



THE PROCESS OF EDUCATION POLICY FORMATION IN AFRICA

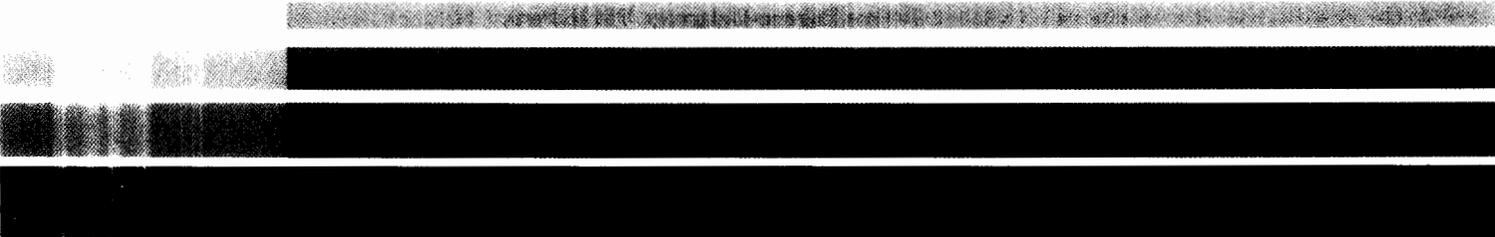
The Case of Mozambique



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1 - CONTEXT

Historical roots

1.1 Before Mozambique gained independence from Portugal in 1975, a dual system of education reflected the social policies of the colonial power. The “official” system, open principally to the Portuguese population, was identical to the Portuguese system, using the Portuguese curricula. The “indigenous” system, by contrast, was the responsibility of the Catholic Church, under the *Concordata da Santa Sé*, an agreement, ratified in 1941, between the Portuguese government and the Vatican. The indigenous system, with a poor and uneven distribution of schools in rural areas, provided rudimentary education up to third grade. Anyone wishing to continue had to seek admission to a school in the official system and was more often than not turned down, generally on the grounds of age.

1.2 As soon as the country gained independence, the *Concordata* ceased to exist, and responsibility for the entire education system was vested in the newly formed state. The new government, headed by the Frelimo Party, found that

Mozambique had inherited from colonialism one of the most dramatic educational situations in the Third World, and that in line with one of the highest illiteracy rates in the world, of serious inequalities in the distribution of educational opportunities for the school-age population, the educational system established by the colonial power was corrupted by racial and class barriers, by elitism and by cultural alienation.¹

The almost exclusive concentration of educational resources in the urban centers acted as a brake to mass participation in the workings of society. For this reason Frelimo directed that

In Mozambican society education is the fundamental human right of every citizen, and is the central instrument for training and improving the technical and scientific knowledge of the workers.²

First steps to reform

1.3 The first education reforms following Independence were established at a National Education Seminar held in 1975, attended by civil servants in the Ministry of Education and by politicians. In addition to deciding that textbooks referring to the history of Portugal and religion should be withdrawn, the meeting’s participants agreed to introduce experiences from the liberated zones (the areas controlled by Frelimo before Independence) into the curriculum. They determined that new textbooks would contain the history of Mozambique, political education, and efforts to consolidate the current ideology. Although members of the party in power may have had a clear understanding of how the education system operated in the liberated areas, most of the staff of the Ministry of Education had no such experience or knowledge.

1.4 These decisions were taken on the spur of the moment, without consideration of educational planning techniques, the process of adjustment to new curricula, or testing of new teaching materials. The capacity of the education system to implement the decisions was not assessed.

Frelimo directives

1.5 Following the 1975 seminar, Frelimo began to establish the framework for sector policy at its congresses. The Third Congress, held in 1977 (and the Fourth Congress, held in 1984), confirmed the Marxist-Leninist orientation of the Party. The congresses were attended by elected members of the Party, and decisions were made through votes by a show of hands, after open discussions generally led by members of the *Bureau Politico*.

1.6 Thus, during the period from Independence until the multiparty elections of 1994, an important role in directing education was played by the *Directivas Economicas e Sociais do Partido Frelimo*, the only official party until 1993. These directives defined education as a fundamental human right of every citizen. The strategic changes that took place in education after Independence were orientated toward the complete transformation of the existing education system by following two main paths: The education praxis of Frelimo, developed in the liberated zones, and the formation of a national cultural identity through an autonomous education system..

1.7 During the first phase of reforms (1975–76), the most important events were

- (a) Bringing all education within state control;
- (b) Curricular reform, especially in history, geography, and political education;
- (c) Creation of new teacher training courses, especially for primary school teachers;
- (d) The more democratic organization of schools and the institution of new, centralized administrative structures.

1.8 In 1983, the People's Assembly approved the SNE, giving it the status of a law. In 1992, the SNE was revised to incorporate the *Lei do Ensino Superior* (LES). Despite recent political changes and the failure of the SNE to achieve its objectives, these two laws form the basis of the present education system in Mozambique.

War destruction

1.9 For ten years between 1964 and 1974, Mozambicans conducted an armed war for their independence, and for another 16 years thereafter (1976–92), the country faced a devastating and destabilizing civil war. During the civil war especially, Mozambique suffered great damage to its physical infrastructure. Schools in the rural areas were often destroyed. A 1988 Report of the Ministry of Education gives an indication of the destruction. According to that report, in the five years between 1981 and 1987:

- (a) 2629 primary schools (45 percent) were closed;
- (b) About half a million primary school pupils were affected, including an estimated 100 thousand who were deprived of tuition and 250 thousand who were relocated or lodged in accommodation centers;
- (c) About 6,750 primary teachers were affected, of whom 192 were assassinated, 185 captured, and 14 mutilated;
- (d) 22 secondary schools (grades 5–9) were closed (13 percent) and about 8,000 students and 200 teachers affected;

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- (e) 36 hostels were closed, displacing more than 5,000 students;
- (f) Four teacher training centres were closed, of which three continued to operate in temporary premises, affecting about 600 students;
- (g) Two technical schools were closed;
- (h) An indeterminate number of literacy and adult education centres and units associated with economic production units, communal villages, and social institutions were closed, affecting the whole management and performance of the campaigns;
- (i) Access roads to schools were destroyed or simply not maintained.

2 - EDUCATION POLICY SINCE INDEPENDENCE

The National Education System (Sistema Nacional de Educação—SNE)

2.1 In 1978, government had created a National Education System (SNE) as a means of consolidating the initiatives taken since 1975. New planning and administrative structures were introduced, among them provincial- and district-level bodies concerned specifically with the management of schools. Educators at the National Institute for the Development of Education developed curricular planning and started pedagogical research. Teacher training programs were introduced, including training of teachers for technical education. Government introduced large and successful national campaigns for literacy and adult education.

2.2 On March 23, 1983, the People's Assembly passed a law that made the SNE the legal instrument for the implementation of the principles outlined in the Frelimo Party Directives. According to this law, the National Educational System "is a process which contributes to the education of the Mozambican, with a patriotic conscience, scientifically qualified, professionally and technically able, and culturally liberated." The SNE had three major objectives:

- (a) The eradication of illiteracy;
- (b) The introduction of compulsory schooling;
- (c) The training of professional staff for development and research.

2.3 The implementation of the National Education System was not viewed simply as a change in the structure of the learning cycles. It was to usher in,

Above all, unity and interaction between: the elimination of illiteracy; the generalization of primary education; entry to the labour force after acquisition of a basic education; and the quality and quantity of technicians necessary for economic and social development.³

Officials stressed that, without this integration, the social impact of the new system would be limited, and the imbalances of the past could re-emerge in the near future.

2.4 The Ministry of Education was responsible for administering the National Education System, creating and directing educational establishments, and coordinating scientific activities. In response to this decree and in order to execute the Economic and Social Directives of the third and fourth congresses of Frelimo, the Ministry of Education made the design and implementation of the SNE the principal focus of its work. Objectives were traced out until the year 2000. The implementation process was expected to include a complex collection of multilateral reforms, covering, among others, pedagogical, legal, administrative, management, organizational, and financing matters.

2.5 Against the background of the current ideological forces, ministry personnel studied various systems of education in communist and socialist countries. Most attractive was the education system of the German Democratic Republic (the GDR, which, in 1990, became part of a unified Germany). Although Mozambican educators played an active role, GDR education experts also contributed much to the design of the SNE. Thus, today some view the SNE an East German system which does not work in Mozambique.

Results of the SNE

2.6 The results of the SNE were extremely unsatisfactory. The system began gradually to collapse from the moment of its introduction, although the effects were not felt until five years later, when an evaluation process commenced. By that time (1988), the system was characterized by:

- (a) An asymmetry in the structure of the school population, with 97.3 percent of students in the primary level (grades 1-7), 2.6 percent in secondary and technical education, and only 0.1 percent in higher education. In other words, for an annual intake of approximately 500 thousand pupils in the first grade, only about 1,000 entered grade 10 and about 300 entered higher education;
- (b) A teaching body inadequate in numbers and without the desired qualifications, especially in primary education;
- (c) High drop-out and failure rates at all levels;
- (d) An inadequate school network, somewhat dispersed and not rationalized;
- (e) A weak foundation in teaching material.

2.7 Aggravating this set of internal weaknesses was the targeting of the system by RENAMO, the opposition force, during the civil war, and the physical damage brought on by that conflict.

2.8 The Ministry of Education admitted that the SNE had introduced new distortions, the elimination of which should be the objective of actions taken in the following years. According to the Ministry of Education Report of 1988,

The insufficiencies and distortions of the educational system, whether caused by inherited historical social factors or by the present situation, reveal the size and scale of our cultural and economic backwardness. Their impact, in educational terms, will continue to be felt in the longer term.

2.9 Yet it was still considered that the education situation had seen significant progress, above all in the fulfillment of the major strategic objectives of the national educational policy.

2.10 The collapse of the SNE may be partly attributed to external factors such as the destruction of the rural school network during the war and severe shortages of resources for education due both to the war and to the introduction of a Structural Adjustment Program in 1987. Yet other, internal factors can also be identified:

- (a) New teaching materials were introduced without being previously tested and evaluated.
- (b) The teaching staff did not fully support the new system. Those who were already teachers when the system was introduced were reluctant to change from the old (colonial) system to the SNE, mainly because they had not been involved in its design and felt it was inadequate. Most of the teachers who started work under the SNE had serious deficiencies in the "basic disciplines" (Portuguese and mathematics) Moreover, they had not been recruited voluntarily or on the basis of a vocation for teaching.
- (c) There were severe shortages of textbooks and other teaching materials to support the new system.
- (d) Some maintain that the political orientation of the SNE's design contributed to its collapse.

2.11 As the SNE was conceived and designed at a time of single-party politics and before the introduction of a market economy, many now believe that it was too tightly controlled and delimited. Critics comment that the lack of success of the SNE can be attributed to the process of its formulation. It was conceived and designed in a office, without taking clear account of the regional differences within the country, or of the conditions of accessibility, communications, and the schools themselves. It is now widely considered that the expansion of education should have been guided in part by financial requirements, not only political needs. Moreover, the alteration of the curriculum should have been gradual and phased, with periods for evaluation and reflection on the results.

The Higher Education Law (Lei do Ensino Superior — LES)

2.12 Within the SNE, in 1993 the Assembly of the Republic passed the *Lei de Ensino Superior*. Before this law, higher education was orientated by directives of the governing party and presidential decrees. The law defined the objectives of higher education, institutional autonomy, the criteria for entry to higher education, types of institutions, the functions of the rectors and vice-rectors of higher education institutions, the procedures for creation of higher education institutions, their obligations, courses and degrees, personnel, and inspection. It also authorized the *Conselho Nacional do Ensino Superior*, composed principally of the Minister of Education and the rectors of the different institutions, as the body that coordinates higher education and defines its attributions and responsibilities.

2.13 The LES was prepared jointly by the various higher educational institutions on the initiative of the Council of Rectors. Eduardo Mondlane University led the preparation process by drafting a law for discussion with the other institutions (Instituto Superior Pedagógico and Instituto Superior de Relações Internacionais). In 1993, after agreement at the Council of Rectors, the proposal was approved by the Assembly of the Republic.

2.14 Under this law, the higher education system, formally dependent on the Ministry of Education, enjoys great autonomy. Some believe, however, that it lacks coordination and the authority and capacity to manage a balanced development of higher education or of scientific research and the application of its results to the production process. In the view of these critics, in effect, there is no national higher education policy.

3 - NEW DIRECTIONS

The new framework

3.1 Following multiparty elections in 1994, the new government, also Frelimo, presented its five-year program, based on the program presented by the Party in its electoral campaign. There is general agreement that the SNE requires revision and that it does not amount to a national policy for education. People are aware of the need for a national education policy.

3.2 At present, the policy framework for education is the program of Frelimo. This framework was included in its entirety in the five-year plan of the new government and will presumably be the main source for new education policy.

3.3 The main goals of the government program are as follows:

- (a) To provide equal access to all levels of education by expanding the network of schools and other institutions and providing financial and assistance to students from poorer families;
- (b) To promote greater participation of girls and women through curricular and material incentives;
- (c) To reintegrate orphans, abandoned children, and those traumatized by the war into the school system;
- (d) To support initiatives at any level or type of education by religious, private, and other social organizations;
- (e) To reinforce the school network through distance learning, initially for teacher training, and then for teaching;
- (f) To increase funding for the education sector;
- (g) To improve the quality of teaching through: (i) developing realistic schemes for teacher training and professional development; (ii) developing other incentives to improve teachers' motivation and morale (better working conditions, higher salaries, and housing in rural areas); (iii) combating failure at school through curricular reform to improve relevance and flexibility; (iv) improving provision of books and other materials to students, through improved texts, production and distribution; (v) creating an efficient schools inspectorate at the central and local levels; (vi) improving the administrative system and its institutional capacity through creation of competence at the local level and eventual administrative decentralization and involvement of the community in school decisions.

Toward a National Education Policy (NEP)

3.4 Formulation of education policy since the 1994 election is just beginning. It is too early to say how far the formulation of education policy will follow the recommendations for a democratic and participatory process, but it is unlikely that any process of education policy formulation undertaken today would take place behind closed doors. This would make its approval more difficult, especially if it had to pass the Mozambican Parliament. On the other hand, the electoral program of Frelimo, including the section on education, was

prepared by a team of leading members of the Party and had the participation of influential members and sympathisers. Recently, the President of the republic charged a senior minister with the task of coordinating a study on the expansion of higher education in Mozambique. This may be seen as the first stage in developing a methodology for the analysis of the system and in policy formulation.

3.5 Many are demanding the formulation of a National Education Policy (NEP). Feeling the need, the Ministry of Education has already called meetings with different parties for brainstorming sessions for policy development. The National Director of Planning, the Minister of Education, the rector of the university, representatives from UNESCO and Swedish Aid (SIDA), and others, have stressed the difficulty of implementing education reforms without a national education policy. In his foreword to the Master Plan for Basic Education, the previous Minister of Education stated that "if universal basic education is to be achieved, substantial and radical changes must be made in the education system."

3.6 The current minister has pointed out that a national education policy document would also contribute to and facilitate government negotiations with donors. At the moment, however, the ministry recognises that it does not have the necessary know-how to develop such a document and that it requires external technical and financial support. Some officials believe that, in the present circumstances, the SNE is inadequate as a guide to planning. For example, although the SNE and the LES foresee the existence of private institutions, they cannot say whether these must operate within the SNE or LES or can set up their own systems, such as a religious-oriented system.

Consultation and ownership

3.7 During the design of the SNE, ministry officials held little consultation with the administrators, teachers, and other users of the system. After the conceptual and design phases, there was to have been ample publicity, and in cities, the SNE was explained and publicised. But in rural areas, which are less accessible, there was no effective publicity. Moreover, publicity must be distinguished from participation in the process of formulating the SNE. There seems to have been no consultation with social groups during the design of the SNE. It was simply modeled on the education system of the GDR, selected for political reasons. Even the LES, planning for which generated wide discussion among the organisations responsible for higher education and in Parliament, was not presented for public debate or consultation. In addition, consultants, foreign or local, almost always conduct policy studies in closed environments, limiting their research to consulting documents and holding highly directed interviews.

3.8 Foregoing such consultation has its price. Mozambique has a segmented society. The most salient groups are the poor, who expect a free education system, those who are well-off enough to pay for education, groups based on a shared ideology, and expatriates. Few of the people in most of these groups had a chance to express an opinion as the SNE was being designed. Another consequence is the failure to develop consensus and strategic thinking among those doing sectoral studies. Coordination on the need, scope and the terms of reference for the studies has no basis in popular support.

3.9 This lack of consensus may have various explanations, but an important one may be that the funds allocated for such studies are insufficient and do not allow enough time for widespread debate. Many educators express the urgent need for a policy formulation process that takes account the variety of social, religious, and economic groups of people whom the education system should serve. It should also take into account the multiparty situation and the current open market economy.

4 - RESOURCES AND CONSTRAINTS

Information and databases

4.1 With few exceptions, the Ministry of Education is the source of information on education at the primary, secondary, and technical levels. Information generated by the higher education institutions is maintained by those institutions. Databases are maintained by the Planning Directorate (DP) within the ministry, both manually and electronically. Data collection is normally started at the district level, using forms prepared in the ministry. Data collected at the district level are sent to the provincial level, where they are compiled and sent to the ministry. At the ministry, the DP maintains the data. A couple of information systems on personal computers allow the DP to create data banks from which school statistics are produced. For example indicators for the effectiveness of primary schools (*indicadores educacionais e efectivos escolares, ensino primário, 1993-92*) provide statistical information about school population and staffing for primary school grades 1 and 2. The statistics cover only two grades, because the DP wants to launch the computerized procedures progressively, since they are new.

4.2 In 1994, with a wider coverage, the DP produced "*Estatística de Educação, Levantamento Escolar - 1994*." The report covers general education, adult education, and teacher training and lists numbers of existing schools; student enrollments by grade, sex, and level of education; number of teachers with pedagogical training, by sex and level of education; students by age, enrolled in first grade; enrollment rates in first grade for specific age groups; and similar statistics.

4.3 One important issue raised by officials at the DP is that although data are systematically collected and reported, few institutions use them. They are used mainly by donor agencies and consultants to prepare reports, not because they are not made public but because the level of interest among national bodies and individuals is low. The National Director of Planning suggested two reasons for why the ministry's data on schools get little use: people are not accustomed to consulting data, and the data themselves, as well as the process of collecting and analyzing them, are undervalued. This was recently illustrated when the unit in the Ministry responsible for coordinating primary education went directly to the schools to request data, while these data were already available in the Planning Department. The head of the Planning Department suggested a campaign was needed to publicize information in the Ministry and to encourage educators and other planners to use that information.

4.4 As a first step in implementing this suggestion, the Planning Department presented at a workshop the information it has in computerised databases and how to access this information. The workshop was attended by the Minister of Education, national directors and many heads of departments in the ministry. Although the department produces an annual bulletin on the databases, it seems that most people heard of them for the first time at the workshop. The minister instructed the head of the Planning Department to organize more workshops of this kind, both for people working within the education sector and for others whose work is linked to education.

4.5 Data collection and analysis appear to be adequate for the ministry's purposes, but that the ministry should continue to promote more use of these data. A more stable information system based on information technology should be considered. The quality of the data is important, since it will contribute to good planning and projections.

Studies of the education sector

4.6 In parallel with the first stages of the formulation of national education policy, though not necessarily as part of this process, a series of sectoral studies was initiated. Master plans were developed for primary education (*Plano Director da Educaçao Básica*), secondary education (*Plano Director da Educaçao Secundária*), technical education (*Plano Director da Educaçao Tecnica/Vocacional*), and higher education (*Educaçao Superior de Moçambique no Horizonte de Dez Anos*).

4.7 For primary education, the *Plano de Direccao de Educaçao Basica*, was financed by UNICEF and UNDP. The purpose of this study, as stressed in its preamble, is to provide guidelines for action plans for investments and financing. It is not regarded as the last word. In fact, the role of the donors here was merely to finance the study as such, with little specific interest in the sub-sector beyond the study.

4.8 The plan for secondary education was drafted in-house by the Ministry of Education. It conducted a study using the UNICEF/UNDP primary education sectoral study as a framework. The study was not financed by a donor (motivation to work on a study funded by donors is higher than to work on one as a normal staff duty). A commission conducted the field research, visiting the provinces and asking for information. The information collected was compiled and presented with recommendations to the Ministry's Consultative Committee.⁴ That committee wanted the report to be more strategic than descriptive, presumably leaving the details of implementation to local educational authorities.

4.9 The World Bank is financing a study on higher education, a sector in which it has provided a substantial amount of support. The study looks at the sustainability of the existing facilities, as well as expansion, taking into account the financial consequences in both cases. It is intended to lead to a more financially, socially, and politically stable solution.

4.10 SIDA and DANIDA (Danish aid) financed a study on vocational education, based on a relationship these two agencies have had with the Ministry of Education in this subsector. The ministry and these donors agree on the need for more middle-level technicians and on the importance of vocational education.

4.11 At present, there is little coordination between the ministry's own studies and those of donors. The number of studies appears to depend on the number of donors. Although some studies refer to others, it is not clear what relationship there is between them or what becomes of their recommendations. This concerns the ministry, because, while the ministry has its ideas about how education should be conducted, donors have their own ideas as well, and they do not always reflect those of the ministry. In some cases these contradictions are not resolved, yet the donor sets forth on its own study. This can easily result in conflicting policies among subsectors and different structures within the education system. At an even later stage, these differences may become unmanageable.

4.12 Several examples illustrate the lack of connection between studies.

- (a) One donor discovered that another donor had funded a study on the same area of education it had already studied.
- (b) USAID prepared an education sector assessment jointly with government as a basis for considering the future involvement of the agency in the sector.
- (c) Government is developing a study on higher education, yet a World Bank study also covered this subsector. It is not clear how these studies will be used.

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4.13 The plan for the primary sector was presumably prepared by the Ministry of Education, yet the document states that

this plan was prepared with the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Technical Commissions were supported by the Swedish International Development Agency, UNDP, UNICEF and the World Bank. Opinions expressed in the document are not necessarily shared by the sponsors and/or the Ministry of Education.

How is it possible to have a document called a master plan when the opinions of the authors may not be shared by those who are supposed to implement it? What is the use of such a document?

4.14 Another example is the February 1995 study on "Higher education in Mozambique: Prospects for the next ten years." The study was prepared by Mozambican and World Bank experts. Because of lack of effective agreement on the terms of reference, ownership of the study, and its working methodology, World Bank experts were saying in the final stages of the study's preparation that it was a Mozambican study or a joint study, while the Mozambicans were saying that it was a World Bank study. There is a danger that the study will lose a good part of its significance because of these differences of opinion, which could have been resolved in the process of identifying the need for the study.

4.15 In May 1995, the ministry began a survey of all the studies made in the field of education, including those prepared by the ministry itself and those prepared by others. This survey is a step toward the formulation of a National Education Policy, to be started as soon as technical and financial support is available.

Infrastructure

4.16 Education policy must take account of infrastructure conditions, not only of the educational establishments themselves but also of access roads and communications systems that provide essential links between the managers of the education system, the teaching staff, and the population they serve. In Mozambique, the lack of rural infrastructure is a particularly serious problem. While in the cities schools are functioning (although in some cases under very bad conditions), in rural areas schools often do not exist at all.

4.17 The SNE was formulated without taking into consideration the physical conditions and resources of the country. According to a senior official in the Ministry of Education:

The SNE was intended to encompass the whole country, but if its design had taken account of the real existing circumstances, such as the enormous difficulties of communications by road in rural areas, it would not have proposed national implementation in the form defined.

In current policy formulation activities, the communications infrastructure in particular is essential for collecting information from and disseminating it to rural areas. The design of consultation processes, with administrators, teachers, and the general population must take into account the great difficulties in communication outside the major towns and cities.

4.18 The infrastructure obviously plays an important role in planning new schools. The criteria used by the Office for Educational Studies and Projects (GEPE) in selecting sites for school buildings are the population density of the district, as recorded by the National Statistical Directorate, and the results of the survey by the Planning Directorate of the Ministry of Education. However, these surveys do not always reflect the actual situation. Thus, in some districts schools have been built which are too small to accommodate the student demand, while in others new schools have too many classrooms. The National Directorate of Roads and Bridges has not been consulted in the process of school location planning.

4.19 It appears that GEPE intends to maintain its present approach to school building, meaning without reference to the National Directorate of Roads and Bridges. One of the immediate consequences of this strategy is that access to areas to which displaced persons have returned will continue to be difficult. These people will be doubly disadvantaged, since their inaccessibility will make it difficult for them to take part in the process of formulation of the National Education Policy. Although peace has now been established, the problems of poor infrastructure will continue for some time.

5 - DONOR SUPPORT AND CO-ORDINATION

Donor support

5.1 A characteristic of the Mozambican economy is that most of the General State Budget is provided by donors. Although the national administrative structure is active, many policies in many sectors are currently being reformulated, and the influence of donors is clear. In the education sector, external support covers about 70 percent of costs, and the extent of political influence mirrors the level of this contribution.

5.2 The ministry is eager for the National Education Policy to be prepared, since this document will serve as the basis for negotiations with donors on their support to the different areas of the education system. This is not to imply that relations between the ministry and donors are bad. Within the ministry, the consensus is that donors do not try to impose their will in decisions on the main guidelines for educational funding programs but prefer to integrate their assistance with government-designed programs. The World Bank has said that as long as the government has a coherent program accepted by the RECODE, it will give support.

5.3 Donors who support the education sector in Mozambique generally attempt to coordinate with each other and with government. Though most people do not feel that donors have a negative influence, they see a tendency among donors to want to support the areas of greatest interest to themselves. Right now, for example, secondary education faces the greatest difficulties in obtaining donor support, because donors are more sympathetic to primary and tertiary education. Yet donors like to know what areas other donors are interested in funding so that they can complement that.

5.4 Minor issues with donors arise during implementation. One is that approximately 60 percent of what donors make available for cooperation in the education sector is earmarked for technical assistance. These funds are used to pay the salaries of advisors and supervisors and are not available for investments. Moreover, donors do not want to be accountable to the Mozambican government for technical assistance funds.

Donor coordination

5.5 RECODE (*Reunião de Coordenação das Actividade de Doadores à Educação*) is the consultative organ of the donors and the Ministry of Education. It was set up by the ministry in 1993 to formalize meetings taking place between these organizations. The concept (called RECOD—without the “E” for education) originated in 1987 with the Minister of Finance. In that year the Economic Reform Program was introduced, signifying the transformation of the socialist economy to a market economy. RECOD was initiated to gather information about donor activities, avoid duplication of efforts, and rationalize the financial resources made available by donors. RECODs were established in line ministries.

5.6 RECODE meets once a month; its members represent the Consultative Council of the Ministry (Minister of Education, Vice Minister of Education, and National Directors) and certain donors and lenders, selected on the basis of the size of their financial contribution to education programs. The donors currently represented in RECODE are UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, WFP, the World Bank, SIDA, FINIDA, DANIDA, the German Embassy, and the Dutch Embassy. RECODE used to have a secretariat coordinated by someone nominated by a donor agency. In late 1994, the ministry suggested the coordination of RECODE be managed by a Mozambican, and offered to assume this task. Since January 1995, the coordination of RECODE has been undertaken by the Department of International Relations of the Ministry of Education.

5.7 RECODE has faced some problems. At one point, donors felt that decisions were not being implemented. The meetings had lost substance. Another problem was that some donors were carrying on marginal activities outside the scope of RECODE. In an attempt to solve both these problems, the ministry has recently promoted the idea of establishing RECODEs at the provincial level. A problem that has not been solved is difficulty in reaching a consensus on the agenda of RECODE.

5.8 In addition to RECODE, the Ministry of Education has an annual meeting attended by all donors in education, even those not included in RECODE. At this meeting the ministry's main programs of work for the following year and their anticipated costs are presented and discussed. Eduardo Mondlane University holds a similar annual meeting with donors.

6 - CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Formulating a policy

6.1 Officials at the Ministry of Education, including the minister, who concur with the general criticisms of the SNE, must be key players in organizing the National Education Policy (NEP). They have expressed their intention to formulate a policy that includes objectives, implementation plans, and costing. The plan should be more than a set of goals. It should indicate also how to reach the goals and at what cost. Source of financing should be foreseen. Plans for the education sector should be compatible with plans in other sectors, such as roads, telecommunications, and electricity.

6.2 Development of the NEP requires a variety of expertise. The definition of objectives and implementation plans should include those who will implement, not only those with political interests. Mozambicans and donors alike are interested in seeing the NEP fully formulated. Donors would like to see the Mozambicans take the lead. Mozambicans likewise want to act, but feel they lack expertise in policy formulation and the funds required to build this capacity.

6.3 Mozambicans need donors help in introducing reforms in the education sector. Donors, however, must not forget the need for harmony during this processes, taking into account cultural and social factors. Education reforms are not academic planning exercises nor the transfer of educational models from countries with different contexts. Everything that can influence the reform must be taken into account. This takes time.

6.4 Mozambicans, be they education professionals or just members of society, are all interested in debating questions related to the education sector. The prospects of such a debate, however, are limited by poor roads and communications infrastructure, the low level of education of most people, and the prevailing uncertainty about the future—the post-war experience. Enough time should be allowed for consensus-building. The debates on a National Education Policy should cover a wider range of subject matter than the sectoral studies have, because the latter are conducted only on the basis of SNE, not on a national plan.

6.5 It is difficult to predict the best consultative process for the National Education Policy formulation. However the existing interest groups (political parties, religious, civil association, tradition power, and so on), could provide the base for an effective process. These groups are active and easy to identify. Attention should be paid also to the educators and parents who may not be part of any of the interest groups.

6.6 Given the number of studies and their origin, it is difficult to judge if there is a formal decision-making or a clearance process for initiation and use of the studies. An objective of a consultative process is to provide as much input as possible into goals and plans. Thus, the methods for studies should include interviews as well as review of documents. If the studies are initiated, developed, and concluded under the appropriate authorities, it is easier to influence the level of participation and debate. It is important to define the best consultative approach for each study.

6.7 The studies could be approved directly at the ministry level or by donors or NGOs, or they could go through a broader consultative process, that is, a wider debate. The advantages of this wider debate would be to reduce the number of parallel systems of policy-making and planning within the sector and to optimise the use of financial, human, and material resources in this process.

Implementation considerations

6.8 The implementation of plans requires good management and a good team of implementers. The completion of a plan and commencement of its implementation should not be regarded as a success. Monitoring and flexibility for progressive project adjustment between the implementers and the donors is particularly necessary in the Mozambican context.

6.9 Well-established information systems have a positive effect on management and administration. Therefore, databases must be established to concentrate relevant data in the appropriate places and to avoid redundancy and inconsistencies. Different databases should be compatible, and the data should be easily accessible by more people than highly trained computer software technicians.

6.10 Donors and lenders should help government solve the problem of funds for investments and recurrent costs by considering a flexible-funds approach. They should be more flexible in the allocation of their support between capital and recurrent costs.

Specific policy recommendations

6.11 A central policy that includes all aspects of the education system will reduce the development of parallel systems (for example, a Catholic subsystem or a Muslim subsystem), which do not have clear or immediate equivalence of academic standards.

6.12 Education reforms should explore the use of information technologies, especially for distance learning in rural areas.

6.13 The war had an impact on social and psychological factors related to development of society. To improve the moral situation in the country, it would be useful to strengthen the social sciences, which are weak compared to sciences and technology.

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1. Ministry of Education Report to Council of Ministers. 1988
 2. *Ibid.*
 3. *Ibid.*
 4. The Minister and Vice-Minister of Education, and National Directors of Education

The formation of an effective national education policy is central in the approach adopted by many African countries to reform the education sector.

The DAE, in close cooperation with the U.S. Agency for International Development, has supported six case studies on the process of education policy formation in Africa.

The case studies, written by African researchers, reflect a variety of experiences in the cycle of policy formation, articulation, dissemination, and implementation in the following countries: Benin, Ghana, Guinea, Mauritius, Mozambique, and Uganda.

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