



Universal Periodic Review

Mozambique Report

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Submission by:

Marist International Solidarity Foundation (FMSI)

Presentation of Marist International Solidarity Foundation

FMSI's approach to development is based on the promotion of Quality Education as an effective tool to protect child rights and empower children to become agents of social change.

Inspired by the charisma of St. Marcellin Champagnat and established by the Congregation of the Marist Brothers of the Schools in 2007, the Marist International Solidarity Foundation works in the world for the rights of children and adolescents through:

- Supporting projects, especially in the field of education: Child, youth and adult education and learning; Training school leaders, teachers/educators; Providing safe and equitable school environments and didactic material; Engaging families and communities; institutional building for strengthening local education systems.
- Advocacy and Lobbying: Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Children through the mechanisms of the United Nations; Skills training within the Marist Institute; building coalitions with other NGOs.

Mozambique has a very large child population, with 52% of the Mozambican population being children under 18 years of age (out of a population of 30,745,521 people) and 23 % of the overall population are adolescents (age 10-19). The average age throughout the population is 17.2 years, demonstrating that Mozambique has a considerable number of young population (Benque, 2020).

1. Right to Education

Article 88 of the Constitution of the Republic of Mozambique states clearly that education shall be a right and duty of all citizens and that State shall promote the extension of education to professional and on going vocational training, as well as equal access to the enjoyment of this right by all citizens (CONSTITUIÇÃO DA REPÚBLICA DE MOÇAMBIQUE, 2004).

Children out of school

In the Second Cycle of the UPR, Mozambique supported recommendations made by Pakistan, Indonesia, Bolivia, Holy See, Afghanistan, Luxembourg and Singapore on realizing the right to education by continuing to enhance access to education. Mozambique has seen an improvement on access to education. According to the Government statistics (2020), the Net Schooling Rate increased from 86.4% (2016) to 93.5% (2019). According to the statistic in 2019 the gross rate of admission was 173%, while practical experience suggests that there are children who never enrolled in schools (UNESCO, 2019) and about 1.2 million children are out of school (UNICEF, 2017; Benque, 2020), especially because there is not persistence to last grade of primary.

This scenario tends to continue perpetuating the illiteracy rate (59%) in rural area, a rate that is much higher than in urban setting (23%) (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2015; REPUBLICA DE MOÇAMBIQUE, 2016). Unfortunately, the incidence of poverty in rural area is 50% (Ministério de Economia e Finanças, 2016) and it is there that 68.58% of the total population of the county lives (INE, 2015; UNESCO, 2019). Yet, education contributes with 36% to poverty

reduction in the country (World Bank Group, 2018).

Student/teacher ratio and availability of school facilities

Studies indicate that the average annual growth of population in Mozambique is 2.7%. This implies that about half a million children with school age seek to enroll in grade 1. This growth exerts pressure on the insufficient educational infrastructures with a heightened student/teacher ratio and overcrowded classrooms causing difficulties in learning and school dropout.

Mozambique has been experiencing a positive development of the net schooling rate over the past years (CENTRO DE INTEGRIDADE PÚBLICA, 2020; REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE, 2020). However, this development has not been coupled with the construction of more classrooms to accommodate the learners. As CIP (2020) reports, from 2016 to 2019, on yearly basis, the government has been investing in construction of classrooms, but there was a deficit of 2.7969 (39,000 classrooms) measuring by the difference between the number of classrooms that have been built and that of destroyed ones. This deficit results in an increased student/teacher ratio. In 2019, the average student/teacher ratio in primary education was 65.1 against the targeted 62.7. According to CIP (2020), Nampula Province had a ratio of 75.7, Cabo Delgado 72.9, Zambézia 70.3 Niassa 68.2, Tete 64.0, Sofala 63.9 and Inhambane with the lowest 46.9 while the remaining provinces feature below the average ratio.

It is evident that Mozambique's economic poverty reflects in the education system, where inequalities persist based on geographical locations, gender, and poverty of the family of the child. In most rural schools and in some urban as well as suburban schools classes are taught under the trees with students sitting on the floor. A study by Accioly (2020) on "denying the right to education and violation of human rights in the development agenda, revealed that in Mozambique, 44% of families pointed to lack of school furniture and 29.4% complained of poor conditions of school facilities.

According to UNICEF budget brief on education of 2019, large differences per student funding persist across provinces. Noticeable differences in per student funding exist between some northern and southern provinces and least funded and most funded.

Recommendations:

1. The government should make an extra effort to continue increasing access to education, especially in rural areas.
2. The government needs to prioritize education in line with the SDG's. Although the Education Sector of Mozambique has met most of its targets and milestones for 2019, Mozambique still has a long way to satisfy its education-related 2020 objectives and achieve Goal 4 under the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
3. Given that majority (68.58%) of the country's population live in the rural area (INE, 2015; UNESCO, 2019), the government is encouraged to continue providing schools, teachers and other facilities to respond to high demand for access to education.
4. The government is encouraged to increase the number of Teacher Training Colleges to cater for the growing number of learners.
5. The government should also provide incentives in different forms to teachers working in rural areas so as to motivate teachers to remain in such environments, otherwise teacher retention would be a problem which disadvantages rural children.
6. In order to curb the problem of increasing student/teacher ratio, the government is urged to increase the allocation of funds for construction of educational infrastructures.

7. Aware that government alone may not adequately address the problem of lack of enough classrooms, government must make deliberate plan to network with all stakeholders that have an interest in education for greater collaboration and support.
8. There should be an equitable distribution of educational infrastructure which should be well furnished to ensure that all provinces, especially rural provinces, get government support

2. Child labour

The conditions mentioned above lead many children to leave school before completion. Leaving school can, and does, lead to work, which is not a suitable activity for children. Child Labour has greatly affected school attendance in Mozambique hence the legislation against hazardous child labour and the employment of children below the age of 15 is not effectively implemented (UNICEF, 2014).

Due to Covid-19 pandemic and consequent closure of schools, child labour in urban areas (cities) has grown to an alarming rate. More and more families, businessmen and owners of stores are using children as salesmen in the streets or market places. Children get in return an insignificant amount of money as their salary.

Children in Mozambique are involved in the worst forms of child labour, with forced domestic work, and dangerous tasks such as production of tobacco, agriculture, mining, pouching (**O País, 2020**). Inspectors do not receive sufficient training, and the government does not have the resources to strength the human resources to check children exploitation. As a result, 44% of children work in informal business, 18.5% are employed as domestic workers, 12.4% are shepherding, while 11.2% are involved in agricultural sector. More specifically, in Maputo City, 300.000 children aged 7-17 are engaged in informal business. Countrywide, Zambezia province recorded 98% of children involved in child labour second rate after Tete with 74% (O País, 2020).

Recommendations:

1. In line with this situation, the Mozambique Government must strength the national law framework against child labour.
2. Although the government has been striving to eradicate child labour, it is encouraged to continue making more efforts to provide adequate training to the inspectors and sufficient resources for the trained law enforcement officers and journalists in order to be able to conduct a wider and accurate inspection work.

3. Child marriage

Child marriage is an important issue in Mozambique, with 48 % children married before 18 years. Mozambique is one of 20 countries committing itself to ending child marriage by the end of 2020, an issue on which it has already established progress, with the passing of the Law 19/2019 of 22 October on Mitigation,

Recommendations:

The government is strongly and urgently urged to address the issue of child marriages. Although the Country's President has endorsed this law, the government of Mozambique is urged to implement it and promote wider awareness campaigns of the Law among people, with especial focus to those in rural areas.

4. Children and HIV

About 200 000 children in Mozambique are living with HIV. Mozambican teenagers lack of opportunities to know about HIV prevention methods, becoming victims of infections that could have been easily prevented. Only 38% of children under 15 living with HIV are receiving treatment. Although these conditions affect their living situations, teenagers are able to collectively find solutions and voice their concerns, through media programs, youth groups or community theater.

Recommendations:

- The Government should provide resources to develop prevention campaigns in schools and other key places where the young people are, facilitating the peer to peer initiatives
- The Government should provide more information and awareness on the benefits of early pediatric testing and treatment with positive messages that incorporate success stories, to reach more pregnant women and mother-child pairs postpartum
- The Government should work with the community leaders and support the uptake of services for HIV-exposed children and HIV affected children for essential care.
- The Government should support efforts being done on the ground by civic groups in addressing the issues of Children and HIV.
- The Government should introduce sex education in line with Mozambican context and cultural values.
- The Government should increase its efforts of fighting poverty as there is a great link between poverty, lack of awareness, exposure and HIV.
- The Government should promote sustainable programmes to encourage changes in sexual behaviour, affordable methods for preventing infection in high-risk populations and expanded treatments for preventing mother-to-child transmissions.

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