

Gender Policies and Feminisation of Poverty in Mozambique

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Acronyms

ASDI –	Swedish International Development Agency
BdPES –	Balance of the Social and Economic Plan
CFJJ –	Legal and Judicial Training Centre
CIDA –	Canadian International Development Agency
CNAM –	National Committee for the Advancement of Women
DAC –	Development Assistance Committee
DF –	Women’s Detachment
DNM –	National Directorate for Women
ECOSOC –	Economic and Social Council of the United Nations
FDC –	Community Development Foundation
FRELIMO –	Liberation Front of Mozambique
FUNUAP –	United Nations Fund for Population
GCG –	Gender Coordination Group
GDI –	Gender Development Index
GFP –	Gender Focal Point
GO –	Operational Group
GOAM –	Operational Group for the Advancement of Women
GoM –	Government of Mozambique
GU –	Gender Unit
LOLE –	Local of Local State Bodies
M&E –	Monitoring & Evaluation
MAE –	Ministry of State Administration
MCAS –	Ministry for the Coordination of Social Action
MDG –	Millennium Development Goals
MEC –	Ministry of Education and Culture
MF –	Ministry of Finance
MINAG –	Ministry of Agriculture
MINJD –	Ministry of Youth and Sports
MINT –	Ministry of the Interior (Home Affairs)
MISAU –	Ministry of Health
MMAS –	Ministry for Women and Social Action
MOPH –	Ministry of Public Works and Housing
MPD –	Ministry of Planning and Development
MTEC –	Medium-Term Fiscal Scenario
NGO –	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD –	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OMM –	Mozambican Women’s Association
PARPA –	Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty
PES –	Social and Economic Plan
PGEI –	Gender Policy and Implementation Strategy
PNAM –	National Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women
PO –	Poverty Observatory
SADC –	Southern African Development Community
SB –	State Budget
UNIFEM –	United Nations Development Fund for Women
WLSA –	Women and Law in Southern Africa Research and Education Trust

1. Introduction

Gender equality and the empowerment of women has long been on the international development agenda, and more so since the 1995 Beijing Conference and the tabling of the notion of ‘gender mainstreaming’ (UN/DAW 2008). The issue has also entered national development policies, becoming an integral part of most development plans and poverty reduction strategies as a ‘cross-cutting issue’ – ostensibly affecting policies and interventions in all areas of national development. Mozambique is no exception to this picture: The Government of Mozambique has made the achievement of gender equality a major objective in its Poverty Reduction Strategy (PARPA II), and specifically recognises that the empowerment of women is a decisive factor in endeavours to eradicate poverty (GOM 2005).

More specifically, the Poverty Reduction Strategy lists with priority the following actions, which are designed to promote ‘equality of opportunity between women and men and to empower women’ (GOM 2005:58):

1. Approval and implementation of a gender policy and related strategies, including the institutionalisation of gender units in all sectors at central and provincial government levels.
2. Integration of the gender perspective into national development policies, programmes and projects.
3. Revision of all legislation that is discriminatory to women, particularly that which relates to domestic violence.
4. Expansion of agricultural extension services [to women] in order to provide better support to the transfer of technologies, particularly in rural areas.
5. Integration of women into strategies for the development of small- and medium-scale companies, including access to suitable credit.
6. Identification of gaps in the gathering and analysis of data that is broken down by sex, in order to design and initiate the implementation of a strategy aimed at filling those gaps.
7. Promotion of gender balance in leadership positions, and fostering the increased ability of women in such positions.
8. Implementation of actions intended to reduce the prevalence of HIV/AIDS among women and girls, including promotion of the role of men in this context.
9. Intensification of efforts to reduce gender disparities in basic, mid-level and higher education.
10. Improvement of coverage of water-supplies and sanitation services in rural zones so that women and girls will not need to travel so far to get water.

At the same time, a number of critical evaluations of gender policies in development cooperation has recently been carried out (see e.g. Mikkelsen 2002; Garrett 2003; Aasen 2005; UNFPA 2006; Jensen 2006; Forum da Mulher 2007) – almost all of which conclude that the concrete implications of these policies on the ground have been minimal. Neither national governments nor donors have managed to make the transition from policy statements and legal frameworks to significant progress towards gender equality and women empowerment. Women continue to have less political influence and be poorer than men, and despite advances in social sectors such as education and health, women are still lagging far behind men in practically all areas. On some issues, such as the affection rate of HIV-AIDS, the situation of women is even deteriorating compared to that of men.

Again, Mozambique is no exception: Available quantitative data show that women generally have heavier domestic responsibilities in the household, inferior employment and lower income, inferior

access to land and lower agricultural production, and lower levels of education and health than men. Domestic violence, with significant practical as well as symbolic ramifications, remains a serious problem in the country. And the proportion of female-headed households – commonly used as a standard indicator of feminisation of poverty – is on the rise and represents an increasing percentage of the poorest sections of the population. Key socio-economic data on the position of men and women in Mozambican society are listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Key Socio-Economic Data on the Position of Women in Mozambique (Per cent)

Item	Male	Female
Representatives in Parliament	64.4	35.6
Formal employment	19.0	3.9
Proportion in agriculture	67.5	89.3
Adult literacy rate	67.0	37.5
Net primary school attendance	62.7	56.7
Life expectancy at birth (yrs)	44.8	48.6
Proportion HIV-AIDS affected *	42.0	58.0
Item	Male-headed households	Female-headed households
Overall Proportion	73.6	26.4
Poverty Head-Count	51.9	62.5

Sources: INE 2004; MISAU 2005; World Bank 2007 * Total HIV-AIDS affection rate 16.1 per cent.

Having said all this, there is a curious incongruity between the often broad and sweeping statements about gender inequality on the one hand, and the great variation and complexity in the lives of real men and women on the other. In Mozambique, the challenges and prospects for equality and empowerment vary greatly between the more than 30 per cent of all women in Mozambique who live in polygamous households and the growing number of better-off female-headed households; between poor female farmers in the largely rural and matrilineal north and female *comerciantes* in the urban and patrilineal south; between young girls growing up in a safe environment with access to education and prospects for employment and the many young mothers in Mozambique without access to education and key social relationships, whose prospects are limited even before adult life has started. While such differences are often hidden in broad policy statements and national statistics, an understanding of these intricacies is absolutely essential to the design of relevant policies and interventions for the improvement of conditions for women in Mozambique.

For this study, a brief survey was carried out among 22 central national and international development institutions working on gender issues in Mozambique (Annex 2). It emerged that while there is broad agreement that some progress has been made over the past few years, much remains to be done. The most important areas for intervention on the issues of gender equality and the empowerment of women are seen to be those of economic participation, education, domestic violence and political participation (Table 2).

Table 2. *Perceived Constraints for Enhanced Gender Equality in Mozambique (Per cent)*

Area of Activity	Percentage
Economic participation	55
Education	23
Domestic violence	14
Political participation	5
Other	3

Source: This project.

At the same time, there is broad consensus that the most significant progress has been made in the areas of political participation and education, and the least in women's economic participation and domestic violence (Table 3). Thus, the challenge lies in finding ways to transfer increased political influence and knowledge into real progress in the areas where it matters most.

Table 3. *Perceived Areas of Progress for Mozambican Women the Last Ten Years (Per cent)*

Area of activity	Most progress	Least progress
Political participation	55	-
Economic participation	9	41
Reproductive health	-	9
Education	32	5
Domestic violence	-	45
Other	4	-

Source: This project.

Finally, the institutions that were interviewed list socio-cultural issues (i.e. Mozambique's heavily patriarchal socio-cultural configuration), political will and the capacity to implement policies as the main obstacles to further progress (Table 4). This implies that significant challenges lie ahead in the struggle for real advancement in the economic and social position of women in Mozambique.

Table 4. *Perceived Constraints for Gender Equality in Mozambique in the Future (Per cent)*

Type of Constraint	Percentage
Socio-cultural issues	41
Capacity to implement policies	36
Political will	23

Source: This project.

A central theme in this study is that progress in gender equality and the empowerment of women is necessary not just for advancing the rights and position of women *per se*, but also for the Mozambican government to reach its goal of overall poverty reduction. Without closing the gender gap in terms of levels and depths of poverty, and empowering women in their social relations with men, Mozambique will remain one of the poorest and least developed countries in the world.

1.1 Study Rationale

This study is the first in a series of three on gender policies and feminisation of poverty in Mozambique, to be carried out in the period 2008-2010 (see Annex 1).¹ The studies will combine a critical assessment of current government and donor policies, with an assessment of the thesis of a feminisation of poverty in the country. Gender policies are usually framed in notions of ‘gender equality’ and ‘the empowerment of women’, and set out to support women by increasing opportunities for employment, education, health and improving other basic socio-economic conditions. The notion of a ‘feminisation of poverty’ is based on the premise that women are poorer than men, that the incidence of poverty among women is increasing relative to that of men, and that growing poverty among women is linked to the feminisation of household headship (Chant 2007).

Our point of departure in this study is that the recent ‘streamlining’ or ‘essentialisation’ of gender policies, largely pushed by international agendas, implies the risk of designing policies that do not relate to national economic and socio-cultural realities. Gender relations are essentially socially constituted, and will be perceived differently and have different expressions in different socio-cultural settings (Ortner 2006). Moreover, while differences in material conditions of income and assets between men and women is an important part of the feminisation of poverty, it also involves questions around voicelessness and powerlessness in relation to institutions of society and the state, vulnerability to adverse shocks, and the ability to cope with these through social relationships and legal institutions. Finally, the possibility for women to make use of increased opportunities and thereby improve their lives depends effectively on their position in the household and their relations with men – making it necessary to understand these factors in order to design relevant policies and interventions.

To accommodate these concerns, we will base the analysis in the three studies on a combination of quantitative data on the structural constraints and qualitative data on the experiences and actual voices of poor men and women, in order to better understand the dynamics of poverty and their coping strategies. For an overall analytical framework, we will look to Bourdieu’s (1990, see also Ortner 2006) notion which outlines that the social and cultural order (or ‘structure’) in which people find themselves has a powerful, even determining, effect upon human action and the shape of events, but also emphasises human agency and the nature of ordinary life. There are always sites of alternative practice and perspective available, e.g. within the hegemonic socio-cultural configurations of gender, and these may become the basis for resistance and transformation (Ortner 1996). Bourdieu’s approach also highlights economic positions and social asymmetry as the most relevant dimension of both structure and action, meaning that the poor and vulnerable are more constrained and have a more limited range of alternative options than the better off. This way, poverty has consequences of its own in the sense that it channels perspectives and acts in directions that tend to perpetuate the structural position of the poor (‘chronic’ poverty).

Moreover, instead of structure or agency assuming priority for Bourdieu, he emphasises the primacy of *relations*. Society does not consist of individuals, he maintains; rather, it expresses the sum of connections and relationships in which people find themselves. In line with this, gender-relations at the level of households and individuals are affected by external political and economic processes reproducing particular sorts of gendered statuses and roles with attributes that are congruent with socially established patterns of power (Moore 1994, Ortner 2006). This means that significant changes in gender relations depend on structural transformation in access to employment and income; control over means of production and other economic assets; and the socio-cultural context in which gender relations are played out as the lived experiences of men and women.

¹ The study is financed by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs/NORAD.

Available studies and data provide a basis for arguing that the existing patriarchal culture and masculinist social order is exceptionally strong in Mozambique. Men control most positions of power and influence both nationally and locally: they are generally better off in terms of employment and income as well as education and health, they control land and other basic means of production in the important agricultural sector, and for most women the social costs of not living in a conjugal union with a man are still high enough for most women to avoid this situation. Nevertheless, we will also show that there are differences in the position of men and women in the matrilineal north and patrilineal south; in rural and urban areas; and between poor and better-off households – and that there are examples of women seizing opportunities following from structural change and new sites of alternative practice, e.g. through urbanisation and the commodification of rural livelihoods.²

The current report is based on existing quantitative and qualitative data on poverty and gender in Mozambique, and interviews with a number of stakeholders in gender policies in the country (see Annex 3). Following this ‘state of affairs’ report, we will carry out two research projects that will particularly emphasise people’s own gendered perceptions and social relations of poverty: In the first (2009), the main focus will be on women’s economic position and role in the household and in the informal economy, and in the second (2010) we will take a particular look at female-headed households, their coping strategies and the extent to which these differ from those of other women. The two studies will be carried out in the district of Mossuril in the Nampula province in northern Mozambique and the district of Chokwe in the Gaza province in southern Mozambique. They represent parts of the country usually considered to characterise significant differences in key economic and socio-cultural areas, including levels of poverty, employment and income, family and kinship systems, and household headship (UNDP 2001, SARDC 2005).

The main research questions to be asked are:

Study 1:

- What are the current government and donor policies for gender equality and the empowerment of women in Mozambique?
- To what extent is there an ongoing process of feminisation of poverty in the country?
- To what extent does current policy relate to the real lives of poor men and women in the country?

Study 2:

- What is the extent and nature of women’s participation in household provisioning and control of economic resources?
- What is their role in the informal economy?
- What are the implications for women’s poverty and well-being?

Study 3:

- What characterises the coping strategies of female-headed households?
- To what extent do they differ from those of male-headed households in terms of intra- and extra-household relationships and resource-allocation?

² There is anthropological research from other countries in the Southern African region (see e.g. Bank 2001 and Tvedten 2008) that show how structural change for example in the form of urbanisation and rising unemployment has threatened men’s role as breadwinners and weakened their position vis-à-vis women – but there is still little evidence of this in the available literature on Mozambique.

1.2 Methodology

From a methodological point of view, we believe that capturing the link between current gender policies and gendered poverty is best done through a combination of quantitative data and participatory and qualitative approaches, in what is often called ‘methodological pluralism’ (Kanbur 2001; Mikkelsen 2005). Quantitative data yield valuable information about the mapping, profile and determinants of gendered poverty and inequality. And participatory qualitative research, looking at the socio-cultural organisation at the level of the community and the household and at people’s own perceptions of gender relations, is useful for understanding the dynamics of poverty, the coping strategies of poor men and women, and factors of continuity and change in gender relations.

There already exists many quantitative data on poverty and well-being in Mozambique. Even though most poverty studies do not consistently disaggregate data by gender, there are disaggregated data for key issues highlighted in the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PARPA II) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The most important sources of gendered poverty data include the National Population and Housing Censuses (INE 1997 and forthcoming 2009); the National Household Survey IAF (INE 1997 and 2004); the National Demographic and Health Survey (MISAU 2005),³ as well as a number of analyses by the Government of Mozambique based on these data (see e.g. DNPO 2004, Chiconela 2004, Maximiano et al. 2005, Maimuna 2008). In addition, international organisations have commissioned several studies of their own, of which the ‘National Human Development Report’ (UNDP 2007); the ‘Childhood Poverty in Mozambique: A Situation and Trend Analysis’ (UNICEF 2006) and ‘Beating the Odds: A Mozambique Poverty, Gender and Social Assessment’ (World Bank 2007) are the most recent and relevant.⁴

There is also a relatively large number of qualitative analyses of gender relations and the position of women in Mozambique upon which we will draw. Gender research in Mozambique has a long and strong tradition. The Centre for African Studies at the University of Eduardo Mondlane produced several studies on the situation of women in Mozambique after independence in 1975. Much of this research is anthropological, with a focus on women’s position in local communities and households (Casimiro et al. 1996). Over the past decade, the Mozambique office of WLSA (Women and Law in Southern Africa) has been an important additional centre for research and advocacy. WLSA has been particularly concerned with legal issues and domestic violence (Arthur 2006, 2007). The Ministry of Planning and Development (DNEAP), has also carried out gender research, particularly in the area of women’s contributions to economic development (Ibraimo 2006, 2008). Finally, there is much independent research taking place, both by Mozambican and foreign researchers (Espling 1999; Costa 2004).⁵ Donors (with the exception of specialised agencies such as UNFPA and UNIFEM and gender sensitive donors such as Sweden, Netherlands and Canada) have been far less active in commissioning gender research, despite their pronounced emphasis on mainstreaming gender in their development work.

Very few, if any, of the studies mentioned above systematically link national quantitative data on gendered poverty with qualitative data on the social relations between men and women in communities and households. A main objective of the current series of studies is to make this connection, in order to get a fuller picture of gender inequalities and the position of women in Mozambique. While the current report will be based on existing quantitative and qualitative data, in

³ Gender-data was collected by INE for a MICS in late 2008, but were not yet available at the time of writing.

⁴ As we shall return to, the role of women tend to be underestimated in statistics e.g. due to their ‘invisibility’ within the household as the key unit of analysis and the limited attention to the informal economy which is vital for women’s coping strategies both in urban and rural areas.

⁵ A particular mention should be made of theses on gender and development that have been written by students at Eduardo Mondlane University (UEM), incl. Balate 2001, Lituri 2002, Ribeiro 2003, Tsabete 2004, Ghonamo 2004, Cuambe 2005 and Membawase 2005.

the two subsequent studies, gendered quantitative information will be complemented by our own original research, done with the specific objective of capturing people's own perceptions and social relations of gender inequalities. This will be done through a combination of i) interviews with key stakeholders at provincial, district and community levels, ii) an adapted local survey focussing on intra- and extra-household gender relations; and iii) intensive fieldwork using participatory methods. These include:

- histograms (to ascertain the history of gender relations in the communities in question and their implications for poverty and well-being);
- wealth ranking (to capture the community's own perceptions of poverty and well-being and the relation between socio-economic position and gender);
- venn-diagrams (to identify social relations and networks used by men and women respectively to alleviate their poverty and improve their lives);
- force-field analysis (to capture perceptions of the political, economic, social and cultural conditions that may inhibit or accelerate change towards greater gender equality).

1.3 Main Findings

Mozambique has a long political tradition of emphasising gender equality and the empowerment of women, dating back to the post-independence Frelimo era. The equal rights of men and women are firmly established in the constitution; Mozambique is a signatory to all relevant international agreements on gender equality; and the empowerment of women is an integral part of the country's poverty reduction strategy. However, the impact of policy on these issues has suffered from a deeply ingrained patriarchal socio-cultural order, weak implementation within institutions and the dominant policy of 'gender mainstreaming' – which has effectively pulverised responsibility and made gender issues into a non-committal 'cross-cutting' issue for government and donors alike. The main exceptions are a strong civil society lobby, first and foremost represented by Fórum Mulher, the specialised UN agencies UNFPA and UNIFEM, and Canada and Sweden as particularly committed bilateral donors. For all relevant institutions, the main challenge now is to move from policy to practice through concrete interventions on issues of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

While there is basis for concluding that poverty in Mozambique is feminised, the picture is complex – with important differences in gender equality and the empowerment of women in different parts of the country, urban and rural areas, social classes and ethno-linguistic groups. Perhaps the most serious condition is the wide-spread practice of domestic violence and abuse, both for its practical and symbolic ramifications. There are also continued major discrepancies between men's and women's access to land and agricultural production, employment and income, education, health and legal rights. The large majority of women in Mozambique still depend on subsistence agriculture, but in an increasingly commoditised social setting like Mozambique the importance of the informal economy in the generation of income among women, both in urban and rural areas, is probably underestimated.

Finally, there are apparent incompatibilities between applied universal principles of gender equality and socio-cultural configurations in Mozambique – as exemplified by the illegalisation of polygamy in the new Family Law which effectively leaves 30 per cent of women in the country without legal protection in family matters. Also, much of the disaggregated data relating to gender do not adequately capture the *relations* between men and women in different socio-cultural contexts, which is key to achieving greater gender equality in the highly patriarchal Mozambican society.

1.4 Main Recommendations

Our recommendations are based on the premise that a stronger emphasis on gender equality and the empowerment of women is necessary – not only to fulfil commitments made by the Mozambican government to achieving gender equality *per se*, but also to be able to fulfil the goal of poverty reduction as is expressed in its poverty reduction strategy. Our recommendations, which will be further elaborated in Chapter 4, will focus on i) the need for strengthening key institutions for gender equality; ii) the need for moving from general policy and regulation to targeted intervention that takes into account the variation in gender relations; and iii) the importance of selecting a limited number of areas/interventions of high priority to ‘lead by example’. These include:

- a push for final approval of the Law on Domestic Violence, which will have strong practical as well as symbolic implications;
- the enhancement of the status and role of the joint government and donor Gender Coordination Group (GCG) as a vehicle for coordinating gender interventions in the country;
- a change in focus on gender in government from *de facto* non-committal Gender Units and Focal Points to specific projects for gender equality and the empowerment of women in key ministries;
- the movement of small and isolated bilateral aid-allocations to gender programmes and projects to the specialised UN-agencies UNFPA and UNIFEM, to ease coordination and enhance impact;
- target interventions to raise women’s control of resources and productivity in agriculture, on which the large majority of women in Mozambique depend;
- target interventions to legalise and facilitate women’s participation in the urban informal economy through credit;
- supporting women’s associations in production, marketing and social protection both in rural and urban areas on the assumption that women are stronger in groups than in individual relations with men;
- a focus on a limited set of key indicators for the monitoring and evaluation of gender policies and interventions that takes regional variations and the special needs of the very poorest and most destitute women into consideration.

2. Gender and Poverty in Mozambique

In this chapter we will take a closer look at the current knowledge about the relation between gender and poverty in Mozambique, discussing the policy and legal framework for gender equality and the empowerment of women in the next chapter. A recurring theme will be the problem of universalised and simplified (or ‘essentialised’) concepts and analyses of gender that increase the danger of streamlining policies that do not fit national economic and socio-cultural realities. Superimposing normative ‘Western’ notions of gender equality and empowerment may offer women neither the succour nor the means to empower themselves.⁶ In particular, feminist research too often disregards national and local differentiation and lays too little emphasis on peoples’ own *emic* perceptions of the status and role of men and women and the nature of the relations between them. The latter is, of course, vital in order to understand the basis for people’s own strategies and actions.

The notion of a ‘feminisation of poverty’ is generally viewed as a global phenomenon, and associated with three main conditions (Chant 2007): women are poorer than men; the incidence of poverty among women is increasing relative to men over time; and growing poverty among women is linked to the feminisation of household headship. As we shall see below, while this is generally applicable and true also in Mozambique, the more specific characteristics and expressions vary over geographical space, class and ethnicity. Moreover, the notion of a feminisation of poverty has largely been assessed in economic terms, disregarding central advances in the analysis of poverty and gender as multidimensional concepts, which also involve socio-cultural conditions such as decision-making power, legal rights, vulnerability to violence, and (self-)respect and dignity (Whitehead et al.).

The existing socio-economic data we will present below do show that there is profound gender inequality in Mozambique and hence that there is a basis for focussing on gender equality and the empowerment of women in the country. These differences are also of such a nature that they seriously compromise Mozambique’s options for broad-based poverty reduction as envisaged in its poverty reduction strategies, PARPA. Women represent the poorest sections of the population (INE 2004, World Bank 2007), and play a key role in the well-being of children and other vulnerable people. To be effective, policies for gender equality and the empowerment of women will have to be consolidated through stronger and more coherent political institutions and aid organisations, and also take the variations in gender relations and the situation of women in the country into consideration.

2.1 International Research

Recent international research on gender shows that developing countries with high levels of gender equality tend to have lower poverty rates; that high gender equality in areas such as education and access to employment reduces the likelihood of households being poor; and that female labour force participation plays a key role in cushioning households from the impact of macro-economic shocks and keeping them out of poverty (Morrison et al. 2007). At the same time, international research reveals generally high levels of poverty among women and female-headed households, as well as a dynamic process of a feminisation of poverty. The real levels of poverty among women in male-headed households are likely to be even higher than quantitative surveys indicate, as these tend to ignore intra-household inequalities and inequitable resource allocations. And, finally, there appears to be strong evidence that women, on average, not only earn less than men, but also work longer hours and have an increasingly heavy responsibility for household provisioning (Chant 2007).

⁶ The feminist movement has often been separated into three waves (Rosário 2008). The first is associated with the suffragist movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and concerned the legal obstacles to equality, like the right for women to vote. The second refers to the period roughly between the 1960s and 1970s when feminists became concerned with inequalities in the private sphere. And the third concerns the ethnocentrism and perceived failure of the second wave to take the lives of women in the developing world into consideration.

There has, in fact, been an increasing focus on what Chant (2007) has called a 'feminisation of responsibility and/or obligation': First, this pertains to growing gender disparities in the range and amount of labour invested in household livelihoods. While rising numbers of poor women of all ages are working outside the home as well as continuing to perform the bulk of unpaid domestic and care-work, men are not increasing their participation in such work despite a declining role as sole or chief income-earners in the household. Secondly, there are persistent and/or growing disparities in women's and men's capacities to negotiate gendered obligations and entitlements in households. Regardless of their declining effort, many men continue to withhold earnings – to fund extra-domestic and fundamentally self-oriented pursuits such as spending time with male companions, drinking or engaging in extra-marital sex. And thirdly, there seems to be an increasing disarticulation between investments/ responsibilities and rewards/rights. While the onus of dealing with poverty is becoming progressively feminised, there is no obvious increase in women's rights and awards, e.g. in the form of benefits such as more personal over collective expenditure, or license to pursue goals that may be construed as individualistic.

The increasing proportion of female-headed households in the developing world is usually seen as a sign of poverty and vulnerability with single mothers, divorcees and widows being forced to establish their own household units (Chant 2003), but there is also recent research showing that the establishment of such households may be 'voluntary' and a reflection of an increasing unwillingness of some women to continue living in situations where they feel powerless and vulnerable in their relationships with men (Kabeer 2007). In line with the former perception, female household heads may be seen as extreme cases of women suffering poverty, inequality and powerlessness with few options other than to fend for themselves and their dependants within a context of gender discrimination in society at large. In line with the latter, female-headed households can be seen as what Kabeer (2007) has called 'pioneers of new social possibilities for women' – or 'enabling spaces' – in which there is scope to distribute household resources and tasks more equitably and focus on education, health, food security and other factors contributing to the overall well-being of female-headed households.

2.2 Gender and Poverty in Southern Africa

Taking a more specific look at gender relations in Southern Africa and Mozambique, it seems these have gone through significant transitions the past few decades (Geisler 2004). One important change took place with the shift from predominantly rural societies based on patriarchal traditional authorities, the extended family and agricultural production to colonial political economies based on the migration of male labour to cities and mining towns. This effectively split households, making them depend on a combination of cash income and traditional agricultural production, where women were forced to take on an increasingly important role in agriculture. The South African apartheid and homeland policy became the epitome of this development, while it was less developed in predominantly rural economies like Malawi and Tanzania. In Mozambique, significant differences developed between the southern parts of the country which became an integral part of the South African mining economy from the early 1900s, and the northern parts of the country which remained predominantly rural and agricultural (Isaacman and Isaacman 1983).

Gender relations were further affected by increasing modernisation⁷ and urbanisation following the demise of colonialism and migration control. Southern Africa has developed into the most urbanised sub-region on the continent with close to 45 per cent of the population living in towns and cities (UN-Habitat 2007), taking hundreds of thousands of women, men and children to cities and towns ostensibly in search of a better life. The large majority of these have ended up in poverty-stricken shantytowns. With rising urban unemployment following the structural adjustment policies of the 1980s and 1990s and the concomitant enhanced importance of informal economic activities, the relative importance of men and women for family provisioning changed. In most rural areas,

⁷ Defined here as 'images and institutions associated with Western-style progress and development in a contemporary world' (Knauff 2002).

agricultural production suffered from traditional modes of production, low prices for agricultural produce and the dearth of male labour – making women increasingly dependent on earning their own income both in rural and urban areas. Again South Africa and Malawi represent extreme cases, with urbanisation rates of 59 per cent and 17 per cent respectively. Mozambique also in this case represents an intermediate position: The rate of urbanisation is 28 per cent; urban areas in the north retain their close relation to their rural surroundings (40 per cent of the urban households are still involved in agriculture); and urban poverty is concentrated in the south with the capital Maputo being the only setting which has seen an increase in poverty over the past few years (Paulo et al. 2007).

One expression of these changing relations is the high prevalence of female-headed households in Mozambique's neighbouring countries, ranging from 42 per cent in South Africa to 23 per cent in Zambia (see Table 5).⁸ Comparative data on the factors behind this development are scarce (Chant 2003), but there are signs of apparently contradictory developments: Among the poor, formal marital unions are becoming more rare, and there seems to be a development towards a larger proportion of *de facto* female-headed households with increasing unemployment and low income among men. Among better-off households there is an apparent increase in emphasis on the formalities of marriage and a cementing of gender relations e.g. through a bride-price. At the same time, the emerging 'crisis of manhood' (Morrell 2001) seems to have contributed to high levels of domestic violence and a large number of extra-marital relations – another reason why many women do not find it worth-while entering into formal unions with men. Again, Mozambique represents an intermediate position. While the overall proportion of female-headed households is relatively low at 26.4 per cent, it ranges between 54 per cent in the southern province of Gaza to only 21 per cent in the two most populous northern provinces of Nampula and Zambézia. Qualitative data indicate that the status and role of men still inhibits women who are not divorced or widowed from establishing their own female-headed households (see below).

Table 5. Proportion of female-headed Households in Mozambique and Neighbouring Countries

Country	Proportion of FHH
Mozambique	26
Tanzania	25
Malawi	27
Zambia	23
Zimbabwe	33
South Africa	42
Swaziland	26

Source: Various national sources (there are no comparative overviews available over proportions of female-headed households in any of the relevant statistical sources such as UN and the World Bank).

Looking at some more specific development indicators, such as life expectancy at birth, education and income, Mozambique is a poor country in both overall and gender terms, despite advances over the past decade (DNPO 2005, see also Hanlon 2007). As seen from Table 6, the country has a lower human development and gender development rank than all six of its neighbouring countries – it is number 172 out of 177 countries in terms of its Human Development Index (HDI) and number 150 out of 157 countries in terms of its Gender Development Index (GDI).⁹ No other country in Southern Africa is ranked lower. Mozambique has a particularly low overall and female adult literacy rate, while it scores closer to the average in terms of life expectancy and estimated income. As will be

⁸ The highest proportions of female-headed households in Southern Africa are found in Botswana (52 per cent) and Namibia (55 per cent). These are among the most 'modern' economies in the region and have the highest HIV-AIDS rates – and may indicate the direction of developments in the other countries.

⁹ The GDI adjusts the HDI for gender disparities in the three main indicators making up the Human Development Index: i) 'longevity' (female and male life expectancy at birth); ii) 'knowledge' (female and male literacy rates, and female and male combined primary, secondary and tertiary enrolment ratios); and iii) 'decent standard of living' (estimated female and male earned income).

discussed in more detail below, the level of education at the time of independence was exceptionally low in Mozambique due to its rurality and Portuguese colonial policies, and initial post-colonial efforts to enhance the level of education were soon halted by the civil war from the early 1980s. Moreover, socio-cultural practices, particularly in the north, inhibit girls from taking equal part in current educational efforts. Life expectancy is likely to show a downward trend in Mozambique, due to the high increase in the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate, particularly among women. With regard to estimated income, there are uncertainties concerning the accuracy of the high level recorded in Mozambique compared to the other predominantly rural economies of Tanzania, Malawi and Zambia (see below).

Table 6. Key Gender Development Indicators (GDIs), Mozambique and Neighbouring Countries

Country	Rank of 177/157		Life expectancy at birth		Adult literacy rate		Gross School Enrolment		Estimated income (PPP)	
	HDI	GDI	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Mozambique	172	150	42.0	43.6	54.8	25.0	58	48	1,378	1,115
Tanzania	159	138	50.0	52.0	77.5	62.2	52	49	863	627
Malawi	164	143	46.0	46.7	74.9	54.0	64	62	771	565
Zambia	165	144	40.3	40.6	76.3	59.8	63	58	1,319	725
Zimbabwe	151	130	41.4	40.2	92.7	86.2	54	51	2,585	1,499
South Africa	121	107	49.5	52.0	84.1	80.9	77	77	15,446	6,927
Swaziland	141	123	40.4	41.4	80.9	78.3	62	58	7,659	2,187

Source: UNDP (2008).

The UN-data are somewhat conflicting with regard to the development of poverty- and gender indicators over time (Table 7). For our comparative purposes, however, it is significant that while both the human and gender development indexes in Mozambique show signs of improvement between 2002 and 2007, Mozambique's position in relation to other countries on the lower end of the poverty index has actually deteriorated in the same period – from 170 to 172 of 177 countries in terms of human development, and from 144 to 150 of 157 countries in terms of gender development. This implies that other countries in the region are making more progress in these areas than Mozambique, which raises questions about the relevance and quality of the poverty reduction efforts in general and particularly the policy and interventions towards gender equality devised by government and donors alike (Hanlon 2007).

Table 7. Key Gender Development Indicators, Mozambique 2002 and 2007

Indicator	2002		2007	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Life expectancy at birth (years)	38.4	40.2	42.0	43.6
Adult literacy rate (per cent)	60.1	28.7	54.8	25.0
Combined gross enrolment rate (per cent)	26	19	58.0	48.0
Estimated earned income (USD, PPP)	1,007	705	1,378	1,115
Human Development Index	0.322		0.458	
Human Development Position (of 177)	170		172	
Gender Development Index	0.307		0.373	
Gender Development Position (of 157)	144		150	

Source: UNDP (2002, 2008).

2.3 Gender and Poverty in Mozambique

While Mozambique is poor both in overall and gender terms, it is also a large and complex country. Few, if any, countries in Southern Africa show such significant and consistent variation in historical and contemporary political, economic and socio-cultural conditions. The country stretches a total of 3500 km from the southern tip of *Ponta do Ouro* to the northernmost point of *Cabo Suafo* – effectively taking between six and eight days to cross with public transportation. The large number of different ethno-linguistic groups show considerable variations in socio-economic organisation and cultural perceptions and practises. And there are significant differences in poverty and well-being both between the northern, central and southern regions as well as within provinces and local communities (Chiconela 2004; Simler and Nhate 2005). In line with this, the dense and tense city of Maputo is as far away both geographically and mentally for poor *Macua* women fish traders on the Island of Ibo in Cabo Delgado, as is the Island of Ibo for female bureaucrats in the richer parts of the capital city. This necessitates an initial word of caution about the overall significance and relevance of gendered identities of men and women as compared with other identity-markers such as geographical location, class and ethnicity. It also underlines our point that equality and the issue of the empowerment of women can only be understood in its relevant context.

History and Gender

Historically the agricultural and matrilineal Bantu-populations in the northern part of Mozambique such as the *Macua* and the *Lomwe/Chuwabo* have been influenced by waves of Swahili/Muslim, Portuguese and Indian immigrants and traders, and by the Portuguese colonisers when they finally gained a firm foothold in the region in the late 19th and early 20th century (Newitt 1995). Particularly the interior parts of the region were also affected by the war of independence against the Portuguese from the early 1960s until independence in 1975, and the ensuing internal war between Frelimo and Renamo between 1982 and 1994. The northern part of the country is still predominantly rural and matrilineal, with the Muslim population living mainly along the coast and dependent upon a combination of agriculture and fisheries, while the population inland consists primarily of agriculturalists and commercial producers. The region also boasts cities and towns such as Pemba in the province of Cabo Delgado, Nampula in the Province of Nampula, Quelimane in the Province of Zambézia and Lichinga in the province of Niassa, but these are also predominantly rural in nature with 40 per cent of their populations depending on agriculture for their primary source of income (INE 2004). In general terms, the north remains more ‘traditional’ than the southern and central parts of the country both in terms of economic adaptation, socio-cultural organisation and, as we shall see, in terms of gender relations.

In the southern parts of the country, the predominantly patrilineal *Tsonga* (or *Ronga*, *Tswa* and *Shangana* sub-groups) were originally agriculturalists, cattle-holders and fishers, with the Portuguese colonisers having less of a direct interest and impact than in the central and northern parts of the country, largely due to poorer agricultural soils (Newitt 1995). However, the region came to be heavily affected by its proximity to South Africa from the early 19th century and the opening up of a railway between Maputo and Johannesburg: A large proportion of adult men left to work in the mines of South Africa, leaving women and children behind to take care of agricultural food production and themselves with the men making their presence felt through remittances and occasional visits to their home areas. At the same time, the south and the city of Maputo developed into the economic and political hub of the country, as trade with South Africa increased. With independence and the removal of migration controls, the population of Maputo grew considerably, and men as well as women settled in the expanding poor *bairros* (*neighbourhoods*) in the city and its vicinities. The economic development and migration in the south led to a larger degree of ‘modernisation’ and changes in social relationships, which, we shall see, also had implications for gender relations.

The central provinces of Sofala, Tete and Manica are in many ways in an ‘intermediate’ position between the north and the south: The historical influence on the largely patrilineal *Shona* ethno-linguistic groups of *Sena*, *Teve* and *Ndau* have come both from Muslim and Christian migrants and

traders, and the Portuguese had a very direct impact in the central region through the establishment of a number of private agricultural companies or *prazos* as part of colonial control. People in the central provinces had extensive contacts with neighbouring Zimbabwe and its *Shona* population, and came to develop their own political identity and sense of 'otherness'. After independence in 1975, the downfall of former colonial industries hit the central provinces and their populations particularly hard, and they became the centre for the devastation and brutality of the war between Frelimo and Renamo – both contributing to Sofala in particular becoming the centre for political opposition in the country. The central provinces also demonstrate that there is no simple and clear-cut dichotomy between 'modernity' and 'tradition': The tradition of bridewealth or *lobolo* is still very important in the region and has significant implications for gender relations and the position of women.

Common for all parts of Mozambique is what we will argue in the following pages is a hegemonic patriarchal or male-dominated culture – being the combined outcome of historical influences and contemporary political and economic developments. Historically, political powerholders were all men, who ruled over the independent chieftainships.¹⁰ The councils of elders were composed of village headmen and cult priests who, with royal families, propitiated the ancestors' spirits and the god to bring rain and ensure an orderly universe (Isaacman and Isaacman 1983). In terms of the socio-cultural order, the Bantu-culture, both in the matrilineal north and the patrilineal central and southern parts of the country, were also dominated by men, even though the most important men in the north were the matrikin (mother's father or oldest brother). The matrilineal system defined women and their children as the 'property' of her own family, as opposed to the rest of the country where a woman and her children belonged to her husband and his family – symbolically and practically segmented though the system of bridewealth or *lobolo*. There were influential women at the level of clans, royal families and extended family units – but they did not have any formal position of power and influence.

The socio-cultural influence of Muslim immigrants and the Portuguese colonisers did not alter the gender relations in Mozambique in any significant way: If anything, the male dominance was even more pronounced among these population groups. Muslim men were in a strong position by virtue of their religion, and the right to have several wives asserted their position as heads of large and dependent family groups. The Portuguese colonisers came from a predominantly patriarchal Latin and Mediterranean culture, and studies show that settlers, who often had a military or religious background and mission, tended to push the 'virtues' of male supremacy in their new African context (Stoler 1997). An interesting exception is the Zambezi *donas*, who were prominent and powerful heads of *prazos* (leased crown estates) and *muzungo* or Afro-Portuguese families (Newitt 1995).

At independence, the Frelimo government had as its explicit policy to work towards gender equality and the empowerment of women in the 'new Mozambique' that it wanted to create (Abrahamson and Nilsson 1995). They *did* accomplish something, particularly in terms of women's political representation and employment on state farms, cooperatives and industry, which is vividly described by Urdang (1989) in her account of 'every-day-heroes' from the mid-1980s. However, for the large majority of Mozambican women, the implications of these policies for their daily lives in their communities and households and for their relations to men were limited. As we will return to in Chapter 3, Frelimo's political decisions relating to gender equality and the empowerment of women were never really intended to change basic relations of provisioning and influence at the private and domestic level.

Moreover, the implementation of socialist and gender policies in the public domain were abruptly interrupted by the 'civil' war from 1984 to 1992, during which over a million people died and four million people became displaced (Nordstrom 1997). The war itself split households and strained relations between (the predominantly male) soldiers and women and children, who tended to suffer the most from the atrocities committed. As we shall return to below, the war is still part of the explanation

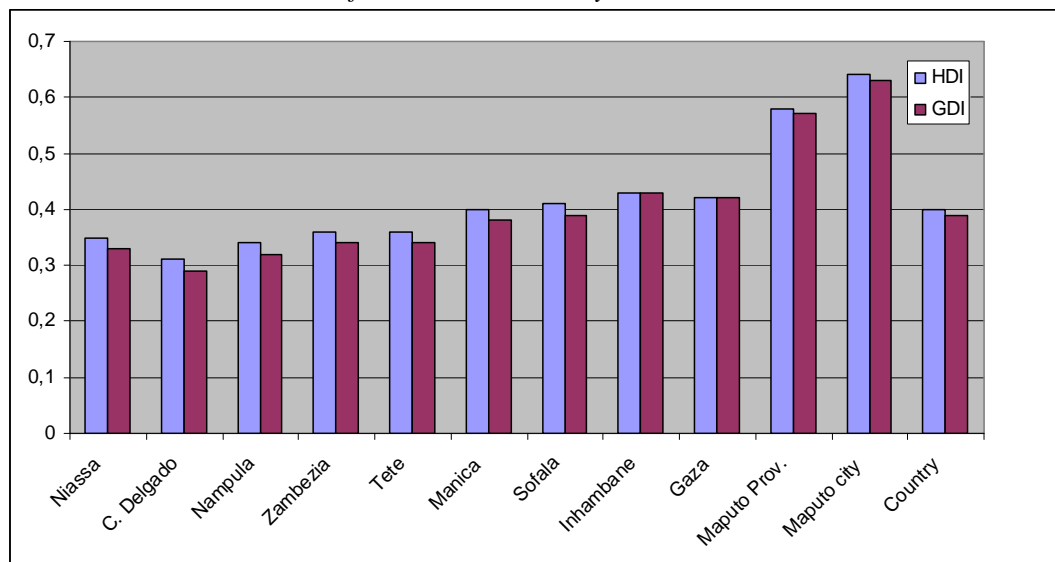
¹⁰ In Angola, the other major Portuguese colony in Africa, Queen Nzinga ruled the Ndonga between 1624 and 1662 and offered powerful resistance to Portuguese expansion (Tvedten 1997).

for the high level of domestic violence in Mozambique and the large proportion of female-headed households in some of the areas particularly affected.

Following the war, the liberalisation of the economy through structural adjustment and other related policies had a more direct impact on gender relations than the attempted socialist policies following independence: Studies show that women were the first to be laid off when the public sector was trimmed and when ‘unprofitable’ industries were closed down, and the closure of state farms, cooperatives and agricultural marketing boards seems to have forced primarily women back to subsistence production (Isaacman and Isaacman 1983). In the current political economy, where cash income is becoming increasingly important for survival and social reproduction, the informal economy has become vital for women, particularly in urban areas, but the production of surplus for sale has become important also in rural contexts. As we shall see below, women in urban areas and the south seem to be in a better position to exploit these structural changes than women in rural areas and the north.

Summing up the implications of the historical trajectories depicted above in terms of human and gender development, Figure 1 below shows that these vary between the country’s ten provinces. The four provinces with the lowest human and gender development index (i.e. Cabo Delgado, Niassa, Nampula and Zambézia) are all located in the north. These are also the provinces with the largest discrepancy between the human and gender indicators, implying a particularly severe situation for women compared to that of men. On the other end of the scale, the provinces with the highest human and gender development index (Maputo City, Maputo Province, Inhambane and Gaza) are all located in the southern part of the country. At the same time, two of these provinces (Inhambane and Gaza) are the only ones without a negative correlation between the human and gender indicators – implying a more equal development for men and women. The central provinces of Tete, Manica and Sofala are in intermediate positions both with regard to human- and gender development.

Figure 1: *Accumulated Variation of the HDI and GDI by Province, 2001-2006*



Source: Adapted from UNDP (2007a).

A recurring theme in the coming pages, then, is how economic and socio-cultural conditions have a different impact on gender relations and the position of women in different parts of the country. In general terms, we will argue that ‘traditional’ culture has the strongest hold on the situation of women in the northern provinces, while economic conditions are a more important determinant for the situation of women in the south. In all areas, however, men have more authority and power in the communities and within extended families and households than women, even though information

about the more explicit position of women in household provisioning and within the domestic sphere is still scarce.

Feminisation of Poverty

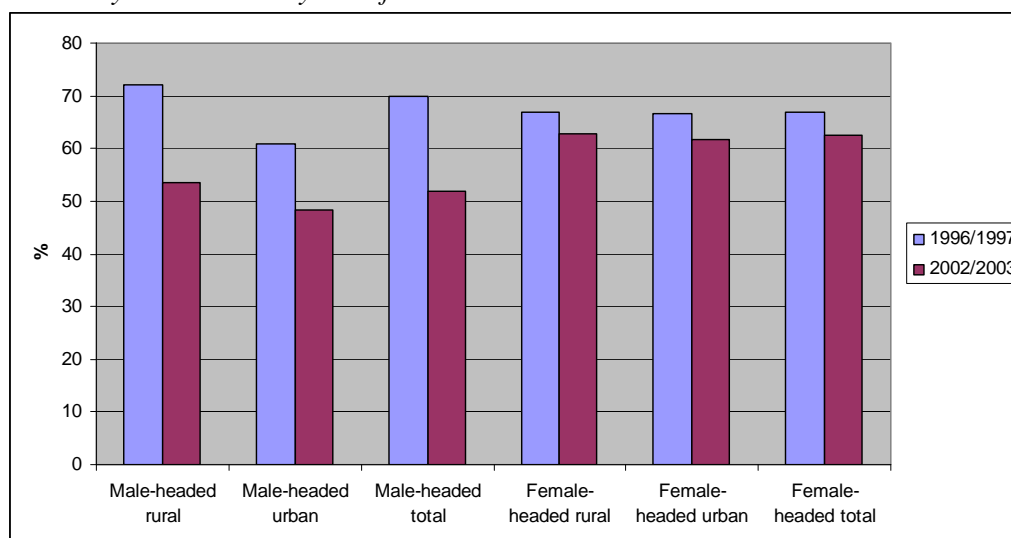
In looking behind the broad trends of human and gender development in Mozambique depicted above, we will start with the proportion of female-headed households – usually seen to be closely related to material poverty. Table 8 verifies a general trend of a feminisation of poverty: Fox et. al (2005) set the proportion of female-headed households at 21 per cent in 1996/97 and 25 per cent in 2002/03, and shows that the proportion of female-headed households has increased in the poorest quintile (from 19 to 24 per cent) as well as in the second and third poorest quintiles (with 1.6 and 1.9 per cent respectively), but decreased in the best- and second-best-off quintiles (with 4.1 and 3.9 per cent). These data indicate what may be two parallel trends in the correspondence between poverty, well-being and the existence of female-headed households: One is that female-headed households make up an increasing proportion of the poor which is likely to be the outcome of the stress of poverty, and a second is that the better-off households have improved options for maintaining the socio-cultural ideal of ‘complete households’ with a husband, wife and children ‘living under the same roof and eating from the same pot’.

Table 8. *Population Distribution Across Quintiles by Gender of Head 1997-2003*

	Quintile				
	1st	2nd	3 rd	4th	5th
<i>Male head</i>					
1997	20.2	20.1	20.3	19.5	19.8
2003	19.0	19.6	20.0	20.6	20.8
<i>Female head</i>					
1997	19.0	19.6	18.2	22.2	20.7
2003	23.8	21.2	20.1	18.1	16.8

Source: Fox et al. 2005.

The trend of a feminisation of poverty is further substantiated in Figure 2, where the development in the poverty headcount by the sex of the household head is shown. First of all, the poverty head-count among female-headed households is higher (at 62.5 per cent) than among male-headed households (at 51.9 per cent). Moreover, while rural, male-headed households are significantly poorer than urban male-headed households, the same is not true for female-headed households: Among these, the difference between urban and rural households is much smaller. Equally significant is the fact that the reduction in poverty between 1996/97 and 2002/03 is much higher among male- than among female-headed households. Overall the poverty headcount dropped from 69.9 per cent to 51.9 per cent or 19 percentage points among the former, while it has only dropped 4.3 percentage points from 66.8 per cent to 62.5 per cent among the latter.

Figure 2. Poverty Head-Count by Sex of Household Head and Rural and Urban Area

Source: Adopted from UNICEF 2005.

Thus, the existing data on poverty all point in the direction of a more difficult and deteriorating situation for female-headed households. The trend of a feminisation of poverty is verified by the perceptions of change among male- and female-headed households respectively. As seen from Table 9, a considerably higher proportion of female- than male-headed households believe that their situation has become worse over the last five years. At the same time the perception of deteriorating conditions is more pronounced among rural than among urban, female-headed households, which may indicate better opportunities for female-headed household heads in urban areas.

Table 9: Perceptions of Change in Household Poverty Over Last 5 Years

	MHH		FHH	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Improved	32.2	28.4	13.0	19.2
Worse	37.2	37.3	49.4	38.4
Not changed	30.7	34.3	37.7	42.4
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: World Bank (2007).

Gendered Work

Part of the explanation for the differences in poverty headcount between male- and female-headed households is found in men and women's labour force participation. The proportion of economically active men and women in Mozambique is relatively equal, with 78.8 and 82.0 per cent respectively (meaning that 22.2 per cent of all men and 18 per cent of all women are economically inactive). The high rate of female participation is likely to be a reflection of their *de facto* responsibility for the well-being of their households, which leaves no room for inactivity even if the returns to labour are low (see below). As seen from Table 10, women are predominantly occupied in the agricultural sector with 89.3 per cent, with commerce (5.5 per cent) and services (3.3 per cent) being the main alternatives. Men have a larger variety of occupations, with 67.5 per cent in agriculture, 10 per cent in commerce, 7.6 per cent in services and 5.5 per cent in government.

Table 10 *Participation in the Occupied Labour Force by Sector and Gender*

Indicator	By Sector		By Gender	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Agriculture	37.9	62.1	67.5	89.3
Mining	83.7	16.3	0.7	0.1
Manufacturing	90.3	9.7	1.6	0.1
Construction	96.9	3.1	4.7	0.1
Transportation	96.0	4.0	2.3	0.1
Commerce	59.3	40.7	10.0	5.5
Services	65.1	34.9	7.6	3.3
Government	75.3	24.7	5.5	1.5
Rate of participation *	44.6	55.4	78.8	82.0

Source: RoM 2005 * Proportion of employed men and women of total Population of Active Age (PIA) between 15 and 60 years of age

As seen from Table 11, women not only dominate the agricultural sector but also make up the majority of its unskilled labour, with ensuing low returns to labour (see the column 'Wage Index'). As many as 95.3 per cent of the working women in Mozambique are either unskilled agricultural labourers or unskilled non-agricultural labourers, which effectively means that they are part of the informal economy. Women form a concomitantly small proportion of the skilled and highly skilled labour force within, as well as outside of, agriculture, where wages are considerably higher.

Table 11. *Skills and Gender Composition and Wage Index of the Mozambican Labour Force*

	Gender shares by skill		Skill shares by gender			Wage Index
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Total	
Unskilled agricultural labour	59.0	41.0	88.2	67.0	78.1	100
Skilled agricultural labour	25.3	74.7	2.4	7.8	5.0	164
Unskilled non-agr. Labour	30.1	69.9	7.1	18.0	12	430
Skilled non-agric. Labour	25.2	74.8	1.8	5.8	3	1,474
Highly skilled non-agr. labour	25.3	74.7	0.4	1.4	3.7	3,509
Average / Total	52.2	47.8	100	100	0.9	225

Source: World Bank 2007.

The weak position of women in the economy is further underlined by the importance of 'self employment without employees' and the category 'family sector without remuneration' (Table 12), which effectively means the informal economy and subsistence labour in agriculture. Only 3.9 per cent of working women in Mozambique are formally employed in the government, public or private sector, which entails a fixed monthly salary with considerable advantages in terms of predictability and social security, even with low wages.

To understand and relate to the economic situation of women in Mozambique, then, their position and role in agriculture and the informal economy stand out as central. Women in agriculture, first of all, have a heavier work-load than men. In some regions, particularly in the south where we have seen that a large proportion of households are not headed by men, women tend to do practically all relevant tasks (clearing fields, taking care of animals, sowing, weeding, harvesting etc.), while in other parts of the country, clearing land and tending livestock is usually the responsibility of men. Studies also show that women are much less likely than men to grow tradable crops because they concentrate on basic foods to feed their family (Arndt et al. 2005). However, the mentioned study also shows that women with education do move into commercial agriculture, underlining the multiple advantages of enhancing the level of education among women in rural areas (see below).

Table 12. *Gender Composition of the Distribution of Sectors of Employment*

Employment position	Men	Women
Government sector	5.9	1.9
Public sector	0.7	0.1
Private sector	12.4	1.9
Self-employment with employees	3.1	0.9
Self-employment without employees	65.6	55.6
Family sector without remuneration	9.1	37.8
Personal employment ('patrão')	2.3	1.5
Cooperative sector	0.0	0.0
NGOs or other associations	0.9	0.3
Total	100	100

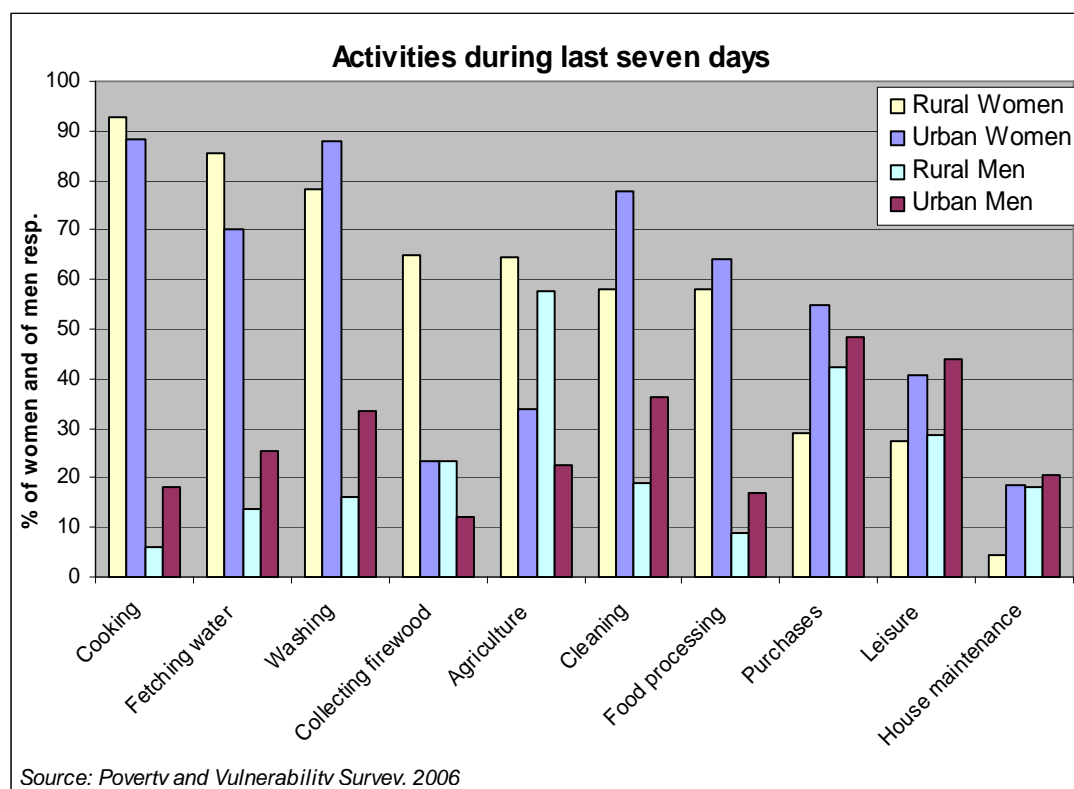
Source: INE 2006.

An important aspect of the 'feminisation' of agricultural production is also that men have moved out of agriculture and into the private sector and self-employment in non-agricultural sectors to a higher degree than women (World Bank 2007, INE 2004). The share of economically active men in agriculture has fallen to 38 per cent, with women making up 62 per cent. What we know less about, currently, is the flexibility of women to leave agriculture altogether, which also relates to issues such as gender penalties in the labour market, socio-cultural pressure for staying in the village and taking care of children, the extended family, and intra-household relations and decision-making.

While it is considerably less studied than the agricultural sector, the informal economy in retail, service and production is becoming an important alternative source of subsistence and income for women, particularly in urban areas (Francisco and Paulo 2006). As noted, however, women in rural areas also increasingly depend on some cash income for basic necessities, and there are indications that their involvement in small-scale rural trade is underreported (Rosário et al. 2008). The structural changes of urbanisation and commodification have opened up new space for women in a context where 30 per cent of the Mozambican population live in towns and cities. Having said this, as many as 40 per cent of urban households continue to be involved in agriculture in one way or another (INE 2004), either through urban-based production or by 'splitting' households in an urban and a rural unit on a temporary or semi-permanent basis.

The existing information about gender and the informal economy is known mainly through qualitative studies (Espling 1999, Costa 2007), which present a sector with a heavy concentration on retail sales of beverages, food-stuffs and cheap imported commodities particularly among women, with the (usually more lucrative) service and production sectors being dominated by men. The sector also seems to be characterised by a limited diversification in terms of goods. For urban women, the informal economy nevertheless represents an opportunity for cash income and self-reliance that many rural women do not have. Studies from other countries in the region show that this has significantly altered gender relations and contributed to a sharp increase in the proportion of female-headed households (Preston-Whyte and Robertson 2001, Tvedten 2008), but there is no verification of such a process in the available literature on Mozambique.

The difficulty of the situation of women and female household heads in Mozambique is not only that they have work with lower returns and are poorer than their male counterparts, but also that their total workload tends to be much heavier, which has significant implications for their situation in life. As seen from Figure 3, women have a far larger workload than men in the areas of agriculture, cooking, fetching water, collecting firewood, cleaning and food-processing. Men have a larger workload than women in purchases, house maintenance and leisure (sic!) – reflecting Chant's (2007) point of a feminisation of responsibility and obligation as discussed above.

Figure 3: Household Division of Labour

Source: World Bank (2007).

As argued in the introduction to this chapter, social change with regard to gender relations and the empowerment of women will rest on a combination of structural change and the agency of the actors involved. The figures presented on employment, income and general workload reveal differences between rural and urban areas, stemming from changes in the political economy and socio-economic environment in urban contexts. Existing data indicate that this has led to changes in the decision-making power of women (see Table 13), but it is still necessary for the large majority of women both in rural and urban areas to consult the male-heads of the families before decisions are made regarding central aspects of their lives such as education, health and (albeit to a lesser extent) food.¹¹ Improved access to employment and income is, in our view, absolutely essential in order to secure gender equality and empower women in their relations with men.

Table 13. Decision-Making Responsibility in male-headed Households

	Rural Areas			Urban Areas		
	Head (male)	Spouse (female)	Both	Head (male)	Spouse (female)	Both
Education	100.0	0.0	0.0	88.5	2.6	9.0
Health	96.2	0.0	3.8	78.2	10.3	11.5
Food	64.2	20.8	15.1	65.4	19.2	15.4

Source: World Bank (2007).

¹¹ Such data are notoriously difficult to verify, as men as well as many women are likely to answer in accordance with established social norms of male supremacy – which may not reflect the actual situation in many households.

Education

In addition to employment and income, key data for the position of men and women and their future prospects are related to education and health – including HIV/AIDS. There have been considerable advances in primary school attendance among girls the past few years leading to a near-equal school attendance with boys (see Table 14), which is the outcome of a deliberate policy by the government. However, the focus on enrolment and ‘quantity’ has not been accompanied by an equal progress in quality, and the non-completion rate is high, particularly among girls: Of those who enrol, only 49.5 per cent finish EP 1 and 27.2 per cent finish EP2 – compared with the equivalent figures for boys of 66 per cent and 40 per cent respectively (MEC 2006).

Table 14. Educational Indicators by Province and Gender

	Primary School Attendance (EP1 and EP2)		Adult Literacy Rate	
	Boys	Girls	Men	Women
Cabo Delgado	61.2	56.1	53.3	15.5
Nampula	50.2	43.1	56.5	24.1
Niassa	44.3	39.8	55.0	16.6
Zambézia	53.4	44.5	55.4	19.9
Tete	60.0	50.3	57.4	27.1
Manica	69.3	62.8	88.7	39.9
Sofala	64.7	57.4	80.3	33.7
Inhambane	77.8	77.0	71.8	54.1
Gaza	77.7	77.0	62.0	55.3
Maputo	87.0	86.0	91.5	70.3
Maputo City	91.7	91.6	96.1	82.0

Source: MISAU (2005).

There are particular challenges in the northern provinces where female attendance is lowest and the drop-out rate highest, partly due to a stronger perception of boys as future breadwinners and socio-cultural practices of early marriage and high teenage pregnancy rates among girls (see below). Female enrolment and attendance also drop dramatically at secondary school level, where only 5 per cent of girls finish ESG1 and 0.9 per cent finish ESG2. An important challenge at all levels is to increase the number of women teachers, both to act as role models for girls and to reduce the reported problem of sexual harassment by male teachers (UNICEF 2006). At present, women represent 35 per cent of the teachers in EP1 and 27 per cent in EP2, with the percentage dropping to 16 per cent for ESG1 and 18 per cent for ESG2 (MEC 2006).

However, even with success in increasing school attendance among girls it will still take years before women have equal benefits from education – as indicated by the vast discrepancy in adult literacy rates between men and women in most parts of the country. As seen from Table 14, the literacy rate is particularly low and the discrepancy between men and women particularly high in the northern provinces. Literacy does not only have practical implications for women’s daily lives, but is also important for self-respect – as indicated by the large number of women who take part in adult literacy courses (*alfabetização*) (MEC 2006). In Maputo City, where the educational opportunities have been better and more equal for some time, there is both higher overall literacy and a much smaller discrepancy in the literacy rate between men and women.

Education and access to information is a key element in gender equality and the empowerment of women. In addition to education *per se*, there is currently a much larger proportion of men than women who have access to mass media information, particularly in rural areas (see Table 15). With the increasing importance of mass media for the extension of information of relevance for gender

equality and the empowerment of women (ranging from the implications of the new Family Law to information on variations in market prices on agricultural products), this is a serious concern. There are also, as may be expected, significant differences between the poor and the better-off in terms of media access.

Table 15. *No Access to Mass Media (Newspaper, Radio, Television)*

Indicator	Urban/Rural		Quintile	
	Urban	Rural	Poorest	Richest
No access to mass media - men	9.0	31.2	41.7	3.5
No access to mass media - women	29.2	62.6	79.0	16.8

Source: MISAU (2005).

Health

There are far less gendered data available that concern key health indicators in Mozambique. The under-five mortality rate (normally taken to be the main indication of general child welfare) and malnutrition data show a generally serious situation, particularly in the northern provinces (see Table 16), but there are no significant differences between girls and boys and hence no significant socio-cultural variations in the way boys and girls are treated as household members. The under-five mortality rate in Mozambique is 181/1000 for boys and 176/1000 for girls, while the order is reversed for the under-one mortality rate (UNICEF 2007). Data also show that the overall life expectancy of females is somewhat higher for women (with 48.6 years) than for men (with 44.8 years), but this may be in the process of changing with the current 'feminisation' of the HIV/AIDS pandemic with an increasing proportion of women being affected (MdC 2005). In Mozambique, women between 20-24 years have four times higher risk than men of the same age of being affected by HIV/AIDS (MISAU 2005, see also Arndt 2002).

Table 16. *Health Indicators by Province*

	Under-Five Mortality	Malnutrition (stunting)	Life Expectancy
Cabo Delgado	241	55.6	41.9
Nampula	220	42.1	43.7
Niassa	206	47.0	44.7
Zambézia	123	47.3	48.2
Tete	206	45.6	44.3
Manica	184	39.0	46.2
Sofala	205	42.3	44.5
Inhambane	149	33.1	49.3
Gaza	156	33.6	48.7
Maputo	108	23.9	53.7
Maputo City	89	20.6	58.6

Source: MISAU (2005).

Both mortality rates and malnutrition are closely related to food access. The international literature often emphasises the stronger tendency for female-headed households to allocate more resources to food, education, health and other necessities than male-headed households (Quisumbing 2003), and there are also indications of this in Mozambique: Sender and Oya (2007:8) report 'surprisingly strong results concerning the relatively successful performance of Mozambican divorced and separated women in educating their children, and in narrowing the gaps between the education of their daughters and sons'. Moreover, the lower proportion of female- than male-headed households who experience

hunger (revealed in Table 17 below) – despite the former’s higher rates of poverty – may also be seen an indication of a stronger sense of social responsibility among women than men in Mozambique.

Table 17. Households Who Have Experienced Hunger the Last 12 Months

Indicator	Rural		Urban	
	All Terciles	Poorest Tercile	All Terciles	Poorest Tercile
Male-Headed	54.3	64.6	48.3	61.3
Female-Headed	48.1	69.8	33.6	55.1
All	52.5	67.0	43.2	58.6

Source: World Bank (2007).

The higher incidence of female HIV/AIDS affection is the result of men’s sexual behaviour and unequal influence in terms of decision-making around the use of contraceptives (Arndt 2002, UNDP 2007), but it is also related to differences in knowledge about HIV/AIDS prevention methods between men and women (Table 18). With the exception of Maputo City (which has a higher general level of education and more easily accessible information) and Cabo Delgado (where the figure is extremely low both for men and women), women in all other provinces are less knowledgeable about prevention methods than men. The implications of this are serious not only for the women themselves, but also because of their responsibility for children and other dependants. The high HIV/AIDS rate contributes to Mozambique’s large number of child orphans, who make up 11.9 per cent or 1.2 million children between 0-17 years. In Sofala, with the highest HIV/AIDS incidence in the country at 26.5 per cent, the rate is 19 per cent or almost one in five children (UNICEF 2006; UNDP 2007).

Table 18. Knowledge of HIV/AIDS Prevention Methods by Province and Gender

	Knowledge of HIV/AIDS Prevention Methods	
	Men	Women
Cabo Delgado	12.4	18.7
Nampula	60.0	39.5
Niassa	66.6	37.1
Zambézia	38.3	25.5
Tete	89.3	63.0
Manica	87.0	59.4
Sofala	77.3	38.9
Inhambane	80.7	39.1
Gaza	87.4	69.7
Maputo	83.9	73.0
Maputo City	56.5	64.5

Source: MISAU (2005).

Social Organisation

As argued in the introduction to this chapter, the social organisation of households as key social units reflects the social and cultural order of society at large and restricts or extends the agency of individual men and women. According to available statistics, the large majority of households in Mozambique has a married head (which by definition is a man), with polygamous heads, divorced heads and widowed heads making up approximately 10 per cent each. The proportion of single heads, i.e. women or (much more rarely) men who are not divorced or widowed and live alone with children or other dependants is very small at 2 per cent (see Table19).

Table 19. *Composition of Households*

Head Characteristic	1996/97	2002/03
Married head	69	65
Polygamous head*	10	11
Single head	5	2
Divorced head	7	11
Widowed head	9	10

Source: Fox 2005 * See alternative figures below.

Available data give a poor basis for analysing the position and role of women within male-headed households, as most statistics use 'the household' as the unit of analysis without probing intra-household relations and distributions of resources. International literature on Southern Africa shows that the decision-making power in male-headed households rests heavily with the man and that the expenditure pattern leans equally heavily towards the male household head – often with the man not disclosing his earnings to the wife or other family members (Quisumbing 2003). Moreover, studies from Mozambique show that women have a stronger bargaining position in the matrilineal north (where they can return to their original household and have custody over their children) than in the patrilineal central and southern parts of the country where the payment of *lobolo* attach them more firmly to the husband and his extended family (Arnaldo 2001). And finally, there are indications that women in urban areas, often living in informal unions of co-habitation and having access to their own income, have a stronger role and are more independent than other women (Paulo et al. 2007; Costa 2007). Below we will take a more particular look at female-headed and polygamous household units as two types of social organisation with particular implications for women – returning to women's position in male-headed households in more detail in the following two studies in this series.

Female-Headed Households. Female-headed households are an increasingly common phenomenon in Mozambique, even though there is uncertainty about the exact proportion (see Table 20). INE has defined 16 per cent of the households in Mozambique as female-headed (INE 2004); the Ministry of Health operates with a proportion of 26.4 per cent (MISAU 2005); and the most recent national survey IFTRAB states that 30 per cent of all households in Mozambique are female-headed (INE 2006). The differences can be explained partly by disparities in definitions between de jure female-headed households (single mothers, divorced or widowed) and de facto (where a woman has the main economic and social responsibility and is perceived as the head by the other household members, even though there is a male partner present).

Table 20. *Proportion of Female-headed Households by Province*

	Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 2003	National Household Survey (IAF) 2003
Cabo Delgado	21.5	17.4
Nampula	20.8	15.4
Niassa	21.6	12.6
Zambézia	21.4	14.3
Tete	23.2	14.4
Manica	23.0	11.0
Sofala	22.7	10.6
Inhambane	45.5	23.2
Gaza	53.6	24.9
Maputo	33.7	19.6
Maputo City	28.0	12.2
Total	26.4	16.0

Sources: MISAU (2005), INE (2004).

As seen from the table, the proportion of female-headed households varies considerably between the different regions in the country: Generally the northern provinces have the lowest proportion (with Nampula having the smallest with 20.8 per cent), and the southern provinces have the highest proportion, with Gaza at the top with 53.6 per cent. In the south, the high proportion of female-headed households primarily seems to be the outcome of the long tradition of male labour migration, urbanisation and social change which has vested considerable responsibility in women. In the north, the social costs for women heading household units in the 'traditional' socio-cultural context seem to be higher, and the economic opportunities to survive without an adult male in the household lower, than in the south (Osário 2001).

As mentioned above, data from INE (see also Membawase 2005) indicate that the large majority of such households are headed by widows and divorcees, with a very low proportion of single mothers (i.e. women who become pregnant and do not have a relationship with a man). A number of qualitative studies emphasise how divorcees and widows are among the poorest and most marginalised family units in Mozambique, where taking care of one's elders has traditionally been seen as a socio-cultural obligation (Arnaldo 2002, MISAU 2005). One possible explanation for their marginalisation and social exclusion is that in a context of modernisation and commoditisation of social relationships, intra- and inter-family relations are increasingly determined by poverty and material well-being rather than traditional socio-cultural norms. Many poor families simply cannot afford to support old and unproductive family members such as old widows – who actually increasingly seem to find themselves in a situation where *they* have to take care of younger family members such as grandchildren, nephews and nieces of deceased parents (UNICEF 2006, see also Rosário et al. 2008).

Single mothers tend to dominate the statistics on female-headed households in most countries in Southern Africa (Chant 2003). The low proportion of such households in Mozambique is particularly noteworthy given the high proportion of young girls who have sex at a very early age, and the concomitant high number of young mothers (see below). One possible reason is the continued social costs associated with being a single mother or having a daughter who is a single mother in Mozambique, and the concomitant inclusion by such units into the single mother's original family. Rosaldo (2008) claims that being a single mother in Mozambique is particularly difficult, often associated with 'prostitution' and making the women concerned particularly vulnerable to abuse. Another possible reason for the low recorded proportion of single mothers is that many women who become pregnant form parts of polygamous relationships, either formally through customary ceremonies or as 'publicly recognised' lovers or *namoradas* ("girlfriends"). In both cases, the woman may have a heavy responsibility for their own and their children's sustenance, and effectively be 'hidden' single mother households (see below).¹²

With the strong correlation between female household headedness and poverty having been revealed above, understanding the processes that produce and sustain female-headed households in Mozambique should be a priority area for research into development and poverty reduction, and will be a main focus in the coming two studies in this series.

Polygamous Households. Another special characteristic of the household organisation in Mozambique is the large proportion of adult women who live in polygamous household units. Also here the data differ between those of the Ministry of Health (who has set the proportion of men heading polygamous units to 18 per cent) and INE, who has defined the proportion to be 11 per cent – also in this case partly explainable by differences in definition.¹³ More relevant from the point of view of gender relations and the empowerment of women is the proportion of women who are part of polygamous household units – by definition a larger proportion than men. As seen from Table 21, available data

¹² Yet another possible reason, to be explored further in the following studies, is the very conception of 'female-headedness': Women who have children with a man who they have no contact with and have never received economic support from may still claim to be 'married' – thereby enhancing their own and their children's social position.

¹³ The differences seem related to *de jure* polygamous households (where the polygamous relationship is based on customary law) and *de facto* polygamous households (that also may include permanent relations between lovers or *amantes*).

show that as many as 31.3 per cent of all adult women in Mozambique are members of polygamous household units – ranging from 40.9 per cent in Inhambane to 21.6 per cent in Zambézia.

Table 21. *Proportion of Women with One or More Co-Wives*

	One Co-Wife	Two or More Co-Wives	Proportion with Co-Wives
Cabo Delgado	19.9	9.2	29.1
Nampula	16.5	17.4	33.9
Niassa	16.7	10.1	26.8
Zambézia	5.7	15.9	21.6
Tete	22.0	6.3	28.3
Manica	25.3	15.5	40.8
Sofala	25.8	10.2	36.0
Inhambane	22.0	18.9	40.9
Gaza	24.5	8.0	32.5
Maputo	17.0	5.5	22.5
Maputo City	11.3	28.3	39.6
Total	17.4	13.9	31.3

Sources: MISAU (2005).

Available literature shows that the reasons for the prevalence of polygamy differ between the different parts of the country, even though all socio-linguistic groups have an historical tradition for polygamy as a sign of wealth and prestige (Newitt 1995; Arnaldo 2002). In the southern provinces where the prevalence is highest, tradition, dearth of men as a result of labour migration and oscillatory urban migration seem to have contributed to the importance of polygamy. In the northern provinces, the combination of tradition and the prevalence of Islam (which preaches polygamy as part of its faith) is central. At the same time, Rosário (2008) shows that the rationale for the practice of polygamy at the level of individuals and households varies considerably. While recognising that being part of a polygamous household has negative consequences not least for the second and third wives with whom the relations are usually less formalised, she also explains the continued practice with reference to the current economic and socio-cultural context of Mozambique. For poorer households depending on agriculture, a polygamous household implies better access to labour. And for many better-off men, having several wives still gives him prestige. In fact, polygamy is practised in all socio-economic groups and showed an increase between 1996/97 and 2002/03 – with the highest increase in the 5th and best-off quintile (see Table 22).

Table 22. *Proportion of Polygamous Household Heads by Quintile 1996/97 and 2002/03*

Quintile	1996/97	2002/03
1 st	12	13
2 nd	12	8
3 rd	10	11
4 th	9	10
5 th	7	11
All	10	11

Source: Fox et al. (2005).

While polygamy is probably the most stigmatised form of household organisation among advocates of gender equality and the empowerment of women – as evidenced by its illegality – it is just one of several alternative forms of social organisation. The prevalence of lovers (*amantes*) among Mozambican men and what may be termed ‘serial monogamy’, with marriages or short cohabitations

following each other, are also common. Moreover, a number of households seem to be 'split' with one part (usually the man with or without a lover) living in urban areas while the wife stays in the rural village to practise agriculture. And finally, there are emerging signs of new forms of matrifocal domestic units in addition to the female-headed households: Studies give examples of mothers and daughters and sisters living together as a deliberate choice, in order to pool labour and resources in the absence of a male income-earner. All these can be seen as flexible domestic arrangements in a context of changing times and poverty – and should be better understood in order to design relevant policies for gender equality and the empowerment of women (Paulo et al. 2006; Tvedten et al. 2007; Rosário et al. 2008).

Child Marriages, Sexual Abuse and Domestic Violence

Mozambique has one of the highest rates of child marriage in the world (MISAU 2003, UNICEF 2006). Studies show that such marriages are based on a combination of tradition and poverty: Traditionally, early marriage was a way to form political or economic alliances between lineages and clans, and having young wives (young girls often became the second or third wife in a polygamous union) was a sign of wealth and prestige (Arnaldo 2002). For many poor households today, however, marrying away children is a strategy to reduce the pressure on their own household and acquire additional resources – either directly through *lobolo* or with the expectation of longer-term relations with the husband and his extended family. An additional factor has also come in with the HIV/AIDS pandemic: By taking young wives, some men consider that they reduce the danger of getting 'the disease' as the girls are more likely to be virgins.¹⁴

18 per cent of Mozambican girls aged 20-24 have been married before the age of 15 and 56 per cent before the age of 18 (UNICEF 2006). Although these percentages have decreased since 1997 (when they were 22 per cent and 57 per cent respectively), there is no significant change in the average age at first marriage, which increased from 17.4 to 17.5 years. The average age at first marriage among girls varies from 16 years in Nampula to 20 in Maputo City. Girls in the poorest quintile of the population are more likely marry early than girls from the better-off quintiles (UNICEF 2006). This suggests that economic status is a factor in child marriage, but it is not the sole motivation. Prevalence of child marriage is also linked to the cultural practices of specific ethnic groups, such as the *Macua* in the north (Arnaldo 2002). The percentage of men who marry early is considerably lower than for girls, suggesting that young girls tend to marry older men (INE 2005; see also Bagnol and Ernesto 2003).

International studies show that marrying young has severe consequences for the development of children, who 'lose' part of their childhood both in social and psychological terms. While some young girls in Mozambique are promised to other men at a very early age and may stay in their original household until they are 14-15 years, others move to the house of their husband as children, where they have to adjust to a completely new social environment and often get a heavy workload. Some also become involved in strained relations with other women in that household (such as the first wife), but there are also studies showing that older women take particular care of such girls and ease their way into their new domestic setting (Rosário 2008). In addition to the stress of early marriage and poverty *per se*, married girls are much less likely than their unmarried peers to attend school and to get employment (UNDP 2001; UNICEF 2006).

The young girls who find themselves in the most difficult situation seem to be those who become pregnant before they have entered a marital union. Not only do their children represent an additional burden for their own household, but they also reduce the options of getting married in the future. As seen from Table 23, the proportion of girls who have had sex before the age of 15 is particularly high in the northern provinces, which are also the provinces with the most limited use of contraceptives and the highest proportion of child mothers in the country. Information collected during a study in

¹⁴ In South Africa and Namibia, studies show that very young girls are coveted as sexual partners to cure AIDS, but there are no studies confirming such a practice in Mozambique.

Nampula (Tvedten et al. 2006) indicates that there is a tendency towards an increasingly low marriage age for girls, which we see as one of the most urgent gender issues to look into.

Table 23. Sex before Age 15 by Province and Gender

	Proportion of Men/Women with Sex Before The Age of 15	
	Men	Women
Cabo Delgado	42.7	45.0
Nampula	31.4	36.6
Niassa	33.4	45.5
Zambézia	19.1	35.2
Tete	31.1	16.7
Manica	14.2	24.9
Sofala	21.1	22.2
Inhambane	35.0	25.1
Gaza	40.5	21.3
Maputo	15.0	17.3
Maputo City	19.5	15.8

Source: MISAU (2005).

Case studies suggest widespread sexual abuse in Mozambique (WLSA 2008), and that there is a particularly high level of outright sexual abuse in the school system. It has been estimated that at least 8 per cent of schoolchildren have suffered physical sexual abuse, and a further 35 per cent have experienced sexual harassment involving verbal persuasion (SC et al. 2005). Actual levels of sexual abuse are likely to be even higher, as 22 per cent of the girls interviewed did not recognise forced intercourse as abuse, and as many as 35 per cent did not consider that verbal harassment constituted abuse. In a 2004 Youth Profile commissioned by the Ministry of Youth and Sport and UNICEF, 20 per cent of girls who participated in the study reported that abuse was a problem in schools. However, interviewers noted that many students and teachers appeared unwilling to talk about the subject. Students reported that they were forced to choose: provide sex, pay money or face expulsion from school. It is difficult to explain the prevalence of abuse of this type, but it is at least partly a reflection of an attitude of men towards girls that perhaps is best described as 'paternalistic' and 'sexist'.

There are also studies showing that (usually older) girls use sex as a deliberate strategy to improve their lives (PSI 2005). The study revealed that those young women engaged in cross-generational and transactional sex had a complex sexual network involving multiple partners. These sexual partnerships were classified into a range of different types of relationships: *namorados* (same age boyfriends, with whom there is a perceived relationship of trust), *pitos* (partners for sexual pleasure and with whom there is no economic exchange), *sengue* (older married men) and *amante* (lovers). The *sengue* and *amante* were both transactional relationships. All of the young women stressed that the primary motive for transactional sex was economic, and that they had no emotional attachment or expectations beyond exchange of sex for money and other economic benefits. Transactional sex was conceptualised as a strategy by which they were able to reverse the existing balance of gender and power relations. Through the power of their sexuality, the young women were able to extract financial resources from men in order to access the material goods and lifestyle that, for them, symbolise modernity and success. Albeit a different form of sexual 'abuse', it is a useful reminder that gender relations are exactly that – *relations* between people.

One of the most disturbing aspects of Mozambican society, from a gender perspective, is the high incidence of domestic violence. There are few data on its actual occurrence, but one study carried out for the Ministry for Women and Social Action in 2004 showed that as many as 34 per cent of women who participated had been beaten. The perpetrator of the violence was most frequently the woman's husband or a close male relative or acquaintance. Women in rural areas reported higher levels of

violence than women in urban areas. A number of qualitative studies particularly by WLSA confirm that domestic violence is wide-spread (Arthur 2006, 2007; WLSA 2008)

The high level of domestic violence seems to be related to a complex set of conditions such as general experiences of violence from colonialism and war; the increasing loss of status and social control of men who use violence as a (final) way to assert their masculinity; and a socio-cultural tradition of bringing up children 'by hand'.¹⁵ Available quantitative data also reveal a wide-spread acceptance of the use of violence among men and women alike (Table 24). 54 per cent of women state that men had the right to beat them under certain circumstances, such as leaving the house without informing the husband or refusing sex. Women in the poorest quintile were most likely to demonstrate an accepting attitude to this violence. An attitude of acceptance was more prevalent in rural areas, where 57.5 per cent of women accepted violence compared to 48.2 per cent in urban areas. At the same time, however, qualitative studies show that while a certain use of force may be seen as acceptable, brutal violence with bodily harm is usually accepted neither by local communities nor by individual men and women. In fact, physical violence is seen as an acceptable reason for leaving a male partner – even though many women will not be in an economic position to do so (Tvedten et al. 2006).

Table 24. *Attitude Towards Domestic Violence by Province and Gender*

	Accepting Attitude Domestic Violence	
	Men	Women
Cabo Delgado	41.8	50.3
Nampula	40.2	62.0
Niassa	24.2	55.3
Zambézia	43.0	41.5
Tete	38.6	67.5
Manica	59.2	58.6
Sofala	53.9	47.1
Inhambane	38.7	68.5
Gaza	52.6	58.8
Maputo	23.7	57.3
Maputo City	40.1	30.5

Source: MISAU (2005).

The issue of domestic violence should be a main focus in policies for gender equality and the empowerment of women in Mozambique. Not only does it seriously affect a large number of women economically, socially and psychologically, but it also embodies two interlinked issues that will be key to improving the conditions of women in the country: One is to improve the economic position of women in relation to men in order to make them more independent, and the other is to relate to the socio-cultural perceptions of patriarchy and masculinity in the country.

2.4 Summing Up

There is little doubt that existing socio-economic information on gender equality and the empowerment of women in Mozambique reveals a very serious situation with considerable implications – both for the women and girls concerned and for the options for poverty reduction in the country. The global Gender Development Index places Mozambique as the least developed country in Southern Africa in terms of women's income, education and health/longevity, with particularly severe indicators in education. Moreover, there are few signs of real improvement except in education:

¹⁵ The 2001 National Survey of Reproductive Health and Sexual Behaviour of Young People and Adolescents (INE 2001) indicated that, as a child or teenager, 30 per cent of women and 37 per cent of men had directly witnessed violence between their parents and that 15 per cent of women and 20 per cent of men had suffered physical abuse by a relative in their youth.

Mozambican women are heavily involved in the economic sphere, but primarily in subsistence agriculture and the urban informal economy where returns are low. And progress in health/longevity is experiencing a backlash due to the feminisation of the HIV-AIDS pandemic.

At the level of households and individuals, women and girls work harder and longer hours than men and boys, have more limited influence on household decision-making, and domestic violence remains a serious problem. As a reflection of and response to these conditions, an increasing proportion of households in Mozambique are female-headed and other 'alternatives' to the hegemonic male-headed household exist. We have also demonstrated variations in the position of women between different regions, urban and rural areas, ethno-linguistic groups and social classes – such as the higher relative social independence of women in the matrilineal north than the patrilineal central and south; the higher incidence of HIV-AIDS among women in the south/central than the north; the higher prevalence of very young wives and mothers in the north than in the south; and the higher economic independence of women in urban than in rural areas. Overall, however, the data confirm that there is an ongoing feminisation of poverty in the country.

At the same time, quantitative data of the type presented here cannot give justice to the variations and complexities of the real lives of individual men and women and the relationships between them. In particular, we still know too little about people's *own* perceptions about gender equality and the empowerment of women; women's positions and role in family household provisioning and allocation of resources; and the more specific nature of their (power) relations with men and how this affects their alternative choices. There are also more concrete issues of importance for the analysis and policy responses related to gender equality about which we still know too little. Among these are i) the gendered dimensions of coping with external crises such as natural disasters and economic shocks like the current food price increase; ii) the nature of gendered control of key assets and resources such as (rural) land and (urban) housing; iii) women's role and position in the primarily urban informal economy; iv) the importance and potential of women's collective action and associations in rural as well as urban areas; v) the role of the church and other locally based civic institutions in promoting or inhibiting gender equality; and vi) the ongoing responses of men as their masculinity and position as family heads and providers come under threat in an increasingly commoditised political economy with rising unemployment and increasing costs of living. All these issues will be the subject of further analyses in the upcoming two studies in this series on gender policies and the feminisation of poverty in Mozambique.

3. Gender Policies and Institutional Framework

This chapter will analyse the current gender policies and interventions in Mozambique – meant to alleviate and improve the situation of gender inequality described in the preceding chapter. To this end, we will assess the participation of women in political institutions at various levels; the legal and institutional framework that promotes and integrates issues of gender equality; and the role of national and international partners in enhancing gender equality and the empowerment of women in the country. Once the assessment of the institutional mechanisms and the current actions for gender equality have been carried out, we will sum up by arguing that the very notion of ‘gender mainstreaming’ has effectively pulverised the responsibility for gender issues in Mozambique. Conclusions and recommendations will follow in Chapter 4.

3.1 Brief History of Governance and Gender

In order to better understand the link between governance and gender in Mozambique, it is useful to briefly recapitulate the socio-cultural basis for the politics of gender in the country and how this has evolved over time. Traditionally, Mozambique can be divided into a patrilineal and a matrilineal socio-cultural system – with the Zambeze River in the middle of the country being considered the dividing line between them. In the former, the wife and children ‘belonged’ to the husband and his family, symbolically and practically manifested through the payment of bride-price or *lobolo*. In the latter, the woman and her children continued to be regarded as the ‘property’ of her own matrilineal family, which gave them an additional set of social relationships. These two systems have influenced the way of life and social relationships in communities and households since pre-colonial times up to the present, and hence also the relationships between men and women (Arnaldo 2002).

In both the patrilineal and matrilineal systems, women’s positions were based on submission to the male members of the family – i.e. the husband and her father/brothers respectively – and women were not supposed to actively participate in decision making in the household or extended family. Public participation in matters concerning the clan, lineage or sub-lineage was also dominated by (usually older) male clan chiefs and lineage kings (Newitt 1995). Territorial leadership involving several clans and lineages were traditionally in the hands of male patriarchs from a lineage whose predominance was acknowledged by the others. As colonial Portugal tightened its control over increasingly more of Mozambique, they brought with them a strong patriarchal ideology that segmented colonial and male dominance at all political and administrative levels, including local communities (Sheldon 2002), using many of the traditional leaders (becoming known as *régulos*) as part of their system of political oppression.

The first significant change in the politics of gender relationships came in the 1960s, with the promotion of women’s role in the fight for national independence. Despite the hegemonic socio-cultural values based on women’s subordination to men, the Liberation Front of Mozambique (FRELIMO) introduced the principle of equality between men and women through the concept of ‘women’s emancipation’¹⁶, meeting the need to find a position for women within the anti-colonial struggle. After independence in 1975, the policy of the new FRELIMO government brought significant gains for women to the extent that it allowed them greater visibility in public decision-making (Isaacman and Isaacman 1983).

However, despite the importance granted to women in the construction of independent Mozambique, this emancipation was limited to the public sphere and did not include the spheres of economic and domestic life. That is to say, the intention was to give value to women’s political participation, but without bringing about a social transformation of the patriarchal structure based on women’s

¹⁶ Frelimo defined the ‘liberation of the land, restoration of fundamental rights, and human dignity of men and women’ as the basis of combat against Portuguese colonialism.

submission and inferiority. For example, during the anti-colonial fight, the Women's Detachment (DF) was formed within the nationalist movement to fight alongside the men as 'equal partners'. Nevertheless, the creation of the DF was always the cause of much controversy, and the role of women eventually became to mobilise communities in the liberated areas and to cook and supply food for the troops, only rarely bringing women to the front line of combat (Alberts and Hirvonen 1993).

Later on, the FRELIMO regime institutionalised the interests of women through the Mozambican Women's Association (OMM). The creation of the OMM reconfirmed the importance attached to women in building the nation and to the country's development, and enabled women to have a certain influence in governance in the period following independence. However, in FRELIMO's strategy, women were seen as the 'educators of new generations'. In other words, OMM was not created to change the status and role of women but rather to highlight women's role in social reproduction. In a speech, President Samora Machel declared feminism to be a 'trivial matter'. The wife of the first president of Frelimo, Janet Mondlane, stated in an interview that 'the OMM is an organisation of men, directed by men, but whose members are women' (Manghezi 2001:39- 40). As we shall see below, the discrepancy between policies for gender equality and actual intervention and change is a recurring theme in the history of governance and gender in Mozambique (Peronius 2005).

3.2 Political Representation

Within the country's legal framework, the first Constitution of the Peoples Republic of Mozambique of 1975 underscored the equality between men and women, in terms of the law, through principles that governed their rights, obligations and relationships. In the 1990 Constitution, the question of gender equality was maintained and consolidated in Article 122 by stating that: '[T]he State promotes, supports and values the development of women and encourages their growing role in society, in all spheres of political, economic, social and cultural activities in the country'.

Women's participation in decision-making processes has seen a marked increase since independence.. Mozambique is one of the countries with the largest presence of women in decision-making bodies, and occupies one of the top positions with a representation of 35.6% of women in Parliament. As seen in Table 25 below, Mozambique ranks twelfth out of the countries with the highest representation of women in Parliament in the world.

Table 25: *Representation of Women in National Parliaments*

Rank	Country	Parliament			
		Election	Total Seats	Women	% Women
1	Rwanda	2003	80	39	48.8
2	Sweden	2006	349	164	47.0
3	Cuba	2008	614	265	43.2
4	Finland	2007	200	83	41.5
5	Argentina	2007	255	102	40.0
6	Holland	2006	150	59	39.3
7	Denmark	2007	179	68	38.0
8	Costa Rica	2006	57	21	36.8
9	Spain	2004	350	128	36.6
10	Norway	2005	169	61	36.1
11	Belgium	2007	150	53	35.3
12	Mozambique	2004	250	89	35.6
13	Iceland	2007	63	21	33.3
14	New Zealand	2005	121	40	33.1
15	South Africa	2004	400	132	33.0

Source: The data in the table were compiled by the [Inter-Parliamentary Union](#) based on the information supplied by the national parliaments on 29 February 2008.

Comparing Mozambique to neighbouring countries, Mozambique *heads* the list with the highest percentage of women in parliament, followed by South Africa, Tanzania and Namibia (see Table 26).

Table 26: *Representation of Women in National Parliaments in Southern Africa*

Rank	Country	Parliament			
		Election	Seats	Women	% Women
12	Mozambique	2004	250	87	34,8
15	South Africa	2004	400	132	33,0
20	Tanzania	2005	319	97	30,4
27	Namibia	2004	78	21	26,9
34	Lesotho	2007	120	30	25,0
84	Zimbabwe	2008	207	28	13,5
87	Malawi	2004	193	25	13,0
97	Botswana	2004	63	7	11,1
99	Swaziland	2003	65	7	10,8

Source: The data in the table were compiled by the [Inter-Parliamentary Union](#) based on the information supplied by the national parliaments on 29 February 2008.

In the Mozambican parliament, the Frelimo party has had the highest representation of women in the last two legislatures, with almost 45 per cent of women, against the 22.2 per cent for Renamo and the União Eleitoral in the current assembly, as seen in Table 27 below.

Table 27. *Parliamentary Representation by Political Party and Gender in the 2nd and 3rd National Assembly, 1999-2004 & 2004-2009*

	199/2004		2004/2009	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Frelimo	58.6	41.3	56.9	43.1
Renamo	80.3	19.6	77.8	22.2
Total	68.8	31.2	64.4	35.6

Source: INE, 1997; MAE, 2005, Mozambique.

In 1995 women made up 14 per cent of the Government's executive power, having increased to 33 per cent in 2000. Currently, Guebuza's government has 11 women among its ministers and vice-ministers, including a lady Prime Minister, representing 32 per cent of the executive power (Table 28).

Table 28. *Gender Composition of Government in Mozambique 1995 to 2005*

	1995		2000		2005	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
President	1	0	1	0	1	0
Prime Minister	1	0	1	0	0	1
Ministers	20	1	18	3	20	6
Vice-Ministers	13	4	4	5	13	4
Total	35	5	24	8	34	11

Source: INE, 1997; MAE, 2005, Mozambique.

However, women in Mozambique have greater representation at the central government level than at other lower levels. As can be seen in Table 29, 23 per cent of the ministers are women while there are

only 18 per cent women among provincial governors. As far as the different administrative levels are concerned, there is also a greater presence of women in the central level than in the provincial and district level bodies. In fact, the presence of women decreases as we move from the central to the provincial and district levels, with the participation of women at the lowest level of district administrators and heads of administrative posts, which are most visible and directly involved with the local populations, still being very weak.

Table 29. Women in political and decision-making positions in Mozambique

Position	No. of Men		No. of Women		% Women	
	1997	2005	1997	2005	1997	2005
Government						
Prime Minister	1	0	0	1	0	100
Ministers	22	20	1	6	4.3	23.1
Vice-ministers	15	13	3	4	16.6	23.5
Parliament	179	161	71	89	28.4	35.6
Political Parties						
FRELIMO	-	91	-	69	-	43.1
RENAMO-EU	-	70	-	20	-	22.2
Provincial Government						
Provincial Governors	10	9	0	2	0	18.1
Permanent Secretary	0	7	0	4	0	36.3
Provincial Directors	130	130	12	33	8.4	20.2
Dep.Prov. Director	11	11	3	3	21.4	21.4
Local Government						
Chair. Mun. Board	0	32	0	1	0	3.03
Mun. Councilmen	-	555	-	235	-	29.7
District Administr.	125	113	3	26	3.8	18.7
Head Adm. Posts	-	288	-	10	-	3.35
Civil Service						
Permanent Secretary	15	13	2	4	11.7	23.5
National Director	141	141	23	33	14.2	18.9
Dep. Nat. Director	59	59	12	12	1.9	16.9
Head of Department	620	620	148	148	19.2	19.2
Head of Division	-	399	157	157	-	28.2
Head of Section	-	622	-	297	-	32.3
Justice						
Judge	-	18	-	-	-	0
Attorney General	1	1	0	0	0	0
Dep. Att. General	-	3	0	1	0	25
Ambassadors						
Ambassadors	12	10	2	3	14.2	23.07

Source: MAE 2005, updated by MMCAS.

The table also reveals that women have a relatively weak presence in civil service management positions. In 1998, women occupied only 10 per cent out of a total of 105 management positions in civil service. Currently, the presence of women in civil service is 26.9 per cent. Most women find themselves in more qualified positions, implying that superior qualifications are necessary for women to be accepted (Forúm Mulher 2007).

While some ministries have a relatively high proportion of women among their professional staff (such as the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education and Culture), there are also ministries with less than 20% representation of women on their staff. These include the Ministry of State Administration (12%), the Ministry of the Interior (18%), the Ministry of Mineral Resources and Energy (20%), the Ministry of Transport and Communication (16%) and, interestingly, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (17.3%) (Fórum Mulher 2007).

The presence of women in judicial power is also still weak (see Table 30). Women represent 18 per cent of Mozambique's magistrates and only 16 per cent of district prosecutors who are more directly involved with the local populations, while informal community courts are completely dominated by male traditional and community leaders. There has been improvements in the recruitment of female police officers, and some Police Victim Support Centres have been created for child and women victims of violence (Mioh Nemoto, pers.comm.). The legal system and courts are, of course, one of the most important sectors for the empowerment of women through the protection of women's formal rights (see Lituri 2002).

Table 30. Women in Judicial Power in Mozambique

	Men	Women	Women (%)
Legal Advisers	7	0	0.0
Magistrates	137	30	17.9
Resident Judges	93	7	7.0
Legal Technicians	169	27	13.8
Lawyers	186	40	17.7
Deputy Prosecutors	6	1	14.3
Provincial Prosecutors	35	7	16.6
District Prosecutors	101	18	15.1

Source: Legal and Judicial Training Centre (CFJJ), 2005.

Despite the positive developments regarding the presence of women in governing positions and (albeit to a smaller extent) in civil service in Mozambique, we saw in the previous chapter that we are still faced with a situation in which women have lower levels of education than men, less access to formal employment, lower income levels and lower productivity in the agricultural sector, as well as with socio-cultural practices which make it difficult for women to become fully integrated into the politics of local communities. In other words, there has been a development which has combined the promotion of women's participation in the public sphere with the continued inequality of women in economic life, in the community and in the domestic sphere. This way, women are given political and legal rights without this translating into real gender equality, which would challenge the existing hegemonic patriarchal socio-cultural model. One way of explaining this is that women in public spheres are still not in a position to effectively influence real political interventions for gender equality. But there are also claims that women in public office do not really prioritise gender issues (Laforte 2004, see also Peronius 2005).

In line with this, many civil society organisations¹⁷ involved in the struggle for the approval of a law on domestic violence have pointed out that having a large percentage of female members of parliament does not necessarily guarantee the defence of the needs and interests of women. Within the scope of the current campaign for the approval of the law on domestic violence, for example, female members of Parliament have actually created obstacles to its approval by the Lower House, alleging that the law will create instability within the family structure and that it goes against Mozambican culture (Arthur, 2008:1). It is our contention that it is the combination of a continued strong patriarchal culture and the absence of a *real* commitment to the social transformation of gender relations among

¹⁷ These include Action Aid, ADEC - Sofala, AMCS, AMMCJ, AMUDEIA, ASSOMUDE, AVVD, FDC, Fórum Mulher, Fundação Apoio Amigo - Tete, LEMUSICA, MULEIDE, N'weti, Rede CAME, TCV - Nampula and WLSA Moçambique

political decision-makers that leads to the failure of many policies, programmes and interventions designed to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women in Mozambique.

3.3 Legal Framework

As shown above, the Government of Mozambique has fulfilled its political obligation to promote equal opportunities between men and women through the legal framework which formalises gender equality and promotes equal opportunities for all individuals. The 1990 Constitution proclaims equality of men and women in its Article 36 which states that ‘men and women are equal before the law in all political, economic, social and cultural spheres of life’. And in Article 122, it reads that ‘[T]he State promotes, supports and values the development of women and encourages their increasing role in society, in all spheres of political, economic, social and cultural life in the country’.

At the international level, the Government of Mozambique has signed several regional and international initiatives aiming at promoting equal rights for women and men. Among these are the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (1993); the Solemn Declaration of Gender Equality in Africa (1994); the Peking Declaration (1995); the SADC (Southern Africa Development Community) Gender Declaration (1997); and the Optional Protocol to the African Charter on Human Rights and Peoples’ Rights and the Rights of Women (2005). These initiatives commit the signatory countries to revise discriminatory laws, and to formulate new policies and programmes for the benefit of women.

Perhaps the most important existing law that defends women and gender equality in Mozambique is the Family Law (AdR 2004). The new Family Law was approved in 2004, after a long period of advocacy campaigns by civil society. The most important provisions in the law are: the recognition of customary unions, which allows women married under customary law to claim property and custody rights; ii) the recognition of informal unions, which gives women who have lived with their partner for more than one year the right to inherit; iii) an increase in the minimum age of marriage to 18 years (from 14 and 16 years for boys and girls, respectively); and iv) elimination of the principle of male supremacy by giving the man and the woman joint administration of property. In addition, polygamous unions (that, we have seen, involve 30 per cent of Mozambican women) are not permitted by law. Having said this, most Mozambican women are still unaware of the rights and illegality of their status as polygamous wives vested in the law, and if they are aware of their rights they often do not know how to exercise them (WLSA 2008).

In 2002, the first National Plan for the Advancement of Women (PNAM 2002-2006) was formulated, coordinated and monitored by the Operational Group for the Advancement of Women (GOAM). During the implementation of the first PNAM, the National Council for the Advancement of Women (CNAM) was created as a successor to the Operational Group, and now coordinates the various sectors with the main objective of following-up the implementation of policies and programs approved by the Government. The PNAM 2007-2009 is currently being implemented (see Box 1), with the main lines of action being based on the assumption that ‘the proper implementation and concretisation of the objectives require strong commitments and active partnerships with civil society as well as improved intersectorial and interdisciplinary coordination’.

Box 1. National Plan for the Advancement of Women 2007- 2009

The PNAM 2007 – 2009 acknowledges seven critical areas of intervention:

- Poverty and employment;
- Health and HIV/AIDS;
- Girls' Education and Training;
- Women's rights and violence;
- Power and presence in decision-making bodies;
- Environment and agriculture;
- Institutional mechanisms for the Advancement of Women.

Source: Action Plan for the Advancement of Women 2007-2009.

A significant weakness regarding the implementation of these laws and policies is that they have been prepared without the necessary policy framework in place. The Gender Policy and Implementation Strategy (PGEI) was only approved in 2007, ten years after the formulation of the Action Plans and the institutionalisation of Gender Units (GUs) in some ministries (see below). The general objective of the PGEI is to 'develop the main action lines, in an integrated manner, aiming at promoting gender equality, regard for human rights and strengthening women's participation in the development of the country'. The implementation strategy focuses on political, economic, legal, socio-cultural, defence and security areas of activities (Government Gazette 2007).

The delay in the approval of the policy again underlines the limited political will of key decision-making actors, and a lack of awareness of the importance of gender issues in the country's development policies. In fact, in the words of Edda Collier, 'The non-existence of a national gender policy represented a critical gap, since some sectors remained unconvinced of the need to appoint Gender Focal Points (GFP) and create Gender Units (GUs) without a formal legal basis' (Collier, 2006:15/16).¹⁸

3.4 Development Interventions

The Government of Mozambique's main development objective is to fight against absolute poverty. Within the efforts to improve living conditions in Mozambique, the GoM developed the Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty 2001-2005 (PARPA I) and the PARPA II (2006-2009). The main objective of the PARPA is to reduce the poverty levels from 70 per cent in 1997 to 60 per cent in 2005, and to 45 per cent by the end of 2010. To this end, there has been some progress since the poverty head count was measured at 54 per cent in 2003 (DNPO 2004, but see also Hanlon 2008). The PARPA strategy includes policies and programmes in six priority areas: education, health, agriculture and rural development, basic infrastructures, good governance and macroeconomics.

The PARPA document defines the strategic vision for the reduction of poverty, the main objectives and the key activities to be implemented, and also guides the preparation of annual budgets, programmes and policies. The PARPA is consequently the central medium-term planning instrument, giving directions to sectorial and cross-cutting policies, programmes and interventions for the reduction of poverty in Mozambique. The poverty reduction policy shall also, ideally, be harmonised with other key development planning instruments such as the Sectorial and Provincial Strategic Plans, the Medium-Term Fiscal Scenario (MTFS), the Economic and Social Plan (PES) and the State Budget (SB).

¹⁸ The Gender Units (GU) are mechanisms created within the different Ministries with the objective of influencing gender responsive planning and budgeting processes, and are catalysts for gender issues to be placed on the agenda of the sectorial programmes.

The PARPA is also the main political framework through which gender inequalities are to be resolved and improved. The document considers gender as a cross-cutting issue, with the argument that gender cannot be considered in isolation, since the strategies and actions depend on the concerted and integrated efforts of multiple actors. The actions in the area of gender inequality are of two main types. Actions of an indirect nature refer to the economic growth process with a fair (equitable) reduction of poverty and cover: (i) the macro-economic policy; (ii) growth of the productive sector, an increase in productivity and in employment; and (iii) the prioritisation/allocation of public resources to the different economic and social sectors. The actions of a direct nature refer to the Social Action Programmes (Human Capital Pillar), specifically directed to enhance education and health and to create mechanisms so that women and their dependants can rise above economic and social poverty and vulnerability.

However, despite the fact that gender issues have been articulated across all pillars of the PARPA strategy, this has not been adequately translated into practice. It is necessary for more efforts to be made to create a favourable environment for the integration of gender issues into the poverty reduction process, particularly in the areas of governance, agricultural production, employment, education for girls, and social security. The following section will outline the concept of gender mainstreaming, which is the procedural approach chosen to accomplish gender equality and the empowerment of women in Mozambique, and then provide an assessment of the current institutional structures that are set up to implement this.

Gender Mainstreaming

The concept of *mainstreaming* appears for the first time during the United Nations Third World Conference on Women (Nairobi, 1985), in a debate on the role of women in development. That debate discussed the importance of integrating the gender issue in development policies, as well as the need to involve governments in the integration of gender equality through the design and planning of policies and programmes.

At the United Nations IV World Conference on Women (Peking, 1995) the mainstreaming strategy was taken on by the Action Platform, where it was specified that governments and other stakeholders should promote an active and visible policy for the cross-cutting integration of gender in all public policies and programmes. The main concern driving the promotion of this principle was the failure to consider the social role of women in developing countries, or the absence of a gender perspective in the design of development policies. In fact, after the definition of the mainstreaming strategy in Peking, many countries began to develop and to promote mainstreaming in their own public institutions.

For gender mainstreaming to work properly, and for a true consolidation thereof to take place, it is necessary to have clear political commitment and to allocate to it sufficient resources, both financial and human. It is equally important to create suitable mechanisms for the monitoring process, and to identify gender issues and gender indicators for each of the sectors where there are gender differences and disparities. Therefore, mainstreaming has to be accompanied by careful gender analyses. Even though mainstreaming may be an efficient instrument for 'generalising' gender policies, it may also be necessary to implement specific policies and programmes for women.

Box 2. Definition of gender mainstreaming

Definition of gender mainstreaming or cross-cutting integration of gender

The notion of integration of gender issues in all development policies and interventions was established as a global strategy for the promotion of gender equality in the Action Platform adopted at the United Nation's Fourth International Conference on Women, held in Peking (China) in 1995. In July 1997, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) defined the concept of *gender mainstreaming* or the cross-cutting integration of gender:

'Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality.'

Mainstreaming or the cross-cutting integration of gender includes specific gender activities where men and women find themselves in situations of particular disadvantage. The specific gender interventions may have women, men and women together, or only men as their exclusive target group, in order to guarantee that they participate and benefit equally in the development task.

Institutional Integration

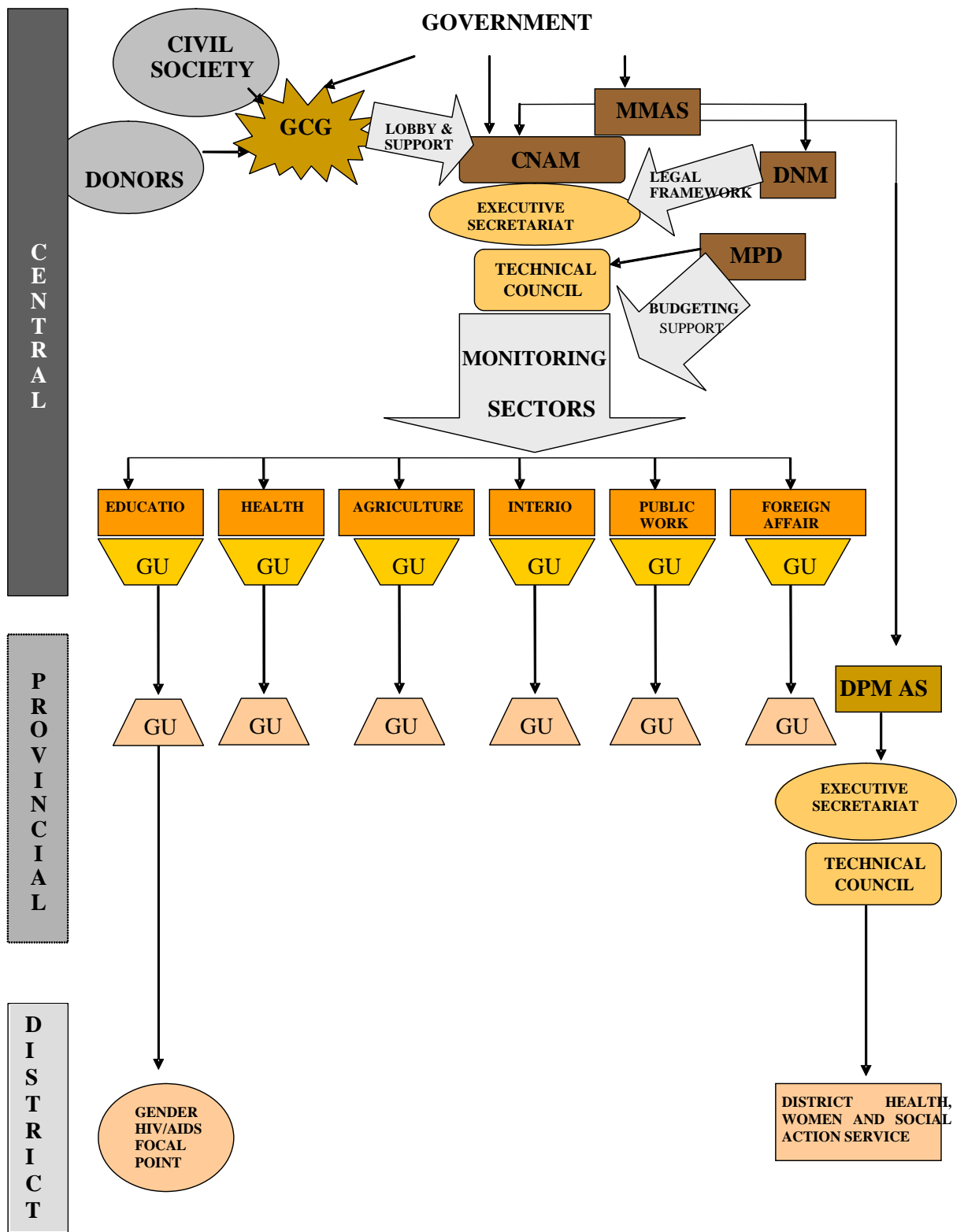
The gender mainstreaming process began in Mozambique immediately following the adoption of the Action Platform of the Peking Conference. The Government created different institutional mechanisms for the promotion, advocacy and mobilisation of support for the advancement of women's status (see Figure 1). As mentioned above, an Operational Group (OG) was created within the then Ministry for Coordination of Social Action (MCAS) and its Department for Women. Over the years, the gender issue began to assume greater importance in the GoM's political agenda, and in 2000 the Ministry for Women and the Coordination of Social Action (MMAS) was created, along with the creation of the National Directorate for Women (DNM).

In 2004, the Cabinet of Ministers created the CNAM, which replaced the former GOAM. This is currently the consultative body through which the Ministry for Women and Social Action carries out intersectorial coordination, with the main objective being to follow up the implementation of gender policies and programmes approved by the Government.¹⁹ The CNAM's main function is to promote and monitor the implementation of the government's gender policies in all of its plans and programmes (PARPA, PES, OE, BdPES) and, in particular, in the National Plan for the Advancement of Women (PNAM) and the Gender Policy and its Implementation Strategy (PGEI). The CNAM is presided over by the Minister of MMAS and comprises ministers from the government;²⁰ two NGOs (Fórum Mulher and the Community Development Foundation); two representatives from religious groups (the Christian Council of Mozambique and the Catholic Church); a representative from the union (the Mozambican Workers Organisation, OTM) and a representative from the private sector (Confederation of Economic Associations, CTA).

¹⁹ Government Gazette, Official Publication of the Republic of Mozambique, Decree 7/2004, I SERIES – Number 13, 1 April 2004.

²⁰ Minister of Finance and Vice-President, Minister of Health, Minister of Education and Culture, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Minister of State Administration, Minister of Youth and Sports, Minister of Labour.

FIGURE 1. GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN MOZAMBIQUE



The CNAM is made up of two bodies: the Executive Secretariat, responsible for the technical management and boosting of the activities entrusted to the CNAM, and the Technical Council, made up of the gender focal points from the Ministries with gender units²¹ and representatives from other public institutions. Gender mainstreaming also includes institutional mechanisms at sector level. In those Ministries considered particularly relevant to gender issues, such as education, health and agriculture, there are Gender Units responsible for coordinating the focal points at each of the Ministry's national directorates, as well as at the provincial directorates. Ideally, gender focal points should be persons with experience and awareness of gender issues in the sector, both at national and provincial levels. The role of the national and provincial Gender Units is to influence the planning and budgeting processes and to be catalysts, by placing gender issues on the agenda of the sector programmes. In this sense, the Gender Units are the key to gender mainstreaming within their respective ministries and directorates. In practice, however, the role of the Gender Units is very weak, as we will return to below.

In the context of the decentralisation process and the strengthening of local authorities (see the Law of Local State Bodies, LOLE), the Provincial Directorates for Women and Social Action have an Executive Secretariat and a Technical Council. Within the scope of UNFPA and UNIFEM's programme 'Support to Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women at Central Level and Selected Provinces', work is currently being carried out to capacitate gender focal points in the province of Zambézia, with future expansions to the country's other provinces.

The roles and functions of the provinces and districts is currently being redefined, and the law is being revisited to enable a larger role for traditional local authorities. The institutional framework has introduced gender focal points at district level, whose activities are financed through the budget allocated to the District Administration. Currently, this public service reform is coordinated by the Ministry of State Administration (MAE), responsible for the management of public service, administration of local government and supervision. At district level there is also the Health, Women and Social Action Service which, within the scope of issues pertaining to women and social action, has as its objective the promotion of the realisation of actions that guarantee gender equality and equity.²² Gender and HIV/AIDS focal points have also been established at district level in the education sector, as part of the Education, Youth and Technology services.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Gender policies and interventions are monitored through sectorial monitoring systems. In other words, each sector has Gender Units that monitor activities, policies and programmes. This sectorial monitoring process is coordinated by CNAM's Technical Council, directed by the Executive Secretariat and made up of a team from the Ministry of Planning and Development, the different focal points from the Gender Units, as well as the different representatives from civil society and donors belonging to the Gender Coordination Group (GCG), to which we will return below.

As already emphasised, the PARPA is the central instrument that defines the matrix of objectives, actions and indicators for each of the pillars defined in the plan. Looking at the PARPA II's Matrix of Strategic Indicators (Table 31), the main 'global indicator' relates to the Gender Development Index, discussed in the previous chapter. There are also more specific objectives for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women, including the approval of the Gender Policy (which has already been achieved) and the regulation and formulation of sectorial gender strategies for each individual ministry between 2008 and 2009. Finally, there are more concrete indicators related to education and health presenting data disaggregated by sex. There are no indicators for women's

²¹ Ministries with gender units include the Ministries of Education and Culture; Health; Agriculture, Women and Social Action; Youth and Sports; Defence; Interior; Mineral Resources and Energy; Science and technology Fisheries and Foreign Affairs.

²² Government Gazette, Official Publication of the Republic of Mozambique, Organic Statute of the District Government, Decree 6/2006, I SERIES – Number 15, 12 April 2006, Mozambique.

involvement in agriculture or other economic areas that we have argued are absolutely essential for the promotion of gender equality in Mozambique.

Regarding the other planning and budgeting instruments, there are, in reality, different levels of integration of gender issues. The Medium Term Fiscal Scenario (MTFS) has neither integrated gender issues nor defined the gender indicators required for monitoring. The most advanced integration of gender issues in sectorial and provincial strategic plans is found in the education, health, agriculture and public works and housing sectors. In fact, the sectorial level is better positioned to guide and integrate gender issues since it is better located to identify gender inequalities at sector level and to design appropriate strategies. The PES also fails to present a systematic integration of gender issues, despite the PARPA's Strategic Indicators Matrix being integrated into the national and provincial PES framework. In fact, this planning instrument is essential for gender mainstreaming to be effective in planning and budgeting processes (see Ibraimo 2006). In fact, many of the shortcomings are recognised by the government and the donors (see PAP 2008).

Table 31. Matrix of strategic indicators of the PARPA II in the gender area

GLOBAL INDICATORS		
Objective	Indicator	
Reduce Poverty	Gender Development Index	
Improve the quality of public service provision		
INDICATORS PER PILLARS		
Pillar	Area	Indicator
Human Capital Development	Education	Net schooling rate for Primary School (1+2) - Girls
		EP2 conclusion rate - Girls
	Health	Coverage rate for institutional births
		% of Health Facilities (HF) located in district capitals, with waiting houses for expectant mothers
		No. of HF per 500 000 inhabitants that provide basic essential obstetric care
		% of pregnant women and children under 5 who have at least one mosquito net and insecticide in each district
		% of pregnant women who receive at least one dose of IPT (Intermittent Preventive Treatment) among antenatal consultation patients
		Percentage (and number) of HIV+ women who received complete prophylaxis treatment in the last 12 months to reduce the risk of mother-to-child transmission.
		Percentage (and number) of persons with advanced HIV infection who received combined ART (antiretroviral therapy) according to the national protocols (disaggregated per sex and per age groups) (0-14, 15-24 and 25 and over)
	Cross-cutting - Gender	Approval and implementation of the gender policy and its implementation strategy
		Gender integrated into the planning process (PES and BdPES)
	Cross-cutting HIV/AIDS	% of people aged 15 to 49 years who express attitudes of acceptance of people living with HIV/AIDS (disaggregated per sex)
		% of sexually active youth between 15 and 24 years of age who report having used condoms in the last sexual encounter with an irregular partner (disaggregated per sex)

3.5 Donor and Civil Society Interventions

Donor Interventions in Mozambique

Since the 1990s, many international donor agencies have been implementing programmes and projects integrating the issue of women as an important factor in the development process, within the perspective of Women in Development (WID). Towards the end of the 1990s the concept of 'gender' began to appear in speeches on development, and donors and international agencies began to include inequalities between men and women in a multisectorial approach. This is what is called the Gender and Development or GAD perspective. In following this up, gender focal points (GFP) began to appear in many multilateral and bilateral agencies as well as in international and national NGOs.

Currently, almost all bilateral and multilateral agencies have a Gender Focal Point, whose function is to ensure that the gender issue is integrated into all programmes and projects. However, Gender Focal Points are usually programme officers whose main responsibility is not gender, but rather to provide follow-up for other areas of responsibility. Currently, only the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in Mozambique has a full-time gender officer in place.

At the same time, while quite a few donor agencies have a general gender policy and strategy, only one agency (also in this case CIDA- Canada) has specific policies and strategies for Mozambique. As we will argue in the conclusion to this report, one of the main problems with the current donor-initiated gender policies and interventions is that they are not sufficiently adapted to the complex realities of gender inequality in Mozambique.

The donor that stands out for its work in the promotion of gender equality is, as already indicated, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). The agency has a global CIDA Gender Policy from headquarters in Ottawa, but also a specific 'Mozambique Program Gender Equality Strategy' (CIDA 2006). Moreover, CIDA has formulated a Framework for Assessing Gender Equality Results (CIDA 2005), which meets the need of assessing all CIDA's interventions for their gender sensitivity. CIDA is also an active participant in the Gender Coordination Group.

The Embassy of the Netherlands is another of the bilateral agencies we would like to rate favourably in the promotion and support of issues relating to gender equality. Despite this agency not having a specific gender strategy for Mozambique, it actively promotes gender issues in the ministries of health and education and supports, among other projects, the UNFPA programme 'Support to Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women'. The third agency we would like to highlight is the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). Their strategy for gender is based on direct support to the State Budget, but SIDA also supports joint programmes with multilateral agencies and a number of national and international NGOs (incl. Fórum Mulher). SIDA also has a special Socio-Economic advisor who has gender as an important part of her portfolio.

Norway is probably a more 'typical' donor with regard to gender issues. Norway has an Action Plan for Women's Rights and Gender Equality in Development Cooperation from headquarters (UD 2007), but as a 'cross-sector' issue it has little impact on the main sectors in which Norway is involved (i.e. energy, fisheries and health). However, Norway does have a few individual projects in the areas of Women and Democracy, Legal Rights, and Prevention of Violence and Sexual Abuse that are important, but largely detached from the larger and more coordinated initiatives, including those of the specialised agencies UNFPA and UNIFEM and the Gender Coordination Group (see below).

Among the multilateral agencies, some United Nations agencies such as UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNIFEM stand out for their effective contribution to the definition of gender responsive policies and programmes in the relevant state bodies. Among these organisations, UNIFEM has the clearest mandate. UNIFEM has been operating in Mozambique since the 1990s, through programmes to fight against domestic violence, HIV/AIDS and the feminisation of poverty, in addition to providing technical assistance to the government and to civil society organisations. The Gender Responsive

Budgeting (GRB) programme, which began in 1996, consists of support to the government and to CSOs in budgeting the gender responsive macro and sectorial plans (UNIFEM 2006).

In 1998, a joint initiative of the United Nations agencies and bilateral donors created the Donor Gender Group. The objective of this group was to create mechanisms for the coordination and exchange of information on the respective activities in the promotion of gender equality (Collier, 2006:16). Later on, the Donor Gender group was transformed into the current Gender Coordination Group (GCG), which in addition to multilateral and bilateral donors, includes members of civil society (such as Fórum Mulher which we have seen is an umbrella organisation for a large number of CSOs) as well as the government through the Ministry of Planning and Development and the Ministry of Women and Social Action (through the National Directorate for Women).²³

Recently, the Gender Coordination Group reviewed its Terms of Reference, with the objective of redefining its role. The new GCG intends to be something more than merely a space for the exchange of information, by placing more emphasis on the coordination and promotion of synergies in the gender field and in the support to the effective operation of the policies and programmes for gender equality (Collier 2006:16). According to the ToR, the GCG's goal is to 'contribute to a greater balance in gender relations in Mozambique through the integration of gender issues in all governance processes and levels'.

More specifically, the objectives of the GCG are to: (i) strengthen the coordination and ensure in-depth political dialogue between the Government and the other stakeholders regarding gender issues; (ii) support the effective operation and monitoring of policies aimed at promoting equity in the gender relations included in the PARPA and PGEI, including legal reform; (iii) contribute to the analysis and research of policy-related gender issues, focusing on the PARPA and PGEI; (iv) support coordination mechanisms targeting gender issues at provincial level; and (v) strengthen the capacity of its members and other stakeholders to analyse gender issues and advocacy strategies.

The perception among the majority of people interviewed for this study is that the *de facto* leadership within the GCG has thus far been held by donors and civil society organisations, with the government having played a much more passive role. At the same time, the interviewees (including those in government) also highlight the importance of donors within the GCG in building up the technical capacity of the different public institutions. To this end, the GCG has an important role to play in promoting political dialogue between the Government and the other stakeholders on gender issues.

Despite the relevance of the group in placing gender issues on the political agenda, one of its weaknesses is the lack of a clear definition of the priorities and the most relevant areas of intervention for promoting gender equality in Mozambique. The GCG has focused mainly on gender responsive monitoring of the sectorial policies and programmes, but has not contributed to the definition of which strategies are needed to put an end to gender inequality in Mozambique.

In fact, most of the donor interventions in the area of gender equality and the empowerment of women have until now aimed at capacity building of government and civil society institutions in Mozambique. Most of them support the government in its efforts to integrate gender equality in sectorial and other plans, in line with the idea of 'mainstreaming'. As we have seen, the concrete outcome of this has been very limited. There are some agencies that implement specific programmes and projects with the objective of promoting gender equality. They either make funds available to relevant NGOs such as MULEIDE, WLSA and Fórum Mulher, or initiate small projects that tend to be rather isolated from larger concerted efforts.

²³ The current members of the GCG are: UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA, Fórum Mulher, MISAU, MEC, FAO, USAID, DFA Ireland, CIDA, SIDA, World Bank, UE, MPD, UNDP, DFID, OXFAM UK, Handicap International Mozambique, Cooperazione Italiana, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, Icelandic International Development Agency (ICEIDA), DANIDA, FDC and MFA.

Box 3. Best Practice: 'Support to Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women'

In 2002, UNFPA and UNIFEM launched the 4-year programme 'Support to Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women at Central Level and in Selected Provinces'. This programme is being executed in partnership with the Government, through the MMAS – National Directorate for Women, Provincial Directorate for Women and Social Action of Zambézia, and Civil Society, represented by Fórum Mulher and by the Nucleus of Women's Associations of Zambézia, NAFEZA. The project was developed with the technical and financial support of UNFPA and UNIFEM, and was co-financed by bilateral donors such as Sweden, Netherlands, Ireland and Canada. The core objective of the project was to support the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and, in particular, their active participation in the development process. In order to achieve this objective, most of the emphasis of the partners' institutional capacity was placed on the government and on civil society.

Civil Society Interventions

Women's social movement in Mozambique was, for a long time, linked to the Mozambican Women's Organisation (OMM). As previously mentioned, the OMM was created by the Frelimo government at the time of independence with the objective of popularising Frelimo's policies and promoting women's emancipation. Despite the good work carried out by OMM, and the genuine efforts to represent all women at national level, little was done to challenge the structures of patriarchal power.

At the beginning of the 1990s, with the transition to political pluralism and the approval of the Law of Associations, Mozambican civil society grew considerably (FDC 2007). In this new context, Frelimo's support to social organisations ended and the OMM lost much of its status and position within the state and party structures. OMM established itself as an autonomous organisation in 1992, but in the words of Edda Collier, 'historically, OMM's approach has been to give priority to the practical gender needs of women, to the detriment of strategic gender needs. Today, the OMM's approach continues to be characterised by issues of 'well-being' for women like mothers and wives, and not as agents for change in society' (Collier 2006:17).

Currently, the best known organisation working for the benefit of women's well-being and gender equality is Fórum Mulher (www.forumulher.org.mz). Fórum Mulher is a network of various organisations, including NGOs, unions, women's leagues of political parties, donor agencies and other entities. One of its objectives is to influence the government and society to adopt policy measures for the advancement of women, and another is to provide services for its members through technical assistance in the analysis of gender, mainstreaming and advocacy. In fact, many organisations working for the benefit of the development of women gained significant force after the Peking Conference. These are listed in Box 4 below.

Box 4. CSOs Working in the Gender Field

WLSA (Women and Law in Southern Africa Research and Education Trust), Muleide, FDC (Foundation for the Development of the Community), AMODEFA (Mozambican Association for the Defence of the Family), Mozambican Human Rights League, AMCS (Association of Women in the Media), AMMCJ (Mozambican Association of Women in Legal Careers), AMRU (Association of Rural Women), ANSA (Association for Food Security and Nutrition), COMUTRA (Working Women's Committee of the Mozambican Workers' Organisation – Trade Union Federation (OTM-CS)), and the CAME Network (Network for the Defence of Children's Rights).

WLSA and MULEIDE stand out as the most specialised organisations. WLSA (www.wlsa.org.mz) is a regional non-governmental organisation that carries out research on the situation of women's rights, and has had a very strong role in the formulation of draft laws, as in the case of the law on domestic

violence. While many organisations work primarily in protecting social and economic rights, MULEIDE's mission is to provide legal support to women in cases of divorce, separation and domestic violence, as well as to conduct educational campaigns within the communities.

Most women's organisations are based in Maputo and to a lesser extent in other cities, despite their proclaimed intention of representing all women. It is vital for organisations to reach all parts of the country, to be able to relate to all the different realities of Mozambican women. To this end, there have been some initiatives to establish provincial networks that group CSOs targeting gender issues (e.g. NAFEZA in Zambézia), but usually these operate in an informal manner, primarily because they do not have sufficient organisational capacity and funds.

Civil society has a very important role to play for gender equality and the empowerment of women, but three critical issues seem to warrant more attention. One is a clear and coherent vision of women's place in society based on Mozambican realities, and an outline of strategies on how to transform society and achieve gender equality. A second is based on the assumption that gender inequality is not primarily a question of the capacity of women to transform their lives but of their unequal relationships with men, which necessitates a stronger focus on the male side of the gender equation. And the third is the need to relate more actively and directly to the lives of the majority of women, who are poor and uneducated and for whom the very idea of gender equality is still difficult to comprehend and relate to.

3.6 Summing up

Despite the relatively strong representation of women in politics in Mozambique, the analysis above suggests that there are significant weaknesses in the integration of gender issues in development policies and programmes in the country. A global integration of gender issues does not exist, and existing gender analyses that identify the inequalities between men and women are inadequate. In addition to the limited political will to deal seriously with the issue, there is limited access to data disaggregated by sex, which is necessary for an effective gender focus in the planning, budgeting and monitoring processes.

The PARPA is the central political framework for the integration of gender issues into the GoM's policies and programmes, by being the document which guides and harmonises all short- and medium-term planning and budgeting instruments. However, the model used does not provide sufficient information on gender to ensure that a gender-perspective on poverty reduction in Mozambique can be followed up. Data disaggregated by sex would help to detect the more relevant development needs and to achieve sustainable and equitable development between men and women.

With regard to gender as a cross-cutting issue, the objective of the PARPA is to 'promote gender equality and strengthen women's power'. For this objective, the main indicator is the integration of gender in the public policy planning processes, such as the PES and the BdPES. In addition to the indicator being vague and ambiguous, the PARPA does not adequately define what 'integration' really means and how it is to be achieved. In fact, the PARPA seems to assume that once gender has been integrated into the instruments of policy, gender equality will be automatically achieved. This effectively makes 'mainstreaming' an objective in itself, rather than a mechanism to achieve gender equality.

In terms of the integration of gender issues in government institutions, the Ministry of Women and Social Action is charged with leading the coordination and execution of policies to ensure that the needs and interests of women are taken into consideration. However, over the last years MMAS has demonstrated inadequate capacity to lead and monitor the government's policy in this area. One important reason for this is the lack of political will and commitment by the Government to gender

issues, which is demonstrated by the limited budget to the Ministry and its concomitant dependence on external aid.²⁴

At the sector level, the Gender Units face several constraints in the execution of their tasks. The main constraint is the lack of institutionalisation, with GUs still found in only some ministries and often with vague status and role. This means that the strength and impact of the GUs is very much dependent on the commitment by the management and the competence and capacity of the gender focal points, usually young women working on a part-time basis. Moreover, the GUs mainly limit their work to awareness building on the importance of gender among staff, and place considerably less emphasis on the concrete planning and budgeting processes, which, in the final instance, are most important if concrete action is to be taken. Within the scope of decentralisation, gender mainstreaming is even more limited.

National NGOs and NGO-networks such as Fórum Mulher seem to have a particularly important role in the work for the empowerment of women, by having the potential to involve a large number of different actors in civil society, who are in direct contact with women on the ground, both in rural and urban areas. To reach this goal, they will need further political as well as financial support. Except for a few multi- and bilateral donors who have gender equality high on their list of priorities (CIDA, the Netherlands and SIDA) or as the main rationale for their work (UNIFEM and UNFPA), most donors currently emphasise gender equality as a cross-cutting issue but do not follow up in terms of concrete intervention and economic allocations.

Overall, the most important weakness in the gender mainstreaming approach in Mozambique is that it is primarily a political process based on policy statements and bureaucratic intervention. As a result, while gender mainstreaming shows some improvements in political and technical terms, it is not being accompanied by concrete action in terms of the structural changes and awareness-building necessary for the transformation of gender relations. A more constructive approach, as we see it, would be to give more priority to specific gender programmes and interventions, which over time would lead to a broader acceptance of the importance of gender 'mainstreaming' in the efforts to reduce poverty and inequality in Mozambique. In this work, we believe that the Gender Coordination Group, headed by Government and involving civil society and donors, should play an important role.

²⁴ The MMAS's budget represented a mere 0.7% of the State General Budget in 2007, of which only a part was destined to the promotion of gender equality (PAP 2008).

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

Mozambique has a long political tradition for emphasising gender equality and the empowerment of women, dating back to the post-independence Frelimo policies and extensive contact with Western feminists. However, the impact of these policies has suffered from deep-rooted male socio-cultural configurations, and limited concrete action and intervention beyond policy and legal frameworks. More recently, change towards gender equality has suffered as a result of a weak Ministry for Women and Social Affairs, and the dominant policy of ‘gender mainstreaming’, which has effectively pulverised responsibility and made gender issues into a non-committal, ‘cross-cutting’ issue for government and donors alike.

Main exceptions to this picture are a strong civil society lobby represented by Fórum Mulher and WLSA, the specialised UN agencies UNFPA and UNIFEM, and Canada, the Netherlands and Sweden as particularly committed bilateral donors. These institutions have pushed important concrete gender-related issues such as the Family Law and the (still pending) Law on Domestic Violence, and implemented important gender programmes such as ‘Support to Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women at Central Level and in Selected Provinces’. Having said this, issues of gender equality and the empowerment of women continue to be a ‘Maputo-phenomena’: There are few repercussions at the provincial and district levels where the Ministry for Women and Social Affairs, the Gender Units in line ministries and most donors have very few concrete initiatives in the area of gender equality.

Despite advances in the reduction of poverty and increase in levels of education in Mozambique over the past few years, the country remains the poorest and least developed in the Southern African region both in human and gender development terms. Indicators on income, education and longevity are all exceptionally low, and the poverty headcount among female-headed households is considerably higher than that of male-headed households. However, while there is a basis for concluding that poverty in Mozambique is feminised, the picture is complex – with significant differences in gender equality and the empowerment of women between different parts of the country, urban and rural areas, social classes and ethno-linguistic groups.

Overall progress in poverty reduction and enhanced education have so far not translated into gender equality and the empowerment of women in a highly patriarchal socio-cultural setting like Mozambique. Existing data show continued skewed power relations in terms of decision-making and resource-allocation within male-headed households – and domestic violence remains a serious problem. At the same time, conjugal relations are considered pivotal for women’s social security. There are few signs of developments in other countries in the region of women deliberately opting for living alone because they consider this to be a better option than living with a man who may be unemployed, poor and violent – despite the fact that female heads of household are in a position to allocate a larger proportion of their resources to food, education, health and other sources of well-being for themselves and their children.

Looking finally at the compatibility between existing gender policies and legal instruments on the one hand, and gender realities on the other, the overall political and legal framework formally relates to key issues of gender-inequality – with the still pending formalisation of the law on domestic violence being the most serious exception. Having said this, there are also examples of tensions between applied universal principles of gender equality and socio-cultural configurations in Mozambique – as exemplified by the illegalisation of polygamy in the new Family Law. And improvements are necessary in the area of sex disaggregated data, since these are still inadequate and do not capture the

relations between men and women in different socio-cultural contexts. In sum, the key challenge is how to convert the political and legal framework into real progress for women through concrete intervention by the government, civil society and donors.

4.2 Recommendations

Our recommendations are based on the premise that a stronger emphasis on gender equality and the empowerment of women is necessary, not only to fulfil commitments made by the Mozambican government for gender equality *per se*, but also to be able to fulfil the goal of poverty reduction. The recommendations focus on i) the need for strengthening key institutions for gender equality; ii) the need for moving from general policy and regulation to targeted intervention that takes the variation in gender relations into consideration; and iii) the importance of selecting a limited number of areas/interventions of high priority with emphasis on the importance of strengthening the economic position of women. More specifically, our recommendations are as follows:

- Push for the final approval in Parliament of the Law on Domestic Violence, which will have strong practical as well as symbolic connotations;
- Enhance the status and role of the joint government, civil society and donor Gender Coordination Group (GCG) – as a vehicle for coordinating gender interventions in a transitional period to get the issue out of the current deadlock;
- Change the focus on gender in government from ineffective and powerless Gender Units and Gender Focal Points to specific programmes and projects for gender equality and the empowerment of women in key ministries;
- Decentralise the endeavours for gender equality by actively funding and using civil society institutions and networks working directly with local populations (including labour unions, churches, rural and urban associations, local media and NGOs);
- Give the specialised and committed UN-agencies UNFPA and UNIFEM a more central role among donors by increasing funding and human resources and redirecting small and scattered bilateral gender projects for them to coordinate in cooperation with the Government/GCG;
- Target interventions to raise women's control of land, productivity and access to markets in agriculture, on which the large majority of women in Mozambique depend;
- Target interventions to facilitate and legalise women's participation in the urban informal economy, with support to the development of relevant credit systems as an initial concrete area of priority;
- Support women's associations in rural and urban areas, in production as well as in the social and private spheres, on the assumption that women are stronger in groups than as individuals in their relations with men;
- Improve and sharpen analytical tools for the monitoring and evaluation of gender policies and interventions, by selecting a set of key indicators, develop means of assessing intra-household relations and resource allocations; and establish a clear and unambiguous definition of female household headship.

Appendix 1. Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

Mozambique is one of the poorest countries in the world, with a human development position measuring income, longevity and educational attainment of 168 out of a total of 177 countries (UNDP 2006) and a per capita income of USD 240 (World Bank 2005a). At the same time, Mozambique has seen positive trends in poverty reduction over the past few years, reducing the poverty head count from 69 per cent in 1996/97 to 54 per cent in 2002/03 (INE 2004a; DNPO 2004; Chiconela 2004). Nevertheless, living conditions for too many Mozambicans remain very difficult.

The Government's second Poverty Reduction Strategy 2006-2009 (PARPA II) defines poverty as the 'impossibility due to incapacity or lack of opportunity of individuals, households and communities to have access to minimal conditions according to the norms of society' (GoM 2006). In line with this, poverty involves lack of income and assets to attain basic necessities; a sense of voicelessness and powerlessness in relation to the institutions of society and the state; and vulnerability to adverse shocks, linked with the ability to cope with them through social relationships and legal institutions.

Poverty research, monitoring and evaluation are given considerable emphasis in the country's endeavours to further reduce absolute poverty, as these are expressed in the Government's Five Year Development Plan (GOM 2005); its Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (GoM 2006) and its annual Economic and Social Plan (PES) (GoM 2005). It is generally acknowledged that available quantitative data yield valuable information about the mapping, profile and determinants of poverty (Broeck 2005; Isaksen et al. 2005). But it is also acknowledged that more research is needed to better understand the dynamics of poverty and the coping strategies of the poor. We argue that this is best done through a combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses, with a focus on how these approaches can be integrated into what is often called 'methodological pluralism' (Kanbur 2001; Mikkelsen 2005).

Several attempts have been made to define the most pressing research needs in Mozambique. These include the need for a stronger focus on cross-cutting issues of the environment, gender and HIV/AIDS (DNPO 2005), as well as a focus on the effect of decentralisation and public action on poverty (World Bank 2005b). Broeck et al. (2005) and Isaksen et al. (2005) offer more comprehensive lists of research priorities.

The following is an outline of a research programme addressing gender and poverty. Its objectives are i) to support the Mozambican government in its endeavours to reduce poverty in the country; ii) to keep informed other stakeholders in the fight for reduction of poverty, such as civil society and international donors; and iii) to enhance the competence and capacity for applied poverty research and monitoring in the involved institutions.

2. Institutional Framework

The programme will be built around institutional collaboration between *Austral Consultoria e Projectos* and *Cruzeiro do Sul* from Mozambique, and the *Chr. Michelsen Institute* in Norway.

Cruzeiro do Sul is a Mozambican research institution with close links to civil society, originally established in 1998 by researchers including the late José Negrão. It currently has three permanent staff and twelve associate members from various academic disciplines. Its objectives are to produce

independent theoretical reflection on development issues; to promote synergies between research and action in concrete situations; and to conceive analytical working tools of use to public entities, private enterprises and civil society organisations. Its main areas of interest are land, development, poverty reduction, and governance. For more information, see www.iid.org.mz.

Austral Consultoria e Projectos is a private Mozambican consulting company established in 1991. Areas of work include economic and financial analyses, market research, environmental studies and socio-economic analysis. The project will involve the Department of Social Research, Environment and HIV/AIDS (PSAH), which has a permanent staff of 10 social scientists and a large research network. Main areas of work have recently been rural development, gender, health and HIV/AIDS. The department wishes to strengthen its research capacity and be involved in a greater number of research-based projects. For more information, see www.austral.co.mz.

On the Norwegian side, the collaborating institution will be *Chr. Michelsen Institute* (CMI). CMI has considerable experience in institutional research cooperation with countries in Southern Africa; a number of researchers (political scientists, economists and anthropologists) working on poverty issues; and staff with research experience from Mozambique and the necessary language skills. CMI has also recently headed a study on poverty research in Norwegian development aid (Jerve et al. 2003), and on the status of poverty research in Mozambique (Isaksen et al. 2005). For further information, see www.cmi.no.

3. The Research Programme

The programme will have two components. The core component will be three interlinked research projects related to gender policies and feminisation of poverty in Mozambique. The second will be capacity development, mainly through the research projects.

Research

There is a wide-spread perception in Mozambique, supported by socio-economic data, that women represent a disproportionately large part of the poorest sections of the population. The so-called 'feminisation of poverty' has been linked with gender disparities in rights and entitlements, impacts of neo-liberal restructuring, the informalisation and feminisation of labour, and erosion of kin-based support networks through migration and urbanisation. Moreover, the proportion of female-headed households, which in the literature is seen as a central indicator of a link between women and poverty, currently stands at 20 per cent and is on the rise. On the basis of a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, the project will assess the thesis of an ongoing feminisation of poverty in Mozambique as well as the relevance of current government and donor policies for poverty reduction through gender equality. Researchers: Georgina Montserrat (Austral); Margarida Paulo (Cruzeiro); Inge Tvedten (CMI)

Capacity Development

Capacity development will primarily take place through planning, implementation and writing within the framework of each individual project. In addition, the Mozambican researchers will both stay at CMI for a period of 2 weeks during the programme period.

4. Programme Output

The programme is an applied research programme, with a central objective of feeding into planning, implementation and monitoring processes for poverty alleviation in Mozambique (see PARPA II, Chapter X). The nature and timing of outputs will therefore relate to central milestones in the planning and implementation cycle, such as the Government's annual Economic and Social Plan (PES); the upcoming National Population Census (2007/8) and the National Household Survey (2008/9). Planned programme outputs for the period 2007-2009 are:

a) One applied research report per year. The initial report will build on literature studies and existing Mozambican and regional data and outline broad trends and main issues involved. The two subsequent reports will be based on original research and focus on one key theme each (see the project outline). An English version of the reports will be published in the CMI Report Series, and a Portuguese version by the two Mozambican institutions and/or on the MPD/DNEAP web-page.

b) Seminar presentations and production of project briefs. For each sub-project, a seminar presentation will take place in the Ministry of Planning and Development (MPD). If deemed relevant, separate presentations will be done in the Ministry for Women and Social Action or gender-based NGOs, as well as in donor-forums such as the Poverty Assessment and Monitoring Group (PAMS) or at the Norwegian Embassy. The results from each study will be highlighted in the form of a four-page Project Brief to be published by CMI.

c) One article in an international journal per programme period. The article shall be published in a refereed journal of high quality. The purpose is partly wider dissemination of information about gender and poverty in Mozambique, but the writing will also be an important tool for mutual capacity development.

d) One study-period at CMI (2 weeks) for each Mozambican researcher per programme period. During the study-visit to CMI, the researchers will be exposed to a large applied research institution and have access to colleagues working on relevant topics. The researchers will give one seminar during the visit, open for all interested colleagues at CMI and other academic institutions in Bergen.

5. The Project

There is a wide-spread perception in Southern Africa, supported by gendered socio-economic data, that women and female-headed households are among the poorest parts of the population (UNDP 2005; World Bank 2006a). Its expressions are related to income- and consumption-based poverty indicators, as well as non-consumption indicators such as health and literacy. The so-called 'feminisation of poverty' thesis has been linked with gender disparities in rights and entitlements; impacts of neo-liberal restructuring; the informalisation and feminisation of labour; and erosion of kin-based support networks through migration and urbanisation (Chant 2003: 1).

Also in Mozambique, existing quantitative data seem to support this thesis. The United Nation's Gender Inequality Index (i.e. HDI adjusted for gender inequality) ranks Mozambique as 133 of 140 countries in the world. And the National Household Survey 2002/03 (INE 2004) shows that the poverty incidence is higher (62.5 per cent) among female-headed households than among male-headed households (51.9 per cent). Also, other studies draw the same general conclusion about links between woman and poverty historically (Baden 1997; Sheldon 2002) and in Mozambique's contemporary political economy (UNDP 2001; ADB 2004; MISAU 2005).

The proportion of female-headed households in a society is generally seen as a central indicator of a feminisation of poverty (BRIDGE 2001). In Mozambique, this is increasing and currently standing at around 20 per cent.²⁵ Further indicating such a trend is the fact that between 1996/97 and 2002/03, the bottom quintile in Mozambique saw the highest increase in female-headedness with a present figure of 27 per cent (Fox et al. 2005). With reference to the considerably higher incidence of female-headed households elsewhere in Southern Africa (World Bank 2006), and the current

²⁵ The proportion of female-headed households in Mozambique is variably presented as 25 per cent (Fox et al.), 20 per cent (Chiconela 2004) and 16 per cent (INE 2005) – all using the National Household Survey 2002/03 as their source.

socio-economic and cultural changes and observed trends in Mozambique the past decade, the proportion of female-headed households in the country is likely to increase in the years to come.

The Project

The Government of Mozambique has made achievement of gender equality a major objective in its Poverty Reduction Strategy (PARPPA II), and specifically recognises that the empowerment of women is a decisive factor in the eradication of poverty (GOM 2005:58). It also recognises that there are gaps in the gathering and analysis of data that is disaggregated by sex, and that those gaps must be filled (GOM 2005; see also Ibraima 2006). At the same time, both in government and among donors there is general agreement that policies for gender equality and the empowerment of women have thus far not been very successful in reaching their targets (see e.g. GOM 2005; Aasen et al. 2005; Jensen et al. 2006; World Bank 2006b).

On the basis of a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods, the project will i) assess the thesis of an ongoing feminisation of poverty in Mozambique and ii) discuss the implications of the economic and socio-cultural position of female-headed households for gender equality and poverty reduction policies in the country. We will first outline current policies and interventions for the empowerment of women and gender equality by the Mozambican government and some of the main donors in the country (including the World Bank, DfID, SIDA and MFA/NORAD), and consult existing gender-disaggregated quantitative data to test the viability of the thesis of an ongoing feminisation of poverty on a national level with reference to data on income, consumption, education, health and other accessible indicators (Report 1).

Following the overall assessment of current gender policies and the feminisation of poverty thesis, two localised studies based on participatory and qualitative methodologies will contextualise and assess the thesis and its causal assumptions, with particular reference to women's role in the informal economy (Report 2) and the coping strategies of poor female-headed households (Report 3). In the international literature on gender and development the invisibility of women's income and consumption is related to their role in the informal economy, which tends to be under-represented, and to a focus on households as a unit of analysis which tends to conceal intra-household inequalities (Cornwall et al. 2007; see also Pontara 2001). Qualitative studies also reveal the importance of not only measuring the resources that flow into male and female-headed households, but also assessing possible gender disparities in the use and allocation of resources (O'Laughlin 2007; see also Horne et al. 2000).

While women's participation in the formal labour market in Mozambique is still low (INE 2004), the informal economy in rural as well as urban areas is widely seen to be increasingly dominated by women (de Vletter 1996; Francisco and Paulo 2006). However, little is known about whether female labour force participation leads to women's increased vulnerability or whether it improves their situation. Report 2 will focus on the socio-cultural basis for what seems to be the exclusion of women from the most lucrative income-generating activities in the informal sector; their strategies for maximising economic returns; and the nature of socio-economic relationships that form part of their economic strategies.

Report 3 will focus on the social organisation of female-headed households, and their social relationships. While data show that they are poorer than male-headed households in income and consumption terms, little is known about poor female-headed households' coping strategies in the form of intra-household resource allocations and extra-household social relationships. On the one hand, qualitative research indicates that female heads of household allocate more resources to health, education and other social investments than male-headed households, as a long-term strategy for poverty alleviation. But on the other hand, the extra-household social relationships of female-

headed households seem to be focused on the immediate extended family rather than on relations with public institutions and civil society, which will increase their vulnerability.

In sum, the main research questions to be addressed are:

- What are the current Government and donor policies for the empowerment of women and gender equality in Mozambique, and to what extent do they relate to the thesis of an ongoing process of feminisation of poverty in the country?
- What is the extent and nature of women's participation in the informal economy, and what are the implications of such economic activities for women's poverty and well-being?
- What characterises the coping strategies of female-headed households, and to what extent do they differ from those of male-headed households in terms of intra- and extra-household relationships and the allocation of resources?

Methodologies

The first part of the project will be based on a combination of existing quantitative and qualitative data at the national and provincial levels. Data from the National Household Survey (INE 1998, 2004) and other relevant data-sets (INE 1999; MISAU 2005) will be used, and where pertinent further disaggregated along gender lines in cooperation with INE. In addition to the relatively limited number of publicly available qualitative studies, particular efforts will be made to consult non-published student essays and theses on gender and poverty at the University of Eduardo Mondlane. In connection with this, the team will organise a workshop for students at the Department of Anthropology.

With existing quantitative data on poverty and gender as point of reference, the team will seek to examine the feminisation of poverty thesis through two qualitative studies. Qualitative studies can contextualise and inform the quantitative data and correlations by testing causal hypotheses on the ground; they can be used to discover processes and interdependencies related to non-tangible dimensions of gender and poverty such as vulnerability and powerlessness; and they make it possible to involve the poor themselves in analyses of their own situation in ways that are difficult with formal questionnaire surveys (Mikkelsen 2005).

The qualitative studies will be carried out through a combination of semi-structured interviews with key institutions (including Local Government) and informants, and focussed surveys and qualitative research methods including histograms, venn-diagrams, wealth-ranking and force-field analysis (Mikkelsen 2005). In order to add to the existing quantitative and qualitative data on poverty and gender that focus on Maputo and the South, the studies will take place in the northern province of Nampula. For comparative purposes, one of the participatory studies will be carried out in one or two *bairros* (*neighbourhoods*) in the city of Nampula, and one in a rural district along the coast. In addition to the important urban/rural and matrilineal/patrilineal dichotomies, the informal economies in the two areas seem to have important dissimilarities in terms of the economic position and role of women.

Personnel

Georgina Montserrat (Austral); Margarida Paulo (Cruzeiro do Sul); Inge Tvedten (CMI)

Timing

October 2008 – December 2010

Appendix 2. People Interviewed

TYPE OF INSTITUTION	NAME	INSTITUTION	POSITION
CIVIL SOCIETY	Isabel Casimiro	Fórum Mulher	President
	Graça Samo	Fórum Mulher	Executive Secretary
	Terezinha da Silva	WLSA	President
GOVERNMENT	Ana Loforte	National Directorate for Women (MMAS)	UNFPA Advisor
	Maimuna Obraimo	Ministry of Planning and Development	Head of gender issues
	Agueda Nhamumbo	Ministry for Women and Social Action	CANAM's Executive Secretary
	Francelina Romão	Ministry of Health	Gender Focal Point
	Ernesto Chamo	Department of Gender and Development (MMAS)	Head of Department
	Albachir Macachar	Ministry of Justice-Department for the Promotion of Human Rights	Gender Focal Point
	Esmeralda Mutemba	Ministry of Education and Culture	Gender Focal Point
DONORS	Eulália Mbeve	Ministry of Health	Gender Focal Point. National Directorate of Medical Assistance
	Paulino Duamba	DANIDA	Head of gender and agriculture issues
	Ondina Vieira	UNIFEM	
	Ventura Mufume	UNDP	Head of gender issues
	Flor Bela	UNFPA	Head of gender issues
	Ida Thygregod	Gender Coordination Group	Executive Secretary
	Lidia Meque	Embassy of Ireland	Head of education and gender issues
	Leontina das Muchangas	CIDA	Head of gender issues
Ana Monge	European Commission	Head of gender issues	

	Paulo Berglof	SIDA	Head of gender issues
	Claudia Fumo	DfID	Head of gender issues
	Clarisse Barbosa * Ingjerd Haugen	Embassy of Norway	* Head of gender issues
	Karen Derooj	Embassy of the Netherlands	Head of gender issues
RESEARCH	Edda Collier	Independent consultant	Expert in gender issues

Appendix 3. Questionnaire

Gender Policies and Feminisation of Poverty in Mozambique

Name of institution _____

Name of respondent _____

Position of respondent _____

Does the institution have a person responsible for gender issues Yes____ No_____

If yes, is that person working on gender issues a) Full time ____ b) Part time_____

Does the institution have a department/unit responsible for gender issues Yes __No __

1) What in your opinion is the most important sector/area to focus on for gender equality in Mozambique? (Please tick only one)

- Women’s political participation
- Women’s economic participation
- Women’s reproductive health
- Women’s education
- Domestic violence
- Other (please specify) _____

2) In what area do you think there has been most progress for women in Mozambique in the past 10 years? (Please tick only one)

- Women’s political participation
- Women’s economic participation
- Women’s reproductive health
- Women’s education
- Domestic violence
- Other (please specify) _____

3) In what areas do you think there has been least progress for women in Mozambique in the past 10 years? (Please tick only one)

- Women’s political participation
- Women’s economic participation
- Women’s reproductive health
- Women’s education
- Domestic violence
- Other (please specify) _____

4) What areas do you think should be given most priority in Mozambique’s future work

(i.e. the coming 10 years) on gender equality (Please tick only one):

- Women's political participation
 Women's economic participation
 Women's reproductive health
 Women's education
 Domestic violence
 Other (please specify) _____

5) What do you think is the greatest obstacle to further gender equality in Mozambique (Please tick only one):

- Political will
 Capacity to implement policies
 Socio-cultural issues
 Other (please specify) _____

6) What do you think is the greatest obstacle for taking the step from gender policies to concrete gender action in Mozambique? (Please tick only one)

- Lack of priority
 Lack of funding
 Lack of ideas about how to do it
 Lack of implementing capacity

7) What do you think should be the most important indicator of improved gender equality in Mozambique? (Please tick only one)

- Ratio of boys to girls in primary, secondary and tertiary education (MDG)
 Share of women in wage-employment in the non-agricultural sector (MDG)
 Ratio of literate women to men in the age-group 15-24 years of age (MDG)
 Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament (MDG)
 Approval and initial implementation of the 'Gender Policy and Implementation Strategy' by the Council of Ministers and the Parliament (PARPA)

Other alternative (please specify) _____

8) Do you agree or disagree with the following statements (please tick):

'Gender equality' is a Western invention that does not relate to Mozambican realities

Agree ____ Disagree ____

Mozambique will not get out of poverty without gender equality

Agree ____ Disagree ____

'Gender' concerns issues that are related to women

Agree ____ Disagree ____

There is no cultural basis for gender equality in Mozambique

Agree ____ Disagree ____

Development towards gender equality in Mozambique is going in the right direction

Agree ____ Disagree ____

Gender policy and intervention in Mozambique do not have much impact on the attitudes and relations between men and women in the country

Agree _____ Disagree _____

9) Any comment regarding the questionnaire/topic of research?

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

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SUMMARY

This study is the first in a series of three on gender policies and feminisation of poverty in Mozambique, to be carried out in the period 2008-2010. The studies combine a critical assessment of current government and donor policies, with an assessment of the thesis of a feminisation of poverty in the country. Our main argument in this report is that the recent 'streamlining' or 'essentialisation' of gender policies, largely pushed by international agendas, implies the risk of designing policies that do not relate to national economic and socio-cultural realities. Gender relations are essentially socially constituted, and will be perceived differently and have different expressions in different socio-cultural settings. Moreover, while differences in material conditions of income and assets between men and women is an important part of the ongoing feminisation of poverty in Mozambique, it also involves questions around voicelessness and powerlessness in relation to institutions of society and the state, vulnerability to adverse shocks, and the ability to cope with these through social relationships and legal institutions.

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