

Between compliance and resistance: exploring discourses on family planning in Community Health Committees in Mozambique

CITATION

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: Although the Mozambican government has implemented a community-based approach to family planning (FP), little is known about the appropriateness of this process. We explore how members of Community Health Committees (CHCs) address and act regarding FP.

Methods/settings: An in-depth qualitative study of CHCs was conducted at two sites in Maputo province—Ndlavela and Boane—using focus group discussions ($n = 6$), informal conversations ($n = 4$) and observation. The analysis followed a phenomenological approach.

Results: CHCs in Ndlavela appeared to transfer more of the expected information than those in Boane. However, in the CHCs at both study sites, we found heterogeneity in CHCs' perspectives leading to conflicting views among committee members (CMs). Arising issues included contraceptive type, target groups, the desirable number of children per family as well as the way FP was to be represented. Moreover, weak communication between CMs and health workers, and lack of payment for CMs' activities influenced promotion of FP.

Conclusions: The two CHCs framed FP in different ways leading to inconsistent participation of CHC members in promoting FP. Policy-makers should consider the diversity of discourses and aspirations of these committees when delivering information to them.