

Assessing the Implications of PARPA II in Maputo 2007-2010



Improvements having taken place in Maputo between 2007-2010 in the areas of poverty reduction, education, health, water, electricity, sanitation etc. seem – ironically – to have brought further challenges to central and municipal government in the form of increasing demands for employment, income, social security and political accountability.

This brief presents the main conclusions from the fifth in a series of six studies monitoring and evaluating Mozambique's poverty reduction strategy PARPA II, using a combination of quantitative and qualitative data. It analyses the constitution and dynamics of poverty and well-being in four bairros in the capital city Maputo, by revisiting the same communities and households three years after a first baseline-study conducted in 2007.

Contradictory Developments

Our studies from Maputo and the four bairros Mafalala, Laulane, Inhagoia and Khongolote in 2007 and 2010 reveal clear signs of reduced consumption-based poverty as well as improvements in physical infrastructure, education and health – even though they also disclose unequal developments between different bairros and a group of 'ultra-poor' who seem detached from these developments altogether. At the same time, the same period has seen unprecedented social uprisings encompassing large parts of the urban population – in February 2008 and September 2010

respectively – with the latter involving widespread looting, a large number of injured and 13 deaths.

To explain these developments, we emphasise the special nature of urban poverty. 'Shocks' in the form of changes in employment status and expenditures on basic necessities make people feel vulnerable and powerless. This has been exacerbated in Maputo, where communication between the government and the citizens has been inadequate: The government does not seem to have been sufficiently 'tuned in' to sentiments on the ground, and citizens have few 'spokespersons' or other platforms for dialogue.

This way, the improvements that have taken place in the areas of consumption, education, health, water, electricity, sanitation etc. seem – ironically – to have brought further challenges to central and municipal government in the form of increasing demands for employment, income, social security and political accountability. Among our conclusions and recommendations are:

This brief presents conclusions from Paulo, Margarida, C. Rosário & I. Tvedten (2007) *'Xiculungo' Social Relations of Urban Poverty in Maputo, Mozambique*. CMI Report R 2007:13. Bergen: Chr. Michelsen Institute and Paulo, Margarida, C. Rosário & I. Tvedten (2011). *'Xiculungo' Revisited. Assessing the Implications of PARPA II in Maputo 2007-2010*. CMI Report R: 2011:1. Bergen: Chr. Michelsen Institute.

The project is funded by DfID.

Governance

There are challenges as regards the municipal system of governance, and the low voter turnout for municipal elections is a signal of limited confidence in the relevance of the municipal government in peoples' lives.

At the level of each bairro, the role of the Bairro Secretary is important. Nevertheless, their relations with the parallel Party secretary and Party cells remain unclear and represent a problem in terms of accountability.

There have been changes in the political structure below the Bairro Secretary, in that many of the older community leaders have been substituted with younger – often female – leaders. The 'rejuvenation' of leaders at this level should be seen as a wish by the population to have more dynamic representatives.

Currently, the limited number and weak position of community-based organisations restrict popular participation in urban development and represent lost opportunities as platforms for dialogue with the Municipal government.



Employment and Income

Employment remains the key determinant of household poverty and well-being. While there have been improvements in the employment situation for many households and their earnings have increased, a basic problem of security remains: Many men work as unskilled labourers in the construction sector in temporary positions, and women still predominantly depend on an informal sector where earnings are fluctuating and unpredictable.

The continued difficulties in transforming higher education into formal and well-paid employment remains a serious challenge, creating a large and increasingly frustrated generation of young people.

Their entrance into working life is inhibited both by limited access to employment per se, and by a system of recruitment largely built on contacts and bribes.

While women still meet severe restrictions on the formal labour market, they have increased their participation in the informal labour market which has led to improvements in the socio-economic position of female-headed households.

The planned introduction of the Local Investment Fund in Maputo has a potential for employment creation and for bridging the gap between informal and formal employment, but has to be carefully implemented in order to avoid the pitfalls the programme experiences in rural areas.

Social Organisation

In responding to the challenges of urban living, households engage in processes of informalisation by increasing the proportion of living-together relationships, and of fission and fusion by shedding or taking in new members.

There has been an increase in the proportion of female headed households, and an apparent improvement in the decision-making power of women living in male-headed households. These are new developments, that we attribute to more social space for women in urban contexts and better options for income and independence.

There are also ongoing processes of marginalisation of the very poorest men and women in a context where access to money is vital for survival. Young unemployed men without means do not have the 'urban basis' for patriarchy or male supremacy, and easily find themselves as destitute with limited social networks and in desperate situations.

For young women, the combination of unemployment and unmarried motherhood often leads to impoverishment and marginalisation – but women seem to be better able to establish social networks than men do by contributing to 'non-economic' relationships in the form of cleaning, child-care, home-based marketing-stalls etc.

With the dearth of urban associations, the most important community organisations in Maputo are churches or mosques. While playing an important role, the strengthening and establishment of associations should be encouraged in order to create platforms for political and socio-cultural communication.