

New Ways Needed to Convey HIV Messages

Maputo, 14 April 2009?

Mozambique's first lady, Maria da Luz Guebuza, said on 24 of March that the country should review the way in which messages about preventing HIV infection are conveyed.

Speaking at the locality of Ndlala, in the southernmost district of Matutuine, as she wound up a four day tour of Maputo province, Guebuza said the age of the people giving the message was an important factor.

Guebuza warned that the fact that adolescents and young people are in charge of conveying messages on HIV and AIDS to all age groups, including adults, may be affecting the way people accept the information.

She believed that adults may not accept the messages conveyed by their own children, nephews and grand children, because HIV/AIDS is a sensitive issue.

Guebuza argued that young people should work with their own age group, while community and religious leaders should work with the adults, if those messages are to have any significant impact.

"We must review, somehow, who should convey these messages to whom. Youngsters should work with those of their own age group, using the language they use in their day-to-day communication", she said.

During her tour of the province, Guebuza talked about prevention of HIV infection and other diseases, such as malaria and cholera, and urged people to work hard to fight against poverty. She promised to channel the concerns raised at her meetings to the relevant authorities.

The latest available statistics put the HIV prevalence rate in Mozambique at 16 per cent of people aged between 15 and 49.(AIM)