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Introduction

In 2002, World Relief, an international faith-based organization, created church-based networks in southern Mozambique to serve, educate, and empower the local community. The networks were created to primarily serve two target populations: people living with HIV/AIDS (PLHA) and orphans and vulnerable children (OVC).

This study looked at World Relief's module of program implementation and focused on the relationship between the church-based networks and the communities they serve.



Source: World Relief-Mozambique

Background

- HIV prevalence rate 16.1% for adults (aged 15-49)²
- Estimated 1.8 million adults and children living with HIV²
- 510,000 orphans (aged 0-17) due to AIDS³
- 140,000 deaths due to AIDS³

Church-based networks:

- Total of 34 networks in Gaza, Inhambane, and Maputo provinces
- Approximately 20 pastors per network
- Each pastor represents a different church
- Networks grouped according to geographic location
- Networks train pastors, provide care, teach prevention and advocacy, and develop volunteer outreach ministries



Source: SA Places

Objectives

To better understand how church-based networks affect the potential of individual churches in addressing the needs of their communities, especially PLHA and OVC in southern Mozambique.

Specific Aims

- To identify factors that affect the network's ability to assist PLHA and OVC
- To identify additional ways to support networks in their provision of services to PLHA and OVC
- To explore the possibility of making each network a more formal and official organization

Methods

Recruitment

- Networks:
 - 34 networks were divided into four categories:
 - Three of the categories were determined by the strength of network (weak, moderate, strong) which included factors such as personal monetary donations from pastors to network, time spent visiting the sick, regular network meetings, and initiative to start community projects
 - The fourth category consisted of networks that became faith-based organizations
 - 4 networks were selected from each of the three provinces and varied in strength
- Pastors:
 - 6-9 pastors in each focus group discussion
 - Selected on ability to speak and understand Portuguese along with similar criteria listed above
- Both networks and pastors were rated and recommended by the animators who worked in the field daily
- Study included a total of 12 focus group discussions and 92 participating pastors (64 men, 28 women)

Methods (continued)

Data Preparation

- Focus group question guide was developed to collect data on services offered by networks to PLHA and OVC as well as pastors' perceptions of the challenges that networks face, their needs, and future plans
- The English-language question guide was translated into Portuguese and back-translated to English in order to ensure consistency in meaning and understanding
- A lay summary and consent form were developed for administration prior to conducting focus groups
- Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was received before beginning data collection
- A one-day intensive training workshop was provided for the research team on qualitative methods, study protocol, question guide, moderator and translator roles and responsibilities, and ethics

Data Analysis

- Data was de-identified and transcribed from digital recorder into Portuguese and English
- Currently, analyzing data in MAX QDA using both inductive and deductive themes such as dependency, government involvement, initiative, transportation, lack of resources and stigma



Source: K. Rook

Preliminary Results

Upon initial analysis of the data, the following themes are central in addressing the overall objective and aims of the study:

- Dependency
 - Refers to anything that has to do with the network depending on World Relief or other organizations for continual support (material, financial, etc.).
- Government Involvement
 - Refers to support or lack of support from the government towards the network and their projects.

Preliminary Results (continued)

- Initiative
 - Refers to anything that the network and/or pastors do to take care of pastors, communities, and sick people (PLHA and OVC) on their own. They are not being prompted or told by World Relief what to do.
- Transportation
 - Refers to lack of transportation and/or long distances that need to be traveled. This is often a barrier/challenge for the network to do its job.
- Lack of Resources
 - Refers to anything relating to poverty (lack of funds), receiving of financial/material support and other references where money is the root of the problem.
 - Also includes any reference to wanting or needing more money for projects.
- Stigma
 - Refers to specific references to stigma associated with HIV/AIDS and/or OVC.
 - Does not include stigma related with religion or being a faith-based organization.
 - Also refers to how stigma has changed over time.

Conclusion

World Relief will utilize the findings of this study to determine better methods in which they can further support and enable the church-based networks to be active in their communities, especially in assisting PLHA and OVC.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank and acknowledge Joaquina Nhanala; Karen Andes, PhD; the collaboration between World Relief-USA, World Relief-Mozambique and Rollins School of Public Health; the Religion and Health Collaborative, O.C. Hubert, and Peachtree Presbyterian Church for funding.

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