

Notes from mtg with AMME Friday - Mozambican Women's Education Association

General objectives, promote socio economic and cultural rights of females and professionals?

Mission, contribute to elevation of status of women. They have functioned since 1997

They speak about gender and education, gender based violence, women and hiv/aids

They have had or have partnerships with Action AID, Concern, Oxfam GB and another Oxfam.

Also partner with educational director of province. Work in 7 districts. Have 3 more districts...can provide the list. Work in different districts supported by different donors.

There is no funding partner yet for 3 districts, including Quelimane.

They have been trained by Stepping Stones to be trainers for the methodology. They have 4 trainers in the regular methodology and 1 trainer for START, the follow on methodology.

They have facilitated many trainings for trainers who have then completed the standard methodology (per the book).

In Gurue, they have trained rites of passage counselors and teacher counselors who are highly placed in the district education system. They chose to work with these groups because teacher counselors counsel parents as well as students and encourage both about the importance of young girls staying in school. Teacher counselors identify many 'premature' marriages of very young girls and try to help them stay in school.

They also work with the counselors for initiation rites for boys and girls.

Before youth start school, they go through rite of passage. (Also said that this normally occurs around age 10, so not sure what is start school age). The facilitators don't ask the counselors to abandon their traditional practices, only how to adapt their practices to modern information.

The traditional message to girls after they are scarred is now you can marry. It used to be that they would not marry until after their period started, but now it is different. Once the girls were scarred, they would drop out of school. They are trying to keep the girls in school and to delay marriage until their bodies can accommodate safe pregnancies.

Thanks to the SS method, there has been a reduction in the # of young girls who drop out of school. And now during the initiation rites, while the girls are healing, they talk about hiv prevention.

For the circumcisers of the boys, they teach them not to use the same blade. And they advise them not to have more than sexual partner. There are only a few districts in Zambezia province that practice initiation rites for boys. 4 districts.

The traditional healers tend to use the same knife for all the boys, believe the knife has power to heal. The SS facilitators try to have clinicians participate in the cutting and not have the healers do.

Saw less counselors using same knife

Traditional healers do not approve of doctors doing cutting at hospital

Counselors want to see what is happening, they don't want to send the boys to the hospital

Some traditional healers use the skin they have cut to protect the boys and help them heal quickly.~

During healing seclusion boys are encouraged not to have many wives or girlfriends. After stepping stones, their period of isolation has been shortened from 3 months to 15 days to 2 months depending on location.

Apparently they are choosing people in the above 2 professions to comprise the peer groups to complete the process rather than choose a cross section of community members. I will ask Alice Welbourne if she has any knowledge of this group's work.

Also visit NAFEDZA, network of women's associations, may see coordinator Monday or Tuesday