

**Finding new coping mechanisms: the impact of HIV and AIDS
on women's access to land in Mozambique**

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Key words

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ABSTRACT

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In this full thesis, I explore the impact that HIV and AIDS pandemic is having in the livelihood strategies of rural women in Mozambique. My intention in this work is to highlight the navigation of Mozambican women through this harsh era.

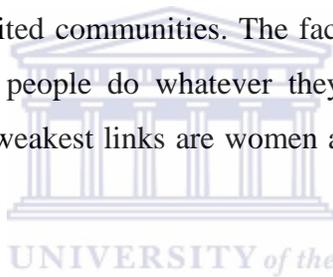
I establish a discussion about land as major asset in a poor and mainly agricultural country like Mozambique. And the fact that many scholars and policy makers are concerned about the escalating number of young widows that have had their land and other assets expropriated after the deaths of their husbands, mainly due to the HIV and AIDS pandemic. The convergence of the colonization process, the civil war (that took over 16 years in Mozambique) and the modernization/development process have been systematically trapping women in the interface between traditional and modern social organization. Now, with the spread of HIV and AIDS, young women and children whose only source of subsistence is their land have been losing their traditional rights, and they face the cultural changes brought about by a new social order that does not support them and their children after the death of a husband or father.

The overall objective of this study is to analyse the coping mechanisms related to land and livelihoods that women are adopting as strategies to survive the impact of HIV and AIDS in a new social order. The study focuses on the perceptions and representations that the women have about those new rules and how they position themselves as social agents in the society. It also examines the impact of the modernization process on their relationship with the land as they navigate tradition and modernity.

Owing to the largely unexplored nature of the topic, this study is exploratory and descriptive in nature held in six districts of two provinces of Mozambique. Research

methods largely focus on a sample of approximately 60 individual interviews with selected women, community leaders, local government officials and community members during a considerable period of time (more than a month with constant feedback sessions with the main stakeholders). However semi-structured interviews were also conducted with key informants in order to complement the individual interviews. My role as researcher as a young western educated woman was crucial through all process; my own personal conflicts of modernity and tradition were valuable to the outcomes of the research.

Two of the utmost conclusion drawn from this work is that in the first place the interference of the modernization ideology, colonization and developmental strategies adopted after independence and finally HIV and AIDS are creating strong contradictions among the members of the visited communities. The fact is that there is a social/values crisis and in those moments, people do whatever they feel right in pursuit of their objectives. At such times, the weakest links are women and children who have no voice in the decision-making process.



On the other hand the women of Tete and Cabo Delgado districts have different coping strategies some of these include that women entering spaces that “traditionally” were relegated to the men they use to survive; many others are based on their local knowledge of seed conservation and planting; the “traditional” brewing of local drinks and baking cookies; the management of the manufacture of herbal medicine and other strategies related to food production and saving money through informal safety networks. Another strategy is to engage in several relationships with men in order to boost the household incomes. Often women even accept being in problematic/violent relationships to achieve both monetary stability and social respect. The problem of this strategy is that in the era of HIV and AIDS, this strategy can lead to infection or re-infection of women in a context where she has few possibilities of surviving this disease or pandemic.

November 2008

DECLARATION

I declare that “Finding new coping mechanisms: The impact of HIV and AIDS on women’s access to land in Mozambique” is my own work, that all other sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references and that this thesis has not been submitted for a degree at another university.

Sónia Marisa James Seuane

November 2008

Signature



Supervisor: Doctor James Lees (University of the Western Cape, South Africa)

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ACRONYMS

AIDS- Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CBO – Community Based Organization
FAO- Food and Agriculture Organization
FRELIMO- Frente de Libertação de Moçambique
GDP- Gross Domestic Product
GNP- Gross National Product
GoM- Governo de Moçambique
HDI- Human Development Index
HDR- Human Development Report
HIV- Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ILO- International Labor Organization
IMF- International Monetary Fund
INE- Instituto Nacional de Estatísticas
MOZ- Mozambique
NGO- Non-Governmental Organization
OMM- Organização da Mulher Moçambicana
OPLWHA- Organization of People Living with HIV and AIDS
PARPA- Action Plan for the Reduction of Extreme Poverty
RENAMO- Resistência Nacional de Moçambique
N.D.- No date

SAP- Structural Adjustment Programme
STD- Sexual Transmitted Diseases
TVM- Televisão de Moçambique
UNDP-United Nations Development Programme
UNAIDS- Joint United Nations Programme Against AIDS
UNESCO- United Nations Education, Cultural and Scientific Organization
WLSA- Women and Law in Southern Africa
WHO- World Health Organization



1. Introduction

Living conditions in Mozambique are particularly harsh at present, and it is becoming one of the most threatening times for Mozambican women especially. We are living in the era of the HIV and AIDS pandemic. More and more women are losing their partners and rights to resources such as land, communities are losing their cohesion and supportive networks and children are growing up in a very difficult environment. Above all, it is very difficult to predict what the future will be like for Mozambicans. Current research studies are mostly focused on the clinic aspects of HIV and hardly any are concerned with the consequences which the pandemic has for the social cohesion and dynamics of Mozambican villages and communities.

This study is an attempt to understand a little bit more about how the AIDS pandemic further complicate Mozambican women's lives - lives that have already been complicated by colonialism, patriarchy, civil war and modern capitalist structures. AIDS is affecting adults in the prime of their lives and as a further consequence we have been witnessing a loss of the social fabric of norms and values that protected women and children's human rights (their access to land and other determinant resources and services). In this situation many women are becoming heads of their families and are struggling to endure in this harsh environment. They have to resort to different cope mechanisms in order to guarantee their own and their children's survival. Many of the strategies they are adopting are harmful and pose life-threatening risks to them, while other strategies challenge the social order that was imposed based on different gender norms, although many women resent the new roles that they now have to assume.

This study is an analysis of the women's adopted strategies in their navigation of the interface of "tradition" (social structures of power) and modernity in their pursuit of a better life. In order to accomplish this analysis, three main paradigms were used: the post-colonialist paradigm, the post-development paradigm and the post-feminist paradigm.

These paradigms were chosen because it is necessary to understand and provide a voice for those considered to be the oppressed and “weakest link” in traditional societies.

Land is the most important asset that Mozambique has. Of the total population, 80% depends on agriculture for their subsistence, and about 65% lives in the rural areas (PARPA, 2001: 5). Recent debates on this issue point to the unanimous view that agriculture is the principal factor in the development of Mozambique and women are the main source of subsistence food production. The republic’s constitution stresses that land is the universal means of enrichment and well-being for the people and because of that, it ensures that access to land is the right of the all national citizens without any kind of discrimination, including gender discrimination.

Although the Mozambican Land Law of 1997 (19/97) guarantees equality of rights among all Mozambican citizens, customary law continues to take precedence over constitutional law. Several empirical studies (Norfolk, 2004: 25-28; Tanner and Baleira, 2005: 15; Save the Children, 2006: 10; Seuane, 2005: 4-8) point out the gender inequality in the access to, and control of land; to be more specific, “being men or women” determines the distribution of the assets within the family, the community and the country.

On the other hand, we have witnessed the spread of the Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) in Mozambique over the last few decades. It has killed more than 25 million people since it was first recognized in 1981. This pandemic is already considered one of the most destructive epidemics in recorded history (UNAIDS, 2005). Many reports warn of the dramatic situation in the Sub-Saharan Africa, which is already called the epicentre of this pandemic, and most critically warn about the high prevalence rates among sub-Saharan women (UNAIDS, 2005: 6; Müller, 2005: 10; UNAIDS, 2004: 3). The same reports assert that sub-Saharan Africa is home to 25.8 million people living with HIV¹ - the equivalent of 66.6% of all people living with HIV world-wide and home

¹Sub-Saharan Africa has just over 10% of the world’s population, but is home to more than 60% of all people living with HIV (UNAIDS, 2005: 6).

to 77% of all women with HIV. As such this region is the only region in the world where women's infection rate is higher than that of men (UNAIDS, 2004: 3).

Mozambique has been through many processes that have influenced the social fabric (values and norms) of its communities. The colonization process, with its emphasis on assimilation into Portuguese culture with the strong support of the Christian church, created an "African otherness" (Chilisa, 2005: 660). After Independence, a civil war raged for 16 years, leading to debilitating factors like population migration, impoverishment, the loss of the networks of families and location, and the creation of new forms of livelihood based on individualism, utilitarianism, etc. In the aftermath of the civil war there was a massive introduction of developmental politics and practices which in the long run resulted in failure because they were, and still are, based on principles unfamiliar to the local realities and contexts. Finally, the HIV and AIDS pandemic added its burden to this situation.

This HIV and AIDS era is marked by a notable growth in the number of young widows with young children that have land as their only source of subsistence and who have been victims of the expropriation of their land and other assets (Villareal, 2006: 1; Munthali, 2002: 14). Although Mozambique has endorsed a number of international and national laws that guarantee the propriety rights of all citizens, particularly women, customary laws still directs the lives of rural communities.

1.2. Research Problem

The existing literature shows that research about HIV and AIDS has only been undertaken in recent years. Although the impact of the pandemic has been felt for several years, researchers did not go beyond clinical and public health concerns. Research has been conducted into the impact and incidence of HIV and AIDS in specific sectors such as transport, fishing, mining, and more recently agriculture. Within the agricultural spectrum we can find literature on land issues and production systems. In Africa, this

kind of research is more common in the Anglo-Saxon tradition with countries such as South Africa, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia and Malawi leading the literature (Izumi, 2006: 2). Therefore, as many authors substantiate, investigations into the impact of HIV and AIDS on women's land rights and access, and on issues around inheritance and women's impoverishment because HIV and AIDS are even more recent (Müller, 2005; Villareal, 2006; Human Rights Watch, 2003; Munthali, 2002; Izumi, 2006). Some authors as Chilisa (2005: 661) believe that this lack of knowledge about the impact of the HIV and AIDS on people's lived histories and social organization is the crucial factor in the failure of all the efforts to reduce and prevent the alarming spread of HIV and AIDS.

Many studies on gender issues by e.g. Wanyaki (2003: 68), Meer (1997: 15), Whitehead and Tsikata (2003: 16), Bonate (2003: 100) and others have demonstrated that women's access to land rights is insecurely based on customary law, and that access usually depends on their link to a male relative (father, brother and principally husband). As Meer (1997: 18) points out, married women are often forced to remain in problematic, or even violent, relationships in order to secure the income and other resources vital to their own and their children's survival. Thus, as Villareal asserts single women, divorced women or widowed women are disadvantaged in their access to land. However, women are the principal producers of subsistence agriculture (Villareal, 2006: 2), and in many instances, the responsibility of the group's food security is in their hands. Theoretically, there is no common tribal law stating that women cannot have access to land in their own right, but in recent years more and more women have been prevented from having access to land by powerful gender hierarchies and inequalities as well as women's lack of the tools needed to be integrated into the so-called "global economy".

In this scenario, Mozambican women are dealing with the consequences of colonialism that have burdened and institutionalized patriarchy in its aim to shape the colonized in its image. Women have to deal with the capitalist development structure that in many cases neglects their needs and role in the community contexts; they have been displaced and witnessed the loss of their cultural identity in the age of the civil war. After surviving all this, women have now been struck with the HIV and AIDS pandemic that is in many

circumstances reversing a not so friendly gender reality, thereby creating a more difficult and uncertain future for them and their children.

Given these circumstances, the question that arises is: What does all this mean for the women and how will women adapt and cope with such pressures (loss of their rights to land and partners, patriarchy, civil war and modern capitalist structures) in order to survive?

1.3. Research question

The overall research question addressed in this thesis is: Given the influence of the historical contexts of colonization, the civil war, development and the modernity process that Mozambique has undergone, *what are the coping mechanisms related to land access and retention (livelihood mechanisms) that women are adopting as strategies to survive the impact of HIV and AIDS?*

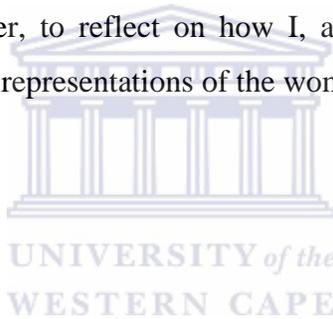
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The main objective of the study is to analyse the coping mechanisms of women in the HIV and AIDS context.

The main research objective is supported and deconstructed by several specific objectives that allow for a better reflection on what this research trail should be. It was of most importance to understand the perceptions and representations of change that women have about the influences that the three phenomena (modernity, civil war and the development practices) have created in Mozambican society. It was also necessary to analyse and understand women's perceptions about their role and identities in society. This has resulted in an interesting research exercise as the women, despite their apparent submission to the social rules and norms are in many instances challenging those norms in order to survive, although many women are not comfortable with the new roles that they now have to assume.

As land is central to the overall analysis and to Mozambican women's lives as prime food producers it was necessary to describe the women's relationship with land – whether it is spiritual or cultural (traditional); whether it is only economical or practical (more modernized). In the context of the current social phenomenon it is indispensable to identify the core social norms and values which have become more modernized; and to identify which social norms reflect the traditional systems regarding land (livelihood) access, control and property rights.

One of the main conclusions of this work is that at the crossing point of modernity and tradition, these social norms are being transformed and re-interpreted fundamentally, placing women and their children in a vulnerable position. In the final analysis, it was important for me, as researcher, to reflect on how I, as an educated African woman, understand the perceptions and representations of the women of my society.



1.4. Significance of the study

This study is of utmost significance for me, because as attested above, the survival of the Mozambican population depends greatly on the capacity of women to succeed, despite little or no attention being given to this group beyond political discourses. The future of women and their children in such a difficult environment is of critical importance. As a researcher, I want to contribute a window of hope and increase the dignity and self-esteem of these badly maltreated women. This research report can provide policy makers and implementers, as well as local practitioners, with a range of information that could help in assessing and understanding the real situation of women regarding the impact of HIV/AIDS on their livelihoods. The result of this work can also reveal what specific aspects need to be taken into consideration when planning and implementing development initiative programmes that would have a positive and significant impact on the lives of this group of people. At an academic level, this reflection of women's coping

mechanisms can encourage further research that could complement this study. During the literature review for this study it was clear that there is a lack of literature regarding the issue of expropriation in Mozambique and therefore this study can contribute new perspectives on the problem of expropriation and survival strategies of women.

1.5. Summary of methods

This study attempted to analyze and assess the challenges and coping mechanisms related to land access and retention that women are adopting as strategies to survive the impact of HIV and AIDS. In order for this aim to be accomplished, multiple methods were needed to ensure reliability of data through triangulation during data collection (Pretty, 1994).

An intensive portion of the research was done during 20 days in six districts of Mozambique, with 10 days allocated to each province, although after this period many feedback interview sessions were held with key informants and community members. In those sites 60 community members, both men and women, were interviewed, and 4 focal groups discussed some issues related to customary law and practices. A substantial group of stakeholders were contacted in order to achieve a more complete insight into the problem.

The data collection instruments included a questionnaire, individual interviews with open-ended questions that allowed free expression of the community's feelings about the issues, and focal group interviews in order to capture different gendered and inter-generational discussions. A significant group of stakeholders that contributed substantially to the understanding of the problem was also contacted.

The aim of the questionnaire was to survey a representative sample of the population in order that as Babbie & Mouton (2001: 57) assert some patterns of behavior and dynamics could be understood. Semi-structured interviews were used for key informants, especially because in some cases the explanatory power of questionnaires can be limited,

as they are usually standardized, not designed to suit individual circumstances and do not allow interviewees to explain their experiences in depth (Chambers, 1997: 24).

Secondary material was also reviewed. These include published and unpublished articles, books and government documents from the Internet. Findings or data collected is presented in maps, tables, and textboxes.

1.6. Outline of Chapters

This thesis comprises five chapters. In this present introductory chapter a brief introduction of the study is made presenting the situation of women regarding HIV and AIDS and their access to land; the issues underlying the problem statement; the objectives and the rationale for choosing this topic of research and finally a summary of which path was followed to achieve the results presented in this work.

Chapter 2 is the literature review. In this chapter a broad discussion is presented of the literature on the topic, observing the three main theories underpinning the research, namely: the post-development theory, the post-colonialist theory and the post-feminist theory. Literature on the HIV disease and AIDS pandemic impact and gender issues are the mainstream topics in this chapter. The chapter presents these key issues exploring the relationships between them, in order to provide a theoretical foundation for the study.

Chapter 3 provides the methodology used in the study. It reports on all used techniques and procedures, as well as the rationale, study limitations and ethical considerations of the study.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the fieldwork process.

Chapter 5 is dedicated to a discussion of the findings, conclusions and recommendations in order to propose possible interventions.



CHAPTER 2. Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

In the present chapter a great effort will be made to understand the theoretical and methodological grounds underlying this thesis. The objective of the study is to analyse the coping mechanisms that Mozambican women are adopting regarding their access to land embedded in a context influenced by colonialism, civil war, and modern development practices against the background of the HIV and AIDS pandemic. These factors evidently are transforming the social dynamics and structures of the society. This chapter attempts to observe how each of one of these factors interfered in the livelihoods of the Mozambican women from the visited sites.

Mozambique is ranked as one of the poorest countries in the world. To underpin this situation, during the last few years it has also become one of the 10 countries most affected by the HIV disease and AIDS pandemic. Many Sub-Saharan countries are living in a critical situation regarding the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals² with the constant rise in the prevalence of HIV and AIDS. As an underdeveloped country Mozambique's development goals, as a global agenda area, among others, are: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger; Achieve Universal Primary Education; *Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women*; Reduce Child Mortality and *Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases*³.

Over the years, Mozambican social organization has been suffering from the influences of phenomena like colonization, civil war, migration and modernization that highlighted the development paradigm as a path to follow for a "better life". However, after many decades of development paradigm implementation, it is commonly believed in

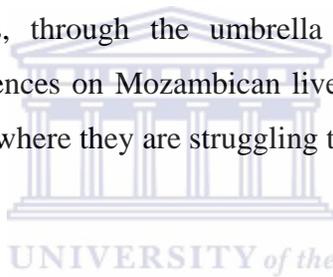
² Mozambique signed the Millennium Declaration in 2000.

³ Italics by us in Goals 3 and 6.

Mozambique that none of these development practices seem to have contributed to the creation of a self-driven nation that can overcome and create practical solutions for its problems, taking into account the available resources.

The majority of the Mozambican population lives in the rural areas. Therefore, land is the foremost source of livelihood and communal dynamics. The HIV and AIDS pandemic targets mostly the prime age adults and consequently the main driving force for any attempt at development. The reinforcement of “non-positive” aspects of the society dynamics and people’s inner lives have been made visible. Women and their children have been the more affected and are in need of creating coping mechanisms to overcome this era.

The present chapter attempts, through the umbrella of three main paradigms, to deconstruct the principal influences on Mozambican lives, and principally the women’s lives, in an HIV and AIDS era where they are struggling to create survival mechanisms in a rural context.



In the following section a historical overview of Mozambique is presented in order to reveal the real Mozambican population so that a better perception of why and how the present situation of women was engendered and which aspects have contributed to this condition.

2.1.1. Historical overview of Mozambique

Mozambique is located in South-eastern Africa. According to INE (2007: 1) It has a population estimated at approximately 20,000,000 million people. It has borders with Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Swaziland.

The National Institute of Statistics reveals that the active Mozambican population (15-64 years) is estimated at 54.5%. The active population is made up of 5,207,149 males and 5,519,291 females. The rest of the population is made up of children less than 14 years

old, of which 4, 229,802 are male and 4,177,235 are female, a combined total of 42.7% of the population. The remaining population are the elderly population of 2.8 % (INE, 2005: 10).

Vieira (2006: 3), in a paper about the Mozambican situation regarding education, presents the ethno-linguistic groups in Mozambique. There are a minority of Asian and European origin, but the majority are of Bantu origin (99%). There are several linguistic groups composed of 25 African languages and 33 dialects spoken by the almost 20 million people. The official language is Portuguese but this language is spoken by less than half the population of the country, with men being the ones who speak this language the most.

Mozambique gained its independence from Portugal in 1975 after 10 years of liberation war. During this time Mozambique went through several obstacles, such as large-scale emigration of the Portuguese population, who held the technical skills in different economic areas, leading to a skills crisis. This situation led to an economic dependence on South Africa. A severe and cyclical drought and prolonged civil war further hindered the country's development⁴.

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Since the signing of the Peace Agreement, Mozambique has become one of Africa's most successful stories of post war reconstruction and economic recovery. A report of the Mozambique Government (2005) asserts that Mozambique has engaged in an ambitious economic, social and political reform agenda, and has made efforts to consolidate macroeconomic stability. As a result, the country has recorded high economic growth rates in recent years, averaging about 9 percent from 1997 to 2003, far above the continent's average. In addition, the country has made significant advances in relation to key indicators of human and social development, with a substantial decrease in the rates of child and maternal mortality and an increase in net enrolment rates.

⁴ The civil war was between the ruling party FRELIMO and rebel Mozambique National Resistance (RENAMO). Those parties signed a peace agreement in 1992, after the change of regime from Marxism in 1989 to multi party democracy and a free market economy.

However, despite these positive indicators, the situation of the country is still very precarious, and it is worsened by the HIV and AIDS pandemic. The increase in this pandemic appears to have many causes. Some causes are pointed out by a 2007 report from UNAIDS, which names one of the causes as being the fact that Mozambique is of being bordered by countries that have an elevated index of HIV prevalence, namely South Africa, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Swaziland. A WHO report highlights that most infections are concentrated along transportation and commerce routes, disproportionately affecting mobile populations (i.e., miners, migrant workers, traders, drivers, and uniformed services) and their partners (WHO, 2004: 7).

The empirical evidence, daily experiences and narratives point to the transformation of social values and dynamics that in certain ways protected women and children from being expropriated after their husband/father's death. This phenomenon was confirmed during the empirical work and I believe that this can be one the worst effects of HIV and AIDS in the lives of Mozambican communities. With the increasing spread of this pandemic we have observed many women rebuilding their lives through any strategies which are available to them that in many cases can be life-threatening and dangerous.

Much of the literature reflects on the interface of traditional societies with modern values: the formal systems only allow social climbing through formal education and skills that generally are prohibited for women by social, cultural, political, and mainly by financial constraints. As many authors discuss, these structural barriers were imposed by the colonial regime, modernization systems and the development paradigm that in many instances ignore the social practices and perceptions that are present in non-western contexts (Rahnema, 1993: ix-xix; Escobar, 1993: 85-93; Illich, 1993: 94: 102). On the other hand, there is the context, the real situation of the millions of people that are supposed to be integrated into an international economy or development, but who are living with what they really have. Macamo (2002: 2) and José (2005: 4) highlight that the people in the so called 'Third World' are labelled "in absolute poverty", as they are living with a determined amount of American dollars per day but are still trying to have livelihood strategies and struggling to be "integrated in the global village" as the only alternative in their minds.

The people of underdeveloped countries are being considered by some actors as victims of violence because they are under the imposition of another culture and perception of what well-being is: “The invention of actors and the visibility of the country are the main elements of disciplining. Through them the World Bank and the IMF are able to produce the ideal type of social actor and social institutions which are the foundation stone for the construction of “a new reality” (Macamo, N.D: 8)

In this chapter an attempt is made to analyse the three main paradigms that create the backbone for this work: the post-colonialism paradigm, the post-development paradigm and the post-feminism paradigm. It is my belief that those paradigms explain and deconstruct reality so that is possible to achieve a better understanding and analysis of the main problem of this thesis: gender access to land in context of HIV and AIDS, and the coping alternatives that women have in this scenario. These theories analyse how the process of cataloguing of the “other” has been constructed and the influences of colonization and modernization on Mozambican culture and women’s present lives.

Adopting a chronological perspective, the discussion of the three main paradigms will start with an analysis of the Mozambican colonialism process through the lens of the post-colonial perspective.

2.2. The post-colonialism Paradigm

“If I told them to go to the new school,’ he said at last, ‘they would go en masse. They would learn all the ways of joining wood to wood which we do not know. But, learning, they would also forget. Would what they learn be worth as much as what they would forget? I should like to ask you: can you learn this without forgetting that, and is what one learns worth what one forgets?’(...)
(Ki-Zerbo et al, 2003: 156)

The necessity of epistemic surveillance regarding an uncritical appropriation of the 'Other', indigenous, local representation on our continent, is a message that repeatedly appears in the works of many African social scientists. Meneses (2005: 1) emphasizes that the importance of the African legacy and its implications are central to the works of Frantz Fanon, Amílcar Cabral, Aimé Césaire, Julius Nyerere, Eduardo Mondlane, among other African thinkers, whose ideas and critical conceptions still today form a basis for an analysis of the present post-colonial situation on the continent.

During (1995: 4) defines post-colonial theory as being foremost about the achievement of 'an identity uncontaminated by universalistic or Eurocentric concepts or images' in post-colonial nations. This theory attempts to challenge and subvert the marginalization of local knowledge systems that have been relegated or even abolished by the colonial presence in the colonial countries. The colonial system used methods that surprised and dominated the colonized and tried to fashion the whole world after its own image. This was such a huge effort that after the independence of the colonies, people remained culturally and economically dependent on the western institutions, as was the case of Mozambique. As Chilisa (2005: 660) remarks, colonization was not only physical, but also sought to take possession of the mentality.

In her article about educational research in post-colonial Africa, Chilisa (2005: 661) explains that the post-colonial theory aims to give evidence of the local knowledge, values and epistemologies, so that the communities can overcome the deep dependency on "foreign" solutions that create a dysfunction in local societies and in many instances is the origin of the failure of the developmental practices and strategies, e.g. the failure of the education system and the failure of the HIV and AIDS campaigns.

2.2.1. Colonialism in Mozambique

Colonialism in Mozambique and other "Third World Countries" is seen as a phase of rupture of the colonised people's dynamics, economies, politics, and socio-cultural cycles

of life. In many cases, however, particularly among Eurocentric thinkers, this is regarded as a positive thing because otherwise these countries would have remained in a much delayed phase of development in all spheres.

In his book about development theories, Graaf (2003:4) argues that the evolutionist theory was, in many instances, taken as rationale for the colonial enterprise. Many colonizing powers justified their actions in the colonies as aimed at helping underdeveloped populations towards a better and more highly evolved place in the world.

Mozambican historians have confirmed this perception. Hedge *et al.* (1993: 37) write that Mozambique was not an exception to this colonization process. In the aftermath of the independence of Brazil⁵, which was formerly a huge source of revenue to Portugal, Lisbon⁶ turned its attention to Africa as a new area of exploitation and exploration.

Macamo (2002: 1-30) in his reflection on the colonialist presence and effects explains that there is some debate about the myth of the 500 years of colonization of Mozambique by Portugal, because Portugal could only defeat the last resistance to colonialism in Mozambique at the beginning of the 20th century. He goes on to stress that only after the Berlin Conference (1884-5) was the Portugal's right of occupation recognized, and most of the present borders of the country were determined by the Anglo-Portuguese Convention of 1891. However, the influence of the colonialist presence in the cultural and social dynamics of Mozambique cannot be underestimated.

Regarding the colonization period, Hedge *et al.* (1993: 33) contend that Portugal was under the influence of the Estado Novo (New Estate) after 1933. This was a political and authoritarian military regime that ruled till 1974. Within this period of time, Mozambique went through the apogee of colonialism, from 1945-1961.

⁵ This event occurred in 1822.

⁶ The capital of Portugal.

Zapata (N.D) also brings some light to the colonization principles and strategies by arguing that the colonial administration used the fact that the Mozambican population was completely rural, to fuel the “Economic Nationalism” in Portugal. Even today, the main population of Mozambique is located in the rural areas. The peasants of rural Mozambique were embedded in multiple strategies that had as their only goal to maximize the colonial presence in Mozambique.

The point of this work is that, beyond the exploitative effects that enforced the poverty of the Mozambican population, this phenomenon severely altered the “natural” course of the Mozambican people’s lives, so that until today, people are trapped in “underdevelopment”, struggling to catch the “development train” and forced to take non-assertive choices of their own, alienated from participation in decision-making on their own lives, and this is far more evident when observing women’s lives.

Many academics have explained the logic behind the colonial economic regime. The compulsory cultivation of cotton, rice and tobacco was introduced into the country, and the peasants were compelled to work on those plantations. One effective form of ensuring this was the introduction of elevated taxes that the rural families were obliged to pay in cash to the local administration (Hedges *et al.*, 1993; Zapata, N.D.; Macamo, 2005; José, 2005).

In this situation, according to Hedges *et al.* (1993: 35-40), many men were forced to leave their families and go to work on the plantations (as a strategy to combat desertion, peasants were allocated to plantations far away from their districts). The colonial government also stimulated migratory work because they drew up agreements with nearby countries to supply cheap labour for relatively short periods (2 years), after which the worker should return home to receive half of the wages in Portuguese currency. This hugely benefited the colonial government, because the agreement meant that the government received the migrant workers’ money in international currency which they would exchange into Portuguese currency so that the families could pay their taxes and use the money within Mozambican territory.

In this new ruling, according to Negrão (1995: 90), women started to remain at home with the children for long periods, working on their small units of subsistence production. This ensured the survival of the group (men's wages were very low and only guaranteed the tax payments), but increased the gender gap. The role of women was not reflected in administrative and governmental statistics, because their work did not account for the national budget, and this perception became incorporated into men's perceptions in general.

As Waterhouse and Vijfhuizen (2001: 16) contend, some scholars have argued that colonial intervention expanded the gender gap in power and experience in a number of other ways. Historians note that colonial tax and forced labour obligations pushed men into waged work, whilst women were left with the major burden of family farm production. Although men's experiences were often harsh, traumatic and unrewarded, nonetheless migrant and paid labour for men broadened their experience, and often increased their economic power relative to women. This was particularly so, since women's unremunerated role in childcare and food production was reinforced by male absence.

Peronius (2005: 15-19) introduces a new factor to this debate. Colonization introduced Judaic-Christian missionaries to the country, which also affected the old system of life. These missionaries propagated for the nuclear family instead of the big and extended polygamous families. The patriarchal ideology of Judaic-Christianity also strengthened the "traditional" belief that the man was the head of the family. The young men who had gone to South Africa were suddenly economically independent. They could afford to pay the *lobolo* themselves and get as many wives as they wanted. The head of the family in the extended families – the old father - lost his authority. The cattle were exchanged for real money in the *lobolo* payment. According to Peronius, the old values that the *lobolo* symbolized, the appreciation of the woman and the ties between the two families disappeared. Instead, the women were bought like trade goods which meant that they could be treated in any way. "If the wife was treated badly and wanted a divorce, it was

no longer possible if her family had already spent the *lobolo*-money. The woman's choice was either to stay in the marriage and continue to be ill treated, or try to get a job so that she could pay the *lobolo* back herself” (Peroniuos, 2005: 19).

As many Pan-Africanist and post-colonialist authors have highlighted, colonization was not only geographical and economic, but also sought to colonize the mind. Mission centres, which pioneered the formal education system, used education to alienate their students from their cultures and people (Chilisa, 2005: 660).

The colonial regime used the Catholic Apostolic Roman Church through the *Concordata* of 1940, to serve the colonial power by evangelizing and educating the Mozambican people to better serve the Portuguese administrative system. On this point, it is important to elucidate that Portugal used the assimilationist strategy to create the pretext that Mozambique was a “Portuguese nation outside Portugal”. The main slogan was: “To build schools, to raise Christians, to raise Portuguese” (Zapata, N.D.: 18).

However, according to Hedges *et al.* (1993: 34), this policy was just one more theoretical explanation to justify its colonialism. This position is held by other authors that the real aim of this regime was the total control of Portugal's colonies by Lisbon, the exploitation of their resources for the benefit of Portuguese capitalists (not African producers or foreign investors), and a "civilizing" role that was promoted in order to deflect criticism about Portuguese colonial practices (Sheldon, 1998; Isaacman and Isaacman, 1983; Newitt, 1995, among others).

The person that had the intention to be an *assimilado* should be “more than 18 years old, speak Portuguese correctly, have completed *elementary* school, have a profession with an economic income, have good moral and civic behaviour, shouldn't be a deserter of the military army, and have good habits that do not offend public and private rights” (Hedges and Rocha, 1993: 313). It is unnecessary to mention that these requirements, altogether, were difficult to achieve by a black person: “one had to be able to speak, read and write Portuguese, be a Christian, have abandoned native customs such as polygamy and

“witchcraft”, eat at the table and speak Portuguese with one’s children” (Macamo, 2002: 10).

With regards to the native education process, several writers contend that the government passed laws that were implemented by the Catholic mission programs, purposely keeping the level of African education low and combining the processes of "Christianization" and "Portugalization". There were "rudimentary" schools for Africans and separate "elementary" schools for children of European descent and for a small number of Africans who met the legal standards of "civilized-status" (Sheldon, 1998, Hedgel *et al.*, 1993; Mazula, 1995). It is symptomatic of this system that, when Mozambique became independent, 90% of its population was illiterate (Viera, 2006: 16)

The only goal of the educational system was to develop a working class able to participate in the colonial economy, but only in restricted ways and especially as manual laborers. As Hedges points out: "Mission evangelization was thus less a means of spreading Christianity than an ideological means of pressuring the mass of the population into accepting labor in the colonial system and the payment of taxes"(Hedges *et al.*, 1983: 314).

The Portuguese language was established as *lingua franca*, or official common language. As Lopes (1998) points out, the Portuguese language was the only medium of government-controlled national communication in the areas of administration and education.

Rahnema writes that "...schools, rather than create democratization, served other purposes. In relation to society at large, the colonists destroyed all previous established systems of cultural references. As the only recognized providers of education, they systematically discredited all previous established mechanisms that different cultures had created through their histories of fostering knowledge and culture" (2003: 158). In the same vein, Ki-zerbo asserts that "...school tends to be increasingly anti-democratic.

Perceived as a source of upward social mobility, it is desired by everyone, but it actually serves people who are already ‘educated’, thus becoming the preserve of a small minority” (2003: 154).

In conclusion, colonialism had a very Eurocentric perspective, aiming to fashion the world in its own image, surprising and dominating the local knowledge, *habitus*⁷, languages, fashion and minds. The colonial ideological process aimed at undermining the authenticity of the ‘other’. Hence as Chilisa argues, education was framed, constructed and driven by an ideology aimed at colonizing the mind, alienating the self, and creating an individual that did not believe in her/himself (Chilisa, 2005: 661). This was so deeply embedded in the minds that it limited the capacity to think in a way that was not recognized by western ideology, which was trying to “pull us out of the underdevelopment condition” through development practices. In this colonial process, women were the most neglected and this began to be excluded from the economic integration as well as the educational processes. They consequently lost power within their own society since the institutional perspective brought by colonialism was extremely patriarchal and autocratic.

The following section deals with the post-development theory, the antithesis of the development theory. This is done in order to grasp the significance of the impact of development politics and practices on the lives of Mozambican communities, and principally on the lives of women in terms of their support networks, their norms and values, and their reactions to the HIV and AIDS pandemic.

2.3. Development conceptualization

2.3.1. Development theories

The Mozambican economy is embedded in a world system where there are scales, power hierarchies that determine whether a country is a First World one or a Third World one, taking into account: the GDP, GNP, HDI, etc. as a set of categories and indexical

⁷ The notion of *habitus* was first used by Pierre Bourdieu who defines it as: the incorporation of the social into the corporeal. A system of durable, transposable disposition that mediates an individual’s action and the external conditions of production (Bourdieu, 1990: 53)

proclaimed universal measures. This world system (as Wallerstein calls it) arose in the aftermath of the Second World War and was influenced by the rise of the United States as a superpower; the enlargement of a United World Communist Movement and the disintegration of European colonial powers. All those factors helped to form the modernization school and, as a consequence, the rise of the development debate (Graaf, 2003: 1-5)

Consequently some theories appeared, namely: evolutionism, functionalism and neo-liberalism⁸. All of them supported the power of the Western nations above that of the Eastern ones with a specific political motivation: to keep Third World Countries away from the influence of Russian or Chinese communism (Graaf, 2003: 3-5). The greatest obstacles to fully attaining modernization were the “the shackles of traditions”: “traditional values which placed religion and family above efficiency and the market, and which blocked progress with fatalism and backward-looking conservatism” (Graaf, 2003: 5)

To attain their objectives, the Western Nations, headed by the United States of America, created the Bretton Wood Institutions in 1944. These were the main international public financial institutions viz. the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. In its turn, this event lead to the creation of the Washington Consensus⁹ rules as a way of further increasing the power of the North above the South, capturing countries and systems in a new global order (see Graaf, 2003: 6-7 and Padayachee, 1996: 353).

The International Monetary Fund according to Padayachee (1996: 354) claims to facilitate the growth of world trade. The major instrument through which the Fund attempts to meet this objective is through loans to members who experience short-term

⁸ Evolutionism believes that all societies have an evolutionist path; those societies must go through a number of stages and stages are the same and all converges to a single form, all societies end up looking the same (Graaf, 2003: 2).

⁹ It's a relatively specific set of ten economic policy prescriptions that constitute a "standard" reform package promoted for crisis-wracked countries by Washington, D.C-based institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and U.S. Treasury Department (Tennissen and Akkerman, 2005).

balance of payment difficulties, i.e. those countries whose export does not match their imports.

Padayachee also contends that the type of financial aid has certain conditions such as: the states must stop intervening in their economies through import controls and exchange and price control, and consumer subsidies, reduce domestic demand - especially in government spending, and increase exports (usually through currency devaluation) (Padayachee, 1996: 357). These are called stabilization policies.

The World Bank had, as its final objective, to “help” countries to attain economic growth. The path for this is export expansion and diversification. It also includes monetary and fiscal restraint, removing obstacles to the free operation of market forces, a sound currency, external economic equilibrium and, most importantly, a favourable investment climate (Padayachee, 1996: 358).

Padayachee offers an insightful critique of the real nature of these international monetary institutions. He argues that the aid that these institutions give is more political and ideological, in line with what the U.S.A. and other Western governments think. In that order, they have begun to make political pre-conditions for loans and credits: only for countries that embark on multi-party democratic forms of government. Nevertheless, those preconditions are specific and implemented in some countries to the detriment of others, i.e. Graaf, quoting Todaro (2003: 25), mentions that “(...) the largest single recipient of this American contribution is Israel, which is not really a developing country at all(...)” and Padayachee (1996: 360) notes that between the years 1970 and 1973 the Bank didn't make loans to Allende's Chile or Peron's Argentina, because those governments were communist and this was and still is against the US policy. Yet the IMF made several large loans to South Africa (for a long time) despite the *apartheid* regime's prevalence

Academics like José (2005) have criticized these Structural Adjustments Programmes that the so-called Third World Countries had to undergo to be part of the world economic

systems. This assistance, they argue, is not noted for its successes because it focuses on macro-economic policies to lead to economic growth with little regard to the socio-economic strategy. Development is a systematic process of meeting human needs, i.e. not only economic needs, but also social, political, cultural, spiritual, physical and environmental needs.

After Mozambican Independence in 1975, the FRELIMO government opted for a socialist ideology. This implied predominantly a huge state intervention in the economy. The nationalization of the principal services and resources such as land, health, education, habitation, transport, insurance companies, Industrial Parks among others was a juridical and political instrument of extreme importance within this process. At the same time this allowed for the direct control of the major economic areas and services, and accomplished the promises made to ensure a better re-distribution of resources and democratization of the access to the public services.

Joseph Halon (1984), in one of his many analyses of Mozambican development, writes that alongside the attempt to ensure what is called a better life for the population, the villagization of the rural population took place. These processes aimed to congregate the scattered rural population in villages that could provide a better standard of living to the people: a better water supply, schools, health centres, post, shops and the organization of social and cultural lives.

Halon remarks that those communal villages, in some sense, re-produced some of the colonial features with the “compulsion” for communal farming to fuel the development of the economy. The massive removal of the inhabitants’ land brought several identity problems that in some way created resistance to the communal projects (Halon, 1984).

This population amalgamation shows what Cahen (1994: 55) argues, that the Portuguese colonialism did not base its administration bases on exacerbating the ethnic distinctions; neither did these bases cause any active forms of tribal wars. The Portuguese perceived the African population, (with the exception of the *macondes* and *chopes*), as a uniform

mass without an organization. It was the colonizer that formatted and created this type of society. After Independence, the ruling party did not change this policy of ethnic ignorance. The objective was to create and impose, through a Marxist-Leninist estate, one modernized nation of the European kind. Actually this was one of the Trojan horses of the National Resistance (RENAMO)¹⁰, which demanded the defense of “our tradition”.

As Zapata argues (N.D.) in the aftermath of the civil war the Catholic leaders were given the mission of re-introducing the distinctive features of the Mozambican culture. Evidently the constitution of this culture would be subject to censure and other intervention agents because the application of a rule is always likely to be manipulated, and appropriated to active re-meanings.

This manipulation and reinterpretation of the “Mozambican culture” was also present in the colonial era where the *Régulos*¹¹ (an elite group of older men) had a privileged role of interpreting of local customs to the colonial authorities (Loforte, 1996: 65).

In an effort to raise the debate about the influence of economic factors that have influenced Mozambican society, Negrão says that after several years of struggle with a huge economic depression, a massive civil war, the end of the Cold War (that represented the downsizing of allies), the loss of capital, and the constant increase in the international debt, the Mozambican leadership decided to adopt a multiparty ideology with a neo-liberalist strategy in the name of an efficient integration into the world economy (Negrão 2002: 20). It is within this context that the Structural Adjustment Programmes became the main development drivers of the country performed by the Bretton Woods Institutions (World Bank and International Monetary Fund).

¹⁰ The RENAMO party started a civil war of almost 16 years after the Mozambican Independence. This army group was created by the South African and Rhodesia government as way of sabotaging the Mozambican economy and sovereignty because its government had chosen to follow the Socialist ideology.

¹¹ The *Régulo* figure was used in the colonial era where the administrative systems chose one man (regardless of the power structure of its community) to serve as community controller, informant and tax collector in the service of the colonial administration. This *Régulo* system changed the relationship of chiefs, both to their people and land. Their former role, as rulers and protectors of their people and guardians of the land, transmuted into a mediating role between the demands of the colonial state, and the local population whom they were now charged to control (Whaterhouse and Vijfhuizen, 2001: 16)

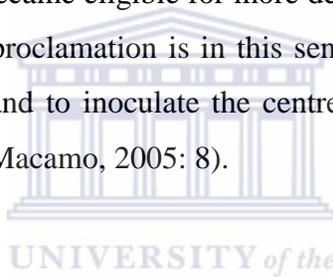
Other academics like Macamo (2002) and José (2005) argue that in the SAP ambit with the politic of free markets and the withdrawing from the state of the public markets and public interveners, many of the nationalized areas were privatized, namely education, health, habitation, transport, etc. This led to devastating consequences for the existing social structures.

Macamo (2002) presents a very alarming analysis of the consequences of the SAP performed by the Bretton Woods “sisters” in countries like Mozambique. He asserts that beyond the material consequences that the SAP has for Mozambicans, there is a totalitarian violence on the neo-liberal project (...) to be found in the colonisation of native’s spaces and bodies as well as in the imposition of limits to the articulations of alternative visions. The totalitarian neo-liberal project again shapes, in the silences which it imposes, in its ability to make the longings, projects and expectations of the ‘Other’ only articulate within the bounds of the Washington Consensus. The main objective of these projects, according to Macamo, is the transformation of Mozambican bodies into objects of power so they could re-invent the country as a local space for external intervention (2002: 3).

As many authors have argued after observing the failure of the programmes that those international institutions bring, the main objective is not correcting structural economic imbalances; SAP is above all a project of “normalization” in the most profound sense. It establishes the norms of conduct which guide the behaviour of the individuals in question, and creates social actors and social institutions which are the foundation for the construction of a new reality. So, on this point I believe that there is no difference between this reality and the principles of colonization. The only difference I can find is that at least the colonial regime could be fought by the liberation wars, but this phase is so sophisticated and subtle that apparently its true objectives were not noticed by the majority of our leaders, or they simply don’t know how to find a way out of it.

A clear example of this was Mozambique's attempt to be nominated for the HIPC Initiative of the Paris Club. Several authors claim that the aim of this institution was to "maintain their roles as debt-collecting agencies, determined to extract their pound of flesh from the poorest people on this earth" (José, 2005: 2). The situation, in brief, was as follows: Although Mozambique had carried out 10 years of SAP, was recovering from a long destructive civil war, and was one of the poorest countries in the world those institutions imposed numerous obstacles in the writing-off of the debt Mozambique could never hope to repay (José, 2005: 1).

When finally Mozambique was nominated for the HIPC Initiative and its debt was written off, it simultaneously became eligible for more debt. Therefore the country's debt problem wasn't solved: "The proclamation is in this sense just a preventive measure to keeps the country vegetating and to inoculate the centre against the side effects of the pathologies in the periphery" (Macamo, 2005: 8).



Macamo (2005: 10) believes that poverty and underdevelopment always raise the ghost of uncontrolled migration, drug trafficking, criminalization of the state, terrorism, etc. These are problems which are perceived as threats in and to the developed world. As a consequence, the best way to deal with them is to transform them into calculated risks. In this ways potentially dangerous countries are identified and policies are designed whose main aim is not to solve the problems those identified countries have, but instead just to mitigate their effects.

After a certain time of implementation of the "classical development theories" some scholars, social activists and politicians in many parts of the world become aware that the imposed Development theory and practice in the "underdeveloped" countries had failed completely (Rahnema, 1997: ix). The so-called Third World Development countries are still struggling with the same or worse problems that those very theories and practice imposed as remedy and women as the most vulnerable group have been particularly

affected by this failure, as the majority of them remain in the informal system where they have neither space nor proper tools to cope in their imposed environment.

In the next section I will deal with the incapacity of the development practitioners in promoting the participation and integration of women on their programmes and the consequent failure of promoting development in women's lives. That analysis starts with a discussion about what development is and moves beyond exalting the existing critiques about this concept and its meaning and how western and westernised development practitioners have failed to create a better life for people and for women in particular.

2.3.2. Development definitions

There are many definitions of development. Coetzee (2001: 120) notes that development infers “a form of social change that will lead to progress, the process of enlarging people's choices, acquiring knowledge and having access to resources for a decent standard of living, and a condition of moving from worse to better”. Cypher and Diethz (1997: 45) define the concept of development as an improvement of socio-economic and political dimensions of society that leads to increased income and standard of living conditions. Generally, the concept of development includes aspects such as participating in decision-making, having access to improved opportunities for education and health, as well as self-improvement irrespective of class, race, colour and gender (Abiche, 2004: 15).

On the other hand the notion of development is strongly linked with the concept of poverty. Allen and Thomas (2000: 10) advocate that poverty applies to individuals and households, whereas development also refers to large-scale processes of change at societal level. These authors explain that the global target for reducing poverty uses a single poverty line for the whole world, so that those in extreme poverty are those whose income is less than US\$1 per day (measured in '1985 PPP dollars'- i.e. adjusted for

‘purchasing power parity’). However this measurement has serious limitations taking into account that measures of average income based on market variations cannot give a full indication of the incidence of poverty. Allen and Thomas assert: “Being an average, Gross National Product per capita says nothing about the distribution of wealth between rich and poor. Also, in general, GNP as an indicator underestimates both subsistence and collective goods, whereas it overvalues whatever is commercialized, individualized and organized” (2000: 11).

As mentioned before, Mozambique is one of those countries considered as a case of extreme poverty. Although there has recently been some evidence of an economic growth, the Mozambican government report of 2007 admits that this economic growth has not yet lead to development and even less to the eradication of the extreme poverty of its people.

In conclusion, in spite of the all initiatives and programmes that Mozambique and other poor countries have carried out, it seems that only some positive events of improvement in the lives of the poor can be noticed. This raises the question: why it this happening and what are the alternatives for this situation? The next section will look at the main critiques that exist towards the development paradigm and its actions.

2.4. Post- development theory

If the goals of official debt managers were to squeeze the debtors dry, to transfer enormous resources from South to North, and to wage undeclared war on the poor continents and their people, then their policies have been an unqualified success. If, however, their strategies were intended - as these institutions always claim- to promote development beneficial to all members of society, to preserve the planet’s unique environment, and gradually to reduce the debt burden itself, then their failure is easily demonstrated (George, S, 1999: xiii-xix)

The post- development theory arose from the perception of some scholars, social activists and politicians from around the world that the imposed Development theory and practice in the “underdeveloped” countries had failed completely. The model of modernization that the First World constantly wants to impose on the so-called Third World has as its main objective, to create a replica of itself, thereby creating another system of domination after the decolonization process in order to continue to exploit the natural resources. Another intention is to use the ex-colonies as markets for their expanding economies or as bases for their geopolitical ambitions (Rahnema, 1997: xi).

In this regard the First World created a set of conditions to reproduce its own way of life in those Third World countries. Critics view this as a failed attempt that only results in dependency, poverty (Zaoual, 1997: 30), and “underdevelopment” (Illich, 1997: 96), as an ideological representation of what is ‘good or bad’ and providing no alternatives for the “underdeveloped” countries to create their own ways of living and “development” that could target the major portion of the population instead of excluding it. Those development strategies mostly create abnormalities such as the ‘illiterate’, ‘the malnourished’, ‘small farmers’ or ‘landless peasants’ to quote Escobar (1997: 86).

Some scholars believe that there is a ‘hidden agenda’ in the Western countries’ intervention using the Structural Adjustments Programmes as instruments. As Macamo says “SAP invents Mozambique. Without SAP Mozambique cannot be visible to the donor community. The logic behind SAP, as we have seen, is the neo-liberal totalizing project. This project is not interested in the development of countries like Mozambique. It is instead more interested in containing the hazards which economic backwardness and political instability at the periphery pose to the centre. These hazards are translated into risks according to strategies which on the one hand identify desired aggregate outcomes and, on the other; they isolate groups considered to be ‘at risk’ so that they do not contaminate the rest. In this connection, development aid is an end in itself. To put it differently, aid is given so that aid can be given. SAP turned Mozambique into one of the largest recipients of development aid in Africa” (Macamo, 2005: 6).

Mozambique followed religiously the prescriptions of the W. B. to the point of being granted, by the western “donors”, the title of “good student of the W.B.”, “the best African examples to be follow by other countries” (José, 2005: 19). However, in spite of those “compliments” the country is still facing huge challenges.

With regards to the educational area, actors like Mário and Nandja consider that “an educated population is essential to national development.” Education, combined with sound macro-economic policies, is considered a key factor in promoting social well-being and in poverty reduction (...), because it can have a positive impact on national productivity and hence shape life-styles and the ability of nations to compete in the global economy” (2006: 2). Although, according to Mozambique’s official data the average of illiteracy among adults nationwide is about 53.6%; it is higher in rural areas (65.7%) than in urban districts (30.3%) and more marked among women (68%) than men (37.7%) (INE, 2004: 10). However, we are not arguing that low literacy percentages can measure the capacity of coping mechanisms among the population because as Ejikeme attests: “...we have to be vigilant not to be careless in our thinking, too often, for example, education is treated by experts as a fetish. Because people are poor or "uneducated" does not mean they are stupid” (2008: 1). This assumption could be easily demonstrated if we look at many examples around the Third World of illiterate women coping with their livelihoods. The Grameen Bank is a well-known example of this. However, illiteracy embedded in a social system that only recognizes development strategies through a formal degree, can be a great obstacle to livelihood improvements.

It is significant that, although Portuguese had been declared the official language of the country, only 3% of the population speaks Portuguese as first language, and 90% of that Portuguese speaking population is located in Maputo City. It is estimated that 40% of the population speak and understand Portuguese as a second language and, as Lopez asserts: “of course, not all of these speakers make the same effective and efficient use of the language” (1998: 447).

These statistics are disturbing in a certain way because, if the Portuguese language is the only medium of government-controlled national communication in the areas of communication and education, this means that more than a half of the population has no access to those primordial services, creating a broad social gap among Mozambicans. It is important to refer here that bilingual education in Mozambique (education in a Bantu language and Portuguese), were only introduced in 2003¹².

There is a great government effort to raise the equity levels in school. This has been mainly attained at primary school level but at the secondary and pre-university levels, the number of females is significantly fewer. According to an UNDP report (2005: 9-10), the mismatch of gender in schooling is due to various factors: some have to do with the school itself whereas others have to do with socioeconomic conditions and the socio-cultural contexts where they live.

According to Machava, some of the factors related to the absence of girls in schools are: the weak relevance of apprenticeship that the school provides; the instructional language (Portuguese) poses difficulty for children, particularly in rural areas; sexual harassment and abuse of girls by teachers and pupils; a lack of female teachers in primary education; the distance to school; illegal payment as a way to pass on to the other grade. These and other factors undermine girls and prevent parents from sending their daughters to school.

Still more critical is that statistics show that more than 60% of the Mozambican population doesn't have access to clean water and more than 70% of the population doesn't have access to health services (Machava, 2007: 7).

This situation is denotative of what the post-development theorists have been highlighting, that although all paradigms and programmes that Western thinking produced to legitimate its action in the South, especially in a country where those recipes had been followed religiously, theory and practice somehow do not 'fit'. Actors are

¹² However, some educational analysts argue that this project is not sustainable because there are no material and human resources conditions for the proper implementation of bilingual education. See: Ribeiro, F. (2007: 9).

unanimous that the social consequences of these programme implementations have been catastrophic mainly for women. The following section will try to clarify the role of women and their situation in the development paradigm.

2.4.1. Development effect on Gender

This section will discuss the rise and criticisms of the developmental institutions as related to gender in developing countries. These development organizations or institutions can be perceived as reflections and replications of the values of those who set them up: “cultural values are reflected in the ways organizations function and these values stereotypes appropriate roles and behaviours in ways that generally limit women’s access to resources and decision-making” (Anderson, 1993: 1).

Much literature points out that for many years there was a large lack of visibility of women in the developmental debate (Macdonald, 1993; Rogers, 1980; Shepherd, 1998; Peronius, 2005). As Benería (2001: 38) highlights: “the agency of women as a force for change is one of the most neglected aspects of the development literature”. The invisibility of women in the development debate and practice is related to the ethnocentric view of the practitioners embedded in a Western view. This point refers to the preconceptions of the implementers of development in developing both international developers’ agents and local ones influenced by the colonial system, attitudes and practices.

Henshall Momsen (1991: 77) recognizes that in the literature about women and developments, there are three different themes to take into account to understand women’s situation. The first one is related to the necessity of observing that in society there is a sexual division of work, but that this varies from society to society and over time. Therefore, it cannot be considered as natural. The second theme asserts that it is important to understand the gender roles in the household before seeking to understand the gender roles in the production context. And the third theme is concerned with the

impact of economic development on men and women where women generally get the worst part.

Rogers (1980: 89) believes that the most important feature of western male ideology is the enormous emphasis on the exclusive role of the biological mother in caring for infants and children, particularly in the first years of their lives. This is closely linked with the identification of women's place in the domestic sphere, as wives and mothers (the home is presented to them as their primary occupation even if they take a second, salaried job outside the home).

Rogers (1980: 47-67) and Beneria (2001: 20-38) demonstrate in their analysis about women's position in society how the concept of domestication of the women in terms of housework and child care is related to the discrimination that women suffer beyond the domestic area. In this way the restriction of women's access to education is justified, because she will have a domestic career as mother and wife. In the access to employment: hiring, promotion and wage structure, the rationale is the same: women don't need be paid for their work because they have a husband that supports them and their children.

These authors suggest that there is a common assumption among Western and Western-trained development planners that the problems of women in developing countries are attributable to their status in traditional society. This explains the emphasis in the United Nations and similar organizations on 'raising the status of women' by involving them in development, often through special programmes and projects (Rogers, 1980: 67; Beneria: 2001: 28).

Rogers argues that the concept of 'domestication' is problematic. It ignores the enormous variety and dimensions of situations in which individual women may find themselves, according to their position in the family, their own and their relatives' occupations, their income, and so on. It also ignores the variations through time for each individual, relating to age, position in the household, health, number of children, etc; the fact that they have varying relationships with individual men and boys according to the various male

structures and life-cycles; and innumerable other factors (1980: 67). Therefore, the concept implies static dehumanization and objectification rather than the dynamic capabilities of the women, which affords them agency.

That argument, although presented years ago, enlightens a phenomenon that is present in Mozambique today, in a statement in the government report on the Millennium Goals: “the recognition by the Mozambican government of the status of the women” (GoM, 2005: 6).

Development institutions’ perceptions of the failure of women to register as landowners, as salaried plantation employees, as the ‘head of the family’ in many instances even in households where men are absent¹³, contribute dramatically to the impoverishment and perpetuation of gender inequality.

Rogers (1980: 69) argues that for many years the figure of the household head was related to a male figure and as such he was the only target of the law and the policy of the flow of cash to and from the household. This was so deeply rooted that the colonial administration’s systems of inheritance was re-directed to a patrilineal system of inheritance, banning already existing bilateral and matrilineal systems. Therefore, agricultural and rural development programmes that provide the criteria for credit and other assistance are aimed almost entirely at men. This position is also held by Sharma: “This kind of ‘development’ may, in fact, intervene directly in women’s subsistence activities in a negative sense. It may increase their workload and in some cases reduce their opportunities for earning cash income by diverting labour and marketing outlets to cash crops, for which payment goes mainly to the men” (Sharma, 1997: 25). The introduction of wages for men by colonialism and its subsequent systems is pointed out by Negrão (1995: 45) and Isaacman (1996: 23) as one of the main causes of the

¹³ Only recently has Mozambique family law stated: The legal figure of the man as head of family has been eliminated. Now, any of the partners of the married couple can represent the “sacred” family (Andrade, 2000: 1). However, a recent study about the Family Law impact in Mozambique demonstrated that a large number of the population don’t recognize this law.

increasing gender gap, where the paid labour and working experiences of men outside the domestic group, increased their economic power relative to women.

Shepherd (1998: 18) points out that many rural development processes have not observed the role of the women despite their being the most forceful drivers of subsistence agriculture in the developing countries; “the women in many cases support themselves and their children as well as offering food to a husband” (Rogers, 1980: 65). Therefore, the question of ‘who benefits by comparison with who contributes’ has been regarded as an important issue in the shift of the paradigm in more recent years.

Sharma contends that women have been discriminated against in the development process as members of development agencies in areas like recruitment, promotion, and work assignments. Development planners are often male planners. Carrying male bias in planning, they are not conscientious about women’s situations and contingency. The consequences of male bias regarding the planning process included the statistical omission of female participation in the household income in the GNP and HDI calculation, for instances. This is also because the women perform unpaid domestic services, subsistence food production and informal activities - aspects that these units of measurement do not take into consideration (Sharma, 1997: 26).

There is a lack of information about jobs done by women and girls, their existence, education, consumption and shelter, because the questionnaires are driven by men and responded to by men as well. In many cases the methodology used to acquire the information is inadequate for women. The concealment or disguise of women’s work serves a very important function; since “what is not counted is usually not noticed” (Rogers, 1980: 66). Reinforcing this position, the ILO HIV/AIDS report attests that: “many women are not considered to be part of the labour force. Yet they grow food, they run homes, and they care for children” (ILO HIV/AIDS report, 2004: 7).

Lately we have seen the introduction of a new paradigm that attempts to address these gaps in gender analysis. Shepherd says that the gender perspective introduces the element

of human rights on a very basic level when the concern is the development debate: “widespread violations of human rights can no longer be tolerated in the name of development” (1998: 15)¹⁴.

The ‘conscientization’ of gender, carried by feminist movements in development agencies, have also been a target of criticism. The roles of the feminist organizations are observed not to be working as catalysts towards women’s empowerment. Some studies point out that these organizations are driven by a Western perspective as well.

Therefore with the incorporation of the women’s movement into the NGOs, debates about women’s needs have been placed in the developmental framework, instead of incorporated into the political context of action for social justice. Thus its scope was restricted to narrow terms within the developmental programmes and projects and it cannot achieve the social transformation required to make communities more just (Msimang *et al.*, 2004: 84).

These actors believe that the advent of HIV and AIDS, as well as aspects like poverty, violence against women, discrimination and marginalization of women are closely and strongly inter-related, one reinforcing the other. There is a need for more activism that challenges the core values that make women more vulnerable to exploitation. The development agencies still have a patriarchal perspective, and this conduct determines that the contacts with the communities are performed in the interest of men. This behaviour strongly undermines transformation (Msimang *et al.*, 2004: 86).

The next section presents an analysis of post-feminist theories in order that more specific social dynamics can be assessed by questioning their contribution to women’s

¹⁴ The new paradigm focuses on participatory and people-centred development. This paradigm calls for an integrative approach whereby all development actors such as government and civil society, including non-governmental and community-based organizations, play a role in development. Further, it seeks to involve ordinary people at grassroots’ level in view of the local community being given the opportunity to participate in projects, have the capacity to plan, implement and manage their own development. This approach enables the community to build their own capacity, self-reliance and ensure sustainable development (Fitamo, 2003; De Beer & Swanepoel, 2001; Penderis, 1996; Burkey, 1993; Abiche, 2005).

impoverishment, lack of power, driving them to the present situation where they are literally struggling to succeed in their roles as society members.

2.5. The post-feminist paradigm

The post-feminist theory, like the other post theories, challenges the feminist Eurocentric-narratives of the Western societies and the imposition of one dominant hegemonic discourse within the feminist theory. This theory seeks to establish marginal discourses, to give voice to the “native” or non-western women that have been left behind by the feminist theory. Many authors have pointed out that feminism is a product of modernization, and as such discriminates and has a totalizing tendency which does not take into account other contexts and other representations (Msimang *et al.*, 2004: 86).

The post-feminist theory seeks to establish a distinction formulated by Teresa de Lauretis, between ‘Woman and Women’ (cited by Brooks, 1997: 56). As Mohanty (1995: 259) claims, the relationship between Woman - a cultural and ideological composite ‘Other’, constructed through diverse representational discourses (scientific, literary, judicial, linguistic, cinematic, etc), and women - real, material subjects of their collective histories - is one of the central questions to address. The intention of the post-feminist theory is to go against the colonizing of the material and historical heterogeneities of the lives of women in the Third World, thereby producing/re-presenting a composite, singular Third World Woman - an image which appears arbitrarily constructed, but nevertheless carries with it the authorizing signature of Western humanist discourse performed by the feminist writings.

According to Msimang *et al.* ‘The influence of trans-national feminism is particularly problematic because it usurps the expression of local feminism. A monolithic, globally

driven feminism can never be a valid reflection of the multiple realities of women - it must necessarily exaggerate, minimise and blend complexities” (2004: 84).

Mozambican scholars argue that: “...for in the same way as Western feminists criticized some studies for being androcentric and sexist, so we may criticize Western Feminists for being ethnocentric and racist. This is because many of their original problems and premises do not have universal relevance and include, as in other social sciences, dualist and paternalistic attitudes when faced with cultural problems different from their own” (WLSA, 1992: 12).

Many of the assumptions made about the lack of agency and poverty of women, are related to African “tradition”. As many African scholars have argued, there is no single tradition which exists all over Africa. And yet, what is considered as “tradition” in African communities “...is often of relatively recent vintage and was colonially-generated. Foreign aid workers and African men are too eager to point to "tradition" when excluding women from developmental projects” (Ejikeme, 2008: 2).

A group of African women have decided to raise their voices in favour of the observance of the real needs of African women. The question that they have is: who should speak for the African women? For many years most of the standard disciplinary observations, opinions and interpretation offered by genealogy, political structure, warfare, rites of passages, beliefs, etc, were taken from male perspectives, and continue to be about men: “Meanwhile data pertaining to women’s roles and beliefs are treated as extensions of men’s views, and their cultural products and views about social and political practices are dismissed as inconsequential” (Oyewùmí, 2002: 2). It is time that African men or Western women step back and leave the prime actors to speak for themselves (Nzegwe, 2000: 15; Ejikeme, 2008: 4; Oyewùmí, 2002: 2).

The major claim of these authors is that Western feminists use their newly acquired power to turn what were formerly perceived as the private troubles of women into public issues. They have shown how women’s personal troubles in the private sphere are in fact

public issues constituted by gender inequality due to the social structure: “It is clear that Euro/American women’s experiences and the desire for transformation have provided the basis for the questions, concepts, theories, and concerns that have produced gender research”(Oyewùmí, 2002: 2).

Oyewùmí explains that the western feminist researchers use gender as the explanatory model to account for women’s subordination. They assume these categories of “women” and their subordination as universals instead of as a socio-cultural construct. They take as given what they need to investigate. Oyewùmí is pragmatic when asserting that if gender is socially constructed, then the category “women” is not universal, and others forms of oppression and equality are present in the society (2002: 1).

As the above author asserts, I believe that western feminist concepts are rooted in the nuclear family. This social institution constitutes the very basis of feminist theory and represents the vehicle for the articulation of feminist values. This is in spite of the widespread belief among feminists that their goal is to subvert this male-dominated institution and the belief amongst feminism’s detractors that feminism is anti-family. Despite the fact that feminism has gone global, it is the Western nuclear family that provides the grounding for much of feminist theory (Oyewùmí, 2002: 3).

It is easy to understand that if the main concepts of this theory derive from the nuclear family, then there will be some clashes in other societies where the nuclear family is not the prototype. In Africa families are not only composed by the father and mother couple and their children. There are others, adults and the children of others, sharing the same space and performing labour divisions independently of their gender and more according to their social relations and positions in the kinship system.

Many examples in literature show us that the gender division in which ‘women’ equal ‘subordination’, and ‘men’ equal ‘power’, is in some instances variable. Amadiume (1987) author of *Male Daughters, Female Husbands* demonstrated the misconception of

gender as a very static category. The anthropologist Geffray (1990) wrote, “Neither father, neither mother”, about the matrilineal lineages of the North of Mozambique, in an attempt to elucidate that the western categories of ‘mother’ and ‘father’ is very different in this society: “...theorizing from the confined space of the nuclear family, it is not surprising that issues of sexuality automatically come to the fore in any discussion of gender. Even a category such as mother is not intelligible in white feminist thought except if the mother is defined first as the wife of the patriarch. There seems to be no understanding of the role of a mother independent of her sexual ties to a father. Mothers are first and foremost wives. This is the only explanation for the popularity of that oxymoron: single mother. From an African perspective and as a matter of fact, mothers by definition cannot be single. In most cultures, motherhood is defined as a relationship to progeny, not as a sexual relationship to a husband” (Oyewùmí, 2002: 4).

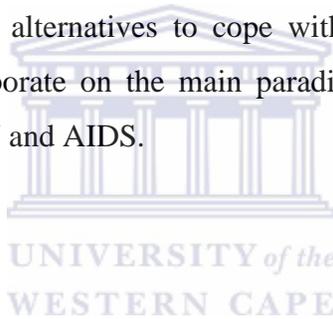
The encounter of two cultures and perspectives has always created misunderstandings. It could be mentioned that many historical monographs narrated the fact that when the Europeans arrived in Africa and witnessed the classificatory system that classified all individuals of the same age of individual parents as mothers and fathers, they believed that these people were so promiscuous that they didn't know who their biological fathers or mothers were. This misconception and stereotype, although it improved, is still guiding some actions and comments from the west in relation to the south.

The rationale of this point is that there is a need of a better understanding of the others in society. The women in Mozambique, in this case, are not in a good position in relation to men but neither do they completely lack power. If observing the position of the father-sister for instance, and the fact that many traditional healers and leaders are women, and that women lead the spiritual rituals and ceremonies, it can be perceived that they yield some power due to their position in the kinship system (See Junod, 1927).

Thus far, I have tried to elucidate the complexity of the overall situation that women in Mozambique have been thru for many generations and periods of time at the macro-level. Colonialism was discriminatory towards black or native people but was even more

discriminatory and marginalizing towards women, reinforcing a strong patriarchal regime. After Independence, the Mozambican government also failed to bring 'development' to its people, especially its women, as development institutions followed the same western ideology. The post-feminist theory helped us to understand that even those that claimed to promote the rights or to analyze African women's fragile situation continued to mislabel and misunderstand who African women really are and which dynamics exist within groups and households.

In these circumstances it is important to bring the analysis to a micro-perspective in order to perceive the micro-dynamics that influence women's decisions, behaviors and discourses to better understand from a more individual/community point of view why women are in such a harsh situation and why, apparently, their agency is misled and they have narrowest range of alternatives to cope with their difficulties. In the next sections I will attempt to elaborate on the main paradigms behind the main concepts related to gender, land and HIV and AIDS.



2.6. The definition of Gender

Various authors define 'gender' as the social construction of roles, responsibilities and obligations associated with being a woman or a man (Müller, 2005; Cranny-Francis *et al.*, 2003; Rogers, 1980; Connel, 2002). It is necessary to realize that these processes of construction are both reproduced and transformed by both women and men. Waterhouse and Vijfhuizen (2001: 8) explain that analysing gender relations means getting to grip with these processes. It must be emphasized that both women and men, by their actions and practices, are involved in constructing gender, assigning meanings, and reproducing norms and values. From this perspective, women are seen as strategic actors and not passive victims of patriarchal and matriarchal structures.

In the previous section, I presented the criticisms of African theorists towards the Western vision of gender being equal to the subordination of women: in Africa, the

process of separating the public/private spheres preceded colonization but was precipitated, consolidated and reinforced by colonial policies and practices (Tamale, 2004: 52) and reinforced the gender gap.

Strobel (1982: 3) makes it clear that to trace Mozambican or African women's situation chronologically is a difficult task. Women are difficult to find in the traditional sources of European and American history; they are even more invisible in African historical sources. Moreover, African historical memory is in certain ways a short one. Therefore, many aspects that are assumed as part of the "African tradition" or way of living have in many circumstances being incorporated by exogenous influences.

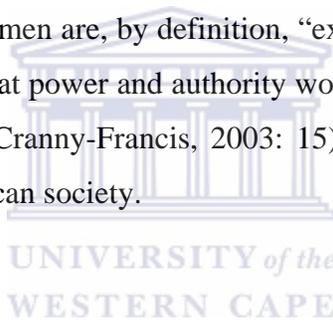
As demonstrated before in this chapter, after considering the influences of colonialism, development paradigms practices and feminist analysis, the reality one is confronted with is a subordinate position of women. One has only to look at the economical and social analyses of many reports and studies which show that the overwhelming number of resource-less people on the continent are women - so much so that one loses track of the very few who actually have control over and access to resources. Moreover, regardless of the differences that may exist between and within African women, all are affected by and are vulnerable to the conceptual and functional space that they occupy in the domestic sphere. Furthermore, no African woman can shield herself from the broad negative and gendered legacies left behind by forces such as colonialism, imperialism and globalization (Tamale, 2004: 45).

In any case it is assumed that this situation is rigid (while in fact in many cases it is very flexible) and irreversible, yet variables such as age, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, social class intervene in this postulation. Consequently, I personally believe in the capacity of the agency of women. This is one of the hypotheses that sparked my interest in this work. This section will present some discussion on the manipulation and transformation of key features that one must be always be vigilant about, in order to satisfy group needs.

In the actual Mozambican context, a patriarchal system is present. Patriarchy is defined by several academics as a social system in which structural differences in privilege, power and authority are invested in masculinity and the cultural, economic and/or social position of the men (Cranny-Francis, 2003: 13 *et al.*; WLSA, 1998:16).

McDowell believes that gender relations are not symmetrical and complementary as they are often described. Instead they are deep down, always a relation of power, hierarchy and inequality: "...moreover, when looking at women as a group they will have fewer opportunities than men as a group. In most places around the world, women will earn less than men and have less access and control over the sources of wealth" (McDowell, 1999: 22). The so-called female jobs always have the lowest status (Henshall Momsen, 1991:2).

Under a patriarchal regime, women are, by definition, "excluded from positions of power and authority - except where that power and authority works to support individual men in the social system as whole" (Cranny-Francis, 2003: 15). The patriarchal regime is the most predominant in Mozambican society.



2.6.1. Mozambican kinship systems

In this discussion about gender I believe it to be of foremost importance to give a brief description of the kinship systems presents in the Mozambican context and purposely chosen sites of this study. The central issue is to examine whether these kinships systems, as the first organization of the social structure, fail or succeed in their rules and norms to protect women, taking into account that in traditional societies kinship systems define the individual and his/her social position. Another question is how women of the two kinship systems react to factors such as patriarchy and HIV and AIDS. This section will deal with this dimension.

Mozambique can be divided into two different forms of kinship systems. The Zambezi River will more or less be the border for these divisions. South of the Zambezi River, the

families are organised into a patrilineal system. In the north of the Zambezi River, most of the families are organised into a matrilineal system (Peroniuos, 2005: 37). These systems meet and mix in the central region of the country (Davidson, 1988: 76).

In these societies men name the children and the line of parenthood is traced through male descent. The inheritance is also attributed through this principle observing the masculine primogeniture. After marriage, the woman moves to the family of her husband¹⁵. The man's family pays a bride-wealth. This is called *lobolo*, and is a sign for how the families get tied together. The ties between the families can be of the most vital importance for the survival of the family in the harsh environment of southern Mozambique. *Lobolo* "is a sign of the appreciation and importance of the woman albeit the depreciation of this value through time" (Peronious, 2005: 36). If the man dies, the customary rule asserts that woman continues to be considered a member of her husband's family. Some cases showed that women "do not inherit anything, and she cannot decide over herself and her children. If there is a divorce the woman has to leave everything, including the children" (WLSA 1997: 28). The *lobolo* can be returned and the woman then moves back alone to her parents' home (Peronious, 2005: 37).

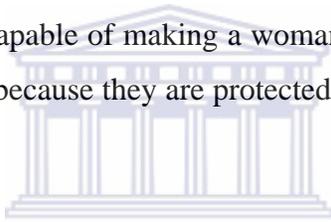
Peroniuos explains that in this family system, polygamy was common. On the traditional family farms, the most important tool is still the human labour force needed to increase production. Since women have the main responsibility for food production, it was natural to try to get as many women for the household as possible. Many wives were a sign of fortune and manhood (Peronius, 2005: 39)¹⁶. The first wife would have a better position than the other wives, whom she would have authority over. The man would live in her house, but make regular visits to the other houses where the other wives lived. It could also be the first wife that gave the proposal to her husband to get another wife so that her work burden could be shared (Peronious, 2005: 40).

¹⁵ Nowadays with urbanization and other phenomena such as migration due to war and social transformation processes, the residences are more likely to be neutral.

¹⁶ Nowadays because of the modernization, Christianity and market-driven economy, polygamy is not legitimate, but even in the urban areas there are new forms of families that can be catalogued as polygamist.

2.6.2. Matrilineal societies

In the north, the system allows more ‘liberty’ and protection to women than in the south: “after marriage the man usually moves to the woman's family territory, although many studies point out that in matrilineal groups women can also move to the men’s territory or the matrimony can even stay in a neutral location” (Negrão, 2000: 5). In the more common case of men moving to the territory of the women’s family, the man (husband) is the stranger in the wife’s group and he is under constantly evaluation by her family. In this system there is no *lobolo*. The man has to work for a period of time for his family-in-law. If they are not happy with him they can send him away. Only after at least one year, is the man allowed to build a house for himself and his wife and children. This house is located in the women’s family territory. Lardinois argues that in this situation the man should demonstrate that he is capable of making a woman pregnant. Also in this context, women are in a better position because they are protected by the family group (Lardinois, 1994: 23).



The matrilineal societies are not matriarchal. Men still hold the power. “However, it would not be the husband, but instead the woman's brother or maternal uncle or another male member from the woman's family” (WLSA, 1997: 28) that holds the power. These men perform the role of social fathers to the children. The children always belong to the mother’s lineage (WLSA, 1997: 30). In this system, according to Lardinois (1994), divorce is much more common, since there is no *lobolo* that constructs a strong bond between the families. In these cases the husband moves away, and the woman stays with the children. Polygamy is not common¹⁷.

In spite of the distinctions made between matrilineal and patrilineal descent systems, in practice there may be many similarities between the two. One should not assume (for instance) that because the political leadership is patrilineal, the inheritance of goods and property must also be patrilineal, or vice versa. Furthermore, inheritance does not have to

¹⁷ Please note that these are generalized characteristics and are more present in the rural context.

be either exclusively matrilineal or patrilineal. For example, “in some societies, both daughters and sons may inherit from both fathers and mothers” (Negrão, 2000: 7).

2.6.3. Gender roles through time

As mentioned above Mozambique was a Portuguese colony until 1975. Colonialism started a new era where the division of labour was changing while families had to get involved in the monetary economy in order to fulfil the tax demands of the new ruling power.

The religious presence also increased the gender burden with its perception of family hierarchy and sizes. Moreover, with migratory labour young men became financially independent and started to confront the old authority held by the elders. During this period, the bride price as a way of compensation for the family and symbolism lost its value and women started to be considered as “trade goods”.

A clear perspective is brought by Lardinois about the gender dynamics within the liberation war in Mozambique. In 1962 The Mozambican Liberation Front (FRELIMO) was created, and started the armed war against the colonial power. Frelimo realized that women were important to win the struggle for freedom. In 1967 it created the *Destacamento Feminino* - the women's brigades, to participate alongside with the men in the battles. “This was seen as very controversial since women had never been involved in military activities before” (Lardinois 1994: 14). However, the women mostly worked by giving information and mobilizing people in the freed areas. They would also help with serving food for the troops (Peroniuos, 2005: 44).

In the next section the post-Independence period is examined to analyse where an attempt was made to balance the power structures among genders by the imposition of a western logic of social structure.

2.6.4. Gender and the Mozambican post-independence process (the Mozambican Women's Organization-OMM)

In post-independent Mozambique, there was a need for a broader non-military organization for women. The *Organização de Mulher Mocambiçana* (OMM) – the Mozambican Women's Organization - was officially created in 1973 (Lardinois, 1994: 14). However, men were behind its creation. Some authors make it clear that because it was believed that women had to be enlightened about their own oppression, this was an essential strategy of Frelimo, since women were seen as the educators of the next generation, who should be brought up with socialist ideals. In other words, OMM was not created to change women's role as mothers and educators (Lardinois 1994: 16; HDR, 2001: 12).

Lardinois continues this reflection asserting that the activities carried out by OMM concentrated on teaching women in the urban areas about better home craft techniques. Often there were attempts to incorporate women through campaigns in specific events or issues. There was a literacy campaign, considered one of the most important and successful campaigns to be carried out. It spread over the whole country. Most of the work was at grassroots level and much of it was placed in areas affected by the war (Lardinois 1994:30).

Peronius (2005) in turn discusses the path followed by Frelimo and OMM, who aimed to eliminate women's traditional shackles by carrying out campaigns against polygamy, *lobolo*, child marriages and initiation rites – traditions that were seen as oppressive to women. Instead, Frelimo propagated for the so-called core family (Peronius, 2005: 60). Despite the political discourse and arguments for the emancipation of women, these actions were limited in their definitions, practices and expectations concerning the contribution of women. A Human Development Report also contributed to this perception by explaining that far from choosing a complete rupture with the patriarchal model, the social role of women continued to be structured around motherhood and domestic work. The socialist political model adopted in 1977 combined the public

participation of women on the one hand, with the maintenance of the dimensions of submission on the other (HDR, 2001: 19).

The lyrics of the Mozambican women's anthem adopted by the OMM captures the ambiguities of the ideology of the time when it declared women to be "the inseparable companion of the committed man.... who feeds the fighters". This clearly suggests that behind the egalitarian discourse there still remained some hesitations soaked in the social constructions based on male domination (HDR, 2001: 23).

The OMM became a forum of contradictions between intentions and political practice. On the one hand, the organization defended women's rights to work, to education and to health, but on the other, it legitimized women's vocation for the domestic sphere, expressed, for example, in the enthusiastic promotion of cooking and needlework courses, as the main activities for improving women skills, particularly in the towns.

Jacobson (1994: 35) contends that at work level Frelimo wanted to integrate women in production by employing them on the community farms along with the men. They did not consider that women already took part in the production and already grew crops on their own family farms. The domestic work was also not considered "real" work. Therefore, the burden on women increased.

Therefore, despite the focus on putting women into productive work, Peronius (2005: 72) demonstrated that the industrial sector in 1992 still had no more than eight per cent women. The women had the least qualified duties. Independence did not change this situation. Peronius mentions some improvement, such as day care at some factories, better employment safety and the right to two months' maternity leave. In general women continued to work mainly in agriculture and the informal sector. Since the majority of women are located in the rural areas and these spaces have a huge lack of institutional capacity, women that do not practice subsistence agriculture because they are sick or have problems accessing land, have severe constraints in find livelihood strategies or coping mechanisms that can support them and their children.

In the next section a detailed examination of the gender educational situation will be presented to complement the perception about the real coping alternatives Mozambican women have and how this situation increases the vulnerability of women and young girls to the HIV and AIDS pandemic as the coping alternatives become fewer and more fragile.

2.6.5. Gender and Education

At the level of women's education the situation is not much better. This aspect is crucial in an information era, where the relations of power and economic sustainability is determined by the capacity of the individual to hold and use information/education to her/his own benefit. As a UNAIDS report states: "education gives girls and women greater control over their lives, and enhanced skills to contribute to their societies and protect their health and well-being. Educated women have fewer, healthier and better educated children" (UNAIDS, 2004: 3).

The level of illiteracy after independence has been decreasing. A Mozambican government report recognises however that the illiteracy level is much higher among women than men (68.8% versus 36.7 %). This disparity varies among cities, rural areas and provinces. In the rural areas, illiteracy among women is twice that of women in the cities: 80.8% versus 41.3% (MoG, 2005; Peroniuos, 2005).

There appear to be a number of causes for women's poor levels of education. Some are related to the educational system and others to socio-cultural factors. This study focuses more on the socio-cultural factors.

In previous sections it was made clear that the process of socialization and expectations among young girls and young boys differs according to the roles attributed to each of them. Katunzi writes: "...when it comes to access to science and technology, women are further marginalized because of the socialization process which assign certain roles to

women and others to men, a factor which affects the current streaming of boys and girls into sciences and arts” (Katunzi, 1999:16).

The perception that women and girls belong to the domestic sphere constrains the possibility of educational achievement for them. The rapid spread of HIV and AIDS only perpetuated and reinforced the low value granted to female education. The Mozambican government has repeatedly expressed concern about the way in which the domestic and seasonal labour done by girls is exacerbated by the impact of HIV and AIDS (Mozambique, 2005). A UNAIDS report (2002: 52) also confirms that: “...the inequalities may be increasing as girls are pulled out of school to care for the sick, when they are orphaned, or due to the economic impact of HIV and AIDS on families”.

This phenomenon is further strengthened by the labour division in the household where women’s roles are seen to be those of reproducing daily life in the social structure - “guaranteeing, organising and undertaking the household’s survival activities” (HDR, 2000: 53). Many reports have highlighted the disregard of families for keeping girls at school because of the families’ perception of the “useless” knowledge that this institution can bring to the social self-realization of the girl. These reports also underline the preference for the traditional education through alternatives instructions that train girls in social duties such as: giving birth, early marriage, polygamy acceptance and domestic duties. These myriad reasons contribute in general to the lower social and economic status of women (HDR, 2000; 53; Mozambique Go, 2005: 20; UNAIDS, 2005: 15).

The HDR continues affirming that boys are given priority in access to school because of the roles envisaged for them. The public arena belongs "naturally" to men. Furthermore, socialisation determines that the school means different things for the two sexes: for boys, it is a place for acquiring knowledge and behaviour that will permit their integration into the world of work. For girls, school is still the place you go to before getting married, and the knowledge picked up there should complement their primary functions which have been predetermined by socialisation (HDR, 2000: 30)

The same report states that this “...logic of submission resulting from this cultural induction is expressed, after marriage, in the impossibility of the woman taking the role of head of the household *de facto* and *de jure*, and often it establishes the conditions for accepting violence in all its forms, and accepting the "particular" nature of men” (HDR, 2001: 31). It also establishes a lower socio-economics status for women as compared with men, coupled with poor health and nutrition with the consequent higher risk of contracting HIV and AIDS (MoG, 2005).

Although women are expected to fall pregnant, even at very early ages, in Mozambican society they are not expected to be more sexually active and informed on sexual issues than men. And that social ignorance about the risks and consequences of the practice of sex reinforces their vulnerability and risk behavior regarding STDs and HIV and AIDS. As Whelan (1999:1-3) attests, the gender differences in most societies influence individual and societal risks of contracting HIV and AIDS. Gender determines the ways in which men and women are expected to know about sexual issues and behavior. Therefore, girls and women are less informed about reproduction and sex, while men are often expected to know much more. Whelan puts it as follows: “Gender attitudes and behaviours can increase individual risk. For example, women may be socialized to please men and defer to male authority...While men are encouraged since the adolescence to have several and partner change behaviour” (1999: 1).

2.6.6. Gender and Poverty

This section is a discussion of how poverty, allied with HIV and AIDS, reinforces women’s subordination and perpetuates gender inequality and equity. These two factors create a vicious circle for women.

Several Human Development reports have confirmed that women around the world are poorer than men: Of the 1.2 billion people in the world classified as "poor", 70% are

women. Although it is estimated that two-thirds of the world's work is done by women, women earn only 10% of the world's income, and control just 1% of global wealth (Human Development Report, 2001: 12).

Mozambique is not an exception to this phenomenon. The HDR lists the main determinants of women's poverty in Mozambique as: "the low level of schooling and high rates of dependency in poor households headed by women" (HDR, 2001: 13). This list also includes low agricultural yields, since most women live from subsistence agriculture, the poor network of basic infrastructures, the country's fragile industrial base, and the lack of social security safety nets that would minimise the risks of natural disasters.

The high level of poverty leads people to adopt subsistence strategies in order to guarantee their survival; these strategies are not always the most effective. An INE report about Mozambican women's situation regarding HIV confirms that short term strategies for young women include resorting to the informal market and domestic employment in urban areas, and participating in agriculture, assisting the family, and resorting to premature marriage in rural areas. As for the individual factors that determine women's poverty, we can mention poor health due to consecutive births resulting from high fertility rates (6 and 4.9 children for each woman of child-bearing age in rural and urban areas respectively in 2000), and lack of mother-and-child health care, together with physical weakness resulting from an inefficient diet, and lack of employment for women (INE, 2000: 10).

In rural areas, poverty is also reflected in the differences in social relations between men and women, and the way in which the community regards single or widowed men and women as poor. This perception was largely confirmed by the empirical evidence of this study. In some cases, poverty is related to ownership of household property (money, livestock, employees, number and size of fields), with households owning little or nothing being classified as 'poor'. The available data show a difference in relations of

power leading to the concept of the “feminization of poverty”¹⁸. This underlines that the women are the poorest of the poor.

According to Baden, gender discrimination in the Mozambican labour force has two dimensions: “...gender disparity in wages, salaries or returns to labour in similar occupations, and sex stereotyping of activities, whereby females are engaged in “female jobs”. He continues: “Women are less likely than men to be paid for their work, with almost two-thirds doing unpaid family work, mainly in agriculture or other enterprises. When women are paid, their average earnings are often less than those of men” (Baden, 1995: 38). Jobs that are stereotyped include clothing manufacture, food processing and shoe manufacture in industry, domestic work and informal trade in services, health and education in the public sector, and the “family sector” in agriculture, producing for household consumption (Baden, 1995: 40).

Baden also considers that women’s position “...in the informal sector and constraints on their time, mobility and behaviour pose specific problems. Lack of access to cash and capital (both physical and human) means that women are mainly confined to those activities which have low entry costs and low skill requirements, which tend to be one of the most competitive and least profitable” (Baden, 1995: 44).

In assessing women’s historical disadvantage in the interface of colonialism and development practices, I brought to the discussion the more specific situation of Mozambican women regarding their position in a new ruling order but still facing constraints such as a lack of education and high rates of poverty. With these variables, it could be said that the access to resources by women is already undermined. However, my intention in this work is to raise a full spectrum of issues. I will now present the analysis of the two main factors that lead to the research question: the assessment of the impact of

¹⁸ Poverty in itself is related to gender inequity: Worldwide, increasingly more women are believed to live in poverty than men, a phenomenon commonly referred to as “the feminization of poverty” (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2002: 28). While the extent of the gender bias in poverty has often been overstated, and claims have been made in the literature and by international actors that are not based on sound evidence, there are important dimensions of poverty unique to women (Müller, 2005: 23).

HIV and AIDS in women's access to land in Mozambique in order that the empirical evidence can demonstrate what the coping mechanisms are that women are creating or adopting in confronting all these factors that undermine their livelihoods.

2.7. Gender and Land

This work attempts to analyse the coping mechanisms that Mozambican women are creating to excel in the situation of the new dynamics, which result from the influence of land tenure in the era of HIV and AIDS.

Halon (2002: 6) writes that the new Mozambican Land Law was promulgated in 1997 and its passage was anticipated by wide-spread consultation. It was considered to be one of the most democratic processes in Mozambique in the 1990's.

Tanner (2002) discusses the main features of the Mozambican Land Law. Under the Constitution (Art 46), land is a state property and as such cannot be sold or mortgaged. This law defines three ways in which people can gain land-use rights: 1) Individuals and communities have the right to land that they have traditionally occupied; 2) Mozambicans have right to the land which they have occupied 'in good faith' for at least 10 years; and 3) People and communities can be authorised by the government to use land.

The above academics (Tanner, 2002; Hanlon, 2002) argue that these characteristics of the land law were developed by drawing on all Mozambican sociology, taking into account society, politics and the development of a consensus, in an attempt to ensure the acceptance and legitimating of this law. These principles were observed to ensure that no group's interest was favoured exclusively over another.

Tanner and Hanlon appear to admire the revolutionary nature of the new Land Law because it recognises customary law and protects the rights of the community; it enforces community consultation, transfers, the use of titles and the possibility of foreign

investment. These achievements are based on four important actions: compulsion of community consultation; compulsion of community participation; observance of women's rights and the recognition of the 'good faith' occupation.

Apart from the Mozambican Land Law, the Mozambican government is committed, together with several other international and national legal and legislative instruments, to guarantee women's property and inheritance rights. Villareal (2006: 9) presents as the main legislative tools the Universal Declaration on Human Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); the Beijing Declaration; the Beijing Platform for Action; the CESCR General Comment No. 4 – The Right to Adequate Housing; the Habitat Agenda; the African Charter on Human and People's Rights; the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa; the Commission on Human Rights Resolution 2003/22 – Women's equal ownership, access to and control over land and the equal rights to own property and to adequate housing; and in the Mozambique context those roles are supported by the Mozambican Constitution and the Mozambican Family Law.

It is clear that the tenure of land by women is ensured by all Mozambican laws. The concept of Land Tenure refers to "the social relations established around land that determine who can use what land and how" (Lastarria-Cornhiel, 1997: 2). But what does customary law say about women's rights to land tenure?

The principle of equal rights is not observed at community level. Waterhouse says: "Within the customary system, the rules and norms guiding access, use and control over land are usually associated with a person's membership status in social groups. Rights and obligations are attributed differently, on the basis of gender, age, kinship status and position in lineage hierarchies" (2001: 10).

There is a debate about what should be considered as the definition of the customary tenure system. Waterhouse contends that this is generally unwritten, local practices, understood to arise from pre-colonial systems, however this same author argues further that recent historical and anthropological research dispels the myth of a static 'traditional' or 'customary' system, lying outside and separate from the formal system of justice. Rather, he argues, 'tradition' is actively constructed (Waterhouse, 2001: 9-15).

In this regard, women's situation concerning land is in constant transformation. But on this point we need to note that access to land by women is through her position in the kinship system. This position is made visible by connecting her with a male relative or in-laws: father, brother, husband or uncle. Davidson argues that colonial intervention led to increasing male bias and an erosion of women's customary land rights (Davidson, 1997: 95) in the sense that titles of property were only given to men and only men as heads of families could be recognize in the official system.

Villareal (2006: 2) argues that single women, divorced women or widowed women are disadvantaged in their access to land. However, women are the principal producers of subsistence agriculture, and in many instances, the responsibility of the group's food security lies in their hands.

In the same vein, Izumi (1999: 2) demonstrates that theoretically, there is no common tribal law stating that women cannot have access to land in their own right. This is a principle of African indigenous land tenure that is meant to protect the access to land of members of a family, and members of a community. However, in many cases, women are prevented from having access and control of land by the powerful gender hierarchies and inequalities that put women in an inferior position to men. Bonate argues that the capacity of women's land access is varied because access to land is socially embedded, and varies between patrilineal and matrilineal societies because the kinship system is the primary organizing order for land access (Bonate, 2003: 130).

As several authors advocate, the indigenous land tenure has changed over time due to various factors (including population pressure, commercialisation of agriculture, increasing land sales, opening of investment opportunities in land, urban expansion, AIDS, and land-grabbing). In areas of acute land shortages, where the value of land has increased, women tended to lose their customary rights (Izumi, 1999; Lastarria-Cornhiel, 1997). At the top of these factors we can include the economic liberalisation that some authors consider to have further accelerated such processes, both in pace and in scale. In many contexts, liberalisation has opened new opportunities for investment in land, leading to increased and intensified contests over land. As land gains value as a commodity for investment, land-grabbing by political elites, appropriation of village land by the state, and allocation of land to investors occur in parallel (ibid.)

In sum, added to the social position that women may occupy in her kinship relationships, there are increased variables that determine the relationship of women with land: women's access and rights to land is shaped by gender-determined power relations, which exist across a range of institutions: “The state, market forces, and tradition may interact, contradict, and co- operate in order to protect and strengthen existing power structures, which constrain women's secure access and rights to land” (Izumi, 1999: 15).

The fact is that today, because of the reinforcement of patriarchy in most of Africa, men control household land because the community authorities have allocated the land to male household heads; these lands are then passed down to male heirs. As Lastarria-Cornhiel (1997) and many others academics have emphasized, for most women, access to land depends on their relation to male relatives and the specific laws and practices of the area.

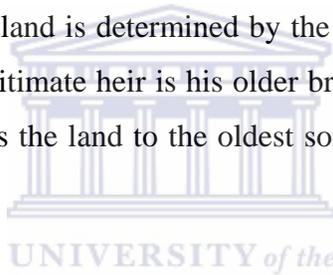
2.7.1. Systems of Customary Laws present in Mozambique

Negrão (2000: 1-22) identifies five system of Customary Laws practised in Mozambique: preferential marriage system; consigned territory system; nuclear descendents stability system; three generations security system and group dependency system¹⁹.

¹⁹ For more information of these customary land systems see: Negrão, 2000: 1-22.

In the present work it has been found that the customary laws practised in the visited sites are of the preferential marriages system in Cabo Delgado where a population with a matrilineal system of kinship can be found. Although Negrão (2000: 13) is not very specific about the groups located in Tete province, the author notes that the group dependency system there is characteristic of populations on the Zambezi river margins. The districts visited in Tete are located on this river's margins.

In both systems the rule of the impossibility of women having control of land is common. Even in the preferential marriage system in matrilineal societies the power of control of the land is circulated among the husband and the maternal uncle, depending of the type of marriage, *matrilocal, patrilocal or neolocal*²⁰. In the group dependency system the control and decision power on land is determined by the male head of the family. If this individual passes away, his legitimate heir is his older brother, and if this brother cannot take over the land, he delegates the land to the oldest son of his deceased brother or his oldest son.



The last factor in this discussion is the impact of HIV and AIDS action on the lives of women, which is discussed last because it is exogenous or is most recently incorporated into Mozambican history.

2.8. Gender and HIV/AIDS in Mozambique

In sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, young women aged between 15 and 24 years are two and a half times more likely to become infected than young men in the same age group. In southern Africa, this gap is even higher: in Zambia and Zimbabwe for example, young women make up almost 80 percent of 15 to 24 years olds living with HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS, 2004: 6). The southern Africa region is the epicentre of the pandemic.

²⁰ Those designations are made to distinguished whether the couple lives in the woman's family territory (matrilocal); whether they live in the man's family territory (patrilocal) or whether they live in a neutral territory residence. To understand these systems better, refer to pp: 45-47.

Many reasons are given for this disparity between the infection rates of men and women. Firstly, we have the biological factors. Many academics and scientists argue women are biologically more vulnerable to HIV than men²¹ (Doyal, L., 2002; NIAD, 2001; Matlin, S. and Spence, N. 2001). Secondly, aspects linked to gender inequalities in society in turn are underlined as the key determinant in the rapid and alarming increase of infections among women. In sub-Saharan Africa specifically, socio-cultural, economic and political aspects all act together to promote the vulnerability of women in society, perpetuating and worsening the situation of disparities and poverty among women (UNAIDS, 2004a; UNAIDS, 2004b; Müller, 2005; Bitangaro, 2005; O' Gray, 2004; Msimang *et al.*, 2004).

Mozambique is not an exception to this phenomenon. Despite the rates of this country remaining among the lowest in the southern African region, data shows a dramatically worsening epidemic overall – the estimated national adult HIV prevalence rose from 14% to just over 16% in 2002–2004 (Ministry of Health of Mozambique, 2005: 10; UNAIDS, 2005). According to the WHO assessment report, it is estimated that by 2010 1.13 million Mozambican children will have lost one or both parents to AIDS, contributing to economic, social, and political instability. The majority of infected people are women (58%). The gender difference is particularly acute among the 15-24 age groups, where the prevalence among women is four times higher than that among men (Mozambique, 2005: 45).

This era has been marked by a notable growth in the number of young widows with young children that have land as their only source of subsistence and who have been victims of the expropriation of their land and other assets (Villareal, 2006; Munthali, 2002). In many communities the social demands of a new style of living, which is more individualist and less based on past social networks, have led to a deterioration of the social fabric that does not “guarantee” women rights regarding land and other assets. In this era women are navigating within the interface between modernity and “tradition” and

²¹ The large mucosal structure of the vagina and the high concentration of the virus in semen put women at a much higher risk of acquiring HIV during unprotected sexual intercourse. If any Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) are present, the risk of HIV infection escalates manifold (de Bruyn *et al.*, 1995: 8).

the rise of new identities (individual and collective), and they frequently have to deal with all those processes alone (as widows or orphans).

2.8.1. Women's poverty and vulnerability to HIV

Poverty associated with gender inequalities, in the present day, is creating a number of social transformations that have a direct impact on family conditions favouring risky behaviour regarding HIV. A report on the Mozambican gender situation regarding HIV prevalence (*Finaciando a luta contra a SIDA*, 2005) reveals that Mozambican women between the ages of 20 to 24 have a prevalence rate 4 times higher than that of men in the same age group.

In the current economic crisis, several strategies are used by different groups to guarantee their survival. Today, in Mozambique, many of those strategies can have a strong link with risky behaviour regarding HIV infection.

Whelen (1999), in an article about risk conditions in an HIV and AIDS era, says that seeking a better livelihood, coupled with a lack of resources and income, can induce men to leave their families to find employment in the cities or in neighbouring countries. Therefore, many structural family ties are dramatically changed and threatened, leading to risky sexual behaviours on both sides.

Owing to a lack of economic equality, many women are compelled to stay in high-risk relationships (whether with an abusive, unfaithful or alcoholic partner) rather than face the greater economic risk of leaving those who depend on them to be harmed by a violent partner (Whelen, 1999).

In many societies this decision is also influenced by the belief that after a man pays a bride-price for a wife, the children of the relationship belong to the men's family. Related

to this issue Maman says: "...the most common form of violence against women globally is abuse by an intimate partner" (Maman *et al.*, 2002: 98). This violence can also "...increase women's risk of infection through forced or coercive intercourse, and being in a violent relationship limits a woman's abilities to negotiate protective behaviour" (Human Rights Watch, 2003: 26; Müller, 2005: 35; UNAIDS, 2004; Msimeng *et al.*, 2004: 73).

The UNAIDS report includes links between violence and HIV infections that include: direct transmission through forced or coerced sexual acts; unsafe sexual behaviour in later life; and fear of violence within relationships (2004: 32).

This violent behaviour of men towards women is created by the socialization of the men that induce them to believe in their superiority and capacity to control women's bodies and lives. Sy (2001: 122) argues that generally in sub-Saharan countries there is a prevalence of strong notions of masculinity among men that determines their control and dominance over women. This masculinity is based on self-reliance and not being likely to show emotions. Therefore men are not likely to seek information about STDs or even HIV because of the cultural perception that they are already knowledgeable about sexual matters or have their own ways of getting this information. This masculine identity compels men to demonstrate their manhood by having multiple partners.

Confronted with this situation women are reluctant to report violence, first of all because they lack knowledge about laws against sexual violence 'perceived as a domestic issue', the consequent attitudes of police and the court (generally dominated by men), fear of her security, social sanctions and lack of support by her family and community (because she is reporting her husband or the father of her children) (UNAIDS, 2004).

In addition, Müller (2005) argues that women and girls have a passive behaviour when confronted with sexual intercourse, because of the expectations among genders about the 'right' attitude in those situations. Many of those relations occur between older men and younger women. This is also related to the norms and perceptions in society that a young

girl must marry considerably older men. The risk of those girls contracting the HIV disease increases in this case because those older men are likely to have had several partners before marriage, making them more likely to carry the HIV disease, while their wives are likely to have less voice partly due to their own immaturity.

Another aspect must be noted. Because of the lack of education and skills discussed above, and “less entitlements to or ownership of assets (including land as well as assets necessary for agriculture tasks), less access to formal social security, a more vulnerable employment status (if they pursue paid employment in addition to farming activities), and overall lower income” (Müller, 2005: 42), many women are dependant on their partner or husband for survival. Therefore, they are prone to be dramatically affected by HIV and AIDS when their breadwinners fall ill. This situation can affect the household in many ways.

Baden (1998) notes those women’s vulnerability increases with the illness or death of their partners. Women tend to assume the care responsibilities; therefore they will not have much time for involvement in productive activities which in many cases can affect their households’ food security.

In this regard Müller demonstrates that those women’s activities within the care economy without HIV and AIDS include: water and fuel collection; production and preparation of food; cleaning and washing; maintenance of social relations with family and neighbours and within the community; supplemental income generation; and caring for the sick. Within the HIV and AIDS afflicted households, additional activities may include: frequently bathing the sick person and cleaning up; hand feeding those too sick to feed themselves; escorting sick persons to and from the toilet; general assistance with walking; emotional support; and purchasing and administering drugs and others remedies (2005: 53).

Following this argument Schoep (1988: 75) and the UNAIDS (2004: 20) attest that women take the majority of responsibilities for HIV and AIDS, mostly in the form of

unpaid, unrecognized, home-based care. This situation will directly reflect in the subsistence crop production or income generating activities. In many cases the children (fundamentally the girls) will be regarded as substitutes or associated in those activities, and this phenomenon reinforces the school drop-out rates of the girls.

As mentioned before, there is a vicious cycle between poverty, HIV and AIDS and gender relations, one reinforcing the other. Gender relation makes women far more likely than men to be poor. At the same time, poverty increases women's vulnerability to the HI virus. Therefore, infection by HIV and AIDS "...leads to illness and reduces the capacity of an individual to earn an income" (Msimang *et al.*, 2004: 74) thereby leading, once again, to the reproduction of poverty.

In a situation of poverty or economic constraints women can undertake strategies to ensure the survival of her family. Müller, (2005); Whelen (1999); UNAIDS (2004) and Msimang *et al.* (2004: 73) agree that women with low skills and less means to earn an income, being their households' heads, or performing another activity, have to engage in sexual exchange (for food, clothes, cash, etc.) as an economic strategy to sustain themselves and/or their families in the face of growing economic uncertainty. Having more than one partner is an economic coping strategy central to many women's ability to support themselves and their children.

The UNAIDS Task Force Report says that several studies in African cities demonstrate a strong correlation between high rates of HIV and different ages, what they call: "Exploitative transactional and inter-generational sex". Those studies underline that older men are more likely to be infected with HIV than younger men. As those old men perceive younger girls as less prone to be infected they tend to seek them out and can be reluctant to use condoms. With a better economic status they believe that by giving gifts and money they can control their young partners better (UNAIDS, 2004: 18).

This report continues: "The bottom line is that such relationships, by their very nature, are premised on unequal age, power and economic relations, leaving girls vulnerable to

abuse, exploitation and violence. This is of particular concern when girls are under eighteen” (UNAIDS, 2004: 21).

2.8.2. Cultural practices and vulnerability to HIV

To complete this assessment of women’s situation regarding HIV infection, I will elaborate on some cultural practices that can increase women’s vulnerability to HIV and AIDS. This is of utmost importance because cultural practices and values must be understood if we really aim to reverse the alarming spread of the HIV and AIDS pandemic. This is one of the main objectives of this work because culture explains why people act in certain ways and not in another and which coping mechanisms can be available to women as social products.

Reinforcing gender inequality, some cultural practices are deeply embedded in socio-cultural perceptions and meanings and as such have a strong power over women and thereby increase their vulnerability. Those practices have been re-appropriated over time in Mozambican society and at present, more than before they can be fundamentally disastrous for women²². The practices are polygamy, bride-wealth, initiation rites, ‘widow inheritance’ and dry sex practices that are entrenched in socio-cultural perceptions and meanings. This section will deal briefly with those aspects.

Polygamy is a phenomenon more common in the south of the country where the kinship system is patrilineal. This situation was “traditionally”²³ justified by the need for a large labour force in the agricultural work, as was noted earlier by Peronius (2005: 20).

²² It is not our intention to argue that those cultural aspects are all negatives and have no positive elements in their representation. Several studies show that, for example, bride wealth and rites of initiation have a largely positive influence in the lives of the people because some identity and self-esteem values are transmitted (WLSA, 1998: 10). Our consideration is that when working together, those aspects reinforce the lowly situation of the women.

²³ The notion of tradition is not an attempt to create a perception of something static and immutable; rather it is an important reminder that this notion is re-appropriated with new rules and norms according to the context and social, economic and political situation.

However, the same author claims that today we are confronted in the cities with a new form of polygamy, where the man with a legal wife has a parallel relation outside the marriage. This other woman has a paid job and lives by herself usually with her children. Despite social sanction and a lack of security in this relationship, this woman accepts this situation because of a social stereotype: "...that a woman needs a man is deeply rooted. A woman who has a relationship with a married man is more accepted than a woman who does not have any man at all. This also applies to her children. In this form of polygamy, the man has less responsibility and the women become more of enemies to each other than co-operators" (Peronius, 2005: 21).

It is evident that in this situation a woman has less capacity of negotiating and claiming the fidelity of her partner, and she is permanently at risk of HIV infection and transmission. As Baden (1998: 26) argues: "In the context of sub-Saharan Africa, the institution of marriage and its cultural specifications has been identified as a major risk factor for any woman to contract HIV". The statistics of this situation are alarming: "It has been estimated that between 60 to 80 percent of HIV positive African women were infected by their husband or stable partner" (Müller, 2005: 26).

Müller (2005: 28) further contends that married women are in a difficult position to demand or negotiate safe sex practices or to prevent their partner from having extra-marital unprotected sexual intercourse. The demand for safe sex by using a condom implies either that she doesn't love and trust her partner or husband, or she is not faithful to him. That makes condoms a 'taboo' issue in this relationship.

Another practice strongly rooted in Mozambican society is the bride-wealth in the south of the country and the initiation rites in the north. The bride-wealth (*lobolo*) has been influenced by modern ideologies and cultures. Some reports reveal that civil marriage is strongly institutionalized²⁴ especially in the urban areas. After independence many efforts

²⁴ Although a high percentage of marriages still following "traditional" and religious procedures (Casimiro, 2004: 146), the civil marriage for many years was the only one recognized by law. This situation was reconsidered in the new Family Law where all forms of marriage (de facto, religious and traditional) are considered.

were made to end the practice of *lobolo*, because it was considered a form of woman's oppression (Peronius, 2005: 22; HDR, 2001: 35). A Mozambican feminist organization report insists that despite the political agenda this practice survived (first secretly) and presently has been re-incorporated more openly. It is now carried out simultaneously with the civil marriage (WLSA MOZ, 1997: 78). Although the new interpretation of the *lobolo* (and this practice is almost the fundamental form of marriage in the rural areas) the essence of the woman's subordination to the man and his family is still present.

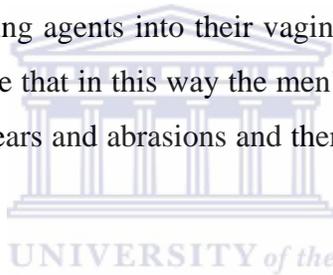
Müller considers that in an HIV and AIDS era the *lobolo* practice can increase women's susceptibility: "In settings where the bride wealth rates are high, men might have to wait a long time before being able to afford to marry. During that time they are bound to have multiple partners, thus running the risk of contracting HIV and then passing it on to their often much younger future wives. In addition, women might have children with multiple partners to prove their femininity in cultures in which being fertile is of prime importance" (2005: 33).

In the same way, a woman cannot 'bargain' for the use of condoms because this has several implications on the perceptions of her behaviour towards the relationship. Women also find it difficult to use the condom because of the importance of motherhood in those societies. The capacity to give birth is related to the economic and social status that society and family confer on women (de Bruyn, 1992: 109; Müller, 2005: 34).

The initiation rites are largely implemented in the north of the country. This institution aims to provide education for young girls and boys on their future roles as a man and a woman in the society. As Peronius notes: "Initiation rites are the key moment in formalising the education that began in the family. The girl entering puberty learns obedience as a value and motherhood as the norm. She learns her place in the family hierarchy, and to distinguish between 'good and bad conduct' in accordance with the cultural model. As in any society the effective acceptance of the norms and values transmitted in the socialisation process" (2005: 27).

The initiation rites have structural influences on the life of the women because of the values incorporated with it. The initiated girl suddenly becomes a woman and as such must fulfil the expectations that her community has in this regard. As a report of HDR (2001: 35) shows: “A *makhua*²⁵ woman is identified as such if she bears a child. A woman must be able to give life to another person in order to be considered an adult member of society. Women begin to bear children at a very tender age. Girls become sexually active when they are 12-13 years old, and half the women already have children by the time they are 16 (one in five children are born to mothers who are under 18). Early pregnancy and childbirth leave young urban women with few options to generate income, and this is made worse by the high level of illiteracy”.

Related to the subservience and dependant sexuality of women to men, is ‘dry sex’. In this practice women insert drying agents into their vagina to increase friction during the sexual intercourse. They believe that in this way the men’s pleasure increases drastically: “but this increases the risk of tears and abrasions and therefore facilitates the entry of the virus” (Müller, 2005: 33).



A practice disappearing in the Mozambican context but still having small manifestations in the south of the country is that describes by an UNAIDS report of 2004 as a strong vehicle of HIV and AIDS transmission. This is the practice of the so-called ‘widow’s inheritance’ through sexual cleansing. After marriage in a patrilineal society a woman joins her husband’s group. If her husband dies, she may be forced to marry one of her husband’s male relatives. This principle had the rationale to maintain the link with the clan and her claim to any property. Traditionally this implied a responsibility on the part of the man to ensure the well-being of the woman and her children, but it now mainly appears to be a way of gaining possession of the property of the deceased (UNAIDS, 2004: 25).

At this point I would like to sum up several critical cultural aspects that underline the subordination of women and the inequality among genders in Mozambique. The

²⁵ *Makhua* is the largest ethnic group of the country and is located in the north.

socialization of women prevents them from being more empowered and having an active role in the decision-making processes of their own lives. This is associated with the auto-perception, derived from the socialization, of being inferior to men. This socialization is reinforced through institutions such as polygamy, *lobolo*, systems of initiation rites that perpetuated and actively trap the women in socio-cultural obstacles and barriers to their self-development and improving their situations. This situation leads to a lack of power of the women to discuss and negotiate their safety in an era of HIV and AIDS. Those aspects have been only recently incorporated in the debate and more timidly in the strategies of HIV prevention.

The roles given by society to women and men have already been discussed. Many studies indicate that searching for the fulfilment of those societal expectations increases women and men's risk of being infected with HIV and AIDS. This recognition is critical in southern African societies where sexual intercourse is the more predominant way of HIV transmission (UNAIDS, 2004: 1).

This aspect explains the failure of the massive prevention strategies based on the slogan: A, B and C (A= Abstinence; B= Be faithful and C= Condomize). Along with the encouragement of behavioural change, those strategies underestimated the essence of the problem. All of those strategies were unsuccessful because to be attained, they need to interfere with culturally embedded perceptions and powerful gender relations in which the subordinate role of women prevent them from having any control over her body and life. As Reid (1992: 25) contends: "Many additional campaigns have operationalized the empowerment of women as the power of negotiating condom use. This reductionist view of empowerment reinforces conceptions of masculine sexuality as performance, 'measured' by access to multiple partners, while the promotion of open communication between the sexes is neglected. More generally most prevention measures are grounded in men's lifestyles and experience rather than women's".

A complementary critic to the strategies of combating HIV is raised by Msimang *et al.*: "...a great concern is that states and international agencies have put too much faith in

their ability to solve the problems that lead to HIV infections. Ignoring the economic and social crisis of structural poverty and gender inequality and the ways in which they intersect and fuel the epidemic, in favour of HIV and AIDS interventions that focus either on mitigation and impact, teaching skills or extending services will continue to yield unsatisfactory results” (Msimang *et al.*, 2005: 74).

In this chapter, I attempted to capture the multidimensional aspects that surround the lives of Mozambican women (at least in the visited sites). It seemed impossible for me to analyse the coping mechanisms of the women regarding their access to land and other resources in an HIV and AIDS era without also addressing the range of factors raised in this chapter.

It was important to analyse the influence of the colonialist presence in enslaving bodies and especially minds in an attempt to create Europeans in African lands. This historical phenomenon has consequently spread its influence among others areas of the Mozambican society. Also, the domination of western ideology in the countries of the South dramatically transformed the social dynamics and structures (people were denied the right to manifest their cultural beliefs and logic). Nowadays these relations of power are still vibrantly manifested in the political decisions and developmental practices that countries such as Mozambique embrace in an attempt to be included in the global economy. In many cases, it seems that the decision makers have and still disregard the impact that those attitudes have on the lives of women.

All these influences have resulted in increasing the vulnerability of women in terms of their relationship with men and furthermore with their capacities to succeed as social agents because of a lack of access to resources and services such as education, formal training and land; all these factors are increasingly diminishing the power and self-confidence of women to face their external challenges. On top of this critical situation we find the HIV and AIDS pandemic that in many circumstances is rapidly transforming the

social norms and dynamics that formerly protected women and children from social disorder.



CHAPTER 3. Methodology

3.1. Introduction

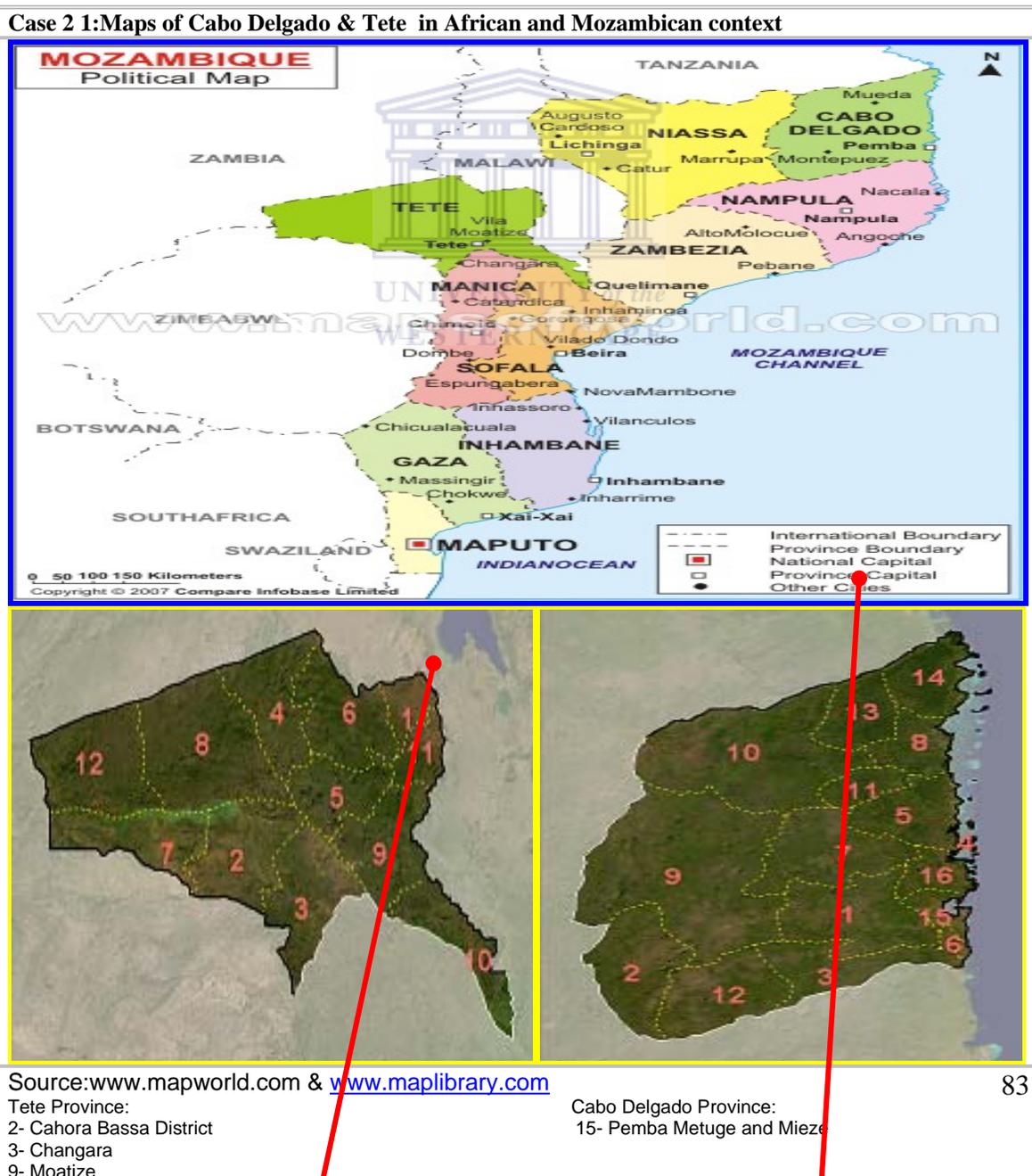
This research is an analysis of the dynamics related to rural women's livelihood in a complex multidimensional society. The overall research question was: given the influence of the historical contexts of colonization, the civil war and the development and modernity process that Mozambique has undergone, what are the coping mechanisms related to land access and retention (livelihood mechanisms) that women are adopting as strategies to survive the impact of HIV and AIDS?

The main objective was deconstructed through several specific objectives, namely:

- the need to understand the perceptions and representation of change that women have about the influences that the three phenomena (modernity, the development practices and HIV and AIDS) have created in Mozambican society;
- the need to analyse women's perceptions about their roles and identities in society; the need to describe the women's relationship with land – whether it is spiritual or cultural (traditional); whether it is only economical or practical (more modernized);
- to identify the overall social norms and values which have become more modernized;
- to identify which social norms reflect the traditional systems regarding land (livelihood) access, control and property rights; and
- to reflect on how I, as an educated African woman, understand the perceptions and representations of the women of my society.

3.2. A brief background on Mozambique

Mozambique is located in the south-eastern part of Africa. It is bounded by South Africa and Swaziland in the south and south-western perimeter; Zimbabwe and Zambia in the western perimeter; Malawi in the north-western perimeter; Tanzania in the north; and the Indian Ocean in the east. Mozambique has a coastline length of 2,515 km from the Rovuma River in the north to the Maputo River (Ponta do Ouro) in the south. It has an area of 799,380 km² and a human population of more 20,000,000 inhabitants (INE, 2007: 1). The country's official language is Portuguese. Mozambique became independent on 25 June 1975. However, Mozambique experienced 16 years of civil war (1976–1991),



perpetuated by the current opposition political party RENAMO against the FRELIMO regime (Nhancale, 2007: 10).

3.3. Research Procedure

This study aimed to analyse critically the nature and extent of the impact of HIV and AIDS on the livelihood of women and especially on women's access to land and other resources in six Tete and Cabo Delgado districts. The choice of visiting six districts was linked to the aim of find organizations with people living with HIV and AIDS and at the same time having a more diversified sample that in some way could capture the complexity of the phenomenon.

Multiple methods, including triangulation of data were used to ensure reliability of data analysis. Babbie & Mouton (2001: 45) define triangulation as a cross-checking of information by using several methods in the process of comparing the results derived from various methods used. Once a proposition has been confirmed by one or more methods, the uncertainty of its interpretation is greatly reduced. However, due to limited time and resources, a small sample was considered for each community in an attempt to capture different variables of different contexts with the same perspective. The research objectives of the study were answered by a variety of methods and sources.

The study (in nature exploratory and descriptive) engaged the following approach for the fieldwork: in-depth qualitative interviews were carried out among 60 members of selected rural households in Tete and Cabo Delgado districts, as well as community leaders, local government officials and social workers. The community members interviewed consisted of 20 women and 10 men from each province in order to capture the gender differences on the issue. The interviewees had different marital statuses: single, divorced/separated and widowed/wed. The literature review demonstrated that marital status is crucial in African society therefore different marital statuses were included in order to compare the consequences of different marital statuses on the lives of

people, principally women. The unit of analysis was composed of men and women aged between 25 and 46 years.

The fieldwork was preceded by a literature review that provided the conceptual framework for the research, and created the appropriate methodological and theoretical guidance. The fieldwork lasted for 20 days but was followed by intensive contacts with key informants that provided constant feedback to the researcher. Each interviews lasted for an average duration of 45 minutes to 1hour, varying in length depending on how forthcoming and uninhibited the respondents were to talk about the issues. The researcher treated all respondents with the utmost respect.

The type of sampling used was non-probability sampling. There are several sub-divisions in non-probability sampling and due to the characteristics of the target group it appeared to be more appropriated to use purposive or judgemental sampling. HIV and AIDS have several consequences for individual social relationships. Evidence points to the stigmatization and marginalization of people with this illness therefore people are reluctant to talk openly about the issue. In addition, because of the lack of health systems in many rural areas and, in some cases, the expense of health care, many people do not know their HIV status. Therefore, the data was collected working with organizations of people living with HIV and AIDS in order to access the target group for the individual interviews.

A qualitative structured interview was used with a number of individuals, who were asked open-ended questions relating to their perception of their relationship with the land and the value the land has for them, which roles women think they have to fulfil in society, what perception and representation about change they have, the strategies and coping mechanisms for survival, and the transformation of values and norms related to the protection of women. Semi-structured and participant interviews were also conducted to complement the questionnaires (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

3.4. Research Techniques

Literature Review: This contains a critical review of: the three main paradigm perspectives used to understand the problem raised - the post-colonialist; post-development and post-feminist paradigms and other dimensions such as gender, poverty and the impact of HIV and AIDS; legal frameworks on land rights and women's rights; books, journal articles, reports, newspapers, and an existing thesis on a related topic.

Structured Interviews: A purposive sample was created with 60 households in four districts in Tete and three villages in Cabo Delgado. This formed the primary target group for the research. This group was composed of widows/ed, divorced and single men and women who related their life histories and experiences which guided the research objectives and results. The qualitative model of interviews described by Babbie & Mouton (2001: 75) emphasises the relativism of perceptions and participation. However, individual interviews were also conducted because they have explanatory power and can be designed to suit individual circumstances and allow interviewees to explain their experiences in depth (Chambers, 1997: 15).

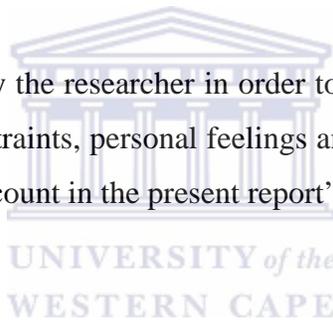
Focus group Interviews: Community members discussed customary aspects regarding women's land rights, divisions of labour according to gender, the transformation of social practices, norms and values relative to gender land access, the impact of HIV and AIDS on their lives and the transformation of social rules. It is an important tool for gathering information confronting different perceptions of the same issue. As Mouton (2001: 24) points out, this technique gives us the opportunity to observe a large amount of interaction on a topic in a limited period of time.

Semi-Structured Interviews: These were conducted with selected key stakeholders (Government officials, Traditional authorities, NGO's, Researchers) regarding their understanding of the role of local institutions, and provided trends and views from a variety of interest groups.

Observations: The study used fieldwork observations on land rights, the distribution and concentration of land among both genders and the conflict resolution pattern within households groups. This technique was of foremost value because through observations of body language and behaviours it was possible to re-construct focal groups (where the researcher felt that some people were uncomfortable to speak in presence of other) and to make appointments for individual interviews that allowed for a more comfortable ambience for the discussion of the topic.

Data Processing and Analysis: After collecting the data, the researcher categorized the data depending on the study's objectives. Qualitative data was listed in the form of quotes and statements. The data were then checked and validated. After processing and analysing the data, a report was produced.

A personal journal was used by the researcher in order to examine and reflect constantly on the findings, conflicts, constraints, personal feelings and emotions, interrogations, etc. These notes were taken into account in the present report's elaboration and presentation.



3.5. Rationale

The effect of HIV and AIDS deaths in prime-age adults and its consequence on access to land and other resources has not been fully explored by scholars, policy makers, practitioners etc. Therefore, the types of coping mechanisms being used principally by women in order to survive are still profoundly unexplored in Mozambique and in other parts of Africa. On the other hand the increasing number of widows, orphans and vulnerable children and the transformation of social rules that acted as social insurance have been changed over time with the colonization process, civil war, developmental strategies and finally the rapid increase of the HIV and AIDS pandemic.

The two provinces chosen for the study appear to be appropriate because of several characteristics. The Tete district is one of the provinces with a high level of HIV infection with a prevalence rate of 16.6% according to the Human Development Report of 2007: 4; and has therefore been dealing with the pandemic over a relatively long period of time²⁶. Other aspect interesting in this province is the patrilineal system of kinship. It is considered one of the tradition keeping zones (compared with other areas of the country) and is landlocked. The other province in this study is Cabo Delgado, which according to the HDR (2007: 4) has the lowest level of HIV infection in the country 7% (although it is actually increasing dramatically). The province is on the coast of Mozambique and has a strong Muslim influence. Bonate demonstrated that demographically, it is constituted by matrilineal groups, where theoretically women have relatively more control of the resources including land (Bonate, 2003: 97).

Therefore, we have two provinces with differences in their main characteristics hypothetically, but under the influence of the same pandemic. More crucially, both are in the same country that is in a struggle against poverty, illiteracy and the lack of a health system and a very strong patriarchal institution. To tackle these issues, the government and policy makers are using neo-liberal solutions which are creating new social disadvantages.

This study hopes to contribute in the first place to the improvement of information about the situation of women in those areas and to understand and assess the coping mechanisms chosen by these women. The study hopes to serve as a guide on how information about this social group can improve the work of researchers and developmental agencies that lack information about this social group.

²⁶ This situation is a duet of factors highlighted by Collings (2006: 26). The action of the civil war in the centre of Mozambique was critical (Tete is in the centre of the country). This created a legacy of migration to the border countries of Zimbabwe, Malawi and Tanzania that have high rates of HIV and AIDS infection. In the aftermath of the civil war the building of development corridors between Mozambique and land locked countries increased the movement of people coming from the above mentioned countries (and with the movement of people increased prostitution, transactional sex, migration of population seeking commercial centres, etc).

3.6. Study Limitations

To undertake a study of a society always has its limitations. The most significant limitations of this study were the time constraints and the resources available. The scarcity of both determined the sample size and the possibilities of further data analysis. The direct consequence of this is the impossibility of making generalizations based on the study's conclusions, which can only be applied to certain circumstances and contexts and not to the entire Mozambican population.

Language was another obstacle for the researcher. Mozambique is a Portuguese speaking country but has several other indigenous languages that people used in their daily lives. The researcher could not speak the local languages of the research sites and therefore used Portuguese in the interviews. In some cases, she was helped by a translator, but felt that some information was missed in the process. Moreover, the research report was written in English, a language in which the researcher is not fully proficient. It was therefore a big challenge to try to capture the perceptions and discourses of the interviewed people as closely as possible to their original meanings.

The topic of the study also raised some constraints. Although people in the OPLWHA accepted their condition, it was always difficult to speak about their experiences and the challenges of surviving in a dramatic situation. This created a sensation of powerlessness and empathy with the interviewees that in some moments inhibited the researcher from eliciting more detailed responses.

3.7 Ethics Statement

Given the vulnerability of the target group and the sensitivity of the information provided by the members of the group in terms of their social values and norms, it was essential to ensure the confidentiality of the information obtained from participants in the study. The researcher attempted to conduct her research in accordance with ethical and professional

guidelines and, as a follow up, will make a presentation of the report information and findings to the communities and key stakeholders in the present study.

The interviews were always conducted in circumstances that protected the confidentiality and integrity of the interviewed and their permission was first obtained to conduct the interviews at a time that was suitable for them. No member of the community participated in the research without knowing the objectives of the study.

3.8. The researcher's view

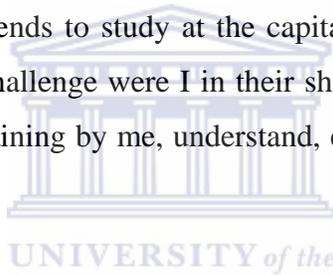
In this journey within the lives of Mozambican women, (which I could only capture partially), I was confronted by many contradictions in my thinking and beliefs. As an African researcher but with a Western education, I needed to reflect constantly on the tension between modernity and tradition in my own life in order to bring about the outcomes of this research successfully. I challenged myself always to “problematize my multiple identities as a researcher marginalized by Western research hegemony and as a member of a privileged elite participating in the colonization of the researched people” (Chilisa, 2005: 680).

In the first place, I learned in theory that as African women we are facing a great challenge to reverse the situation of complete domination that the social system has imposed on us. Our lives are so dependent on men's dominance and we should make a big effort to emancipate ourselves through schooling and training to compete in equal circumstances with men in order to achieve economic independence. I have accepted this challenge: I have a university degree, I have a respected job, and I speak some international languages, therefore I fit under the possible definition of an empowered woman.

Some time ago, as youth trainer for skills and capacities to avoid HIV and AIDS I experienced many disappointments when returning to a rural area and realizing that the

young women that I had advised so much about studying, saving sex for later and the consequences of an early pregnancy, had ignored all my ‘good advice’ and carried on with their lives, married and had children.

This recurrent confrontation with the reality in the rural areas and sometimes, in the urban sites of Mozambique, gave me a wake-up call: did these girls really have the opportunity to choose a modern life where they had the capacity to control their bodies and social spaces? How could they manage to be modern and choose when their entire surrounding context didn’t have spaces for modern life? If it is possible to imagine that these young women carried on with their school degrees, what would they do with it after finishing their matric? Which opportunities did they have in their communities to use what they had learned? Would those girls be emotionally and materially prepared to abandon their relatives and friends to study at the capital of the province and country? Would I be able to face that challenge were I in their shoes? Moreover, how could they suddenly, after one week of training by me, understand, engage and find support for this new way of living?



Some of the above answers came more recently, when I was about to get married and we were at my engagement ceremony (*lobolo*). An aunt approached me and said in *Ronga*²⁷: “*My daughter I am very proud of you because you can have as many degrees that you wish, have a good job and money but if you don’t have an ndlango*²⁸ *you are nothing for us*”. Later on I read an article by an African scholar that confirmed my insight on this issue and increased my understanding of those rural girls: “The way patriarchy defines women is such that their full and wholesome existence depends on getting married, producing children and caring for their family. In Africa, it does not matter whether a woman is a successful politician, possesses three Ph.D.s and runs the most successful business in town; if she has never married and/or is childless, she is perceived to be lacking in a fundamental way” (Tamale, 2004: 3).

²⁷ Ronga is the languages used by the autochthones of the region that today comprise Maputo city and province my mother comes from.

²⁸ I could not yet find a word in English equivalent to *ndlango* that in Ronga encloses husband and children and is frequently used to refer when a woman is “in her house with the family that she created”.

After several years working on gender issues and having the opportunity examine issues related to my life, I have felt in my life the confusing experience of being a “modern” or “empowered” woman in a world where tradition and modernity intersect, but where tradition still has considerable power.

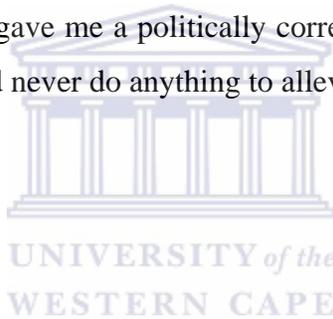
Yet, after a closer look I have starting realising that Mozambican and other African women are not as miserable as they are described and as sometimes they were “forced” to think about themselves. I look around and I see, even within my own family, many women with power inside their domestic group. The so called *hahani*²⁹ are powerful persons within the family decision-making processes. There are many healers that are women; there are many community leaders that are women and the matriarchs of the matrilineal system have decision-making power and actively participate in the structures and organizations of their communities. Observing our African surnames we can perceive that many of them are not feminine and not masculine, but are simply the names of an animal, or a thing, a phenomenon or a place. Mozambican surnames are mostly names of places and not of persons, and after marriage; women are not necessarily “traditionally” compelled to adopt their husbands’ surnames³⁰, which is a product of the western culture.

In many ways I am satisfied with the positions and situations of the women that surround me. Some anthropologist colleagues (men) for instance, believe that Mozambican women are free to negotiate their conditions (principally when it affects their sexual affairs). There is a big difference between the general discourse and perception of people and reality, especially with regards to what happens within the households where women can and do manipulate and negotiate situations freely in their favour. I certainly believe in the partial veracity of this perception, and my work is about this aspect of women’s agency and potential. However, I cannot neglect the reality! Mozambican women continue to face more constraints than their counterparts, mainly due to a system and ideology that is embedded in our minds and that does not allow women’s progress.

²⁹ The father’s sister.

³⁰ Some ethnic groups have a tradition of changing the bride’s name completely after marriage.

The statistics demonstrate this state, and my life experience confirm the figures, but my life observation and the evidence of this research also demonstrates that even in extreme situations women find a way to deal with their constraints. However, the existing pattern of subordination and control can never be challenged with top-down paradigms and practices performed by governmental and non-governmental institutions and simple people like me, who interrupt community members' lives for some days, distribute some packet of whatever is in fashion to "donate" and return to our comfortable lives in the big cities conscience free of having done the right thing, forgetting that people have their own life logic and principles that must be taken into account to achieve effective results. In sum, through this process many times I felt so pathetic asking women about their feelings and their lives, knowing that, despite being clear about my working objectives, I was an outsider and as such could be a potential donor and a mind colonizer (this was evident when they recurrently gave me a politically correct answer just to "satisfy me"). However, as an outsider I could never do anything to alleviate their agony.



CHAPTER 4. FINDINGS

4. 1. Introduction

The present chapter aims to look at the findings produced through the field work during more than 20 days in some Mozambican districts. As a first step, the main characteristics of the people that were interviewed will be presented.

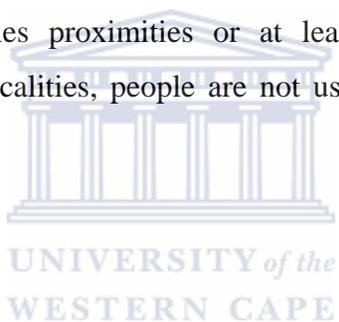
It is important to note that this research is the result of an evolving process that simply started with the aim of analysing women's participation in the community decision-making process and their consequent access or restriction to the natural resources. However, in deconstructing those aspects, I felt more and more the necessity to deepen my insights into rural women's livelihoods in order to understand their coping mechanisms better in the current situation.

In the first phase of the research, I searched for people living in the rural areas that were involved in a land conflict or were victims of land eviction or expropriation. I tried to link their situation with cases of HIV and AIDS infection or the effects of members of their families suffering from this pandemic. However, this strategy created a major difficulty. The Mozambican health system is very weak. The World Health Organization advocates that the recommended figure for a sound health system is an average of one doctor for a minimum of 1000 people, but Mozambique only has 600 medical doctors for a population of 20 million people (Health Minister, TVM, 2008). Therefore, many Mozambicans in the rural areas simply don't have information about their status regarding HIV and AIDS and other diseases. In the cases where it is possible to diagnose the virus, the infected person usually has to move out of their local villages to the city centres where they can have better medical assistance. Tracking such relocated persons is mostly impossible.

Nevertheless, this study resulted in a collection of valuable information about livelihood strategies, norms and perceptions about gender access and control of natural resources and women's coping mechanisms after their husbands' deaths (for any reason), although a very weak link was made with the impact of HIV and AIDS on the lives of those women.

The next strategy was to approach rural CBOs of people living with HIV and AIDS and at that point to study their lives, taking into account their access to natural resources, principally land.

Once again, this new strategy had a direct consequence on the unit of analysis. As was mentioned before, when a person is diagnosed with HIV and AIDS, they usually migrate to the proximity of the cities proximities or at least to the district seat of the municipality. And in these localities, people are not usually as closely linked to land activities as before.



4.1.1. The aims of the study

Given the influence of the historical context of colonization, the civil war and the development and modernity process that Mozambique has undergone, *what are the coping mechanisms related to land access and retention (livelihood mechanisms) that women are adopting as strategies to survive the impact of HIV and AIDS?*

The specific aims were related to understanding the perceptions and representations of change that women have about the influences that the three phenomena (modernity, civil war and the development practices) have created in Mozambican society; to analyse women's perceptions about their role and identities in society; to describe the women's relationship with land – whether it is spiritual or cultural (traditional); whether it is only economical or practical (more modernized); to identify the overall social norms and values which have become more modernized; and to identify which social norms reflect

the traditional systems regarding land (livelihood) access, control and property rights; and finally to reflect on how I, as an educated African woman, understand the perceptions and representations of the women of my society.

4.2. Personal characteristics of research participants

The main aims of the research made it necessary to interview 30 participants in each province, leading to a total of 60 interviewees.

In Tete province 30 adults between the ages of 25 and 46 were interviewed. This group included 20 women and 10 men. It was necessary to include both genders in order to compare men and women's capacity for coping with the new environment. Those participants were individually interviewed. In addition, four focus groups, two consisting of women, and two consisting of men, discussed issues with me.

Table 1. Interviews in the Tete and Cabo Delgado provinces

Provinces	Districts	Women	Men	Focus Groups
Tete	Cahora Bassa	5	3	Two women's groups
	Moatize	7	3	
	Changara	5	3	Two men's groups
	Tete City (suburbus)	3	1	
	TOTAL	20	10	30
Cabo Delgado	Pemba Metuge	3	2	Two women's groups
	Miezi-Locality (Pemba Metuge)	9	2	
	Pemba City (suburbs)	8	6	Two men's groups
	TOTAL	20	10	

Table 2: Individual Interviews in the Tete and Cabo Delgado Provinces

Individual Interviews			
Province	Marital Status	Women	Men
Tete	Widow/ed	12	5
	Divorced	8	5
	Married	0	0
	Single	0	0
	Total	20	10
Cabo Delgado	Widow/ed	10	4
	Divorced	8	1
	Married	1	5
	Single	1	1
	Total	20	11

The majority of the research participants lived in *de facto* unions (where women and men co-habited without marriage) or were married through “traditional” rituals, and only 2 women had had civil marriages. Of all the married people, 6 had experienced a polygamous³¹ marriage where the number of wives varied between 2 and 3 women per man. The target group consisted of practitioners of several religions in this province: Catholic, Protestant, Muslim, etc. Everyone in this group followed the patrilineal kinship system.

In Cabo Delgado, the same pattern of sampling was followed: 30 people were interviewed (20 women and 10 men); and 4 focus groups held discussions. People in Cabo Delgado follow the matrilineal kinship system. However, it was noticed that social transformation of this system was taking place, due to the influence of many factors and

³¹ This refers to the type of marriage where a man has two or more wives. The Mozambican Family Law doesn't recognize this type of union albeit is recognized in the tradition and some religions.

this has a direct impact on the vulnerability of women's lives³². A statement about the family constitution will explain this transformation.

“The more close to the people's hearts are the father, the mother and the children, the grand-parents part are like a second family. Some people don't understand this. Still, the Macuas as the Mwanis³³ they preferred the uncles and nephews. They were matrilineals in traditional terms, only now they are starting to change, but regarding to the extended families they are still attached to aunts and nephews. In the Quirimbas, Quissanga, Ibo Islands, as in Palma, Mocimboa da Praia they continue to live in this way. To solve problems one has first to call the uncle, it's not like here in the town where you speak directly with your father, the mother and brothers. You don't to have to call any uncle that is far away. That is reducing, only when a women becomes a widow, it is usually that the male family members show up to evict her from everything, even when they are children in the middle (Community court judge, Pemba, May 2008),

Another distinctive feature of Mozambique is the strong Arabic influence given that practitioners of Islam make up more than half of the total population (our own sample, for example, was composed of 68% Islamic and 32% Catholic practitioners). The Muslim religion has a direct influence on the marriage structure and on the marriage types, as 20% of our interviewees were in a polygamous marriage. Only one interviewee had gone through a civil marriage and the rest had had religious or traditional marriages. The majority of our interviewees had gone through a divorce/separation process before; it was seen as a feature of the high level of instability or vulnerability in those relationships.

³² Osório, C. (2006: 6). Matrilineal Society in Nampula: *Are we talking about the past?* In *Outras Vozes* no 16. Maputo, speaks about the present fragility of the matrilineal systems that create the women's vulnerability in a system where women in the past had some negotiation power and a less vulnerable position.

³³ Those are the main ethnic groups present in Cabo Delgado, however a minor but influent group of Macondes can also be found.

4.3. Participants' well-being

The majority of the women that participated in the research process believed themselves to be poor. That was a systematic response no matter how many goods those women had or whether their situation was better or worse than the rest of the community's women. Those answers raised two aspects. The first one is that the conception of poverty is relative to each individual. Many women attested that they were poor because they were alone, they didn't have a husband to share responsibilities and to make them respectable and dignified within their community. In many cases, practically, a big gap didn't exist in terms of material goods and income sources between the interviewed women and the married women of the community, but they didn't feel respected and considered because they were widowed, divorced or were abandoned by their husbands.

The second aspect is, as suggested by Rahnema, that while in many pre-industrial societies poverty applied to certain individuals and generally did not carry any implication of personal inadequacy, with the advent of the global consumer society entire nations and continents were led to believe that they were poor, and in need of assistance, only because their per capita income was below a universally established minimum (Allen and Thomas, 2000: 11). This image of being poor and in need of assistance is verified when women, who have the tools to undertake a livelihood that allow them to make a living, still cling to this discourse of "*we are in extreme poverty*", resulting in them always feel less well-off and in constant need of help from someone.

The historical approach of a providential state and the continuous action of the Non-governmental Organizations "delivering the humanitarian aid for development" constantly create an underlying perception of incapability and neediness among the people. This situation led to the expectation that the researcher was a person who could bring some direct benefits for their lives. As an outsider, I carried with me some potential symbols of power unnoticed by me but catalogued by the community that in some moments of the fieldwork created some constraints for me. This alerted me to what Chilisa contends, that "as a person with a Western education and with a Western way of

life, I am a member of a privileged elite participating in the colonization of the researched people” (Chilisa, 2005). I was therefore extremely vigilant not to be seen to be exploiting the people for the sake of my research.

Generally, there is a sexual labour division in the societies. The women’s activities are more related to the household management. The foremost source of revenue for the women is the land. From the land women produce the food that ensures the food security of the group. According to Negrão, land also represents the place of water supply through lakes and rivers, medical plant sources and fire-wood from the fauna. It is also where the ceremonies and rituals of communal harmony are performed, where the ancestors or dead relatives rest; where people live, the children play, where people grow crops and raise their livestock. Land for an African has a multidimensional significance, a practical, spiritual and economic significance and each parcel has its significance and use (Negrão, 1995: 20).

The men are more focused on the activities linked with the “public” arena. In the rural areas, they work in scrubland exploration, building of animal shelters, and if they are fellows of a CBO certainly they certainly occupy a position of privilege. In most cases this is due to men being better qualified on the whole than women and being eligible for these positions. Women are more eligible to positions as members of community courts for instance. This situation is the product of several decades in which the developmental and structural adjustment policies were gender blind and failed to promote participation and equity.

In the HIV and AIDS age, these women have more limited sources of income and are less dependent on land. Generally, the women that participated in the research receive a small subsistence subsidy obtained from their membership of a Community Based Organization. That provides a small monthly basket of basic food and a small sum of money that often arrives late. Some of the women attested that they tried to have other income activities such as producing and selling traditional drinks, baking and selling cookies, and performing some domestic labour for neighbours who were “better

financially positioned people”³⁴ at the community level. If they didn’t have these opportunities they had few alternatives and sometimes could only rely on the charity of their family, friends and neighbours to survive with their children. It is important to point out that the family in this case is still the more efficient system of social security, where the kinship system works together to protect and support its individuals.

Only 10% of the interviewed women had a basic formal education. The majority of this group of women had access to the primary level of formal education and another 10% was illiterate. This situation to a certain degree prevented these women from having access to a better life, work and other services. In the majority of the visited locations, there are a few places where those women could sell their labour. It was notable that all of them considered that the lack of better formal educational skills was a constraint for the achievement of a better standard of life. However, when observing the infrastructural conditions of the location of these people it is obvious that educational skills wouldn’t be enough to improve their lives.

As asserted above, Mozambique is a country with many difficulties. 80% of its population is located in the rural areas where on the whole there is no access to electricity. Only 7% of the Mozambican population have access to electricity and 2% of these are in the rural areas (INE, 2007). Rural people also have little access to the written media: newspapers, magazines, reports, and other written sources. There are no proper road and rail networks or working conditions that could absorb workers (women and men). Those who possess some skills migrate to the big cities of the country or go abroad. Therefore, even if those women had better formal skills, they would still have to struggle to find appropriate work. Yet, it is difficult to find a secondary school in all district villages; therefore, if a young individual wants to progress with his/her studies, the parents are compelled to send their son or daughter to the provincial capital with all the costs that this entails. As a result, when a student succeeds in school to a high degree, s/he usually doesn’t return to the rural villages. As Ki-zerbo explains, the imported

³⁴ It is important to note that the economic differences within the sample communities are not so high, taking into account the overall country situation.

school leads to an economic dead-end and a social power keg. One wonders whether school does not create more problems than it solves. It is the origin of this general exodus which is common to all underdeveloped countries, particularly in Africa...The student with a primary school certificate goes to the little town, the one with a high-school diploma to the capital, the graduate and the postgraduate to rich countries. Rural zones which have paid for the expenses of education thus end-up by being punctured, with their vitality, their capacity to progress and even to survive pumped out of them. Living in the cities, they are nothing but wrecks. They become like uprooted trees which cannot be replanted elsewhere (Ki-Zerbo, 1997: 154).

Regarding their economic situation, the sample population of Cabo Delgado is relatively better off than the sample population of Tete. A considerable part of this sampling population has a remunerated job, even at the district level. For example, the researcher Metuge found two women that are employed in the national health system.

Overall, the situation is similar in the two provinces, however many women based their livelihood strategies on their relationships with men. Many simply said, *“I get money from my boyfriends”*. The perception of a man as a guarantee of socio-economic stability was quite strong among the interviewed women, and many of them testified that they had several boyfriends as a way of attaining this objective. In contrast, only one of the men in the research population lived on charity, while the others had permanent employment.

The perception of the interviewed women about better schooling being the solution for the constraints that they are facing is very strong and in many cases is considered a way of achieving social values among men. Teresa believed that her condition of illiterate prevented her both from having a better life and even to have a good relationship with a man. When asked what she would like to achieve in life, she answered that she wanted a family with husband and children: *“At this right moment no because I am sick, but if I get better I can have a husband and more children. If someone shows up and wants to marry me I would be very happy, but I am illiterate and ignorant no one will want to marry me,*

I don't have a house, I have nothing, men nowadays don't want women in my condition (Teresa was tested HIV positive, she is a 33 years old widow and mother of 5).

"Yes I need a husband and children, why not?" (Lúcia, 35 years old and mother of 4, was abandoned by her husband).

4.3. Women's situation regarding decision-making power

During the research process, which observed the patrilineal and matrilineal differences related to the women's coping mechanisms regarding their access to land and other resources in a HIV and AIDS era, some particularities were noted.

It is important to note that many scenarios are present in the visited sites; there is no static behavior in either the patrilineal or matrilineal order. Moreover, the influence of modernity and the market economy tends to homogenize the cultures and at the same time to transform practices and values. As Wallenstein (1996: 36) asserts: the last three decades have revealed that modernization and globalization have accentuated social and political conflicts, the cleavages, the inequalities from center and periphery, increasing the excluded numbers, in a dimension never seen before. For the first time, the entire planet is confronted with an unprecedented transition for which a solution is not forecasted. The main features of it are: the de-ruralization of the planet; the accelerated urbanization phenomenon; increasing social costs in the externalization of companies' costs; economics cost with the generalization of the democratic system-multiparty, etc.

In observing the women living under the patrilineal context, it was notable that there were more widowed, divorced and separated (sometimes abandoned women) living in family households, more than 55%. Some of them live at their parents' households and the remaining 15% at the households of their brothers and sisters. The other half of the all interviewed were those that were still living at the matrimonial home (about 20%) and the rest were those that could rent a house or even build their own house (of fragile material).

At the ambit of the family transformations many of those women lived with their husband in neolocal residences³⁵. This fact can have positive and negative implications. Among the positives implications it is possible to find separation from the husband's lineage that controls the woman's life. In the cases of widows the proximity of their husbands' family groups can enforce expropriations and evictions of women. Among the negative implications we can find that living at some distance from the husband's lineage leads to a widow often being located in a place where she has no strong links of solidarity, and in those cases she lacks access to services that are exclusively done by men, as mentioned above: scrubland exploring, building of animals corals and building and rebuilding of houses and other infrastructure etc. This leads to payment being necessary for these services, which many of the interviewed women cannot afford.

In a traditional arrangement the use of wills is not present, and death in the African epistemology is therefore respected but also feared. This lack of foresight is also critical when families sell their assets: livestock, bicycles, sewing machines, radios and even personal objects when the man is sick and medical treatment is needed. This has dramatic consequences for the surviving members of the family who have neither legal protection of the few remaining assets nor a fresh starting point without the household's main breadwinner.

Living within the husband's family group, women must submit to its decisions due to their economic vulnerability, dependence on charity and the scarce resources that they can afford). Despite being heads of their family (their children being their responsibility), they have to submit to the decisions of the family males (fathers, brothers and adults sons) or even to the male family members of a new husband. This includes decisions on sowing the seed, seed supply, selling products and financial support for certain objectives even if this doesn't correspond with their needs.

³⁵ This refers to the residences that are neither in the women's family territory neither within the male's family territory.

Case 1

Ana is the widow of a former employee of the Ministry of Social Action who passed away in 2005. She is 46 years old, with four adult sons and daughters. She remains in the home where she lived with her husband even though this house is located in the husband's family plot. Although Ana has an unofficial paper in which her husband names her as heiress of all their goods, she fears that living with her in-laws can become difficult because they expect her to move out of the house. Although Ana is relatively better off economically than other women (she is president of a community-based organization of widows, a traditional healer, a small-scale farmer with an autonomous source of income and the living pension of her deceased husband) her husband's brother is actually demanding that she perform the *levirate* ritual with him (*ku-tchinga* or in the case of Tete province *Ku-pita Kufa*). She is not willing to do so, and because of that he is threatening her with sexual assault. Ana firmly believes that her in-law could do that and she is more worried about him than herself because she went through a ritual treatment with her late husband to ensure that she cannot have a sexual relationship with another man without causing the supernatural death of this man. She is resigned to living a lonely life (Tete, November 2006).

The history of this woman reflects the main argument of this study that reflects the contradictions present in a Mozambican woman's life. On the one hand, Ana is quite an empowered woman. She is a traditional healer whose relative economic independence is guaranteed through her marriage, she is the leader of a CBO and she has her own subsistence production.

On the other hand, she depends on her deceased husband's will to remain in their home, and is "psychologically" controlled by the wish of her late husband to remain single after the ritual that she went through. And finally she is under pressure to maintain a relationship with her brother-in-law by a ritual that Villareal explains is meant to guarantee the survival of a widow and her children (Villareal, 2006: 3). However, Ana does not need to perform such a ritual, because she has some economic independence and in addition there is the danger of infection with HIV and AIDS.

In a patrilineal society there are a number of norms and values that controls the movements and bodies of women directly and indirectly. These norms and values are so embedded in its members' perceptions that even women that are empowered, are not

released from the social obligations of being a woman who has to be subservient to those rules.

Despite the apparent presence of modernity and developmental actions as can be seen by some schools, roads, and other modernized infra-structure, there is still a large division between what it is supposed to be “right and modern” and what is ruled and “traditionally” accepted. The customary laws seem to be struggling to prevail in a context of many social transformations.

Customary laws tend to be control women. This power of control and decision-making takes several forms and dimensions. There are reserved spaces to men and women that are incorporated into the existing culture, in people’s discourses and their actions and certain transgressions are socially sanctioned. In this context there are many taboos and rituals that reinforce the power of men regarding women and many of them put women in a situation of disadvantage regarding the HIV and AIDS pandemic³⁶.

In matrilineal societies, there is not in reality much difference. The social power is mainly in the hands of men, and women have their space but on a lower scale. The focal groups at the matrilineal sites spoke about the perceptions of the roles of women and men: “*Women control the food at home, men decide about what will be the price of crops in the market*³⁷, *what to do with the income and household priorities*” (male focal group in *Metuge, Cabo Delgado; November 2006*). Men also decide about the inheritance.

However, something distinctive was found among these groups with regards to death. If a woman passes away, her direct assets (like her clothes and personal assets) belong to her family (her parents, brothers and sisters, etc.) and if a man passes away, his family has

³⁶ This refers to the taboos linked to the sanction of witchcraft in case someone fails to obey the social norms stipulated. Added to this there a number of purification rituals as: *Kupita Kufa*, *Kupita Moto*, and others that are performed in case of social misfortune. The problem with these rituals is that many of it involves women in sexually unprotected relations, sometimes with strange men that are paid for this purpose.

³⁷ In the matrilineal groups women remain in the household area and men go to sell goods in the informal and formal markets. In the patrilineal groups it is difficult to find a man in these places.

the heritage rights. Only after this has been settled, can relatives divide the assets and include the sons or daughters of the deceased as well.

In the cases of women's expropriation, women under the matrilineal system are by customary law better positioned than those under the patrilineal system. More than half of the interviewed women were still living in their marital residences, whether divorced/separated or widowed³⁸. The practice is that men visit the women's houses to obtain spouses and when married the couple will live in the home of the bride's parents. After a year or two of this matrimony the woman's parents can give a plot of land to the couple in order that they can build their household and grow their crops. Therefore, after a split or separation the men have to leave the house because their wives are protected by their families. Even if the man is polygamous, he lives among his wives' houses (Case 2).

Case 2

Fatima is 33 years old. She is the widow of a policeman and has 5 children (four with her deceased husband and one more from another relationship). She remains in the house where she always lived because her husband had another wife and he moved from one wife's house to another (her house is inside her relatives' plots, inherited from her father). After her husband's death she kept nothing from him because the first wife of her husband refused to share his assets with her (Cabo Delgado, November of 2006).

4.4. Access to land and other resources

In the patrilineal sites, customary law regulates that land must be inherited through the paternal line. This is derived from the perception that women cannot afford to keep this asset, as well as the belief that these women "must" marry in order to ensure social respect and social insertion. Therefore it is deemed useless to allocate land to women that will "belong" to another group. However, when the need arises some transformations are undertaken in a manner that meets the group's necessities. If necessary a woman can

³⁸ It should be understood that the matrilinearity question, as a social phenomenon, is something in constant change and redefinition, and it deserves further analysis.

inherit land if she is the oldest sibling and her brothers are minors. In this situation the women is not a tenure security source because she can get married and move to the male family group or even to a neutral location. Her presence in this family and the relationship that she might have with this new family's assets depend on the duration of the marriage, as Villareal (2006) asserts. By marrying a clan member, the woman has access to use the land of this family, but when this matrimonial link come to an end, her right of use also ceases. The *levirate* institution, in which the widow re-marries a deceased husband's relative, ensures the continuity of the food security of this woman and her children, but above all the levirate is an institution that preserves men's property rights. In this system women will never have the property rights of land because they always carry the "outsider" status legitimated by the marriage that is valid only for its duration (2006: 3).

Villareal continues by asserting that in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa, women's access to land and use rights are determined by marriage. By marrying a member of a clan, women can use the clan's land, but when the marriage link is severed, so are these rights. The institution of *levirate*, by which a widow should marry a brother or other close relative of the deceased upon his death, ensures her continued rights to use the land of the clan. While frequently interpreted as a social safety net that ensures widows the possibility to continue to exercise their rights to use clan resources, allowing for their and their children's food security, it is first and foremost an institution that preserves male property rights. In this system, women can never own the land and will always carry an outsider status, temporarily legitimated through marriage, only valid for the duration of it (ibid).

The evidence shows that the HIV and AIDS impact drives women to a situation of critical vulnerability when it comes to land tenure. In this situation, diverse outcomes can be observed.

The research findings indicated that there is no scarcity of land in Mozambique, however with the increase of investment and the influence of the market economy, there is a

scarcity of productive lands available for all. In case of expropriation (where women are removed from the plots or small subsistence farms where they produced food crops with their husbands or husbands' groups) they have no choices beyond returning to their group and accept marginalized and less productive land, which are the only kind that such women can afford. These marginal lands are in most of cases offered by her relatives or by the communal structure also because those lands have little or no value in the land market. Therefore, it was made clear to us that the most common system of land allocation is through the lineage system and by the marriage link.

The fact is that with the advent of HIV and AIDS, many younger women are losing their husbands earlier and have more young children to nurse. In many cases around Mozambique, the husband's relatives take possession of the family properties: land, the house, livestock and other assets. About this some older men in the focal group said: *"It is not a customary rule that a woman after the death of her husband must go without nothing; the problem is that we are becoming poorer and some families prefer to send this women and her children back to her group instead of having her in a situation of extreme poverty, maybe there she can have a better life"*.

It was mentioned before that a woman has access to resources through her male relatives, from her own kinship and from marriage. In normal situations after the death of a husband or divorce, there are several mechanisms or social norms that ensure the inheritance of assets and resources by women and children.

In the different focal groups that I organized, there was consensus that women have no property rights with her husband assets, but is the *guardian* of those assets until the children grow up and have the capacity to manage the family assets for the benefit of their group. That is why a woman has to refer to her in-laws when she wants to carry out some activity and has to dispose of the family assets. However, in the context of HIV and AIDS, there are many cases of young widows with young children that have been stripped of their properties. As many reports confirm: "This is not a new phenomenon, but the massive amount of deaths brought about by AIDS is creating significant changes

in the structure of property ownership in many rural areas. Stripping widows and orphans of land and other property has been extensively reported in rural areas where the HIV/AIDS epidemic has become widespread” (Aliber *et al.*, 2004; Drimie, 2003; FAO, 2003; Strickland, 2004; ICRW, 2004).

On the other hand, there is the *levirate* institution. This institution attempts to “ensure” the social security of this family. This practice is no longer widespread within the Mozambican context and is mostly taking different forms. It sometimes follows individual objectives (as pursued by Ana’s brother-in-law) rather than collective ones³⁹. The fact is that in this new era, all those systems aimed at protecting women are becoming fragile and unsustainable leaving women and children in a situation of extreme vulnerability and poverty. The current trend is that there is a rupture between a woman and her in-laws after the husband’s death, and in the majority of cases, women are overloaded with the responsibility of caring for children without the expected support of their father’s relatives.

More than half of the interviewed women (55%) had to return to their parents’ house after divorce or being widowed. This clearly means one form of expropriation because generally those women’s plots were near or on their husband’s land property, so the move from her residence, *per se*, meant the loss of her rights to that asset. In those cases, in certain ways there was no perception of injustice among the women and their families, especially if the women did not have a remunerated activity and was financially dependent on her husband (Case 3).

Case 3

Faustina is a young woman of 26 years old and has two children aged 5 and 2. She split with her husband when he decided to marry (traditionally) other women and forced her to co-habit in the same space. She returned home where she lives with 4 more siblings and her parents. She said that she never demanded any good of her husband because she never had any income resources and depended totally on him although she had a small plot. In her parents’ house she started a business of selling products that she bought in the Angonia district. However, she has tested positive for HIV and has become so ill that she has had to

³⁹ The new Mozambican Family Law discourages all types of polygamy (the levirate by its essence doesn’t have to be a polygamous relationship) but in the major cases the men are already married.

suspend those business trips (Tete, November 2006).

However, there are others forms of accessing land for farming, through relatives like fathers, grandfathers, brothers, etc. and even the local structures (See case 4). More recently we could find another form of land access, the renting or buying of a plot. The Mozambican Land Law prohibits the buying or selling of land and land is a state property, however the peasants and communities have the right of usufruct of the land and can guarantee this right by a title. However, because of economics imperatives and a monetarized economy, some title owners are rapidly selling their lands⁴⁰ in some cases for a very high price.

A considerable number of our interviewees used this strategy as method to obtain productive land. As much of the available community level land is infertile and of no interest to anyone, such land offers the last possibility of survival for the expropriated women survival. Otherwise, they must go far from their residences to find more productive land, but as many asserted: “...*that is very difficult for us because, to have those productive farms is very expensive*” (women from Changara, Tete). Farming demands several investments, like the purchase of the use or renting rights; the transport cost of going back and forth; and the cost of paying for male labor to clear the forest and perform other tough activities related to the farming. Another constraint is that many young women with small children have some difficulty in walking long distances and often leave their children in the care of relatives or friends. It was already mentioned that in this crisis situation the responsibility of nursing the weaker family members and children always falls to the women. This situation once more reveals the total decontrol of the social rules of this patrilineal society where by customary norms the children belong to the father’s side of the family, and in cases of divorce and death children should remain under their care. Even if they live with their mother, the father’s family has a duty to see to the needs and living conditions of “their children”. But in the present cases, the women of our target group are living with their children and for the greater part affirm that they have no support from their in-laws.

⁴⁰ Selling land in this case means selling the right of use of the land.

This situation is common in the matrilineal societies where, although the children are part of the mother's clan, we predict a coming shift from matrilineality to patrilineality because of the influence of modernity and the economical environment in which men are gaining more responsibility over their own families than before. However, even in the context of these transformations, men expel or expropriate women from the couple's property and in general neither the men nor their surviving family members demonstrate any concern for the children.

Case 4

Isabel is 27 years old and has 3 children. She lived in Tete City with her husband. At the time we met her she had been expelled by her husband 8 months before. She left behind an urban life with power and clean water besides the assets that she had accumulated during her marital life. Isabel returned with her children to her parents' house and only one month before our arrival, she could erect a small house of fragile/raw material in which she could live with her children. Her father gave her a small plot that is very poor soil and produces very little. Although she cannot do much, it is the only way that she has to survive. During her married life she didn't have the need to produce on a farm therefore she doesn't have much knowledge about this activity (Tete, November 2006).

Hence, in many cases where there is a woman looking for a piece of land to work on, she often doesn't have the money to access the services mentioned above. To take up residence near the productive farms would be a better alternative in terms of cost savings; however, that economic measure is failing because women still need the resources to pay for many services. At the same time, these same women need to be close to their family and communal network in order that they can survive. In the cases of HIV positive women the proximity of the city is critical. Those women often are too weak to perform the hard work of agriculture and in addition they need to be close to relatives to have the emotional and physical support that they need. They also need to be in close proximity to the health centers that provide them with medicines and in many cases they need to be close to the community based organizations for people with HIV and AIDS that are their main backbone to face many life situations and adversities.

Many of the interviewed women did not have access to land, and those that had, worked on unproductive farms of little value on the land market. Therefore, the women face several difficulties when they return to their parents' homeland and try to start afresh, because they are poor and trapped in a modernized system that stipulates that women must be submissive to men.

4.5. Accessing resources, gender inequalities and HIV and AIDS

In an era of HIV and AIDS, the situation of women in sub-Saharan Africa, as shown by the Mozambican contexts, is critical. Villarreal says: “The epidemic is spreading very fast to the rural areas and increasingly affecting women. Moreover, the worst impact of the epidemic is still expected to come” (Villarreal, 2006: 4). “It is predicted that by 2010, the total number of orphans is expected to climb to more than 18 million in Sub-Saharan Africa and that is a ‘long wave event’, i.e. its impact will be felt over many decades and can last as long as a century. The full impact of HIV/AIDS will not manifest itself until several decades into the future” (UNAIDS, 2004: 15; Barnett and Whiteside; 2002: 20).

In the Tete province the prevalence level is one of the highest in the country (16.6%), and here we also find increasing evidence demonstrated that women are more likely to lose all forms of land tenure and other assets.

Among the 20 women interviewed for this study, nine were expropriated and returned to their parents' house when their husbands realized that they were affected by chronic diseases.

In those cases I noticed that issues of gender inequality and power relations between women and men are further enforced by the impact of HIV and AIDS.

Case 5

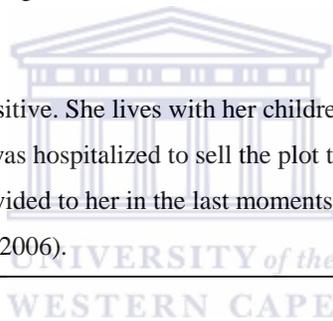
Olivia is 30 years old. She lived in Maputo City with her husband with whom she had two daughters who died of AIDS. After a certain time she began to be ill, and on noticing that her condition did not improve, her husband took her from Maputo to Moatize (Tete province) to return her to her parents without any good apart from her clothes. Later on Olivia had a relationship with a man who also abandoned her for the same reason. Now she is in her parent's house with a son infected with HIV.

Case 6

Olga is 43. She was married in a polygamous relationship to a husband with another wife, and she has two sons infected by HIV. During a phase when her condition was critical, her husband abandoned their house and went away to live with the other wife. Her family moved her to an older sister's house and put her house up for sale. In her turn, the older sister assumed that Olivia would not survive and opted to expel her from her house. An HIV and AIDS local CBO member took care of her and her children and after joining to this CBO Olga recovered and rented a house with the subsidy that she received from this organization. This case shares several similarities with the next one.

Case 7

Maria is 31 years old and is HIV-positive. She lives with her children in a rented house because her brothers took the chance when she was hospitalized to sell the plot that her mother gave her in appreciation of the care that she provided to her in the last moments of her life. Paulina's mother also died of AIDS (Tete, November 2006).



We are in the presence of miscellanea of social crises derived from the influence of poverty levels, open market economies, individualization (modernist thinking) and perhaps a loss of values. This is demonstrated by those cases where even brothers and sister in a rural setting are capable of disrupting the social organization that has the family as the strongest security system, and abandon or expel their relatives (see cases 5, 6 and 7).

It can be argued that there is a social crisis or transformation of values because, even though women are often the weakest links and they are directly affected by the HIV and AIDS pandemic, some men are also victims of this situation although they appear to suffer less in cases of access and land tenure as this still a pillar of rural society under customary tenure (see cases 7 and 8). Men are usually in relatively more economically comfortable situations than their female counterparts, but they are increasingly being

affected by the social transformation created by HIV and AIDS on all people's lives: physical debilitation constraining the productive force and the related menace of food insecurity, access constraint to certain resources such as migratory labor, education, information of youth and adults, disappearance of entire household groups, weakness of the social and kinship networks and of interpersonal support.

Case 8

José Carlos is 35 years old; he is HIV positive and is a widower. At the time that his late wife discovered that he was infected, she ran away from the marital house and eventually died (José doesn't know if it was due to the infection of HIV/AIDS or not). José inherited his parents' farm, but he was too sick to work on it and when his shack collapsed, he couldn't re-build it. At that time he moved to his sister's house. She had also been abandoned by her husband. He now shares this house with two HIV positive people – his sister and young brother. José Carlos had two children who died of AIDS.

Case 9

António is 43 years old was abandoned by his wife when he started to become ill. He has tuberculosis, and in this condition he cannot perform his job as a car painter. He said that he was victim of an injustice because the minor judge gave him custody of his children custody even though he is in not a condition to provide for them.

Despite these two cases, it was clear that women suffer far more victimization in this era. Women living with HIV and AIDS reported a few options about coping strategies that they could use to protect themselves and to avoid re-infection. Many of them did not know how they contracted this virus but they couldn't do any better because they, as women, had to have babies (and many desire to have more despite their condition) and they could not negotiate their partner's/husband's fidelity.

Mozambican society still demands that women should have children as a means of ensuring her marriage. If she is unwilling to have babies or perhaps cannot biologically have them, her marriage is sure to be dissolved. In Mozambican society (and in African society as a whole) there is no conception that women can choose to be child-free. Bearing children is a duty and responsibility of the women, and those who fail to do so, particularly in rural areas, can be at risk of marginalization and not being recognized in her community. Therefore, in order to fulfill these social obligations, many women risk

being infected by HIV and AIDS to have children, despite knowing what the dangers are. Their safety does not merely depend on condomization⁴¹ as protection and they cannot be assured of the monogamy and fidelity of their partners.

4.6. Women's coping mechanisms

In this chapter, an attempt has been made so far to describe the main features and dynamics of women's livelihoods. However, the main aim of this study is to analyze how women handle this new era with all the factors that have been described before.

My assumption is that despite the numbers that reveal a great gender inequality and an urgent need for intervention by exogenous forces like developmental agencies or modernization actions, there are still many women who are negotiating their own decisions and needs because of the simple fact that they are social agents.

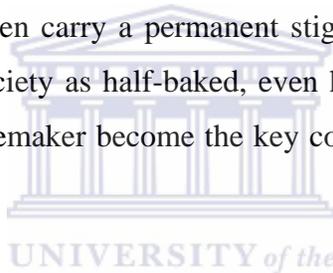
From this point onwards I examine the possibilities for women within a social context of constant and rapid transformation in which they are the object of so much pressure and control coming from so many imported strategies and influences. The latter are supposed to improve women's lives, but in practice neglect them; and clearly favour elites and networked people, leaving behind the majority, the real people that compose the Mozambican population.

It has been observed frequently that peasants adopt a number of strategies in order to survive regardless of the adversities. Berry writes: "Like farmers anywhere, Africans have responded to instability and economic decline by economizing and, at the same time, attempting to diversify their options" (Berry, 1989: 41). I will now examine the coping strategies of the women in this study.

⁴¹ In Mozambican rural areas it is impossible to find the feminine condom (those are expensive and difficult to wear). Therefore, the only people that can use condoms are men.

The population sample of this research study was predominantly made up of rural women that were HIV and AIDS positive. For strategic reasons, as stated before, the target group consisted of people with HIV and AIDS living in CBOs. The groups of women that were members of these organizations were mainly widows, or had experienced divorce, abandonment or separation.

It was clear by their discourse that they considered themselves the poorest in their community. Our impression was that the “wealthy”⁴² member of the community didn’t link themselves with those institutions. In some cases, even when the rest of the community knew that a person was infected, this woman would not come out and share it with other as long as she had a husband and children and could “pretend” to be carrying on with the social role stipulated to her in order to protect her social dignity. As Tamele asserts: “Single, childless women carry a permanent stigma like a millstone about their necks. They are viewed by society as half-baked, even half-human. Thus, the domestic roles of mother, wife and homemaker become the key constructions of women's identity in Africa” (Tamale, 2004: 52).



The action of the developmental train involves a large amount of money and human resources all around the world. In Mozambique in provinces like Tete, where the effects of the pandemic was felt early, many CBOs were created for people living with HIV and AIDS. Many of them disappeared over time, but some continue to work mainly by affiliations to international donors that support them.

These community-based organizations are created and sustained as forms of solidarity and empowerment for people in unfavorable situations. In the majority of cases, it was confirmed that men are given better positions in these organizations, while women form less half of its population or members. The majority of those women work as volunteers - 41.8% (INE/CINSFLU, 2006). But, even with those statistics I can attempt to state that

⁴² It has been mentioned that the poverty experienced by the interviewees can be catalogued as relative poverty in the sense that there are not so many differences among the community members and in some cases those people that are described as poor are in a better material condition than others are not considered to be poor.

the simple act of accepting to be a member of this structure can be valorized as a surviving strategy for women: *“I came to this association because I felt lonely and miserable when my husband abandoned me and I got sick. My colleagues help me when I’m unwell, they bring me food, they chat with me, and they are my family. I wouldn’t be alive without the association people”* (Women abandoned by her relatives in Cabo Delgado).

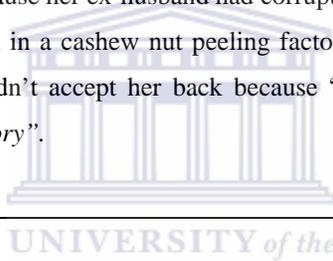
Case 10

Cristina is 26 and mother of 6. After seven years of marriage her husband expelled her while she was 3 months pregnant. According to her, she helped him to obtain everything they had during their marriage (house, a car, two farms, livestock and a stall) and he didn’t want to share those assets with her.

She submitted her case to the community courts. However, after 6 months of debates she realized that her case would not succeed because her ex-husband had corrupted the tribunal members.

After her divorce she went to work in a cashew nut peeling factory until the birth of her child.

After this period her employers didn’t accept her back because *“they don’t want women with small children working in their factory”*.



The majority of the women that we interviewed have been educated until the 5th grade of the primary level. Many of the older women are illiterate. Only some of them had completed the basic studies and those two were the only with a specialized function in their employment. Therefore, the majority of those women relied on subsistence agriculture, on social networks donations and work supply forms, selling and buying activities or even on relationships with men to subsist.

After the IFM and World Bank measures to reduce the social expenditure and promote a more pro-market economy, less alternative employment opportunities in the rural areas were created beyond the agriculture activities, such as teaching, health services and rural industries. Therefore, the livelihoods strategies for women were reduced (see case 10).

Many of the women had experience as farmers, whether on their parents’ farms or their marital farms. However, with the emerging in their life of a crisis and left in many cases

with the responsibility for children and the weakest, women have had to resort to their creativity and try new ways of dealing with this situation. In stable circumstances, women grow food crops while men bring money to the household. This sexual division of labor, as attested above, gives more value to men's occupations: "*When you have a husband at least he brings money to buy soap, oil, clothes and the children notebooks. Without them I don't have how to achieve those things and I need it*" (several women in both provinces).

As Tamale recalls: "In circumstances of weak state structures, corrupt leadership and civil instability; African women realize that they need to be more resourceful in order to enhance their access to and control over resources. This is not to suggest that women in Africa have not been ingenious and practical. We all know that millions of citizens on this problem-ridden continent would not be alive today were it not for the ingenuity of the African mother, grandmother, wife or sister" (Tamale, 2004: 1).

4.6.1. Ecology-related resources for coping

Many of the women that were chased out of their original plot have to start a new farm that is located in another place and sometimes with another type of soil. It was attested before, that again and again women are allocated new pieces of land but with a very low degree of productivity. Those women, despite those constraints, manage, appealing to their knowledge of seed preservation and food crops, to produce something for their children's survival.

Much empirical evidence has demonstrated that the HIV and AIDS impact is broader and more strongly in rural peoples' lives. A significant number of interviewed women asserted that they had been weakened by the disease and they strategically opted to work on a small portion of land planting easy growing crops in order to minimize the effort expended on this activity. This position is confirmed in many reports about gender and agriculture all over Africa (Villareal, 2006; FAO, 1995; Yamano and Jayne, 2004).

Access to money was an important aspect for these women, given the lack of men in their lives, therefore, although the crop production was small and less rentable than other products, they sold this in small informal markets that can be found all over the countryside and in the cities as well.

It is important to note that, despite the ongoing transformation of the rural values of communal life and interdependence into a more market-driven economy, there are still manifestations of solidarity among the rural people. Many women in a crisis situation are invited or offer themselves to work on another person's farm, especially at harvest time, and in return they receive some of the produce. Those are deeply rooted practices that resist the demands of the market economy.

These market demands impose consumerist behaviors on the traditional cultures which could in the past feed and perpetuate themselves. As some authors contend: "Popular traditions of frugality were not ideologies, they were living practices. They were the way ordinary women and men carried out their daily lives and taught their children to follow them. That all this should have been discarded overnight was a grievous loss, and grievously we are paying for it" (Blackwell, T. and Seabrook, J., 1993: 78). Our evidence however demonstrated that forms of inter-help systems still survive even with these markets conditions.

As these women were HIV positive, they had access to some medical attention if they were close to the health system. It is important to note that many HIV positive people in Mozambique don't have access to anti-retroviral treatment because there are not enough ARV's in the country for all the infected population. Despite getting some medical attention, the women in our study still had to deal with the sickness of their children and other family members.

Once again, the accumulated knowledge through generational contact with the ecosystem gave them the advantage of being able to use herbal medicine. It was common to hear women respond as follows on what they did when their children were ill as a result

of malaria or other common diseases: “*I can’t afford to go to the hospital, is too far, I don’t have money for transport and for the medicine that the doctor will recommend, so I just wait until the children get better*”. But, if one insists on getting more information, the response comes: “*Oh, sometimes I take the child to a Healer but if I don’t really have any money I know some plants that help a lot when someone is sick, it serves for other diseases too*”. Such responses were definitely worthy of more analysis.

The first response was made according to what the woman thought that I wanted to hear as an outsider and probably a developmental agency representative or those *mulungo wa ntima*⁴³: *I would like to go to the hospital but I cannot afford the distance*. This answer again can be interpreted in two ways. Firstly, our local knowledge was so devalued and banished several time during our country’s history that people don’t consider it as precious and can publicly advocate for its legitimacy, although the state recognizes its lack of power in health service delivery in a vast country like Mozambique. If people cannot access hospitals, where they heal? On the other hand, facing me as “the other”, the answer could be a form of potentially trying to access any source of benefit (some external investment or donation) from me.

Nevertheless, this episode demonstrated that the choices of where to go in case of illness can be also strategic. If a person is sick with a well-known disease, women with scarce resources can choose not to walk for long distances, or paying for transport to go to the hospital, where after paying for the appointment they will have to buy medicines. They can strategically save some money and provide some local medicine cheaper and more effective that serves that immediate purpose. Tamale avers: “...as the primary farmers and the caretakers of the young and sick, African women are highly knowledgeable in seed preservation, herbal medicines and other ecology-related resources” (2004: 3).

There are other varieties of livelihood strategies that were mentioned in the interviews. Many of these women make their livelihoods in the informal markets: selling traditional drinks, baking and cooking for sale. They work as seasonal domestic workers: doing the

⁴³ Pejorative expression that literally says: white person with a black skin, making allusions to the black *assimilados/elites* that are under the influence of the western culture and way of living.

laundry, cooking, bringing water from public springs/wells and taking care of the elders or even children. This work is sometime rewarded with money but in many cases they receive a payment in kind: food, clothes or other useful goods.

In some of these strategies I noticed a break with the social norms regarding the social division of work among gender. With the absence of men, women are increasingly compelled to break the domestic line of livelihood and sometimes enter spaces previously reserved for men.

Many women said that they have to survive through odd jobs which are in a certain way new to them. Mozambique is attracting external investment that is translated into the construction of roads and other infrastructure. If there is an opportunity, women that are in a critical economic condition, don't hesitate to enter the "men's world" working in whatever is possible for them to do in this context.

It has been mentioned before that in the North of Mozambique spaces like the market and domestic work are principally for men. Nevertheless, women that are lacking men to perform their role within the household division of labor are increasingly entering the public spaces in pursuit of their and their children's survival. Moreover, in the absence of men and living far away from their relatives, some women are being "forced to be the heads of their families", to take decisions and assume the household responsibilities for their daily needs.

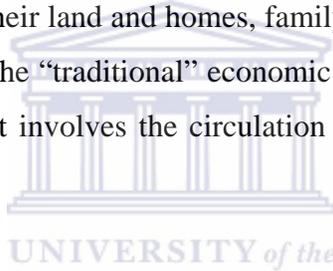
Nevertheless, this is not an uncontroversial scenario. These women are still struggling internally with their own beliefs of what their social roles must be; to struggle with the community members' perceptions, which in some cases, devalue them for performing those activities. In sum, they are failing to be women. Nevertheless, this doesn't stop them to persist in their livelihood strategies.

Case 11

Rosalina is 40 years old and a mother of 5. She got divorced from her husband because he wanted to have another wife and she completely disagreed with this idea. After a certain time by herself, she engaged in another relationship where she is the second wife because in her own words: *“I don’t want to live the social exclusion that the women without a husband are exposed to”*.

HIV and AIDS is not only transforming the spaces where women move, but is also transforming men’s roles. To investigate this, the study also examined some men’s perspectives. Some of them had lost their wives and remained with the responsibility of nurturing their children. This situation had forced some men to begin to perform some women’s activities such as: cleaning, cooking, bringing water, etc.

Although, the examples mentioned above (see cases 6 and 7) of some family members depriving their own sisters of their land and homes, family is still the main social security form in the women’s lives. In the “traditional” economic system of Mozambican groups, there is an existent pattern that involves the circulation of goods, values and people to support each other.



Actually, it was common to have as a response: *“It was my father that gave me this piece of land when I returned from my husband’s house; or my brother takes care of me and my children’s necessities”*. A woman from Pemba (Cabo Delgado) told us that: *“When my husband called my family to say that he didn’t want me anymore because I am always sick, they answered him that he should build a house for me and the kids, he refused to do so and my sister took me over and until now I live in her house and she is the one that when I am sick asks for days offs in her job to take care of me”*.

4.6.2. Men related strategies

It was clear during the whole fieldwork process that women strictly believe that they need a husband/partner’s presence in their lives to attain a state of well-being (mostly if they are still young). In this HIV and AIDS age, many women are becoming widows or separated because of this condition’s impact.

This is because of the undervaluation or lack of significance that society attributes to women in general. This is mostly because it is a patriarchal society reinforced by the colonialist and missionary presence, where the public spaces are the domains of men and only men can access and control the available resources that this public sphere can offer: waged employment, power and decision positions, education, etc. Thus women easily feel the impact of the lack of men in their lives, and consequently many of them engage in new relations to fill this emptiness.

This is confirmed by Tamale: “The fact that women's lives are defined by the ideology of domesticity, that their unwaged productive and reproductive labor in the domestic arena is unacknowledged, undervalued and invisible in economics statistics, largely explains their resource-less status and points to some radical ways of tackling the problem (Tamale, 2004: 2).

Many of the women in the study considered themselves poor simply because they didn't have a husband, irrespective of their real economic situation. One example is that of a woman that lives in her own house (where she lived with her deceased husband). This house was re-built by her son, a migrant worker, who left his wife with his mother in order that they could support each other. This woman has a fishing boat and a big wheelbarrow⁴⁴; but nonetheless she believes herself to be a poor person because she doesn't have a husband that takes care of her and has to manage her own life.

It was mentioned before that many women have several relationships to ensure their and their children survival, and this is not a new practice. However, in the HIV and AIDS age, this behavior pattern can be critical for the woman's life, when she becomes aware of her conditions that reproduce this strategy.

⁴⁴ This big wheelbarrow is a vehicle very common in Mozambique in both sites: cities and rural areas. This vehicle is used to carry heavy loads from one place to another. Many people have it even to just rent it to others.

Case 12

Maria is 43 and is mother of 8 children. She is HIV positive and the widow of a HIV and AIDS positive man. She has under her responsibility a orphaned grand-daughter who is HIV positive, whose parents died from the same condition. She doesn't grow crops because it is too far to go back and forth from the plot. Yet, she had a daughter of one with a member of her CBO, who is also HIV positive, who has taken her as a second wife. She said that she accepted this situation because she wouldn't be able to cope with her life without a man in her life (Tete, November 2006).

Schoep (1998: 47) attests as follows about this approach: "More generally, an economic crisis hit many of the worst HIV and AIDS affected countries in Africa even before the epidemic struck, bringing with it a proliferation of multiple partner strategies (not necessarily prostitution but strategies to have more than one partner to ensure the survival of a woman and her children). While such strategies used to be viable survival strategies they now have been transformed into death strategies".

The research findings demonstrate that women have some coping mechanisms to deal with their difficulties. Many of those strategies are not realized as positive ones, and many women are living at the breaking point of their living strategies. When asked what could be the better solution for their life situation, many of them didn't have an answer, or they gave a stock answer that they had learned in their lifetime was a way to avoid being confronted.

This made me recognize one of the main arguments of this work; that sometimes, people are so brainwashed that they simply stop believing in themselves and their capacities and potential. They start to believe that they simply don't have any solution besides to sit and wait "for the providers" to come and bring a better future for all.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

This research report intended to provide an insight into women's situation regarding their access to land in six districts of Mozambique located in the provinces of Tete and Cabo Delgado. The main aim of the study was to assess and analyze the coping mechanisms related to land access and retention (livelihood mechanisms) that women are adopting as strategies to survive the impact of HIV and AIDS.

The analysis was conducted based on three main theories: the post-colonialist theory, the post-development theory and the post-feminist theory, which all share the common concern of raising the voice of the marginalized, underdeveloped and the oppressed. This takes into account the global system where some are placed in the centre and others in the periphery. This system determines who are doing well and who are not, and brings with it recipes of how to be "good" and modernized instead of being obsolete and traditional – thereby devaluing all systems of values and norms considered inadequate for success.

Although many efforts have been made by the Mozambican government through structural adjustment programs and open market driven policies, the situation of the people is still very critical, and among the poor, women are the most affected by poverty. They lack access to services like education, health and other resources that could enhance their lives.

The main point of this debate is: what is the impact of all of those factors -modernization, colonization and development paradigms and practice - on the lives of Mozambican women, considering that women are the poorest of the poor and are heavily impacted by the above-mentioned phenomena?

5.2. Discussion

Land is the most important asset that rural people have in Mozambique. It has been largely demonstrated that women are the principal work force in agriculture responsible for the food security of the household, a responsibility that is increasing all the time (Izumi, 1999; Bonate, 2003; Lastarria-Cornhiel, 1997). It is a paradox then that women are facing many factors that are severely contributing to a permanent decrease in their land access and control.

With the colonization and the Judaic-Christian influence the already-existing patriarchy was further reinforced and modern state institutions, through legal frameworks, applied a discriminatory agenda in favour of men's control of land and resources over women.

In advent of HIV and AIDS this situation is worsening. The impact of this pandemic leads to the strong transformation and vulnerability of women's land tenure due to many factors: loss of land rights including inheritance rights, shifts in the use and tenure of land, distress sales and shifts in ownership. Significant decreases in amounts of land cultivated have been documented in different contexts, as well as shifts in the types of crops cultivated, increasing those that are less labour-intensive (FAO, 1995: 13; Yamano and Jayne, 2004: 77).

Although the statutory laws of Mozambique guarantee equal rights to property by married people and to men and women as citizens of Mozambique, the customary law still is the principal means of determining access to, and ownership of land.

Thus, the common way women have access to land is through their relationship with men (they can also request land from the local/community authority, but the kinship system is still the main system of organizing and structuring the society in the rural areas of Mozambique). The stability and longevity of the marriage guarantee the wife continued access to land and other productive resources. In an HIV and AIDS era, prime age adults are the principal victims; this results in an escalating number of young widows with

young children with fewer resources to survive. The loss of property through land grabs was a common feature reported by the interviewed women in this study.

In Mozambique land is not scarce but in the recent years, owing to the impact of the structural adjustments and a shift to a market driven economy (creating the conditions for poor countries to become eligible for financial loans made by international monetary institutions such as IFM and W.B.) the land has gained a monetary value, and an increasing land market can be noticed. More and more, the evidence shows that women are being allocated marginal land (with low production levels).

The condition of HIV and AIDS also constrained the movement of the interviewed women in search of more productive lands located outside their communities. Besides that, they cannot afford the transports cost and male labour necessary to initiate and maintain a farm. Those women generally carry the responsibility for the children and the sick as well. By staying close to their community they have more medical attention, support from their relatives and of other people living with the same condition.

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The colonialist presence brought the modernization paradigm as the path of attaining well-being. The post-independence government is seriously engaged in the modernization and development perspective in its actions and rulings (the construction of the New Men-*homem novo*). However these efforts, perspectives and policies are gender blind and most of all do not deliver the so-called development in the lives of the community members and the population as a whole. Nevertheless, there is a great of ideological and discursive efforts to propel people to follow certain recipes and means to attain development. The communities visited, and more critically the women, have been systematically and for many years “brainwashed” to think that they are less important, that their local knowledge is worthless and this has made them powerless to use their potential and build solutions from what they actually have.

The gender gap was largely reinforced by the colonialist system and institutions supported by the Judaic-Christian religions. The perception of women only being

important in the domestic area was increased with the introduction of tax payments, forced cash crops production and the migratory labour that took men away from their household domains to fuel the colonial economy. Since then women have remained at home growing food crops and taking care of the children while men worked on remunerated jobs. In these terms, men held the strongest decision-making power. However, Mozambican women still having some arenas of decision-making power, but they always have to refer to their male counterparts in the case of a decision considered of major importance for the household's stability and harmony.

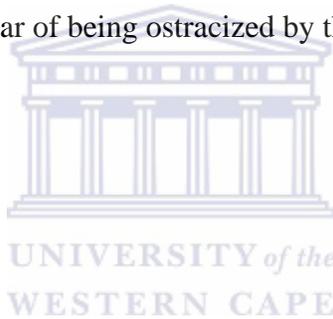
Moreover, the colonialist presence and development paradigm reinforced women's reclusion to the domestic sphere; even though, the new theories of development considered the inclusion of women in the public domain important to ensure development. However, many studies have demonstrated that these principles are more ideological than practical. In addition, women, far more than men, still lack access to formal training and formal education. They are still excluded from the decision-making process and are left behind by the development institutions.

On top of this, there is the lack of delivery capacity of the government's developmental institutions and infrastructures. In the visited communities there is no electricity and no high schools. In some areas, it is difficult to find some private or government institutions that could provide employment and provide training in specialized works. Therefore, there are not enough motivational aspects and opportunities that could engage these rural women in other areas of the economy.

The outcome of this is a utopian vision that creates expectations of "the government solutions" - solutions based on what ideological thinking has told them would be good for them. Many of the interviewed women firmly believed that if they "*had some formal schooling they would be in a much better situation*".

In a traditional society men and women have expected roles that they have to accomplish. With the HIV and AIDS advent, the “complementary” role of women being in the domestic sphere and men being outside and making money is being strongly challenged. The number of women as ‘de facto’ heads of their families is rapidly increasing. Women are struggling to cope with this new social order but are in the middle of several constraints, such as traditions, gender hierarchy and a crisis of values.

Women are socialized from an early age to be mothers and wives. All their education and training are geared towards succeeding in this role. A woman without a husband doesn't have social respect and value. The current era of HIV and AIDS, with its associated high death rates are leading to high rates of widows, divorced/separated and abandoned women. This situation affects the self-esteem of women who are reluctant to participate in certain social activities for fear of being ostracized by their community.



5.3. Conclusions

The overall scenario in the visited sites pointed to several conclusions:

HIV and AIDS are creating many young widowed women with young children. This situation, as many authors have pointed out, is having a direct impact on the access rights to land (Villarreal, 2006: 1; Müller, 2005: 3; Izumi, 1999: 29) and other natural resources in the sense that many women have been evicted from their property, had to sell their goods to afford medical treatment for their deceased husbands and did not have the financial means to start over in a new plot.

The interference of the modernization ideology, colonization and developmental strategies adopted after independence and finally HIV and AIDS are creating strong contradictions among the members of the visited communities. If on the one hand they are willing to capture the developmental train they are faced with a lack of tools to do

this. One of the possible consequences is to hold on to what is perceived as achievable: traditional power. However, this tradition is interpreted and re-interpreted through the years and the result of these several patterns of “traditional” behaviour is total social disorder. The fact is that there is a social/values crisis and in those moments, people do whatever they feel right in pursuit of their objectives. At such times, the weakest links are women and children who have no voice in the decision-making process.

The evidence demonstrated that there is a clear manipulation of norms and values that used to protect children and women in their societies. With the advent of HIV and AIDS, those practices are in disarray, affecting mainly the women and their children.

Women are using many coping strategies in order to survive. Owing to a lack of male labour, some women are entering spaces that “traditionally” were relegated to the men: this includes going out to the market places (in the north of Mozambique, this is traditionally a space for men only); as well as working on the roads and on other infrastructure constructions. Even in the agriculture sector, some women are performing activities traditionally carried out by men. At the same time, some men are starting to assume domestic responsibilities, as they are also losing their wives to HIV and AIDS. Because of the pandemic, they have some difficulties in finding healthy partners to replace their deceased wives in their households.

This rapid shift in the sexual division of labour is having a big impact on the self esteem of women. Many of these women consider it demeaning to have to perform those activities instead of having a husband or partner to support them financially and to give them the social respect and honour that married women have in the society. In these circumstances it is possible to make an analogy between what the Brazilian pedagogue Paulo Freire claimed about the class relations among oppressors and oppressed - the peasants and labour class - and the power relations among men and women: “The peasants feels that he is inferior to his boss, because it seems that the boss is the only one capable to make things work. As long as this ambiguity persists, the oppressed are

incapable to resist and have no trust in themselves. In this regard, they have a collective magic belief in the invulnerability and power of the oppressor” (1979: 35)⁴⁵.

Even with this perception about their knowledge, the women of Tete and Cabo Delgado districts have different coping strategies that they use to survive, and many of those are based on their local knowledge of seed conservation and planting; the “traditional” brewing of local drinks and baking cookies; the management of the manufacture of herbal medicine and other strategies related to food production and saving money through informal safety networks. Another strategy is to engage in several relationships with men in order to boost the household incomes. Often women even accept being in problematic/violent relationships to achieve both monetary stability and social respect. The problem of this strategy is that in the era of HIV and AIDS, this strategy can lead to infection or re-infection of women in a context where she has few possibilities of surviving this disease or pandemic.

It is obvious that a big transformation is taking place in the dominant social norms and values, but perhaps these transformations are leading to a society more egalitarian in terms of social divisions of work, decision-making power and opportunities/conditions. The fact that women are now experiencing what men traditionally do, while men are experiencing the domestic responsibilities of women, could be the starting point of better mutual perceptions and partnerships.

It is important to note that the conclusions drawn from this study are not an attempt to generalize patterns of social dynamics and behaviours to the entire country. The research was qualitative and the sample size cannot be taken as representative of the Mozambican population as a whole. Therefore, it is crucial that many more research studies should be done in order to capture the complexity of this phenomenon and then to consolidate all the findings in order to create a definitive description of the situation of Mozambican

⁴⁵ Free translation.

women and their coping mechanisms in the current context of the HIV and AIDS pandemic.

5.4. Recommendations

The evidence presented by this study reveals a need to conscientize all spheres of Mozambican society on this issue: the Mozambican government, the politicians, the policy makers, the development practitioners, the academics, the civil society people and organizations. This conscientization demands that men and women create their existence with the material that life has to offer (Freire, 1979). It is important that Mozambique as nation stops endorsing the culture of silence, which forces the subjugated to obey those who talk and impose their voices on them.

It is critical that governmental and non-governmental institutions should work to bring out what is the best for our communities, appreciating and celebrating the local knowledge in order to create practical solutions with the available resources. Those institutions must create forms for the elevation of the self-esteem of women, thereby creating real empowerment in their lives.

The non-governmental organizations which are working on community development must ensure that their practices and principles are truly gender-inclusive and guarantee women genuine participation in their activities.

It is of maximum urgency that the judicial institutions create mechanisms that reinforce the application of the laws that protect women. It was evident in this report, that women are not aware of their legal rights, and if they have the perception of being victimized, they don't know how to access justice. A starting point would be sensitizing the local authorities to women's rights, given that in many instances these authorities act in accordance with their own beliefs as social products.

If it is impossible to find a way out of the “development” paradigm to achieve the desired well-being of women and their children, it is important to do it with prudence, fitting the recipes to the local contexts, and making sure that the conditions are created that could be sustainable, attainable and legitimated by the people that are supposed to benefit from development programmes. It is worthless to build thousands of schools everywhere if people will have nothing to do with and don’t identify with the knowledge acquired in those schools. Development is a systematic process of meeting human needs, i.e. not only economic needs, but also social, political, cultural, spiritual, physical and environmental needs.

Academics must be more concerned with a number of so-called “alternative perspectives” that are not included in the dominant discourses and in many cases reflect and analyse feasible alternatives for those in the “periphery”.

Finally, an analytic follow-up is needed to determine the transformation that HIV and AIDS and other factors are producing in the shifting social roles of men and women in order to contribute to the building of a better Mozambican society. Further studies must be carried out regularly in order that the changes that this pandemic are creating in the lives of women and other groups can be monitored and analysed.

“Announcing that women and men are people and as people, must be free, but doing nothing in order that this statement becomes reality, without a doubt, is a comedy” (Freire, 1979)⁴⁶.

⁴⁶ Free translation.

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