

Towards
Gender Equality
in
Mozambique

A Profile on Gender Relations



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Executive Summary

Gender and macro-economic policy

The concepts of 'gender' and 'gender relations' are fundamental instruments to describe and analyze inequalities between men and women. Gender relations are shaped by cultural, social, economic and political values/norms and are subject to change when these norms change, making it possible to renegotiate gender relations and to negotiate for greater equality between men and women. In Mozambique, as it would also seem in all other countries, gender relations place a heavier work burden on women and domestic responsibilities rest squarely on the shoulders of women, to an important extent releasing men for more leisure and more involvement in public life. This is also reflected in laws and traditional norms that subject women to the social, economic and political authority of male kin. Therefore, a study of gender relations in Mozambique must repeatedly stress the relative deprivation of women in relation to men, although *in se* a study of gender relations serves equally well to describe the relative deprivation of men.

The division of labour is also an important tool to identify existing gender imbalances, since gender roles and status for men and women are largely based on the types of work that are deemed appropriate for men and women. While women participate in all types of work in the home and community, productive and reproductive, much of their work is seen as an extension of their roles as mothers and nurturers. This work is unremunerated and thus it is not counted in a country's formal economic statistics, obfuscating a significant part of women's contribution to the creation of economic wealth.

Since the last decade, Mozambique has experienced strong economic growth, but the country's economic performance occurs unevenly in the provinces and disparities between urban and rural trends are notable. Human development indicators show that women have fewer entitlements (access and control over productive resources), fewer capabilities (access to education and health services) and lower status (women participate less in decision-making). These limited entitlements, capabilities and status are obstacles to women's ability to fully participate and benefit from economic opportunities. This is particularly the case among rural women and female-headed households. Economic policy should include gender

specific targets and resource allocation mechanisms to address gender imbalances.

A poverty study found controversial evidence that appears to indicate that female-headed households are not poorer than male-headed households. These findings, however, are contestable on the grounds of the methodology used in the study. A more useful approach would seem to analyze female-headed households in terms of their greater vulnerability to poverty and ability to choose livelihoods rather than in terms of their level of cash income.

Critical issues for support can be identified, *inter alia*:

- Review if and how current macro-economic policies address gender imbalances, in particular of rural women
- Promote the collection of sex-disaggregated data and statistics that will help make women's reproductive and subsistence work visible
- Include both practical and strategic gender concerns in SWAP negotiations, including specific targets and resources allocation mechanisms promote the use of the Women's Budget analysis.

Sources of income and sustainable livelihoods

In all regions of Mozambique, the majority of the rural population is engaged in agriculture. Most rural households depend on subsistence agriculture/peasant smallholdings cultivated by women. Low levels of productivity characterize this type of agriculture. Gender relations restrict women's ability to access and control land, extension services, technology, credit and labour; thereby compounding low levels of productivity. This results in reduced food security, deepening poverty and the degradation of natural resources.

Natural resources are increasingly under pressure, not only because of agriculture but also due to rapid urbanization. Except for natural resources that are exploited under formal concessions, it is mainly women who are chief responsible for the resources used by households such as water and firewood, and it is women who are responsible for waste management and sanitation.

The slow expansion of the formal labour market and women's inability to actively influence the trade union movement has resulted in high levels of unemployment and job uncertainty among female

workers. These are often the first workers to be laid off since the male workers are still regarded as the family's main breadwinner. Such gender stereotyping also accounts for the fact that female workers may often receive lower wages than male workers for the same work.

Many women resort to the informal sector as small- and medium-scale entrepreneurs (SME). Gender roles imply that female-owned enterprises are predominantly home-based and characterized by limited capacity for capital accumulation. Gender relations that restrict women's ability to raise start-up funds or credit limit the economic potential of SMEs.

Critical issues for support include:

- Improvement of agricultural productivity, particularly in the subsistence sector
- Involvement of men and women in the sustainable management of natural resources, both in rural and urban areas
- Promotion of women's participation and representation in the trade union movement delivery of appropriate credit systems to stimulate female-owned SMEs.

Human development and capabilities

Capabilities refer to the level of education and health of an individual. These are not only aspects of well being but also enable an individual to fully participate in the economic and political processes. Education and health are fundamental aspects of Mozambique's development, synonymous with the development of human capital.

Mozambique has one of the lowest adult literacy rates in SADC. There are more illiterate women than men and most illiterate women live in the rural areas, where traditional gender roles bar girls from entering school. The same gender roles account for a higher dropout rate among girls, so that very few girls persist into secondary and higher education. Gender stereotypes also determine the choice of study fields.

Health indicators show a clear imbalance between the provinces and between urban vs rural zones. Life expectancy for women in Zambezia is 38 years, compared to 61.8 years in Maputo City. Rural infant mortality and maternal mortality are among the highest in the world and are both significantly higher in rural areas. This is related to the fact that immunization and antenatal care

provisions are substantially better in urban areas: urban areas have twice the level of immunization coverage than rural areas. Almost all urban women have access at least once to antenatal care, compared to Zambezia where less than half of pregnant women receive such care. The government's policies focus predominantly on reproductive-health related issues, leaving little scope for preventive and broader-based health needs such as malaria, TB etc.

Health needs are also exacerbated by the lack of clean and safe water. More than 90 per cent of female-headed households rely on non-piped water.

The development of human capital is severely threatened and undermined by the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS, which is expected to have consequences at all levels of public and private life. Women are not only physically vulnerable, but gender roles also render them powerless to negotiate for safer sex. Traditional practices such as polygamy, male infidelity and widow inheritance and poverty compound women's vulnerability to HIV/AIDS. The impact of HIV/AIDS will be felt partly through the death of large numbers of productive adults, leaving orphans. Girl orphans in particular will have an increased workload as they have to take over the domestic responsibilities and subsistence agriculture traditionally performed by their mothers or female relatives.

Critical areas:

- Support the implementation of the Education Sector Strategic Plan 1997–2001, particularly the Plan of Action that mainstreams gender and addresses gender constraints to girls' education
- Support the implementation of the SWAP for health, including gender activities and targets
- Promote sensitization campaigns to improve community management of water and waste by both men and women
- Promote sensitization campaigns for both men and women on the imperative need to use safe sex
- Support the implementation of the National AIDS Plan, particularly with regard to orphans.

Legal situation and human rights

The Constitutional principle of non-discrimination prohibits discrimination based on sex, thus upholding the principle of gender equality. International instruments such as CEDAW further reinforce the

latter. In practice, however, there are numerous cases of discrimination against women. This is mainly due to the following factors:

Ordinary legislation that dates from the colonial period contains provisions that uphold patriarchal submission of women to fathers and/or husbands. Although important laws have already been reviewed and amended such as the Land, Labour and Family Laws the process of legal reform is slow and much remains to be done by the Commission for Law Reform. Customary law embodies the traditional patriarchal values of the local communities and ethnic groupings and in the absence of effective and efficient justice and police systems to administer and enforce the law, many conflicts are still brought before community courts or elders and/or chiefs. Since legal aid and legal literacy initiatives are mainly concentrated in Maputo City, the vast majority of women are unaware of the legal protection and rights that the Constitution affords them. This is particularly the case among uneducated rural women.

Violence against women is widespread. An important step will be the formal qualification of violence against women as a criminal offence under the Penal Law that is being reviewed.

Critical areas include:

- Support to the on-going law reform process, including support for NGOs so that they are able to participate in the discussions and advocate for gender issues
- Disseminate new laws
- Support legal literacy campaigns, particularly those that target rural women
- Support the training of legal personnel and police officers
- Support for networks/coalitions that lobby for the criminalization of violence against women
- Undertake further research about the role of women in conflict situations and conflict resolution.

Political situation and decision-making

The 1990s were a decade of political reform, with the transition from a single-party Marxist regime to a multi-party parliamentary democracy. In this context, it is the right of all individuals to participate in decision-making processes and to be adequately represented in these processes.

At first sight, the number of women who

participate in decision-making appears to be quite high, solely on the grounds that 27.8 per cent of all parliamentarians are women, which is well above the SADC average. However, this masks the fact that there are only few women in senior government positions, very few judges and only 15 per cent of all civil servants are female. In addition, many women face particular difficulties to participate in public office on account of conflicting gender roles and gender prejudices.

Once elected or appointed, it is important that those women in office should be able to effectively lobby for gender equality and address those issues that are of immediate concern to their female constituency members. This requires not only advanced training in leadership, advocacy and gender analysis skills but also a constant and free-flowing dialogue with female constituency members as well as with all sections of civil society.

Consequently, key areas to be highlighted include:

- Support for the *Núcleo de Promoção da Mulher na Função Pública*, particularly so that it can extend its activities to the provinces
- Provision of leadership and gender training for women MPs and the Council of Ministers
- Promotion of dialogue between decision-makers and constituencies, particularly rural women
- Promotion of dialogue between decision-makers and NGOs and support of coalitions/advocacy networks

Media and ICT

The media and communications sector is not only a fundamental aspect of a democratic society, but it is also a key instrument to promote gender equality, to raise public awareness of women's issues and to document women's changing status and roles in society by upholding role models.

The two main characteristics of the media sector are first that the media are concentrated in Maputo City, with only limited coverage of the provinces, and secondly that most media operate in Portuguese, even though this is spoken only by a minority of the overall population. These two characteristics raise important questions about access to the media in the rural areas, particularly among illiterate rural women. It also highlights the importance of the production of media programmes/messages in local languages and the importance of adjusting the contents of media

messages to be relevant to rural populations, especially the illiterate media users. Few women participate in the media sector as journalists or editors, so that the media still predominantly portray traditional gender roles and stereotypes.

Although the Internet and new information technologies are increasingly recognized as powerful tools for development, Mozambican women face numerous barriers restricting their use of Internet and ICT. These barriers include the lack of income, lack of time, lack of training and lack of access.

Therefore, key areas include:

- Production of media programmes in vernacular, with content adjusted to reflect rural realities and poverty reduction strategies
- To respond to the high illiteracy rate it will be necessary to develop alternative forms of social communication, such as radio, drama etc.
- Training of media personnel so that they will portray women as active and empowered citizens and showcase appropriate role models
- Promote the use of Internet and ICT by NGOs and individuals by integrating required skills in the school curriculum and through the provision of computers

The girl child

Gender relations are also defined by age. The implication thereof is that a gender approach requires the systematic mainstreaming of girls' special needs and concerns into policies and programmes that promote equality between men and women at all stages of an individual's life cycle.

Currently, interventions by national counterparts focus predominantly on the following areas, which can be identified as areas for support by donor agencies:

- Ensuring primary education for all children and secondary education in particular for girls whose chances of attending school are curtailed by their socialization as future wives and mothers;
- Adolescent reproductive health including teenage pregnancy and girls' vulnerability to sexually transmitted diseases
- Girls' vulnerability to gender-based forms of violence.

Some of these issues can be addressed through legislation that can regulate compulsory primary

education, abortions, minimum age for marriage and legal instruments to protect female students against violence by male students and teachers.

National inputs for the promotion of gender equality

In recent years there has been a greater awareness of gender inequalities and different forms of discrimination against women that occur in both private and public life in Mozambique.

With the support of bilateral and multilateral donor agencies, government and civil society have begun to develop policies and institutional mechanisms to address such questions. In doing so, they have often used data and research generated by independent academic institutions such as UEM and CEA. The main institutional mechanism is the *Grupo Operativo*, which is chaired by the Minister for Women and Coordination of Social Action. This newly created Ministry is expected to institute a separate National Directorate for Women and Gender in the near future.

National counterparts in government and civil society have identified a need for more advanced training in gender mainstreaming and gender analysis as well as strengthening of their coordination role. Gender targets remain vague and general, with a tendency to focus on practical gender needs rather than strategic gender needs, thus avoiding the challenge of renegotiating gender relations. Finally, there is not yet a uniform mechanism to systematically allocate funds to gender activities so that activities have to be funded on an ad-hoc basis.

In the light of this, the following key areas for donor support include:

- Technical capacity building, i.e. training of counterparts in gender analysis and mainstreaming and the identification of specific objectives and strategies to meet strategic gender needs
- Institutional support, i.e. material support to equip and staff gender units and gender focal points
- Strengthening of the coordination role of MMCAS and the *Grupo Operativo* at all levels, i.e. internal, external, between central level and the provinces, between government and civil society
- Inclusion of gender activities in sector plans and budgets.



I. Gender and Macro-Economic Policy

The concept of gender

‘Gender’ refers to the relationship between men and women that arises from the roles assigned to them by society. It is different from sex that is biologically determined and does not change over time and place. Gender recognizes that men and women are socialized into culture-specific roles that are reinforced by parents, teachers, peers, culture, religion, society and laws. These roles vary over time and place and are influenced by many factors such as ethnicity, location and class. The fact that these can change means that gender relations can also be renegotiated within a society to improve the status of women and to redress inequalities between men and women. In Mozambique, as in most if not all other countries, women have a heavier work burden and more domestic responsibilities than men, who are thus available for more leisure and more involvement in public life. Furthermore, laws and traditional norms subject women to the social, economic and political authority of male kin. Therefore, a study of gender relations in Mozambique must repeatedly stress the relative deprivation of women in relation to men, although *in se* a study of gender relations is gender-neutral.

The gender-aware approach to development identifies and analyses the ways in which men and women have different status, entitlements and capabilities, which cause the differences in the ability of men and women to participate in the social and economic development of their country. A *gender and development approach* (GAD) therefore promotes the better identification of real community needs by ensuring that the needs of both women and men are addressed.¹ Rather than focusing exclusively on women, this approach is concerned with relations between men and women and it challenges unequal decision-making and relations of power not only between men and women but also between rich and poor.

Demographic data

Community needs are determined in part by demographic factors. Mozambique’s population stands at almost 17 million. It is one of the poorest countries in the world. At a glance, the key demographic characteristics include:

- 52 per cent of the total population are women
- Mozambique has a very young population structure, which is due to high fertility and mortality rates
- 71 per cent of Mozambicans live in rural areas, 29 per cent live in urban areas; half of the urban population lives in Maputo City
- 38 per cent of the total population is concentrated in Zambezia and Nampula provinces
- 70 per cent live under the poverty line of \$0.40 per day.

The country is divided in 10 provinces plus Maputo City. It has 3 distinct socio-economic zones: the North (Niassa, Cabo Delgado, Nampula provinces) that accounts for 33 per cent of the total population; the Central provinces (Zambezia, Tete, Manica, Sofala) that are home to 42 per cent of the total population and the Southern region (Inhambane, Gaza, Maputo Province and Maputo City) that comprises 25 per cent of the total population.²

While, generally speaking, gender relations in Mozambique are characterized by inequalities between the sexes, the exact nature of these inequalities will differ from region to region due to the heterogeneity of the population. There are various ethnic and racial groups, that each has their own traditional customs and norms.³ In the main, the southern groups are patrilineal, while matrilinealism occurs north of the Rio Save, whereas Islam is primarily encountered in the coastal communities and cities.⁴ The cultural diversity is apparent in the diversity of vernacular languages, of which the most important are Emakhuwa (spoken by 26 per cent of the popula-

¹ Gaynor, C. for Irish Aid, *Policy on Gender on an Operational Footing : Final Report*, 1995, p 3–4

² See annex 1 for a map illustrating administrative divisions and economic zoning in Mozambique, and annex 2 for an overview of the population distribution by region, province and sex.

³ See annex 3 for a map illustrating the distribution of different population groups in Mozambique.

⁴ ‘Patrilinealism’ can be defined as a principle of social organisation, whereby descent is traced through the male line, so that material goods, societal status and authority can be devolved from father to son.

‘Matrilinealism’ is said to occur where descent is traced through the female line. However, matrilinealism does not mean that rights and goods are devolved from mother to daughter; matrilinealism legitimizes the transfer or inheritance of rights and goods from the maternal uncle (i.e. mother’s brother) to a beneficiary.

tion), Xichangana (11 per cent) and Elomwe (8 per cent). Although it is the official language, only 50 per cent of men and 30 per cent of women speaks Portuguese. The use of Portuguese at home or as mother tongue is essentially an urban phenomenon.⁵

Most of the population (71 per cent) lives in the rural areas where the effects of the civil war are still felt in the lack of infrastructure and lesser availability of social services. The remaining 29 per cent live in urban areas. In the past ten years there has been a marked increase in urbanization, which is due both to rural-urban migration motivated by the search for better wage labour opportunities, and the reclassification of certain districts as urban in the 1997 Population Census. On the whole, there are just a few more women living in the rural areas than men. Nationwide, 72 per cent of all women live in rural areas, compared to 70 per cent of men. In the southern regions, however, women greatly outnumber men in the rural areas.⁶ This is due to the historic patterns of male labour migration to the mines and farms in neighbouring South Africa and Zimbabwe. Census data show that male labour migration is not only a rural phenomenon, but occurs also within Mozambique, where both men and women are attracted to cities.⁷ For both men and women, migration is highest among the 15–29 year age group. The young population structure is reflected in 1990 data that indicate that roughly 46 per cent are under 15 years, 52 per cent are 15–64 years old, while only 2 per cent is 64 years or older.⁸

The economy as a gender structure: macro-economic policy and gender

Individuals have different abilities to participate in economic activities. An individual's level of poverty is linked to his/her measure of access to resources, control over productive resources and level of participation in political and decision-making processes/structures. The unequal gender relations are based on the fact that men and women have different entitlements (access to and control over productive resources such as land, credit, labour), different capabilities (access to education, health, water and sanitation, other services) and different status (laws and customs that assign different rights and roles). These differences may be due to laws and cultural norms or to macro-economic policies that put men and women on a different footing.

At the basis of the inequality between men and women is the division of labour. Examining what types of tasks men and women usually carry out in a day and how much time they spend on those activities, it can be seen that women have triple roles: reproductive work, productive work and community work.⁹ Much of the work done by women is part of an unpaid care economy, deemed appropriate for women due to their presumed natural disposition for roles as mothers and nurturers. Most of the work traditionally deemed appropriate for men is usually part of the paid commodity economy. As women's work is unpaid, it is considered inferior and this strengthens the perception that women have a lower social status.

⁵ INE, *Mulheres e Homens em Moçambique*, 2000, p 38

⁶ INE, *Mulheres e Homens em Moçambique*, 2000, table 1.2 p 6

⁷ For an overview of migration patterns, see also annex 4, reproduced from INE, *Mulheres e Homens em Moçambique*, 2000, graph 1.5 p 17

⁸ Pontara, Tique and Osorio for UNDP, *Feminization of Poverty Study (draft of June 2000)*, p 25

⁹ The differing gender roles of men and women can be categorized as either reproductive, productive, community participation or community leadership. 'Reproductive work' includes child bearing/rearing responsibilities and domestic tasks required to guarantee the maintenance and reproduction of the labour force. It covers not only biological reproduction, but also cooking, looking after the sick and elderly etc. Reproductive work tends to be done almost exclusively by women and is often described as 'domestic work'. 'Productive work' is work done by both men and women for payment in cash or in kind; its main objective is to provide a source of income. It includes both market production with an exchange value, and subsistence/home production with actual use value, but also potential exchange value. 'Community participation work' refers to activities usually undertaken by women at community level, as an extension of their reproductive role, to ensure the provision and maintenance of scarce resources of collective consumption such as water, health care and education. This is voluntary work done in free time. 'Community leadership work' describes activities undertaken at the community level often within the framework of national politics or local decision-making processes. This work is usually done by men and may be paid directly or result in increased power and/or status. The term 'triple roles' refers to the fact that women tend to work longer and more fragmented days than men as they are usually involved in three different gender roles (reproductive, productive and community participation work). Men, on the other hand, tend to be involved mainly in productive and community leadership work. Definitions adapted from: UNDP, *Gender and Development Briefing Kit*, p 46

Economic growth has been steady since the 1987 Economic Reform Programme (*Programa de Reforma Económica* – PRE) launched by the government with the support of the IMF and World Bank. The objective of this PER was to introduce macro-economic policies for structural adjustment programmes (SAP) to liberalize the market. In order to minimize the social impact of the SAP such as cuts in the social services, job losses on the labour market and informalization of work the PRE was later transformed into the Social and Economic Reform Programme (*Programa de Reforma Económica e Social* – PRES).

Steady growth is apparent from the following: since 1996, Mozambique has registered an average 10 per cent growth rate in a non-inflationary environment and GDP has grown by 7.5 per cent. Per capita income in Mozambique is \$ 230.¹⁰ Mozambique's growth has been led by smallholder agriculture, due to the increase of land under cultivation. The services sector has been stimulated by a revival in transport, tourism and the financial sector. Large-scale agriculture and industry have recovered more slowly on account of protracted privatization and restructuring. In spite of this, some types of manufacturing such as food, drinks, chemicals and minerals have experienced robust growth of almost 40 per cent annually between 1995 and 1997.¹¹ Based on the achieved macro-economic stability, Mozambique qualified for debt relief under the HIPC initiative in June 1999, resulting in debt relief amounting to roughly \$ 3.7 billion. Enhanced debt relief is expected for 2001, which will substantially improve Mozambique's external viability and sustainability. Since debt service savings are directed to poverty reduction, it is expected that this will also bring benefits to the poor.¹²

However, the human development index shows that economic growth has not resulted automatically in greater human development for all.¹³ The

Gender Adjusted Development Index (GDI) compares the extent to which women and men have different access to factors necessary for longevity, literacy and income. It thus adjusts the Human Development Index to account for the gender disparities in the three variables. In 1994 Mozambique had an HDI ranking of 166 (out of 175 countries) and a GDI of 139. In 1997 the country's HDI retained its ranking, while the GDI decreased to 142. This means that while the overall HDI did not change, the human development of women relative to men worsened, affirming that women in particular were less able to benefit from the economic growth trends. This raises two questions: to what extent is women's lesser ability to participate in the economic structure due to gender inequalities and to what extent do macro economic policies maintain gender inequalities, thereby deepening the poverty of women.

A break down of the GDP and human development indicators per province also shows that economic growth and human development occurs unevenly.¹⁴ Human development has improved in all regions, but that of Maputo City outstrips all other regions. The human development level of Maputo City is comparable to that of Botswana or Swaziland, whereas that of the northern provinces is comparable to that of Sierra Leone or Ethiopia. The human development rate of Maputo City is roughly two times greater than that of the rest of the South, two and a half times greater than that of the Central region, and three times greater than that of the Northern provinces.¹⁵ On a national level, 70 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line of \$ 0.40 per day, and the incidence of poverty is higher in rural areas (71.3 per cent) than in the urban areas (62 per cent).¹⁶ The picture that emerges is that the situation in rural areas is worse than in urban areas.

Taken together, the human development indicators clearly highlight the relatively unfavour-

¹⁰ World Bank, *Country Assistance Strategy*, p 2

¹¹ World Bank, *Country Assistance Strategy*, p 4

¹² World Bank, *Country Assistance Strategy*, p 7

¹³ The *Human Development Index* is a composite of three basic components of human development : longevity, knowledge and standard of living. Longevity is measured by life expectancy; knowledge is measured by a combination of adult literacy and mean years of schooling; standard of living is measured by purchasing power based on real GDP per capita adjusted for the local cost of living. Definitions taken from the *National Human Development Report for Mozambique 1998*, p 9

¹⁴ See annex 5 for an overview of regional human development levels.

¹⁵ UNDP, *National Human Development Report 1999*, p 23 graph 2.8

¹⁶ UN Coordination Office, *Common Country Assessment 2000*, p 16

able position of rural women. Therefore, a central question when assessing the impact of institutional and policy framework is whether local, regional and national plans and policies favour or constrain development in the interest of the rural poor – and rural poor women in particular.

Poverty is defined by the government as the inability of individuals to ensure for themselves and their dependents a set of minimum basic conditions for their survival. The government's Five-Year Plan for 2000–2004 gives priority to the reduction of absolute poverty with an emphasis on education, health and rural development. This policy objective is reflected in the annual Economic and Social Plan (*Plano Económico e Social* – PES) and National Development Framework for Poverty Reduction (*Plano de Acção para a Redução da Pobreza Absoluta* – PARPA). The PARPA was approved in December 1999 and aims to reduce the incidence of absolute poverty from the current level of 70 per cent to 60 per cent by 2004. The Population Policy (*Política de População* – PP) was approved in April 1999. Its objective is to influence mortality, fertility and migration so that population trends will contribute towards economic growth and human development.

The PES, PARPA and PP are linked to the government's Post-Beijing Plan of Action, i.e. their objectives are consistent with key objectives of the Post-Beijing Plan of Action. Some objectives are related to welfare (i.e. they make provisions for certain groups of women who are classified as vulnerable groups), thereby addressing practical gender needs. Other objectives seek to empower women (i.e. they improve women's access to health and education so that women can overcome different entitlements and improve their capability to benefit from economic growth), thereby addressing strategic gender needs.¹⁷ While these objectives constitute a positive step, the realization of gender targets will be a long-term process, since it requires systematic mainstreaming of gender concerns into all sectoral policies and a clear allocation of

financial means to implement relevant programmes. While gender concerns may be included in policy documents, specific targets are not specified and each sector must still define its own targets and allocate the necessary resources. In this context, gender can be usefully integrated in the negotiations for Sector-Wide Approaches (SWAPS).

The *Women's Budget* is an instrument to analyse the implications of the State Budget for gender relations. In particular, it measures the amount of public revenue, expenditure and investment allocated to programmes that promote gender equality in different sectors.¹⁸ The Ministry of Finance is currently working to apply the Women's Budget analysis. While this is an important tool, the analysis of public finance also requires that women's contribution to the unpaid care economy and subsistence economy be brought into the picture. This data is not available, because women's reproductive and subsistence work is unpaid and unpaid work is not reflected in the national statistics and is not counted towards the GDP. Informal work also not counted in the GDP. The GDP only considers women's participation in the formal wage sector, and since only 20 per cent of women are estimated to be active in the formal labour force, the GDP therefore underestimates the contribution that women make to the economy.

Poverty as a gender structure: female-headed households

The discussion of the relative poverty of female-headed households gauges the impact of the macro-level policies on the micro-level, i.e. the poverty status of households. Although controversial, there is a general perception that SAPs have a negative impact on gender relations, leading to a greater incidence of poverty among women and female-headed households in particular. This perceived 'feminization' of poverty has been linked to the fact that in most countries SAPs coincides with an increase in the number of female-headed

¹⁷ 'Practical gender needs' are linked to daily life and usually relate to unsatisfactory living conditions and lack of resources (e.g. access to water and sanitation, health care and education, increased income etc.). 'Strategic gender needs' are long-term and relate to improving the position or status of women and men. They are less visible and more ideological in that they are about changing power structures and influencing attitudes and behaviour. Definitions adapted from: UNDP, *Gender and Development Briefing Kit*, p 46

¹⁸ A *Women's Budget* analysis seeks to identify the number of female beneficiaries of government programmes and to gauge the amount of resources spent on achieving gender equality. This requires both quantitative indicators to measure the number of beneficiaries and qualitative indicators to measure the impact of programmes on gender equality.

households, informalization of the economy, and greater reliance on the unpaid care economy due to cuts in social sector spending.

Although the majority of households are headed by men (70 per cent) the number of female-headed households has increased from 23 per cent to 30 per cent from 1980 to 1997.¹⁹ There are slightly more female-headed households in rural areas than in urban areas (31 per cent versus 28.5 per cent).²⁰ There have been no cuts in public spending on social services, given that any reductions were amply offset by overseas development aid flows that increased after the introduction of the PRES. On the other hand, the rationalization, privatization and restructuring in the formal economy has resulted in job losses, pushing more persons into the informal sector, which has expanded – although this is difficult to measure. Many agro-industries, such as cotton processing/textile weaving and the cashew nut sector are labour intensive, employing a large number of female workers. Privatization and the removal of protectionist barriers have resulted in the lay-off of many workers, particularly female workers since women are under-represented in the trade unions.

According to the national poverty survey conducted in 1997, female-headed households are not significantly worse off than male-headed households.²¹ This conclusion seems, at least in part, due to methodological issues. First, aggregate national poverty estimates are based on household surveys that use income and food availability as basic indicators. These surveys assume that resources are shared equally between household members, which is clearly not the case since within households access to and control over resources is defined by gender relations. These surveys thus do not provide an insight into the depth of poverty among different household members. This would require an analysis of who has access to and control over resources, who controls family labour, inequalities and rigidities of the traditional gender division of labour, inequalities in consumption and household expenditures.

Secondly, income or consumption per household does not provide information on how these factors may fluctuate by season or by life cycle, nor

on the vulnerability of families to shocks such as disease, war, floods etc. The well being of household members cannot be read off the overall status of the household. The possible benefits of the mother's education on her children's welfare may occur only above a critical minimum income or consumption level. Thirdly, there is no uniform or operational definition of what constitutes a female-headed household: headship can be based on authority, economic contribution, or simply the temporary – or permanent – absence of an adult male. Fourthly, this highlights the need to distinguish between the different categories of female-headed households. Certain categories may be socially sanctioned and receive external support (married women whose husbands are temporarily away and who receive remittances) while others may in fact be female headed households without being counted as such (where men are present but not economically active). Poor households tend to have multiple earners and female headship may be a temporary arrangement to accommodate male migrant labour.

Gender analysis would suggest that on the whole, female-headed households in Mozambique do appear to be poorer. The following supports this:

- Higher dependency ratios due to the absence of male adults
- Lower average earning of female main earners
- Fewer assets and less access to productive resources due to gender imbalances in both customary practices and legislation
- Longer hours of domestic work/care economy

The poor enforceability of women's rights in the home over income expenditure, in the community over property and productive resources, and in the labour market suggest that women are more vulnerable to poverty and have less alternative livelihoods and limited choices/capabilities. It would therefore seem more appropriate to base the analysis of female-headed households on the concept of their greater vulnerability to poverty rather than on their actual level of income and consumption. Vulnerability correlates with an individual's or household's choices of livelihoods.

¹⁹ INE, *Mulheres e Homens em Moçambique*, 2000, p 19

²⁰ INE, *Mulheres e Homens em Moçambique*, 2000, p 22

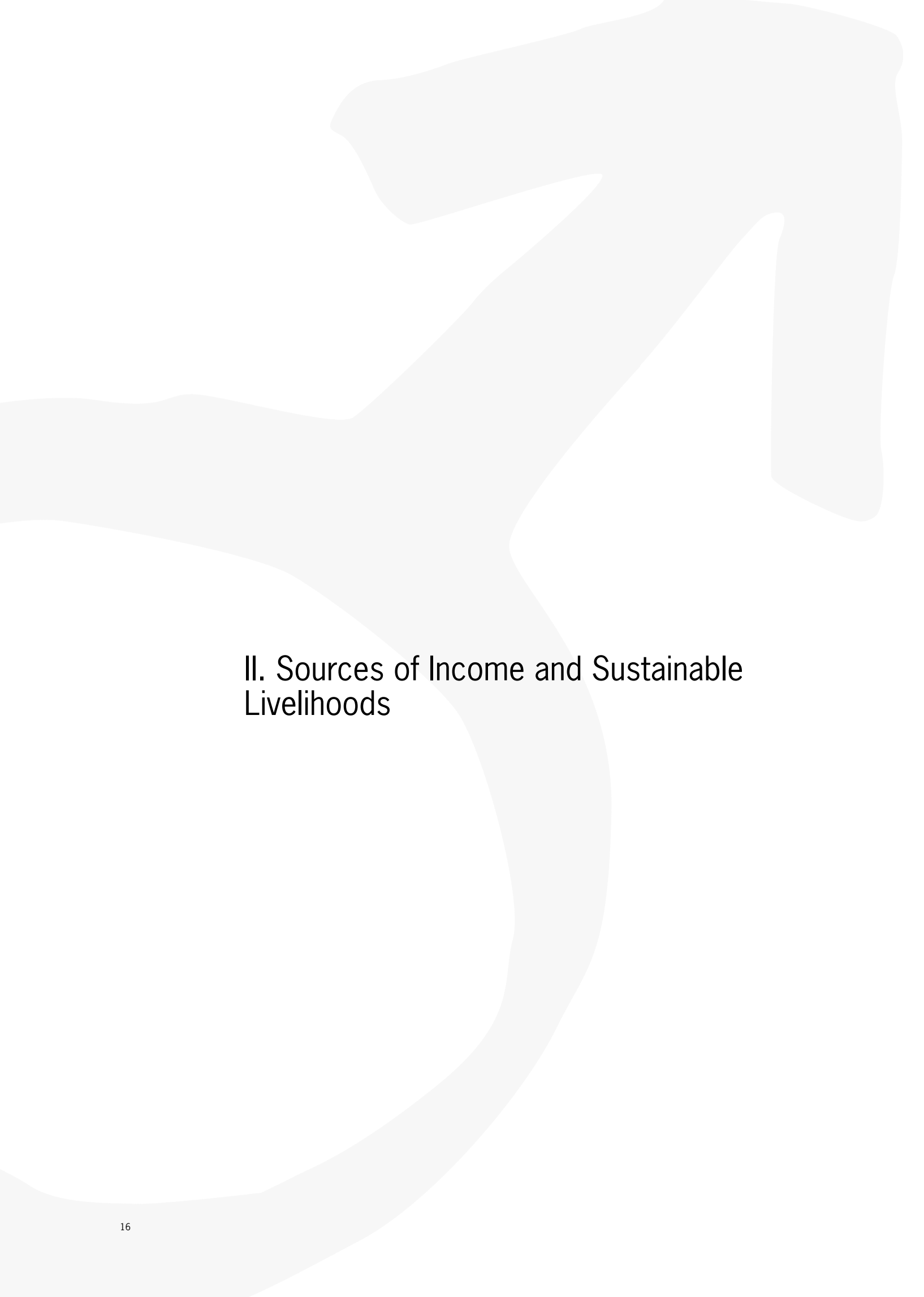
²¹ MPF, *Understanding Poverty and Well-Being in Mozambique: First National Assessment*, 1997

SUMMARY AND STRATEGIC AREAS

- Concepts of ‘gender’ and ‘gender relations’ are fundamental instruments to describe and analyze inequalities between men and women – gender relations are changeable/renegotiable.
- The division of labour is also an important tool to identify existing gender imbalances, since gender roles and status for men and women are largely based on the types of work that are deemed appropriate for men and women – much of women’s work is seen as an extension of their roles as mothers and nurturers, unremunerated and thus rendering invisible a significant part of women’s contribution to the creation of economic wealth.
- Strong economic growth, but this occurs unevenly in the provinces and disparities between urban and rural trends are notable.
- Human development indicators show that due to gender relations, women have fewer entitlements (access and control over productive resources), fewer capabilities (access to education and health services) and lower status (women participate less in decision-making) – particularly among rural women and female-headed households.
- Economic policy should include gender specific targets and resource allocation mechanisms to address gender imbalances.
- There is controversial evidence that appears to show that female-headed households are not poorer than male-headed households, but findings are contestable on methodological grounds.
- A more useful approach would seem to analyze female-headed households in terms of their greater vulnerability to poverty and ability to choose livelihoods rather than in terms of their level of cash income.

Critical issues for support can be identified, inter alia:

- Review if and how current macro-economic policies address gender imbalances, in particular of rural women
- Promote the collection of sex-disaggregated data and statistics that will help make women’s reproductive and subsistence work visible
- Include both practical and strategic gender concerns in SWAP negotiations, including specific targets and resources allocation mechanisms
- Promote the use of the Women’s Budget analysis.



II. Sources of Income and Sustainable Livelihoods

Agricultural production, food security and natural resources

Although two thirds of the economically active population is involved in agriculture, the sector accounts for only 25–30 per cent of the volume of the GDP.²² More than half of the rural population relies on agriculture, whether subsistence/small holding agriculture or commercial farming. Agriculture in general is characterized by low productivity, due to the use of traditional farming methods, lack of money to invest in better means of production, lack of knowledge about extension services and limited credit facilities. The lack of knowledge about the market and poor storage facilities means that households are not stimulated to produce surplus to sell on the market. Such a lack of local surplus means that goods have to be transported – at a considerable cost – and distributed through limited commercial networks. In view of this, the government's National Agricultural Development Programme (PROAGRI) was elaborated. Its main objectives are to promote food security through a self-sufficient family-farming sector that produces surplus for the market, and to improve the commercial networks, including the road and transport infrastructure.

Household farming, particularly subsistence agriculture, is traditionally a woman's job. 91.3 per cent of women are involved in agriculture.²³ While men may clear the land and participate in harvesting, other tasks such as sowing, planting, weeding, irrigation etc. are women's tasks. Together with food preparation and fetching water, these activities take up the bulk of rural women's time, resulting in a far greater workload than men have. The low productivity of the sub-sector is in part at least due to gender relations that limit women's access to land, credit, extension services and technology, and labour. Although there is plenty of land available, the typical family farm is less than three hectares because this is what can be farmed with manual labour using simple tools. The low productivity of the sub-sector triggers other consequences such as malnutrition, longer hours of work so that girls are not available to attend school, less opportunities to supplement subsistence farming with cash cropping and less income generation.

All these factors combine to deepen the poverty of rural households and deprive women producers of the means to overcome their structural poverty. It should therefore be examined to what extent PROAGRI addresses the structural gender imbalances inside the family-farming sector. This translates into two questions: (1) what are the concrete measures proposed to address gender imbalances and assist female producers; (2) to what extent do the PROAGRI partners have the necessary capacity to mainstream identified gender concerns into multi-sector policies and plans?

The lack of infrastructure results in a high cost of transport, which is often a disincentive for commercial agriculture and limits the ability of women traders to engage in petty trading/vending. Hence the importance of including women and their expressed transport needs in the identification of roads earmarked for demining and rehabilitation. In rural areas the emphasis is on the rehabilitation of tertiary roads. Efforts are being made to increase the number of female labourers in the brigades and maintenance committees. Improved roads facilitate the spread of HIV/AIDS, in particular along the principal commercial transport routes known as the Nacala, Beira and Maputo Corridors. This necessitates sensitization campaigns aimed at truck drivers who frequently have casual relations with a sex worker along the route.

Female-headed households have less food security than male-headed households: 4.2 months vs. 3.5 months; due to low productivity. Approximately 65 per cent of female-headed households occupy less than 1.5 hectare against 47 per cent of male-headed households. Only 20 per cent of women in Mozambique have more than 2 hectares. In the North, 33 per cent of families with less than 0.5 hectare per adult consume 80 per cent of the required daily calorie intake. In the south, the calorie intake is much lower, especially for female-headed households since access to land is regulated through a patrilineal system whereby a woman depends on her husband for land and she generally only has access to smaller tracts of land of less than 1 hectare. In the south low soil fertility and erratic rain compounds food insecurity and malnutrition. The country produces almost

²² UNDP, National Human Development Report 1999, table 3.3, p 38

²³ INE, *Homens e Mulheres em Moçambique*, p 28

enough to feed its population, but remains vulnerable to sporadic shocks such as the recent floods that devastated southern and central Mozambique in February and March 2000.

Among the most important environmental concerns are soil degradation and land erosion, deforestation, desertification, sewage pollution and solid waste disposal, industrial pollution. Rural women are the chief managers of natural resources such as water, land, forests etc. Based on their reproductive and food production roles, they collect water, gather firewood and gather forest products. Urban women are also responsible for water and firewood, and where there are no adequate public services they too must look for suitable supplies. When natural resources are gradually depleted, women are compelled to spend more time traveling greater distances to obtain them. Men tend to be more involved in tasks related to their productive roles; i.e. felling trees for construction and fencing, preparing fodder for livestock, clearing land and cultivation of cash crops.

The biggest problem that women face is the lack of access to land for family food production and alternative forms of income; hence the importance of credit and extension services to acquire new production methods and technologies. Women are unlikely to have equal opportunities to participate in decision-making over the use of natural resources, especially not where the community itself has been marginalized by the granting of concessions over natural resources (e.g. timber) to large, commercial enterprises. Women tend to cultivate more fragile land because of their traditional farming methods. To counter this women must either increase their productivity or find alternative forms of income, whether in formal employment or in the informal sector.

Employment, private sector and informal sector

45 per cent of population is economically active. Of this, 75 per cent is engaged in subsistence agriculture, 19 per cent are wagedworkers, and 5 per cent are self-employed outside of agriculture.

There is high unemployment because the formal labour market is slow to expand due to the restructuring of firms and low educational level of employees. In this context, the annual social and economic plan (*Plano Económico e Social* – PES) for

2000 focuses on the promotion of employment, self-employment and vocational training.

Gender imbalances in the labour market are apparent from various types of discriminatory practices such as occupational segregation whereby women tend to be concentrated in certain occupations and feature most often in the role of support staff instead of managers and high status employees. Other forms of gender-based discrimination are differential earnings for male and female employees, and higher unemployment rates among women. COMUTRA, the women workers' syndicate has members representing various sectors and regions, but is institutionally unable to place female workers' issues on the agenda of the trade union movement.

There is a general assumption that men are the primary producers and that they are thus in greater need of employment and income earning opportunities. Women are viewed as secondary earners, more suited to informal and small-scale earning opportunities such as in the informal sector; where profits are low and competition is stiff.

The informal sector is defined as a range of economic units, mostly in the urban and peri-urban areas, that are owned and operated by single individuals with little capital and limited labour, who produce and distribute goods and services to generate income. The informal sector already employs a significant portion of the urban labour force. It is expected that this economy will continue to grow, particularly as poor households are increasingly excluded from the formal sector due to globalization and restructuring. Women in particular are seeking alternative forms of employment and alternative livelihoods, as they are often the first to be squeezed out of the private sector. They are increasingly becoming self-employed as owners or managers of micro-, small- and medium-scale enterprises (SME), especially in trading and low technology manufacture of artisan products.

The high prevalence of women in the informal sector is due to the following characteristics of the sector: easy entry; labour intensive and cheap, simple technologies. However, these characteristics also account for the production of low quality goods and high levels of competition. Women's entrepreneurial activities are frequently combined with household tasks and agriculture. This means

that these activities are home-based and small-scale, which also makes them less profitable than male-owned SMEs.

In addition, this type of entrepreneurship is characterized by the limited capacity for capital accumulation, whereby most SMEs cannot expand, and thus cannot realize their full economic potential as a strategy to secure a livelihood. Typically, women have less wealth or assets that can be used as collateral to secure credit. This is exacerbated by gender relations that make it impossible for a woman to take out bank loans without the approval of male kin. Gender inequalities are reflected in legal structures with regard to ownership, and these determine access to credit: who owns land, capital assets, credit, materials, inputs and implements. Outside of the major cities, almost no credit facilities are available for self-employed or SMEs. Where facilities exist, credit is expensive.

For this reason, the government intends to promote new channels of credit delivery for poor women, such as short-term loans and micro-credit. It is striking that in general women entrepreneurs have a much higher repayment rate and generally manage to repay the credit within the set time frame. In general however, the success of micro-credit schemes is partly based on enabling circumstances such as:

- Provision of training to accompany loans
- Non-subsidized interest rates
- Formal memberships requirements that are designed to attract disciplined borrowers.

SUMMARY AND STRATEGIC AREAS

- In all regions of Mozambique, the majority of the rural population is engaged in agriculture, with a pronounced dependency on subsistence agriculture/peasant smallholdings cultivated by women.
- Agriculture is characterized by low levels of productivity, especially where gender relations restrict women's ability to access and control land, extension services, technology, credit and labour, resulting in reduced food security, deepening poverty and the degradation of natural resources.
- Agriculture and rapid urbanization are putting increasing pressure on natural resources; women are mostly responsible for the resources used by households such as water and firewood, as well as waste management and sanitation.
- High levels of unemployment among female workers are due to the slow expansion of the formal labour market and women's under-representation in the trade union movement.
- Gender stereotyping accounts for lower wages for female workers.
- Many women resort to the informal sector as small- and medium-scale entrepreneurs (SME). Gender roles imply that female-owned enterprises are predominantly home-based and characterized by limited capacity for capital accumulation. Gender relations that restrict women's ability to raise start-up funds or credit limit the economic potential of SMEs.

Critical issues for support include:

- Improvement of agricultural productivity, particularly in the subsistence sector
- Involvement of men and women in the sustainable management of natural resources, both in rural and urban areas
- Promotion of women's participation and representation in the trade union movement
- Delivery of appropriate credit systems to stimulate female-owned SMEs.



III. Human Development and Capabilities

Education

Education is a basic human right, recognized by the Constitution, and fair provision of education to girls as much as to boys is a major political responsibility. The benefits of girls' and women's education are strikingly obvious, such as greater earning power for families, reduced fertility, reduced infant and maternal mortality and better public health, which in turn can change existing gender relations. Universal education for children and adults has been a primary goal since independence. By signing the Jomtien Declaration of 1990, Mozambique has affirmed its commitment to gradually introduce compulsory education.

Although some early successes were achieved since independence, the subsequent civil war destroyed a large part of the school infrastructure, particularly in the rural areas, resulting in lower enrolment, the stagnation of the literacy programme and a general decline in the quality of education. Adult literacy has increased from 16 per cent in 1970 to 40 per cent in 1995, but Mozambique still has one of the lowest adult literacy rates in SADC. Over 60 per cent of the adult population is illiterate: 46.6 per cent male – 75.7 per cent female. Mozambique also has the lowest combined gross enrollment ratio of 25 per cent in the SADC region: just under 60 per cent of children in the age group 6–12 years are out of school. The primary school teacher: pupil ratio stands at 58 per cent, which is the second highest in SADC after Malawi. 53 per cent of children do not reach grade five, compared to SADC average of 35 per cent.²⁴ The recent floods have highlighted the vulnerability of the educational network to natural disasters: it is estimated that 210,000 children, 3000 teachers and 600 schools were affected. The cost to infrastructure alone is estimated at over 30 million USD.²⁵

With regard to girls' and women's education, the main observations are that there are significant gender differences: 89 per cent of rural women are illiterate, versus 57 per cent of urban women.²⁶ There are significant barriers to girls' entry and there is a higher dropout rate among girls, so that the majority of girls don't make it into secondary and higher education. There are also important

regional differences, with significantly fewer girls and young women attending educational facilities in the North and Center.

This is consistent with the findings of the PARPA: "There is a strong relationship between education and poverty. However, differences between the poor and non-poor are lower than gender differences and area of residence, where women and rural areas are worse off. This means that a poor child in an urban area has a greater probability of attending school than a non-poor child in a rural area. Moreover, in rural areas a poor boy has a stronger probability of attending school than a non-poor girl. There is also a strong relationship between the education of the head of the household and the poverty of the household: families whose head has a better education tend to be less poor. This relationship is especially strong in urban areas and in female headed households."²⁷

The Education Sector Policy and Sector Strategic Plan for 2000–2002 (ESSP) are based on three key elements: expansion of access, improving quality and relevance of education, and strengthening the capacity to manage and sustain improved educational services. It pays specific attention to the four As: access (getting in), attainment (staying in), achievement (actually learning something) and accomplishment (deriving socio-economic benefit and wellbeing from education).²⁸ To address gender issues, the Gender Action Plan has been elaborated. There are also several provincial strategic plans and almost all provinces have gender units. Primary education is the foremost priority, but since there are so many illiterate adults government strategies will be complemented by simultaneous development of functional literacy programmes that are based on active participation of local communities, and that target women and adolescents in particular.

Primary school education comprises grades 1–5 (EP1) and grades 6–7 (EP2). 43 per cent of pupils in EP1 are girls. Although the absolute number of girls enrolled is increasing, the proportion is decreasing. The target is to increase the proportion of girls in EP1 from the current 43 per cent to 45 per cent by 2002. Each year, around 30 per cent of all children

²⁴ SAPES, UNDP & SADC, *SADC Human Development Report 1998: Governance and Human Development in Southern Africa*, p 67

²⁵ UN Coordination Office, *CCA 2000*, p 63

²⁶ Forum Mulher, *Marcha Mundial*, 2000, p 14

²⁷ MPF, *PARPA*, p 7

²⁸ Netherlands Development Assistance, *Operational Guide : Girls and Primary Education*, 1997, p 3

repeat at least one class. In 1999, the average duration to complete EP1 (1999 figures) was estimated for at 12.7 years for boys versus 13.8 years for girls, whereas the normal duration should be five years. The longer duration is related to the fact that 32 per cent of boys and girls attend only one shift instead of a full day and this is particularly the case for girls who have domestic work to carry out at home.

The central question is how to get and keep more girls in primary schools. Constraints/barriers to girls' education have been identified:²⁹

- Low value of girls' education compared with boys' education since girls are not expected to get jobs; the investment in or opportunity cost of education may not be worth it.
- Girls' domestic work load and seasonal labour
- Tension between traditional and formal education: early marriage and childbearing, lobolo, initiation ceremonies and alternative instruction (e.g. korannic schools)
- Poverty
- Lack of female teachers, who are needed as role models and to supervise girls
- Sexual harassment by teachers and male students
- Distance from home to school and fewer facilities for girls, such as inadequate residential accommodation for girls.

The ESSP foresees specific measures to increase girls' participation in primary education, such as:

- Provision of more and better educational facilities, particularly in the Northern and Central provinces and rural areas (construction of school buildings, provision of residential facilities for girls and female teachers)
- Improvement of the quality and relevance of education through curricular reform, in-service training of teachers, motivation of teachers and distribution of schoolbooks and teaching materials.

Most secondary schools in urban centers. Mixed schools are the norm, but boarding schools lack

facilities for girls. Many girls do not make it into secondary education. Participation of girls in secondary education is estimated at 36 per cent compared with 42 per cent at primary level.³⁰ Repetition rates in EP2 are higher than in EP1: among boys the repetition rate is 46.5 per cent, versus 53.5 per cent among girls. Specific measures are planned to counter these constraints, such as study grants, exemption of school fees, making teacher training programmes gender sensitive, awareness of communities of the need to reduce domestic workload of girls by providing access to water and reducing expenditure on wood fuel by using improved stoves. Curricular reform should make learning programmes more relevant to the specific needs of female learners.

Given that Portuguese is the official language it is also the main medium of instruction. For the majority of the population – particularly in rural areas – it is a second language, resulting in learning difficulties, isolation and limited reading material. This in turn can lead to a fallback to illiteracy after formal training.

Only 1 per cent of students enter higher education. The sub-sector is small and underdeveloped. In technical and professional education girls constitute 20 per cent of students in basic and medium level technical education.³¹ The dearth of women in higher education is related to women's reproductive role, which is deemed incompatible with study, and, to some extent, lack of self-confidence.

Gender stereotypes are also reflected in the choice of study fields. Commercial Institutes offering secretarial, administrative and accounting courses registered 60 per cent women students, whereas Industrial and Agricultural Institutes have a significantly lower number of female students.³²

Measures proposed in the ESSP include the creation of a gender-sensitive school environment, provision of indirect material support to families (access to water, better stoves) so that girls have time to study, direct support to the poorest women students (study grants, exemption of paying fees, free distribution of school books and materials).

²⁹ Walker, B. and Gender Team Ministry of Education, *Mainstreaming gender in the Education Sector Strategic Plan 1997–2001: Plan of Action*, February 1998, p 9–12

³⁰ Council of Ministers, *National Education Policy and Strategies for Implementation*, resolution n 8/95 August 22, 1995, p 25

³¹ Ibidem, p 30

³² Walker, B. and Gender Team Ministry of Education, *Mainstreaming gender in the Education Sector Strategic Plan 1997–2001: Plan of Action*, February 1998, p 8

Efforts will be made to stimulate young women to enter fields traditionally reserved for men (e.g. exact sciences, engineering, technology) and agricultural courses. Similar measures can help young women gain access to universities.

The SADC Protocol on Education and Training recognizes that human capital formation, and higher education in particular, is critical to participate proactively in globalization. It calls for a greater focus on the access to and quality of higher education, specifically for women, in the area of new technologies.³³ In January 2000, the Ministry for Higher Education and Science was created to coordinate educational and research needs of contemporary society. A positive step is that a woman Minister was appointed in the person of Lidia Brito, the former vice rector of UEM.

Early Childhood Development /formal pre-school services are delivered by MMCAS, but it is recognized that NGOs have a special expertise in this area. The expertise of NGOs, private sector and religious organizations can also be used to provide special education for disabled pupils in normal schools and those who require attendance in special schools).

Health

The right to a healthy life is recognized in article 94 of the Constitution as well as in various world summits in which Mozambique participated.³⁴ However, the health indicators show that the widespread poverty limits the attainment of this right by all. Indicators show very clearly that there are alarming imbalances between provinces and rural-urban areas.

In 1997 life expectancy for women comes to 44 years and 40.6 years for men, but in Maputo City women's life expectancy was 61.8 years compared to 55.1 years for men. In the central region women's life expectancy drops to 41.6 years compared to 38.8 years for men, but in Zambezia province the life expectancy is only 38 years for women and

36 years for men.³⁵ According to the 1997 census it was calculated that life expectancy for both sexes would increase to 47 years by 2005, but this is now expected to decline to 35.7 years due to HIV/AIDS.³⁶

Nationwide, the infant mortality rate is 146 per 1000 live births but with marked differences between the sexes (152.9 for boys and 137.8 for girls). Zambezia and Nampula have the highest infant mortality rates (192 and 173 for both sexes). The poor levels of health care coverage in rural areas are reflected in the global infant mortality rate (urban infant mortality rate: 101 and rural infant mortality rate: 160).³⁷ Similar urban-rural imbalances are reported in under-five mortality rates, which are expected to increase up to 20 per cent due to HIV/AIDS in the next five years. Immunization coverage for children between 12 and 23 months and for pregnant mothers has increased, but again the immunization rate is much higher in the urban areas than in rural areas. In urban areas immunization is administered to 85 per cent of children and 58 per cent of pregnant women, compared to 36 per cent of children and 27 per cent of pregnant women in rural areas.³⁸

Maternal mortality is estimated at 1,500 per 100,000 deliveries, one of the highest rates in the world. The majority of maternal deaths are attributed to direct causes (complications related to pregnancy and delivery), whereas only a minor number of maternal deaths are related to indirect causes such as malaria and infectious diseases. 96 per cent of urban women receive antenatal care at least once during pregnancy compared to 65 per cent of rural women. Low coverage is most notable in Zambezia and Sofala provinces, where less than 50 per cent women receive such antenatal care, and among adolescents and women with no education.³⁹ In the rural areas maternal mortality is exacerbated by the long delays in seeking medical help and the lack of proper equipment and trained medical personnel.⁴⁰

³³ SAPES, UNDP & SADC, *SADC Human Development Report 1998: Governance and Human Development in Southern Africa*, p 44

³⁴ World Summit for Social Development – Copenhagen 1990, World Population Summit – Cairo 1995, Beijing World Conference for Women 1995

³⁵ UN Coordination Office, *CCA 2000* uses estimates based on the Demographic and Health Survey of 1997

³⁶ Ibidem, p 52

³⁷ Ibidem, p 52

³⁸ Ibidem, p 53

³⁹ Ibidem, p 53

⁴⁰ Ibidem, p 53

Family planning services are widely available but there is a low demand. Approximately 40 per cent of women and 30 per cent of men declare that they have no knowledge of modern contraceptive methods. Consequently, the total prevalence rate is very low: 5.1 per cent among women and 6.5 per cent among men in union. In urban areas prevalence drops to 2 per cent compared to 17 per cent in urban areas. Prevalence is correlated to female education: 3 per cent utilization by women with no education compared to 27 per cent for women with secondary school or higher education.⁴¹

Government policy for the health sector focuses on expanding and upgrading primary health facilities particularly in rural areas. Among its objectives are: a reduction of intra-hospital maternal mortality to 100 per 100,000 deliveries; 90 per cent prenatal and 50 per cent post-natal care coverage, 50 per cent institutional delivery coverage and 12 per cent family planning coverage.⁴² This policy – reflected in the sector-wide approach planning – views women's health needs in terms of women's reproductive role instead of being more broad-based, and thus neglects other important health needs such as those related to cervical and breast cancer, gender-based violence (rape, assault), illegal abortions and mental illness. Critical gender issues comprise the identification of health problems arising from women's triple roles and heavy work load; consideration of time and travel constraints when planning and locating services; training of adequate numbers of female health staff and review of the capacity of local health care services to understand and meet women's specific health needs.

Water and sanitation

Overall, it is estimated that 50 per cent of the population has access to safe water, but there are significant differences between urban/peri-urban areas and rural areas. 74 per cent of urban and peri-urban households have access to safe water, compared to only 40 per cent of the rural population.⁴³ 92.3 per cent of female-headed households rely on non-piped water: 56.4 per cent use wells

and 16.4 per cent draw water from rivers and lakes.⁴⁴

Although in the last 5 years access to water has improved due to the expansion of water supply systems, the problem is steadily getting worse due to uncontrolled urbanization. This carries a higher risk of regular outbreaks of diarrhea and other waste-borne diseases such as cholera. The Government's Implementation Manual for Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (1999) highlights the need to include community participation in the management, storage, use and disposal of water.

This community-based approach recognizes that women are traditionally responsible for fetching water, disposing of waste and caring for the sick. For these reasons it encourages women to participate in local water and sanitation committees entrusted with the management of water and waste disposal as well as personal hygiene education programmes. Such initiatives should not however exclude women from training programmes in pump maintenance and should encourage men to actively share their responsibility for household water and hygiene.

Gender and HIV/AIDS prevalence among women

Although data on HIV/AIDS prevalence in Mozambique is limited, surveys of pregnant women in ante-natal consultations show that while there is a higher infection rate in the central and northern provinces than in the south, in Maputo prevalence is increasing very fast and faster than in any other part of the country (see table, NHDR 1999 p 72). Rapid assessments conducted in 1998 show that urban and rural areas are equally affected. In 1999, an average of 600–700 people a day became infected with HIV. Infection rates are highest among adults (15–49 years). It is estimated that in the year 2000 15 to 16 per cent of Mozambican adults (15–49 years) are infected with HIV.

Women and girls are physically more vulnerable to HIV infection. In recent years, however, there has been a growing recognition that the vulnerability of women to infection is more than a

⁴¹ Ibidem, p 54

⁴² MPF, *PARPA*, cited ibidem, p 57

⁴³ Ibidem, p 49

⁴⁴ INE, *Mulheres e Homens*, 2000, p 67

physical/medical issue. Various social, cultural and economic factors increase women's risk of contracting the virus and other sexually transmitted diseases.

Female gender roles are generally tied closely to women's biological reproductive role. This means that their sexuality is primarily defined in function of their roles as wives and mothers. Since in many cultures women have a lower status than men they are not in a strong position to negotiate for safe sex. Men, on the other hand, have more status and power, and their greater social and economic standing may in turn influence their personal and sexual behaviour increasing their number of sexual partners.

In Mozambique, women are still viewed as subordinate and they are expected to serve and please husbands or boyfriends. This makes it difficult for a woman to refuse unsafe sex and reinforces the widespread view that men have the power to make decisions about the sexual behaviour of their wives. Attitudes to virginity before marriage are also critical; in the Muslim coastal communities, for instance, women are often expected to be virgin brides whereas men are encouraged to be sexually experienced. Tolerance of traditional practices such as polygamy, male infidelity and widow inheritance also exposes women to a greater risk of infection. In some cases women themselves may not want to use condoms because children are desirable and men may feel pressured to take a second wife or partner if the first wife does not produce a child.

Vulnerability to the pandemic is also correlated with poverty. A critical aspect is the increased labour migration to urban centers and along the commercial transport routes (Nacala, Beira and Maputo Corridors). Men away from home often become clients of sex workers or they establish new relationships with younger partners who provide sexual and domestic services. For rural women, especially those that have no education and skills, sex work in an urban center can become an easy source of income. Clients are often truck drivers who ply up and down along the transport corridors, infecting a series of partners.

Fewer children from poor households receive formal education about reproductive health and HIV/AIDS at school; this lack of information in turn reinforces the low self-esteem that many girls have about their sexuality and perpetuates their

inability to make decisions about their sexuality themselves. Poor households have very limited access to the appropriate reproductive health care, HIV testing and treatment for STDs. In some districts poor women therefore resort more frequently to traditional healers and traditional birth attendants who are insufficiently informed and ill equipped to limit the impact of the pandemic.

In spite of the accumulating evidence that such social and economic gender imbalances are critical factors contributing to the pandemic, most strategies and campaigns to curb the pandemic have focused foremost on promoting the use of condoms by men. A potential problem of this approach is that it tends to ignore the fact that women are powerless to negotiate for safer sex and condom use. Therefore, it is necessary to educate and empower women to realize their human right to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health. Such sensitization efforts should start from a good understanding of the various social, cultural and economic factors that combine to render women vulnerable to STD/AIDS.

The impact of the pandemic in Mozambique

At the moment, projections on AIDS cases and deaths and their implications for the Mozambican population structure are not yet available. However, a significant amount of those infected are expected to die of AIDS or AIDS-related diseases. The consequences will be a sharp reduction in the number of productive adults, a decrease in life expectancy and an increase in the number of children orphaned. The impact of the epidemic will be felt at various levels, including that of the households, social services and national economy.

AIDS will diversely and severely affect households. Illness and death will result in psychosocial trauma, particularly where AIDS sufferers are stigmatized and when children have experienced the suffering and decease of their parents or siblings. Women and girls are often 'double victims' in that they are responsible for caring for the sick members of the household and could be without support should they fall ill themselves. Health care and funeral costs will force households to sell off economic assets (land, livestock) or to take on debts. In this way, poor households are pushed into deeper poverty. In particular, this may

affect female-headed households that have fewer economic assets or whose economic assets are controlled by men.

The increasing number of orphans will alter the dependency ratio, which is already high in Mozambique. Rural communities that depend on subsistence agriculture for survival respond to the loss of productive adults by abandoning labour-intensive and non-food crops, focusing on a few staples, which result in malnutrition and food insecurity, particularly when children become responsible for food production. In view of such circumstances, some families may adopt labour migration as a survival strategy, becoming dependent on remittances sent home by relatives, but also becoming more vulnerable to infection by the migrating relatives.

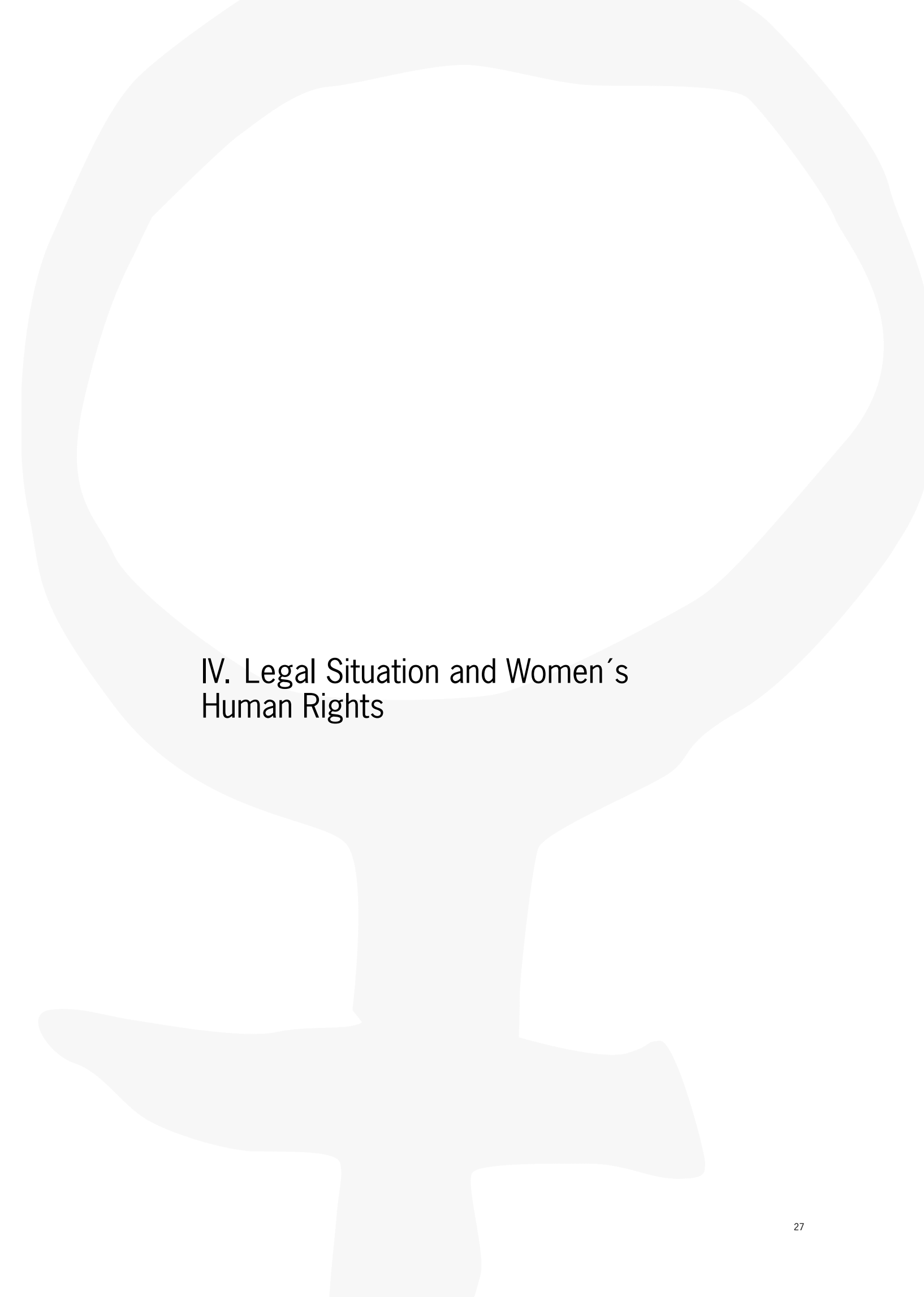
The greater incidence of HIV/AIDS will result in a greater demand for social services, particularly in the health sector and a greater demand for poverty alleviation measures. At the same time, there will be fewer trained people in the institutions that provide services, reducing the efficiency of the institution to deliver such services to vulnerable groups such as family units/households headed by women or orphans. Businesses will be affected both by the diminishing ability of households and individuals to purchase goods and services and through the loss of skilled workers.

SUMMARY AND STRATEGIC AREAS

- Education and health are fundamental aspects of Mozambique's development, synonymous with the development of human capital.
- Mozambique has one of the lowest adult literacy rates in SADC, particularly among rural women. This is chiefly due to traditional gender roles that bar girls from entering or completing school.
- The same gender roles account for a higher dropout rate among girls, so that very few girls persist into secondary and higher education.
- Gender stereotypes also determine the choice of study fields.
- Health indicators show a clear imbalance between the provinces and between urban vs rural zones. Rural infant mortality and maternal mortality are among the highest in the world and are both significantly higher in rural areas.
- The government's policies focus predominantly on reproductive-health related issues, leaving little scope for preventive and broader-based health needs such as malaria, TB etc.
- Health needs are also exacerbated by the lack of clean and safe water. More than 90 per cent of female-headed households rely on non-piped water.
- HIV/AIDS poses a serious threat to the development of human capital.
- Women are physically vulnerable, but gender roles also render them powerless to negotiate for safer sex. Traditional practices such as polygamy, male infidelity and widow inheritance and poverty compound women's vulnerability to HIV/AIDS.
- The impact of HIV/AIDS will be felt partly through the death of large numbers of productive adults, leaving orphans. Girl orphans in particular will have an increased workload as they have to take over the domestic responsibilities and subsistence agriculture traditionally performed by their mothers or female relatives.

Critical areas:

- Support the implementation of the Education Sector Strategic Plan 1997–2001, particularly the Plan of Action that mainstreams gender and addresses gender constraints to girls' education
- Support the implementation of the SWAP for health, including gender activities and targets
- Promote sensitization campaigns to improve community management of water and waste by both men and women
- Promote sensitization campaigns for both men and women on the imperative need to use safe sex
- Support the implementation of the National AIDS Plan, particularly with regard to orphans.



IV. Legal Situation and Women's Human Rights

The Constitution

Since 1975 the Constitution has upheld the principle of gender equality. The Constitution of 1990 gives more explicit form to this principle through articles 6 and 67 where it is stated that:

- All citizens are equal before the law, enjoy the same rights and are subject to the same obligations, irrespective of colour, race, sex, ethnicity, place of birth, religion, level of education, social status, marital status of parents or profession (art. 6)
- Man and woman are equal before the law in all spheres of political, economic, social and cultural life (art. 67)

Mozambique reaffirmed its commitment to non-discrimination when it ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) on 2 June 1993. CEDAW acquired force of law in Mozambique on 16 May 1997.

Although these instruments provide a powerful orientation, their meaning is limited due to several factors: the Constitutional principle has never been tested in court (there is no record of a court case based on the violation of these articles); the existence of out-dated legislation; the application of customary law; the weakness of mechanisms to administer law and widespread ignorance among women of their rights. Because the Constitution is the highest law of the land, all other legislation and jurisprudence must comply with the principle of non-discrimination. This, however, is not the case, because most of the legislation dates from the colonial period and is characterized by a strong patriarchal bias in favour of men.

Legal reform

Since independence the country has undergone many fundamental changes. In order to harmonize and align legislation with the Constitution and in order to adjust the body of legislation to the present socio-economic, political and cultural reality a process of law review has been started with the establishment of the Law Review Commission in 1997. The commission functions under the supervision of the Ministry of Justice. The Law Review Commission includes two gender focal

points whose task it is to ensure that gender analysis is integrated in the substantive reviews of the legislation. In addition, civil society and women's organizations take an active part in the discussions of the proposed amendments.

The Labour Law was reviewed and now foresees in 60 days maternity leave with full pay and the right to breastfeeding leave (30 minutes twice a day for up to six months) without reduction in salary. The problem, however, is that these maternity rights only apply in the regulated sectors of employment. This means that the majority of women, who work in the informal economy without wages, are excluded. It is estimated that only 20 per cent of all employed women are waged workers.⁴⁵

The Law Review Commission has also reviewed the Land Law, which was passed by Parliament in 1997, and prepared a draft Family Law that will be discussed by Parliament and put to the vote later this year. The new Land Law and proposed Family Law govern important gender relations through the right to property, land tenure, inheritance, marriage, divorce, affiliation and domestic violence.

The Land Law of 1997 seeks to improve the land tenure security of smallholder or family sector producers, the majority of which are women. It makes a radical departure from the previous law in that it formally recognizes usufruct rights to land acquired through customary norms and practices such as inheritance, marriage and allocation by lineage chiefs. These customary norms and practices are only recognized if they do not violate the constitutional principle of gender equality.

Although the law protects women's land rights, women can only vindicate their usufruct rights through the formal justice system, which is expensive, slow and presupposes a reasonable degree of legal literacy/awareness of their rights on the part of the women. Land security is an important key to improve women's economic position, but rural women face numerous additional constraints that remain outside of the law, such as the lack of labour and economic inputs and lack of farming technology.⁴⁶

The Family Law is a key part of the Civil Code because the family is the basic unit of society in

⁴⁵ Forum Mulher, *A Marcha Mundial das Mulheres em Moçambique : um instrumento para educação cívica e advocacia*, 2000, p 14

⁴⁶ Rachel Waterhouse, personal communication, April 2000.

which individuals are socialized and learn gender roles. The old Family Law dates from 1967 and reflects the patriarchal ideology of the colonial period. In 1998 the Mozambican Committee of the global *Marcha Mundial* network launched an extensive advocacy campaign to ensure that the proposed law includes equal rights for men and women and that domestic violence be qualified as a crime.

Key issues to be addressed include:⁴⁷

- that marriage should not be seen primarily as a union whereby women serve to produce children, but rather as an equitable emotional and material union between equal partners
- that both spouses should equally and jointly administer the estate formed by the marriage union
- that the union should not be headed by one spouse, but by both spouses jointly
- that the legal minimum age for marriage should be the same for girls as for boys
- that traditional, religious and factual unions should be accorded the same status, rights and obligations as marriages contracted through civil law, in particular concerning paternity, guardianship of children, inheritance and division of the material estate upon separation/divorce or dissolution of the union.

The Penal Code Review was started in 1997. The Penal Code dates from 1929, and was twice reformed in 1945 and in 1972. After Independence several *decretos* altered a few things, but these amendments did not reflect the principle of non-discrimination. One of the burning issues is that the law is lenient when women succumb to violence meted out by men, whereas manslaughter by women carries heavier punishment.

In view of the government's stated goal to foster the development of the private sector, the Commercial Code is being reviewed. Important gender issues that should be included in the review are measures to increase the role of women in small and medium enterprises and to enhance their access to credit.

Although efforts are being made to ensure that laws are reviewed and amended to enhance and

broaden women's rights, legislation is only useful in changing gender relations in so far that it is applied in practice. Women's rights, and human rights in general, should not be seen solely in terms of formally instituted rights, but also in terms of political, social and cultural practices, law enforcement and legal literacy.

Customary law and cultural practices

In addition to the statutory laws, which were first imposed by the colonial government and later by the independent government, many communities have retained their own customary norms and practices. This rich body of customary law is based on the communities' own traditions, value systems and conflict resolution mechanisms. It is not a homogenous body since different communities have diverse traditions and systems of political, social and economic organization (patrilinealism, matrilinealism, Islam etc.) These customary norms are enforced and administered by community courts presided by local chiefs.

Despite their rich diversity, the customary norms share one common feature: they serve to perpetuate women's subordinate status and to retain patriarchal gender relations in both community and private life by restricting women's access rights to land, labour and other resources. Even in matrilineal societies women only have rights through their male relatives, i.e. brothers or maternal uncles.

Legal aid and legal literacy

The state provides legal aid through the *Instituto de Patrocínio e Assistência Jurídica* (IPAJ) that functions under the supervision of the Ministry of Justice. The majority of cases brought by women are claims related to maintenance and inheritance. The services provided are unknown to most women, who consequently remain without recourse. Although IPAJ now functions in several provinces, its activities are concentrated in Maputo City.⁴⁸

In 1996 various women's organizations formed a national network together with MISAU, MMCAS, CEA and UEM to combat domestic violence. The *Todos Contra Violência* (TCV) network provides legal, psychosocial and medical

⁴⁷ Forum Mulher, A Marcha Mundial das Mulheres em Moçambique, p. 19

⁴⁸ Director of IPAJ, personal communication, February 1999.

counseling for victims. In 1998 it attended over 1000 cases in Maputo City alone.

The *Marcha Mundial* and human rights NGOs undertake other legal literacy campaigns. The Ministry of Justice has published a brochure on domestic violence and appropriate legal remedies. Although some campaigns such as the *Marcha Mundial* and National Land Campaign were conducted on a nationwide scale, most initiatives have focused mainly on Maputo City and coverage of the rural areas, where the need for women's legal literacy is greatest, remains patchy.

Administration and enforcement of the law

The courts are outdated, inefficient and poorly equipped to ensure the rule of law. The dissemination and enforcement of current laws is poor, particularly outside the main cities. There is a general lack of trained personnel and material resources, resulting in delays in proceedings and growing backlogs, which in turn results in diminished public confidence in the justice sector. Whereas an increasing amount of commercial and civil cases are being solved in private fora such as arbitration courts or foreign courts, family matters and petty conflicts are increasingly resolved before informal mechanisms of conflict resolution, such as community courts and traditional leaders.⁴⁹ These are more likely to apply customary norms that perpetuate women's subservient status in all aspects of public and private life.

The Government's Five-Year Programme for 2000–2004 emphasizes the following areas as priority areas of intervention to improve the administration and enforcement of the law:⁵⁰

- Coordination among institutions
- Training of justice and police personnel
- Improvement of prison conditions
- Legal reform
- Legal assistance.

The justice sector is characterized by a severe shortage of legal personnel, particularly of female

lawyers, prosecutors and judges. In the period 1994–97, there were 79 prosecutors of whom 14 per cent were women; 116 professional judges of whom 17 per cent were women and 86 lawyers of whom 15 per cent were women.⁵¹ To increase the capacity in the justice sector, the Center for Judicial Studies and Training has been established. Its purpose is to train legal personnel such as judges, prosecutors and legal defenders. It will also carry out socio-legal research and disseminate legal texts to the provinces. This is especially important given that a recent study found that tribunals and other dispute settlement mechanisms interpret the law differently and give different degrees of punishment depending on whether the offender is male or female.⁵²

Violence

Violence against women refers to 'any act of gender-based violence that results in physical, sexual or psychological suffering'.⁵³ It can take many forms, such as beatings (physical assault), sexual assault, insults, being forced to accept one's husband's lovers, and the prohibition to leave the house. Violence is essentially a manifestation of unequal power relations between men and women, and it is often related to an underlying economic aspect of control over resources/means of production.⁵⁴

The low social and economic status of women can be both a cause and a consequence of violence against women. Fear of violence limits women's mobility and this in turn limits their access to resources and ability to carry out basic activities.

Violence against women 'both violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment of women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms'.⁵⁵ It not only breaches the human rights of individual women, but it also has a societal dimension in that it threatens peace and social stability. It can even have long term effects on society, since children who were exposed to a violent environment often grow up to accept violence and discrimination against girls and women and may perpetrate violence in later life.

⁴⁹ UN Coordination Office, *CCA 2000*, p 93–96.

⁵⁰ UN Coordination Office, *CCA 2000*, p 94

⁵¹ MICAS, *CEDAW Report 2nd Draft* of 1999, p 38

⁵² For more details see CEA/WLSA, *A ilusão de transparência – administração da justiça*, 1999

⁵³ UN Information Services (NY), *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, paragraph 113

⁵⁴ For a comprehensive discussion see da Silva, T. et al for CEA, *Violência Doméstica : factos e discursos*, 1999.

⁵⁵ UN Information Services (NY), *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, paragraph 112

During the war, numerous women and girls suffered forms of gender-based violence, such as forced abduction, separation from relatives, and rape. Those who left their villages to seek refuge in refugee camps or displacement centers often found themselves isolated from their relatives and community structures, which rendered them more vulnerable to such physical violence. Even though personal security is a critical aspect of life in a refugee camp/displacement center, these camps are notoriously difficult to police. Later, many women returnees also faced personal insecurity as they returned to their torn and divided communities. These experiences have led to deep psychological trauma among both women and children, among whom there are quite a large number of orphans. At the same time, many cultures traditionally give women certain leeway in which they can actively participate in conflict resolution. This happened in Mozambique when the women of the *Movimento das Mulheres Mocambicanas pela Paz* successfully lobbied both the government and opposition when the opposition threatened to boycott the elections in 1994. More research needs to be done to investigate in more detail what conflict resolution mechanisms women can resort to.

Now that peace has returned, violence against women continues to be a widespread and culturally accepted practice. It is estimated that one of four women in Mozambique is exposed to some form of gender-based violence and the number of victims of domestic violence seeking support from community centers has increased considerably in the past five years. Domestic violence is tolerated through cultural values that maintain patriarchal relations between family members and between men and women in particular.

These cultural values are not only apparent in the daily relationships of men and women, but are

also reflected in legislation. The dispositions contained in the Family Law are particularly important, since they define in what ways women are subjected to the authority of their fathers and/or husbands. An example of this is that husbands are allowed to 'discipline' their wives, which is often interpreted as the legitimization of domestic violence. This is enforced by the fact that the Penal Code does not at the moment sufficiently protect the physical integrity of women in marriage. The *Marcha Mundial* network therefore advocates for the qualification of domestic violence as a crime.

Statistics collected by the TCV show that half of the reported cases of domestic violence against women and girls are cases of sexual abuse and that violence does not occur only within poor groups with a low level of education, but that it occurs in all social groups. Persons who are close to and well known by the victim, typically relatives or neighbours often perpetrate violence. For this reason, many cases go unreported, as victims feel shame and are reluctant to denounce relatives. Other relatives who are aware of the abuse may try to mediate, mostly suggesting non-conflictual and 'internal' solutions to avoid embarrassment and to avoid disruption of social and economic relations.

The TCV has also highlighted additional reasons why many cases remain unreported, such as the lack of police sensitivity when the crime is reported. Nationwide, only 6 per cent of all police personnel are female.⁵⁶ Domestic violence is often seen by the police as a private matter and since a husband is traditionally entitled to discipline his wife and since the objective of marriage is the production of children, violence and abuse such as rape are not given due attention by police personnel. The police force is now being trained to deal in a more sympathetic way with domestic violence and rape victims.

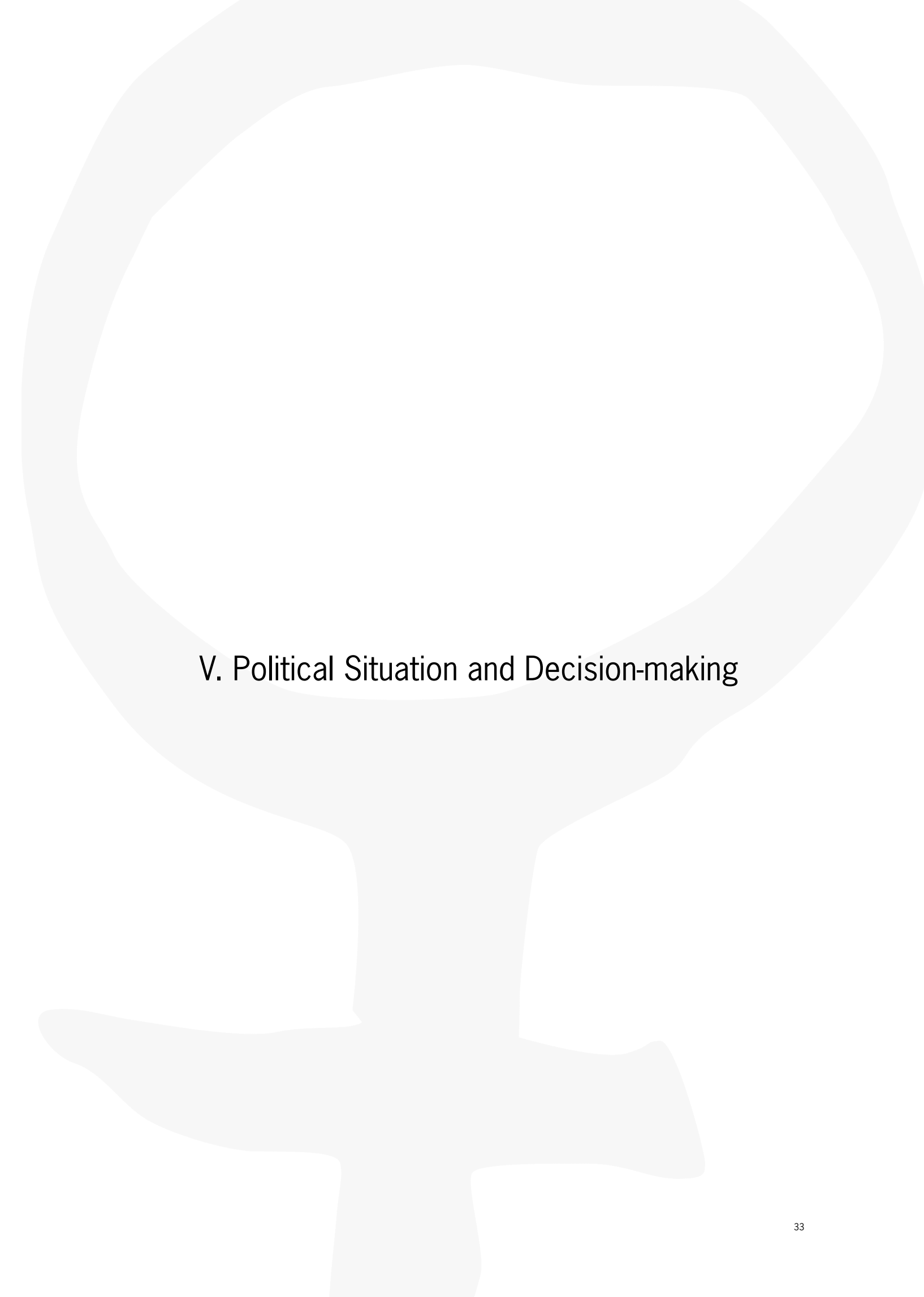
⁵⁶ MMCAS, *Beijing + 5 Report*, 2000, p. 30

SUMMARY AND STRATEGIC AREAS

- The constitution and international instruments prohibit discrimination on the grounds of sex.
- In practice, however, there are numerous cases of discrimination against women, mainly due to old legislation, customary law, absence of effective and efficient justice and police systems to administer and enforce the law, and large-scale unawareness among women of their legal rights. This is particularly the case among uneducated rural women.
- Violence against women is widespread. An important step will be the formal qualification of violence against women as a criminal offence under the Penal Law that is being reviewed.

Critical areas include:

- Support to the on-going law reform process, including support for NGOs so that they are able to participate in the discussions and advocate for gender issues
- Disseminate new laws
- Support legal literacy campaigns, particularly those that target rural women
- Support the training of legal personnel and police officers
- Support for networks/coalitions that lobby for the criminalization of violence against women
- Undertake further research about the role of women in conflict situations and conflict resolution.



V. Political Situation and Decision-making

The 1990s were a decade of fundamental changes in Mozambique. After the liberalization of the economy, started in 1986, the Constitution of 1990 laid down the fundamental conditions for the democratization of the political structures. The single party regime with centrally planned systems of economic management and administrative and political governance was replaced by a democratic, multi-party system with a rigid separation of the executive, legislative and judicial powers. The Peace Agreement of 1992 paved the way for the first multi-party presidential and legislative elections that were held in 1994. To allow greater participatory development, the Law on Municipalities of 1994 and the Law on Local Authorities of 1997 created the legal framework for decentralization. In 1998 the first local elections were held in 33 municipalities. In December 1999 the second presidential and legislative elections were held.

Democracy can be defined as the participation of citizens in the choices and options that shape their personal and social life. Although the right to participate in the nation's political structures is guaranteed to both men and women by the Constitution, women participate much less in the decision-making processes than men do. Increased representation and participation of women in the formal decision-making processes of the state is a key strategy to enable women to participate fully and actively in the development of the country and to benefit from economic growth. NGOs, CBOs and other associations of civil society are additional instruments with which women may participate in community life and through which they can influence decision-making.

Participation of women in state decision-making processes

Although women constitute 52 per cent of the total population, the number of women in public office at national level is very low, especially at senior level. Reference is made to the tables in appendix 5 that summarize the number of women in government, parliament, municipalities and civil service sector. In this government, there are three female ministers. It

should be noted that the Minister of Planning and Finance is a woman. The others are the Minister for Women and Coordination of Social Action and the Minister for Sciences and Higher Education. There are also five female Vice-Ministers. Women hold 69 seats in Parliament, which equals 27.8 per cent, one of the highest rates of female participation in the SADC region. The greater number of female FRELIMO MPs is due to the quota system whereby at least one third of candidates are female. In spite of this, no particular efforts were made to target the female vote during the last legislative elections held at the close of 1999.

The public administration comprises approximately 108,000 civil servants, of which only 15 per cent are women.⁵⁷ In 1995 the *Núcleo de Promoção da Mulher na Função Pública* was established to promote women's participation and provide training for women in public administration, but it has few activities outside of Maputo and could play a greater role in the provinces.

Representation of women in decision-making

Participation per se does not mean that women will be effective in representing women and articulating gender interests. Often, women's voices are not heard because of factors such as:⁵⁸

- The small number of women, marginalization
- Male resistance and silencing
- Side-lining of women into social sectors while certain pivotal, technical areas of policy and decision-making (e.g. state budget) remain in the hands of male politicians⁵⁹
- Often, those few women who participate in public fora may focus more on practical concerns related to the existing division of labour and power structures instead of challenging these power structures (i.e. they may advocate practical gender needs instead of strategic gender needs).

Powerlessness or exclusion is not based on sex alone but also on class and race/ethnicity that shape gender relations. Therefore, women's participation in politics should not be seen as separate from

⁵⁷ UN Coordination Office, *CCA 2000*, p 98

⁵⁸ For a comprehensive discussion, see UNDP, *Women's Political Participation and Good Governance: 21st century challenges*, 2000, pp 27–40.

⁵⁹ Although the Minister of Planning and Finance is a woman, this sidelining occurs almost without exception both in central and local government.

women's overall socio-economic status. While there are no formal obstacles for women to be elected and hold public office, there exist a number of societal/cultural barriers to women's active participation in politics, particularly at local level, such as:⁶⁰

- Too much work and difficulty to reconcile family obligations with public office
- Low educational level and lack of previous experience of public office
- Lack of financial resources to finance an election campaign
- Lack of access to the media
- Abuse and harassment of aspiring candidates
- Lack of self-confidence
- A general perception that public office is a male preserve, while a woman's place is in the domestic sphere.

Women's participation in democratization and decentralization implies more than the number of women in national or local public office. What is important, is the extent to which women's issues are 'heard' by the public sector and local government as well as the extent to which these can integrate gender analysis in their poverty reduction programmes. This underscores the need identified by the *Grupo Operativo*⁶¹ for leadership training and gender training for female parliamentarians and members of the Council of Ministers. For example, women should participate in local planning processes to ensure that these address poor women's concerns in areas such as urban housing transport provision etc. Municipal planning decisions and regulations should be defined so that they neither prevent nor displace women's informal economic activities. This in turn requires a broad dialogue between public sector and female constituents.

NGOs complement the government's programmes and activities by taking the role of implementing agencies but they also represent the interests of their constituencies and play an important role in shaping public opinion on a number of social, economic, governance and cultural issues.

SUMMARY AND STRATEGIC AREAS

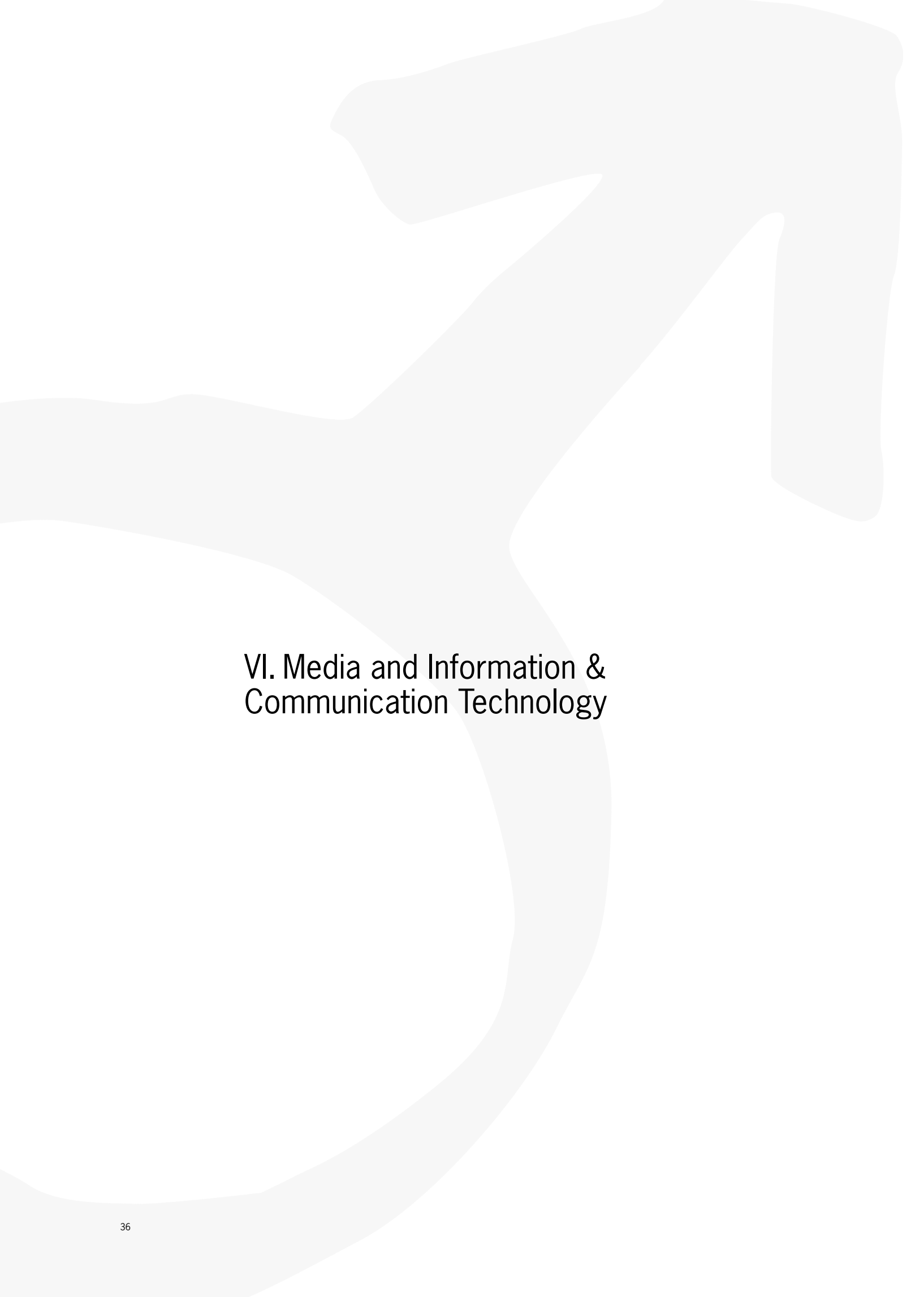
- All individuals have the right to participate in decision-making processes and to be adequately represented in these processes.
- 27.8 per cent of all parliamentarians are women, which is well above the SADC average, but this masks the fact that there are only few women in senior government positions, very few judges and that only 15 per cent of all civil servants are female.
- Women face particular difficulties to participate in public office on account of conflicting gender roles and gender prejudices.
- It is essential that women in office should be able to effectively lobby for gender equality and address those issues that are of immediate concern to their female constituency members, requiring leadership and advocacy skills as well as a dialogue with female constituency members and civil society.

Consequently, key areas to be highlighted include:

- Support for the *Núcleo de Promoção da Mulher na Função Pública*, particularly so that it can extend its activities to the provinces
- Provision of leadership and gender training for women MPs and the Council of Ministers
- Promotion of dialogue between decision-makers and constituencies, particularly rural women
- Promotion of dialogue between decision-makers and NGOs and support of co-alitions/advocacy networks.

⁶⁰ WILDAF, *Study On Women's Political Participation*, 1998

⁶¹ The *Grupo Operativo* is the main institutional mechanism to promote gender equality and to coordinate the implementation of the Beijing Conference recommendations in Mozambique. It consists of governmental gender focal points as well as representatives of NGOs and academic institutions. See also chapter VIII.



VI. Media and Information & Communication Technology

The 1991 Press Law guarantees the freedom of expression and freedom of the press as well as the citizen's right to information. With the end of the civil war in 1992 Mozambique ostensibly embraced a democratic and pluralistic ideology, which has increased the number of actors involved in the media sector. A significant number of independent newspapers, newsheets, radio stations and partners in social communication emerged to complement the state-controlled media. The media and social communications sector is a key instrument to promote gender equality, to raise public awareness of women's issues and to document/disseminate women's changing status in society.

Access

There are approximately 30 newspapers and newsheets with national distribution. Of these the daily newspaper *Notícias* has the greatest readership and best geographical coverage. The limited transport and distribution networks in the provinces and the high level of illiteracy in the rural areas mean that few people have access to printed media outside of Maputo. Although few households own a radio (less than 35 per cent) radio broadcasting reaches more people than the print media. The State Institute of Social Communication (ICS) owns community radio stations. Churches and religious organizations run other radio stations, often with help from donors and NGOs.⁶²

There are two principal characteristics of the media sector. First, the overall majority of the media operate in the official language Portuguese – even though only 6 per cent of all men and women declare Portuguese as their mother tongue. Secondly, national media organizations are concentrated in Maputo City and Maputo Province. This means that one of the greatest challenges is the uneven distribution of media production and access in the country.⁶³

Therefore, the Government's Five-Year Programme 2000–2004 foresees in the broadening of television and radio coverage and capacity building

for journalists and social communication professionals. Training programmes to promote greater use of alternative forms of social communication such as drama-based interpersonal communication, songs, street theatre etc. are planned for the School of Journalism, Institute of Social Communication and staff of the *Gabinete de Informação*.

The number of women who have access to newspapers or radios is likely to be very small given the fact that so many rural women are illiterate and poor, and that men sometimes control the use of radios in the household by removing the batteries.⁶⁴ It is estimated that 19 per cent of female-headed households have radios, compared to 33 per cent of male-headed households.⁶⁵

Participation

The vast majority of media professionals are male, particularly among journalists and reporters (16 per cent are women), since reporting is widely perceived as a male occupation that exposes reporters to external contacts and allows them to speak for and on behalf of society. 23 per cent of editors and directors are women. This gender gap is consistent with the low number of female students. In 1989–99, the School of Journalism registered 28 female students out of a total of 184 (15 per cent) and only 17 per cent of graduated students were women (19 out of 107 in total).⁶⁶ There is no national association of women reporters or media professionals, although various local associations exist such as in Nampula.

Efforts are made to provide journalists and media professionals with gender training. SARDC and the Nordic Journalism Center in collaboration with the *Gabinete de Informação* conducted trainings. Training manuals were developed in Portuguese and are locally available. These focus on the importance of portraying women as empowered citizens and active participants in the country's development instead of as passive victims or isolated success stories, as well as on the ways in which positive gender images can be achieved through language and showcasing of role models.

⁶² For a detailed overview of the media instruments see UNESCO, *Media Pluralism Landscape Study*, 1999

⁶³ UN Coordination Office, *CCA 2000*, p 102

⁶⁴ Walker, B. personal communication, 1997

⁶⁵ INE, *Mulheres e Homens em Moçambique*, p 68

⁶⁶ MMCAS, *Beijing + 5 Report*, 2000, p 35

Portrayal of women and gender stereotyping in the media

Notícias has a special page (*Página da Mulher*) that appears every Saturday. *Radio Moçambique* has a programme dedicated to women's issues (*Quadrante da Mulher*) that is aired on Friday afternoons. In addition to such regular features, the press, radio and television frequently provide coverage of women's issues particularly when the government organizes thematic events for women on 8 March and 7 April.⁶⁷

Women's NGOs also frequently use the media to disseminate information and to lobby/rally support for their activities and objectives. For example, the *Marcha Mundial* Committee recently took out a page-wide advert in *Notícias* to disseminate their key revindications with regard to the worldwide campaign against the feminization of poverty and domestic violence. In general the media do report on women's and gender issues, but they tend to view these as separate issues that are covered in special features.

Urban culture is setting the standard in the way the media depict women. In general, poor women are portrayed as powerless and silent victims. In advertising, the portrayal of women coincides with the usual western female stereotypes: middle-class housewife and mother belonging to the urban elite. As noted in other lusophone countries, Brazilian *telenovelas* are a powerful means to propagate these urban, middle-class gender stereotypes.⁶⁸

Internet and ICT

The Internet and new information communication technologies (ICT) constitute potential sources of information. However, as in other developing countries, women in Mozambique face many barriers restricting their levels of ICT use. Such barriers include the lack of income, lack of time, lack of training and lack of access.

The majority of women live in rural areas, where the number of computers and telephone lines is virtually negligible. Where computers are available, such as in schools or administrative centers, computers are seen as a status symbol and

often hoarded for that reason in the office of the hierarchical superior, even if this person does not have the skills to use the computer. All these factors combine so that most women do not enjoy the potential benefits of these technologies such as an extension of communication networks and access to a wider scope of information.⁶⁹

The Internet and the ICT sector are characterized by high-level skills, continuous learning and skill upgrading. At the moment there are only very few women with access to training in scientific and technological fields. It is expected that the creation of the new Ministry for Higher Education and Sciences will improve the number of women in higher education, but this will only have effect in the long term.

In Mozambique women's organizations are beginning to use ICTs to expand their access to information sources. They use ICT to collect and disseminate development-related information that can be used towards sustainable human development goals and empowerment. With the support of donors, some initiatives have been taken to use the Internet as a tool for advocacy and networking.

However, the Internet is still seen mainly as a source of information and is not yet used as a forum for wider debate or as a place where NGOs can publicize their ideas and invite critical feedback. They could still get more out of the Internet as an instrument to improve the effectiveness of their lobbying, widen the reach of their information dissemination activities and increase the extent to which they are integrated in international campaigns/networks.

The Internet can also help some women producers obtain access to larger markets for the distribution of their goods and services, but this is not yet happening in a structured or large-scale manner. Such opportunities of economic empowerment are only available to those few individuals who possess computers and high education levels. As with the conventional media, the critical question is how to reach rural women and empower them to effectively use ICTs.

⁶⁷ 8 March is International Women's Day, 7 April commemorates Josina Machel's birthday and is celebrated as Mozambican Women's Day.

⁶⁸ Perrhson, K. et al for SIDA, *Gender Profile Angola*, 2000, p 51

⁶⁹ These are described at length in Gillian Marcelle, *Transforming Information and Communication Technologies for Gender Equality*, 2000

SUMMARY AND STRATEGIC AREAS

- The media and communications sector are key instruments to promote gender equality, to raise public awareness of women's issues and to document women's changing status and roles in society by upholding role models.
- The media are concentrated in Maputo City, with only limited coverage of the provinces.
- Most media operate in Portuguese, even though only a minority of the overall population speaks this medium.
- This raises important questions about access to the media in the rural areas, particularly among illiterate rural women and the production of media programmes/messages targeting illiterate rural populations.
- Few women participate in the media sector as journalists or editors, so that the media still predominantly portray traditional gender roles and stereotypes.
- Although the Internet and new information technologies are increasingly recognized as powerful tools for development, Mozambican women face numerous barriers restricting their use of Internet and ICT, such as the lack of income, lack of time, lack of training and lack of access.

Therefore, key areas include:

- Production of media programmes in vernacular, with the content adjusted to reflect rural realities and poverty reduction strategies.
- Developing alternative forms of social communication, such as radio, drama etc, to respond to the high illiteracy rate.
- Training of media personnel so that they will portray women as active and empowered citizens and showcase appropriate role models.
- Promoting the use of Internet and ICT by NGOs and individuals by integrating required skills in the school curriculum and through the provision of computers.



VII. The Girl Child

An overview of the status of women and gender relations in Mozambique would not be complete without a section on the specific constraints faced by girls for two reasons. First, since Mozambique has a young population structure, the majority of the female population is under 15 years. Second, the status of women and gender relations are defined by different factors, such as ethnicity, class, level of education, marital status, and age. During her life cycle, a woman will experience a diversity of gender relations, such as when a woman is unmarried, married, divorced or widowed.

The implication is that girls' specific constraints should be systematically integrated into all gender policies and programmes. In practice, however, concerns about the girl child tend to focus on primary education, teenage pregnancy, and socialization of girls within the family whereby girls learn to behave in gender appropriate ways, and the vulnerability of girls to sexual violence and abuse.

In Mozambique girls have less access to education than boys, partly because families socialize them to assume the triple roles of reproductive, productive and community work. While girls are not seen as inferior and while families do not report any differences in the allocation of food to boys or girls, girls are taught from an early age to put themselves last. The result is low self-esteem and lack of confidence, whereby young women find it difficult to break out of existing gender roles, overcome structural poverty and participate in decision-making processes.

Legislation can be an important instrument to increase girls' access to and attainment in education. Although the Constitution recognizes basic education as a basic right, there is as yet no law making primary education compulsory. Another important question to ask with regard to gender legislation is whether a minimum age has been set for the marriage of girls, and if so, whether this has been set sufficiently high not to interfere with school age. Another question refers to the legal and regulatory protection of the sexual safety of

girls, which should extend to the question of how punishable male teachers are in practice.⁷⁰

"Perhaps, when it comes to the future of girls, access to the labour market is precisely what parents fear rather than claim. Parents may feel that the highest form of accomplishment occurs when their daughters become good and submissive wives and mothers. In that case, when school works towards a more modern perspective, we may have a serious mismatch between supply and demand."⁷¹ As long as initiation rites, early pronounced adulthood, early marriage and sexual vulnerability of young girls persist, girls are more likely to be taken out of school at a premature age or not being sent to school at all.⁷² A challenge is to turn primary school into a less alien institution and make it into an integral part of community life, which can be accomplished through greater participation of the communities and parents in school management.⁷³

Some initiatives have already been taken, such as in Cabo Delgado and Nampula where OMM has mediated an agreement to hold initiation rites during school holidays. In Cabo Delgado pregnant girls are encouraged to remain in school – as a negative example – to discourage others from pregnancy, whereas in Nampula pregnant students are transferred to evening classes.⁷⁴

The education of the mother is directly correlated to the level of education and health status of her daughter. The number of female teachers and headmistresses, who are seen as role models, is also a positive factor to assure parents and communities of the value of girls' education. In Maputo Province 70 per cent of schools have female headmistress, but in the rest of the country there is a marked lack of female teachers.⁷⁵ In 1994, 42 per cent of the national total of primary school teachers graduated from 63 courses were women, but most were active in the southern provinces.

The low number of women teachers is related to the following: inadequate residential accommodation for female teachers, low pay and conditions of service, and low status of teaching profession.

⁷⁰ Netherlands Development Assistance, *Girls and Primary Education : Operational Guide 5*, 1997 p 7

⁷¹ Ibidem, p 3

⁷² Ibidem, p 11

⁷³ Ibidem, p 11

⁷⁴ Forum Mulher, *Políticas da Desigualdade: primeiros elementos para uma avaliação das políticas e programas de género do governo e ONGs após Beijng 1995–1999*, p 16.

⁷⁵ Ibidem, p 16.

Although there is no intentional discrimination in the criteria for recruitment and placement of teachers, these gender barriers are not taken into consideration.⁷⁶ Teachers' expectations of the skills and future of girls ought to be raised.⁷⁷ This can be partly achieved through a more positive portrayal of girls' roles in schoolbooks and materials.

Adolescents' reproductive health is another key concern, particularly in relation to teenage pregnancies. The fertility rate in the 15–24 years age group is very high, with consequences for maternal mortality and the incidence of STDs and HIV/AIDS. Teenage pregnancy also significantly reduces the likelihood of continuing education and reduces employment opportunities.

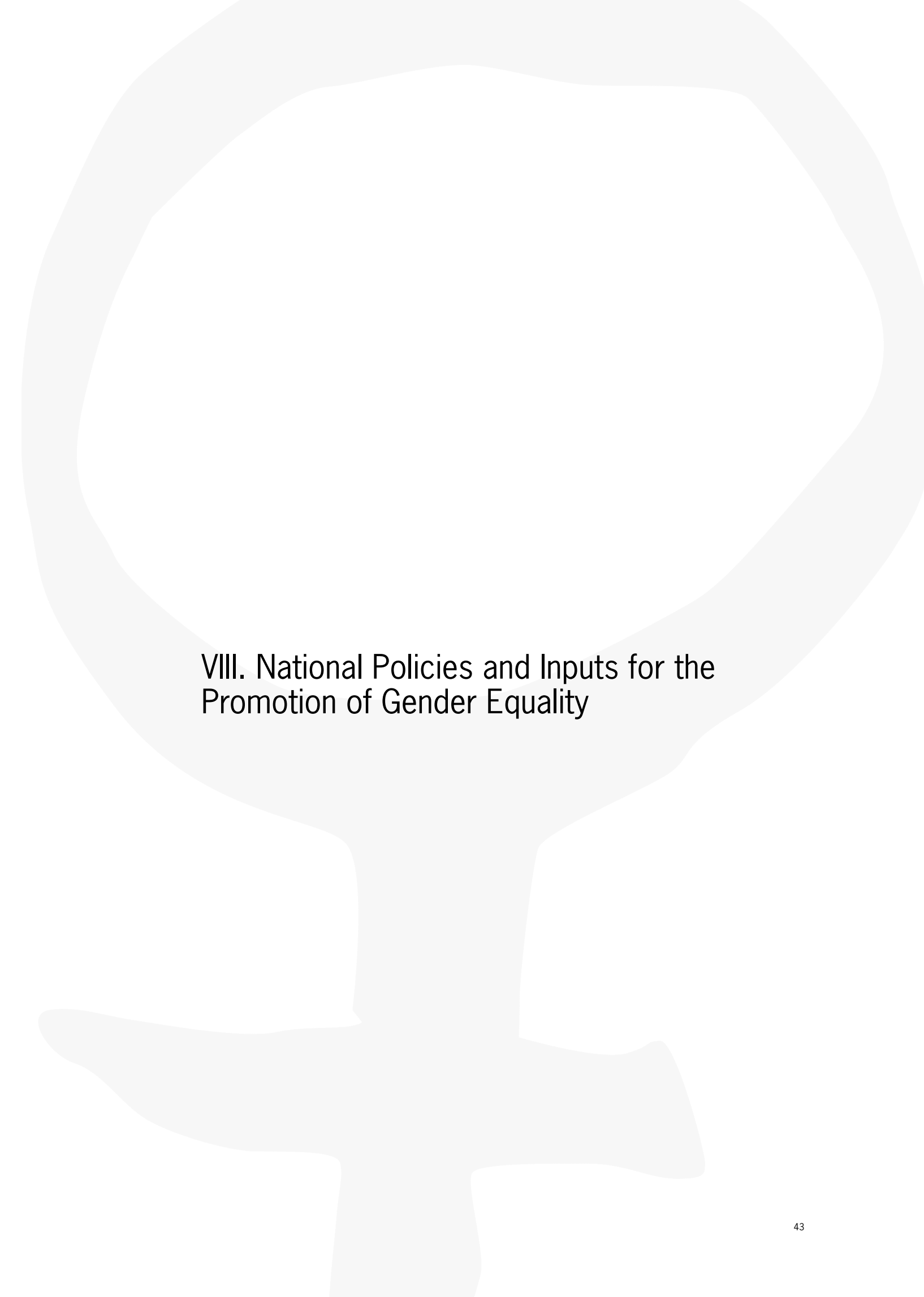
Although prohibited by law juvenile prostitution is increasing. This is due to such factors as rising unemployment and poverty, urbanization and degradation of traditional family values, substance abuse and increasing consumerism. Once they enter into prostitution, young girls are trapped into existing gender stereotypes that render them vulnerable to health problems such as illegal abortions following unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS.

SUMMARY AND STRATEGIC AREAS

- Gender relations are also defined by age, requiring systematic mainstreaming of girls' special needs and concerns into policies and programmes that promote equality between men and women at all stages of an individual's life cycle.
- Currently, interventions by national counterparts focus predominantly on the following areas, which can be identified as areas for support by donor agencies:
- Ensuring primary education for all children and secondary education in particular for girls whose chances of attending school are curtailed by their socialization as future wives and mothers;
- Adolescent reproductive health including teenage pregnancy and girls' vulnerability to sexually transmitted diseases;
- Girls' vulnerability to gender-based forms of violence;
- Legislation to regulate compulsory primary education, abortions, minimum age for marriage and legal instruments to protect female students against violence by male students and teachers.

⁷⁶ Walker, B. and Gender Team Ministry of Education, *Mainstreaming gender in the Education Sector Strategic Plan 1997–2001: Plan of Action*, February 1998, p 12–13

⁷⁷ Netherlands Development Assistance, *Girls and Primary Education : Operational Guide 5*, 1997 p 9



VIII. National Policies and Inputs for the Promotion of Gender Equality

Strictly speaking, the concept of gender equality is not new to Mozambique since it was an important element in the liberation and governance ideology of FRELIMO. Refer, for instance to the Constitutional principle of gender equality and the formal prohibition of discrimination based on sex.

The participation of a large Mozambican delegation in the Fourth World Conference for Women, Peace and Development in Beijing in 1995 has significantly increased gender awareness among both government and civil society, particularly in Maputo City and the major towns. It has, however, proved difficult for both government and civil society to operationalize the concept of gender equality, and this has resulted in difficulties to implement activities that aim to promote gender equality.

Policies and institutional mechanisms to promote gender equality

Before the Beijing Conference, women's issues and gender concerns were dealt with by a National Secretariat for Women located within the Ministry for Health. In 1995, these responsibilities were taken over by the *Sector da Mulher*, which is a part of the National Directorate for Social Action inside the Ministry for Coordination of Social Action (MICAS). The implication is that gender inequality was seen primarily in terms of women as a vulnerable group that qualifies for social action or welfare assistance instead of renegotiation of more equal gender relations.

In 2000 MICAS was transformed into the Ministry for Women and Coordination of Social Action (MMCAS). In this context, the *Sector da Mulher* has been upgraded into a National Directorate for Women and Gender with two departments (Women & Family and Gender & Development). As was expected, a woman was appointed to head MMCAS. MMCAS is traditionally a weak ministry, under-resourced, under-staffed and unable to recruit a sufficient number of skilled officials. An urgent matter is the staffing of the new National Directorate for Women and Gender and reinforcement of MMCAS' ability to fulfil its coordination role. There is also a Gender Adviser to the Prime Minister.

MMCAS is responsible for the overall coordination of gender issues and promotion of gender mainstreaming among government ministries. In 1995, an inter-sectoral coordination mechanism

called *Grupo Operativo* was created. In the words of its *regulamento*, its objective is to supervise, promote and follow-up on the implementation of policies and programmes approved by the government in the area of women and gender. To this end, each ministry is required to appoint two gender focal points that are ex officio members of the *Grupo Operativo*. In order to coordinate with civil society, Forum Mulher participates in the meetings of the *Grupo Operativo* as a representative of women's NGOs and associations. The *Grupo Operativo* was inactive in the period March 1999–May 2000. It has recently resumed its functions under the leadership of the new Minister for Women and Social Action and begun to elaborate a work plan and to identify the training needs of its members.

Quite a few ministries have participated in training courses on gender, but most courses were short-term lasting just a few days. There is a clear need to complement these with longer, in-depth training that goes beyond sensitization and rudimentary mainstreaming.

The government has not yet formulated an overall gender policy, although some ministries have developed their own gender policies. Key ministries such as MISAU, MINED, MMCAS, MICOA and the Ministry for Agriculture and Rural Development have also established gender units to ensure that gender is mainstreamed into their policies and sector plans, but not all ministries have functioning gender units. In addition, different ministries follow different approaches; some focusing predominantly on WID while others adopt GAD approaches. While some ministries have integrated gender into their sector plans, developed their own gender strategies and established specific gender-responsive programmes others have not yet achieved much. A positive step, however, is that the Ministry of Planning and Finance has integrated gender into its Population Policy and elaborated guidelines for the preparation of sector budgets. These guidelines specifically recommend that sector budgets make provisions for gender activities identified in the Beijing Plan of Action. Unfortunately, the guidelines are advisory only and each sector can still determine if and how much it wants to allocate to gender activities.

In the absence of a national gender policy, the government's overall commitment to gender equality is contained in the National Post-Beijing

Plan of Action that was approved by the Council of Ministers in 1997. It outlines strategic objectives, strategies and activities to realize the recommendations made at the Beijing Conference in seven areas of concern.⁷⁸

The implementation of the National Post-Beijing Plan of Action is compromised by the absence of systematic resource allocation, MMCAS' limited capacity to coordinate implementation and the need to provide extensive gender training to the ministerial gender focal points/*Grupo Operativo*. For the Plan to be properly implemented nationwide, it will be necessary to also strengthen MMCAS' capacity to support the provincial directorates, as well as to provide direct training to provincial counterparts.

Other instruments that orient the government's policies are the Gender Declaration of SADC Heads of State, Commonwealth gender commitments and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). It should be noted that the first CEDAW report is being drafted by MMCAS since 1998 and that it has been overdue for two years. The implication is that the CEDAW report cannot be used as a background analysis for the current legal review and reform processes.

Civil society and women's organisations

OMM is historically the most important and powerful women's organization. It was established in 1973 to mobilize women in support of FRELIMO on the basis of FRELIMO's Marxist-Leninist egalitarian rhetoric and ideological emancipation of women. OMM became the primary channel by which women could participate in the political processes since the FRELIMO Central Committee only had very few female members. Funding was provided by the FRELIMO-government and leading OMM cadres were seen as state employees. Quite a number of the most influential cadres were formerly female freedom fighters who had participated in the anti-colonial struggle for independence. OMM has an impressive broad outreach, with nationwide coverage that penetrated down to the district level.

Although OMM played an important role in influencing FRELIMO's policies (e.g. review of the Constitution in 1990), its primary focus was on education, adult literacy and various women's practical needs related to health, water and sanitation. OMM's vision of women's role in society was very much related to women's traditional family roles. It thus did not strive to challenge the patriarchal value system.

In 1992, OMM detached itself from FRELIMO to adopt an autonomous NGO status, but in 1996 it reverted to FRELIMO out of a lack of funding. With the emergence of NGOs, OMM's membership has decreased, but it remains influential, particularly in pressing FRELIMO for the maintenance of the quota system whereby one third of FRELIMO candidates for the recent national elections were women. RENAMO also has its women's arm, called Women's League, but its activities are not extensively documented.

In the 1970s, there were very few women's NGOs. These focused mostly on poverty and basic needs such as nutrition, health, education, water and sanitation. Throughout the war period, NGOs concentrated on emergency and relief assistance. After the Law of Associations was passed in 1991, more NGOs were founded. Today, it is estimated that around 400 Mozambican NGOs operate countrywide.

National NGOs also emerged in response to the growing nation of community-based development. This drive for community-based development has often presumed that community segments are in harmony and has ignored the significant differences between men and women as well as the fact that traditional leaders and community structures are patriarchal.

Religious organizations are also active in different parts of the country. The Muslim associations and various Christian Churches have Mothers' Groups/Ladies Societies that are represented in the coordination body of the Christian Council of Mozambique. Influential in the rural areas, these religious groups perpetuate a patriarchal value system and concomitant gender relations.

In general, NGOs have limited capacity to analyze gender issues. They tend to focus on

⁷⁸ The critical areas focus on employment, agriculture, health and education. For a full appraisal of what has been accomplished, see also the government's Beijing + 5 report and Forum Mulher, *Políticas da Desigualdade: primeiros elementos para uma avaliação das políticas e programas de género do governo e ONGs após Beijing 1995-1999*.

alphabetization programmes/projects for women, credit for women, health education, civic education campaigns for women and violence against women.

The majority of women's organizations are members of Forum Mulher, an umbrella organisation based in Maputo that functions as a communication network, as a resource network to strengthen the technical capacity of NGOs involved in women and development, and as an advocacy instrument to promote gender issues and equality. Forum Mulher itself is a member of LINK, a network of some 150 national and international NGOs in development. The objective of LINK is to foster greater co-operation between national and international NGOs and between NGOs and government and donor institutions.

Communication and coordination between NGOs based in Maputo City and the provinces is limited. In the provinces, coordination mechanisms between locally based NGOs are either lacking or embryonic. National NGOs are mostly based in Maputo, in close proximity of donor institutions; many rely on external funding, are usually not based on constituency but organized around a few personalities and have limited capacity to systematically analyze gender issues and incorporate them into their projects/programmes.

'Gender' still means different things to different actors, which also limits their ability to effectively influence governmental policy. A focus should be to provide capacity building for women's NGOs, particularly in gender training.

The *University of Eduardo Mondlane* (UEM) and *Centro dos Estudos Africanos* (CEA) also play an active role in support of gender equality. In particular, these academic and research institutions improve the data that can be used to document existing gender inequalities. They identify and document emerging issues of concern and are an important advocacy partner.

The role of donors: supporting national efforts

The great majority of bilateral and multilateral donor agencies have firmly placed the promotion of gender equality on their agenda. A number of bilateral donor agencies have financed research and publications such as the Gender Profiles of Nampula and Niassa.⁷⁹ They have also financed training activities and collectively lobbied for the inclusion of gender targets in the national programmes that they support, such as in PROAGRI and the Feeder Roads projects.

Multilateral donor agencies such as the UN agencies are bound by the UN Development Assistance Framework 1998–2000. UNDAF explicitly includes objectives such as empowerment, reduction of discrimination particularly against girls and improvement of women's standard of living. All UN agencies adopt a mainstreaming and GAD approach, with the exception of WFP that has set stringent women-specific targets.

In 1998 the Gender Donor Group was reactivated. It serves as a coordination mechanism and medium to exchange information about different donors' activities and priorities. UN Gender Focal Points coordinate with each other through the UN Gender Thematic Group.

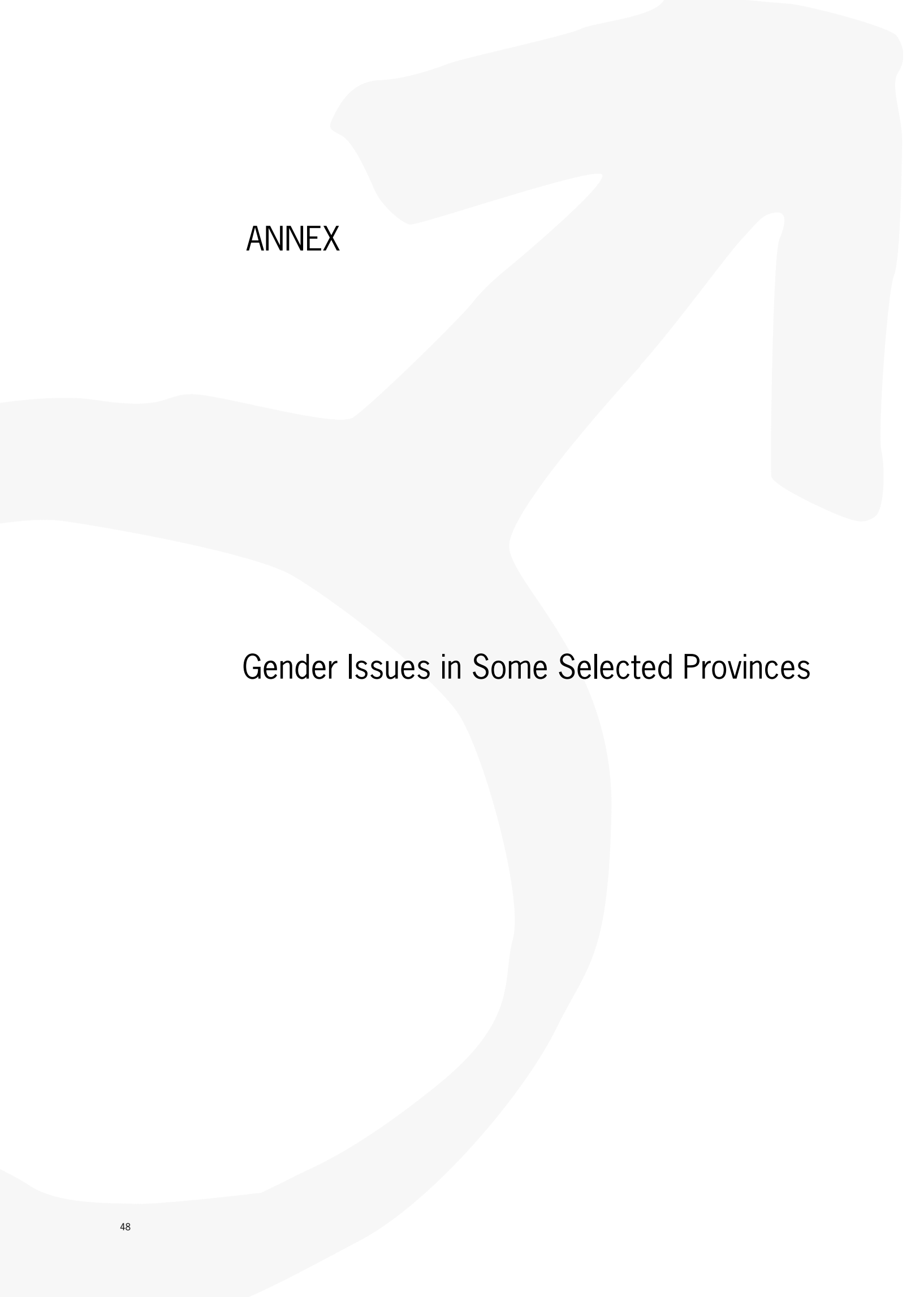
⁷⁹ Hirvonen, S. and C. Braga for the Swedish Embassy, *O perfil de género do Niassa*, 1999 and da Silva, T. et al for the Dutch Embassy, *O perfil de género da provincia de Nampula*, 1998

SUMMARY AND STRATEGIC AREAS

- With the support of bilateral and multilateral donor agencies, government and civil society have begun to develop policies and institutional mechanisms to promote gender equality.
- The main institutional mechanism is the *Grupo Operativo*, which is chaired by the Minister for Women and Coordination of Social Action. In addition, a National Directorate for Women and Gender is being instituted within MMCAS.
- The members of the institutional mechanisms require advanced training in gender mainstreaming and gender analysis as well as strengthening of their coordination role.
- Gender targets remain vague and general, with a tendency to focus on practical gender needs rather than strategic gender needs, and there is a need to establish uniform mechanisms to systematically allocate funds to gender activities.

In the light of this, the following key areas for donor support include:

- Technical capacity building, i.e. training of counterparts in gender analysis and mainstreaming and the identification of specific objectives and strategies to meet strategic gender needs
- Institutional support, i.e. material support to equip and staff gender units and gender focal points
- Strengthening of the coordination role of MMCAS and the *Grupo Operativo* at all levels, i.e. internal, external, between central level and the provinces, between government and civil society
- Inclusion of gender activities in sector plans and budgets.



ANNEX

Gender Issues in Some Selected Provinces

Introduction

This annex contains a more detailed overview of the situation of women and most critical gender issues in Niassa, Nampula, Tete and Inhambane. The focus on these provinces is based on the existence of data as well as the specific interest of the Swedish and Irish cooperation in Niassa and Inhambane.⁸⁰

Although the construction of gender identity is the basis for gender relations and social harmony in all parts of the country, the selection of these provinces also serves to highlight that gender relations are gradually changing. In particular, in the Northern and central provinces of Mozambique the extended matrilineal family is being gradually transformed into a greater tendency towards nuclear families that are patrilineal. In the Southern provinces, the erosion of traditional (patrilineal) kinship systems is due to male migration to South Africa and Maputo City, and this has a profound impact on women as they become increasingly vulnerable to poverty.

Nampula Province

Nampula is situated in the North. As in other parts of Mozambique above the Rio Save, the main social unit is the matrilineal extended family. The matrilineal family is headed by an elder, the maternal uncle (*mwene*), who is the guardian and distributor of the lineage lands. He is assisted by his sister or niece (*pyamwene*), who represents the link with the lineage ancestors and who advises him on collective rituals. Polygamy is still practiced, particularly among the large Muslim population.

Post-independence economic, legal and administrative changes are transforming the traditional matrilineal system, gradually introducing a new emphasis on nuclear families that are headed by husbands and/or fathers. Economic changes refer to the increasing monetization of the regional economy, which is due to increasing urbanization, the commercialization of cashew nuts and (albeit limited) opportunities for wage labour. Legal changes make it easier for men to acquire land in their own personal name, directly from the

administration, instead of through the *mwene*.

The erosion of matrilineal structures in favour of patriarchal family systems has not only weakened the elders' authority and weakened women's access to land, but also resulted in smaller nuclear family units that consequently have less access to labour since they comprise fewer adults. The result of the redefinition of gender relations is that women's agricultural workload has increased, often leaving them very little time to engage in other income generating activities. Households in Nampula depend on subsistence agriculture for their food, meaning that measures to improve subsistence agricultural production are imperative.

Only a small percentage – less than 20 per cent – of micro-businesses are owned by women and trading or vending on the market are considered culturally inappropriate for women. There are some micro-finance schemes that can assist women, but these are mainly found in Nampula City. The Rural Women's Fund in the provincial capital and surrounding districts comprises around 400 members.

With only limited opportunities to earn cash income, there has been an increase in the number of poor households that cannot afford to pay rent for APIE-owned accommodation and who have therefore moved into the peri-urban areas. This is particularly the case for female-headed households. These *bairros* have less access to clean water and sanitation facilities and there are no operational garbage or sewage disposal systems. The swelling of the peri-urban districts has also had a significant impact on the environment, since 90 per cent of the population use firewood as the prime source of energy.

Initiation rites are still widely practiced and remain the main form of socialization of adolescents into adults. The rites are widely regarded as the most appropriate type of education for girls, since it explicitly prepares them for adulthood as mothers and wives and is therefore often cited as the main reason why girls are taken out of school after completing only the most basic formal education. The perpetuation of these gender roles encourages premature marriage and early child-

⁸⁰ Cfr. Casas, Maria Isabel et al. *Gender Profile of Nampula Province*, Maputo 1998 (commissioned by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Maputo); Chege, Rosabelle *The Situation Analysis of Women : PROAREA Project – Tete Province*, Maputo 2000 (commissioned by UNDP Maputo); Hirvonen, Soila and Braga, Carla *Perfil de Género: Província do Niassa*, Maputo 1999 (commissioned by SIDA, Swedish Embassy Maputo).

birth. These gender roles also define a paradox in health issues: i.e. women are considered responsible for reproductive health, while they lack the power to make decisions about their own sexual health (e.g. use of condoms, family planning and abortion).

Niassa Province

Although one of the largest provinces, Niassa is the least populated.⁸¹ The main population groups are Macuas (55 per cent), Yao (37 per cent) and Nyanjas (8 per cent). The Macuas and Nyanjas are Christian, whereas the Yao follow Islam. In Niassa there are 10 women for every 9 men, which means that the gender imbalance is not as pronounced as elsewhere. This is related to the limited opportunities for migratory labour. Men do not migrate very far, and they are often employed only for a few weeks during the harvest season.

Situated in the far North-Western corner of Mozambique, it is characterized by isolation due to the long distances between the districts and the lack of infrastructure. Consequently, the economy of Niassa is defined by the proximity of neighbouring countries such as Zambia, Malawi and Zimbabwe, more than by Maputo that is situated over 2000 km to the south.

Although it has excellent agricultural potential due to sufficient space, favourable climate and good soil the agricultural sector in Niassa is characterized by a low degree of productivity. Agriculture is mainly directed towards subsistence family farming. Both men and women undertake farming activities, but women tend to be solely responsible for food while men also tend cash crops. Fishing, which is possible along the shores of Lake Niassa, is typically considered a masculine activity.

In Niassa the number of female-headed households is growing, particularly as polygamous wives consider themselves to be the sole providers for themselves and their children. The biggest problem identified by female-headed households is the lack of labour.

Gender roles are perpetuated through initiation rites for both boys and girls. In the poorest families there is a tendency to hold initiation rites at an

earlier age, sometimes as early as six years for girls, because this prepares girls for early marriage, relieving fathers of the responsibility to support daughters. In spite of a growing incidence of divorce, the traditional gender roles of wifehood and motherhood are normative, resulting in the marginalization and ostracization of single women. As initiation rites are often considered more appropriate forms of education for girls these are given priority over formal schooling. This is reflected in low female literacy rates: only 14 per cent of women are literate, compared to 44 per cent of men.⁸²

Many NGOs and women's associations are springing up. These organizations focus on community participation, which is mostly achieved through consultation of the *regulo* (i.e. traditional/community leader) as spokesperson for the community – which often results in the sidelining of women's views.

There are very few jobs available in formal employment. Gender barriers bar women's access to promotion, equitable recruitment and equitable salaries, and leave women vulnerable to sexual harassment in the work place.

Informal activities are linked to agriculture, which is the basis of Niassa's economy. Additional income is most commonly generated through the sale of surplus food production, for which women are responsible. Although both men and women engage in farming, women are generally responsible for subsistence farming, whereas men predominantly engage in cash cropping such as tobacco and cotton. Sometimes a household will engage in both types of agriculture, in which case women bear the additional burden of tending two plots. Men usually decide how family labour is allocated and they control the income from surplus production. Given that the economic base of the households is the *machamba*, measures to increase the productivity of agriculture are essential to reduce poverty. This implies the provision of extension services for female farmers and labour-saving devices. As girls are expected to work in the *machamba*, these measures may contribute to increasing girls' education.

Health facilities are poorly developed both due to the devastation of the war years and due to the

⁸¹ This section draws on the work of Hirvonen, Soila and Braga, Carla *Perfil de Género: Província do Niassa*, Maputo 1999 (commissioned by SIDA, Swedish Embassy Maputo).

⁸² UNDP, *National Human Development Report 1999*, table 26.

relative isolation of the districts. A specific gender problem is abortion, which can be performed in a hospital on the triple condition that it is carried out before eight weeks gestation, that the woman submits a written authorization of her husband, father or brother and that she pays 250.000 Mt. Considering that women can earn around 5000 Mt for one morning of work on someone else's *machamba*, this is often an impossible requirement. Another gender problem is the high incidence of anemia among women which is largely due to certain food taboos which pregnant women must observe (e.g. the prohibition to eat certain meats and eggs).

The gender profile highlights the following issues that can serve as point of departure for interventions in Niassa:

- the need to improve the productivity of small-holding agriculture
- the need to improve the transport and commercial networks
- the need to improve health facilities
- the need to promote gender balance in education.

Tete Province

Data was gathered in seven communities, namely Angonia, Macanga and Tsangano among the Ngoni and Chewa people.⁸³ These groups are matrilineal and when men marry, they move to their wives' homestead. The women identified this as an advantage because in case of separation or divorce the land and children remain in their hands. 30 per cent of the women interviewed were in polygamous unions and considered themselves as the sole providers for themselves and their children.

There are limited opportunities for employment in these rural districts, although Tete City is expanding. The province accounts for five per cent of the national GDP.⁸⁴ Based on the gender division of labour, women almost exclusively work on the family *machamba*. In spite of low productivity, some women manage to sell some surplus farm produce. For men there is some seasonal waged

work on commercial tobacco farms, but this is only a few weeks per year. Construction and maintenance of houses is considered men's work, but as these activities are only required a few times per year men have more time to grow cash crops or to take surplus produce from the family *machamba* to the market. The fact that men dictate the use of bicycles also restricts women's ability to go to the market themselves, so that men are the ones who receive the cash proceeds and control expenditure.

The PROAREA project gave credit to both men and women but only a few women participated and only a small number of businesses survived. This experience has highlighted the importance of identifying markets, the importance of buying what customers will buy and require; the importance of bookkeeping skills; the importance of buying the right product at the right time and the importance of pricing products correctly. The implication is that credit should be accompanied by training in elementary business skills.

Life expectancy at birth for women in Tete province is 46.4 years compared to 43.4 years for men. Due to its geographical location Tete has one of the highest HIV prevalence rates: 22 per cent of all adults between 15–49 years of age is thought to be infected.⁸⁵ There is a high incidence of malaria, malnutrition and maternal morbidity. Many problems are related to women's childbearing role and they are exacerbated by a woman's heavy workload.

In some districts the net enrolment of girls in standard 1 exceeds the net enrolment of boys, but in the next grades girls drop out faster and more than boys do. By standard 4 and 5 most girls have dropped out all together. This is consistent with the low levels of female education for the province as a whole: 67 per cent of the adult population is illiterate; 86 per cent of rural women is illiterate and half of the urban women are illiterate.⁸⁶ In addition to the long distances to schools, the reasons why girls drop out of school are immediate consequences of female gender roles: girls are taken out of school to avoid early pregnancy, to get married, and to help in the household. In the

⁸³ Chege, Rosabelle *The Situation Analysis of Women : PROAREA Project – Tete Province*, Maputo 2000 (commissioned by UNDP Maputo).

⁸⁴ UNDP, *National Human Development Report 1999*, page 39.

⁸⁵ UNDP, *National Human Development Report 1999*, table 24.

⁸⁶ UNDP, *National Human Development Report 1999*, table 8 and table 26 (1997 census data).

community exists a demand for adult education, but there are no courses available yet.

In interviews, women identified poverty as the root of all their other problems. Although 'poverty' was not defined, it was most commonly taken to mean 'lack of money'. Lack of money has numerous consequences, such as inadequate housing, inadequate health care, discontinued school attendance, and the lack of food. In turn this results in malnutrition, hunger, and a greater incidence of domestic violence, as husbands demand food when there is none. It is estimated that 82 per cent of all households live in absolute poverty.⁸⁷

For this reason, women interviewed felt that the key to alleviate their poverty is improved productivity of the *machamba*. Improved seeds and fertilizers increase production, so that the *machamba* can yield more surpluses that can be sold for cash on the market. There remains, however, the issue of women's limited access to the market in view of the long distances and relatively high cost of transport and women's workload that precludes activities other than farming.

The main issues identified by the PROAREA study were: credit and training, education, health and the reduction of the division of labour and workload. It highlights that gender roles affect every aspect of women's lives such as education, health, poverty and identifies the following salient areas for potential intervention in Tete:

- improving the productivity of the *machamba* as the key strategy to reduce the poverty of households: extension
- access to markets and informal economy: credit should be delivered together with elementary business skills training.

The transformation of gender relations in the North and Central Regions

Historically, social organization in Niassa, Nampula and Tete is characterized by matrilineal descent, whereby productive assets are passed on in the female line. This resulted in the fact that upon marriage a man moves to his wife's homestead where he acquires access to land from her lineage elder, who is usually the wife's maternal uncle. Even though matrilineal descent does not allow

women to allocate land rights themselves, it does safeguard their rights to land and affords women a degree of economic security. In case of divorce or separation, land and children stay with the wife since these must remain in hands of the matrilineal lineage group.

In recent years, however, various factors have come into play that are steadily weakening and transforming the traditional matrilineal structures. There is a tendency towards patrilineal descent systems, virilocal residence and nuclearization of households.

This is due to economic changes such as the increasing monetization of the economy (e.g. wage labour, urbanization and commercialization of cashew nuts harvested from trees that are owned by individuals and families). It is also in part due to legal changes such as the Land Law of 1997 that allows individuals to acquire land rights directly from the state instead of through the *mwene* and lineage. This results in a multitude of family arrangements that undermine the position of women both inside and outside of their lineage. In particular, women in nuclear and/or patrilineal families are at risk of losing the land security and family-based labour pool that they need to maintain the agricultural output of their subsistence smallholdings. It can therefore be said that the re-articulation of matrilinealism has not brought significant improvement of women's status in society. This re-articulation appears to be an ongoing historical process, closely linked to the political history of the North and Centre, including the introduction of colonialism, Islam, Christianity, Frelimo ideology, the establishment of OMM that took the place of female leadership through the *pyamwene*. Each of these factors contributed to the reinforcement of patriarchal value systems.

Inhambane Province

Inhambane is situated in the Southern region. Although the Southern region as a whole has the most favourable human poverty index of the country, social and economic indicators for Inhambane remain low. The survival deprivation rate (i.e. percentage of people who will not live beyond the age of 40) is approximately 32 per

⁸⁷ UNDP, *National Human Development Report 1999*, table 24 (1997 census data).

cent, compared to 18 per cent in Maputo City. More than 96 per cent of the population does not have access to piped water and 68 per cent do not have access to adequate health services.⁸⁸ Half the population is illiterate; 71 per cent of rural women are illiterate and 47 per cent of urban women are similarly deprived of education.⁸⁹ According to the Child Vulnerability Index using 1997 census data, 38 per cent of women over six years old have never attended school; 83 per cent of households live in absolute poverty; 11 per cent of adults 15–49 years old are HIV positive; 26 per cent of children under three are affected by malnutrition.⁹⁰ In Inhambane life expectancy for women in 1999 is estimated at 52 years compared to 44.6 years for men.⁹¹

The economic base of Inhambane is predominantly agricultural: the majority of households rely on their *machambas* for subsistence farming. There is also some limited commercial farming of cash crops such as coconuts, citrus fruits and cashew nuts but virtually no industrial production. Along the coast the exploitation of marine resources such as fishing, prawns and the unfurling tourism industry affords limited opportunities to earn an income. The province's contribution to the real GDP is five per cent.⁹² In the light of limited income-generation, the most striking characteristic of the provincial economy is the high incidence of labour migration. A significant number of adult men, husbands and sons, leave the rural homestead in search of wage employment in Maputo City and in the mines or farms of South Africa.

The impact of migration patterns on poverty among women in Southern Mozambique

Although there is no province-specific gender profile or situation analysis available for this province, there are some case studies that were conducted as part of a recent study on the feminization of poverty.⁹³ These case studies focus

mainly on the effects of migration patterns on female-headed households in the Southern region and thus permit an analysis of the specific ways in which women are integrated in the regional economy of Inhambane.

Male migration provides women with additional cash income as husbands and sons send home substantial remittances and duty-free goods. Cultural practices reinforce the social and economic protection of women, such as the custom that sons traditionally look after their elderly parents and in particular widows. There is also the custom of 'levirate' whereby a widow may marry her brother in law who will provide for her and her dependants. It is therefore frequently assumed that women in the South have more opportunities to obtain cash income than women in the North and central regions and that this results in greater wealth among women and households.

While these traditional types of 'safety nets' undoubtedly exist, there is evidence that these mechanisms are crumbling. Paradoxically, this may be due precisely to the increasing opportunities for labour migration by husbands and adult children who fail to return to their families. Many husbands do not return to their wives, because they choose to start new families in South Africa. There is also a high mortality rate among mine workers because of the risks they face in the violent culture of Johannesburg and because of infection with HIV/AIDS. Adult sons leave the rural areas to seek jobs in cities and daughters marry and move to other places with their husbands. The result is the abandonment of women by their families. This affects particularly elderly women and widows. The loss of remittances, the loss of security and loss of access to land rights under a patrilineal system heighten a widow's vulnerability to poverty.

As discussed in Part 1, gender barriers mean that women have virtually no savings, no livestock or cattle, no education. This means that the

⁸⁸ UNDP, *National Human Development Report 1999*, table 8 (1997 census data)

⁸⁹ UNDP, *National Human Development Report 1999*, table 26 (1997 census data)

⁹⁰ UNDP, *National Human Development Report 1999*, table 24 (1997 census data).

⁹¹ UNDP, *National Human Development Report 1999*, table 23.

⁹² UNDP, *National Human Development Report 1999*, graph 3.3 p 39.

⁹³ Cfr. Polana, Emilia and de Vletter, Fion *Mulheres Comerciantes Itinerantes de Milho no Sul de Moçambique: um estudo de uma actividade informal de rendimento alto e seus potenciais para a redução da pobreza*, Maputo 2001; de Vletter, Fion *Enfrentando a pobreza extrema através de habilidades tradicionais: o caso das fabricantes de cestos xirundzu em Moçambique*, Maputo 2001; de Vletter, Fion, *Case Study 4: Some Implications of the February 2000 Floods of the Limpopo Valley*, Maputo 2001; cfr also the 'Microfinance Paper' presented at the Feminization of Poverty Seminar on 22 February 2001 in Maputo.

machamba is their main asset that is used both to satisfy nutritional requirements and to occasionally realize some cash income from the sale of surplus produce. This cash income is however very limited: a recent study found that in some cases this comes to an annual income of 250,000 Mt!⁹⁴

As elderly women must increasingly fend for themselves, they engage in various activities to earn some cash such as the making and sale of baskets, traditional beer brewing, sale of charcoal and petty vending or trading.

As an example of this, a growing number of women are active as maize traders. They travel inland to buy maize directly from the producers or on the local markets, which they then transport back to the urban areas where they sell it at a good profit. The ability to exploit this economic opportunity is however limited by gender barriers. Age is also an important determining women's ability to engage in survival strategies. For example, trading involves extensive travel and a minimum capital investment and is thus not viable for women with very young children and elderly women, who may prefer to engage in traditional home-based micro activities.

Women do not widely access credit mechanisms, for fear of contracting debt that they are unable to manage properly. This aversion to debt has important implications for micro-credit projects that aim to facilitate women's participation in the informal economy, namely that credit facilities should be accompanied by business skills training.

In the main, female-headed households in the South are more involved in informal market for the following reasons:

- households benefit from remittances and goods brought back to Mozambique for use or sale
- specific credit or savings systems such as the popular *xitique geral* allow women to accumulate savings so that monthly bills can be paid and it takes away the control of husbands over the money
- proximity of markets in South Africa and

Swaziland where goods can be sourced for resale and the existence of transport corridors that attract informal markets/vending to cater for passing traffic.

In addition, in Maputo city, households do not rely on a *machamba* for subsistence food production so that women are free (time-wise) and obliged (to buy food) to engage in the informal economy.

In the North gender roles and the sexual division of labour curtail women's participation in the informal economy. Initiation rites result in early marriage and early childbearing, so that women drop out of education earlier which in turn limits their economic activity. Women require the authorization of husbands or fathers to engage in economic activity; and vending in the informal market is regarded as culturally inappropriate for a married woman, so that most female vendors are divorced or widowed. In the North households tend to be, generally speaking, poorer as they spend more time and resources on subsistence agriculture whereas in the South the greater wealth of households is due to their more active participation in the informal economy, migration and the proximity of major urban centers or markets in neighbouring countries.

However, even in the South, gender relations define women's ability to exploit economic opportunities. As women continue to be responsible for the family's subsistence through small-scale farming, they have fewer opportunities to seek out formal employment or alternative sources of income in the cities and continue to subsidize male migratory employment. In addition, the long-standing male migration patterns have weakened traditional family structures, which may result in increased vulnerability of particularly elder women to poverty.

In sum, the improvement of the productivity of subsistence farming is a key area for intervention as a fundamental strategy for poverty alleviation of women in all regions of Mozambique.

⁹⁴ de Vletter, Fion, *Case Study 4: Some Implications of the February 2000 Floods of the Limpopo Valley*, Maputo 2001, p 2.





Towards
Gender Equality
in
Mozambique



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