



Community Involvement Strengthens Girls' Scholarship Program

Winrock International

Improving Lives and Livelihoods Worldwide



“This program helps us to take care of each other.”

- Christiana Fe Mami

Community involvement is a top priority for staff at Kulima, a local partner of Winrock International, implementing the Ambassadors' Girls' Scholarship Program (AGSP), which is part of President Bush's Africa Education Initiative, implemented by USAID. The program has provided 6,000 scholarships to vulnerable girls in Mozambique.

Kulima's field staff work directly with community leaders to ensure supportive environments for the scholarship program. Community participation helps to overcome the logistical challenges of distributing school supplies to 1,400 girls and monitoring these girls' progress in school. Community leaders have also pledged their commitment to reducing girls' vulnerability.

In a presentation to a group of 30 recipients and their guardians, a local leader stressed the roles and responsibilities required by the scholarship program, “Parents and guardians - if anyone sells a blanket or any other material designated for the selected scholars, the scholarship will be revoked. Girls, you may not be able to control how your family handles the resources, but make sure that you come and tell us - the community leaders. We can help you. Girls, if your marks at school drop, you will lose your scholarship. If the American government gives us support, we need to repay them with good marks and results.”

Kulima also works closely with local Non Governmental Organizations and

Community Based Organizations to help identify and select the most deserving scholarship recipients. Kulima teamed up with LIVANGO, an association of people living with HIV/AIDS, in the Maxixe District. LIVANGO's president, Christiana Fe Mami, explained, "This program helps us to take care of each other. People we know die every day, and this helps us to take care of their children. Usually, when a parent dies, their children are forced to drop out of school. We as an association have not been able to do anything about this, but now we can. It is a great relief to parents who are sick that their children will be taken care of. It's as if an umbrella came from heaven – now it's like these children's parents are here to protect them."

LIVANGO helped identify recipients within their network, but association members also volunteered to find other vulnerable children in the community who might have been missed. They assisted Kulima with home visits and assembled lists of children for Kulima's review. Fe Mami explained, "We had a six person committee. First, we looked within our own networks, and then we reached out to other children in the community. It was difficult work because we had to go house to house. It took two to three days to visit ten houses. Working with Kulima we started to really understand what we were looking for (eligible girls). Now I think that we better understand the criteria, and we could do the entire selection process and verification by ourselves."

Winrock International is a nonprofit organization that works with people in the United States and around the world to empower the disadvantaged, increase economic opportunity, and sustain natural resources.



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