Case Study for Gender at Work

Action, Learning and Gender in Mozambique: A Pause

Solange Rocha**,** Michel Friedman, Giovanni Sgobaro, Helena Chiquele, Sylvie Desautels
Translation: Rex Fyles

Part I: Starting at the End

> *"I met myself again and valued myself more, not only at work but in my whole life, day to day"* (participant's comment)

What happened in the Gender Action Learning (GAL) can be understood as a pause. In music, a pause means the sound of silence, a time between notes. In Mozambique, the deep reflection process about gender in workspaces often meant taking a pause for participating organizations. For most participants this was their first experience of time to reflect, a silence filled with internal sounds coming through subjective doors.

In many situations, this pause produced strident noises in the institutional silences and personal lives related to the deepest dimensions of gender. This pause allowed the strident noises to surface. Those voices that are normally taken for granted, that tend to put women in their place, were disrupted. For example, women's access to and control over resources were no longer just empty words on project proposals. Participants questioned and made practical changes to the formal and informal rules which held that "*women are not good at managing loans*" (participant's comment). The defense of Mozambican cultural traditions, the notion that "this is not our culture" was always a strong argument to oppose new changes in institutional and personal dimensions that could transform norms that oppress or abuse women.

However, at the initial meetings of the GAL what appeared within the organizations was incredibly depressing. Dreams appeared smothered under the burden of work created by multiple projects with different demands from each donor, low salaries which distanced the desire to be a social justice organization devoted to improving access to economic opportunities through credit. When we began with the "hearing the stories" visits, there were frequently statements that it is important to incorporate gender, that projects need this dimension and that donors require[1] it but that "*we don't need to be experts in gender in Mozambique since there are other organizations dedicated to this, like Forum Mulher or WLSA[2]"* (participant comment).

Participants described the "vocation" of being "genderized" as a certain type of organizational and professional specialization where gender is a specific theme reserved for experts. In this way, gender is introduced into projects and activities in a mechanical manner. Participants considered gender as a women's issue. Gender is governed by a rule or policy which basically equates gender equality to the number of women who participate in any given activity. None of the organizations involved in this process had reflected on the deeper dimensions of gender in the economic, social or cultural relations that perpetuate inequalities.

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[1] Mozambique is a highly dependent on international aid (50-60% of its GDP consists of donor funding in 2012). Given the orientation of international agreements, particularly the Millennium Development Goals, the majority of these resources impose conditions to include a gender approach.

[2] Organizations identified with the women's movement and agenda.

Through the change process, the organizations moved dialectically between resistance, confusion, recognition and transformation, from a perception of gender as something which is external to the needs of the organization, imposed by funding partners, toward the view that gender is key to confronting inequalities in personal and institutional life.

In this article we want to discuss what happened along the way and the changes that took place, what they did, what resistance emerged, what really worked and what has been the lasting result since the end of the process. Three organizations participated[3], and we will take the case of AMODER (Associação Moçambicana para o Desenvolvimento Rural) based in Maputo[4] as the example to be analyzed.

We have chosen the case of AMODER as illustrative of an organization that initially did not know what gender was, that did not think they needed it as an organization but was interested in participating in the GAL process because working on gender was a funding condition for many projects. What was so striking about AMODER was not only did not think they needed to understand gender, but they did not think 'gender' was 'in them'. The "Hearing the Stories" confronted the organization with how saturated they were with gender relations as part and parcel of their everyday organizational life. This is a classic case how the language of 'mainstreaming' gender can sometimes be part of 'the problem'.

"Gender" had already been thoroughly "mainstreamed" in AMODER, but in an unequal way. Our approach was to transform what was there, not to try to put something into AMODER that didn't already exist. That is what I think GAL offers as opposed to traditional mainstreaming. Our initial thinking is about transforming existing unequal gender relations, not 'putting gender equality' into something as if 'gender' doesn't pre-exist our efforts.

AMODER is an organization that provides credit in rural areas and has a mission devoted to the development of Mozambique, which appeared to us to be quite strategic since 54% of the population lives in poverty and women have difficulty accessing credit. Women are the most seriously affected by gender vulnerabilities determined by cultural, social and economic conditions. AMODER is a sort of microcosm of Mozambique; facing huge challenges in the field, inheriting a long history of hierarchical relations internally and with foreigners, and "doing gender" to comply with donor requirements without remotely understanding gender equality's potential power to transform their work, organization and personal lives.

Perhaps given its profile, AMODER was quite open as an organization to reflect on change. The learning process was slow and full of distrust and conflicts, as we discovered at the end of the program. However, all of the participants were deeply honest in their personal and professional contributions and shared their personal and institutional difficulties, limitations and blockages.

Participants described their increased capacity to handle conflicts with calmness and assurance. They shared cases of rebalancing power within family and organizational dynamics, with an increase

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[3] UNAC (União Nacional dos Camponeses), with it head office in Maputo is a cooperative created in 1987 and lead by its peasant members. MAGARIRO, based Chimoio, Manica grew out of the education sector work of the Irish NGO Concern. Magariro means "going to the roots to find positive values and culture. AMODER has it head office in Maputo and was created in 1993 to provide credit.
4 AMODER Participants in this meeting: Olívia Pechisso, Accountant; José Trindade, Executive Director; Elias, Program Supervisor; Betty Raunde, Facilitator; Ia Petersson, Program Coordinator.

in internal power (both within the organization and the individual participants) and developing the power to work as a collective. All of the women involved in the GAL process changed their attitude toward their own voice; having a voice meant taking on leadership roles within institutional processes. However, all these changes were permeated with conflicts and personal suffering regarding institutional 'obstacles' or difficulties, and the recognition of deeply rooted inequalities in personal lives. For example:

> "Opportunities were not equal in my family. My father invested in my brothers' education and left the women in the last place, and this is still reflecting now" (Participant's comment).

> " I grew up saying that chairs are for me and mats are for women until I reached the point where I saw this was discrimination. Chairs were designed to give comfort to men (Participant's comment).

At the institutional level, the perception of what is gender equality was broadened and was reflected in changes in the <u>norms and practices</u> of the organization's formal rules and informal culture that shaped women's access to resources. Amid the sounds of the orchestra of the lessons learned, we heard a solo that pointed to changes in their understanding of gender equality. The Director of AMODER, whose main frame of reference is Marxist, held the question of class structure as a principle and ethical perspective in the organization of society. In the last GAL workshop, he told the following story: he was walking down the street and saw people lining up to buy a type of fritter, *badgia*, which is very popular in Mozambique because it is filling and very cheap. Looking at the people in the line, the director said that his head went "click" and in that moment he understood that it was possible to eliminate hunger but that gender inequalities could not be resolved merely through overcoming the contradictions between labor and capital.

> ... "I can say that after 40 years, I felt a personal transformation in my reflections. I began to consider the struggle against gender inequalities as the need to change our minds, and this change in mentality also implies, or certainly will affect, people's economic world. I think that in this moment, I am a different person. I feel like I have been cured of an illness that I had."

For AMODER, transforming existing unequal gender relationships meant recognizing that women and men suffer the impacts of poverty that flow from the lack of financial resources differently. Their capacity to deal with problems is not the same. Women are important agents of change. They know how to deal with problems, have skills in saving and managing household resources and possess knowledge about caring for family and community. However, since their voices are not heard, this knowledge is not taken into consideration, which contributes to the inefficiency and inefficacy of development interventions. Pause.

In the macro political, economic, social and cultural context of the country, as with orchestras when all of the instruments are playing, the silence of some musicians is not heard. In the same way, the reflective pauses of the organizations involved in the program were not and still may not necessarily be heard throughout the organizations. However there were loud silences that made new melodies explode within each participant. Despite the important changes that have taken place, the biggest challenge is to know the range of this melody's reverberations, since this is an ongoing process within the organization and other results will only be seen over the long term.

Section II: Context (maybe synthesize and further articulate this section?)

> **"The GAL cleverly transformed our minds through a marriage between ourselves, our society and the environment that surrounds us"** (*participant's comment*)

Article 36 of the country's Constitution specifies equality of rights. In 2011, the country received an award as the country with a high level of development regarding gender. It is classified in 22nd place out of the 134 countries that make up the list (Global Gender Gap Report, 2010). However, gender advancement measured on the basis of laws, policies and strategies that put Mozambique in a good position in the international ranking is not transforming the gender inequalities that shape the reality of the country in practice. Poverty and gender inequalities in fact continue to aggravate women's vulnerability.

In the last 20 years, with the introduction of the gender based approach, governments around the world and particularly in Mozambique, have focused their strategy on changing formal laws by introducing policies to promote the status of women. Significant funding and attention has been focused on gender inequality, resulting in efforts by national and international women's movements and action to promote gender and women's human rights. The gender perspective within development is now indisputable. This creates greater opportunities to eliminate differences between men and women, democratize resources and make it possible for women to have capacities and be included in decision-making processes.

Mozambican government policies make strategies to achieve development goals explicit with regards to gender equality and women's empowerment. The planning and budgeting instruments structured by international agreements such as the Millennium Development Goals, the African Protocol of the Rights of Women, CEDAW recommendations (1993), Beijing Plan of Action (1995), the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development (1997) which govern the gender focus of national policies and plans namely: the Gender Policy and Implementation Strategy (2006), the National Plan for the Advancement of Women (2008-2011), the National Plan for the Prevention and Reduction of Violence against Women (2008).

However, these nominal gender policies do not achieve effective equality of rights, nor do they deeply alter power relations. The organizations that work in the field of human rights face big challenges: in Mozambique the incidence of gender based violence and women's subordination is very high. The relatively high percentage of women members of parliament (39.2% in 2010) has not brought significant changes in promoting gender equality. In the health sector, policies targeting women are restricted to mother-child health priorities. The family law, the land law and the domestic violence law, among others, are not well known or well implemented.

To understand the limitations for the advancement of gender equality, it is necessary to highlight that Mozambican society is patriarchal, and as such the power lies in the hands of men, despite the matrilineal systems present in the central and northern parts of the country (which follow inheritance through maternal lineage and assets normally pass from one generation to the next through the mother's line). According to Isabel Casimiro's study (2010), one of the main differences between the two systems, which offers some advantages to women in the matrilineal system, is the access and control of resources. However, the organization WLSA has explained that matrilineal

descendence does not mean that women retain formal power. In fact, decision-making power is vested in the mother's brother (maternal uncle) who holds the right to distribute assets and resources. Generally speaking, gender relations in Mozambique are characterized by the subordinate position of women. Both patrilineal and matrilineal communities in Mozambique are grounded in forms of social control, which value the collective good to the detriment of the individual.

This is the practical reality of informal and formal life in Mozambique. It informs the conditions AMODER faces in granting loans to men and women. This cultural context shapes the ways in which credit works or does not work. Through the GAL process, AMODER reflected on what is necessary to overcome these limitations and make credit more accessible to women.

This reality is reflected in social policies, where unequal power relations, culture and tradition limit the achievement of women's rights. Available quantitative and qualitative data reveal the inequality that women experience and demonstrate that women are disadvantaged in such crucial areas as education and employment. Furthermore, areas where policy implementation for women has shown greatest progress have reinforced the traditional reproductive role of women.

Mozambique is a democratic country, having gone through 16 years of civil war between FRELIMO and RENAMO, which ended in 1992 with the signing of the General Peace Accords. In the midst of recurring political crises surrounding allegations of corruption, the country lives with the consequences of the implementation of the neoliberal policies that followed the socialist strategy which brought down the colonial government.   The current government is trying to promote a program of participatory government to reduce poverty although shortcomings prevail with regard to real citizen participation. In the realm of public policies, initiatives in the social sector, specifically health and education are inadequate, particularly with regard to reducing infant and maternal mortality and fighting the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Synthesis of Gender Data and Indicators	
Population	22.9 million (UNDP 2011)
Inequality Index (Gini)	0.605 (2009)
Urbanization	Approximately 30% (2009)
Population - Women	51%
Poverty	54.7% (2008)
Illiteracy	50.3% (64.1% for women)
People living with VIH/AIDS	11.2%; 1,810,000 (55.5% of whom are women)
Life Expectancy	47.1 years for men and 51.8 years for women
Employment	Active population 75% - overall unemployment reaches 18.7%. In agriculture, 89.3% of the labor force is made up of women, while men represent 21.7%. Nearly 83% of the population practices subsistence agriculture.
Poverty Index	The poverty level fell from 69% (1997) to 54% (2003) of the population living below the poverty line. A study in 2010 (PES 2010) shows that poverty has not declined a lot since 2003, despite a notable economic growth rate led by foreign investment in mega-projects in mining, gas and natural resource exploitation.

(Source: CENSO 2010 e PES 2010)

Violence is a daily reality for many young and adult women in Mozambique. In 2009, Law 29 on violence against women was adopted but its implementation is very deficient; police forces, response centers, judges and other actors in the judicial system are not trained and have very limited resources. Violence is still seen as a "private" conflict and cases are not directed to the

courts quickly or efficiently. Society's knowledge about the domestic violence law is weak, which results in the absence or incorrect application of its provisions (WLSA 2010).

This context, however, has not prevented the country from achieving some notable progress toward meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly with regard to access to primary education.   Despite the progress made, the low capacity of government institutions, the growing impact of HIV/AIDS and food insecurity constitute important challenges for the future. The Government of Mozambique has formulated policy and implemented strategies designed to promote gender relations in all domains of public life. The Cabinet approved the Gender Policy, together with its respective implementation strategy. (PGEI).

Who and what changes and what paths were followed?

AMODER was created in September 1993 and was licensed by the Bank of Mozambique to provide credit in 1999. The founders of AMODER had been involved in the parastatal marketing and commercialization vehicle, AGRICOM, which ceased operating in 1993. The cessation of AGRICOM's functions left a large void in the rural economy, removing the guaranteed market for small-scale farmer production. At the same time, the business sector had suffered serious decapitalization, as a result of the war, and the only newly emerging businesses were the cotton and tobacco concessionaries.

As a response, AMODER decided to participate in the development of rural communities through the improvement of service provision in rural areas. Their target group includes economic actors involved in marketing local produce and the supply of agricultural inputs and consumer goods to rural communities. This includes medium scale entrepreneurs who directly or indirectly provide services to rural communities (e.g. purchase and or processing of local produce, transport of produce and merchandise, supply of agricultural inputs and equipment, supply of consumer goods, etc.). AMODER also provides small amounts of credit to small-scale farmers, as a stimulus to increase production.

Currently AMODER has delegations in 7 provinces, and has 8 functioning offices. These include Tete (Tete province), Chokwe (Gaza province), Massinga (Inhambane province), Mocuba (Zambezia province), Nampula (Nampula province), Cuamba & Lichinga (Niassa province), Pemba (Cabo Delgado). The organization has 77 staff, including 24 credit officers supporting clients in managing the credit provided.

> *"We started in 1985, when we were still at Agricom, with the change in the system, peace arrived and the used clothing sent by international solidarity organizations continued to arrive. There was a surplus and we decided to found an association. The main target group are people who provide services, have businesses and need credit. In 1998 we had our first increase in staff and later in 2003. We are working to benefit society and to develop the country, but it is possible that we are creating inequalities because we fund some people and not others. At this time we have 10 to 13% women entrepreneurs. We need to think why we fund more men"* (*participant's comment*).

The organizations that participated in the GAL, particularly AMODER, are an example of the potential for civil society organizations to act on changes in the realities in which they live. In this way,

incorporating gender strategies, in addition to the challenge of building more equal relations within families, organizations and communities, turned out to present an opportunity for the organizations to engage in cultural changes that can open spaces within Mozambican society.

The GAL experience supported by Oxfam Canada took place between March 2010 and September 2011. The objective was to push the limits of the capacities of the partner organizations to take up the challenges of transforming gender relations. The methodology was to promote changes through a multi facetted and holistic approach, based in experiential and peer based learning in which each participant is seen as a subject of the process. The methods used stimulated reflection to integrate theoretical knowledge, personal feelings, and the limitations and possibilities of bringing to life new practices based in new perceptions between participants and the world that surrounds them. In this way, it was possible to bring about lasting changes that impacted institutional culture and organizational actions within the communities.

The process systematically followed **the action learning cycle**: reflection; hearing stories; planning and revising change plans; action; personal, organizational and community change; deepening theoretical and practical learning. Each organization assumed responsibility to carry out the change process within their organization. At the beginning of the process, the participating organizations[5] were visited to allow them to tell their stories. The objective at this stage, beyond mapping out the context, was to create synergies to enable the organizations to look more deeply into gender imbalances and inequalities. The three organizations met together in three successive workshops with a focus on peer based learning in order to challenge and support each other.

Throughout the process, the GAL provided a team of facilitators to accompany and support the organization in its efforts to change. Dialogues within organizational teams were facilitated and reflective learning processes at the community levels were identified. For example, one of the meetings with the AMODER group took place between the second and third peer learning workshops. It was held at Ilha de Moçambique, where 25 coordinators and managers from all the provincial offices were chosen to participate in leading the change processes within the different teams in the organization. The main result was the recognition that gender based inequalities were part of everyone's lives and that AMODER perpetuated rules and norms that promote these inequalities. Furthermore, participants stated that this meeting "reconnected" the organization. Many did not know the institutional history and felt isolated. The meeting made it possible to relaunch AMODER's collective project.

In recent years, Oxfam Canada undertook work on gender equality to bring about system changes at the level of organizations, individuals and communities based on the consideration that all these levels are interlinked and interdependent. The Gender Action Learning program sought to bring about a greater coherence and intentionality between changes at these different levels. Not only a new approach, external to the individual experiences of each participant, the GAL process proposed lasting changes in power relations between men and women. In this way, the program was developed to make possible opportunities for participants to implement a deep institutional intervention.

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[5] Depending on the internal dynamics of each organization: AMODER began with four participants and ended with 5 (2 men and 2 women); Magariro participated with four people (1 man and three women) and UNAC began with four and ended the process with three participants (2 men and 2 women).

The GAL process was designed to provide specialized support and accompaniment to the organizations to allow them to look inward to their own organizational structure and institutional culture, in order to contribute to existing processes and dynamics and to be appropriated by the organization. In this way, the process in itself forms the shape of "integration" and gender is not seen as something extra or added on but as an intrinsic aspect of the life of the organization. The learning process requires that the participants question their assumptions and reevaluate their beliefs when faced with different or new information or perspectives that can challenge what they previously "knew" to be true.

AMODER is a very large civil society organization in a specific social, economic, cultural and political context which tends to embody the prevailing rules, norms and values of society. The GAL process made possible change processes in policies and formal norms, behaviors, attitudes and informal (cultural) norms that generated significant changes. However, we have not yet been able to verify the breadth of these transformations since time is needed to analyze the reach of these changes within and outside of the organization.

The organization has a dream

At the first "Hearing the Stories" meeting, we learned about the way in which gender relations played out within inside the organization. For instance, after several accounts that demonstrated that AMODER's "spirit" was low, we asked: how would you measure yourselves on a happiness thermometer (from 0 to 10)? The group responded "3" on average! We then sought to understand what happiness meant and the motives within the organization that gave it such a low measurement. We heard the following explanation:

> "We have lost our innocence. We see that we are no longer the collective that we used to all be within the management team. Our solidarity is over. Before we had "good Fridays" which was our way of being together and we had something to drink, some food. We held discussions and a colleague would sing. When the "good Fridays" ended, birthdays continued, with flowers and drinks. But this ended too and we no longer go out together to enjoy ourselves. At that time, we used to buy drinks every time we travelled and now we no longer have these moments. The purse strings began to get tighter and we lost informal conversations. Now we have grandchildren... and each person arrives and leaves to go home... Before we used to be a family. We felt more at ease within AMODER. We missed each other. They were moments of joy, even better than in our own families. There was a lot of unity. Without this something has changed (Participant's comment).

We discovered that the large majority of people felt that work took up a lot of their time, that even when at home they were preoccupied with their work. Some accounts showed that work constituted people's personal lives and that they felt very responsible for the organization, but experienced conflict with family members because they didn't feel supported. For the women, other conflicts arose:

> "We feel that the team is made up mainly of men but the work requires a lot of traveling and the conditions are bad. Women have more difficulty, which can cause conflicts at home, and there are few women who have the capacity to manage this kind of work. The only one who succeeds is the coordinator because she has more training and more

experience but we do not choose team members to be men or women but rather because they are good workers. (Participant's comment)

Starting the Gender Action Learning process by hearing these stories allowed us to get to know the organization. The group plunged into an analysis of the choices and pathways the institution had followed. They arrived at a deeper analysis of these choices which enabled them to ask whether they were able or wanted change them. The GAL pursued a Theory of Change approach and also used the Eguren metaphor (2011). It navigated the complex oceans of social change in search of archipelagos where the changes might prosper.

The crisis and stagnation within AMODER lay at the base and provided an opportunity for change since the reflection and learning process could result in very concrete actions for personal and organizational change. Though non-linear, change process followed a particular flow.

The idea of forming an association coincided with the end of the civil war and the liberalization of the economy (and civil society). These changes rendered humanitarian assistance less attractive and opened greater opportunities to access foreign funds through non-government organizations. AMODER took on micro-credit as its main business. The nature of the demanding work required to build the organizations organizational was perceived as "men's work:" it provided privileged access to resources and opportunities to travel throughout the country (usually under difficult and dangerous conditions), initially to distribute used clothing and subsequently to provide credit.

If we consider the world of money, finance and credit, historically, this too has been "men's work:" located firmly in the public realm, both market driven and private initiative, generally carried out by men and serving to define masculinity. In this regard, we may find the "key" to understanding why AMODER has chosen to provide loans primarily to men whereas in most countries, women are the main clients.

The GAL process was a deep process of deconstructing the concept of masculine power that was visible in formal and informal institutional norms.

- Starting with a change in consciousness, they moved forward with changes in the formal internal norms and rules of the organization by opening new positions and creating incentives for women to be hired by the team.
- Parallel to this, they changed work dynamics. Instead of focusing only on individuals, a women's group was formed in one of the provinces, Niassa, (Cuamba district), to reflect on the possibilities and limitations for women to access credit.
- Through the whole process, particularly after the third workshop, participants shared personal changes related to women's attitudes about speaking in public, their ability to express their opinions and their sense of self worth, while recognizing the value of the institution. To do this, the organization launched into deep debates about informal norms in order to recognize inequalities in the productive and reproductive spheres and each person also recognized that they perpetuated inequalities. They questioned "untouchable" values of Mozambican culture and tradition that maintain the majority of women in subordination, for example, the difficulties women face in seek promotions or getting access and control over resources.
- These changes were reflected in the policies determining women's access to credit.

Some exercises[6] were powerful in the reflection process. The G@W framework and the Power exercises demonstrated dynamics to balance gender inequality within an organization. The framework provided a collective experience where participants moved between the individual level quadrants on consciousness and the quadrants on structural and social dimensions of the organization. This exercise enabled the group to reflect on, accept and encourage decision-making decisions and changes to favor women. We sought to develop values of equality that are reflected in informal social and labor relations between women and men. We enabled participants to accept that the "triple role" women bear has negative implications and limits women's participation in the organization. We supported belief in the importance of gender equality work to change structures, norms and behaviors.

The Gender at Work framework analysis brought out strong feelings through the stories told by the participants and powerful testimonies about the inequalities that they experienced and they reproduced in their families and in at work. They revealed that the GAL involved them in a change process that was not always rational, since gender inequalities entail choices and attitudes that are based in culture, traditions and are mirrored in social relations.

> *"What do our stories have in common? Women's problems are the same but appear differently... Men continue to put up barriers in the field and in organizations. The barriers can be different but they are always barriers (participant's comment)*

> *"Women are always asked to do more. We are professionals and we want to leave things running well but sometimes it is difficult to discuss when power relations are unequal for" (Participant's comment).*

In this direction, it was essential to work on the theme of power to ground the notion that changes require balance, courage, love and responsibility. To change, it is necessary to develop capacities to confront and to let go of old practices or privileges within the organization, the family or the individual. To change, it is necessary to believe in change and to create opportunities for women, which means encouraging their voice and attitudes, challenging their capacities to overcome gender inequalities.

In the web of interconnected themes, we emphasized the connections related to public-private dimensions. For example, the central theme was access and control over credit. Around this theme, we reflected on the subordination and cultural limitations, using as an example the experience of sexuality. Many women cannot ask to have sex with their husbands because it would be improper. The silence surrounding gender based violence within families and communities was also recognized. The subject of violence is confined to the home and offers another example of how cultural norms and traditional rituals value men and teach women to obey. It is considered taboo to talk about these themes in Mozambican society. Likewise, the women's limited access to upper level positions within the organization, the recognition of domestic work and how these issues influence the work space were not questioned within AMODER. This is to say that we worked in a broad context so that debate around access to resources could be connected to various different dimensions of personal and professional life.

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[6] Hearing women's voices: using participatory methods, peer learning with creative exercises like the Gender at Work Framework, wicked questions, the power triangle, "power exercise" agreement-disagreement exercises, ritual dialogues, free writing reflection, and drawing, among others. Tai chi and massage help create space and harmony and help people heal physical and emotional illness.

Cultural norms created opportunities and limitations for the work undertaken with AMODER. The best result of the entire process was the recognition that for the organization to intervene to affect the culture of the community, it needed to work deeply on its own structure and organizational culture. "*The question of gender is in all areas. AMODER's experience allows us to say that working for gender equality and women's rights increases effectiveness, efficiency and harmony within the organization. We have highs and lows. There are phases when we advance well but there are phases when it is hard to image progress. However, we are conscious of the fact that if we work in favor of equality, we make use of 100% of our resources and not just 50%*" (Participants comment).

Together we sought to identify the key factors that bring about changes in gender equality. We started with the change plans and participants' understanding of the process, to think about possible next steps in their projects.

In this way, key elements of the theory of change were identified with the following "ingredients" based in our individual and collective experience:

- Internal reflection – led participants to share experiences and discuss values. It is a space for sharing the lives of people in the organization and in the community. It builds group attachment.
- Internal power – internal strength to recognize inequalities and injustices, resulting from reflection. "*I'm beginning to accept that I continue to perpetuate inequalities. Moving forward, I take the commitment and responsibility for change. Moving forward, there is an opportunity to change norms in the organization and the community. I take this consciousness and it has given me more internal power*". (Participant's comment).
- Space for dialogue – internal reflection needs space with trust and without judgment for dialogue to take place. It brings a feeling of inclusion, of belonging. Individuals feel part of the problem and of the struggle. This openness builds better relationships and greater communication.
- Action plans – the opportunity to experiment and to act.
- Trust, consciousness, courage and openness – this is the base and stimulus of the process.
- Good leadership and support from the collective - committed leadership within the processes makes change possible within the organization, in the same way that collective support is powerful for initiatives not to die. It helps to have the support of facilitators and partners for greater complementarity.
- Process and time – understanding that changes is a process and takes time. The organization and people need to find individual and collective time to bring about changes and recognize that each person and group has different timing.
- Intentions – important to consider since individuals or groups need to have the intention of changing in order to initiate and continue the process.

Resistance

Transformation of deep structures of gender inequality can be linked to individuals' subconscious to the extent that they lie largely beyond the realm of consciousness and are not questioned. In the gender action learning process we questioned these deeper dimensions, which provoked resistance that expressed itself in tensions and conflicts.

> "*Inequality of rights is when the man smokes a cigarette and walks relaxed while the woman carries the baby on her back and the bag on her head (Participant's comment).*

> *"In my home the one who makes decisions and has the last word is my eldest brother. If by chance he is not there, we wait for him to arrive. I have tried to change this but it's hard (Participant's comment).*

In the conceptual-methodological arena, gender basically was perceived as biological differences between the two sexes, or as synonymous with "women". This discourse is used to explain that women's world is part of men's world and if men and women have the capacities, both will have opportunities. Gender was also approached as a polarity between nature, associated with women and culture, associated with men. Or it focused on equal participation and harmony between men and women. It is also seen as a hierarchically inferior element to economic questions, or "if women have access to education and financial resources, inequality would disappear" and mainly this argument underpinning institutional norms and rules regarding granting credit.

In the first peer-learning workshop, the use of the G@W framework showed that the organization concentrated more effort on changing gender within the quadrant on access to services/resources. The tensions presented were related to the limited pathways to transform informal norms that sustain inequalities. The experiences described by the group showed that informal norms create cultural rules that are accepted in the family, at work and in the community. In summary:

> *"Why do men help women with housework? Is it so that women can do work that would be defined as men's work? (Participant's comment).*

> *"Some people help with housework and they have already changed their consciousness and support women. On the other hand, a man who shares his credit with a woman is not normal in our culture (Participant's comment).*

Cultural norms and practices were a central theme in this process. Participants recognized that maintaining power is directly related to culture and political structures and that these processes impose limits and possibilities for men and women to be in the world. Particularly in AMODER, it was made explicit that women are not good managers of savings, but are good at managing small resources like, for example Xitique[7,] which is a form of savings practiced in the reproductive realm and in private space. There was a clear vision of access to credit being based on merit. That is, men are seen to have greater experience in the productive sphere. Men know how to manage resources in the public realm while women only know how to manage resources in the reproductive sphere, or private realm.

AMODER's process was not a flat photo, was not one-dimensional. Once they understood the different dimensions of gender, they were shocked because this perspective questioned all of the accepted truths, questioned the organization's values and raised contradictions. AMODER dreams of a society of equality and social justice based on a class analysis. Yet, they work with credit and within the rules of the market supported by donors that function within neoliberal rules, which places limits on their institutional dreams. It is a context permeated with tensions that are exposed in power relations and translate into internal institutional rules.

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[7] Informal savings system (ROSCA) very commonly used by groups of women across the country, considered a strong strategy to increase women's economic power among all social classes.

Section III: How did it happen and what were the strategies?

> **"Internally organizations must worry about not "projectifying" gender, they need to ask certain questions to change behaviors, attitudes, culture – the framework can help move these changes forward"** (Participant's comment)

The case of AMODER is related to deep theoretical, political and methodological transformations within the organization, located in unequal power relations, gender blindness, internal rules and norms that reflect the conception of a hierarchical, bureaucratic organization whose hiring criteria and lending rules are based on merit. In the Mozambican context, civil society organizations follow bureaucratic rules which mirror the bureaucracy of party and state. Within this model, the organization depends on islands of change to move processes forward.

Based in feminist popular education, the facilitators of this process moved among the instruments in the GAL orchestra, the comings and goings of change, moments when it appeared that nothing would happen to tumultuous moments of ideas and stories, a resonating profusion that made many collective dances possible (some real, non-metaphorical dances).

In addition to these spaces for concerts, we also had a powerful backstage: people and dynamics that push fundamental processes off stage. This is how change took place within AMODER. We are referring to the broader team within the organization. The change group that participated in peer learning workshops was made up of five people but 25 people participated in the workshop that took place on Ilha de Moçambique, mentioned earlier, which intervened in the institutional process. This meeting was a strategy to broaden the dialogue within the organization and the institutional change group. Over three days, their explorations dug deep to resolve or understand illnesses within the organization. They explained that they brought the dream back to life, they cured institutional "soul" that was sick.

Participants identified the "illness of AMODER's institutional body" at the initial organizational "hearing the stories" visit. They made a drawing that exposed the organization's difficulties:

> *"AMODER has strong feet, its head is in the right place, it knows what it wants but it is losing its heart, its vitality. Its arms are stretched out to function well in the provinces but the body is sick. Its voice is weak; it does not have the voice of women. Its arteries can be blocked at any moment; communication doesn't work. Its organs are disintegrating; organs like the management team and the board are isolated and don't work. These are its vital organs but they are not functioning" (Participant's comment).*

We would highlight as a result of the "Ilha workshop," as it became known, the recognition within the team of their sense of belong to the collective project, the institutional dream. The event was later described as the moment when AMODER recovered its self-esteem and the meaning of its existence. Specifically, they made changes to their communication and decision-making dynamics, since they recognized that the organization faces difficulties given the unequal dialogue between the administration, management and programs.

Through the GAL, an island emerged in the complex ocean of changes. In AMODER's structure, the head office is located in Maputo, in the extreme south of the country, with several offices in different provinces and districts. The Cuamba office is an island that stands out. It is located in the

extreme north of the country. There was a marked difference in the leadership of one employee who participated in the GAL with regard to her voice, her ability to face power relations and her action at the local level.

A case study within the case study

The problem faced in Cuamba was the difficulty women faced in accessing credit. This participant had a "change task" to achieve. Her strategy was to bring the women together to talk. From this simple initiative, a reflection and support group emerged for women's projects.

> *"No, we already have more women joining the credit program, accessing loans. Above all this group was very special because they exerted pressure on each other. They shared experiences. It is a group that creates space for regular dialogues in which each woman explains to the others what she has done with the loans she received, what is happening in her life regarding personal problems and how she is solving them. The women listen to the opinions of the other members of the group, what they think about what they have heard, and up to a certain point it helps the group to break down the cultural myth here that a woman is tied to their husband who just mistreats her and doesn't help support the family, because our culture is like this here. 'He is your husband and you have to live with him'. This helped a lot".*

As a result, the participant emphasized:

> *"We have several stories from women who succeeded in leaving their marriage and starting a new relationship, a healthy relationship, and they succeed in supporting their families and today are building better houses. Women are better able to talk on an equal footing with the man at home. We have women who take the money and share it, give some to the man, saying, 'go manage your part and together we will make a profit for our home and improve our living conditions'… We have women who are already talking about paying for their children's education, to send them to university, to continue their studies and all this diversity comes through the micro-credit program that we are managing in Cuamba and that we want to expand because it is more inclusive than the other programs we were managing before the GAL process."*

Main strategies in the process:

- We noted that the G@W framework and the power exercises offered important and surprising learning when participants recognized how the organization perpetuates strategies that do not transform the culture and how each person exercises different forms of power. It was at the second workshop that the participants share the first sounds of the internal noises that the gender reflection was provoking within them. They expressed that the change experiment was not a project along the familiar lines of the institution, but that they considered that it could change the institution itself. They better understood the shortcomings of the organization and their own work.   They recognized "*their own prejudices*" and "*where they were in the power triangle*."
- Learning about listening, having the courage to look in each other's eyes, to ask powerful questions and to insist on ideas. The relevance of sharing experiences and recognizing that with these methods it is possible to face the challenge of working with gender at the grassroots level within communities.

Section IV: What were the results observed during the process at different levels and what were the effects of these impacts on the organization, the community and the people who supported the change project?

> **"The big challenge is to demystify and make gender inequalities appear less natural." " (Participant's comment)**

We feel that a deep respect for women as people and as workers already existed within AMODER prior to the GAL process. Given its socialist perspective, the meaning of their work in general is an institutional value. This is the likely explanation of how the organization "re-interpreted" hierarchical and peer relationships and created change strategies. Essentially, what changed through the process was a greater sensitivity to "unconscious" inequalities and discrimination that existed within the organization and in their work with beneficiaries. The invisible slowly became visible.

At the Ilha workshop, we witnessed a good example how the members of AMODER overcame their resistance to become convinced of the need to "invest" more in women. In one exercise each participant interviewed a women as a "potential beneficiary." The interviews were done as an investigation-experiment to try to understand the living conditions that could enable women to be successful in business. The opportunity helped the participants identify more effective questions and the need to record the answers very attentively. The result was expose prejudicial preconceptions about women. It revealed something that had never been considered within AMODER: the simple possibility that a woman could be as capable at running a business as a man!

Another change was the genuine intention of reconstructing and recuperating a "democratic" culture" within the organization. At the Ilha workshop, the desire to bring back "something that used to exist" became clear. Those who were in the organization from the beginning re-appropriated its story – while the "new people" were able to learn it for the first time.

The positions on gender, culture and religion were also discussed openly in all phases of the GAL process, with a notable capacity to critique with respect. The meaning of the organization's values was revisited: one of the team members – often silent – stood up and spoke with conviction about the deep social motivations that inspired the creation of AMODER, and invited the others not to be afraid to embrace the gender question as the organization's next challenge.

Consciousness:

In addition to reflecting on the daily implications of gender inequalities, the participants recognized that the "roots" of the limitations women face in accessing and controlling economic resources were related to the various dimensions of subordination in which women live. AMODER understands that to advance women's economic empowerment, it was necessary to challenge cultural and social norms to achieve economic development, which means changing the norms governing women's access to resources and decision-making power.

From the personal point of view, we concluded the process by recognizing each other as people, regardless of the roles we play within our organization and the nature of our professional

relationship. An intimacy full of respect and mutual responsibility was created. It was a result of the process, but also (and perhaps above all) resulted from the participants' capacity to invest all of their qualities into the process, and to reach out to others with an open heart.

> *"The action learning cycle is very didactic and allows for a lot of interaction. It is more effective, especially in awakening consciousness and looking at group dynamics. It helps you to look at things differently. The methodology opens up your vision and makes things possible. People discover the need for change on their own and become aware." (Participant's comment)*

Individual changes are mainly related to participants' increased awareness of the existence and reproduction of gender inequalities, which constituted an important step toward people initiating change. Improved communication stood out: greater personal openness, greater skill in managing conflicts and a feeling of calmness and assurance. It is important to emphasize the contributions in rebalancing power, increasing internal power and developing the power to work within teams, which resulted in women becoming more vocal and assuming leadership roles in the GAL process, the workplace and family life.

Participants adopted the habit of using massage, relaxation and tai chi in their personal lives. They state they feel changes and perceive greater harmony in their families. At home, they have open up deep, quality conversations about relationships within couples and with parents, brothers, sisters, sons and daughters. Several participants say they have changed their attitude toward housework. Some people shared their experience with breaking cultural rules about family traditions related to men's and women's roles related to social events, mainly regarding wedding rituals. People have had serious health problems but attribute to the GAL process their ability to face these problems with more inner strength. In their professional lives, participants are able to take on new functions with greater responsibility. They no longer think it is normal for other women to suffer and cite examples of helping other women, which motivates them to change attitudes and not accept inequalities. They feel like change agents, active in the struggle that is no longer inferior.

The main change in the organization occurred at the theoretical-practical level. We listened to intense accounts of improvements in their institutional capacity to promote gender equality. The examples showed changes in dynamics and internal rules, and they began to pay greater attention to the specific needs of women within communities. There were changes in the ways of speaking and being within teams and in their interactions with communities and clients. The changes that occurred affected the organizational culture, for example, with regard to internal gender focused policies that became integral to the substance and reflection of institutional life. More opportunities were created to hire women (7 new positions to hire women, using a strategy of selecting women for internships and training them to take on these positions). The GAL process helped the team to understand gender and frame their projects in accordance with donor requirements. They are now better equipped. For example: their latest reports present information regarding women's and men's participation and a gender analysis of their credit programs.

Changes in lending rules are changing women's lives. AMODER now knows its clients better and knows how to do a gender analysis regarding access to credit. "*Now we ask whether women are among the beneficiaries / borrowers or not.*" The result is that there are more women joining the credit program. There is a new understanding of credit as not merely about lending money but

rather creating a means by which people – including women – can change their lives. For example: "within a couple in which the husband is a borrower from AMODER, it has now become mandatory for the wife to co-sign the terms of responsibility regarding loan guarantees". This was a strategy to protect women's assets. "*We expanded the micro-credit program geographically in Tete and Mandimba.*" A women's group was created to reflect on access to resources in Cuamba.

AMODER started using GAL **methods** in their meetings and confronted the stereotype that women are not capable. They now understand that if women are given opportunities and methodologies are appropriate, women understand, participate, open up and take on work with very good results.

There were also **changes in alliances and partnerships**. In Niassa, the Cuamba group of women is working with the Niassa Women's Forum to support the women's projects. They have identified tasks that create opportunities for women.

The GAL process also brought about **changes within the facilitation team and for Oxfam Canada**. The process was considered adequate for the donor that had deeply held principles regarding gender equality approaches and they have a partnership attitude to adopt this method to support changes in the dynamics within the organization.

Oxfam Canada is an international NGO and funding organization that already had strong principles and practices about gender equality, and took a partnership's approach to supporting a process like GAL.

For Oxfam Canada, this GAL process reaffirmed the conviction that a deep and multi-layered process is key in bringing long lasting changes toward gender equality. Oxfam Canada had experimented with the GAL process in other countries (Ethiopia, South Africa) and now in Mozambique. This demonstrates that because it takes into account specific the social, economic, political and cultural context, the methodology is adaptable and replicable.

On the one hand, a process like GAL is costly in term of financial resources and time for Oxfam and for the partners involved. On the other hand, seeing the changes it brings within people and organizations, it is an effective investment. From this experience with GAL in Mozambique, the Oxfam Canada team in the country convinced another sister Oxfams to adopt the methodology. This is the case of Oxfam Solidarité Belgium that started GAL with smallholder farmers unions in Cabo Delgado province, and the Oxfam country strategy for 2012-2017 includes a commitment to gender transformative processes such as GAL, with Oxfam staff and partners.

Facilitation changed the facilitator as much as the "facilitated"

The facilitation team was made up of four people: two facilitators with extensive training in feminist popular education and GAL methods, plus two Oxfam Canada employees who had less experience with facilitation, and acted as local facilitators to stimulate processes within the organizations.

From the perspective of the facilitators, these are dialectic learning processes. The initial proposal provided a road map that was revised and revised again at each meeting and reflection. Here we point out the evaluation made by one of the local facilitators that captures the meaning of facilitating a GAL process.

"I confess that that the beginning of the process, in 2010, I had an unclear idea about what would happen and really no idea of the kind of change that I could expect beyond the initial expectations and work plans we had formulated. But through the process, I learned that the capacity to maintain openness is possible and the very essence of the work of facilitating social and organizational change. What we control are our intentions, the qualities that we know and want to put forward in our work, our capacity to listen and to recognize the opportunity for a turning point, the tools we have at our disposal…" (Facilitator's comment)

The greatest learning from the facilitation was that the "how" and the "why" are what make the difference. The rest is up to those we are meeting, with their openness and freedom to choose. For Oxfam, the GAL was a deeper learning experience about the partners than many previous work conversations. It was possible to pull back the curtain of "politeness" of institutional relations and learn about the love and dedication that many people put into their work. They discovered deep respect for one another, beyond the difficulties and blockages that might exist. They came to see AMODER as a living being, not merely as the sum of people, systems, log frames, procedures and technologies. It was possible to interact with power relations. Energy, blockages, action, stagnation all became visible.

The process is a two way street or an intersection of different streets, between AMODER, the other participating organizations, Oxfam and Gender at Work. What was previously "private and hidden impressions" about the organizations became material for discussion and open conversations between interested people with different perspectives within a process of transformation.

Although, Oxfam considered it appropriate for its employees to act as facilitators, it is important to avoid "mixing up" different roles – perhaps unavoidable for a group as small as Oxfam Canada's team in Mozambique - which can create tensions: "*to facilitate processes, while at the same time monitoring project implementation and demanding reports, may not be compatible roles*". Certainly the path taken by the GAL process, although not written on paper, was to trust in a share ethic.

What could be done differently?

Looking back, we would give more attention to *Outcome Mapping* as an approach to design action plans. A simplified version was presented to the groups just before they starting elaborating their action plans and some concepts were well received (for example, "progress markers:" expect to see, like to see, love to see). Unfortunately, in the chosen format, there was not enough time to do justice to the reflection process and explain well this alternative approach to designing programs. Outcome Mapping, though apparently simple, has its own principles, logic and language, which need to be explored and understood minimally to be applied somewhat effectively.

We know well the extent to which linear and deterministic thinking – the basis of logical framework project design methods – has shaped and continues to shape NGO thinking and approaches to change. To reprogram this frame of thought, it would be necessary to dedicate more time to deepen other perspectives and ways of carrying out projects.

Another adjustment would be greater reflection on criteria that informed the selection of change teams members. This too can reveal the norms that shape an organization's functioning – how it decides who is in and who is outside of the core group and processes. Perhaps we had a somewhat

superficial approach at the beginning of the GAL. It is interesting to highlight that at first AMODER had trouble choosing its change team and almost the entire team based in Maputo attended the first workshop. This might show one of two things: difficulty in making decisions or a genuine openness to participation (we feel that in the case of AMODER, it was the former).

Did we achieve the expected results? What were the expected longer term results? What lessons and dilemmas emerged?

> *"For institutions working in the area, it is worth it to invest and to continue with this kind of work. We do long-term programs because it is not possible to achieve short-term results (Participant's comment)*

To writing this article a year and a half after the end of the GAL, we returned to AMODER and interviewed the team at the head office in Maputo and interviewed a participant over the phone from her office in Cuamba.

The general perception of AMODER's progress is that there are no new elements of change at the individual or organizational level following the GAL. In our estimation, many of the changes mentioned are more the echo of changes seen over the course of the GAL process, rather than new changes.   This is due to various causes, particularly the reduction in funding and the end of Oxfam Canada's accompaniment since the end of the GAL process. With the reduction in available funds, AMODER faces the dilemma of how to carry the increased cost of pursuing their "gender objectives", (e.g. resources for change committee meetings, training, experience sharing, bringing together staff from various provinces and supporting women's credit group beneficiaries) while keeping the organization alive.

AMODER considers it a huge step forward the priority placed on hiring women. Of roughly 12 new hirings, all were women.   There is also a complementary initiative to retain women employees working for AMODER (Niassa) and to give them support to improve their technical knowledge and confidence. The change team participant in Cuamba holds mentoring sessions for new women employees about professional and personal gender issues.

In her interview, the participant in Cuamba said she feels a great deal of freedom to design and implement activities that seek to promote gender equality. There is greater openness among the people who work for the organization. There is openness to dialogue. For example, there was a problem with one of the recently hired women. She felt a lack of accompaniment and support to fulfill her responsibilities properly and she expressed her concern. AMODER created space to discuss this issue. There was an open discussion where they spoke of creating a healthy environment to integrate women. It all ended well because she integrated herself well and came to hold an important position within the organization. Within the Maputo office, the team states that they are more united despite the fact that "good Fridays" have not returned.

In work dynamics, changes can also be seen in the fact that both male and female employees manage loan repayments from borrowers. Previously, only male employees carried out this function in AMODER's credit programs.   The argument that this work was too difficult for women credit agents has disappeared.

With regard to women beneficiaries, we would emphasize that AMODER has extended its microcredit services - the form of credit most sought after by women - and considerably increased the number of women entrepreneurs who benefit from AMODER's services. Women have taken on an important role in signing loan agreements. Couples are counseled to share responsibilities when they receive loans as a couple.

The women's group in Cuamba has grown. The women in the group in Cuamba who benefited from AMODER's credit services are clearly more empowered. They are responding to questions of domestic violence in a more informed manner. Some say they "*no longer accept abuse at the hands of men*". Women who make up this group are starting to request and access larger loans. Many of them have improved their homes or bought new houses. There is ongoing work to encourage the women to exercise their formal rights, for example, by registering their houses and formalizing their land holdings as to provide collateral for loans but primarily to protect themselves in case of land disputes. AMODER's dilemma at this point is whether to increase the size of the group or increase the size of the loans to the original group members.

AMODER's influence on other organizations and individuals
In relation to its partners, AMODER now recognizes that gender is not just the concern of feminist organizations: "*gender is in all the work*". They are coordinating with a partner organization, Malonda Foundation, to open a line of subsidized credit for women. They are interested in knowing how subsidies can be useful to strengthen women's small businesses.

AMODER influenced one of its longstanding partners to have gender disaggregated data to show women's access to credit. This organization, called Kid's World, now is integrating women's access to credit as an objective in their activities and planning.

Limitations, blockages and constraints
The main limitation is related to the reduction in financial resources in the overall context of reduced access to foreign funds in Mozambique. This situation has affected AMODER's capacity to invest in programs that promote increased numbers of women benefiting from credit services. It affects AMODER's plans to hire and train more women.

The problem of women employees still not being empowered in their personal relationships remains. Reproductive life is an added burden to work and the organization still has not managed to deal with this dimension of public-private life. The level of formal education of women who form AMODER's target group is low which affects both hiring women and women's access to loans. Compared to men, women hired need additional training to exercise their functions and women borrowers need more support to develop economic activities with the loans they receive. This ends up overloading certain people within the organization.

Which leads to the lesson that Oxfam Canada's "cutting" its accompaniment, due to budgetary constraints, has caused us to reflect on the efficiency of the process versus the length of the accompaniment of the organizations through the change process. For example, the regular meetings between the AMODER's change team did not take place due to various factors such as geographical distance of one of the members, work pressures and lack of accompaniment by Oxfam Canada given the end of their institutional support.

In this particular situation, the end of Oxfam Canada's funding combines with the strong reduction in AMODER's overall financial resources to interrupt the GAL process. We require further reflection about how to sustain the motivation and pressure needed to keep the process alive. Should this pressure come from inside the organization? Or from a sister organization that had participated in the GAL? What is the appropriate role and what kind of resources could an international NGO or funding organization provide?

Section VI: Conclusion

> **"Working on gender equality creates a consciousness that values more people (or does it value people more?). It creates solidarity and help between people. It compresses hierarchy and stimulates openness and dialogue between everyone at all levels (Participant's comment).**

The changes that occurred during the process can be compared to the fusion of sounds of an orchestra that can be pure melody or resounding chaos. In the case of AMODER, this music was not always harmonious but the organization was open to finding a melody through organizational change, from the individual level, mainly regarding improved communication and personal openness at home and at work, to deep changes in formal and informal rules, access to services and changed attitudes toward women's access and control of resources through credit.

The way of working over these 18 months constituted a veritable "alternative" story about the meaning of gender in organizations. It pushed the limits of AMODER's capacity to take up the challenge of transforming gender relations. The program made visible the systems that maintain inequalities. Substantive and sustainable changes are required to change women's lives, since women are the most effected by gender inequalities. The process showed that women, men and organizations need and should be given the opportunity to change in a systemic way.

For AMODER, the biggest organizational changes started from changed individual consciousness about gender inequalities. They recognized that *"if we didn't change the culture in the organization and people's mentality, everything would collapse"*. For AMODER, it was necessary to work on changes in institutional policies, taking the organization as a whole "*as if we were stirring the ashes to make sparks to find light*". The GAL process touched on the roots *"of personal construction and relationships with other people, it stirred something in our own lives – we consider this was the best way to understand gender".*

AMODER renews its dream of "*promoting development through credit, which entail high costs to help people grow. Helping people develop means supporting women and men in their different needs*".

The GAL was a pause. AMODER continues to navigate its sea of changes. The orchestra is still playing. The chaos of noises emerges frequently. Silence does not mean passivity but can be the expression of subordination. Silence can be resistance and the pause reflection.

Mozambique, Junho, 2013