, my brother, grandmother, my sister and my cousins. Here at home there are goats, cats, chickens and a dog. There are 8 rooms. My grandmother sleeps in this rondavel.

Manje sengiya emlilweni ngiyiqophela khona ugogo ngoba ugogo uthanda umlilo.

Now I am going to the fireside, I am going to record grandmother there because she likes [sitting next to] the fire.

Promise: Sawubona.

Hello.

- Gogo: Yebo.
Yes.
- Promise: Unjani?
How are you?
- Gogo: Ngiyaphila.
I am well.
- Promise: Uthandelani ukotha umlilo?
Why do you like the fire?
- Gogo: Ngiyawotha angithi umlilo sengigugile akusafani nalokhuya ngisemusha, manje ngiyawuthanda-ke umbaso ngoba sengigugile.
I like fire, because you see I am old, it's not like when I was young, now I love the fire because I am old.
- Promise: Wazizwa unjani ngenkathi kushona umntanakho?
How did you feel when your child died?
- Gogo: Ngazizwa kuba buhlungu enhliziyweni yami ngoba akagulelanga kum uqhamuke egula lapha kade esebenza khona. Ngabangeka isibizi ngakhohlwa ukuthi ngithini ngathi mina, ey, cha kulungile ngoba yize engasekho emhlabeni ngizozigcina izingane ngizoziphakela. Ngiyaziphakela namanje.
I was terribly upset he wasn't with me when he was sick. When he came back from his workplace, he arrived here sick. I was confused and didn't know what to do and I said oh, no, it's all right because even if he's not here I will take care of the children, I will feed them. I am still feeding them even now.
- Promise: Ngiyabonga.
Thank you.
- Gogo: Nami ngiyabonga.
Thank you, too.
- SFX Umsindo wokuwasha izimpahla - *sound of clothes being hand-washed*
- Promise: Mama uwashani?
What are you washing Mama?
- Mama: Ngiwasha amashethi osisi bakho oNobuhle esikole.
I'm washing your sisters' shirts, Nobuhle and others, for school.
- Promise: Bengisacela ukukubuza imibuzo.
I would like to ask you some questions.
- Mama: Ungakhululeka ungibuze.
Feel free to ask me.
- Promise: Yini eyayenza ukuthi ningasitsheli thina zingane ubaba egula nangenkathi eseshonile?
What was your reason for not telling us children that our father was sick, and also that he had died?

- Mama: Phela ubaba wakho ngesikhathi egula ngangimtshela ngithi makabe yindoda abekezele izinhlungu. Noma ezwa kubuhlungu engakhali phambi kwenu ngoba uzoninika ukuthi ithemba ningabi nalo yilokho-ke engangenza ukuthi ningaboni ukuthi uyagula yimina engangibona ukuthi uyagula.
- Because when your father was sick I used to tell him to be a man and endure the pain, and that even when he felt pain he should not cry in front of you because he would make you lose hope, that is what I was doing to ensure that you didn't see that he was sick. I am the one who knew that he was sick.*
- Promise: Kukuphatha kanjani ukusikhulisa uwedwa?
- How do you feel about raising us alone?*
- Mama: Kunzima kakhulu ngane yami ukunikhulisa ngingedwa ngoba izinto eziningi yimina engicabangayo ukuthi ukudla akukho, eh, kufuneka niye esikoleni, kufuneka nigqoke, kunzima kakhulu ukuba umama ubuye ube ubaba ubambe imisebenzi kababa ekhaya.
- It's very difficult my child to raise you alone because there are many things that I think about, like that there is no food, eh, you have to go to school, you have to have clothes. It's very difficult for a mother to also be a father, to hold the father's role at home.*
- Promise: Ngiyathanda ukusibona lesithombe ngoba nami uma ngibuka lesithombe, uma ngikhumbula ubaba ngiyasibuka lesithombe.
- I like seeing this picture because I look at this picture, when I miss my father I look at this picture.*
- Promise: Mama uzizwa unjani uma ubuka lesithombe?
- Mama, how do you feel when you look at this picture?*
- Mama: Isithombe ngisi... ngizwa ngijabulile ngesithombe ngoba ngenzela nina ningamkhohlwa ubaba wenu nihlale nimkhumbula nimbuka njalo esithombeni.
- When I look at this picture I ... I feel happy because I [framed] it for you so that you wouldn't forget your father, for you to remember him and always be able to look at him in the picture.*
- Promise: Ngicela ukubuza ukuthi mina ngimfuze kanjani ubaba?
- I would like to ask whether I am similar to my father?*
- Mama: Ubaba wakho umfuze ngenhliziyo encane ngoba naye wayevele ekhale ungamazi ukuthi ukhalelani nawe-ke ingakho ufuze ubaba wakho.
- You take after your father emotionally because he used to cry easily for no reason. In that way you are like him.*
- Promise: Mina umlayezo engifuna ukuwusho kulabomama abashiywe obaba wabo abashonile ahlale phansi nezingane ezitshele ukuthi, ehena, ubaba wazo usushonile hhayi ukuthi bezwe ngendaba sebethi, ehena, uSibanibani ushonile.
- The message I want to give to the women who have lost their husbands is that they should sit down with their children and tell them that their father has died, they shouldn't hear it in conversation that so and so has died.*



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For further information contact:

Helen Meintjes
HIV/AIDS Programme, Children's Institute
helen.meintjes@uct.ac.za
+27 21 689 5404

Bridget Walters
Zisize Educational Trust
bridgetw@iafrica.com
+27 35 572 5500

Web: www.ci.org.za/depts/ci/prg/radio_project/index.htm