



## **"Ouro Negro da Malta": Amplifying Youth Voices through SBCC**

### **Issue:**

Due to factors including poor access to information and unequal gender and age relations, children and adolescents' rights in Mozambique are still far from being fully realized. Using teen radio hosts and producers, 'Ouro Negro da Malta' addresses these issues by promoting social and behavior changes in sexual health, education, child marriage and gender, and other relevant areas. Hearing information from peers can further engage young people and promote positive change. This radio talk show is produced on six radio stations in Nampula and Zambézia provinces.

### **Summary:**

Cultural traditions, unequal gender relations, and limited access to information represent the main factors that affect adolescents' rights and well-being in Mozambique. 'Ouro Negro da Malta' is an adolescent-led SBCC radio program produced by young people and for young people. For many, it is the only source of information on critical topics that affect younger populations, particularly sexual and reproductive health, education, child marriage, and gender equity.

Analysis of qualitative results, including testimonials, indicates that young people are engaged in the program. 'Ouro Negro da Malta' demonstrates that if properly supported by adults, adolescents, especially girls, use the program to redefine their life, their perspectives for the future, and their roles in the community. Programs like these can also help inform future initiatives implemented in partnership with youth and marginalized groups.

The discussion will explore both the successes and the challenges of facilitating meaningful participation of adolescents in SBCC programs that address adolescent issues, as well as important considerations, such as competing priorities affecting youth and adult engagement critical to achieving social behavior change objectives.

### **INTERVENTION:**

With the support of local partners, the program identified and trained 24 girls and boys (aged 10-19) as producers to lead the radio program. Through a co-design workshop, these adolescents participated in the ideation and planning phase of the workshop, and through a capacity building session, they were trained in production, and monitoring and evaluation techniques.

While the radio drama component is fiction, the talk show brings the real experiences of young listeners into the broadcasting studio. In the program, teenagers talk about what they know, what they think, how they live their lives, and make decisions about the various issues addressed in the radio drama. Adolescents and young people are the producers and presenters of the shows, and the invited guests are of ages that can easily relate to the audience. Listeners interact with the shows by SMS and calls.

## **RESULTS:**

Interviews confirmed that listeners value the program and that it contributes to changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors—particularly among youth. One challenge that emerged in the process was the retention of adolescent producers. Because young people are involved in a lot of competing priorities such as school and family obligations, their ability to participate is more varied than regularly dedicated staff. One solution to this is to increase the number of young people involved.

It was evident that adult supervision and engagement remain critical to ensure successful youth participation. Adults are still needed to provide oversight in the form of regular monitoring, training, and site visits. 'Ouro Negro da Malta' will offer insight into the role SBCC can play in making sure that young people's voices, experiences, and aspirations can drive positive social and normative change in their communities.

## **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FIELD:**

'Ouro Negro da Malta' elevates the voices of young people and enjoys enormous success because teens were able to see themselves and their concerns represented in authentic and relatable ways. The program breaks down social and cultural barriers to youth participation by facilitating access to resources and including young people in decision-making. Building the skills, knowledge, and confidence of teens helps them to express their aspirations, ignites their advocacy, and role models how to bring down barriers to participation for other marginalized groups.

This presentation will discuss lessons learned from this process and how key audiences, particularly youth, can take on leading roles in designing and implementing SBCC campaigns. While creating social and behavioral change requires a certain level of capacity development, guidance, and support from adults behind the scenes, when young people are empowered in meaningful ways, they can catalyze powerful positive social and behavior change in their communities.

## **Contact:**

**VP Communications: Michelle Lanchart, [mlanchart@pcimedia.org](mailto:mlanchart@pcimedia.org)**