

Homosexuality decriminalized in Mozambique!

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With the approval of the new penal code of Mozambique (which you can read about [here](#) and [here](#)) the very last official hindrance for homo/bisexuality has been removed. Homosexuality has not been outspokenly illegal before but it has been a matter of interpretation. The old penal code from 1887 included a paragraph where so called "crimes against nature" were punishable. In some cases this paragraph has been used against homosexuality. This paragraph has now been removed and homosexuality is today officially legal in the country.

However, as we have talked about before in the series of article regarding the Mozambican penal code, you need more than laws in order to make a significant change. Gabriel de Barros from Afrikagrupperna's partner organization AMODEFA explains to us how they are working with the issue. "We try to educate all our medical staff to be tolerant and treat everybody equally regardless of sexual orientation. This is the policy that we have and that we are striving to uphold. However, our staff is also a part of the local context and part of a society that is less tolerant. This can make things more difficult."

One thing that is missing in the new penal code, mentioned by Dr. Maria José Arthur from WLSA, is protection against discrimination towards LGBT persons. "This is one of the areas where there still is work to be done". Dário de Sousa from the LGBT organization LAMBDA agrees with Arthur in an article in the newspaper @Verdade.

Since this is the last part of our series on the new penal code we have put together a little summary to clarify what civil society has succeeded in and where work still needs to be done. As Dr. Maria José Arthur told us here they will never stop fighting for a just and equal Mozambique!

- No punishment if a rapist marries his victim. (Law not applied since independence 1974) - REMOVED
- Proposal of legalized bigamy and penalized adultery - REMOVED
- Criminally responsible at 10 years of age - Raised until 16, but civil society demands 18
- Rape should count as "crime público" - Not successful
- "Crime against nature" - REMOVED
- Rape should include vaginal, anal and oral abuse as well as the introduction of objects - Vaginal and anal included, oral and introduction of objects are not.
- Harder punishment if a rape is committed by more than one assailant. - Not successful

Link to the original article (in Swedish): <http://sodraafrikaidag.se/2014/09/18/homosexualitet-lagligt-i-mocambique/>