

canaries in the coal mines

An analysis of spaces for LGBTI activism in Mozambique

COUNTRY REPORT



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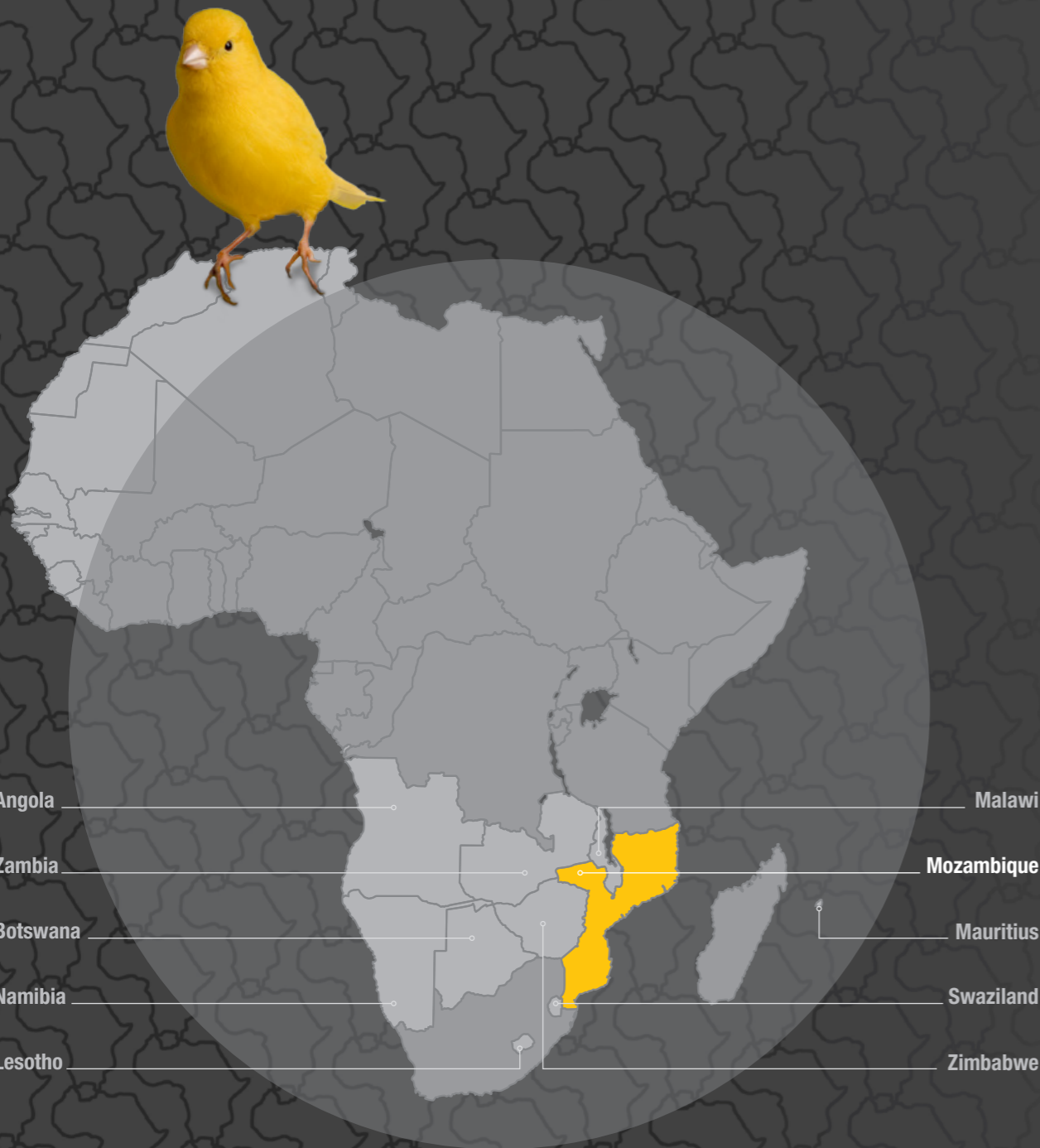
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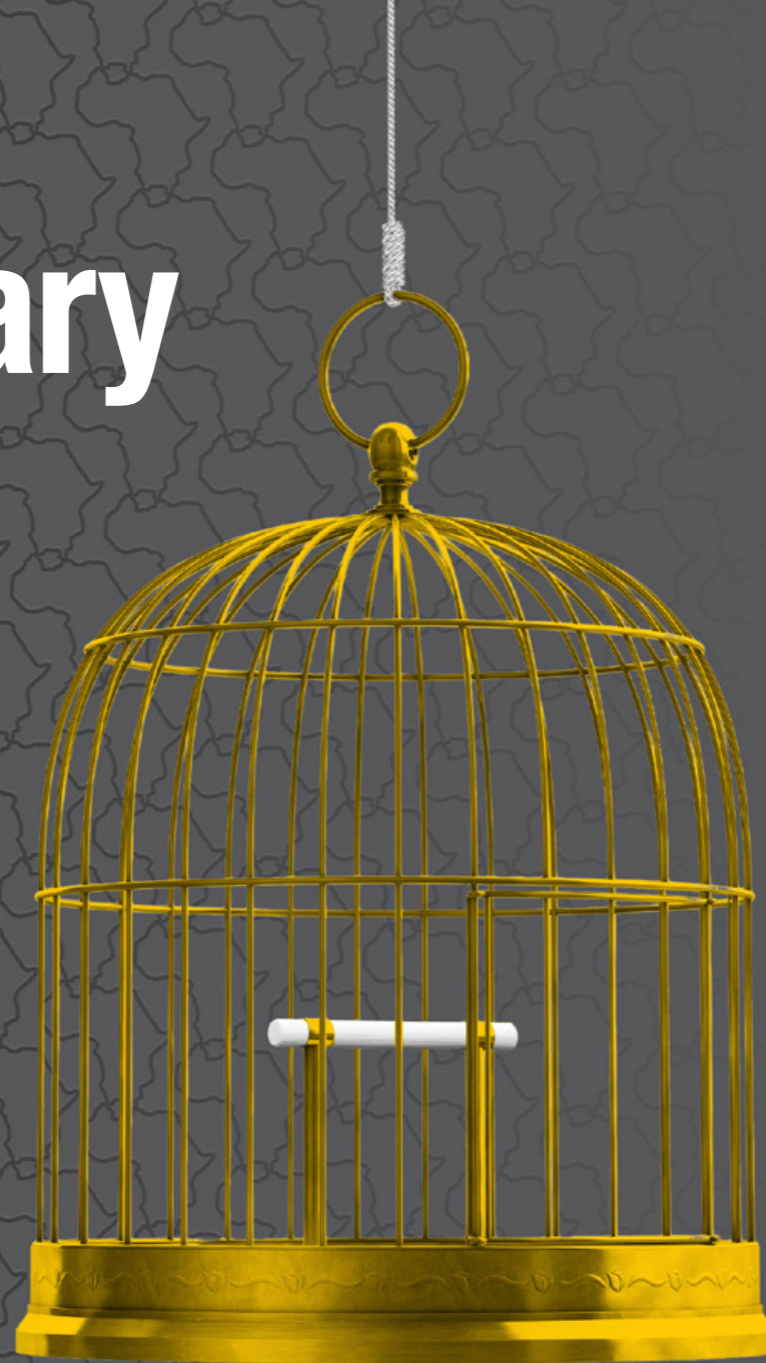


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summary



This overview of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) groups and allies in Mozambique, explores LGBTI and civil society organizations that work to advance the human rights of LGBTI people, their strategies and implementation. It also considers Mozambique's legal environment, considering key laws that directly and indirectly discriminate or violate the human rights of LGBTI persons, along with laws and policies that protect LGBTI people.

Homosexuality was decriminalized in Mozambique in June 2015. Same-sex sexual acts had been outlawed under a section of the colonial-era Penal Code. Although there had been no reported cases under the prior legislation, it could be used to legitimize discrimination and marginalization of non-normative sexualities and gender identities.

With increased LGBTI activism an LGBTI movement is arising under the leadership of LAMBDA, Mozambique's sole LGBTI organization, that has not yet received approval from the Ministry of Justice for formal registration.

Mozambican society considers itself to be quite tolerant. Public discourse on sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) has improved, in part, due to the work that LAMBDA and their allies have been doing. There is, however, a significant gap in information and education on SOGI issues in relation to the education system, workplaces, religious institutions, and the health-care system. The public health discourse of 'key populations' has directed some attention to men who have sex with men (MSM) in the context of HIV/AIDS.

The strategic use of media, social media, advocacy, education and sensitization have been effective practices to advance the human rights of LGBTI people in Mozambique. Research and knowledge production from human rights organizations, LAMBDA, allies, academics and individual activists, have increased the visibility and profile of SOGI issues in the public sphere.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

This country report was written for the Other Foundation by Tahila Pimental informed by engagement with individuals and organizations in Mozambique. Tahila is a gender researcher who, until recently, was part of the team at the prominent African transgender organization, Gender Dynamix. She recently joined the team at Iranti-org. Tahila comes from Mozambique. The production of the report was supported by George Murumba and benefited from editorial contributions given by Mark Gevisser. The final text of the report was edited by Sarita Ranchod and Sonja Boezak from Under the Rainbow.

country context

1



Mozambique, a country with a population of 25 million, was under Portuguese colonial rule from 1752 to 1975. Under colonialism, racial, spatial and labour segregation became a characteristic of Mozambican society.

During the transition from colonialism to independence, there was a perception that the end of colonialism would result in the end of racial segregation. Conflicts between political parties FRELIMO and RENAMO resulted in a 15 -year civil war from 1977 to 1992.¹

The war was brutal and had serious consequences for the poorest, in particular. After the war ended in 1992, FRELIMO and RENAMO signed a peace treaty, and Mozambique had its first democratic elections in 1994, with FRELIMO winning the popular vote. Theoretically, peace and democracy were initiated, and a transition to a capitalist society ensued.²

1.1 SOGI Issues

Rapid changes in the country since independence encouraged the development of gender relationships that are hybrid and dynamic, particularly in urban areas. Even so, patriarchal views still inform national policies and development projects (Manuel, 2014). Urban areas are the most racially and economically diverse, as most *mulatos*,³ black and Indian middle-class individuals live in these areas.

According to LAMBDA, Mozambique's social environment is not necessarily hostile towards non-normative sexual

and gender identities, but it does not encourage these identities to live openly. No instances of hostile attitudes towards activities conducted by the organization have been registered, however, governmental authorities have continuously shown apathy towards issues around non-normative SOGI. It is important to note that different from many other neighbouring countries, the government does not specifically criminalize or discriminate against the LGBTI community. It is however silent on LGBTI human rights.

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¹ Passador and Thomaz, 2016

² *ibid*

³ *Mulatos*: Term commonly used for mixed raced people, initially a pejorative term, afterwards re- appropriated. It refers to a person of racially mixed ancestry.



As with their male counterparts, there is a tendency to assume a dual identity: straight towards society, and gay before other homosexuals.

A 2012 LAMBDA publication undertaken by Manhice and Timbana, analyzed the processes towards the affirmation of women's sexual identities with other women in Maputo. The study explores the experiences of "Maria boy", understood as cisgender women who wear socially designed costumes for "men".

Saiete's 2011 study engaged with lesbians affiliated with LAMBDA, analyzing the way in which they build

and manage their identities through their day-to-day lives. The results are painfully associated with the omission of their sexual orientation in schools, amongst families and friends. As with their male counterparts, there is a tendency to assume a dual identity: straight towards society, and gay before other homosexuals.

legislative and policy environment



2



The fight for the scrapping of both homosexuality and abortion ran hand in hand, and involved much debate between feminist organizations and LAMBDA. The scrapping of both laws were seen as an important win in the fight for human rights in Mozambique.¹

2.1 Decriminalization of Same-sex Acts

The criminalization of homosexuality was officially repealed in June 2015. While punishable by up to three years of hard labour, no one had been prosecuted under the law in the 40 years since Mozambique's independence.

The scrapping of this law was the result of several years of pressure, activism and advocacy led by LAMBDA and allied civil society and human rights organizations, particularly feminist groups and those working on women's rights,

including Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA), the Movement of Young Feminists (MOVFEM), Fórum Mulher and the Human Rights League.

The fight for the scrapping of both homosexuality and abortion ran hand in hand, and involved much debate between feminist organizations and LAMBDA. The scrapping of both laws were seen as an important win in the fight for human rights in Mozambique.¹

2.2 SOGI Invisibility in the Legal System

The principles of equality and freedom are included in the preamble of the Constitution, prohibiting discrimination and prejudice on the grounds of origin, race, sex or age, and ensures exercise of social and individual rights, freedom, safety, welfare, development, equality and justice as supreme values of a fraternal, pluralistic and unprejudiced society.

SOGI issues and the rights of LGBTI people are for the most part invisible and excluded from Mozambique's legislation. The right to family does not include same-

sex couples. Laws that focus on family values tend to be heteronormative, and there are no laws that advance the rights and needs of transgender and gender non-conforming people. No laws exist for altering one's sex description, making it difficult for transgender people to change their gender markers on identity documents. These difficulties aggravate the already difficult and vulnerable situation of transgender persons when enrolling in schools, looking for work and participating in society.

¹ Da Luz, 2015



2.3 Lack of Anti-discrimination Laws

There are no anti-discrimination laws protecting LGBTI persons. Current anti-discrimination law does not include SOGI. The Labour Law of 2007 protects individuals based on sexual orientation in

the workplace. Transgender individuals often bear the brunt of discrimination, especially when attempting to find employment.

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public discourse

3



3.1 Public Spaces

A 2013 study conducted by LAMBDA aimed to understand how homosexuality is expressed in three cities, with attention to knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding homosexual identity in public and private spheres, sex education, sexual minority rights and issues relating to violence within sexual minority groups. The study revealed general ignorance towards homosexuality with many respondents not knowing what being homosexual meant.

A 2011 study by South Africa's Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) concluded that reluctance to fully include LGBTI people in Mozambican society relates to conflicts with religious beliefs, heteronormative masculinity values and concerns for the continuity of families.

LGBTI people live open social lives in 'safe' spaces, most likely gay-specific events. While there are no LGBTI-only bars and clubs, there are specific places that are known to be LGBTI friendly, mostly to gay men.

A 2013 study conducted by LAMBDA aimed to understand how homosexuality is expressed in three cities revealed general ignorance towards homosexuality with many respondents not knowing what being homosexual meant.

3.2 Media

Social media has served as a platform for raising awareness. Dercio Tsandzana, a leading activist and blogger said: "*in newspapers you can't find it, in local media they don't talk about it, but you can go to Facebook and find LAMBDA. Look for us, we exist.*" La Biba and La Santa, a singer and performance group who is openly gay and cross-dresses during shows, have featured in Mozambican media quite often.

According to Danilo da Silva, the lack of media attention on LGBTI issues lies with editors who regularly claim that LGBTI

issues are too sensitive and are not a priority to be discussed in the media. When LGBTI issues are covered, it most often relates to matters abroad, such as same-sex marriage in the US.

In 2006, prominent Radio Mozambique journalist, Emilio Manhique approached the issue of gay marriage on his call-in programme *Café da manhã*. Most listeners who called in were shocked that gay marriage was being discussed on a Mozambican radio station, reflecting the taboo nature of LGBTI engagement in the public sphere.



New wave' churches, mostly with younger people, are more accepting compared with orthodox and traditional churches.

3.3 Social Media

A huge part of LAMBDA's activism, advocacy and community mobilization depends on social media, which has helped grow LGBTI activism. LAMBDA hosts gay parties and LGBTI focused events that are mostly advertised through emails, text messages and WhatsApp groups.

Mozambique also has some gay websites that have created safe spaces for LGBTI people to meet and to date. The HSRC study highlights the positive impact of social media on LGBTI activism and mobility:

"The impact the Internet has had on the Mozambique gay community dating is significant. Websites advertise that "No longer are homosexual men forced to hide their sexual orientation; no longer is it taboo to see two people of the same sex holding hands in public, dancing together at clubs or just enjoying a quiet dinner in a restaurant together. You can now celebrate your diversity with millions of others around the world."

HSRC, 2011

3.4 Public Health

Although LAMBDA is not yet registered, the organization is regularly invited to government events, particularly those focused on health. Funding for MSM and 'key populations' affected by HIV has meant an increase in attention to this particular group. It is estimated that 15% of the population (1.6 million people) live with HIV/AIDS. According to the

National Strategic Plan (NSP) III in 2010, the main route of transmission of HIV/AIDS in Mozambique was heterosexual sexual relationships. Although articles 89 and 119 of the Mozambican Constitution provide for access to health for every citizen, the stigmatizing nature of health institutions frequently discourages MSM and LGBTI persons to approach them.

3.5 Religious Restitutions

Historically, LGBTI people were not highly stigmatized or condemned in Catholic Portuguese churches. Compared with other colonies on the African continent,

Catholic Portuguese churches were perhaps the most tolerant, though still prejudiced.



In 2004, during a public debate on strategies for preventing HIV in Mozambique, Islamic cleric, Sheik Aminuddin Mahomed implied that the 'revolution of the gays' was something to look out for in these debates, blaming same-sex couples for the AIDS epidemic. He claimed that religious believers should choose ethics and morality, and not blasphemy, heresy and pornography (referring to LGBTI people). Although these instances are rare, they do happen. Some observations by members of LAMBDA include that:

- > 'New wave' churches, mostly with younger people, are more accepting compared with orthodox and traditional churches.
- > When the leader of a church is discriminatory and prejudiced, LGBTI people are excluded. When religious leaders are open and accepting, churches are more inclusive. The same applies to Muslim mosques.
- > Social exclusion in religious spaces is worse for transgender people.

3.6 Political Parties

"We can no longer afford to discriminate against people on the basis of age, sex, ethnicity, migrant status, sexual orientation and gender identity, or any other basis – we need to unleash the full potential of everyone."
Joaquim Chissano (quoted in Smith, 2015)

In a 2014 letter to all African leaders, Former President of Mozambique, Joaquim Chissano appealed to them

to end discrimination, including against LGBTI people. This was after Nigerian president Goodluck Jonathan passed a draconian anti-homosexuality law, and when intolerance and discrimination against LGBTI people was increasing in Uganda.

This was the only time that a Mozambican head of state (or former head of state) took a public stand against discrimination based on sexual orientation.

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due to the increasing attention to LGBTI human rights, government representatives promised to look at the situation of LGBTI rights in the country. Unfortunately, after the hype, the same government representatives seemed to forget about it.

4.7 Other Human Rights Organizations

"In the first years of LAMBDA's existence, the organization had to train and sensitize various civil society organizations that said they were advancing human rights, but did not consider SOGI issues to be crucial in this spectrum. These institutions would simply not discuss SOGI issues if LAMBDA was not present. A lot of them still don't. However, after a lot of time and work, today you find more and more organizations including SOGI issues as important in the advancement for human rights."

Danilo da Silva,
April 2016

Partner organizations such as Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA), Fórum Mulher, The Lawyer's Order and the Mozambican League of Human Rights have supported LGBTI human rights for several years. International NGOs and development cooperation partners also support advancing the human rights of LGBTI people.

4.8 Transnational Influence

When neighbouring South Africa legalized same-sex marriage, attention was drawn to discussions about sexual minorities in Southern Africa. State owned news agency *Agência de Informações Mocambique (AIM)* interviewed Mozambique's main human rights group about its campaign against LGBTI discrimination. Newspaper, *Savana* interviewed several gay men, about their lived experiences of discrimination in Mozambique. During this time, due to the increasing attention to LGBTI human rights, government representatives promised to look at the situation of LGBTI rights in the country. Unfortunately, after the hype, the same government representatives seemed to forget about it.

Brazilian *telenovelas* are popular and influential in Mozambique and are available through national and international TV channels. Mozambican sociologist Carlos Serra has said: *"The novela is an absolutely sacred time in the Mozambican way of life"*. In 2013, a Brazilian telenovela aired a kiss between two men for the first time. The kiss was not only a shock for Brazilian spectators, but for Mozambican, Angolan and Cape Verdean viewers too. In Mozambique, the kiss scene drew different reactions, mainly expressed through social media.

the LGBTI movement:
organizations advancing the human rights of LGBTI people

4





“There is no movement in Mozambique...The movement will emerge when all forces decide to include LGBTI issues. When the LGBTI community itself gains conscience of the importance of fighting for their rights and for their space in the Mozambican society.”

*Danilo da Silva
April 2016*

Although there may be no actual movement, much work has been done to advance LGBTI rights in Mozambique. LAMBDA, as the only organization in Mozambique that deals solely with the LGBTI human rights is therefore at the forefront. Founded in 2006, LAMBDA aims to mobilize a society that can advocate and include LGBTI human rights, starting with civil society organizations understanding and acknowledging the importance of including LGBTI programmes in their own work and strategies.

4.1 Government Silence on LGBTI Human Rights

LAMBDA's registration process started in 2008 and is ongoing. After its submission, LAMBDA's founding members were informed that the organization posed obstacles towards the country's 'moral code'. In March 2009, the organization was advised by the Minister of Justice to adjust its application. After making alterations and re-submitting the documents, the organization has not had any response.

Although LAMBDA operates with some freedom, it needs the assistance of organizations such as Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA), which supports its logistical and funding operation. According to LAMBDA, there

LAMBDA works across several provinces in Mozambique, with its main office in Maputo. The NGO has 64 activists and community agents in 8 cities. In the provinces there are support groups, activists and educators who conduct trainings and workshops with health practitioners and provide psychosocial support to LGBTI people.

is no reasonable explanation for why the Ministry of Justice has not registered the organization. The silence and disregard about the organization's registration reflects current narratives around SOGI issues within the government.

The silence from government creates a sense of uncertainty regarding the structure of LGBTI activism and the building of an LGBTI movement in the country. It is worrying for the organization's founders, staff and members, that the NGO is not operating 'legally' and can therefore suffer the consequences of 'illegality' at any moment.



4.2 'Key Populations' Discourse and Funding

The narrative created by the focus on MSM as a "key population" amongst international funding bodies says a lot about the spaces that MSM and LGBTI people occupy in human rights, LGBTI and governmental organizations, and dictates the focus of the movement that is currently being built. Even so, the existence of this discourse within the current growing LGBTI activism in the country is important. MSM work and the focus on health is vital for the gaining of space, visibility and funding for MSM and LGBTI activism in the country. So, on one hand, this funding contributes to

the advancement of a movement that increases visibility for MSM, but on the other, it perpetuates a negative and public health centred discourse on MSM.

MSM is often understood as cisgender men who have sex with men and trans women, and predominantly associates MSM populations with HIV/AIDS, sex work and injecting drug users. Mozambique's LGBTI activism has nonetheless been able to expand this discourse, highlighting the needs and experiences of other members of the community beyond the focus on health.





strategies

used by LGBTI groups and allies

5



5.1 Communication

Media and social media use have been some of the most effective strategies in advancing the human rights of LGBTI people and highlighting SOGI issues. LAMBDA's Facebook page is amongst the 10 most accessed Mozambican pages with 40 000 likes. SMS's, twitter, WhatsApp and email are also effectively used by the organization to mobilize the LGBTI community, educate and share events that are LGBTI focused or friendly. LAMBDA has a list of 900 members that receive text messages regarding health and events, and more than 300 registered emails that receive their newsletter.

LAMBDA also established a radio programme called *"Purple Coffee"*, available in Maputo, Beira, and Nampula. The programmes are available online through podcasts. Engagement through the LAMBDA website is also effective and received 62 240 visitors in one year.

Monthly cinema sessions are held at LAMBDA, screening movies with LGBTI themes. The organization has recently been organizing Vox pops with Mozambican citizens, asking questions about their perceptions of SOGI issues in the country. They publish monthly articles in the National newspapers *Zambeze* and *Canal de Moçambique*. This communication mobilization has proven effective in creating visibility on LGBTI issues, and establishing partnerships with various organizations, academics and individual activists.

Although many members of the public might be reluctant towards the inclusion of these issues in mass media, in general, there has been a very positive response and interest by Mozambican citizens. The catch of these programmes is that most of them approach urban areas and those who can access technological devices.

5.2 Research and Knowledge Production

Research and knowledge production has been increasing, as the interest and visibility of LGBTI issues has advanced. There is research conducted by academics and individual activists in the field of gender inequality, performance of femininities and masculinities, perceptions around homosexuality in the country and the relationship between health and lesbian and gay issues, particularly MSM.

An interesting approach used by LAMBDA, is the publication of the best academic and research papers focusing on LGBTI issues, as a form of incentive particularly for university students writing their final papers. This has increased the interest and approach from students and academics to work with LAMBDA on research projects. LGBTI identifying members of LAMBDA have participated in these studies. The organization has

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One of the successes of advocacy efforts is the decriminalization of same-sex sexual acts, a result of lobbying and dynamic activism by LGBTI, human rights, civil society and feminist organizations.

also produced some research of their own, sometimes in partnership with the Ministry of Health, academics and other organizations. Finally, it produces various informative documents and pamphlets

5.3 Psychosocial Support

LAMBDA offers free psychosocial support for LGBTI individuals and their families. They have also conducted various training programmes to expand psychosocial support. Compared with the need, the services available are not adequate. Due to the lack of psychosocial

through its research, available to the public, including flyers, manuals, booklets and banners highlighting issues around homosexuality, STIs and HIV/AIDS.

professionals trained on issues regarding LGBTI life, LAMBDA ran a free course about "Tackling Human Psychology and Sexuality". The course reached ten professionals who became referees for psychological support to LGBTI communities.

6.4 Advocacy

One of the successes of advocacy efforts is the decriminalization of same-sex sexual acts, a result of lobbying and dynamic activism by LGBTI, human rights, civil society and feminist organizations.

Other advocacy methods that have delivered results are:

- > Training professionals in various fields about LAMBDA, sexuality, human rights and STI and HIV/AIDS prevention.
- > Bi-monthly safe sex debates.
- > Production of a journal about LGBTI people, called "The Colours of Love" soon to be published in the national newspaper, *Savana* every 3 months.
- > Advocacy work with decision-making groups highlighting the importance of including sexual and gender minorities. LAMBDA is a member of the Commission on Human Rights. Since 2010, the organization also participates in the African Commission of Human Rights.
- > In partnership with the Ministry of Women, LAMBDA has participated in a health workshop where it distributed informative pamphlets on health, focusing on same-sex relationships and activities ran by LAMBDA.
- > In partnership with WLSA, LAMBDA leads training workshops with police officials and magistrates in various provinces.



6.5 Networking and Alliance Building

One of the strongest strategies used by LAMBDA, is the call for the inclusion of LGBTI issues in the work of other NGOs. This considerably strengthens LGBTI activism in the country. LAMBDA actively participates in regional and international conferences on LGBTI rights, and is part of networks such as African Men for Sexual Health and Rights (AMSHeR),⁵ the Pan-African chapter of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex

Association (ILGA) and the Coalition of African Lesbians (CAL).

These established partnerships have been useful for mobilizing resources and visibility of LGBTI issues nationally, regionally and internationally. What is lacking is partnerships with fellow Lusophone countries, given the similar historical, socio-political and human rights situations.

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⁵ AMSHeR is a coalition of LGBT/MSM-led organizations across sub-Saharan Africa, established to address the disproportionate effect of HIV/AIDS on LGBTI individuals.



the needs and experiences

of LGBTI people: social in/ exclusion

6



Key contributors of this review understand social inclusion as a society that does not discriminate or violate the human rights of LGBTI people just because of their SOGI. It is a society where LGBTI people have the same possibility as others of progressing socially and economically without having their SOGI impeding their advancement. It is also a society where LGBTI people accept themselves and are not afraid of expressing who they are. It is not only a social issue, but a personal one, due to the strong self-censorship amongst LGBTI people. Some of the main themes that arose from perceptions of social inclusion and exclusion in Mozambique are discussed in greater detail below.

Schools are heteronormative and cisnormative spaces that rarely or never discuss SOGI issues. Any issue related to sexuality and identity is considered a taboo.

6.1 Education, Bullying and the Fear of Discussing SOGI

LGBTI youth are often bullied in schools due to their SOGI. Schools are heteronormative and cisnormative spaces that rarely or never discuss SOGI issues. Any issue related to sexuality and

identity is considered a taboo. There are no policies in schools that protect LGBTI youth and it is not yet a priority of Human Rights organizations and LAMBDA itself to educate and sensitize schools.



Even if the country had specific laws amended, the implementation of such would be dubious, not necessarily because of discriminatory conducts against LGBTI people, but because authority systems are corrupt.

6.2 Employment and Workplace Experiences

There are no reported cases of lesbian or gay people not being able to access a job because of their sexual orientation. However, LAMBDA is aware of cases where transgender people have a hard time finding a formal job due to discrimination against their gender identity. Most LGBTI persons involved with LAMBDA are between the ages of

20-29 and are students or unemployed.

Workplaces are heteronormative and cisnormative spaces. LGBTI persons fear coming out in the workplace, although the Labour Law protects individuals based on sexual orientation. LGBTI people experience humiliation and isolation at work, impacting their wellbeing.

6.3 The Role of Corruption

The Constitution and legislative system do not criminalize the LGBTI community, but does not provide anti-discrimination laws based on SOGI. A big part of Mozambique's legislative system is run by corrupt officials. An illustration of this is a case of one of LAMBDA's members, who was bullied and physically assaulted by three men because of his sexual orientation.

According to the individual:

"We went to the police station, lay charges and they told us to go back the day after. We took the paper to the guys who beat us up showing the charges and they just said: what is this, we are just going to buy some beers for those police officers and nothing will happen. They did so and the police really took down the charges. So my boyfriend went there personally the day after and talked to the chief. They started immediately saying sorry to my boyfriend because he

is important in town, so we decided to transfer the case to the tribunal. We met with 7 judges to explain the case, and only two were familiar with homosexual issues and hate crimes. They had been in a LAMBDA workshop so it was easier for them. So, the guys who beat us up were sentenced to two years in prison."

The perpetrators were only sentenced to prison because his boyfriend had a prominent position in a state department, despite the police having dropped the charges after being paid by the perpetrators. This shows that even if the country had specific laws amended, the implementation of such would be dubious, not necessarily because of discriminatory conducts against LGBTI people, but because authority systems are corrupt.

6.4 Safety, Security and Tolerance Towards LGBTI People

The environment is seemingly tolerant and safe, with reports that Mozambican society is becoming more tolerant, particularly due to the work that LAMBDA has been doing for the past years. The Southern provinces are much more tolerant than those in the North. There are no reported cases of surveillance towards LGBTI people, and no cases of police harassment particularly because of SOGI. An illustration from a gay identifying cisgender man residing in Maputo:

"I was at a social last week, it was women's day, so my friend said to everyone: come in a capulana⁶ and with a scarf on the head. And I was like, is this a joke, or something? So well, when I got there I was the only one without a capulana. We were in a place with a lot of people. And everyone was very chilled about it, it was very nice. Some men even came and bought us drinks saying that it was our day after all. I liked it. I saw that the environment is changing."

6.5 Culture, Faith, Patriarchy and 'Cultural Family Values'

There are cases where LGBTI individuals are kicked out of church, and because responses towards inclusivity within religious spaces vary, some claim that these spaces are the most hostile in the Mozambican society, and create the biggest psychosocial barriers towards LGBTI people.

In many instances, when an individual discloses their non-normative sexual or gender identity, families react badly

and take the individual to church or to *curandeiros*,⁷ because they believe the person is acting under 'external forces' (LAMBDA, 2014).

There is a huge pressure on men to pass on the family name, particularly in the South. This pressure makes it difficult for gay men to go against 'cultural family values' by being in a same-sex relationship. They tend to marry a person of the opposite sex and live a double life.

⁶ Capulana - type of a sarong worn primarily in Mozambique but also in other areas of south-eastern Africa.

⁷ Curandeiro- Traditional healers



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key potential non-LGBTI allies/

strategic entry points

7



7.1 Family of LGBTI Individuals

Family members of LGBTI people are participating in support groups for family members at LAMBDA. They have the potential to become activists for LGBTI

human rights. These potential allies will require support to engage in different spaces such as workplaces, schools and churches.

7.2 Project Geração Biz

Project Geração Biz (PGB) is a multi-sectoral program for the promotion of Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) and HIV and AIDS prevention among adolescents and youth.

PGB is currently including MSM in some of its programming, and the organization

has the potential to include LGBTI issues more broadly, through sensitization and education. In order to achieve this, PGB would require training, education and funding specifically directed toward LGBTI people.

7.3 Religious Institutions

While there are currently no obviously sympathetic religious institutions, the potential exists for more inclusive and informed religious leaders to become advocates for inclusivity of LGBTI people in religious spaces and leadership positions. Religious leaders will need training, education and sensitization

around LGBTI issues – particularly by existing LGBTI religious leaders. This group would also benefit from regional partnerships by already established LGBTI inclusive religious institutions, such as exchange programmes with inclusive church institutions in South Africa.

Religious leaders will need training, education and sensitization around LGBTI issues – particularly by existing LGBTI religious leaders. This group would also benefit from regional partnerships by already established LGBTI inclusive religious institutions, such as exchange programmes with inclusive church institutions in South Africa.



As with the media and religious leaders, there is no open support for LGBTI people, though the potential exists for traditional leaders to be open about their own SOGIs and to participate in sensitization workshops.

7.4 Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education is heteronormative and cisnormative, and is not inclusive of SOGI issues. The Ministry has the potential to create visibility and

raise awareness of SOGI issues through the education system, as an advocate for gender equality.

7.5 Media

The media as a potential ally lies in its ability to raise awareness of SOGI issues, create visibility of ordinary LGBTI people

to 'normalize' their presence in broader society, and to influence public opinion.

7.6 Traditional Leaders

As with the media and religious leaders, there is no open support for LGBTI people, though the potential exists for traditional leaders to be open about their own SOGIs and to participate

in sensitization workshops, receive appropriate information on LGBTI issues, and begin to work toward the open inclusion of LGBTI people in communities.

7.7 Private Businesses

Bars, restaurants and clubs are covertly pro LGBTI people, and some host LGBTI parties that are open and inclusive. These businesses have the potential to

provide safe spaces for LGBTI people to be included and accepted, and to contribute to the social and economic empowerment of LGBTI people.

ways forward & recommendations

8



The country is an example of how solid leadership, communication and advocacy, networking, alliance building and research are strong strategies for the advancement of LGBTI activism.

Mozambique’s ongoing LGBTI work and activism has considerably increased in the past few years. The country is an example of how solid leadership, communication and advocacy, networking, alliance building and research are strong strategies for the advancement of LGBTI activism. The movement is young and has positive prospects. There is a lot of work being done by academics, LGBTI, human rights and feminist organizations, and individual activists and students themselves. Currently, there is much more work being done around issues that pertain to lesbians and gays, but some programmes are slowly starting to include transgender people.

8.1 For Funders and Partners

- > Create programmes that go beyond LAMBDA, and involve other human rights and feminist organizations.
- > Go beyond programmes that target MSM, and encourage the deconstruction of what MSM means as a key population.
- > Work with in-country researchers, academics and activists (preferably LGBTI).
- > Encourage comprehensive inclusion of transgender-specific activities.
- > Media and communication seems to be a successful point in Mozambique’s LGBTI activism. Engaging editors could be very beneficial.
- > Prioritize the translation of pertinent LGBTI studies into native languages for full participation.



8.2 For In-country Organizations

- > Create joint and exchange programmes between Mozambique and Angola.
- > Keep producing knowledge and encourage research work, conduct best practices comparative studies between LGBTI activism both in Mozambique and Angola.
- > Prioritize engagement with families, traditional and religious leaders within advocacy and community building work.
- > Mentor smaller groups to increase capacity and organizing.

8.3 For Allies and Potential Allies

- > Include SOGI issues in all human rights work.
- > Businesses that are allies or could be potential allies should not only focus on the social inclusion of LGBTI people, but seek to employ LGBTI individuals, contributing towards their economic empowerment: particularly for transgender people who struggle to secure work.
- > Schools, universities and workplaces should have clear policies protecting and including LGBTI individuals.

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canaries in the coal mines – an analysis of spaces for LGBTI activism in Mozambique



© The Other Foundation 2017

Postnet Suite 209, Private Bag X31,
Saxonwold, 2132,
Johannesburg, South Africa

www.theotherfoundation.org

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