

MEN ENGAGED IN GENDER EQUALITY: A CASE STUDY FROM MOZAMBIQUE

This case study covers the work of the HOPEM network in Mozambique. Established in 2009 and consisting of 25 civil society organizations and activists, the network focuses on the promotion, advocacy and lobbying for a new masculinity, while seeking to provide men with skills to enable them to actively contribute towards overcoming gender inequality by promoting and upholding the human rights of women. HOPEM engages men as stakeholders challenging stereotypes, negative behaviours, and attitudes in gender relations. The document focuses on three projects: Men in the Kitchen Program to encourage greater domestic engagement; The Arts without Violence which combines the Arts and Activism (Artivismo) to challenge stereotypes; and A Man who is a Man project based round a weekly TV debate.

This Case Study was a background briefing for Oxfam Novib's 2013 Annual Review, prepared in partnership with the HOPEM Network, and describes the programme in Mozambique. Although it is not a formal evaluation it does consider lessons learned by both Oxfam Novib and its partner organisations.

These Case Studies are shared in the form in which they were submitted, often written by partners whose first language is not English, and have not been edited since submission. We believe that the meaning is clear enough, and the authenticity of the reporting and the availability of Southern Voices on development makes their inclusion in the Oxfam iLibrary worthwhile for sharing with external readers.

Programme Partner: Rede HOPEM

AIMS OF REDE

REDE HOPEM seeks to contribute towards the creation of a more just society where men, boys, women and girls share equal opportunities in terms of access and exercise of their human rights, and contribution to the well-being of everyone. In order to fulfill this goal, the work undertaken by HOPEM is guided by five main objectives:

1. Encourage male involvement in doing away with negative masculinity patterns and building new ones;
2. Influence HOPEM network's member organizations, government and non-government institutions to continuously work toward the participation of boys and men in the promotion of gender equality;
3. Promote a culture of peace and active non-violence from a gender perspective through educational initiatives and programs specially geared towards men and the transformation of masculinity;
4. Contribute with sustainable measures towards gender equality in public policies, strategies, laws and other instruments influencing individuals, thereby bringing men to the core of the agenda as part of the solution to problems;
5. Promote the sharing of resources, instruments, knowledge and good practices as well as work initiatives with young and adult males within the context of the fight against genderbased domestic violence, and the promotion of health.

PROBLEMS AND THEORY OF CHANGE

Perceived as something intrinsically related, gender relations bring to the fore two important social roles : “being a man” and “being a woman”. These roles have been socially constructed and legitimized on the basis of the patriarchal system on which society is structured; a system characterized by unequal access to resources, opportunities and rights both in the public and private sectors, thereby favoring men.

The HOPEM network was established in Mozambique in 2009 to address the problem of gender inequality. It consists of 25 organizations which have been working to assert the human rights of men, women and children through an innovative approach which is unique to the country. This is an approach which focuses on actions seeking definitions of new masculinities, while accepting male engagement as a means of challenging and transforming the patriarchal system.

For the implementation of its activities, HOPEM regards men as part of the solution, instead of being part of the problem, and seeks to work with men who also suffer the consequences and the stress of the social roles and stereotypes defined by the patriarchal system, so that they may question and find other masculinity models that conform to equality and respect for the human rights of women.

CONTEXT

Mozambique ranks 125th in a UN1¹ gender inequality index of 146 countries. Although some

improvements have been made in Mozambique in the past few years with the approval of key instruments, both national and international, defending and advocating gender equality,² gender equality and respect for the human rights of women in the country remains a major social problem affecting not only women, but the harmonious and healthy development of society as a whole. As an example, in 2009 at the level of tertiary education, 62% of enrolled students were male and 38% female. Regarding executive and management positions in the public sector, in 2011 the situation was as follows: Cabinet Ministers – 71% male, 29% female; Governors – 73% male, 27% female; Provincial Directors – 59% male, 41% female; District Administrators – 80% male, 20% female; District Permanent Secretaries – 84% male, 16% female; Heads of Administrative Post – 85% male, 15 female; Municipality Mayors – 93% male, 7% female.³ Thanks to efforts made by CSOs, it is today possible to speak of gender-based violence as a crime, notably physical violence against women. In the first half of the year, there were more than 12,000 reported cases⁴ of violence against women, but the actual number of cases of violence against women not reported to the police is far higher. Suffice to say that more than half of Mozambican women have suffered some form of violence, according to UN Women Mozambique data.⁵

WHY DID OXFAM NOVIB GET INVOLVED?

Rede HOPEM under the AGIR Program/Oxfam Novib

Since 2012, Rede HOPEM has been part of OXFAM NOVIB as a partner institution within the context of the AGIR (Inclusive and Responsible Governing Actions) Program. This is a five-year (2010-2014) program funded by the Swedish and Dutch Embassies to assist Mozambique's civil society to capacitate active citizens and a strong and vibrant society, which in turn would participate and influence the democratic process, thereby contributing toward responsible government, a fullfledged democracy, and gender and human rights equality in Mozambique.

In tandem with its approach and experience in the promotion, advocacy and lobbying for gender equality, HOPEM was included in the second thematic areas of Subprogram A: "Participation, Social Responsibility and Monitoring of Human Rights Compliance". Subprogram A has two specific goals forming part of HOPEM's strategic plan: 1) Contribute towards improving and sensitizing women and men about sexual inequality, knowledge and dedication, and 2) make citizens, men, women and children feel that there has been an increase in the respect for their human rights, and a reduction in the discrimination against the most vulnerable members of society.

Thus, in the context of the support that it provides to CSOs, the AGIR Program funds Rede HOPEM's strategic plan by favoring the strengthening of its institutional capacities and advocacy actions related to gender issues and human rights. This has a major social, economic and e political impact on the lives of women, while taking into account the influential role of the patriarchalsystem in Mozambican society. Several actions have, therefore, been undertaken, including the strengthening of a transformational leadership, a tailor-made capacity building approach, and social mobilization campaigns.

METHODOLOGY

Activities and Strategies

To counter the scenario of violation of women's human rights, REDE HOPEM has designed a number of activities the main goal of which is to encourage a systematic questioning of oppressive masculinity patterns constituting an affront to the human rights of women, thereby building alternative patterns and behaviors which promote effective equal rights between men and women.

To illustrate this set of innovative actions undertaken within the context of gender equality promotion in Mozambique, we single out the following activities: Men in the Kitchen Program, Arts without Violence, A Man who is a Man, Brainstorming campaigns and initiatives on the transformation of negative masculinities and gender equality.

a) Men in the Kitchen Program

This program promotes gender equality by giving a new meaning to a domestic area which is regarded as the sole domain of women.

Objectives:

- Promoting male engagement in household tasks by increasing their cooking knowledge;
- Preventing violence against women, following a strict division of social roles for men and women by expanding the participation of men in household economics;
- Challenge posed by masculinity and femininity stereotypes which contribute to in-depth social imbalances between men and women, thereby restricting their personal development.

b) The Arts without Violence Program

It started in 2011 and is based on the concept known as ARTIVISMO (arts + activism) in that art has the unique potential to convey values, emotions and feelings in a strong and effective manner, thereby contributing to world transformation. The objectives of this program are as follows:

1. Encourage the creation of a movement of Mozambican artists who review and discuss art, and include human rights, gender equality and positive masculinities in their creativity and performance.
2. Through art, promote and disseminate items which contribute to a more just society and equal gender relations.
3. Stimulate public brainstorming sessions on positive masculinity and its importance in the prevention of discrimination against gender-based violence.

c) The Man Who is a Man Program

This program started in 2011 under UNIDOS. It explores the potential of the media and social media as opinion makers and promoters of brainstorming sessions and debates within society. The program is in the format of a TV debate, broadcast weekly on Mozambique

Television (TVM), in which participants openly discuss and criticize without prejudice taboos, behaviors, attitudes and practices associated to male experiences. Three commentators are invited to give their views about a number of themes: gender, masculinities, sexual and reproductive health, among others. Viewers are asked to phone-in to give their views and clarify issues. The program aims to:

- Contribute towards the eradication of violence against women by men and boys.
- Sensitize young and adult males about gender-based violence from a human rights perspective; and the role they can play in fighting this phenomenon.
- Encourage the adoption of more just, respectful and equitable attitudes towards women.
- Promote critical and transformational brainstorm sessions about current masculinity trends and their implications in the lives of women, men and children.
- Contribute towards the creation of a more favorable environment for male adherence to efforts aimed at preventing and fighting violence against women.

The program, the first of its kind in Mozambique, is an unequivocal example of male commitment to promoting gender equality and which has proved to be an important platform for dismantling uneven power relations between men and women. Although most of its contents are recorded in Maputo, the program is aired in others cities and communities in the country, often with distinct experiences, allowing for a broader understanding of gender problems in Mozambique.

RESULTS

Although HOPEM is a relatively new organization that only started its interventions a few years ago it already claims some results coming out of its interventions:

OUTCOMES
Men begin to understand gender equality from the moment questions are raised and patriarchal behavior trends and masculinities are dismantled The public has been sensitized about gender inequality through works of art and male participation
Men adopt new behavioral patterns based on respect for the human rights of women and the leveling of power relations at household and public levels
Artists begin to question harmful masculinity stereotypes and include gender issues in their work.
The public has been sensitized about gender inequality through works of art and male participation.
The news media becomes engaged in the search for new masculinities and the defense of the rights of women.
CSOs pledge to incorporate approaches favoring male involvement in the promotion of gender equality.
CSOs pledge to advocate for the inclusion of themes on male commitment and positive masculinities in the drafting and implementation of public policies.

LESSONS LEARNED

Rede HOPEM's activities constitute an enriching and innovative experience. They are an important lobbying and advocacy platform for gender issues, serving as a means of developing men's skills through open and broad debates likely to overcome relationships based on power and violence. The following is an appreciation of Rede HOPEM's key successes and challenges.

Successes

Integration of men's roles and responsibilities in gender issues

The merit of HOPEM's areas of operation and the activities that it has carried out is the cross-sectional search for new masculinities where man is regarded as playing a pivotal role, while being engaged in the redefinition of social roles so that equality and respect for gender differences may be an objective and a value pursued by men themselves.

Denaturalization of the patriarchal model

The dismantling of the patriarchal model of male domination, which structures our society, includes the recognition that it is not a natural model, but rather one which has been naturalized by society. As such, it is open to redefinitions which can only be made by the very society that legitimizes such a model. Of necessity, this entails a review of masculinities as pivotal to the redefinition of man, the being, as HOPEM has been doing. It would be necessary to redefine kitchen and home as an inferior domestic setting which is solely designed for women as opposed to public spaces which would be a masculine domain and of greater importance. The activities contemplated in the Men in the Kitchen Program show how important it is to bring gender equality into fruition in our day-to-day activities.

Acknowledgement: National and international prizes

Despite its short existence, HOPEM is today a participant whose merit has been acknowledged by organizations working for the promotion of gender equality in Mozambique and beyond its borders.

Challenges

Diversify local activities and increase the number of beneficiaries

HOPEM is still faced with a number of challenges. The search for the definition of “new masculinities”, including roles, activity models, norms, values and identities, which question the patriarchal setting, is something recent, under permanent construction and which needs to become effective. Given the cross-section of its nature, it needs to be transformed into something which is structural, hence the challenge posed to HOPEM that its activities be far-reaching and have a broader focus, by contemplating sectors of society which have become increasingly larger. This entails greater investment in terms of areas of activity, numbers of beneficiaries and strategies to replicate activities.

NOTES

¹ <https://www.oxfam.org/en/countries/mozambique>

² Examples: The CEDAW convention ratified in 1993; the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, 2008; The Family Law enacted in 2004; O Protocolo dos direitos das mulheres na Carta de África sobre os Direitos Humanos em 2005; Law 29/2009 on domestic violence against women, among other instruments

³ HOPEM (2012): Desigualdades e violência de Género - Base de Dados de Nível Nacional. Available at: [http://www.hopem.org.mz/docs/Base%20de%20Dados%20Completa%20de%20Nivel%20Nacional%20%20\(1\).pdf](http://www.hopem.org.mz/docs/Base%20de%20Dados%20Completa%20de%20Nivel%20Nacional%20%20(1).pdf)

⁴ Dados do Gabinete de Atendimento a mulher e Criança de Moçambique

⁵ Information available at:

http://www.portaldogoverno.gov.mz/Informacao/boletinInf/jornalmocambique/Jornal_do_Governo_Mocambique_Ed0015.pdf

© Oxfam Novib March 2014, January 2016

First published as an internal document in Oxfam Novib March 2014

Loaded to the Oxfam iLibrary and published online January 2016

The Oxfam Novib Programme Case Studies are documents prepared as background to the Annual Reports from the organisation. They are shared here mainly in the form in which they were submitted, often written by partners whose first language is not English, and they have not been extensively edited since submission. We believe that the meaning of the text is clear enough, and the authenticity of the reporting and the availability of Southern Voices on development makes their inclusion in the Oxfam iLibrary worthwhile for sharing with external readers. If you want to ask for more information or need clarification on meaning for any title in the series, please email info@oxfamnovib.nl

This case study was prepared with the support of the Oxfam Novib partner Rede HOPEM.

For further information on the issues raised in this paper please e-mail info@oxfamnovib.nl

This publication is copyright but the text and accompanying photographs and graphics may be used free of charge for advocacy, campaigning, public and institutional education, teaching, programme development, research and knowledge sharing, provided that the use is not undertaken for direct commercial benefit, that the source is acknowledged in full, and any changes or modifications to the text are clearly shown. The copyright holder requests that all such free-of-charge use is registered with them for impact assessment purposes. For copying in any other circumstances or for re-use in other publications, or for translation or adaptation, or for any form of commercial publication, permission must be secured and a fee may be charged. email policyandpractice@oxfam.org.uk.

The information in this publication is correct at the time of going to press.

Published through the Oxfam iLibrary by Oxfam GB for Oxfam Novib in January 2016.

Oxfam GB, Oxfam House, John Smith Drive, Cowley, Oxford, OX4 2JY, UK.

Oxfam Novib, P.O. Box 30919, 2500 GX The Hague, The Netherlands

Rede HOPEM, Rua Vila Namwali no 296, Maputo, Mozambique

OXFAM

Oxfam is an international confederation of 17 organizations networked together in more than 90 countries, as part of a global movement for change, to build a future free from the injustice of poverty. Please write to any of the agencies for further information, or visit www.oxfam.org.

www.oxfamnovib.nl



OXFAM