



Mozambique

Country Context

Mozambique has a population of about 17.5 million inhabitants. More than 70% of the total population live in rural area and is mainly dedicated to agriculture and fisheries. Half of the total population is aged between 6-24 years and the majority is female. This fact, together with the population growth rate of 2.8%, poses enormous pressure on the education system, particularly from primary and secondary levels. According to the PARPA (Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty in Mozambique 2001), there are four main problems in the education sector in Mozambique: limited access to educational opportunities; poor quality of teaching and human resource creation; high rate of inefficiency which translates into high repetition and drop-out rates and high costs of expanding access and improving the quality of education on offer (Lind & Kristensen, 2004). The challenges facing the education sector can be attributed to both external and internal contextual factors like poverty, socio-linguistic and cultural background of parents and students, funding, capacity and corruption.

In spite of the factors mentioned above that are playing against the development of education in Mozambique, there is significant progress toward education for all. A crucial element of the education system has been the provision of free education for primary level. How this policy is working in reality is a challenge that faces government, and the citizen and strengthening civil society engagement in the delivery of Education for All.

Key Achievements

- Strengthening the institutional capacity of the national education coalition (MEFA).
- CEF has increased donors interested in a coordinated fund for supporting CSOs to monitor PRSP (PARPA) process.

Breakdown by Criteria

CRITERION 1

Three national organisations have received support from CEF in Mozambique: Movement of Education for All (MEFA), Forum of African Women in Education (FAWE) and Magariro (an NGO that works in Manica). As a result of this work educational plans have been influenced in favour of the most vulnerable including those affected by HIV/AIDS and significant changes have been made with regard to education access for girls. The achievements are currently restricted to the provinces of Maputo and Zambézia. It is recommended in the MTR that advocacy capacity of the remaining provinces is enhanced through knowledge sharing via documents, seminars and possibly website construction. As a result of work by Magariro and MEFA, communities are now much more able to participate in decision making within schools and as a result there have been improvements in curriculum development and teacher training. The work

of CEF and its partners has led to greater civil society participation in the control and monitoring of government education budgets. Yet an absence of information on how to monitor and involve the community restricts progress in most provinces. MEFA and FAWE have been able to organise communities to execute and monitor campaigns but it remains a challenge to ensure that communities are clear about the objectives of the campaign and how local, regional and national agendas each play a role.

CRITERION 2

MEFA has been able to access relevant information on national budgeting for education and shares this with its members. This has encouraged the Ministry of Education to decentralise funds to schools. However, members of civil society remain unfamiliar with interpretation and understanding of the information available. The MTR recommends that nationwide programmes should take place, involving members of the School Councils to encourage partners in financial analysis of education budgets.

CRITERION 3

The MTR reports a developing feeling of national solidarity with vulnerable children and orphans as well as awareness within educative communities on the importance of safe and healthy environment without the risk of sexual abuse. As a result of the work undertaken, national education plans incorporate strategies for better access and retention of girls in schools, non-formal education and the cancellation of school fees. This has been achieved by; the mobilisation of community leaders and communities, the creation of girls clubs to discuss the issues surrounding female education, the distribution of leaflets and delivery of lectures on sexual security in schools, and support for the inclusion of children excluded as a result of HIV/AIDS.

Case Study: Girls Clubs in Schools

There is a considerable challenge in Mozambique related to the retention of girls in education. Girls face many problems and many drop out of school due to marriage, pregnancy or expulsion from school.

With CEF support, the Forum of African Women in Education (FAWE-MO) Coalition works to establish girls' clubs in schools in order to build their capacity to be able to collectively stand against the bias affecting girls' continuation in education. The girls' clubs facilitate information sharing and collective problem solving. In turn FAWE-MO uses the information generated to build the capacities of the pupils, teachers and communities on gender issues affecting female education.

The project has been in place since 2002 and will run until 2006. So far achievements have occurred in information transfer, policy implications and changes in practice. Information notice boards in schools are used for sharing

information on specific cases, although some have been published in local newspapers. In addition a number of brochures have been developed and distributed. Policy changes are in place to allow pregnant girls to continue schooling, which has broader implications for female access to school. In some areas free education for girls has been achieved and increased enrolment has been recorded.

Plans exist to expand the programme across the country but this raises resource challenges and added difficulty in monitoring the programme and compliance to the policy pronouncements especially in remote areas. The next step is to ensure government ownership for this project and for mainstreaming gender in education more generally.