

## D I S T O R T I O N

A short one Act Play written for the UNICEF Workshop on  
"Communication for Social Development"

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SET - (a) A cluster. (3 or 4) of squatter type houses set at random over the acting area. (b) Bush shown on acting area by shrub and grass. (c) Pool of water imagined by action. (d) 2 or 3 chairs and a table. (e) UNIP flag over the Chairman's hut. Sewing machine and clothes or material.

### PERSONS IN THE PLAY

- a) Fonzani Banda - UNIP Branch Chairman
- b) Tinenenji Banda - Fonzani's wife
- c) Pius Chanda - Mayor of Lusaka
- d) David Griffiths - Town Clerk of Lusaka
- e) Daniel Hamatwi - Community Development Officer
- 5 residents of the compound - Mulenga Sakeni, Susana Sakeni and
- f) Dr. Whitworth, City Engineer

SCENE I

(Funzani Banda is tailoring. Mulenga Sakeni has brought an old trouser to be mended. Tinenenji Banda and Susana Sakeni are at the water pool, one washes clothes while the other draws water from the pool).

- : - (Hard of hearing). Ha. My cousin, how are you today?
- SAKENI          : - Since I have seen today's sun, I should think I am alright.
- BANDA           : - And have you found a job now?
- SAKENI          : - Here in Sambia (can't pronounce Zambia with a "Z") you would be lucky if you would find a job so quickly. During the federal days you would just round two streets and you would have it.
- BANDA           : - (Pricks his ears and looks puzzled). What do you say about Feduro?
- SAKENI          : - I said jobs were not easily found these days in Sambia like they were in Federal days.
- BANDA           : - LIE
- SAKENI          : - I AM NOT LYING. +
- BANDA           : - THE BEMBA HAVE LOUD MOUTHS. WHY DO YOU NOT GO HOME TO CUT YOUR TREES?
- SAKENI          : - You dog of a Ngoni. Have you yourself gone back to Chipata to dig?
- BANDA           : - Don't you see I have a job here, (indicates the sewing machine and the sewings).
- SAKENI          : - IS MENDING CLOTHES A JOB TO BOAST ABOUT YOU DOG? IN FACT YOU STOLE THIS SEWING MACHINE FROM AN INDIAN. I WILL REPORT YOU TO THE POLICE TO ARREST YOU. FUNSANI HAVE YOU HEARD THAT THE MAYOR AND THE TOWN CLERK ARE COMING TO VISIT US TODAY?
- BANDA           : - (with a start). What do you say?
- SAKENI          : - I said the Mayor and the Town Clerk are coming to visit us here at Buntungwa.
- BANDA           : - What do they want here? And why don't they warn me they are coming to hold a meeting here.
- SAKENI          : - BUT YOU ARE THE PARTY CHAIRMAN HERE. YOU SHOULD KNOW MORE ABOUT THE MAYOR'S MOVEMENTS.  
(ENTER TINIENENJI WITH WATER BUCKET ON HEAD).  
Can you please mend my trousers.

+ Not an exact translation as this is a linguistic mis-understanding between a Bemba & a Ngoni.

Note: Capital letters indicate dialogue spoken in nyanja.

- TIMENENJI : - There has come a car with the Mayor and the Town Clerk. And you are sitting there as if you were not the Chairman?
- SAKONI : - You hear now what I have been telling you my friend? Have I been telling you lies?
- BANDA : - (More frantic). But what shall I do. Please brother help me call people to the meeting.
- (ENTER SUSANA WITH A DISH OF WASHINGS)
- SUSANA : - THE MAYOR HAS COME. THEY SAY THERE IS A MEETING. AND YOU ARE SITTING THERE AS IF YOU ARE NOT THE CHAIRMAN!
- BANDA : - BUT WHAT SHALL I DO? THEY NEVER WARNED ME THERE WOULD BE A MEETING.
- MAYOR : - (Puffing up pompously). Good morning Bwana. Where are the people of this compound?
- BANDA : - Sara - zey no tell me zere will be a meeting today.
- MAYOR : - What? You were not informed of today's meeting! But I had requested the Regional Secretary to make arrangements for this meeting. (Turns to his Town Clerk). What do we do Mr. Town Clerk?
- TOWN CLERK : - I think your worship, we should inform the local UNIP Branch chairman of Council's decision concerning this compound. This fellow (indicates Fuzani Banda) should help us to find the Branch Chairman. The Chairman can then inform the Branch executive committee and later the residents.
- MAYOR : - (Still pompously). I think you are right Mr. Town Clerk. We have no time to waste till these people learn to come to meetings. (Pinches his nose). My God, this place stinks. (The few residents exchange glances of mixed fear and contempt for the civic officials).
- TOWN CLERK : - We should I think your worship start by finding out who the local chairman is. Can you speak Nyanja your worship? Because it seems Nyanja here is pre-dominant.
- MAYOR : - (Sarcastically). I don't know that frog-eaters' language. I will use English. It's our official language. But I understand a little Nyanja.
- TOWN CLERK : - As you wish sir.
- MAYOR : - (To Banda). What's your name?
- BANDA : - Fuzani Banda.
- MAYOR : - I am asking you, what's your name? You!
- BANDA : - (Looking foolish and does not seem to have heard because he is deaf).

- MAYOR : - (Angry). My God! You can as well be addressing a stone.  
(Then more loudly). I am asking you what is your name?
- BANDA : - Funzani Banda sara. (The Mayor shows all signs of anger and frustration).
- TOWN CLERK : - What does the fellow say your worship?
- MAYOR : - My good God! We are wasting our time with this idiot. (The residents show more disgust mixed with still more fear on their faces). I asked the fellow what his name was. Instead of telling me his name he referred me to some other person he calls Banda. I can't understand why the fellow should not know his own name and why he prefers some one else to tell me his own name!
- TOWN CLERK : - Perhaps he thinks we are special branch men looking for criminals. Does he know who we are Your Worship?
- MAYOR : - I am sure the fellow should know me as the town of this mayor ..... I mean as the mayor of this town. (To Banda). My dear fellow, can you speak a little English?
- BANDA : - (Does not seem to have heard).
- MAYOR : - (More loudly and angrily, to Banda). Did you hear what I said? I said can you speak English?
- BANDA : - (With a start). Yes sara. I can speaking small English.
- MAYOR : - (A little relieved). Good. Now my friend, what is your name? You! your name?
- BANDA : - (With emphasis). Funzani Banda.
- TOWN CLERK : - What does he say your worship?
- MAYOR : - He still insists I should ask Banda to tell me what his name is. Have you ever heard of that, Mr. Town Clerk?
- TOWN CLERK : - Perhaps ask the fellow where this Banda is. What about this other fellow, what is his name?
- MAYOR : - (To Banda). Where is this Banda then?
- BANDA : - I am name Banda.
- MAYOR : - Your name is Banda?
- BANDA : - Yes sara.
- MAYOR : - And what's your other name?

- BANDA : - (Does not seem to have heard).
- SAKENI : - (With gestures indicating ears). E as no ears. You shout Bwana for him.
- TOWN CLERK : - (To Sakeni). You mean he is deaf sir?
- SAKENI : - Yes sah. E is des.
- MAYOR : - I see. (To Banda very loudly). What is your first name Is Banda your first name?
- BANDA : - No sara. Banda is second name.
- MAYOR : - And your first name?
- BANDA : - Funzani.
- MAYOR : - (Laughing). Oh. I see now. Your full name is Funzani Banda?
- TOWN CLERK : - Really your worship. I thought the fellow had said his name long before and couldn't understand the misunderstanding!
- MAYOR : - Pardon me Mr. Funzani Banda. (To Town Clerk). And excuse me Mr. Town Clerk. These Ngoni names are funny. Actually the Nyanja word "Funzani" means "Ask." And when he said "Funzani Banda" I thought he meant "Ask Banda!" I think I must attend evening classes in Nyanja. Anyway, Mr. Banda, do you know who is the branch chairman of UNIP in this compound - what do you call it?
- SAKENI : - It call Buntungwa sah.
- MAYOR : - (Repeats as he jots down). Buntungwa compound.
- TOWN CLERK : - And what's that your worship?
- MAYOR : - It means; Independence Compound. And who is the chairman of Buntungwa?
- BANDA : - Myself sara.
- MAYOR : - (Together). YOU!
- BANDA : - Ses sara.
- TOWN CLERK : - Oh, that's wonderful. We don't have far to go Your Worship. Mr. Banda here can spread the news around on the new Council policy concerning this Ba-ntung-wa compound.
- MAYOR : - Right. (Sakeni excuses himself and goes off behind the bush nearby). Mr. Banda, since you say you speak small English, and I do not speak Nyanja, we will have to do with English.
- BANDA : - Speak sara. But you speak loud (indicates his ears).
- MAYOR : - I understand Mr. Banda (More loudly). Listen Mr. Banda (Banda pricks ears and cocks his head on one side). We the City Council of Lusaka would like to bring about changes to Buntungwa compound. (Banda is puzzled and horrified). Do you understand Mr. Banda? We want to bring change here.

BANDA : - I an understand. But we here you go throw people who .....

MAYOR : - Listen Mr. Banda. It is the intention of the Council to see that improvements and social amenities are brought to this compound once the Ministry of Local Government has decided to recognise your compound as legal. But this place is so unhealthy. You have no toilets. No piped water, no clinic, no community centre, we want to bring all these things for you people here. My Council has set aside K150,000 for this project.

TOWN CLERK : - (Cutting in). It is important Mr. Banda that the Council receives the co-operation of your people or else the scheme will fail.

MAYOR : - Right. And we want you to tell your people here, to start clearing sites on which we will build clinics and community centres. The Council also wants better houses here. We will have to pull down the bad looking inhabitable houses. (Banda shows fear). Look! (points to Mr. Banda's shack). That is not a place for any human habitation. The Council will give loans to people to help them build their own homes. Building material will be on site for purchase much like we do for site and service scheme. All these done, there will be change here. Tell all your people Mr. Banda.

BANDA : - Yes sara.

MAYOR : - But where are all the members of your Branch executive committee? They all did not know we were coming?

BANDA : - No sara. Zey not know you come today. And zey are all go to ze mariketere.

MAYOR : - And you yourself never got the message we were coming until you saw us here?

BANDA : - (Shakes head). Nevara atoro.

MAYOR : - Alright Mr. Banda. We will leave you to inform the residents here on what we have told you. Good bye now. (They go off).

(Tinenenji and Susana emerge from the shacks as Sakeni comes round from the nearby bush ziping up his trousers. They all cluster round Banda).

TINENENJI : - What were they saying those people?

BANDA : - They say they want njangi to come to Buntungwa.

SAKENI : - What? They want to build a railway line here. Is there no other place to build a railway, but they must bring it here to Buntungwa! (Spits contemptuously). So they want to break our houses, and where do they think we shall go? I shall see who breaks my house.

- BANDA : - ZEY SAY ZIS RAILWAY IS GOING TO COST K.150,000. ZONE HOUSES ARE GOING TO BE PULLED DOWN BECAUSE ZEY SAY ZEY DON'T WANT SUCH RUBBISH TO SIT IN TOWN. ZE MAYOR SAID: (Mimicking) "My Got, zis place stink! Look zat is not a place for any human ..... (can't find the terrible word;) ..... to sit in.
- SAKENI : - And so he want railway to sit here and not people. IS THIS HUMANISM? I WILL SEE WHO BREAKS MY HOUSE. I WILL FIGHT HIM.
- BANDA : - BUT LISTEN .....
- SUSANA : - AND WHY DON'T YOU LISTEN FIRST BEFORE PUFFING UP LIKE PUFFADDER?
- BANDA : - ZEY SAY ALL PEOPLE MUST BE TOLD HERE ZAT ZERE WILL BE CHENJI + ZAT IS WHAT ZE MAYOR SAID. THE MAYOR ASKED WHERE THE PEOPLE OF BUNTUNGWA WOULD GO IF THE RAILWAY CAME HERE. BUT HE SAID: (Mimicking the pompous authoritative character of the Mayor). Ah, no zis place is stink, is no latrine, you people go bush. You no have pipe water and so on and so on. Ati: - we want to bring pipe water here. Tell all people.
- SAKENI : - So dey want to bring water here to fool us into thinking dey care about us and once dey have brought water dey will tell us: get out, dere is coming industry here! I know den, don't you remember how dey chased us away from Chinika where dey have built the Cold Storage of Zambia?
- BANDA : - WHAT YOU SAY IS TRUE. I REMEMBER. And you see also what happen for people who sit in old Kabwata?
- SAKENI : - (With enthusiasm). You see. Dose people were sit very well. The Gavamentis say dey is no good water, dey is bad latrine and bad houses. Dey brake all people's houses and people have no where to sit. (The wives with wide open eyes admire their husbands' knowledge of the educated man's language. Their husbands are conscious of this).
- BANDA : - Zey say zey taked all zose who were sit in old Kabwata to Kaunda Square where Council give zem good houses.
- SAKENI : - Dat is lie, Council is not give house free. People who sit in Kaunda Square build house with money. I an not work myself, and you are not work. Very small people who sit in Buntungwa compound work. Where we go get money for build house? I know what Gavaranenti is want. Dey want all people who sit in town without work to get to home in rural areas. I WILL NEVER GO BACK HOLE TO THE RURAL AREA. (Swears) Dey want to bring railway here and say dis place is fit for industry like dey did at Chinika. And when we do

+ chenji = railway

not find place to sit we will be force to go to our homes in rural areas. I am not going to listen to any Council talk on self-help. (Angrily) WHY! WE ALL HELP DEM WIN SPENDENCE. And when we say we also want to eat spendence dey-say self-help! IF YOUR FRIEND WHO HELPED YOU WHEN YOU WERE IN TROUBLE ONCE SAYS TO YOU, "MY FRIEND, I AM ALSO IN TROUBLE COME AND HELP ME". ARE YOU GOING TO TELL HIM NO? SELF-HELP!

BANDA : - Now what shall we do to Council Chenji?

SAKENI : - We refusing SELF-HELP!

BANDA : - YOU WILL BE IMPRISONED.

SAKENI : - It's people who go to prison and not stones. You should tell de residents here dat we have refused to have our houses broken. If you wish I help you spread dis news.

BANDA : - Yes. You help me tell all ze people what Council is want to do with zeire houses and to bring Chenji here. I too will go zis side of compound to tell people. I will tell my wife to go tell Chairlady for Women Brigade. (Speaks to his wife in tumbuka. They all go off in different directions with determination to thwart Council attempts at spoiling their lives in Buntungwa Compound).

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SCENE TWO

Set the same three shacks. A big pennant tin of Chibuku. Enter a group of five or six residents including Fuzani Banda and Mulenga Sakeni. Enter also Tinenenji Banda. Drums and Ngoni warrior sticks called Chirutunga. The men enter the stage singing the old Zulu song: - NGEKE NGIYE KWAZULU.

1. Mirian Makeba - "The land of the Zulus".
  2. S - Mgeke Ngiye Kwazulu Kwafelu.  
C - Ngeke ngiye Kwa Zulu kwafelu baba lomana.
  2. S - Ebaba ntombi ikeza ngovuna khukhali  
C - Ntombi ikeza ngovuna khukhali izingani
  2. S - Abati ngekengiye kwazulu kwafelu.  
C - Welawe mama! Kwafelu baba lomana.
  2. S - Ebaba ntombi ikeza ngovuna khukhali.  
C - Ntonbi ikeza ngovuna khukhali izingani.
- Refrain S - Abati nkhozi mazulu.  
C - Abe Nguni mama kela mankhozi.

(They sing and stomp around the beer tin to the accompaniment of women clapping, ulalations and drumming. While this goes on, enter a survey team from the City Engineer's Department. They carry survey gear and are exceptionally well-dressed and clean. The survey team at first stops to watch the dance appearing more like tourists. The nerry residents eye them suspiciously as they sing and dance. After watching for a while, the survey team ignores completely and sets about surveying the area laying pegs even against Mulenga Sakeni's as well as Banda's shacks. The surveyors improvise lines).

- SAKENI : - Do you see what those devils are doing. They are fixing pegs near my house. These people is want to break my house.
- BANDA : - Even at my house, they are doing the same.
- SAKENI : - Let then waste their power. We shall destroy them as soon as they have left.
- RESIDENT I : - Is that the railway they are planning?

- BANDA : - Yes, zat is ze rerwe I told you about. You see my friends zey is going to break my house.
- SAKENI : - And my house. Kanje upononepokamo elyo beshibe ukuti kanshi natufulwa.
- SUSANA : - WHY DON'T YOU BE PATIENT. PLEASE STOP IT. YOU ARE NOT THE ONLY ONE WHOSE HOUSE IS BEING BROKEN!
- RESIDENT II: - YES. LET US BEAT THEM SO THAT THEY STOP THIS NONSENSE FOR EVER!
- RESIDENT III:- LISTEN. I HAVE A LITTLE PLAN. LET THEM WASTE THEIR ENERGY AND RESOURCES. ONCE THEY HAVE GONE WE WILL DESTROY ALL THE THINGS THEY WILL ARRANGE.
- SAKENI : - Dat is very wonderfulu idea. Let den fix pegs now. We will took den out. If dey come tomorrow and say you all come to self-help, you refuse and tell den to go away. We all fight for spendance. (They all shout agreement and go away leaving the survey team finishing off their survey of the area. The team finishes off by fixing a sign near Banda's shack: -  
LUSAKA CITY COUNCIL  
Buntungwa up-grading  
Self-Help Scheme.  
Exit the survey team. Re-enter the angry residents).
- SAKENI : - SOME SHOULD HELP ME UP-ROOT THESE PEGS AND THIS SELF-HELP SIGN HERE!
- (They all set to work shouting insults at the City Council.  
Exit all).

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SCENE THREE

SET - Mayor's parlour set on one side of the acting area. Table and four chairs. Enter the Mayor, Town Clerk, the Community Development Officer and the City Engineer).

MAYOR : - Well gentlemen. I have called you here to review the Buntungwa Up-Grading Self-Help Scheme which seems to get us no where at all. The people of Buntungwa are very un-co-operative, primitive and I must say quite a pest on the fringes of our city. Apart from being a health hazard and threat to the city as a whole because the place is void of any sanitation as a whole; Buntungwa Compound is indeed an eye sore to our visitors especially international tourists since it is on the entrance to the city. The City-Engineer has a sad report to make gentlemen. I suggest we hear the Engineer's report first.

CITY ENGINEER: - Thank you Your Worship. (The City Engineer Dr. James Whitworth has difficulty in pronouncing the "S" or "s" sounds and usually pronounces them as "O"). Actually thith ith a very thiriath thing Your Worship. I have rethelved report from my thurvey team to the effect that the rethidenth of Buntungwa Compound have dethtroyed all the prelininary thurvey work; that ith, pegth marking vital contour path-th, ath well ath the thines. The people of Buntungwa are underthtood to have threatened the liveth of my workertth th that it ith very dangerouth for my department to carry out any uthful work among the rethdenth of Buntungwa Compound. Your Worship if thith attitude on the part of the rethdenth of Buntungwa continueth, the Up-Grading them ith already a failure. Thonething ought to be done quickly.

MAYOR : - There you are gentlemen. You have just heard a very sad report from the City Engineer.

CITY ENGINEER: - It ith very thad indeed Your Worship.

TOWN CLERK : - How much money have we spent already on the preliminary survey project?

CITY ENGINEER: - Thix thouthand-four hundred and fourty-thix Kwacha Your Worship.

/...

MAYOR

- : - That is quite a fortune. This council has no intention to spend money so uselessly, I have a feeling we have gone wrong somewhere. I have been advised to seek the assistance and services of our Community Development Officer. This is why the Community Development Officer is here. I think this is where our Community Development Officer could come in useful. Unless you have other comments to make I would like to call upon the Community Development Officer to give us his professional estimation of the problem. (The Mayor looked right and left. No one replied). Mr. Community Development Officer please.

COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT  
OFFICER

- : - Your Worship I am really pleased that you have seen it fit to consult me on this problem. Very often local authorities and indeed the Central Government itself tend to overlook the fact that for any development project to succeed, a careful study of suitable approaches to the people on whom the project is aimed is essential. Your Worship, I am not merely trying to justify my existence in the service of this council. But I should be failing in my duty if I do not tell you that for any such project to succeed, you need a Community Development or Community Organisation approach depending upon the degree of urbanisation.

MAYOR

- : - Exactly what do you mean by Community Development approach Mr. Community Development Officer?

COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT  
OFFICER

- : - It has been usual Your Worship to force ideas from the top on the people without the people having any say in the project. The colonial philosophy of administration was paternalistic rather than participatory.

CITY ENGINEER

- : - That is what I do not understand with this proposal. They tell too many words that don't mean anything.

TOWN CLERK

- : - Yes they do. I am very much interested in what the Community Development Officer is going to say about a people that do not realise they are living in inhabitable surroundings and have no intention to change. Do you expect them to suddenly wake up one morning and do wonderful things that will change their way of life for the better? Don't you think someone must give the lead.

/...

- COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER : - No sir. I do not indeed expect them to suddenly start working miracles towards progress. And I agree with you sir, someone must give lead. And you have used just the right word Sir. "Lead." Giving lead is not the same as forcing an idea on the people or worse still pushing them around. By lead Your Worship, I understand creating a situation where you provoke thought in the right direction within the community.
- CITY ENGINEER : - Wordth, wordth, wordth. I believe in action Your Worship. Go to the fellow in thianti compound. Tell him hith houth ith bad. Pull the hut down and build him or thio him how to build a better houth and that ith it.
- COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER : - Short cuts in any community development projects Your Worship are often short lived. We in community development believe in making people see the need for change. It is when people identify themselves with the project that their co-operation is not only most assured but that it gives personal satisfaction to see the product of their endeavours.
- CITY ENGINEER : - Wordth wor .....
- TOWN CLERK : - Hang on Dr. Whitworth. I think there is something in what the Community Development Officer is saying. Your Worship I suggest we make Buntungwa Up-Grading Scheme a special Community Development project, and that Council engages the services of the Community Development Officer and his staff.
- COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER : - I have been in the area Your Worship. And the things I have heard makes me wonder whether the people there really know what the intentions of Council are. There is talk that the Council intends to build a railway through that compound, and that .....(The Mayor, the Town Clerk and the City Engineer exchange incredible glances). Yes Your Worship. That is the rumour now circulating in that compound. It is further rumoured that the Council intends to destroy people's houses to make way for the railway and industry.
- TOWN CLERK : - That is a lot of rubbish. I and the Mayor here visited the area. We told a local branch chairman of the party - a fellow called - - Bu ---.
- MAYOR : - Banda

/...

TOWN CLERK : - That's right. Fellow called Banda. We told this fellow that the Council intends to upgrade the Compound by bringing social amenities and services like water borne sanitation and good houses in the area. I can't understand this rubbish about the Council ever wanting to build a railway there.

MAYOR : - Yes I do Mr. Town Clerk. That Banda fellow seemed to be hard of hearing. He could have not properly heard what we had said and now he is spreading wrong information on Council's intentions. I agree with you Mr. Town Clerk we should engage the Community Development Officer's services in firstly cleaning up the mess we might have created there through our crude approach, secondly to let the Community Development Officer work among the people so as to ensure success of this scheme on which we have already waisted a good deal of money. Agreed?

ALL : - Agreed.

MAYOR : - Thank you gentlemen. I leave it to the Town Clerk to make the necessary arrangements for the deployment of the Community Development staff. The meeting is over gentlemen and thank you for the useful discussions.

(EXIT ALL)

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(At Buntungwa Compound. Enter Banda and his wife; Sakeni and his wife and four other residents of the compound. They are drinking, singing and dancing. They are not particularly well dressed but are very merry. After a while enter the Community Development Officer dressed in shorts and short sleeve shirt. He joins the beer party).

SAKENI : - WE ARE AT HOME, PLEASE MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME.

COMMUNITY : - THANK YOU SIR AND GOOD DAY TO YOU ALL.  
DEVELOPMENT  
OFFICER

ALL : - GOOD DAY TO YOU.

BANDA : - ARE YOU WELL?

COMMUNITY : - YES I AM WELL THANK YOU.  
DEVELOPMENT  
OFFICER

RESIDENT I : - IS THIS NOT THE TEACHER OF WELFARE CENTRE. IT'S SHE, OR AM I MISTAKEN?

COMMUNITY : - THAT'S SO SIR.  
DEVELOPMENT  
OFFICER

BANDA : - (Drunkenly but importantly). So you is the teacher of to welfare centre eh. Why we no have centre for children like Kabwata, Chilenje and Matero? But you go pull down our houses and build railways through our compound.

COMMUNITY : - It is not true sir that the Council plans to build a railway through this compound. What is true sir is that the Council plans to help you build better houses. In fact I have come to inform you Mr. Chairman that the Council intends to build community centres and creches where our children can go to play while their mothers are at work. Do you think sir, if it was Council's policy to destroy the compound it would want to build community centres and even beer halls or taverns? (There is very happy laughter).

RESIDENT II: - The words of this one are good. That's what a good Council should do. Do you see that what this woman says is very different from the words of the Mayor? She is not talking about building a railway here and forcing us to go and build houses at Kaunda Square. We have no money to build houses at Kaunda Square.

ALL : - YOU HAVE SPOKEN WELL.

COMMUNITY : - INDEED SIR IT IS NOT THE INTENTION OF COUNCIL TO BUILD A  
DEVELOPMENT RAILWAY HERE. THE COUNCIL WANTS TO BRING PROGRESS HERE LIKE IN  
OFFICER OTHER COUNCIL TOWNSHIPS.

ALL : - OH, THAT'S THE THING WE WANT HERE.

BANDA : - What things is council want to bringing for progress which  
you speak about?

COMMUNITY : - You see sir, in new Kamwala or new Kabwata there is piped  
DEVELOPMENT water. People don't go two kilometres to get water for cooking  
OFFICER and washing. WATER IS FOUND NEAR THE HOUSES AND ITS GOOD WATER.  
HAVE YOU GOT PIPED WATER HERE? (All show a lot of enthusiasm  
and excitement in what the Community Development Officer is  
saying. The women especially are very interested when they hear  
they will not have to go far to fetch water).

SAKENI : - DAT IS WHAT WE WANT HERE. WHY DOES COUNCIL NOT CONSIDER US  
AS PEOPLE?

SUSANA : - WHEN IS COUNCIL GOING TO GIVE US PIPED WATER?

COMMUNITY : - It's now if you want. Do you want it?  
DEVELOPMENT  
OFFICER

ALL : - (Very enthusiastically) Ye-es. We want it. (Severally and  
individually but all talking at the same time).

RESIDENT III:-Do you really need to ask that?

RESIDENT IV: -Even now I am very know how to plumber you see. We want piped  
water.

SAKENI : - As for me you go to tell Council that the people of Buntungwa  
want piped water very much.

BANDA : - That is so. We is very ready now to co-operation for Council.

RESIDENT III:- (Hesitatingly to Community Development Officer) Can you  
drinks Chibuku sir?

COMMUNITY : - Oh yes. I drink (accepting the large mug from which everybody  
DEVELOPMENT is drinking).  
OFFICER

/...



RESIDENT III : - We here drink to one cup. We are not bad eaters like those who sit in towns who drink to tumblers and deny others a chance to share.

RESIDENT II : - Here we don't talking humanism on lips. We live humanism. (They all cheer, and applaud him. Sakeni starts song and dance. Two or three drun to the accompaniment of the song.)

SONG: - S - Nasekela seke! (This is repeated several  
C - Naterwa. times. The Community  
S - Nasekela seke! Development Officer to  
C - Naterwa. the delight of residents  
joins in).

(A Ngoni soon takes over after Sakeni with: - KUMANDA  
KWA BAMBO WANGA)

S - Kumanda kwa bambo wanga (2)  
Kunalila chiani?  
C - Kunalila ngwenya.  
S - Eya ho!  
C - Kunalila ngwenya  
C - Kunalila mukhango kunalila ngwenya.

\* \* \* \* \*

SCENE V

(At the Mayor's Parlour. Enter the Mayor, Town Clerk, City Engineer and the Community Development Officer).

MAYOR : - Welcome gentlemen. This time we are meeting on a happier note (everybody is smiling) and I can judge from the happy faces that we are all very pleased indeed with the progress made on the Buntungwa Up-Grading project.

TOWN CLERK : - We owe it to the wise Community Development Officer Your Worship. He is the one who should really be congratulated.

CITY ENGINEER:- I am thorry Your Worship I had appeared not to believe in the ideath of the Community Development Offither. But now I thii he wath right.

COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT  
OFFICER :- All is well.

ALL :- That ends well. (Exit all).

END OF PLAY



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Title

**"Distortion" a short one-act play, written and produced by Kabwe Kasoma, Playwright, Dean of Students, Univ of Zambia, for the UNICEF/PSC Workshop on Communication for Social Development, held at the University of Zambia, Lusaka, 29 April to 10 May 1974**

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Notes

**The play was enacted during Part V of the workshop (Workshop Exercises) it illustrates misunderstandings between the Bemba and the Ngoni, and tensions between the Town Clerk and the Mayor, and suspicions of local peoples of a proposed development project in their area.**

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