

Muriel Visser-Valfrey

Health communication and education consultant (PhD)

Interests and professional goals

- Policy development and monitoring for health and education.
- Program/project design, implementation and evaluation in education, health and community development in contexts where creative inputs are required.
- Theoretical and applied research in health communication and education with the specific purpose of contributing to policy development and to designing communication and education initiatives in health (with particular focus on HIV/AIDS) and social learning.
- Design and delivery of training courses and materials in the areas of (health) communication, teacher training, and community development.

Professional Experience – long term assignments

2001-2003 – USA: Research and Teaching in Communication and Health

Conducted various theoretical and applied research projects in the United States and in Mozambique related to mass communication policy and practice, perceptions and practices in the field of HIV/AIDS and adolescent attitudes toward tobacco, whilst affiliated with Florida State University as an assistant teacher and (PhD) student. Concurrently, taught various cycles of stand-alone face-to-face and on-line upper level undergraduate mass communication courses as an instructor in research methods, leadership and group dynamics, public speaking, fundamentals of speech, and media legalities.

1997-2000 – Mozambique: Sector Manager Education, Netherlands Embassy

Managed and monitored the implementation of the education sector program of the Netherlands Embassy in Mozambique (total annual budget of US \$ 5 million), involving projects in basic education, curriculum reform, teacher training, vocational education, integrated community development, and higher education. Included participating in the preparation and implementation of the Mozambican Ministry of Education Strategic Plan from 1996-2000 and in the development of a national strategy for addressing HIV/AIDS in education. Concurrently responsible for the supervision of 20 technical experts placed at the Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo, under the auspices of the technical assistance program of the Netherlands Government.

1993-1995 – Mozambique: Training Specialist, Ministry of Agriculture

In the context of an agricultural development program which was financed by FAO, responsible for conducting training needs assessments, course and materials design, course delivery and follow-up, for extension workers and their supervisors in rural areas of Mozambique. Concurrently held responsibility for preparing project proposals in the field of agricultural self-employment, community participation and gender, for financing by various agencies.

1991-1992 – Mozambique: Advisor to Integrated Rural Development Project

Responsible for providing support to the implementation of an integrated rural development project financed by UNICEF in the green belt around Mozambique's second largest city, Beira. Project activities included preventive health care, agriculture and livestock management, adult literacy courses, water supply and income-generating activities. Responsibilities also involved providing training to the project team in project planning and implementation, and supporting the development of training courses and materials for groups of semi-literate women.

1989-1991 – Mozambique: Advisor to Teacher Training Program, Ministry of Education

Planning, and monitoring of the implementation of four UNICEF financed projects in teacher training, adult education, special education and basic education which were under the overall responsibility of the National Directorate for Teacher Training. Included preparation of training modules and teaching duties, as well as regular project support activities.

Short Term Assignments

January 2005/ to date: Provision of technical support (on a part time basis) on HIV/AIDS mainstreaming and program development to Education Sector Specialists in 15 partner countries of the Netherlands Ministry of Development Cooperation. Assignment includes liaising with other donors, developing policy briefs, setting up data base of resources, drafting of a Ministerial work plan on HIV/AIDS and education, facilitation of specific sessions on HIV/AIDS in workshops organized for specialist staff, and direct support to country programs through on-site visits. **Client:** Netherlands Ministry of Development Cooperation, The Hague, the Netherlands.

May 2006: Review of UNESCO's EDUCAIDS initiative with a specific focus on identifying opportunities for linkages and collaborations with other major initiatives on HIV and AIDS in education. **Client:** UNESCO, France.

March/April 2006: Evaluation, as part of a team of three consultants, of the Linking Organization Model of the International HIV/AIDS Alliance based in Brighton, with specific responsibility for country assessments in Ecuador and Senegal. **Client:** International HIV/AIDS Alliance, United Kingdom.

February 2006: Evaluation, as part of a team of five consultants, of the DFID country program for Mozambique, with specific responsibility for the health, education and HIV/AIDS components of the program. **Client:** Evaluation Department of DFID, United Kingdom.

November 2005: Evaluation, as part of a team of five consultants, of the DFID country program for Bangladesh, with specific responsibility for the education, communication, and disaster response components of the program. **Client:** Evaluation Department of DFID, United Kingdom.

June/July 2005: Team leader for a combined international and local evaluation team of joint donor support to the Ministry of Education's Basic Education (SWAp) Program in Mozambique. **Client:** DANIDA, Mozambique.

December/January 2004: Analytic study of progress in the Education Sector in Mozambique from 1998 to 2003, with particular emphasis on the SWAp and the progress toward sector budget support. **Client:** DFID, Mozambique.

October 2004: Preparation of a detailed methodology and guideline for the development of operational plans by government institutions and civil society in response to the 2005-2009

Strategic Plan of the National HIV/AIDS Council in Mozambique. **Client:** National HIV/AIDS Council, Mozambique.

September 2004: Preparation, as part of a team, of selected components of the Education Sector Strategic Plan (2005-2009) for the Ministry of Education in Mozambique, with specific responsibility for ensuring mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS, gender and poverty issues in the Strategic Plan. **Client:** Ministry of Education, Mozambique.

September 2004: Preparation of discussion/training paper on challenges to HIV/AIDS planning in education for sector specialists of the Ministry of Development Cooperation in the Netherlands. **Client:** Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands.

August 2004: Pre-appraisal of the Education Strategic Plan (2005-2009), as part of a team, with specific responsibility for assessing the HIV/AIDS, gender and poverty components of the plan. **Client:** Ministry of Education, Mozambique.

January/February 2004: Research, design and layout of three issue papers and six small case studies on the impact of HIV/AIDS on the education system in Mozambique for use as training materials for teachers, and educational planners at district and provincial level. **Client:** UNICEF.

April 2002: Preparation of a provincial distance education program to provide 10.000 children and adolescents in remote areas with access to upper primary education. The project design includes intensive use of radio as a means of delivery, and integrates health and rural development issues in its programming. **Client:** UDEBA/ Netherlands Embassy, Mozambique.

June/September 2002: Member of a multi-disciplinary team commissioned to design a three-year integrated health development /education /water and sanitation program for the Province of Cabo Delgado (Mozambique), with specific responsibilities for the design of the education and health education (among which HIV/AIDS) components of the program. **Client:** French Development Agency (AFD), France.

June 2002: Socio-economic study of funeral services in the capital city of Maputo as part of a program aimed at improving support to the private sector. **Client:** Irish Aid, Mozambique.

January/February 2002: Preparation of manual on HIV/AIDS prevention for students at Florida State University. **Client:** Florida State University, USA.

August 2001: Drafting of a comprehensive implementation strategy and five-year work plan for the of a provincial \$ 5 million basic education program in the southern province of Gaza. **Client:** UDEBA/ Netherlands Embassy, Mozambique.

April/May 2001: Drafting of the three-year \$ 3 million Country Program for Irish Support to the Education Sector in Mozambique. **Client:** Irish Aid, Mozambique.

October/December 1996: Preparatory activities (field research, staff selection, institutional arrangements) for the implementation of two projects in teacher training and vocational education: **Client:** Netherlands Embassy, Mozambique.

July/September 1996: Research and design of a 5-year (\$ 6 million) project in the area of basic education and teacher training for Tete Province, northern Mozambique. **Client:** DANIDA (Danish Development Cooperation Agency), Mozambique

April/June 1996: Drafting and finalization through intensive stakeholder consultation sessions of a 2-year (\$ 3 million) project for the pre- and in-service training of primary school teachers. **Client:** Netherlands Embassy, Mozambique.

October 1995/March 1996: Supervision of the research, curriculum design and institutional arrangements for the establishment of a private pilot primary school in Maputo, Mozambique.

August/September 1995: Preparation of a national two-year (\$ 3 million) program to support the financing of teachers' salaries in Tete Province, Mozambique. **Client:** DANIDA.

July 1995: Support to the Mozambican Human Rights League in drafting a project proposal for institutional support to its core activities in the country. **Client:** DANIDA.

May/June 1995: Preparation of a five-year project proposal for organizational strengthening of the provincial agricultural training centers in Mozambique's 11 provinces. **Client:** DANIDA.

May/September 1994: Supervision of the design and implementation of a nation-wide literacy and vocational training program for demobilized soldiers. **Client:** UNOMOZ.

March/May 1993: Evaluation of training programs for medium level agricultural technicians at two National Training Institutes in Mozambique. **Client:** FINNIDA (Finnish Development Organization).

July/October 1992: Evaluation of training activities of six UNICEF supported projects (with specific responsibility for evaluating the programs in health and emergency support) as part of a multi-disciplinary team of four consultants. **Client:** UNICEF.

July 1990: Preparation of training modules on school community linkages for school directors. **Client:** Ministry of Education/ World Bank.

Professional Qualifications

2004 PhD in Mass Communication with Minor in Measurement and Statistics, Florida State University, United States of America.

Dissertation title: "The Impact of Individual Differences on the Willingness of Teachers in Mozambique to Communicate about HIV/AIDS in Schools and Communities."

1999 Masters in Distance Education, University of London, United Kingdom. Title of Thesis: "Helping Learners to Learn: an Assessment of Support to Teachers Studying via Distance Education in Mozambique."

1989 Bachelor in Agricultural Sociology, Wageningen Agricultural University, The Netherlands. Main areas of study: Agricultural Research and Agricultural Knowledge Systems.

Awards and Honors

- Recipient of the International Communication Association (ICA) award for outstanding doctoral dissertation, May 2006.
- Recipient of a PhD in Mass Communication from Florida State University with distinction, 2004.
- Nominated associate for the Program of Instructional Excellence at Florida State University 2002/2003.
- Recipient of the 2002 Award for Outstanding Practice as a Graduate Student in Instructional Development (for a module on HIV/AIDS prevention) of the Association of Educational Communications and Technology (AECT), Division of Instructional Development.

- Recipient of the 2002 Award for Excellent Teaching by a Graduate Student, Instructional and Developmental Division of the International Communication Association (ICA).
- Recipient of the 2002 Outstanding Doctoral Student Award, College of Communication, Florida State University.
- Elected member of the Scholastic Honor Society Phi Kappa Phi, Florida State University Campus, 2002.
- Recipient of the MA in Education from the University of London with distinction, 1999.

Memberships

- Association of Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) – www.aect.org
- Learning Development Institute (LDI) – www.learndev.org
- International Communication Association (ICA) – www.icahdq.org
- National Communication Association (NCA) – www.natcom.org
- Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) – www.aejmc.org

Papers, Presentations and Publications

- *Impact of individual differences on teachers' willingness to communicate about HIV/AIDS in schools and communities* (2005). Paper accepted by the Health Communication Division of the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference to be held in Dresden, Germany, in June 2006.
- *Communicating about HIV/AIDS – attitude functions and willingness to talk about condoms and sexuality in Mozambique* (2005). Paper accepted by the International and Development Communication Division of the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference to be held in Dresden, Germany, in June 2006.
- *A deserted landscape? The footsteps of teachers in the fight against HIV/AIDS* (2005). Lecture at the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture in The Hague, the Netherlands, on World AIDS day, December 2005.
- *Teachers – Drivers of Change* (2005). Lecture held at the Conference on HIV/AIDS and Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights, The Hague, November, 2005.
- “...But first there are the communication skills”: Visser, L, and Visser, M. (2005). *Distance Learning*, 2(4), 24-29.
- “Thank you for (not) forgetting us” – reflection on the trials tribulations and take-off of distance education in Mozambique (2005). Visser, M., Visser, J. Buendia, M. In *Trends and Issues in Distance Education: International Perspectives*, Information Age Publishing, Greenwich.
- *Building bridges over troubled waters: Learning from teachers in the fight against HIV/AIDS* (2004). Issue paper produced for the Ministry of Development Cooperation, The Netherlands.
- *The Scientific Mind and HIV/AIDS*. Coordination of the Panel Session on HIV/AIDS at the Advanced International Colloquium on Building the Scientific Mind held in The Hague, The Netherlands from May 17-20, 2004.

- *Beyond the looking glass –Addressing HIV/AIDS through education (2004)*. Presentation for the Department of Social Sciences of the University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.
- *“Life or lunch, what do we choose?” – HIV/AIDS in the workplace (2004)*. Paper produced for UNICEF Mozambique for inclusion in the Basic Kit for Teachers. Maputo, Mozambique. Publication Forthcoming.
- *Addressing the impact of HIV/AIDS (2004)*. Paper produced for UNICEF Mozambique for inclusion in the Basic Kit for Teachers. Maputo, Mozambique. Publication Forthcoming.
- *Teaching about HIV/AIDS (2004)*. Paper produced for UNICEF Mozambique for inclusion in the Basic Kit for Teachers. Maputo, Mozambique. Publication Forthcoming.
- *A Cornucopia of Problems: Visser, J., Visser, M., Burnett, R. (2004)*. TechTrends, 48(2), 70-72.
- *“Inverted commas”: A critical reflection on ambiguity in the context of HIV/AIDS”*. Paper presented at the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT), Anaheim, CA, October 22-26, 2003.
- *We Closed Our Books and Put Them Away: Learning Stories from Mozambique – A Critical Reflection on Communicating about the Reality and Future of Learning*. (Visser, M. & Visser, J.). Paper accepted by the International Division and presented at the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT), Anaheim, CA, October 22-26, 2003.
- *Functions of Attitudes toward Cigarette Smoking among Adolescents: An Initial Investigation and Possible Implications for Anti-Smoking Messages*. (Visser, M. & Arpan, L.). Paper accepted by the Social Cognition Division and presented at the National Communication Association (NCA) in Miami, November 19-23, 2003.
- *The Story Behind the Headlines –HIV/AIDS in a Leading South African Newspaper*. (Visser, M. & Hsu, C.) Paper accepted by the International and Intercultural Division and presented at the National Communication Association (NCA) Conference in Miami, November 19-23, 2003.
- *Gender Patterns and Smoking Susceptibility among Adolescents Who View Actors Smoking*. (Arpan, L. Heald, G. & Visser, M.). Paper accepted by the Health Communication Division and presented at the annual conference of the International Communication Association (ICA) in San Diego, CA, May, 2003.
- *Talking about the unknown*. Visser, J. & Visser, M. (2003). TechTrends, 47(1), 5-8.
- *Where Teachers Fear to Tread – Communicating About HIV/AIDS in Mozambique*. Paper Published in the Proceedings of the 2002 Conference of the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT), Dallas, TX, November 12-16, 2002 (in press).
- *The Legacy of Malcolm X in Africa: On the Relevance of Black American Rhetoric for Africa in 1964*. Paper accepted by the Division of Rhetoric and Public Address of the Southern States Communication Association (SSCA) Alabama, Georgia, April 2003.
- *Where Teachers Fear to Tread – Communicating About HIV/AIDS in Mozambique*. Paper presented at the International Conference of the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT), Dallas, TX, November 12-16, 2002.

- *They Killed the Messenger: An Analysis of Media and Framing of News in Mozambique.* Paper Presented at the International Conference of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), Miami, FL, August 5-9, 2002.
- *HIV/AIDS in Mozambique – A Critical Reflection on World AIDS Day.* Presentation for the Global Gatherings of the International Centre of Florida State University, November 22, 2002.
- *Motivation and Communication in Distance Education – Do we get the message?* Paper presented at the International Conference of the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT), Atlanta, November 2001.
- *Distance Education in Mozambique.* Paper presented at the 18th World Conference of the International Council for Distance Education. Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA, June 2-6, 1997.
- *A Ligação Escola –Comunidade – um manual para directores de escolas primárias.* Ministry of Education/ World Bank. Maputo, Mozambique, 1994.
- *A Ligação Escola-Comunidade – um guião para o professor primário.* Z. Cabral, A. Calane, M. Teixeira, M. Visser. Maputo, Moçambique, 1990. Ministério da Educação/ UNICEF.

Language Skills

Proficient in Dutch, English and Portuguese.

Good command of Spanish and French

Personal information

Nationality The Netherlands

Contact Information

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