NEW GENDER DYNAMICS FOR HIV PREVENTION:

Windows of opportunity in Mozambique

Center for Communication Programs
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

February, 2009

Rosa Said, Msc.
Maria Elena Figueroa, Ph.D.

Place overleaf

Suggestion for Reference:
Acknowledgements

This study was made possible thanks to the generous support of the U.S. Agency for International Development and U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Prevention (PEPFAR), and would not have happened without the help of our colleagues from the USAID Mission in Mozambique.

Our thanks to the local support provided by the Provincial AIDS Nuclei, Provincial Health Directors and District Administrators in the provinces worked in, and, in particular, to Tereza Mendoza, World Vision Mozambique’s PEPFAR Program Director and the provincial managers of the COACH projects, Rita and MOZARK.

We would also like to thank the teams of researchers for their efforts – in the province of Zambézia: Aurélio Andate, Antonio Manuel Giuá, Idalina Passos, Guida Marcos, Jaime Francisco, Leão Maruassa, Marcelino Morais, Merino Sarifo, Sérgio Gaspar; in Sofala: Eva Khan, Adolfo Culete Necame, Adélia Tamele, José Carlos Manuel; and in Maputo: Antonio Uqueio; Honório Samucene, Juma Aiuba, Mangina Sigauque, Sónia Xerinda, and Sonia Magaia.

Finally, our special thanks for the contributions of the participants, the adult men and women, traditional leaders, religious leaders, godparents/sponsors, teachers and truck drivers who generously gave of their time to discuss the topics covered by the researchers.

Acknowledgement also goes to Maria Elena Figueroa, for conceptual design and technical leadership of the research; Patricia Poppe and Alice Payne Merrit, of the JHUCCP team in Baltimore, for technical support; Rosa Said, with support from Maria Elena Figueroa, for the field research coordination, data analysis and information preparation; Emily Holman, for the bibliographical review and field logistical support; and, Mário Marrengula, for the information survey in the provinces to select the survey sites and recruitment of researchers.

Special thanks for the comments provided by Patrick Devos and Mário Marrengula, and the JHUCCP team in Mozambique.

Transcription of recordings: Dulce Passades, Abílio Cossa, Francisco Nguenha and research teams in the provinces.

And to the organizations N’weti Comunicação para a Saúde and Population Services International (PSI), who kindly provided photographs for the composition of the projective techniques used in the research.
Index

Acknowledgements

Introduction ......................................................................................................................... 4

1. Research Sites ............................................................................................................... 6

2. Methods ......................................................................................................................... 6

3. Main Outcomes ............................................................................................................. 9

A. Social and Gender Norms – Obstacles and Opportunities for Behavior Change ...... 10

B. Underlying Social, Cognitive and Emotional Factors in Risk Behaviors .............. 16

1. Multiple Concurrent Partnerships .................................................................................. 16

2. Transactional Sex ......................................................................................................... 24

3. Cross-generational Sex ................................................................................................. 28

C. Perception of Risk in Multiple Concurrent Partnerships, in Transactional and Cross-
   generational Sex ........................................................................................................... 34

1. Perception of risk in multiple concurrent partnerships .................................................. 34

2. Perception of risk in transactional sex ........................................................................... 40

3. Perception of risk in cross-generational sex ................................................................. 41

Bibliographical References ............................................................................................... 44
Introduction

With a population of 19.8 million inhabitants, Mozambique falls into the group of Sub-Saharan African countries whose HIV prevalence continues to be extremely high, at 16%, with a tendency towards stabilization in the Central and Northern regions, and growth in the Southern region. Prevalence is higher in the provinces of Maputo (26%), Sofala (23%), and Zambézia (19%) (MISAU/INE, 2007. In: UNAIDS, 2008).

In epidemiological terms, the HIV epidemic in Mozambique is characterized by a generalized profile, in other words, it is not concentrated in specific groups, but spread across the population. The results of population surveys indicate that the epidemic affects young women aged between 20 and 24 years three times more than men in the same age group. In men, prevalence is higher among the 30 to 39 years of age bracket (CNCS, 2004). Available data also show that the prevalence of condom use is low (CNCS, 2005; PSI, 2005, Prata, 2006). Multiple concurrent partnerships, transactional sex and cross-generational sex are considered determinant risk behaviors in the spread of the virus among the population. Reducing these practices may result in considerable impact on containing the epidemic (UNAIDS, 2008).

Existing qualitative studies, such as the CAP (behaviors, attitudes and practices), have identified socio-economic determinants and certain motivations related to the sexual practices mentioned above. Some authors describe them well (Bagnolle, 2003), but they do not elucidate the cultural complexities conditioning them. Furthermore, most of the qualitative studies carried out in the country have had a limited scope, since they basically involved urban areas (Karlyn, 2005; Hawkins, 2005) or younger populations. Although useful to suggest the association of factors, such studies do not attempt to explain the common determinants of high HIV prevalence in the provinces mentioned, or the intermediary, emotional and cognitive factors sustaining high-risk sexual behaviors.

It must be highlighted that several authors have called attention to information gaps in available literature on HIV risk behaviors, for example: little is known about the perspective of adults in transactional/ cross-generational type relationships (“sugar daddies” and “catorzinhas”) (Kuate-Defo, 2004; SADC Report, 2006), the perception of personal risk in marital and non-marital relationships in a context of “trust” between partners (Agha 2002), whether being married is a risk factor or protection against HIV for women (Luke, 2002), family and social expectations with regard to the sexual behavior of adults, and relatives’ influence on cross-generational sex (Bagnolle, 2003). The motivations for fidelity and consistent use of condoms have also been underexplored in existing studies.

Recent studies and debates suggest that certain gender particularities in Mozambique favor the behavior patterns mentioned (Bagnolle, 2003; PSI, 2004; Karlyn, 2005; Fórum Mulher, SARDC WIDSA, 2006). Taking into consideration individual and collective behaviors per social norms, interventions on gender norms could be effective in controlling the epidemic (Harrison et al., 2000; Campbel, 1997; Hawkins, 2005). Starting
from this premise, and based on the literature review carried out by HCP on HIV transmission in Sub-Saharan Africa, the JHUCP team designed adult-focused formative research, with the objective of **identifying intermediary socio-cultural, cognitive and emotional factors sustaining high-risk HIV sexual behaviors in Mozambique, and also the more equitable gender behaviors which may be translated in “behavior models” to support communication programs**.

In specific terms, this research attempted to explore:

- The concepts of masculinity and femininity among adults, seeking to identify more equitable gender behavior ideals;
- The reasons for the relationship patterns (motivation, benefits, objective and subjective rewards);
- Expectations of men and women, implicit and explicit incentives in agreements regarding transactional sex;
- The perception of HIV risk in multiple concurrent partnerships, transactional and cross-generational relations.

It must be noted that although this survey is not the only one to research sexuality and gender in Sub-Saharan Africa, it is one of the few that has focused on adult men and women, thoroughly examining the socio-cultural, family and individual aspects that determine current sexual relationship patterns. This research is also the first in the field using projective techniques to facilitate broaching sensitive topics through discussions in the “third person”, assuming that by speaking of “others”, people will indirectly speak of themselves and their reality (Catterall, M. & Ibbotson, P., 2000; Wiehagen T. et al, 2007).

This report presents a summary of the research outcomes. Carried out between November 2007 and March 2008 in Mozambique, this survey’s findings present evidence of changes in gender values and norms which may be driven through the media to influence HIV prevention behaviors.

In general, the findings indicate that there are “windows of opportunity” that communication programs in Mozambique can use to encourage healthier sexual behaviors. To this end, it is important to highlight two types of findings: firstly, despite the primary role exercised by economic pressures in certain risk practices, it was possible to identify ideals of behavior among adults that may be strategically valorized by media. These are indications that men and women seek to establish more equitable gender relations, but resist behaving differently from the norm because they need to have social validation as well as peer recognition, understood inter-subjectively. This finding suggests that gender relations in Mozambique are in a process known as the “Spiral of Silence” (Noelle-Neumann, 1995). This phenomenon generally occurs when something, which is different in nature, tends to create controversy. The concept of “Spiral of Silence” refers to people’s silence when they feel/perceive that their opinion is not the dominant opinion. According to this theory, people do not express their opinion openly or act according to their preferences for fear of social isolation. With Mozambique having a society where traditional gender norms still guide the behavior of the majority of the
population, it is to be expected that this fear is strong in those who think or behave differently to the norm. However, the Spiral of Silence is an indicator of change underway in both social norms and in the scale of values, which is seen as an opportunity to be capitalized on by communication programs, through creative strategies that provide social validation for opinions on more equitable social behaviors, including peer support.

A second type of finding, in an in-depth process by JHUCCP, refers to the definition and possible dimensions of the concept of multiple concurrent partnerships (MCP). The first findings of this analysis suggest that Mozambicans identify several modalities of MCP, and each one, according to their opinion, has a different social acceptance. Through the expression “play the field” (“andar fora”), participants in the discussion groups describe different conditions giving rise to several categories of behavior that require different attention from the communication programs (Holman, 2008, ongoing report). Current literature on MCP shows that authors have classified the concept in sub-categories, based on a series of relationship characteristics, and according to paradigms in their areas of study that condition the manner in which the concept is defined and explored (Holman, 2008). Although several studies in Mozambique have dealt with this topic (Bagnolle & Chamo, 2003; Machel, 2001; Manuel, 2007; N’weti, 2007; and others), there is no detailed information on how adults conceive and speak of this type of behavior. This more detailed analysis seeks to contribute with a different perspective in dealing with the phenomenon, examining the particularities attributed to it by the participants, and the level of social acceptance of each particular situation – beginning with how they discuss and describe “playing the field”. A report on the outcomes of this analysis will be shared at a later date.

1. Research Sites

The research was carried out in the provinces of Zambézia (districts of Mocuba, Morrumbala and city of Quelimane), Sofala (city of Beira and district of Dondo) and Maputo (districts of Marracuene and Boane). In each of the provinces/districts, the CCP team worked with partner organizations to identify locations with distinct profiles, i.e., with urban, peri-urban and rural characteristics, so as to cover groups from different ethnic formations, economic conditions and diverse contexts.

2. Methods

- Research design

The research was based on Qualitative Methods – discussion groups with men aged 25 to 50 years and women aged 25 to 40 years, and in-depth interviews with key informants. Group discussions were encouraged through projective techniques – the use of photographs, drawings, case studies and unfinished sentences (having participants finish incomplete sentences).
For the purpose of this study, these techniques were used to encourage the expression of feelings, values and attitudes regarding sexual behaviors and decision processes in relationships, through indirect questions, in other words, non-invasive questions (Donoghue, 2000). For example, instead of asking a group of men: “Do adult men in this community have extramarital relations?” the facilitator showed a photograph of a man, accompanied by a woman, both with characteristics similar to those of the participants, and started the discussion by asking: “What do you see here?” The situations described by the participants, the sentences and intonations used, either positive or negative, reflected the practices and attitudes regarding the behaviors of the social group they represented, their social norms and gender behaviors.

**PHOTOGRAPH 3 with caption**

In the projective approach, ambiguous scenes (photographs) invite a wide range of interpretations, and the participants are given the opportunity to comment on situations lived or witnessed without directly identifying their own experiences or the experiences of people known to the group, thereby avoiding the possibility of uncomfortable situations. For example, to introduce cross-generational sex, photographs and drawings depicting older men establishing some form of contact with adolescents were used. These materials gave rise to many discussions, normally revealing indignation with this phenomenon. The suggestive photograph of a couple in conflict also led to significant discussion in all groups and localities, and brought up the issue of domestic violence, a phenomenon that is normally silenced, showing the gender inequalities and subordination that mark the life of Mozambican women. In turn, a photograph showing an apparently happy family allowed participants, both men and women, to reveal the existence of different positive behaviors and express more equitable gender ideals.

The groups formed were, to a certain extent, homogeneous per sex and age, and the process for conducting discussions by the facilitator included the following steps:

1. Opening discussions on the roles of gender, masculinity and femininity, and ideals of behavior;
2. Presentation of ambiguous photographs without captions, followed by photographs with captions for appraisal and comments;
3. Case studies on concurrent sex;
4. Case studies on transactional and cross-generational sex; and,
5. Conclusion of sentences on HIV prevention behaviors.

- **Discussion groups**

The discussion groups were conducted by local facilitators trained by the JHUCCP team in Maputo, with technical guidance by Maria Elena Figueroa, from the Baltimore staff, who personally participated in the first training session held in Zambézia. The capacity building activities in each province took three days and involved hours of lessons and field activities, with theory support on projective techniques, classroom simulation and field practice, and the opportunity was taken to pre-test and jointly review the instruments.
The groups had an average of 5 to 8 participants, and were led by facilitators of the same sex as the groups, with command of the local languages; the participants were given the choice of language used in the discussions. The sessions took, on average, 2 hours, and were recorded with the agreement of the participants. A total of 17 group sessions were held in Zambézia, 10 in Sofala and 10 in Maputo. In total, over 250 men and women were heard.

- **In-depth interviews**

In-depth interviews were held with two types of informants: a) influential people in the community (traditional leaders, Christian leaders, teachers, godparents) and, b) adults differentiated by the communities for their “model” behavior, such as, for example, women acknowledged as leaders, men respected as “responsible,” among other qualities (marked in literature as “positive deviants” since they present non-conventional behaviors); also included in the discussion groups were some participants with positions that differed from the social expectations or who claimed to adopt HIV prevention attitudes. In addition to these profiles, it was considered appropriate to interview truck-drivers in Mocuba/Zambézia, since this district is characterized as being a corridor route.

Lasting approximately 30 to 45 minutes, the interviews with people of influence dealt with the perception of social norms, gender roles, prevalent sexual relationships in the community, and risk factors. As to the interviews with “positive deviants”, with a similar duration, the perspective was to understand the motivations, values and skills, among other cognitive and emotional aspects, which played a part in the adoption of prevention attitudes and/or affirmative postures in gender relations.

A total of 61 in-depth interviews were held, with 38 in Zambézia, 10 in Sofala and 13 in Maputo. These interviews were fundamental in addressing and/or enriching the information obtained in the discussion groups.

- **Data Analysis Process**

Operationally, the statements were systematized separately per rural and urban areas and per province, according to the previously established analysis categories. Following this, the similarities and differences between the statements were identified, according to the different areas in each province and finally between provinces. As is the norm in a qualitative approach, the interpretation was based on the following analytical resources:

- Arguments used on the same topic at different times in the statements;
- Recurrent Arguments/ Confirmation/ Underpinning;
- Different arguments to defend certain opinions;
- Same arguments used to defend opposite opinions;
- Relationship between the different opinions/ positions;
- Observation of connectives – used to link sentences, more important/ less important / emphasis;
• Ambiguities;
• Silences/ Sharp interruptions/ Omission; and,
• Semantics.

3. Main Outcomes

As was previously mentioned, the findings show ambivalence among both men and women from urban and rural areas, with regard to the actual status of gender relations and couples’ relationships. Although men justify, through culture, women’s subjugation to masculine power, they also acknowledge and aspire to a marital life which has greater understanding, is peaceful and long-lasting. Women, in turn, state that they owe men respect; however, they wish their partners/husbands would have more consideration for their workloads; they want more dialogue and a better family relationship. However, these aspirations and desires for change are being constrained by peer opinion (mainly men), both from families and residential neighbors.

The perception of risk in sexual relations seems to be more present in women than in men. However, the woman’s unequal social position forces her to comply with the wishes of her partners, even when she wants to have sexual relations using a condom. Appearance is a factor which contributes to minimize the perception of risk. The “trust” between partners is seen as an “excuse” for men and women to not protect themselves against HIV. Added to this is the fact that men perceive themselves as being biologically stronger than women, believing therefore that they run less risk than women of being infected. This perception leads men to blame the women when the infection appears first in the woman.

Transactional sex, generally associated with cross-generational sex, is perceived as a situation of risk for HIV infection for either partner involved, because neither partner knows the other’s previous sexual experiences. In cross-generational sex, the older man is perceived as being a potential STD/HIV transmitter, since he has generally had sexual relations with many different women. It must be added that many men appear to believe that having sex with an adolescent girl improves their own health. In this case, refusal to use a condom could be explained due to the importance given to the exchange of body fluids.

It must also be mentioned that the information obtained in the three provinces does not differ significantly. In other words, the results were similar, with small variations from one province to another and among urban and rural areas for some of the aspects examined. For this reason, the findings will be presented here together, pointing out the differences whenever these are significant.
A. Social and Gender Norms – Obstacles and Opportunities for Behavior Change

• Norms and indications of ruptures

As we mentioned previously, existing social and gender norms in Sub-Saharan Africa have been considered in current literature as determinant factors in HIV high-risk behaviors (Chatterji, 2004; Harrison et al., 2006; Luke, 2002; Pulerwitz et al., 2007). The authors converge on two explanations for this inference: these norms endorse multiple partners, and men’s control over the sexuality and behavior of their primary partners.

Considering that the purpose of this research was to obtain information to help design communication programs, it was of interest to us to know to what extent social and gender norms operated as obstacles to behavior change in Mozambique, and what could be opportunities for those changes. For this, we sought to investigate how adult men and women understand those norms, how they answer to them, and what the cost of transgression represents for both men and women, in their family and social contexts. Also, we have tried to identify new values underway, their motivations, and how this is affecting the behavior of adults.

In that perspective, the research began with the exploration of the perceptions of masculinity and femininity among the participants in the discussion groups, asking what they considered to be a “good man” and a “good woman”. These questions were sufficient to obtain information on traditional gender expectations, current gender behaviors, social control mechanisms and idealizations.

The information obtained confirmed that traditional gender roles constitute the identity reference of men and women, as is mentioned in other studies (Dahlbäck et al., 2003; UNAIDS, 2004; Bannon and Correia, 2006). In the opinion of men and women alike, men are responsible for establishing and supporting the family, and determining the rules for living together. The woman runs the home, which implies a series of obligations: having children, taking care of them and the husband, taking charge of the domestic chores and complying with the decisions of the head of the family. The man always has the final say in conflicts of management in the home. Some statements illustrate these perceptions, and the extent to which the woman revolves around the man.

“A good woman is one who makes her husband look good, washes her husband’s clothes, irons his clothes, does everything for her husband and gets the water ready for his bath.” (DG, 06/12/07, women, Quelimane, Zambézia)

“What we think is that the man is the male of the house, he secures the family, the man is responsible for everything, the other difference is that the man thinks of educating the woman…it happens that the man does that, he makes the rules for the woman, the man can educate the woman but the woman can also educate a man, but it is the man that lays down the rules.” (DG, 13/02/08, women, Boane, Maputo)
“I, personally, would like the woman, I think I am going to repeat, she should listen to her man as if she were listening to God, I mean, listening to a King, because the man is the woman’s king, he is everything for the woman... if she speaks her mind to her husband, that is where there will be trouble (confusion, fights)” (DG, 13/02/08, men, Boane, Maputo)

A female participant, who stood out in one of the groups for having questioned the traditional gender norms, summarized the general feeling of Mozambican women in that context:

“An African man does not ask the opinion of his wife. The woman has to respect her husband. Regardless of how much the woman may help with some money in the home, the man does not change; he continues to think in the same way. An African man thinks that the woman should yield to her husband. The woman should simply listen to the husband’s idea. The woman’s idea is never valid. African men are superior to their wives, because the assets in the home belong to the husband and not to the couple” (E, women, DP, 20/03/08, Beira, Sofala)

These statements mark the prevalent feature in couples’ relationships in the study area: the man decides and the woman obeys; this model is typical of patriarchal-based family systems. However, the situation is not consistent: during the exploration of men and women’s roles, the participants discussed situations that present windows of opportunities (ideals, aspirations) in current gender relations. For example, women say they feel safer with a man who shares in the domestic chores, and take this behavior as proof of love.

“I feel good, I feel like a strong woman because my husband likes me and is happy to help me with the domestic chores, he does not like to sit around doing nothing, he likes to know that the bucket of rice or of sugar belongs here, so he has to get up and sweep.” (DG, 14/02/08, women, Boane, Maputo)

“Women like this kind of man because they feel valued and they lessen the workload”. (DG, 24/03/08, men, Dondo, Sofala)

Above all, women and men become aware of the need for change in their domestic arrangements (with greater participation by men) to make family life easier and to ease the burdens on the woman:

“At other times, the man may cook because I may be in the field and he leaves work and gets home before I do and does not find any pot on the fire, but there are children that have to go to school or it may be that we do not have any children but we may be hungry, and he can help, getting things ready... but currently, since we are living the democracy, men are beginning to open up... if everyone starts work at 7:30 and leaves at 15:30, the first one to get home begins to prepare things, but this did not happen before” (DG, 14/02/08, women, Boane, Maputo)

“Many men leave everything for the woman to do; even if he is at home seeing everything, he leaves it all, it cannot be only the woman taking care of the children by herself, the men can also do it.” (DG, 15/02/08, men, Guava/Marracuene, Maputo)
Looking at the photograph of an apparently happy family, participants from all groups reiterated their desire for change:

**PHOTOGRAPH 4, without caption**

“This man lives happily with his wife; that thing of saying that I am the man of the house and therefore I am in charge does not exist here. Everything that is done in the home is done based on understanding and coordination” (DG, 28/11/07, men, Morrumbala, Zambézia)

The women mentioned that they would like their partners to talk to them, to respect their opinions, and include them in their leisure time, and some men commented on the need for greater dialogue between couples:

“I would like him to be a good companion, always present, a person who can listen to you when you want to talk of a specific issue, who respects your opinion, knows how to correct something that is not correct nicely, be a brother, on those “men’s Friday nights”, take his wife to where he goes.” (DG, 20/03/08, women, Beira, Sofala)

“Nowadays it is not like before; now there is AIDS and couples sometimes need to talk about this evil that is killing many people. In addition to being infected through sex, a woman can become infected by using a neighbor’s needle... On the other hand, when he goes or comes from work, it is impossible to know for a fact who he is involved with out there, he may be having unprotected sex and it is necessary for couples to talk. Or they can be talking of family planning or the use of condoms.” (DG, 15/02/08, men, Guava/Marracuene, Maputo)

- **Peer, family and community pressure for traditional roles to be maintained**

Men, particularly in the rural areas, were very apt to be influenced by the opinions of their peers, direct family members or neighbors regarding their behavior in the home, particularly when dealing with tasks traditionally attributed to women.

“Others because they would be embarrassed by their own family, if they were found washing clothes, they would say that our son was married.” (DG, 13/02/08, men, Boane, Maputo)

“In the rural area this practice is not accepted, for example: If a father who lives in the country comes to visit his son who lives in the city, and finds him helping his wife, when he returns to the country he will speak ill of his son, saying that he was placed in the bottle, he married a white, our son is the servant because in the country there are tasks that are only for men and tasks that are only for women”. (DG, 20/03/08, men, Beira, Sofala)

The women had the same opinion regarding peer pressure:
“This type of man is seen by his friends as being mad, because what he does is not good. His friends say this because in their homes they do not do what this man does.” (DG, 25/03/08, women, Dondo, Sofala).

The men feel belittled, in other words, it is a threat to their social role reference. This was well illustrated by some of the comments made by participants after seeing a photograph of a man, alone, taking care of a baby:

**PHOTOGRAPH 1, with caption**

“...there are men capable of doing it (taking care of babies) and there are others who are not; not because they don’t have the physical capacity, but morally they feel like they have been belittled or humiliated, they feel really humiliated either because others will bad-mouth them or something like that, saying that he takes care of the children so his wife has drugged him, for that reason certain men limit themselves to doing certain activities.” (DG, 13/02/08, men, Boane, Maputo)

It is important to note the emphasis given by this participant when indicating that “…for that reason certain men limit themselves to doing certain activities.” This confirms the fear of criticism and of social isolation, mentioned in our description of the “Spiral of Silence,” which contributes to men not participating in tasks not traditionally attributed to their role. The same situation is presented in the case of women, i.e., they also fear social criticism if they allow their partners to cooperate, as is illustrated in the statement below.

“My husband cooking, lady, while I am not sick, I am at home, goes to the stove, it is not right, even the neighbors, if they find him there, can think it odd, talk badly of me and think that I drugged my husband, when what exists between us is love, but for others I lose value when he cooks and I am sitting.” (DG, 14/02/08, women, Boane, Maputo)

However, as we saw previously, women admit that they like men who cooperate and lament that they are a minority. With regard to the appraisal of photograph 1, shown previously, when the facilitator asked the groups of women if they would like this type of man, the following comment was typical:

“We do like them, but unfortunately we do not have them, they are rare. I can like a man like that because he can help me with everything. Like he is doing, feeding milk, bathing, washing nappies, doing this and that, but the neighbors begin to interpret it badly, saying that the woman drugged the husband, and when the man hears that, will he continue to help?” (DG, 14/02/08, women, Boane, Maputo)
• Domestic violence as a disciplining resource

Participants’ allusions to domestic violence made it possible to measure the extent and configuration that the phenomenon assumes in conflicts based on gender expectations, appearing to represent a habitual reaction by men whenever the primary partner does not meet the expectations of her role in the family. Notwithstanding the possibility of women’s aggression towards men, it is curious to note that this type of occurrence was mentioned only once in the entire survey (see statement immediately below). Studies carried out in Sub-Saharan Africa have noted, for example, that sexual violence is closely linked to the breakdown of men’s expectations with regard to women’s behavior (Ajuwon, 2001; Bannon and Correia, 2006).

“Women now order men around and we can even be hit by them. Today, women whip the men. When you see a woman, she is proud to be able to humiliate a man, which did not happen before. When she makes a mistake and you try to counsel her, she tells you to shut up because she is already independent and you, a man, no longer order her around.” (DG, 13/02/08, men, Boane, Maputo)

PHOTOGRAPH 1, without caption and PHOTOGRAPH 3, ELICITATION

Men’s aggression towards women was mentioned over and over again in the versions given by men and women in all discussion groups, on what could be happening in the photographs that suggested conflicts between couples.

“It could be that the husband is returning from work and the wife has not cooked for him.” (DG, 29/11/07, men, Morrumbala, Zambézia)

“It could also be that the man came home late and when the woman asks, in addition to not saying where he was, he prefers to use force to shut her up.” (DG, 29/11/07, men, Morrumbala, Zambézia)

“This photograph is a continuation of the first one, because it shows that the man is decided on hitting the woman because she does not want to have sex with him. (DG, 28/11/07, men, Mocuba, Zambézia)

The comment below shows clearly women’s fear of aggression by their husbands:

“The woman must be very patient with her husband and children, because if she is not patient, she will be visiting the emergency room (hospital) every day, because tempers rise, because even the man turns into a child when facing the woman ...” (DG, 20/03/08, women, Beira, Sofala)

“I am afraid of laying a complaint at (station?) because I fear retaliation; I do not know what the future holds. I am scared of that man. He is violent, he hits me, one day he may kill me, or even sell my house, without my knowing.” (DG, women, 20/03/08, Beira, Sofala)

These statements are consistent with the findings of a study recently published in Maputo by a network of organizations defending the rights of women and children (Gaspar, 2005)
on the extent of physical and sexual violence against women in Mozambican homes (verbal aggression, threats to physical integrity, through the use of a weapon or knife, strangulation, suffocation and burns, among other forms). This study points to a quarter of the women interviewed (23%) reporting sexual violence (In: Gaspar, 2005; Fórum Mulher, 2006).

However, other statements reveal that not all men agree with violence against women. More than one participant mentioned the Family Law on the Rights of Women, and some questioned domestic violence.

“Here there will be a problem... a legal problem can also occur involving the man, because in the law, a woman may not be knocked around (shown aggression) because she refuses to do something that is unnecessary.” (DG, 28/11/07, men, Mocuba, Zambézia)

PHOTOGRAPH 4, with caption

“We do not like photograph 4 because it is not a good example to go around hitting women; regardless of what she has done wrong, it is necessary to sit down and resolve the problem in a different manner” (DG, 29/11/07, men, Morrumbala, Zambézia)

“This man is different from most men because many men do it but it is not constant. Many men think they have more rights than women, while in fact they have the same rights”. (DG, 24/03/08, men, Dondo, Sofala)

In short, the gender norm perceptions identified in the statements given by men and women present a side that is very unfavorable towards women, but also reveal changes underway that need to be validated by society. This represents, without a doubt, opportunities to promote more equitable gender relations. The findings are summarized below:

Unfavorable aspects

• Men are seen as being the providers. Men have the authority in the home and define the rules for living within the family;
• According to local social norms, everything contained in the home belongs to the man’s family (represented by the husband) – the woman, children, house and household content;
• The woman is responsible for domestic chores and caring for the children and her husband. She has to explain herself to her partner, but her partner does not feel obligated to do the same. She does not have the right to question her partner’s behaviors;
• Physical violence is a resource used by men to discipline the women’s behavior; and,
• Peers and the community work as the “safeguards” of traditional gender norms.
Favorable aspects

- Women feel more valued and secure with partners who share in the domestic chores and take this behavior as proof of their love;
- Women and men are aware of the need for changes in domestic arrangements (with more participation by men), in order to facilitate family life;
- Men and women feel that dialogue between partners contributes towards understanding and harmony in the home; and,
- Not all men agree with violence against women. More than one participant referred to the “Family Law” on the rights of women, and some men questioned domestic violence.

Communication programs could valorize behaviors diverging from current standards, raising them to the category of socially “more desirable ones,” emphasizing respect and admiration of peers, families and community for men who cooperate in the home and in caring for the children. The media could put the spotlight on the importance of dialogue in conflict resolution, and emphasize the rights of women, secured in the Family Law.

B. Underlying Social, Cognitive and Emotional Factors in Risk Behaviors

1. Multiple Concurrent Partnerships

Underlying Factors

Literature defines “multiple concurrent partnerships” as a situation in which an individual is sexually active with two or more partners within a same period of time, being valid for both men and women. This situation can take on many forms, for example, in the case of men or women that are married or are in stable relationships and that are involved with another person at the same time, where this second relationship can be short or long-term, or casual; the person may be single and be involved in simultaneous casual relationships; or when an individual maintains “small houses” or “house 2” (to refer to a man who supports one or more long-term lovers). These practices are common in Sub-Saharan Africa, and in Mozambique in particular (Halperin & Epstein, 2004; N´weti, 2007).

The literature highlights the following factors that favor this behavior pattern: a) cultural familiarity with polygamous marriages; b) migratory movements in search of better work opportunities, forcing the separation of couples for long periods of time; and c) the

---

1 In Mozambique, for example, although prohibited by law and questioned since the Portuguese colonial times, even after independence – in the perspective of the fight against traditionalism and the country’s modernisation – polygamy is still maintained in rural areas through traditional marriages (N´weti, 2004, p.40).
socialization of men in patriarchal bases, which is based on masculine superiority, in terms of rights and sexual vigor, resulting in the “naturalization” of the desire to conquer as many women as possible (Ahlberg et al., 2001; Bagnolle, 2003; Campbell, 1997; Hawkins et al. 2005; N’weti, 2007).

The findings of this research highlight two factors that favor the existence and continuity of this practice: 1) the belief/ social acceptance that man is unfaithful by nature, and 2) excess consumption of alcohol.

Both men and women participants reiterated men’s “vocation” (natural infidelity) for multiple relationships, more than the other way around, as is shown in the statements below regarding a case of multiple sexual partners presented to the participants (Samuel’s Case):

PHOTOGRAPH SAMUEL (in elicitations)

“They are unfaithful by nature” (DG, 28/11/07, men, Mocuba, Zambézia)

“When men are away from home they are like birds, they perch wherever the fancy takes them.” (DG, 20/03/08, women, Beira, Sofala)

“...if the husband goes out, comes back, do not even ask or anything... you keep your mouth shut. You cannot ask “where were you”? Whatever... Leave it, he is a man, he will come home; home is here” (DG, 25/03/08, women, Beira, Sofala).

However, at different times during the discussions, it was evident that infidelity is not as acceptable as it may appear\(^2\), and may even end in divorce if the woman decides to face the conflict.

“When the man no longer loves you, he says “listen, I already have another woman”, but if he loves you he will hide his extramarital affairs, as if he were a thief” (DG, women, Dondo, Sofala)

“If it is a problem of betrayal, there may be fistfights between the wife and the lover, or it could even end up in divorce for the couple.” (DG, 28/11/07, men, Morrumbala, Zambézia)

“It hurts a lot, being betrayed, being swapped for another, it really hurts, but if they are already together, there is nothing to be done.” (DG, 14/02/08, women, Boane, Maputo)

As we will see further on, one of the obstacles that Mozambican women face in their stand against their partner’s infidelity, beyond the risks they run of being infected with HIV, are the cultural mechanisms for the resolution of family conflicts. These mechanisms are regardless of the “Family Law,” which is only put into action in extreme

---

\(^2\) A recent study carried out in the provinces of Sofala and Inhambane points to infidelity and/or assumption of infidelity as underlying factors in disagreements/discord between couples. More specifically, informants mentioned jealousy (42.5%), polygamy (18%) and adultery (8%) as the main sources of conflict between couples (Gaspar, 2005).
cases, namely in the event of a contested divorce. Before reaching this point, the couples resort to traditional counseling by authorized relatives, as we saw in the statements. Grandparents, aunts, parents-in-law, godparents/best-man or matron-of-honor, and people from church were indicated as counselors and/or conflict mediators between couples in both rural and urban areas.

“When they are a couple, they can resort to their best-man or matron-of-honor. The best-man and matron-of-honor are the best mediators and counselors for the couple, and should talk to them. If a couple begins a dispute, they should at least resort to someone who can at least give them advice.” (DG, 13/02/08, men, Boane, Maputo)

“Father’s aunt or my wife’s aunt is where we can go to discuss in this manner and she can give advice.” (DG, 14/02/08, men, Boane, Maputo)

“In a home where there is infidelity there is non-conformation, and where problems of this nature arise, it always ends in fistfights and divorce.” (DG, 05/12/07, men, 35-40, Quelimane)

However, generally, the guidance provided by those mediators reproduces traditional gender norms, in other words, the women are persuaded to adjust to their husband’s temperament and attitudes, to be understanding, to be patient, or even to “correct themselves,” presupposing that they are not meeting the expectations of their role as wife. The comments made on a photograph of an elderly lady talking to a young woman in an intimate setting illustrate this finding:

PHOTOGRAPH 3, without caption

“This daughter here is in the home and went to her grandmother’s house to ask for advice, and the grandmother asks “what is going on, my child?”, and she says “grandmother, I am being driven out of my home,” and she says “my dear granddaughter, my dear child, I always tell you to fully respect your husband and his family, because where you are it is not like here, over there you have no say and you do not decide. You have to be like me, here in the home with my husband and I always respect him.” (DG, 13/02/08, men, Boane, Maputo)

“If you find your husband with a lover, and create problems for the two of them, you will be blamed; even if you complain to your father-in-law, he will be the first to tell you “forget it, my child, he is a man”, but if he so much as suspects that I am with someone… that a certain man… he can expel me from home without proof or even slash me (cut with an instrument similar to a scythe).” (DG, 20/03/08, women, Beira, Sofala)

Curiously, it is the men, more than the women, who question concurrent long-term relationships, the so called “concubinage” in more detail. For them, someone who behaves in this manner cannot be considered responsible, honest or intelligent.

“This happens because the man is dishonest, is unfaithful and is irresponsible in his marital relationship. He ceases to love his own wife, to go out with her, and only goes out with lovers and leaves the wife at home alone.” (DG, 06/12/07, men, Quelimane)
“It is being a mampara (fool, idiot) being unintelligent, being ignorant, being dumb. Leaving the wife at home alone, the person who your parents or you paid a lot of money for with the bride price, and you go out without her and she stays at home, sad and abandoned, you go and love someone else outside and treat her in that way.” (idem)

“Most women really like that type of man, because they already know that this man is intelligent, because when he sits at home, he does not think that there are other women out there.” (idem)

“Suppose I have my wife and children. If I leave my wife to run after lovers, I will be deviating from the allegiance I entered into with her, and she will copy what I do and our children will not grow up with a good education. Also, they will think that our actions are normal and will also do the same.” (DG, 24/03/08, men, Dondo, Sofala)

Excess consumption of alcohol was a recurrent topic in the groups, whenever participants spoke of socially undesirable behaviors for men and women. In Mozambique, access to home-brewed or store-bought alcoholic beverages is practically unrestricted, regardless of the age of the consumer, even being available in kiosks close to schools. Although few participants associated the consumption of alcohol with high-risk sexual behaviors, the statements hint at the fact that alcohol abuse is a common practice among adults, and therefore requires the attention of communicators.

“Between husband and wife, the one who trips most (who has the most extramarital affairs) is the man because he drinks more.” (DG, 25/03/08, men, Dondo, Sofala)

“It is exactly what he already said. Now, if there is love, being a good and faithful person is what a woman shows at home, but when she is drunk she may even kill or have sex with other men. She must not drink so that she can set a good example for her children.” (DG, 15/02/08, men, Guava/Marracuene, Maputo)

“...others drink a lot, but there are some who know how to consider their wife and children, when they know they go out and have a time to come home. (idem)

“...no, they do not think of protecting themselves, often they do it while they are under the influence of alcohol.” (Interview, 14/02/08, religious leader, Mafalala, Maputo)

Direct or Subjective Motivations/ Benefits,

As we saw previously, few studies in Mozambique covered the motivations for adults to engage in multiple concurrent partnerships. In our research, the discussions highlighted

---

3 Alcohol consumption is currently acknowledged as a determinant of high-risk sexual behavior, and indirectly as a factor contributing to the transmission of HIV in Sub-Saharan Africa countries. Studies carried out among adults in this region have uncovered associations between alcohol consumption and unprotected sex, early sexual initiation and multiple partners, with these factors increasing the risk of infection (Lewis, James et al., 2005; Morojele et al., 2006).

4 An audience survey carried out by N’weti (2007) in rural, urban and semi-urban areas of Mozambique pointed to several reasons for men and women becoming involved in multiple concurrent partnerships,
the following motivations, for men: 1) Biological need; 2) Cultural conditioning; and 3) Lack of leisure options – sex for fun. For women, they are: a) Need for money (transactional sex); and b) Reactive behavior

In the case of men:

- Biological need

Men and women insinuated, in their statements, that men have difficulty controlling their sexual desires because this goes against the physiology of males:  

“…all men, as men… hum…, have the choice of being with someone as a man and her as a woman. Having his biological needs obligates someone to satisfy those needs…” (Interview, 29/11/07, CAM, Mocuba, Zambézia)

“Having a wife at home means nothing. By nature, a man always lusts after other women, even if he has someone at home”. (DG, 14/02/08, men, Boane, Maputo)

“Yes, as far as I know women normally, it depends, it is relative, but there are women who, when they are pregnant, that after their 4th month don’t want to have sex, so that interval from the 4th to the 9th month is bigger, and the man cannot go without for all that time.” (DG, 13/02/08, men, Boane, Maputo)

“Well, I would like to add that a married man seeks out other women because sometimes his wife is not well and you want to have sex at that moment or during that week, and so if you don’t have sex then you suffer.” (DG, 15/02/08, men, Marracuene, Maputo)

The last sentence in this statement (“if you don’t have sex then you suffer”) reinforces the perception that contradicting the “nature” of males is not good for the man’s health.

- Cultural conditioning

...
“That is why many married men seek out other women; I think that the man has the right to have two women, and this does not happen with women because they are not the ones who seek out the men.” (DG, 15/02/08, men, Guava/ Marracuene, Maputo)

“Some say because they cannot stay with only one woman, they want two women, another will say because it is his tradition to have two women...” (DG, 13/02/08, women, Boane, Maputo)

“Men have more than one partner because of cultural and tribal customs.” (Reference to polygamy)” (Interview, 24/03/08, religious leader, Dondo, Sofala)

“There are certain men that do this because they argue at home with the wife, and then leave saying that they are going to cool off, but there are also others who do this because it is a habit of wanting to have 3, 4 women.” (DG, 28/11/07, men, Morrumbala, Zambézia)

• Lack of leisure options: sex for fun

“This happens everywhere, a man having other women elsewhere; just don’t show your wife, you can play with her for a while.” (DG, 15/02/08, men, Guava/ Marracuene, Maputo)

“Well, normally I can only base myself on the issue of poverty, since our country or our province is very poor, so people normally, either because of a lack of entertainment, people use, treat sex as a sport or as some form of amusement...” (E, 07/12/07, best-man, Quelimane).

In the case of women:

• Need for money – transactional sex (see item 3.2.2)

• Reactive behavior – Reaction to dissatisfaction in the marriage

Power inequalities in relationships appear to result in women having reactive behaviors.

“Some women want to compete with the man. If he returns at 10:00 p.m. of the following day, she will also return at 10:00 p.m. of the following day; if she finds out that her husband has a lover, she also gets a lover, but it should not be like that, the woman should try to resolve the problem in a different way.” (DG, 20/03/08, women, 25-40, Beira, Sofala)

“...there are other women who, if the husband leaves to stroll around, you that are the wife when you stay, say “I am also going out”, is it only him who went out? Now there

---

6 A survey carried out recently with leaders and population groups in the provinces of Maputo, Gaza, Inhambane and Sofala revealed that, in Sofala and Inhambane, over 50% of the people interviewed referred to “sexual dissatisfaction” as a factor of interference in the couple’s sexual relationship, responsible for distrust, conflicts and disagreements/discord (Gaspar, 2005, p.43).
are those who want a home and say, ‘that one can go run around, I am not going, I am staying here, and she will even cover everything up... I will stay until the owner, the husband, runs me out of the house.” (DG, 06/12/07, women, Quelimane)

Although the participants did not directly mention sexual dissatisfaction as a possible reason for married women to engage in other relationships, their statements revealed dissatisfaction with partners who do not fulfill their role of provider, including compensating them with gifts (clothing and other necessities). The comments below illustrate this observation:

“The man should think what a woman should, today or tomorrow, use these clothes, and “I need to become interested in looking for something for my wife”. The woman has to know that, where my husband went, on his return he must find something ...” (DG, 28/11/07, women, Mocuba, Zambézia)

“Another thing, the husband buys good clothes for the friend, you do not have, you also see that, hii, my friend is wearing it, why am I not wearing it, well, I am not loved by my husband, for what reason?” (DG, 25/03/08, women, Dondo, Sofala)

The comment of one of the participants suggests that women view infidelity positively when they feel “compensated” by another partner.

“Because it happens that someone can be happy with a husband that is not hers, is happy because she sees that he does good things for you.” (DG, 14/02/08, women, Boane, Maputo)

Some statements given by men and women suggest that dissatisfied women are more prone to becoming involved in other relationships.

“In my opinion that good man, as the brother there said, I am going to add a little. When you concern yourself with your wife, she even respects you a lot, and when sometimes a man comes and tries to win her over, she refuses because she knows that her husband respects her, because there are those men who hit their wives, sometimes when he gets a job, he does not bring the money home, and then it is enough for a guy to chat her up (win over or pursue) because she is trying her luck with other men to see if she can improve.” (DG, 15/02/08, men, Marracuene, Maputo)

Other men become crazy when they get another woman; you who are at home, he no longer sees you as a woman, if he wants he can say that you don’t bathe, when you cook, the food doesn’t cook, and the money no longer comes into the house, it goes to that other woman on the street, that is why many women want men who are married, because they are well taken care of by other women’s husbands, and she also does not have expenses because the wife washes that man’s clothes, the wife does everything but only she (the lover) gets the money, that is why she wants her friend’s husband. (DG, 13/02/08, women, Boane, Maputo)

Other aspects possibly linked to a context of dissatisfaction were also identified. For example, when photograph 2 (alongside) was examined, none of the participants associated the scene to an everyday couple. They all attributed it to a situation between
lovers, implying that there is no room for leisure together in a formally established marriage.

PHOTOGRAPH 2, without caption

“These two are not married. They are lovers. Love between married couples is not shown like this; you can see that from how they are and where they are…” (DG, 13/02/08, men, Boane, Maputo)

“They never go out together, only if they are sick, even then they do not walk together. These two are lovers. His wife is at home and this woman’s husband is also at her house”. (DG, 25/03/08, women, Dondo, Sofala)

“Yes, it happens, and it is very common to see lovers here. The love between a married couple does not do this, it does not have space for this type of relationship.” (idem)

These statements indicate that both dialogue and the joys of life between partners is lost when they marry. This, without doubt, leads to an unsatisfactory interaction for both, leading to the search for other partners, justified for the man and denied for the woman. The comments below illustrate the women’s desire for more harmony in their married life.

PHOTOGRAPH 2, with caption

“Yes, because there are those who, when they come home they want to be the man, the rooster, they come home with frowns, if the table is not laid in time, then there is trouble, whatever else, and they do not talk to the children or to the wife, they do not have that conversation between friends, because husband and wife need to have friendship in the home. Being friends is not only being husband and wife, it is also winning the friendship. But there are husbands who do not do this, they come home because the man only comes home, eats and then leaves again.” (DG, 15/02/08, women, Guava/Marracuene, Maputo)

“He is very simple, when it is the weekend, for example, this weekend, if he were at home, he would talk, play with the child, and even this baby would not be here with me, it would have stayed with him. He would be at home with this child, playing. Yes, we are well. I still do not have that trouble.” (idem)

These findings suggest that adults long for changes in their relationships and offer an opportunity for the communication programs to promote a lifestyle for couples different from the present one, with harmony, communication, support for one another and dedication to the family, without the need to go in search of additional partners.
2. Transactional Sex

PHOTOGRAPH 7, with caption
Underlying Factors

Literature on transactional sex in the African context identifies factors associated with this behavior. The main determinant identified is women’s limited access to economic opportunities and financial resources. Some authors also highlight the cultural tradition of *Lobolo* (Bride Price), which associates the exchange of goods or money for owning the woman in marriage, contributing to instill the idea in women that sex can be an advantage for them to obtain benefits from men. (Bagnolle, 2003; Kuate-Defo, 2004; N’weti, 2007). Others recognize the difficulty in differentiating this behavior from other non-transactional ones, due to the variety of forms that these transactions may assume (Chatterji, 2004).7

The outcomes of our research coincide with the few findings found in literature relating to the contextual factors that favor transactional sex in adult women. The main reason mentioned by the participants for the occurrence of this practice is the situation of poverty in which most of the families in Mozambique live.8

“So, ultimately because of the poverty that we have, every woman thinks, ok, she will be able to get something from there to take home, for school, for lunch, for snack, or I don’t know what else, and they end up becoming involved, and, practically, that person will not be happy.” (DG, 13/02/08, men, Boane, Maputo)

“The women think that the men have money because one may find a man who gave her 50 meticais, the following day he gives her 100 meticais, and the following day 500 meticais. She thinks that he is a good man and even comments with her friends that her “old man” is good because he buys her whatever she asks for.” (DG, 14/02/08, men, Boane, Maputo)

PHOTOGRAPH 5, with caption

7 Chatterji (2004) verified the occurrence of associations between socio-demographic variables and the probability of a person participating in transactional sex, applying multivariate and regression analyses to samples of men and women aged between 15 and 49 years in twelve countries in Africa. The results of the analysis indicated that in all those countries, married women would be less likely to participate in this practice than unmarried women. Some religions also contributed to discouraging them, for example, Muslims and Christians, with the former in relation to women and the latter in relation to men. This practice was associated with precarious domestic conditions in half of the countries, and not associated in the others. However, the author indicated that the study did not allow the dimension of the transaction to be verified, i.e., the people could have answered “yes” because they received food or some other support normally given in non-transactional relationships.

8 N’weti (2007) also observed a similar association, emphasizing that in contexts of extreme poverty, this is the way found by women to obtain some money, small goods, employment opportunities or favours that help them meet their needs – either for survival or superfluous – and that it does not occur in the same proportion for boys because the current masculinity model does not approve of a man depending on a woman. (p.13)
The research obtained some important findings on transactional sex, sometimes cross-generational sex, among teachers and female students. Unanimously condemned by the participants in all of the provinces, and criticized as a routine practice, the main reasons indicated for its perpetuation and impunity were:

- Parents do not know of or believe in the proceedings filed by schools to punish the teachers; they do not know the Law and/or do not believe in the judicial system;
- The fear that their daughters will be kept back at school (failing the year);
- The hope of finding a future husband for their daughters;
- Teachers’ lack of preparation with regard to their role; and,
- Culture of silence among colleagues.

**PHOTOGRAPH 6, with caption**

Some statements made by teachers summarized the aspects mentioned. For example, on the extent of the problem:

“It is common, because it is heard of almost everywhere, in almost all places in the region and in all national schools, even in primary schools. I have already worked in lower level primary schools where there were cases, even of being caught in the act, involving a teacher and a 12 year old female student. In all schools.” (Interview, 06/12/07, teacher, Quelimane, Zambézia)

Ignorance of or disbelief in the Law and/or in preventive mechanisms implemented by the schools:

“... for example, a father finds his daughter with a teacher and lodges a complaint with the school director, and the director says he will refer the case. The father waits for the result with the director, who in turn, does not know where the case stands, or at what district directorate it is at, or if it is at another institution and the family, therefore, does not know how to follow-up the case, and therefore gets scared and ends up keeping quiet.” (Interview, 28/11/07, teacher, Mocuba)

Fear of daughter being kept back at school:

“Some parents refer this to the school management, while others don’t, perhaps because they are poorer, or maybe because they fear that if they accuse that teacher, it may imply that their daughter will be failed; and they end up accepting” (Interview, 03/12/07, teacher, Morrumbala)

Hope of seeing the daughter married:

“...either because in this day and age there is that concept that it is better for a girl to bring a boyfriend home than to fall pregnant and have no responsibility, so the parents accept it.” (idem)

Teachers’ lack of preparation to work with adolescents and youth, and not understanding their role as educators:
“I think that these are mostly young teachers, who are working with girls for the first time. These cases involve mainly younger teachers, who bring with them that air of flirtation that they had in high school where they were studying... other teachers use this as an exchange for marks, and so this is the way the teacher finds to coerce the girl to go out with him...” (Interview, 03/12/07, teacher, Morrumbala)

“... because there are teachers who did not receive any training; because he leads a rural life, so he thinks like a peasant and as soon as he sees a female student, he runs after her.” (Interview, 05/12/07, teacher, Quelimane)

Pact of silence:

“... it should be the management and the parents themselves, because a teacher who knows that a colleague is involved with a student and tries to approach and advise “that what you are doing is not good”, looks like he is selling him out (denouncing), one day when he is caught, he will not acknowledge (admit), he will only think that it was his friend who blew the whistle on me. (Interview, 28/11/07, teacher, Mocuba)

**Direct or Subjective Motivations/ Benefits**

The problem in identifying the motivations for transactional sex lies in the difficulty of characterizing, as purely transactional, relationships in which women benefit from the men with whom they are involved with some form of material assistance, considering that women in Mozambique are conditioned to expect financial support from the man. For example, in the review carried out on the quantitative and qualitative studies in Africa on transactional and cross-generational sex, Luke (2002) observed that women expect presents as part of any relationship, feeling undervalued or humiliated when this does not happen (p.4).

The fact that most of the women in the discussion groups were married and knew each other may have led them to not comment on the behavior of women in the same age group and life situation, in terms of non-traditional behaviors.

Nevertheless, a more detailed analysis of the statements on the different aspects explored in the research indicates that the association between poverty and gender relations is behind this behavior pattern. Another reason, which also involves gender perceptions, concerns the blaming of women for supposedly seducing the men through the way they dress.

**Poverty and gender:**

The women reiterated that they live in poverty (situation of the population investigated), and imply that, in general, they do not have control over available money to cover household expenses; they do not know how much their husbands earn, and are dependant on their husband’s good will to get some extra funds to pay for small personal needs.
“...money is what causes a lot of turmoil; when he does not bring money, when he does not show that, hii, I received so much, or here it is, shows the amount received, that is when there is turmoil, major uproar.” (DG, 25/03/08, women, Dondo, Sofala)

“...when he receives, if a man works, brings the money, does not spend it before bringing it home, then you are happy and content. Hiii, my husband likes me.” (DG, 25/03/08, women, Dondo, Sofala)

“...because what happens is that women get upset because they already have someone who gives them money, someone gives her 1.00 while here at home she only gets 0,50 cents. “They like this because it gives money to support the home. Others don’t like it.” (DG, 28/11/07, women, Mocuba, Zambézia)

“Says, 'I don’t mind' while perhaps the one who is giving her 1.00 is deceiving her ...” (DG, 14/02/08, women, Boane, Maputo)

Blaming women for seduction:

Without denying the poverty situation as a motivation for transactional sex, in general the men blamed the women’s behavior and manner of dress, saying that it was a factor that encouraged this practice. The criticism regarding the exposure of women’s bodies, through external influences, is linked to the breakdown of traditional social norms. Indirectly, men blame them for provoking them sexually. The women did not discuss the merit of this claim.

“The way in which women dress determines their manner of being, humm, ehh, the way this one dressed is not good, those that use short skirts and you soon find out, and there are those who dress in good capulanas, (cloth which native Mozambican women use to cover from the waist to the knee) tied properly, long, and you find out, she was brought up well at home... see how she behaves, quiet when she is walking or sitting with her friends, without doing things to attract improper attention from others...” (DG, 04/12/07, men, Quelimane, Zambézia)

“...perhaps one of the characteristics would be the valorization of our culture, because currently what is happening, eh, a little in our society, is the disappearance of our culture. Our culture is disappearing; we are copying what we see on television... I mean, in our culture, before, the women’s culture was to wear clothes, ah, in a qualified manner, eh, below the knee; but what we are seeing now, is exposed navels, hum, that to an old man, is an adulteration of what behavior should be, perhaps tradition.” (DG, 06/12/07, men, Quelimane, Zambézia)

“... this through culture; culture is too much, yes, culture is definitively lost ...”(idem)
3. Cross-generational Sex

Underlying Factors

According to the literature, cross-generational sex is a socially acceptable phenomenon in Africa, being directly linked to the social construction of the female. With the female identity rooted in the archetype of mother-wife, families tend to view an unmarried and childless adult daughter living at home as a constraint. If this is the norm, the woman will, with either direct or subliminal support from her family, try to find a partner and fall pregnant, even if he is much older (N’Weti, 2007; Luke, 2000).

This study found a certain ambivalence of opinions with regard to cross-generational sex and a kind of “culture of silence” around the matter, contributing to its perpetuation. The community does not usually interfere in those situations, considering this to be a private matter⁹.

PHOTOGRAPH 6, without caption

“... it is normally said that a man does not have an age.” (DG, 13/02/08, women, Boane, Maputo)

“This is very normal here in the community and if that happens, nobody will speak. The people are at ease and think it is normal.” (DG, 04/12/07, men, Quelimane, Zambézia)

“He has a crazy heart but it could be that you do not have harmony in the home, so he prefers to leave. It could happen that he did not want to have fun with that girl, but if he marries her, and she becomes the second wife and he builds her a house where he will be happy, he can no longer get that here at home.” (DG, 14/02/08, Women, Boane, Maputo)

“The community never says anything; that is their private life. When we are in our homes, it is each one for himself and God for all. To say, if you see a neighbor going out with a child, what are you going to ask? Nothing, let him do what he wants because it is his life.” (DG, 15/02/08, men, Guava/Marracuene, Maputo)

“But when the people in the community keep silent it is not because they are happy, they very often condemn it, they speak badly of the person, but they do not do so directly, but they speak, and others may even find you odd.” (DG, 14/02/08, men, Guava/Marracuene, Maputo)

Certain comments revealed that this type of behavior causes many adults to feel strange or uncomfortable due to its association, as a rule, with transactional sex, which is a situation that tends to have financial repercussions for the family of the man involved and/or jeopardizes the future of the young girl.

⁹ The audience survey performed by N´weti (2007) refers to the “lack of reprimand by the family as well as the community in the involvement (mainly) of women and female adolescents with committed men (married, engaged or dating)” (p.16).
“In my opinion, I think that sometimes, those people who violate children because they use their money to abuse children, because they know that a child is a child, a child does not think, so they take advantage of this to use the children, then they abandon them and some of them are disgraced... then it is a scandal.” (DG, 06/12/07, men, Quelimane, Zambézia)

“A person of this age should see this girl as his daughter, and not take advantage of the fragility of a child for him to violate; often they seek out these men to have money and nothing more, and because this man has money he thinks that he will seduce all the girls and ultimately will create problems for himself at home” (DG, 15/02/08, men, Guava/Marracuene, Maputo)

“The mother can say ‘yes, you are with that man like that, an old man like him, why don’t you marry someone your own age?’ But she will not want to because what does she want, she wants money. (DG 1, 06/12/07, women, Quelimane, Zambézia)

“That old man does not think, there are those that beat up their children because of exactly this, so he left his own house and went looking for a younger woman and then his children are suffering at home with no money to pay expenses.” (DG, 14/02/08, men, Guava/Marracuene, Maputo)

The findings also highlight the family’s collusion with this type of relationship, as a result of poverty, interest in securing a future marriage for a daughter, or “ambition”, in the perspective of some participants in the study.

“...When the daughters turn 14 years old, they go and get involved with a man of 40-something years old, when she has 500 thousand she brings it home, buys that, the mother is more relaxed and the daughter has a good boyfriend.” (DG, 06/12/07, women, Quelimane, Zambézia)

“There are ambitious families.” (DG, 14/02/08, men, Guava/Marracuene, Maputo)

“When they know that that man has dough (money), ah, my daughter, go ahead, marry him.” (idem)

“That depends on the parents; very often the parents see whether the person has conditions (good financial situation and unmarried), if not, then it is not worth it, he can only complain for the court to give a fine, in vain; now, if it is a person with money, they do not leave you alone, they look for you until they find you and make you marry their daughter.” (idem)

“While there are some parents who allow their underage daughters to marry older men because they treat them well, and will provide financial resources, and a home, they are more concerned with money than with age.” (DG, 21/03/08, women, 25-40, Beira, Sofala)

A similar finding can be seen in Kuate-Defo (2004), where it states that it is common for parents to encourage their daughters to become involved with older men, with the hope
that they will find a husband or at least financial security; also, they will be a provider for any child that the girl may possibly already have. It was also seen that the relatives tend to reject these men when they understand that they have no intention of marrying.

Our participants also pointed out that, in general, in cross-generational relationships, the older men are normally married to someone their own age, and the young girls also have a partner or boyfriend.  

“Just to add, there are cases where the girl has two boyfriends, an older man and a boy her age, and the one serves to give her money, and the other, who is her age, she says she likes, and so for me it is sometimes difficult to explain.” (DG, 14/02/08, men, Guava/Marracuene, Maputo)

However, cross-generational sex with a very young adolescent (under 15 years old) is clearly disapproved of, mainly for health reasons, explained in item 3.3 of this report. This behavior was emphasized as “sexual abuse” in all discussion groups.

PHOTOGRAPH 7, without caption

“It is not advisable of a girl of 15 to get involved with an older man, of 35 years, it is not an age... it is to destroy... she will destroy herself, she will not be a woman like the others, because she began earlier...” (DG, 28/11/07, women, Mocuba, Zambézia)

“Another thing, they are violating the child’s rights.” (DG, 04/12/07, men, Quelimane, Zambézia)

“They do this because they have no respect; currently, the older people do not have any respect for the younger people. The man dresses and has a lot of money and has everything while the child comes from a humble family, and when the man notices the child’s condition, he offers money... the old man will not have the patience to do all this for nothing for the child, he does this to destroy her life, because for a long time it was inconceivable for a relationship to exist between a child and an old man, but currently we are seeing many cases like this.” (DG, 14/02/08, women, Boane, Maputo)

And even if the young girls involved are not that young, social acceptance of the norm is not the same everywhere, i.e., the situation causes many adults to feel strange or uncomfortable, even because cross-generational sex appears to be closely linked to transactional sex, and because these relationships have repercussions on the family and tend to jeopardize the future of the young girls.

---

10 Based on studies on the behavior of adolescents and youth, other authors have observed that the partners (boyfriends) of those who engage in transactional sex with older men also benefit from those relationships. This, perhaps, is an important factor favoring cross-generational sex, taking into consideration that boys, generally, have no access to financial resources to please or support their girlfriends, compared to older men. In these cases, the gender dynamics are inverted, since women use those resources to seduce and/or keep their primary partners (Bagnolle, 2003; Gregson, S. et al. 2002).
Direct or Subjective Motivations/ Benefits

The findings of our study confirm most of the information existing in literature on the motivation of adults, but advance some aspects that will be mentioned further on.

PHOTOGRAPH 7R, IN ELICITATIONS

- The men think they are more protected against HIV in a relationship with a young woman

  “Because the girls live in poverty, they find an old man who gives them money. She prefers to go out with him, now, because the big man pays 200, 300, 500 and even more, and they say ‘this child is really good, she does not play around’. ” (DG, 05/12/07, Women, Quelimane, Zambézia)

- They feel more power and control with a young woman

  “What will happen is that because the girl wants money, he will sleep with her”. (DG, 20/03/08, men, Beira, Sofala)

  “Leaves his wife at home to go and look for the “catorzinha” (very young girls – cradle-robbing) because with her he feels more powerful, more of a man and the boss, regardless of whether this girl is the same age as his daughter or granddaughter or not, he thinks she is a woman and sexually abuses her”. (DG, 20/03/08, men, Beira, Sofala)

- They feel more sexual pleasure

  “Those men who have sex with the girls, they think that the girls have more spirit than the housewives or the women at home. ” (DG, 03/12/07, men, Morrumbala, Zambézia)

  “He feels that if he gets involved with a child he will rejuvenate, and when the child becomes sexually involved with the man, the next day he feels cold while the man gets strong.” (DG, 14/02/08, women, Boane, Maputo)

- Fame/ prestige among friends

  “They do not gain anything, are only following, getting fame, like he is the one going out with a very young girl.” (DG, 28/11/07, Women, Mocuba, Zambézia)

  “His friends think that he is the greatest. ‘But how did you manage to get that girl of 15, catorzinha? ’ while he has an older wife.” (DG, 06/12/07, women, Quelimane, Zambézia)

  “First, I think that he gets fame among his colleagues and even tries to convince others to see the girl, and the friends comment that ‘you managed to get a hot chick. Instead of rejecting the idea, they give him an even bigger reputation and he becomes even more at ease. ’” (DG, 04/12/07, men, Quelimane, Zambézia)

- Increased self-esteem
“It is for the emotion, to make out like he is young while he is already married.” (DG, 28/11/07, men, Mocuba, Zambézia)

- Curiosity

“Some men are just curious and want to go through many girls.” (DG, 28/11/07, men, Morrumbala, Zambézia)

These findings were also reported by authors like Bagnolle (2003), Gregson (2002), Kuate-Defo (2004) and Luke (2002), who also highlight: better status; and having someone to help with the housework, when the man does not have a wife. Bagnolle (2003) also indicated other motivations, over and above those mentioned: 1) men prefer young women because they are cheaper, easier to get and are more accessible; 2) men think that it is more socially acceptable to go around with a young girl than with a prostitute; 3) relationships with adult women are more complicated and costly, because generally they have children; 4) men think that a relationship with an adolescent is less complicated because it is easier to meet in the street, and to arrange other rendezvous, than it is with an adult woman, normally married, and who has commitments at home, in addition to the possibility of having problems with her husband.

The outcomes of our study also suggest that there are other motivations, not previously examined:

- Competition with younger men

An adult man feels powerful when he is able to provide some form of financial support for a young girl, since a boy does not have the conditions to do this.

“The girls agree to sleep with men who are not their age because of money, because now it is said that the old men pay the most; because the boys don’t pay anything, when a man gives a lot of money, the girl becomes vain and the girls agree to sleep with men that are older than them.” (DG, 28/11/07, men, Mocuba, Zambézia)

“Don’t they follow money these days? Because they already know that ‘even if I have a friend, a boy who doesn’t work, he will not give me anything’” (DG, 28/11/07, Women, Mocuba, Zambézia)

The younger men confirmed this disadvantage:

“Some acknowledge that they do not pay anything for the girls, they even say that they cannot compete with that old man, because he can even pay my salary, while the old men have nothing to lose.” (DG, 28/11/07, men, Morrumbala, Zambézia)

Older men feel that they offer more protection to a young girl than partners of the girl’s own age.
“... because with a young boy the same age there will be dishonesty, while with an old man, he will pay for everything she wants, and the older man is more concerned for the girl.” (DG, 06/12/07, men, Quelimane, Zambézia)

“If you are lucky with an adult man, you can be treated nicely because you, that are young, that man can marry you and take care of you, but the boys still want to run wild, they want to meet people their age, and now this man still sees this girl as a baby and so takes good care of her.” (DG, 13/02/08, Women, Boane, Maputo)

- Adults are allowing themselves to do, in sexual terms, what they did not have the opportunity to do when they were young (opportunity to satisfy repressed desires).

“...During his youth he did not have the opportunity to date, because culture did not allow it, and ihhh, now things have changed. In those times, when you were discovered with a woman that was not your wife, you were punished and now it does not happen. And so, those who never got the chance to be with a pretty woman now give thanks...” (DG, 04/12/07, men, Quelimane, Zambézia)

- Repressed desires associated with blaming adolescent girls.

“People say that these days children want old men and old men want children, but the children are too much!... because these children, the way they dress (laughter) don’t even say it, and an adult cannot resist, he ends up giving all his money in exchange for the sex that he never had as a child.” (DG, 06/12/07, Men, 25-35, Quelimane)

- Young women are more uninhibited.

“Married couples do not like to talk about sex, for example, what a woman wants a man to do so that she feels more satisfied, but this is only because the woman is shy, which is why the men find young girls out there and they say do it like this, I want it like that ...” (DG, 20/03/08, women, Beira, Sofala)

- To avoid rejection by older women, when the man has some disease that is noticeable to adults.

“It could be that this man has realized he has a disease and when he goes out with other people they also see that he has a disease, but they still don’t know what it is, so he wants to relieve himself with the child because everyone avoids him, his sperm is building up and so when he finds the children he entices them with money and becomes sexually involved with them and feels relieved.” (DG, 14/02/08, women, Boane, Maputo)

In short, the underlying factors and motivations linked to multiple concurrent partners, in its various forms, in Mozambique, reveal that gender norms contribute to maintaining these practices. However, there are indications that a certain social conscience is developing on the need for changes in current relationship patterns, so as to protect men and women against HIV. This awareness should be reinforced in community-based communication and in the media. The findings are summarized below:
Unfavorable Aspects

- Social perception that men are polygamous by nature (biologically determined);
- Excess consumption of alcohol, favoring unprotected sex;
- Transactional sex as a “way out” to meet basic and superfluous needs; and.
- Social perception of cross-generational sex as a private issue. Despite being morally condemned, when dealing with adolescents, society does not offer any mechanisms to prevent this practice.

Favorable Aspects

- For men and women, extramarital relations imply a deviation of resources from the household budget, affecting the children and the well-being of the family;
- Men and women admire people who remain faithful in their marriage;
- A faithful man is considered by other men to be an intelligent person because he protects his family from STDs/HIV;
- When the partner is faithful, the women feel more confident, respected and take this attitude as proof of love;
- Men and women want to have a happy family life, in a climate of peace and harmony;
- Cross-generational sex is seen as sexual abuse when it involves girls under the age of 15, and is generally associated with transactional sex.

C. Perception of Risk in Multiple Concurrent Partnerships, in Transactional and Cross-generational Sex

In this section we will present the results on the perceptions of risk in sexual relationships, without separating the different categories of behavior identified in the Holman (2008) analysis on multiple concurrent partnerships, mentioned in the introduction of this report. The CCP team will carry out an additional analysis, taking these categories into consideration, to investigate whether differences exist between the perception of risk according to type of relationship/behavior.

1. Perception of risk in multiple concurrent partnerships

The findings show that, in general, men and women from urban and rural areas acknowledge that a person may become infected with HIV in multiple and unprotected sexual relations, and transmit the virus to other partners. What prevents people from protecting themselves against infection may be summarized in the following factors: 1) The relativization of exposure to the risk of infection through sexual relations; 2) Gender norms associated with the perception of men being biologically stronger, not being easily contaminated; 3) Appearance and trust as criteria to reduce the risks associated with gender conditionings.
The relativization of exposure to the risk of infection through sexual relations

The participants in the study acknowledged that a person may become infected in unprotected sexual relations.

“...since Fridays are considered the men’s night, they go out with other women to enjoy themselves, and when they get the disease nobody knows where and how.” (DG, 14/02/08, men, Boane, Maputo)

They also agreed that an infected person may go on to transmit the virus in other sexual relations. With prompting from a photograph showing a case of multiple partners, the facilitator checked whether the participants were aware of the transmission chain: “In addition to Samuel, could some other people also be infected?”

“Yes, they can get infected in the following way, since other people also went where Samuel went, and Samuel never kept still and went on infecting other people, in this case, Samuel has already sowed this disease and anyone who goes where Samuel went, without protection, will become infected. As my colleague said, that is how it is.” (DG, 04/12/07, men, Quelimane, Zambézia)

However, they consider the possibility of other routes of transmission (contaminated sharp objects, injections, razor blades, etc.) sometimes placing them on the same level of damage as the sexual ones. Thus, they understand that a person may even take sexual precautions, but he/she will not be safe from becoming infected through those other routes, where he/she does not have much control. Women, for example, expressed difficulty in knowing whether a married man was infected through extramarital relations or by other means. Naturally, this may be only a “defense mechanism” used by women so as not to face their partner’s infidelity, nevertheless, it reveals that there are still doubts regarding the importance/usefulness of prevention during sexual relations.

“AIDS is not only transmitted through sex, even a blade can contaminate you, even these injections, even logs, if they hurt someone who is infected and then someone else who is not infected comes along, that other person can get AIDS.” (DG, 29/11/07, women, Mocuba, Zambézia).

“She may have a disease, but the husband may not have caught it yet. The woman could have been infected with the virus at the hospital and not from a lover; you can become infected through blood transfusions if it is contaminated, or from an injection or blades and from the husband as well...” (DG, 14/02/08, women, Boane, Maputo)

“She may not have been infected through sex but rather by the traditional healer. Traditional healers use blades and afterwards used it on her. She could also have been infected at the hospital, in another way, like through an injection, because of lack of sterilization. If she had been infected through sex, her husband could also have it.” (DG, 13/02/08, men, Boane, Maputo)
Gender norms associated with men’s perception of being biologically strong, not being easily infected.

Women seem to be aware that their husbands may transmit the infection to them, however the pressure of gender norms makes self-protection difficult.

“Because there are men who are aggressive who say ‘we don’t want to use a condom because when we use a condom we don’t feel good, we don’t get the taste’ (laughing), that’s the problem and women don’t always like it like that because they know that there is a lot of disease, and the woman is the one who always demands those things but the man is always – they are like that – maybe and also they can accept it the first time but the second time – after getting used to it they say we are already used to it, it is better to leave that there, if you don’t want, stay, but you want him or you want to have him, what do you have to do? You have to go – give in (laughing).” (DG, 05/12/07, women, Quelimane, Zambézia)

“In the case where a husband is positive and the wife is not, the wife continues to take care of the husband... but in many cases the husband forces the wife to have sex without a condom, alleging ‘we are married’, but if he is very sick he doesn’t stand a chance, he has to accept what the wife says.” (DG, 21/03/08, women, Beira, Sofala)

“They are husband and wife, you cannot tell your husband to use a condom, even knowing that he goes around with other women, you cannot say that.” (DG, 14/02/08, women, Boane, Maputo)

“He can say ‘why do you want me to use a condom? Why are you thinking this of me, what have you got to want me to use a condom?’ Instead of questioning himself about what he has, he will ask you what you have, and so he will immediately think that you have other men.” (DG, 14/02/08, women, Boane, Maputo)

Added to the perception observed between men and women is the idea that not everyone is vulnerable to HIV, because some people are stronger than others, and that the disease does not affect men as easily, or even that HIV shows up sooner in women because their organism is more fragile than men’s. It is possible that this idea makes sense to them, when trying to understand the existence of discordant couples.

“It may be that some don’t have it because in some people the blood is very weak, but in others it is very resistant. There are those who can sleep with a person with AIDS and not become infected.” (DG, 13/02/08, women, Boane, Maputo)

“Because men believe that they cannot get it, and the disease hides itself in them.” (DG, 13/02/08, men, Boane, Maputo)

“It may happen that the husband is not positive, only the wife is positive. Since it is not possible, it can only be that they have different bodies and the husband is stronger and has still not begun to react.” (DG, 15/02/08, men, Guava/Marracuene, Maputo)

This perception of the fragility of a woman’s organism, associated with the gender disadvantage, combined, results in men blaming the transmission of the virus on the
partner’s infidelity as a first reaction, when the disease appears in the family, directly contradicting the acknowledgement that men are more prone to multiple relationships than women. In this manner, in all group discussions with men, emphasis was placed on the possibility of the woman infecting him. Only a few times did one or other participant raise the possibility of the opposite happening. The following is a typical statement given in response to the question of what women can do to protect themselves against infection:

“... married women should stop sleeping with other men or if they do, because it is difficult to control a grown person, she must remember that the person she is getting involved with is not her husband and should use a condom ...” (DG, 06/12/07, men, Quelimane, Zambézia)

“...In my opinion it could be that he was working in the Republic of South Africa and the wife was having unprotected sex.” (DG, 15/02/08, men, Guava/Marracuene, Maputo)

Occasionally, some women had the same reaction:

“She got it because she went and slept with another man who had AIDS and he infected her, when she gets it, then if she sleeps with her husband he also becomes infected, and if the husband goes and sleeps with another woman who has AIDS he also gets it.” (DG, 29/11/07, women, Mocuba, Zambézia)

**Appearance and trust as criteria to reduce the risks associated with gender conditionings**

The participants acknowledged that the use of condoms may prevent infection; however, the use of condoms conflicts with the argument of “trust” as a kind of non-discussable “convention” in medium, long-term or marital affective relationships.

“That is difficult to answer; a man who does not have lovers, who does not get involved with anyone outside... it is complicated. Every day he comes home to sleep, but only he knows where he is coming from. Another may receive his salary and bring it home, but only he knows how he lives. So it is difficult to know if this one does play around or not, he may do everything he has to at home, but before you realize it he already has others, when you realize he has already brought diseases. So she thinks, but my husband does not play around, we trusted each other, but how did this disease appear, where did he get it?” (DG, 13/02/08, women, Boane, Maputo)

When questioned by the facilitator on a “case” of multiple partnerships, where one of the people involved became infected, normally the participants answered that those people did not use a condom because they loved each other. This is exemplified in the dialogue below:

“He did not have a condom so that is why he is sick” (DG, 14/02/08, men, Boane, Maputo)

Facilitator: But did Samuel know that this could happen?

“No way” (chorus response by participants)
Facilitator: Why did he not know?

“Because he loved that woman without knowing that she was dating that one over there.”

This aspect has already been explored in existing literature, and will not be considered further here. However, the element of “trust” also appears in our study, associated with the physical appearance of a person, minimizing concern on the risk of infection.

“Women... gain trust, they gain trust because a man has been married for a long time and is still healthy, but she thinks that perhaps he doesn't play around, but he plays around, only, well...” (DG, 06/12/07, men, Quelimane, Zambézia)

“They trust the other when they see he/she is healthy.” (idem)

“Others say that woman, just by looking at her you can see she is not infected with the virus” (DG, 28/11/07, men, Mocuba, Zambézia)

“Yes, we are looking at beauty because she does not have blemishes, her physical stature, and we don’t believe that this person can be infected.” (DG, 13/02/08, men, Boane, Maputo)

“For me, it is excessive trust, because we think that someone that is infected must look finished, must have blemishes on the body; when the person still looks good, it is difficult for us to see and we ignore condoms or abstinence and we end up falling for it.” (DG, 13/02/08, men, Boane, Maputo)

With trust between couples being “unconditional”, it suggests that the use of condoms is a sign of this pact being broken, in other words, it causes “distrust.” Furthermore, associated with the prevention of pregnancy, more than with the transmission of STDs, the use of condoms in marital relationships goes against a fundamental aspect of gender construction in Mozambique, which is to produce children as an affirmation of masculinity and to bear children as inherent to the female condition.

“When a couple speaks of using condoms, it is because there is distrust. If the couple trust each other, for them sex is something normal. In this case they can talk of the use of condoms as a form of preventing pregnancy. For that reason, a couple speaking about using condoms is a path of distrust” (DG, 25/03/08, men, Dondo, Sofala)

“Even after knowing they are infected, the couple does not use condoms during sex”. (DG, 20/03/08, women, Beira, Sofala)

Another aspect to highlight, confirming the literature, is that men accept the use of condoms at the beginning of a relationship, and then a little later on refuse to use them because they feel that a relationship of trust has been established.

“Because (pause, laughter) because there are men who are aggressive who say ‘we don’t want to use a condom because when we use a condom we don’t feel good, we don’t get the taste’. That’s the problem and women don’t always like it like that because they know
that there is a lot of disease, and the woman is the one who always demands those things but the man is always – they are like that – maybe and also they can accept it the first time but the second time – after getting used to it they say we are already used to it, it is better to leave that there, if you don’t want, stay, but you want him or you want to have him, what do you have to do? You have to go – give in.” (DG, 05/12/07, women, Quelimane, Zambézia)

This context explains why the female participants in the study, in general married, stated they were impotent to handle the risk of transmission by their partners, considering that it is almost impossible to demand the use of condoms. “The owner’s house is the owner’s house”. This is the expression used, mostly by women from the rural areas, and corroborated at several points in time by women from urban areas, to say that they cannot refuse to have sex with their husbands, even if they have suspicions regarding their state of health, since he owns the house and they are subject to his orders and needs.

“In the owner’s house it is the owner’s house. Because the husband can say ‘why are you refusing to let me have sex with you, why are you making me use a condom? So you are the clever one and are playing around. While you haven’t done that, you are only suspecting that he is doing that. You have to accept because it is his house.” (DG, 06/12/07, women, Quelimane, Zambézia)

Furthermore, as is seen in other studies in Mozambique and in African countries (Luke, 2005, Fórum Mulher, 2006), women do not think it very “natural” to have condoms at hand, either for the prevention of HIV in casual relations or in stable relationships. The statement below illustrates clearly the restriction of condom use to transactional or commercial sexual relations, not being applicable to married women:

“I have heard of prevention through condom use, as I explained earlier, but because I am not a wayward woman, I never have a mind to keep condoms with me. And it is not easy to tell our husbands, normally African, explain to them that when they go out they should use condoms.” (DG, 06/12/07, women, Quelimane, Zambézia)

“Women prostitutes talk more about condom use with their clients or among themselves”. (DG, 24/03/08, men, Dondo, Sofala)

Other obstacles to the use of condoms

Despite the male condom being known to the public in general and relatively easy to access, as shown in some studies (Hawkins, 2005; UNAIDS, 2007), there are still many negative condom beliefs, contributing to resistance to and/or inconsistent use of condoms.

“Yes, we think like that, because, firstly due to the variety of condoms, it creates a threat for us, we begin to think ok, the discrimination already begins here, there are condoms of 300, others that smell of fruits, others smell of I don’t know what, ihh, with variety. You can find a white (man) who comes from Europe, but that white, I believe he does not use those condoms that we receive in the hospital. He does not use that condom from here, and so from there we begin to have a threat, why can he not use it if he is a human being? Right here we have diversity. Secondly, we don’t know if the condom itself offers good
As can be seen from the statements, with the exception of marital relationships, where “trust” between partners is stipulated, when it comes to risks it does not make any difference whether an extramarital relationship is transactional or not (here we are speaking of statements given by adults, mostly married). Both men and women acknowledged that they run the risk of being infected with HIV or other STDs in casual relations, because neither knows the respective sexual history of the other partner. The same is applicable to cases of “concubinage.” This term was used to refer to relationships that are more or less long-lasting, where the man spends money on his partners. It must be highlighted that most of the comments on transactional sex were linked to cross-generational sex. Hardly any mention was made of transactional sex between older women and boys.

The risk of the young girl falling pregnant and causing problems for the man’s family was also widely mentioned.

“Perhaps that man had many partners before he even reached the age of 45, and now he is coming on to that girl; perhaps he will be her first and there she will be, open to being infected with HIV, or maybe not HIV but another sexually transmitted disease.” (DG, 04/12/07, men, Quelimane, Zambézia)

“Yes, he also runs some risk because he can contract diseases. Those that we already spoke of, AIDS.” (DG, 14/02/08, men, Boane, Maputo)

The statements below are from the discussion on transactional sex, but they are not that different from other statements when the topic broached was multiple concurrent partnerships.

“The taxi drivers or even truck drivers are always like that, they date any woman. This is a clear example that he has this and that woman... But, yes, it is difficult to know how and when he got it (AIDS)” (DG, 14/02/08, men, Boane, Maputo)
“The man may be going to meet another woman and he does not know her status. The wife may also be seeing another man because of money, and money that is money, she accepts, but she also does not know that man’s status, and he is showing her money.”
(DG, 14/02/08, women, Boane, Maputo)

3. Perception of risk in cross-generational sex

Age as a risk factor was confirmed in the analysis of the group discussions on cross-generational sex. Statements by men and women suggested that young women run greater risk of infection, due to the fact that the adult man has already had many sexual experiences throughout his life. In the opinion of the participants in the study, many men feel that they are risk-free because they think that the adolescent girls are disease-free. In this case, appearance counts, as was previously mentioned. Another interesting finding is the belief that sperm is good for a woman’s health. The study did not go into detail on this aspect, but it is possibly an excuse/rationalization used by adult men to take more advantage of a relationship with a young woman (feel more intensely).

Age of the young girl is a risk to her; however, it is protection for the man

The perception of risk that runs throughout all statements is directed at the female, in other words, it is the young women who are running the risk in that type of partnership. Apparently, the men think they run less risk by going out with girls than with adult women, for a simple reason: they think that because the girls are not sexually experienced, their organism is free from sexually transmissible diseases.

The idea is that the older a person is, the greater the probability of the person carrying sexually transmissible germs, as a result of the exposure factor. For this reason, in the women’s perspective, men seek out young girls because they think their health can be improved through sexual contact. They consider that adolescents or young girls have not yet been “contaminated”, and therefore they have “fresh” blood, i.e., “pure.” Because blood and sperm are bodily fluids they are associated or, rather, symbolically equal. The metaphor used by a participant explains what could be happening when an adult becomes involved with an adolescent:

“The child’s blood is very fresh and when it joins with the already spoiled blood it re-feeds it, becoming new. We can compare this to the case of fish, when you put a spoiled fish together with other fresh ones, they all become fresh, but if you put a small quantity of fresh fish with a large quantity of spoiled fish, it all becomes spoiled, do you see?!”
(DG, 14/02/08, women, Boane, Maputo)

“Because João is an older person, his blood is already tired, so he can contaminate her.”
(DG, 28/11/07, men, Morrumbala, Zambézia)

“She can become anemic, weak, have health problems, she can have AIDS, anemia and others.”
(DG, 29/11/07, men, Morrumbala, Zambézia)
In addition, the participants in the study felt that adolescents run the risk of unplanned pregnancies and of contracting sexually transmitted diseases, including STDs/HIV, as a result of the incompatibility between the organism/blood of an adult man and that of a child.

“Yes, because the age does not match, she is still a child, having sex will cause some infections or lesions to her genital organs and may even result in an unnecessary pregnancy.” (DG, 26/03/08, men, Dondo, Sofala)

“Don’t know, I don’t know, I do not know this disease AIDS. The child’s whole body hurts, because the adult person discharges all his filth in her, and so her body gets tired, she is always sore. Her legs hurt, her bones, her ribs, everything hurts because the adult comes and discharges a blood that is not compatible with that of the child, discharges filth while the child’s blood has to combine with the blood of young ones. Children cannot stand up to the adult’s movements; that is what I wanted to say.” (DG, 14/02/08, women, Boane, Maputo)

Sperm is good for a woman’s health

An explanation put forward by a participant for why some adults refuse to use condoms in those relationships is the belief that sperm is good for a woman’s health. They report that, for this reason, some men advise against the use of condoms in sexual relations with young women.

O “Jeito” (a condom brand) can create many problems for a young girl, you see, because that girl is killing herself; lets assume she is having sex a lot in bed, the sperm does not reach there, inside, she suffers because all the pressure there stops. Sperm is part of a girl’s health, that’s why they don’t use. (DG, 06/12/07, men, Quelimane, Zambézia)

The main findings in this item, which should be capitalized on by communication programs, are highlighted below:

Unfavorable Aspects

- The perception of risk in sexual relations appears to be more present in women than in men. However, a woman’s unequal social position forces her to abide by the man’s wishes, even when she wants to protect herself by using a condom;
- Because of the belief that a woman’s organism is more fragile, men tend to think that women are more easily infected than they are;
- For the reason given above, women are seen as vehicles of transmission and accused of infidelity when one of the partners is infected;
- Appearance and trust are criteria that still determine personal assessment of risk with regard to HIV; and,
- Men and women attribute the same level of importance to all methods of HIV transmission. Because they have no control over the transmission of HIV through sharp objects, injections and/or razor blades, they tend to think that it is not
worthwhile to control their sexual activities or use condoms to protect themselves against HIV.

Favorable Aspects

- Men and women from urban and rural areas acknowledge that a person may become infected with HIV in multiple and unprotected sexual partnerships and transmit the virus to other partners;
- The older man is perceived as being a potential transmitter of HIV to a young woman, due to his accumulated sexual experience; and,
- Men and women consider that cross-generational sex with very young girls is, in general, carried out without protection and tends to result in unwanted pregnancies and/or some form of STDs.
Bibliographical References


Bagnolle B, Chamo E. "Titios" e "catorzinhas": Pesquisa exploratória sobre "sugar daddies" na Zambézia (Quelimane e Pebane). DFID/PMG Mozambique; Aug. 70 pgs. 2003


