Democracy Assistance to Post-Conflict Mozambique:

Intentions and Outcomes

Working Paper 37

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Preface

In April 2002, the Conflict Research Unit (CRU) of the Netherlands Institute of International Relations (the 'Clingendael Institute') started a comparative research project, analysing the role and impact of international democracy assistance on post-conflict societies. This project, entitled 'Democratic Transition in Post-Conflict Societies. Building Local Institutions', is a collaborative research effort between participating research institutes in Central America, Africa and South Asia, and the Clingendael Institute. Unlike other studies, the analyses are conducted by local researchers and reflect their views on the influence that international assistance has had on the process of democratisation in their countries. The main question addressed is how international assistance can have a more sustainable and positive impact on the functioning of electoral, human rights and media organisations in post-conflict societies. In order to include a wide variety of experiences and different socio-political settings, case studies focus on Cambodia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Uganda, Mozambique and Sierra Leone.

Using a structured assessment methodology, each country report focuses on some of the key aspects that determine the democratic strength of local organisations: sustainability, autonomy/independence, accountability and influence. The primary aim of the reports is to assess which domestic organisations in the fields of elections, human rights and the media in the post-conflict countries have received international assistance. In addition, the analysis focuses on the types of activities funded and their long-term impact. Finally, the studies aim to provide lessons learnt and concrete recommendations to improve the effectiveness of international democracy assistance.

The following case study about Mozambique focuses on international support for elections, human rights and media development between 1994 and 2005. Drawing on an earlier unpublished paper by Carlos Serra, Teles Huo, Hélder Ossemane and João Carlos Colaço, in this study Marc de Tollenaere goes a step further and analyses the impact of international assistance on the continuing process of democratisation in Mozambique. After identifying the strengths and weaknesses of various areas of democracy assistance, each chapter provides a number of lessons learned as well as concrete recommendations for improving future international support for democratisation in Mozambique.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACIPOL	Mozambique Police Academy
ADG	Aid for Democracy Group
AEJ	Association of Media Houses
AIM	Mozambique News Agency
AWEPA	European Parliamentarians for Africa
CC	Constitutional Council
CFJJ	Legal and Judicial Training Centre
CNE	National Elections Commission
CSCS	Higher Council for Social Communication
CSMJ	Higher Council of Judicial Magistrates
CSO	civil society organisation
Danida	Danish International Development Agency
DFID	Department for International Development
EC	European Commission
EISA	Electoral Institute of Southern Africa
FORCOM	National Forum for Community Radios
FRELIMO	Mozambique Liberation Front
GPA	General Peace Agreement
HIVOS	Humanist Institute for Cooperation with Developing Countries
ICS	Institute for Social Communication
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPAJ	Institute for Juridical Support and Assistance
LDH	Human Rights League
MISA	Media Institute of Southern Africa
NGO	non-governmental organisation
Norad	Norwegian Agency for International Development
NOVIB	Netherlands Organization for International Development
ONUMOZ	United Nations Operation in Mozambique
OREC	Organisation for Conflict Resolution
PAF	Performance Assistance Framework
PIC	Criminal Investigation Police
RENAMO	National Resistance of Mozambique
RM	Radio Mozambique
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SARDC	Southern Africa Research and Documentation Centre
Sida	Swedish International Development Agency
STAE	Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration
UN	United Nations

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UTREL	Technical Unit for Legal Reform
UTRESP	Technical Unit for Public Sector Reform

Executive Summary

The paper presents an overview of three areas of democracy assistance in Mozambique between 1994 and 2005. Support to elections appears as the most prominent sector of democracy assistance in both financial and political terms. External actors have effectively influenced some technical areas and contributed to institutional development (the Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration [STAE] and some civil society organisations [CSOs]), but overall electoral support has not resulted in furthering the quality of democratic practice. Human rights assistance covers support to the justice sector, the police and civil society. The fragmented justice sector proved to be a very complex partner and expectations of progress were often frustrated. Major efforts were made during the period under review to (re)train police officers on a massive scale, but the effect of the training has not yet resulted in a marked change of corporate behaviour, also because the training was not complemented in a timely fashion by structural reforms. Media assistance was only modest in scope. The one major initiative that was undertaken resulted in wider coverage of the elections by national radio, the establishment of some community radio stations and technical support given to independent print media. Nevertheless, it is felt that the proliferation and improvement of media initiatives did effectively contribute to furthering democratic values.

In relation to the entire aid envelope to Mozambique, democracy assistance has been a modest sector, in contrast to the prominence of democratic governance in the development discourse of donors and government. Donors have also shown an increasingly pragmatic attitude when confronted with disappointing outcomes of democracy assistance. Maintaining political and economic stability and safeguarding cooperation initiatives (generally regarded as a 'success') has always taken precedence over efforts to speed up progress along the imaginary path of democratic consolidation.

Donor pragmatism also resulted in the loss of a strategic vision regarding democracy assistance. There was a clear agenda set for supporting democratic consolidation after the first multi-party elections in 1994. The implementation of that agenda was never assessed from a broad democracy assistance perspective and was never replaced by a new vision; somehow there was an unintentional move from good intentions to no intentions at all. The compass guiding democracy assistance is pointing in many directions and there is no clear reference point. The early post-conflict advances now look easy, with hindsight. The potential targets for democracy assistance have multiplied and the increased complexity challenges our understanding.

In conclusion it is suggested that donors do need to address this strategic vacuum, and this time on the basis of the real political trajectory and not on a desired sequential consolidation of democracy.

I. Introduction

1.1. Country Background

Mozambique is a country of approximately 19.4 million inhabitants spread over nearly 800,000 square kilometres. It is located on the south-east coast of Africa. It has a coastline of over 2,500 kilometres and shares land borders with South Africa, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia and Tanzania.

Since the civil war ended in 1992, Mozambique's average growth rate has averaged 8 per cent a year[1] Inflation is down to single digits and the currency is stable. However, per capita income is still at a fairly low level (around $240) and close to 70 per cent of the population continues to live in absolute poverty. Much of the growth is due to a few large investments that have boosted extractive industries and exports (e.g., aluminium and gas).

Life expectancy is low, at 40 years for men and 38 years for women. Only half of the population over the age of 15 is literate and less than half of the population has access to healthcare facilities. HIV/AIDS prevalence is 19 per cent with strong regional differences (e.g., 38 per cent in Sofala).

Much of Mozambique was occupied in its early history by dispersed Bantu populations. Three cultural zones of influence were formed. One in the south that is oriented towards South Africa, one in the centre that is close to the Shona of Zimbabwe and one in the north that is ethnically closer to groups in Tanzania. In the first two zones, families are organised according to a patrilineal tradition and north of the Zambezi to a matrilineal tradition.

Coastal areas were influenced by Arab traders and from the 16th century also by Portuguese settlers. Until the late 19th century, there were still very few Portuguese settlers but from 1890 a process of Portuguese military occupation started. The centre and north of the country was divided up among concessionary companies while the south remained largely under the direct rule of the Portuguese state. Mozambique was governed as a province of Portugal.

In 1962, Mozambican nationalist groups formed the Mozambique Liberation Front (Frelimo) in Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. Frelimo launched a war of independence in 1964 that would last for ten years. In 1974, the Portuguese fascist regime fell and Frelimo negotiated independence from the colonial power. On 25 June 1975, Mozambique was declared independent.

1.2. Conflict History

The roots of the conflict in Mozambique are both internal and external. The internal causes are related to the process of nation and state formation in a complex context of ethnic and religious pluralism, colonial legacy and post-independence policies. The external causes have to do with the Cold War conflict at global level and regionally with the destabilising role of the former Rhodesian and South Africa regimes.

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[1] All data come from the National Institute for Statistics (INE): http://www.ine.co.mz/.

In the years following Mozambican independence in 1975, Frelimo attempts to implement its Marxist-Leninist policies created significant grievances among Mozambicans, especially in the rural areas. Examples of such policies were the establishment of 're-education' camps, the imposition of patrilineal family rules, the concentration of production on state farms and the official de-legitimisation of traditional and religious authorities. These genuine attempts to create a modern society generated internal discontent and eventually resistance.

The Frelimo government also disturbed the white minority regimes in Rhodesia and South Africa. Mozambique supported and harboured Zimbabwean guerrilla fighters and the Rhodesian secret service retaliated by organising, training and arming a guerrilla movement in Mozambique, consisting of former Mozambican soldiers who had served in the Portuguese army, escapees from the re-education camps and ex-Frelimo members who disagreed with the movement's Marxist-Leninist ideology. This was the genesis of the National Resistance of Mozambique (Renamo) that started operating from the central provinces of Manica and Sofala.

In 1980, when Rhodesia turned into independent Zimbabwe, South Africa took over the task of supporting Renamo and continued to do so until well after the signing of the Nkomati Non-Aggression Pact between Mozambique and South Africa in 1986.

Renamo's war strategy was to destroy or undermine whatever could be perceived as a government effort to provide products and services to the population. That included the destruction of schools, hospitals, roads, electricity and telephone lines, etc. Renamo's violence was not limited to infrastructure. Atrocities were committed against people: murders, the burning-down of houses, abductions and torture. On the other hand, Renamo also tried to gain legitimacy by reinstating traditional and religious authorities in the areas under its control.

The Mozambican army could not stop Renamo's insurgency from spreading northwards to Tete, Zambezia and parts of Nampula provinces and southwards towards Maputo. As the war increasingly reached stalemate and the economic situation deteriorated, the official army also became more aggressive and used arbitrary violence against any civilians who were collaborating, or even suspected of collaborating with Renamo.

The civil war between Renamo and Frelimo was at its bloodiest in the period 1984 to 1986. In that same period, however, auspicious changes were getting under way that would lay the groundwork for peace. Mozambique joined the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 1984, announcing a dramatic change in its economic policy. The sudden death of Samora Machel brought the less charismatic, but more diplomatic and pragmatic Joaquim Chissano to the helm of the country in 1986. Frelimo rejected Marxism-Leninism formally in 1989, at the time of the symbolic end of the Cold War and its proxy wars in the developing world. Last but not least, South Africa's apartheid regime was now focusing on internal political transitions and abandoned its support to armed opposition groups in the region.

1.3. The Peace Process

Peace negotiations through the intermediaries of the Catholic Church really took off in 1988. In 1989, President Mugabe of Zimbabwe and President Moi of Kenya facilitated talks between church leaders and Renamo in Nairobi. This resulted in an outline of the conditions for further dialogue that indicated the long road ahead to peace as well as a measure of the will to end the war.

In July 1990, the Catholic Community of Sant'Egidio was accepted by both parties as mediator, and formal negotiations started in Rome. The talks were marked by a permanent tension between the desire for peace on the one hand and mutual distrust on the other. An agenda for full peace negotiations was agreed in May 1991 and consisted of six topics: the law on political parties, the electoral system, military issues, guarantees for Renamo, a ceasefire and a donor conference. Gradually, consensus was reached on each topic and a General Peace Agreement (GPA) was signed on 4 October 1992 in Rome.

The GPA provided for a special United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) to be established to supervise the implementation of the peace agreement. The operation mainly focused on the demobilisation of Renamo troops, the formation of a new unified army and the preparation of the first multi-party elections. According to the GPA, such elections had to be held within a year of its signing, but this proved unrealistic. More time was required to adopt a consensual electoral law, to create electoral structures and to register voters. The first multi-party elections, held in October 1994, are generally regarded as the crowning achievement of the peace process. Mozambicans participated massively, there were no notable incidents, the process was technically satisfactory and the losing party, i.e., Renamo, accepted the results.

1.4. Post-Conflict Assistance

After the signing of the GPA, there was massive international assistance to finance the implementation of the agreement. The ONUMOZ operation itself spent around $1 million a day, a large demobilisation and reintegration programme was set up, a substantial programme of technical and financial support to organize elections was implemented, and trust funds to finance political parties were created.

After the first, successful, multi-party elections a growing number of multilateral, bilateral and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) shifted their focus from emergency and rehabilitation assistance to Mozambique to structural development projects and programmes. These programmes focused mainly on the reconstruction of infrastructure (roads, railways, bridges, airports but also electricity and communication lines, schools and hospitals) and capacity-building for civil servants.

In early 1995, the international community established an 'Aid for Democracy Group' (ADG) that was the natural successor to the Elections Working Group established in 1993 for the follow-up of the preparations and conduct of the first multi-party elections.[2] The ADG was a forum for exchange of information and a coordination mechanism for the formulation and implementation of external interventions to consolidate democracy. Meetings were held on a monthly basis in the World Bank offices. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was mandated to organise a mission that would identify priority areas for supporting the consolidation of the newly baptised democracy.[3] The mission consisted of Mozambican and international experts and concluded that international assistance for the building of democratic institutions should be directed at the parliament, the police,

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[2] In 1996, the mandate was broadened and the ADG became the Donor Policy Group. In 1997, this transition was confirmed when, again, the name changed to Development Partners Group. The focus of the group moved away from political or individual projects to more general development issues.
[3] UNDP, Consolidation of the democratic process in Mozambique: Some priority areas for assistance (Maputo, 1995).

the legal sector, local elections and a civil identification system.[4] Only afterwards, support to independent media was added to the priority list, more or less on the sole initiative of the donors and at the cost of a civil identification system.

Attempts were initiated by UNDP to formulate an integrated democracy assistance programme, but sector analysis and needs assessments of the areas, compounded by a decidedly vertical administrative tradition, soon made donors realise that this was not a viable option. UNDP received a mandate to formulate separate projects that were to be co-financed by various donors. Negotiations on content, implementation modalities and budgets with government and participating donors were slow and difficult in most cases. The projects to support parliament, police and media were approved in 1996, but became operational only in 1997. A programme to support the legal sector started in 1998, after the Danish co-operation agency Danida had already launched a bilateral effort.

A second shift in international assistance started towards the end of the 1990s. Motivated by concerns about governance and the need to make assistance more efficient, donors in Mozambique followed an international trend towards budget support. The multiplicity of earmarked projects and programmes proved to have high transition costs, hindered clear policy formulation and limited beneficiaries' sense of ownership. Initially, some donors concentrated on sector financing.[5] Since 2000, however, there has been a strong move towards direct budget support. Currently, 17 donors are contributing about $250 million per year on the basis of a joint agreement and common indicators. There is no earmarking and no separate reporting.[6]

1.5. Methodological Issues

The main sources for this review on democracy support to Mozambique over the past ten years are project documents, progress reports and evaluations. The author also relied on personal experience, having been involved in the formulation of various democracy support programmes between 1996 and 2004.

Financial data need to be treated with caution because the various sources provide differing figures. Often it is difficult to assess whether the figures represent commitments, budgeted amounts or actual expenditure. Therefore, they reflect an order of relative size, rather than absolute values.

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[4] Issuing identity cards was identified as a crucial step in the consolidation of democracy, but it was never seriously addressed within this framework.

[5] This was through sector-wide approaches (SWAPs). Agriculture was the first SWAP, followed by health and education.

[6] However, targets for the whole budget are agreed (e.g., 65 per cent of the budget is expected to be spent on social sectors) and detailed annual reviews of government and donor performance are carried out.

II. Electoral Assistance

2.1. Legal and Institutional Context

The 1990 Constitution of the Republic of Mozambique created the legal framework for multi-party elections, freedom of association and the formation of political parties. A constitutional amendment in November 1996 created the legal conditions to hold multi-party elections at local, i.e. municipal, level.

The five multi-party elections that took place between 1994 and 2004 were governed by five different sets of laws. For each election adjustments were made to legislation on electoral management bodies, voter registration and voting. These constant changes certainly illustrate the political sensitivity of elections in Mozambique as much as they express an attempt to maintain stability through regulations.

Currently, the Constitutional Council (CC) functions as court of final appeal for all complaints related to the electoral process. Furthermore, the CC has to approve presidential candidatures and validate the results of the elections.

The National Elections Commission (CNE) is the decision-making and supervisory body of the electoral process. The CNE's responsibilities include upholding the freedom, justice and transparency of elections and the equitable treatment of citizens in these procedures; overseeing voter and candidate registration; approval of codes of conduct; promotion of civic education; guarantee of security; provision of financial aid for the parties' and candidates' campaigns; supervision of the distribution of electoral materials; and proclamation of the results. Before 2003, the CNE functioned on a temporary basis, i.e., only when voter registration or elections were to take place. Now it is a permanent body at central level, while its provincial and district branches continue to be temporary. The national CNE consists of 19 members, of whom 17 are appointed by the parties represented in parliament (proportionally) and 1 by the government. A president chosen by the 17 members from nominations submitted by officially registered civil society organisations (CSOs). The President of the Republic formalises the appointment. The president of the CNE is assisted by two vice-presidents, one from each of the two parties represented.

For the implementation of all electoral activities, the Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration (STAE) supports CNE. STAE is responsible for the administration of registration, the distribution of electoral materials, the training of polling staff and the organisation of the poll. STAE has provincial branches, which are permanent, and district branches, which are temporary.

CNE and STAE, but in particular the CNE, are dominated by party politics and by the polarity between Frelimo and Renamo. Electoral administration in Mozambique is strongly politicised.

The electoral system establishes that seats in the assemblies (municipal and national) are allocated through the D'Hondt system of proportional representation. For the national parliament there are 11 constituencies within the national territory (coinciding with provinces) and 2 for Mozambicans living abroad (Africa and the rest of the world). The president is elected by a simple majority system.

2.2. Electoral History

The first multi-party elections (1994) were the crowning achievement of the GPA and the start of a new era in Mozambique's history. The elections were considered a success, notwithstanding the many challenges: a tense post-conflict political environment,[7] a weak economic and financial resource base, a high illiteracy rate, intensive population movements as refugees and displaced populations returned home, and poor communication infrastructures within and between many parts of the country. Yet, 80 per cent of the estimated electorate was registered and 85 per cent of the registered voters participated in the elections. Renamo lost, but surprised most observers – not least Frelimo – with the results it obtained. The massive participation and broad acceptance of the results reflected the people's desire for peace and their perception of the role played by elections in this peace process.

The GPA also stipulated that local elections had to be organised within a year of the first general elections, but lengthy discussions about the required legislation postponed that process to June 1998.[8] The government opted for gradual decentralisation, so elections were held in 33 cities and towns, representing around 25 per cent of the national electorate. During the election preparations, problems were noted with voter registration books.[9] Renamo suspected manipulation and fraud, withdrew from the CNE and decided to boycott the elections. Most smaller political parties joined Renamo's boycott. The only competition for Frelimo came in some municipalities from 'groups of citizens' who formed a list. Frelimo won the elections in all 33 municipalities.

The elections were a disappointment: technical problems, they opposition's boycott, problems with the tabulation[10] and, most strikingly, the fact that a mere 15 per cent of eligible voters participated. The problems influenced the preparation of the second multi-party general elections scheduled for 1999. An entirely new voter registration system was introduced to overcome the problems of 1998 and to allow for computerisation of the register, which would facilitate future updates. The new electoral legislation reformed the electoral management system. The National Elections Commission was no longer to be present only at central level, but also at provincial and district levels, and Renamo and Frelimo could even nominate a few hundred party representatives at all levels of the STAE. Nevertheless, the atmosphere during the preparations remained tense and was marked by the opposition's continuous flow of accusations of manipulation and fraud. Renamo felt strengthened by its coalition with ten smaller parties. Eventually, President Chissano (Frelimo) won by a small margin, while his party maintained a comfortable absolute majority in the parliament. Renamo contested the results, but its 23 complaints were overruled by the Supreme Court. There was post-electoral tension, with violent incidents and a boycott of parliamentary sessions, and informal negotiations were conducted at the highest level.[11] It took the massive floods of 2000 to divert attention from the political situation.

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[7] The tension culminated in opposition leader Dhlakama's last-minute threat to boycott the elections – a threat that was deflected only by high-level diplomatic pressure, including pressure from the UN Secretary-General and Nelson Mandela.

[8] A decentralisation law of 1994 (Law 3/94) was considered unconstitutional. Therefore the constitution had to be altered, firstly to allow the creation of autonomous, elected local governments (municipalities). Then the legislation on how these local governments were to function had to be prepared and, lastly, new legislation for the local elections had to be approved by consensus.

[9] Some registration books were lost or damaged.

[10] I.e. the totalling and reporting of the vote data.

[11] Chissano and Dhlakama met for the first time since the 1994 elections.

The second municipal elections were held in 2003, again under new legislation and with a new National Elections Commission, but still permeated by the post-electoral problems of 1999. The electoral process developed without major problems, but the tabulation of the results lacked transparency and was riddled with errors. Serious problems in the updating of the register of voters had also been revealed. The opposition's result was well below what they had anticipated,[12] but all contestants accepted the Constitutional Council's ruling and approval of the results. The level of participation had improved compared with 1998, but was still at the low level of one-third of the registered voters.

The general elections of December 2004 were held under new legislation, but were managed by the same Elections Commission as in 2003. The problems with the register of voters seemed irreparable, but assurances that everything was under control kept the process going. Dhlakama ran for the third time for president, now for the first time against Chissano's successor Armando Guebuza, but he lost again and this time by a much wider margin. Frelimo won a nearly two-thirds majority in the parliament. Notably, voter turnout fell to a sobering 40 per cent.

Table 1: Results of Parliamentary Elections					
1994	*Seats*	*1999*	*Seats*	*2004*	*Seats*
Frelimo	129	Frelimo	133	Frelimo	160
Renamo	112	Renamo-União Eleitoral	117	Renamo-União Eleitoral	90
União Democrática	9				

Table 2: Results of Presidential Elections					
1994	*%*	*1999*	*%*	*2004*	*%*
J. Chissano (Frelimo)	53.3	J. Chissano (Frelimo)	52.3	A. Guebuza (Frelimo)	63.7
A. Dhlakama (Renamo)	33.7	A. Dhlakama (Renamo)	47.7	A. Dhlakama (Renamo)	31.7
Others	13.0			Others	4.6

The main characteristics of Mozambique's electoral history are continued mistrust between the two major parties, deficiencies in automated parts of the process (registration and tabulation), a constantly changing legal framework and a gradual loss of credibility of the electoral authorities. Since 1994, electoral pluralism has not resulted in a more inclusive political setting. At national level, parliament is now more monolithic than ten years ago. At local level there has been a modest breakthrough, but prospects for more inclusive governance through multi-party elections are not bright.

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[12] Renamo-UE won 5 out of 33 elections for municipal president and a majority in 4 municipal assemblies. This was widely considered to be well below their electoral potential as indicated in the two previous national elections.

2.3. Electoral Assistance

The international community invested an estimated US$ 150 million in the five multi-party elections between 1994 and 2004, but there are clear dynamics in the volume and type of assistance over this period.

The international community started providing electoral assistance in December 1992. Through various modalities 17 donors contributed US$ 59.1 million to implement the first voter registration and general elections. The support included funding of ad hoc electoral staff (registration teams and polling staff) equipment, transport, civic education, training and technical assistance.[13] Outside this core funding of activities to be carried out by the electoral authorities, The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) financed the training of party monitors. Separate funding was also provided for international observers.[14] Relatively low levels of support were provided to emerging Mozambican organisations that were interested in civic education activities and election monitoring.

Between November 1995 and March 1996 a UN-led needs assessment of the electoral administration was carried out in preparation for the local elections. A new project was launched in June 1997, after the approval by consensus of the new electoral legislation.[15] The European Commission (EC), and nine other donors provided US$ 17.7 million through UNDP for the organisation of elections in 33 municipalities on 30 June 1998. The support covered the same budget lines as in 1994, but now with reduced technical assistance.[16] Again, USAID, European Parliamentarians for Africa (AWEPA) and some others provided training to political party representatives and national observers.

A few months later, the EC and UNDP started discussing support to the second general elections and jointly mobilised US$ 30 million, including funding for a new voter registration system. International support was investment-oriented[17] and continued to include a reasonably strong technical assistance input.[18] Funding increased for monitoring side activities. USAID and the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) funded a long-term observation mission by the Carter Center, and further amounts were invested in the training of national observers. The EC also deployed a large observation mission,[19] as did regional organisations such as the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA). The external support provided through UNDP was to continue after the elections to help consolidate the experience that had been gained and to assist with computerisation of the register of voters.

The local elections of 2003 and 2004 were funded in one package. The EC provided around US$ 18 million extra budget support and UNDP had a relatively small (US$ 1 million) technical assistance programme that functioned as the international antenna within the electoral administration. The great novelty this time was not the volume of the external financing, but the near-disappearance of technical assistance.

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[13] Sixty-eight experts from 26 countries to support the electoral administration (STAE) at central and provincial level.
[14] A massive 3,000 in 1994.
[15] Consensus approval was a condition for international support.
[16] Still nearly 30 international experts.
[17] As was the case to some extent in the past, recurrent costs of electoral staff were to be funded by the government. In 1997 the EC still covered part of the recurrent expenditure.
[18] Three international experts and 34 UN Volunteers deployed in the national and provincial capitals.
[19] International observation missions throughout these and the next elections numbered between 10 and 75 members.

A somewhat atypical form of assistance was the South African logistical support in 1999 and 2004. South Africa provided military transport helicopters and crews to distribute election materials and polling staff to remote areas or areas of difficult access. External funding served to pay for fuel and per diems for the staff.

External assistance outside the electoral administration increased again in 2003-04. DFID, USAID and Switzerland spent over US\$ 1.5 million on parallel vote tabulations which were carried out in both 2003 and 2004 by a coalition of Mozambican NGOs. In 2004, there were over 2,000 national observers and 20,000 party agents as against 200 international observers.

2.4. Impact of External Assistance

The objectives of external assistance to elections in Mozambique can be divided into two groups:

- capacity-building and equipment of the electoral authorities (in particular, technical administration at all levels) to prepare and conduct voter registration and elections;
- capacity-building of political parties and CSOs to participate in electoral processes (campaigning, civic education, monitoring).

The longer-term goal or development objective of the programmes was generally the strengthening of the democratisation process.

At the level of short-term objectives, international assistance had a strong impact. Technically, the electoral administration has been equipped with infrastructure, tools, systems and procedures to be able to register voters and organise elections. The implementation of the 2003 and 2004 elections demonstrated that this capacity has been built by technical assistance over the years. It is certainly the case, however, that the effects of this assistance remain fragile because the capacity rests with individuals rather than structures, and the technicians concerned display a tendency to use systems and tools in a repetitive rather than a creative way. Budgets, training materials and working methods are copied from previous elections and adjusted to legal requirements where necessary. There is no proactive endeavour to improve systems and methods.

The two technical areas where the electoral administration has performed below standard (computerisation of the register of voters and tabulation of results) are precisely the areas where technical assistance was systematically rejected. Donors have invested at least US\$ 10 million in the computerisation of the register of voters, but the end result has been of appallingly low quality, because the project was implemented without any realistic strategy, technical rigour or quality control. Tabulation software is technically fairly simple and many existing systems can be adapted to the Mozambican requirements, but the electoral administration has insisted at every election that they prepare their own software. Tabulation has been of a very poor standard in each of the last four elections.

In other technical areas such as logistics, training and civic education, international assistance has had a decisive impact. However, international assistance was very much focused on getting the job done and it paid far less attention to the intrinsic qualities of the process, such as the legitimacy and credibility of elections and electoral authorities. The National Elections Commission (CNE) never took part in discussions on the proposed form and volume of international assistance, because it was not yet operational at the time when programmes were to be drawn up. The CNE never requested or

accepted any direct external support or technical assistance.[20] It relied for advice on its technical branch (STAE) and considered itself a political process manager rather than the guardian of free, fair and transparent elections.

Another area where international assistance had no impact was the reform of electoral legislation. Despite many proposals and offers of assistance[21] the special parliamentary commission dealing with this never accepted any of the offers.

Impact measured against the long-term objective of strengthening democracy is obviously more difficult to assess, but at best a mixed picture can be discerned. The subsequent electoral processes did not consolidate the legitimacy and credibility of the electoral system and the electoral authorities. There is a widespread perception that both are there to consolidate the power status quo, rather than to democratise the political system.

External support for the cost of elections, although consistently high (90 per cent of the total cost in 1994, 65 per cent in 1999), did not result in financial dependency. Elections in Mozambique are relatively expensive,[22] but even so, currently the government would have to set aside less than 0.5% of its annual budget to organise local and general elections every five years. If elections are considered a high enough priority, the government could fund them without any extra financial assistance, taking into account that the country receives US$ 250 million annually as direct budget support. Costs could certainly be reduced through improved planning and management, better maintenance of equipment and databases, and in particular by increased trust between the two main parties. The latter issue is the biggest challenge to sustainability: it is because of the fundamental distrust that election materials can only be distributed at the last minute, which means that expensive transport methods are required for the most remote areas. A higher level of trust between the main parties would reduce these costs.

The request for extra external financing for every election has become an established reflex action rather than an absolute necessity. It also has an undertone of holding donors co-responsible for the country ending up with a political system that was not Frelimo's first choice of Frelimo but forced on it by the pressure of internal conflict and an international discourse that links democracy with development.

International assistance was gradually increased to recipients outside the formal electoral administration. Some CSOs gained experience in civic education and monitoring, but often this was only through having a physical presence, and their participation in the process was not used to increase the external accountability of electoral management bodies. Political parties also received support to increase their electoral preparedness, but this has had no impact at all in terms of the plurality of elected bodies. As against this, the implementation of a parallel vote tabulation by a coalition of CSOs in 2003 and 2004 is beyond doubt an externally assisted activity that has had a strong impact. In particular the unexpectedly wide margin between the two main presidential candidates in 2004, combined with the tabulation process poorly conducted by CNE/STAE, had the potential to spark conflict, which was kept at bay, however, by a credible, independent, sample-based tabulation.

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[20] Except for some ad hoc training for provincial and district commissioners and funding of attendance at international conferences for national commissioners.

[21] Assistance was offered by, among others, the Carter Center, the UN, the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) and Switzerland.

[22] The cost of an election is roughly between US$ 15 million and 20 million. Currently there are two elections within a five-year cycle.

2.5. Strengths and Weaknesses of Electoral Assistance

The main strength of external electoral assistance was beyond any doubt its sheer volume and the voluntaristic or activist spirit with which it was organised. Because of their perceived importance, elections were an area of cooperation where donor coordination was very smooth and where donors always managed that little extra effort to make funds available in a timely fashion.[23] There was usually very little discussion between donors about budgets, objectives and activities, and information-sharing, through an 'election working group', was continuous and systematic.

A second strength of the international support was the effective delivery of technical assistance to STAE before and during the elections of 1994, 1998 and 1999. This support contributed greatly to technical capacity-building within the electoral administration. The provision of electoral equipment has also contributed to lowering the cost of elections, although not yet convincingly.

A third strong point of the international assistance was that it gradually stimulated emerging national organisations to participate more actively in electoral processes, in particular on the monitoring side.

The weakest aspect of the international electoral support is its ad hoc and isolated character. Support to the electoral administration was on each occasion concentrated in the months before an election, squeezed between yet another late approval of the legal framework for an election and the deadline for holding elections imposed by that framework. The 1999 UNDP electoral support programme built in a post-electoral dimension with the intention of reviewing and consolidating systems outside the high-pressure period. It was found that this component was too light as both STAE and donors showed very little interest in an ongoing effort. A crucial function of the post-electoral assistance was to get the voter register computerised. Donors made that process an explicit condition of finance for the new voter registration of 1999. STAE never did duly complete the computerisation, but that did not call into question external financial support in 2003 or 2004. This indicates another weakness in the donor performance: when donors linked conditions to electoral support, they never worked. This is at least partly due to the international community's eagerness to support elections,[24] but is also indicative of the fact that donors are prepared to settle for less democracy than they originally aimed for.

International support to the strengthening of CSOs' participation proved to be quite ineffective in terms of stimulating a more resolute demand for accountability. Organisations did carry out civic education and, often, 'open-ended' monitoring.[25] In this sense, the failure is due not only to donors who wanted to define CSO activities, but also to Mozambican organisations that did not take the opportunities that were offered.

A third and important weakness of international electoral support is that it rarely got beyond the technical level, especially after 1994. The powers that be took good care that donors did not become involved in three crucial areas: tabulation of the votes, the CNE, where decisions are taken and parliament, where legislation is formulated. There was for both donors and government a certain

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[23] In this sense, electoral support was delivered more efficiently than other areas of post-conflict support such as demobilisation and demining.

[24] For example, electoral support does not figure in the EC's current country strategy for support to Mozambique and the Head of Delegation stated categorically after the 1999 elections that the EC would no longer provide financial support. All it took was a government request, a new head of delegation and an elegant solution to accommodate electoral assistance via direct budget support.

[25] Monitoring without reporting or without dissemination of the findings.

convenience in the fact that donors' impact on elections was overrated. It was overrated in the sense that there was – and still is – a general perception that elections could not take place without donor support and donors were given the impression that their support was crucial to the consolidation of democracy. Electoral support built technical capacity but meant little in terms of democratisation.

2.6. Recommendations

Electoral assistance has been at the heart of international democracy promotion in Mozambique. In terms of both funding and strategic importance it easily outweighs support to other governance sectors. All five multi-party elections have received considerable external support, although this assistance became gradually less decisive. The 1994 elections simply could not have been held without external assistance, while the government could have funded the 2004 elections from its annual budget (if it had considered them to be a high enough priority). Technical assistance was reduced from being omnipresent to providing ad hoc inputs, and elections have certainly become cheaper, although there is still room for improvement.

Looking back at ten years of electoral assistance, the following recommendations can be made:

- Donors no longer need to invest in the electoral administration. Elections can perfectly well be financed through the regular budget. Instead, donors should consider benchmarking crucial reforms and improvements for the conduct of elections in the Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) that monitors budget support. This would be an explicit demonstration that donors and government consider the proper conduct of elections important enough.[26] The critical points that need to be addressed have been mentioned in numerous observation reports and technical assessments carried out ever since the 1994 elections.
- Donors should continue to provide or, where feasible, increase support to initiatives that strengthen civil society capacity to monitor political processes in general and elections in particular. However, it would be advisable to do this in a structural way, rather than on an ad hoc basis around the time of elections when these emerging organisations receive levels of attention and inputs which, although they can promote, can also jeopardise their institutional development.
- Donors should support the promotion of regional and continental agreements and guidelines that are genuinely African and no longer western imports and that can be used by Mozambicans to hold electoral authorities accountable.

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[26] Proper conduct does not refer to imposed donor or international observation standards, but to the quality standards that have been agreed within the framework of the African Union (AU), the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

III. Human Rights Assistance

3.1. Context

Human rights are here considered from a broad perspective and include public as well as private rights. The historical background to the human rights situation is one of extended generalised discrimination against the black population during colonial rule. The constitution adopted at Independence in 1975 contained 11 articles on rights and freedoms and was heavily biased towards collective rights. The rise of internal tensions in the years after Independence resulted in a reinstatement in 1979 of the death penalty, usually carried out in a public or semi-public way, and in 1983 other practices appeared, such as punishment by lashing, compulsory deportation and re-education in closed camps. It can be said that, in general, the duration and territorial expansion of the conflict gradually generated a culture of impunity.

The 1990 constitution confirmed a new concept of what human rights are and how they can best be guaranteed. It contained 40 articles on rights and freedoms, with considerable more attention for individual rights and freedoms, and provided for a separation of powers. On the basis of the new constitution a civilian police force was created after the signing of the peace agreement in 1992 and staffed with demobilised soldiers from both sides.

Regulation of the powers of the judiciary was not completed until seven years later and was done in a very complex and formalistic manner. The institutional independence of the judicial sector and the length of time it took to formalize it resulted in inadequate co-ordination and a fragmentation of policy-making. An Integrated Strategic Plan for Legality and Justice was agreed in 2002 to improve collaboration and co-ordination, but its implementation is partial and painfully slow.

The main public institutions that safeguard human rights in Mozambique are:

- the Ministry of Justice, responsible for the Notary, the prisons (after conviction), training of legal staff (through the Centre for Juridical and Judicial Training – CFJJ) and the provision of legal assistance to those who cannot afford legal fees (provided by the Institute for Juridical Support and Assistance – IPAJ);
- the Ministry of the Interior, responsible for the police and for prisoners before trial;
- the court system, currently present in all provinces but not yet extended to every district, and managed by a Supreme Court;
- the Attorney-General, responsible for public prosecution, but investigation has to be coordinated with the Ministry of the Interior, which is responsible for the Criminal Investigation Police (PIC);
- the Administrative Tribunal, which verifies the legality of administrative acts and audits state accounts;
- the Higher Council of Judicial Magistrates (CSMJ), which coordinates relations between the different legal institutions.

Besides the public institutions, there are two other institutions that need to be mentioned:

- the Bar Association, with around 200 registered members, of whom 180 are based in Maputo;
- a Human Rights League (LDH), established in 1995 and now with delegations in practically all districts. LDH visits prisons on a regular basis, organises civic education campaigns about civil rights and provides legal assistance and advice to citizens in need.

The LDH produces bi-annual reports on the human rights situation in Mozambique. The last country report by Amnesty International dates from 2000/01, but the US State Secretariat continues to publish annual updates of its human rights report. The principal human rights violations that are recurrent in the reports are corruption in the judiciary, the appalling living conditions in the prisons, illegal detentions and the abuse of power by the police (extortion and violence).

Over the past ten years several assessments of the legal sector, or parts of it, have been carried out and the main challenges that emerge are: a lack of qualified staff across the board, but in particular within the public prosecutor's office; a lack of infrastructure and equipment; outdated laws; corruption; dreadful conditions in the prisons; little or no information sources (jurisprudential, statistics); a major backlog of court cases; and a weak independent watchdog function. Considering these problems the legal sector still represents a considerable democratic deficit.

3.2. International Human Rights Assistance

Since 1995, Danida has been the lead donor to Mozambique's legal sector.[27] Between 1995 and 2004 it invested nearly US$ 15 million in this sector. In a first phase (1995–2000), Danida financed the construction of courts and houses for judges in 20 priority districts, the formulation of a strategic plan for the Ministry of Justice and the establishment of the judicial training center (CFJJ). In a second phase (2000–05), Danida focused on increasing access to justice through expanded support to the CFJJ and selected CSOs. After the Ministry of Justice, strategic plans were drawn up for the courts and the public prosecutor's office and an investment was made to speed up capacity-building in these two areas. Danida also financed a Technical Unit for Legal Reform (UTREL) that was established to modernise outdated legislation.

UNDP is involved in two major interventions. A multi-donor programme of support to the police was formulated in the framework of the democratic consolidation agenda that donors had agreed after the 1994 elections. The programme is mainly financed by Spain and the Netherlands and was based on a technical assessment and later it also included technical assistance from the Spanish Guardia Civil. The programme started in 1997 and aimed to support capacity-building and restructuring of the police force. The capacity-building component was provided through the rehabilitation of a training centre in Michafutene, just outside Maputo, and three-month 'recycling courses' were organised. Around half of the police force has been 'recycled' and over US$ 26 million has been spent on the capacity-building of junior police officers.

Soon, the need was felt to establish adequate education facilities for higher-ranking police officers. This resulted in the creation of a police academy (ACIPOL) in 1999. The police academy received external support from Switzerland and the UK. Switzerland cut its support to ACIPOL in 2003 because structural reforms of the police force had not taken place.

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[27] However, in 2005 Danida phased out its support to the sector out of frustration with a continued lack of co-ordination and reform responsiveness.

In 1999, UNDP launched a study on the management and infrastructure of the prisons. The study confirmed and systematised information on the dreadful conditions in which prisoners had to live and resulted in a US$ 2.6 million programme to address the situation. This programme was co-financed by Portugal, Ireland and Switzerland.

Various programmes were consolidated in late 2004 under a broad programme for institutional development in the justice sector aimed at improving the quality of, and access to, justice. This programme was boosted by US$ 12 million co-financing by the EC for the period 2004–07. The main components are institutional support to the Attorney-General's Office, institutional support to the Criminal Investigation Police and capacity-building across the legal sector.

USAID has a US$ 3 million programme consisting of various components: equipment for the Maputo City Court, books and equipment for the training centre CFJJ, a twinning programme with the Anti-Corruption Unit in the Attorney-General's Office and support to the CSO Ética Moçambique, a watchdog organisation that carries out research on corruption.[28]

With regard to private organisations, besides Ética which receives support from Switzerland, Ireland, Norway and USAID, there has also been long-standing external assistance to the Human Rights League, LDH. Between 1997 and 2003 a group of donors[29] provided around US$ 2.5 million to finance the activities and institutional development of the LDH (including the opening of an office in each provincial capital). The League continues to receive support[30] and has been an active player in the legal sector.

Sweden has a durable partnership with the Administrative Tribunal and has provided US$ 6.5 million to its section that audits the state accounts. The Administrative Tribunal also receives limited technical assistance from France.

3.3. Impact Assessment of Human Rights Assistance

Over the past ten years, some improvements can be observed, as represented by:

- a greater awareness of and better reporting on the appalling conditions in the prisons. CSOs (in particular the Human Rights League), the press and parliamentarians all explicitly denounced cases identified as clear violations of basic human rights. Some improvements to the prison installations have started to take place;
- the expulsion and/or imprisonment of members of the legal system who had been engaged in irregular practices;
- the establishment of an anti-corruption unit in the Public Prosecutor's Office;[31]

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[28] In fact, Ética only carried out one survey, which was published in 2001; it opened offices in seven provinces, but since 2001 has produced unimpressive results. Ética is currently losing donor support because of its disappointing performance.

[29] The Norwegian Agency for International Development (Norad; coordinator), Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), Helvetas, Swiss Cooperation, Danida, Netherlands, the Netherlands Organization for International Development (NOVIB), the Humanist Institute for Cooperation with Developing Countries (HIVOS), Finland.

[30] Although well below the US$ 8.8 million five-year plan that was presented in 2003.

[31] The Unit's performance has been frustrated by the courts' rejection of most cases that it presented. The outspoken head of the Unit, Isabel Rupia, was sacked in September 2005 and the name of the Unit changed into Central Office for the Combat of Corruption.

- improvements to the legal framework (e.g., amendments to the Penal Code and approval of a new Family Law which guarantees equal rights to women and men).

The legal sector was the last of the identified priority sectors for democratic consolidation to become the focus of donors' attention, but it has risen up the agenda ever since. During the 2005 budget support review, donors indicated the legal sector as the one most in need of improvements. A 2004 survey on the public perception of corruption confirmed that justice and the police were the two sectors most affected by corruption.[32] There remains a large backlog of court cases and the wider public still considers the police more as a potential threat rather than as a beacon of security.

The impact of international human rights assistance is most notable at the level of certain institutions (Administrative Tribunal, the LDH, CFJJ, etc.), but generally remains confined to those institutions. The international support provided to the legal sector over the past ten years has not drastically changed it. There are still the same structural problems of poor infrastructure, lack of capacity, outdated legislation, corruption, failed investigations, the widespread use of preventive imprisonment and limited access to justice. International assistance has helped to function better those parts of the sector that have to uphold human rights, but it has not succeeded in reducing the democratic deficit that the legal sector still represents.

3.4. Strengths and Weaknesses of Human Rights Assistance

As stated above, international human rights assistance has made considerable contributions to the establishment of some institutions and the dramatic improvement of their performance.

Yet, international human rights assistance has not been the result of a joint policy and strategy. That may be one of the reasons why international assistance to this area over the past ten years has not resulted in a structural imposition of the rule of law. Although there is some level of co-ordination between donors,[33] and there are multi-donor programmes, and initiatives still seem to be too fragmented.

Despite their good intentions, donors also tend to distort intra- and inter-institutional relations. For example, the Attorney-General's Office has a wide range of needs, and the establishment of an anti-corruption unit within its structure could potentially attract a disproportionate amount of external funding for this specific area of its work.

Certainly, it is very difficult for external interventions to achieve results in this sector. Some of the institutions involved (e.g., the courts system, police, etc.) have no experience in dealing with international partners and are reluctant to engage with them, partly because of their discreet or at times even secretive organisational culture and tradition. It is a sector that did not receive much attention between 1975 and 1990. The separation of powers enshrined in the new constitution exposed weak institutions that had to find a new own identity and new ways of relating to other sectors of society. In such an environment it is hard to formulate and implement successful external assistance programmes.

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[32] This was also the finding of the 2001 survey on corruption commissioned by Ética. The 2004 survey was commissioned by the Technical Unit for Public Sector Reform (UTRESP) and implemented according to a methodology provided by the World Bank Institute.

[33] There is a broad legal sector working group that is part of the general donor co-ordination system under the Development Partners Group umbrella; a group that co-ordinates support to the Human Rights League; and an informal group that meets on an ad hoc basis to discuss corruption issues.

Another mutual weakness is that both sides (donors and beneficiaries) have been struggling with a strategic vision on what has to be done, how it can be done and what the function/contribution of external assistance can be. Most of the programmes in this field are donor-initiated, but often with a high degree of discrepancy between the perceived problem and the resources made available. Beneficiary institutions (apart from the CSOs and the CFJJ) display an ambiguous attitude, of interest in obtaining funding on the one hand, but reluctance to engage in reforms on the other.

3.5. Lessons and Recommendations

In the given circumstances, two essential ingredients of success are, on the beneficiary's side, sound leadership and, on the donor's side, insightful willingness to engage.[34] A coincidence of those two elements has certainly produced worthwhile results.

The human rights or legal sector will provide many opportunities for external financing in the future, as the needs are so great. Donors could support a home-grown drive to establish a national human rights commission or the participatory formulation of a national human rights policy. A central database of cases could be established, regional networking could be encouraged, and a postgraduate course can be set up. The police could be given further training, as could judicial staff, institutions helped to expand their territorial coverage, etc.

It is essential, however, that donors adopt a more streamlined and more harmonised approach when planning support to the human rights or legal sector. Such an approach would also include having a clear strategic vision of the role and potential of external assistance in this area.

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[34] The CFJJ is probably the best example of how sound leadership can make good use of external funding.

IV. Media Assistance

4.1. Context

Mozambique adopted a liberal press law in 1991; in its preliminary articles the law clearly states that "the Constitution of the Republic of Mozambique, in Article 74, preserves the right to freedom of expression and freedom of the press as well as the right to information. The mass media play an important role in implementing those rights, as well as in giving value to the other individual and collective rights enshrined in the Constitution." The creation of independent print media and private radio and television stations confirmed the start of a new era of independence and pluralism of the media.

This represented a major change from the past.[35] Under colonial rule, and in particular from 1933 to 1974, Mozambique experienced permanent censorship. Upon Independence a national radio station (Rádio Moçambique – RM) and a national news agency (Agencia de Imprensa de Moçambique – AIM) were established. The press was placed – almost voluntarily – at the service of the revolution. Most journalists were genuinely supportive of the new government,[36] while the government displayed a somewhat limited trust in the press. The Ministry of Information exercised censorship wherever the press seemed to fail in its mandate to inform, educate, mobilise and organise the people.

Growing frustration over the expected results of the revolution, together with attitudes prevalent among the ruling elite that severely tested journalists' loyalty, gradually resulted in the press adopting a more independent stance and increasing pressure to liberalise the media. The proclamation of the press law in 1991 was immediately followed by various initiatives to set up independent media. The daily newspaper distributed by fax, *Mediafax* was the first medium outside state control (1992), followed later by the weeklies *Savana* and *Demos* and others.

With regard to institutional changes, the 1991 Press Law abolished the Ministry of Information and created an Information Office under the Prime Minister's auspices with the mandate to divulge official information, register media initiatives and allocate frequencies to private radios. A Higher Council for Social Communication (CSCS) was also established as an independent regulatory body to oversee media practice within the framework of the new law. However, because of its constitution and the interventions it has carried out, the Higher Council is not considered to be impartial, but rather as a control mechanism of the ruling party. The Institute for Social Communication (ICS) has a specific mandate to promote communication in rural areas, in particular through community radio stations. The Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) established a chapter in Mozambique in 2000 with assistance from Finland, the United States and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. It functions as a press freedom watchdog, provides funding for the legal defence of journalists where this is justified and supports initiatives to promote media independence. MISA recently published a first report on press

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[35] By 1990 there were only nine media organisations in the country and all were exclusively state-owned.
[36] Their sympathy with the revolution meant that they exercised self-censorship.

freedom in Mozambique[37] and formulated a legal proposal to guarantee access to information that was submitted to parliament for discussion and approval in November 2005.

The first exhaustive overview of the Mozambican media landscape under the new law was conducted by UNESCO in 1999.[38] The study identified 90 active media organisations registered in the country: 51 print media and 39 electronic media. These figures do reflect the dynamic nature of the media scene but, according to the same study, large areas of the country still remained beyond the reach of the media. Thus, despite the new freedom of expression, the population's right to receive information had still not been fully realised.

The media scene in Mozambique has undergone considerable changes since 1995. The public broadcaster, Radio Mozambique, remains the most powerful radio station in the country with a presence in each of the ten provinces. But nowadays there are also 35 private radio stations which are owned by communities, associations or private individuals. There are around 25 news publications including daily newspapers distributed by fax and provincial or district newsletters. However, except for a few powerful, independent newspapers with national potential, the other media, both printed and electronic, are small-scale and weak in terms of management and business capacity. And the bigger ones with national potential are facing an uphill struggle in terms of distribution, prohibitive newsprint prices, etc.

The assassination in 2000 of Mozambique's most prominent investigative journalist, Carlos Cardoso,[39] raised a number of serious questions as to how this would affect individual journalists' use of their constitutional freedom. A more restrained attitude induced by fear was expected but, generally, the media continued to play its role actively with due commitment.

4.2. International Media Assistance

The most important international intervention in support of Mozambican media was part of the co-ordinated effort to consolidate democracy in Mozambique after the first multi-party elections (see above). As in the case of the other multi-donor programmes that were part of the democracy assistance agenda, UNDP was mandated to co-ordinate the preparation, resource mobilisation and implementation of a media support programme. In this case, UNESCO was entrusted with the technical formulation and execution of the programme. The formulation process started in 1995, but the programme only formally started in mid-1998. Conducting negotiations between the government and donors for an international support programme that essentially aimed to benefit independent media proved to be a highly sensitive and difficult task.

Eventually an agreement was reached on a programme to strengthen the human, technical and organisational capacity of the communication media in Mozambique, especially independent and community media as well as the public service radio. The long-term goal was to enable these media to effectively contribute to the process of national development, good governance and democracy. The

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[37] *MISA-Moçambique, Relatório anual sobre o estado de liberdade da imprensa em Moçambique*, Maputo, 2004.

[38] UNESCO, *Media Pluralism Landscape Study*, Maputo, 1999.

[39] Carlos Cardoso was murdered on 21 November 2000 in central Maputo. The assassination was linked to his investigation of a US$ 144 million bank fraud. The three gang members who killed Cardoso were convicted as well as three businessmen who contracted them to carry out the murder. Yet, there remain suspicions that former president Chissano's oldest son might also have been involved.

project is currently in its third phase of implementation (2004–06). The first two phases aimed at improving the quality of communication training, increasing access to the media through decentralisation and creating media facilities at the provincial and community levels. The present, final exit phase focuses on consolidating and ensuring the sustainability of community radios, provincial communication centres for the printed press, and participatory management processes that were initiated within the public radio organisation and selected print media organisations.

By the end of the programme (scheduled for September 2006), approximately US$ 11.5 million will have been provided to the media, comprising contributions from Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Norway, Portugal, Sweden and UNDP. The main activities carried out under Phases I and II of the project were as follows:[40]

- About 570 men and women were trained in political and economic journalism, investigative journalism, gender-sensitive reporting, HIV/AIDS reporting and media management in 30 courses, each lasting two weeks. In addition, about 300 others have received training in community radio management, community radio programming and programme production, audience research, preventive maintenance and technical support to community radio;
- To back up the community radio training courses a series of 15 community radio manuals were prepared and various workshops were conducted on the concept of community radio and the relevant legal framework;
- Various studies were carried out (including, among others, the 'Media Pluralism Landscape Study'; Radio Mozambique technical capacity and training needs assessment; reform of journalism training curricula);
- Organisational and institutional capacity-building was delivered to all community radios that are part of the project and to Radio Mozambique provincial stations;
- The project procured, installed and commissioned transmission and computer equipment for Radio Mozambique;
- The project also procured, installed and commissioned FM transmitters, studios and recording equipment for the establishment of eight community radio stations in Mozambique. Institutional (technical and training) support was also granted to five already established local/community radio stations;
- Three experimental communication centres were created and equipped with computers, printers and Internet connections, as well as news-gathering and editing facilities in three provinces. The communication centres are owned by local independent media associations, which also receive support.

The third and last phase of the project does not provide for new activities, but focuses exclusively on creating conditions to maximise the sustainability of existing components.

Small-scale external assistance was instrumental in launching the first independent media. *Mediafax* was able to start operating in 1992 thanks to a US$ 3,000 fax machine funded by Norad, and another faxed newspaper, *Faísca*, started with a US$ 2,000 grant from Austria's cooperation agency. The weekly *Savana* also received external funding to start up, but most private initiatives started and

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[40] UNESCO/UNDP, Final Evaluation of the Second Phase of the Project "Strengthening Democracy and Governance through Development of the Media in Mozambique", Maputo, 2004.

survived without external support. None of the printed media is externally funded today. The aid agencies' most important material contribution is that they are loyal subscribers to the various independent media.

Over the past ten years, several organisations have organised and financed ad hoc training courses for journalists on specific issues (e.g., the Southern Africa Research and Documentation Centre [SARDC] on electoral coverage and the Organisation for Conflict Resolution [OREC] on peace and conflict prevention), but it can be concluded that the Scandinavian donors have been by far the most active external players in the media sector.

4.3. Impact Assessment of Media Assistance

An assessment of the impact of international media assistance is complicated by the absence of well-developed indicators. Projects are evaluated solely on the basis of implementation of the agreed activities and outputs, without a clear linkage to what effect these have on the nature and quality of democracy in Mozambique.

Over the past ten years, the Mozambican media have undeniably changed. Radio Mozambique, the most important media organisation in the country, continues to improve in terms of coverage, management and programming.[41] There is improved management and sustainability in a variety of media houses, and where it has been possible to develop talent through capacity-building there has been an improvement in the quality of reporting. Community radios have grown in number, and improved the access to and quality of information in the areas covered.

However, according to the 1999 UNESCO media landscape study,[42] despite the range and number of media by then operating, their impact on people's lives was still found to be limited because of the continued concentration in Maputo. It is estimated that the print media reach only one per cent of the public.[43] Radio Mozambique is slowly increasing its coverage, it's geographical coverage now being approximately 80 per cent. Community radios are active in 37 districts, meaning that around one-third of the country has access to this small-scale, participatory medium. It was also found that the content and range of issues usually covered by the newspapers generally do not relate to the main concerns of their readers at national and provincial levels.

The community radio component of the UNESCO project had the greatest impact, essentially because it has created a new dynamic in the communities where the radio stations were established. As a result, individual behaviour patterns are changing and community participation is increasing. However, the impact and the sustainability of the community radios vary considerably depending on their socio-economic, cultural and political circumstances as well as their set-up and management.

A major 'Qualitative Impact Assessment Scheme' for the eight community radios set up by the UNESCO project has been created and piloted over the past two years.[44] The scheme aims to measure the impact of the radio stations by assessing three specific aspects: (1) does the radio station really

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[41] A good indicator here is the degree of coverage and quality of the reporting of elections. Dramatic improvements could be observed between 1998 and 2004.

[42] UNESCO, *Media Pluralism Landscape Study* (Maputo, 1999).

[43] The high cost involved in printing and distributing newspapers limits newspaper circulation. High taxation on imported paper, telecommunication costs and air transportation of newspapers continue to act as a stranglehold on the print media.

[44] UNESCO, End of Phase II. Project Progress Report MOZ/01/003: Strengthening Democracy and Governance through Development of the Media in Mozambique (Maputo, 2004).

represent all communities within its range? Is it run in a democratic and participatory way?; (2) does the programming reflect the real interests and concerns of the community? Is the community satisfied with the content, presentation and format of the programmes?; and (3) does the community radio, through the first two areas assessed, actually manage to create qualitative improvements in the everyday lives of the people making up the community? In other words, does it contribute to achieving desired social changes? However, no results of this assessment have yet been published.

A less tangible impact was the 'moral support' that some members of the international community gave to journalists and editors. The presence and role of the international community has certainly provided back-up and encouragement to embark on new initiatives and take risks in this sector.

4.4. Strengths and Weaknesses of Media Assistance

Generally speaking, international media assistance, and in particular the UNESCO-implemented programme, has contributed to the diversity, increased access to and better quality of media in Mozambique over the past ten years. International support has beyond any doubt played a part in the establishment of new media or the consolidation of existing media. The access to print media has increased in urban areas, Radio Mozambique now covers nearly the whole national territory and has made strides towards more participative management at provincial level. Moreover, there are now 42 community radios in the country that offer more information focused on the needs of varying local contexts, and hundreds of Mozambican journalists from different media houses have participated in technical or managerial capacity-building initiatives. The creation of a National Forum for Community Radios (FORCOM) and an Association of Media Houses (AEJ) constitute emerging, but promising, frameworks for co-ordination, information exchange and policy dialogue.

Some training has been seen as too theoretical or not tailored to the working environment. Therefore, on-the-job training and coaching in journalism, management, accounting and marketing are considered more effective. There is also need for longer-term on-the-job training in more professionally organised media houses, preferably in Brazil or Portugal.

A major weakness of media assistance relates to, not surprisingly, the financial sustainability of initiatives that depend to a high extent on international support. Some community radios may soon be self-sustaining, others will require continued assistance and some will prove not to be viable. There is no doubt that a number of initiatives will suffer a setback when external support ceases.

Despite some useful contributions, the various stakeholders are offering no overall vision or strategy regarding the role of external assistance.

4.5. Lessons and Recommendations

Two elements seemed particularly crucial for successful support to media. First are speed and flexibility to support the take-off of independent media initiatives (e.g., *Mediafax* and *Faísca*). This has often been small scale-support with a strong impact. Second, the best results seem to have been achieved through the adoption of an iterative and participatory approach in programme formulation and implementation. The formulation of the UNESCO project was not the result of a participatory process, but rather the result of negotiations between the government, donors and the UN. Its

implementation, on the other hand, was done in a participatory manner, which has certainly optimised the realisation of a programme that was not initially based on inputs from its beneficiaries.

Ten years of media assistance also confirms that development requires time and that one cannot expect changes to be very rapid. The media sector has certainly expanded and diversified, but quality often remains based on the talent of individual journalists. Reporting generally continues to be shaped to a very great extent by declarations by politicians, there is little investigative journalism and stories generally are very protracted. Few media houses have editorial policies that guarantee independence, and the difficult working circumstances and low salaries remain a permanent threat to the maintenance of proper professional ethics.[45]

An important lesson that can be learned from the UNESCO project is that attention needs to be paid to the specificity of each context in which the different media evolve. No generalisations are possible as far as their viability and sustainability are concerned. It is therefore essential to monitor the conditions of each media initiative as closely as possible in order to provide specifically tailored support.

neither lesson learned is that the success and achievements of projects depend not only on the validity of their objectives and activities, but just as much on the quality and enthusiasm of the management. This has certainly been the case for the UNESCO project which, in spite of a very challenging management environment, dealing with different government structures, various donors and not least with two heavily bureaucratic UN agencies, has managed to achieve most of its objectives.

International support to a complex and sensitive sector needs time to develop and time for learning to be gained from experiences. In addition, there must be dialogue between the various initiatives that support the development of the media. Strengthening democracy through support given to the media cannot be achieved by stand-alone projects implemented over a limited period of time.

Ten years of international assistance to the media allow the following recommendations to be made for future support:

- Support an assessment of the broader legal and institutional media framework. It now seems to be the right time for this assessment, which could include revisions to the legislation, the formulation of a concerted national social communication strategy, the creation of a national broadcasting authority and other wider policy issues regarding media development and social communication interventions.
- Further analyse the success factors of a community radio and continue supporting the expansion of this medium. This could include reviewing the possibility of establishing a Community Radio Fund.
- Continue on-the-job training and coaching of media staff, with special emphasis on management, accounting, marketing and fundraising.
- Support the review of the organisational structure of the media, including the consolidation of national dialogue platforms (e.g., FORCOM).

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[45] A classic example is that of a journalist covering an election campaign who, in order to do so, finds himself or herself with no alternative but to use transport facilities kindly offered to him or her by a candidate. Obviously such services complicate objective reporting.

V. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1. Conclusions

The international community has dedicated very different levels of resources and attention to the three sectors of democracy support under consideration in this review over the past ten years. The indicative level of external support is an estimated US$ 120 million to election-related programmes, US$ 60 million to human rights-related programmes and US$ 15 million to programmes in support of the media. Including some sectors of democracy assistance that are not considered here (e.g., support to parliament, civil society, decentralisation, etc.), it can be calculated that the international community has invested between US$ 300 million and US$ 400 million in democracy assistance to Mozambique.[46] This is approximately 5 per cent of total external assistance over the past ten years – certainly a modest share, given the prominence of governance and democratisation issues in the development discourse.

Ten years ago there was relatively little experience of post-conflict democracy-building and there was an unspoken and quite widespread confidence among the donor community that it would be possible to gradually establish the institutional pillars of liberal democracy in Mozambique: free and transparent elections, an independent judiciary, a strong parliament, vibrant and independent media, decentralised government, and an active and organised civil society. In the meantime, development partners have found that what they have got is free but not entirely transparent elections, a continuously weak judiciary that is susceptible to political influence and corruption, a parliament that undertakes only limited legislative initiatives and does not pose a challenge to the government to make it more accountable, an ambiguous and partial decentralisation policy and a ruling party that has more effective power now than before the democratic transition. This is a transition that has certainly turned out differently from what most international providers of democracy assistance had expected. Clearly, the ruling elite has successfully taken charge of the democratic institutions and the democratic process.[47]

Donors have been able to influence the establishment of democratic rules, but not the way the game is played. The establishment of a western-like liberal democracy is simply not the main goal of the national political elite (both majority and opposition). Frelimo wants to consolidate and strengthen its power because it thinks that this is in the country's best interests. Democratisation is subject to that.

Faced with the reality of this political transition, the international community did not rethink its vision of what its role could be in the promotion of democracy. In the absence of such a vision, development partners have focused on quite open-ended capacity-building and limited institutional

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[46] It is impossible to calculate exactly how much has been spent on democracy assistance, but even so it is considered useful to indicate the relative share of democracy assistance in the total aid envelope.

[47] See C.Alden C. *Mozambique and the construction of the new African state. From negotiations to nation building* (Palgrave, New York, 2001). Alden argues that the democratisation process can actually be equated with the consolidation of the political and economic interests of the elite.

end points.[48] Do donors settle for a development paradigm that aspires to poverty reduction based on macro-economic and political stability? This is a static, rather conservative, but predictable agenda with obvious advantages for both government and donors: a comforting status quo. Or might there be a not-yet articulated drive to raise the stakes and pursue a development agenda based on economic growth and democratisation? This is a more dynamic and progressive agenda, but far less predictable: a contentious push for positive change.

Although in a way that is mostly implicit and not sustained by any strategic vision, donors in Mozambique act according the first paradigm. The usual targets of democracy assistance are increasingly those at the core of the development discourse under the label 'good governance', but they are not necessarily becoming more important in development activities. The annual dialogue between government and donors around budget support has repeatedly highlighted democratic deficits, but so far none of those deficits has been measured against the perceived successes of international cooperation with Mozambique. Political conditionality has been somewhat 'stretchable' and no explicit bottom line has been defined. This ad hoc approach can result in sudden and dramatic changes, as illustrated by the recent cuts in budget support to Ethiopia and Uganda.[49]

5.2. Recommendations

The key recommendation is for donors to reflect on the purpose of democracy assistance and to draw operational conclusions. This would need to be based on a much improved understanding of the political trends and the governance system. One can no longer assume that we are on the once-envisaged (theoretical) democratisation track. If the past decade has demonstrated one thing very clearly then it is that the outcomes of democracy assistance generally did not echo those of the transition discourse.

On the basis of a realistic analysis, donors must identify areas of intervention where they can positively influence the democratic quality of governance. Traditionally there is a tendency towards supporting the areas where the needs are highest, but these are rarely the areas where external support has had a strong impact (e.g., justice). In setting priorities for support, equal or greater attention should be given to areas with opportunities, as these yield better results. These opportunities are created by shifts in government policies (e.g., the increased drive to decentralise power to district governments) or through demand from other governance actors (e.g., mounting pressure for government accountability from the media and civil society).

The governance analysis, planning and monitoring require specific skills. It is not sufficient for donors to create a governance post or a governance unit; it is also necessary to recruit specialised staff for these posts. It seems that this is increasingly being done, and is a trend that must be supported.

A third recommendation is to link aid modalities to the democracy assistance agenda. The project modality, with all its advantages and disadvantages, will remain a key instrument of democracy assistance, also because certain of its objectives can only be achieved through the government's own

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[48] By this we mean that donors often push for the creation of certain institutions or regulations but later notice that these are used in a way that does not aim to strengthen democracy, but rather to consolidate the power of the ruling party. Elections have demonstrated that fair legislation and formally democratic institutions do not necessarily produce an outcome that is generally perceived as fair and democratic.
[49] In both countries some donors reduced or cut budget support because of perceived repression of political opposition.

funding. Project support is excellent for getting small institutions going, but the inherent lack of predictability and durability of external funding will rarely succeed in getting, for example, the legal sector on the right track. Project support may even have a fragmenting effect and there is always an element of competition and substitution driven by disbursement pressure. For the development of core public institutions it makes more sense to look at how this can be done through direct budget support rather than through project support. This may be more effective and less frustrating for all stakeholders. It would also be an indicator of the level of the government's commitment to addressing democracy deficits.

A fourth recommendation is to intentionally combine process and product. For example, if donors decide to fund yet another completely new voter register it is important to consider not just the expected output, i.e., the characteristics of the register. It is equally important to look at how it will be used, who has access to it, etc. It is the internal process dimension [50] of democratisation that poses the biggest challenges in Mozambique. Attempts should be made to pay more attention to 'how the governance game is played'.

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[50] This refers to the interaction between Mozambican actors; this is a different process dimension from the one between donors and government.

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