

TRADITION VERSUS AIDS

Case Study

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The people in a central African community believe that a woman is married to a clan rather than to one man. Therefore, a bride in this culture has sexual intercourse with all of a husband's brothers before she appears in public.

The World Vision health coordinators discouraged this practice; they said it helped spread HIV. One person, Nkulanga, argued that discouraging this practice was against their culture. He said the brides would not respect her husband's brothers if they departed from this custom. Also, the brothers would not see any value in bringing a bride price to their home.

Nkulanga got considerable support from the other participants for expressing his views on this issue. They supported him even when their support was challenged by the dangers of AIDS. The participants accused the trainer of trying to impose a different cultural standard on them.

How can the health trainer address the people's beliefs on this issue?