

How is gender equality included in education sector planning?

An analysis of power, voice and social change in Mozambique

Mozambique Country Report

Annex D.1 Mozambique Country Report

Mott MacDonald Limited trading as Cambridge Education. Registered in England and Wales no. 1243967. Registered office: Mott MacDonald House, 8-10 Sydenham Road, Croydon CR0 2EE, United Kingdom

Cambridge Education
22 Station Road
Cambridge CB1 2JD
United Kingdom
T +44 (0)1223 463500
camb-ed.com

United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
3 United Nations Plaza,
New York, NY 10017
USA
Ungei.org

Information class: Standard

This document is issued for the party which commissioned it and for specific purposes connected with the above-captioned project only. It should not be relied upon by any other party or used for any other purpose.

We accept no responsibility for the consequences of this document being relied upon by any other party, or being used for any other purpose, or containing any error or omission which is due to an error or omission in data supplied to us by other parties.

This document contains confidential information and proprietary intellectual property. It should not be shown to other parties without consent from us and from the party which commissioned it.

Contents

List of Acronyms.....	4
Context and overview of planning process.....	5
Thematic Findings.....	6
Political Economy.....	6
Political will.....	6
Accountability	6
Relationships.....	7
Power and decision-making.....	7
Networks and Coalitions.....	7
Voices.....	8
Gender Expertise	8
Voices of young people and communities.....	9
Society.....	10
Social norms.....	10
Resistance	11
SWOT Analysis.....	11
3.1 Strengths.....	11
3.2 Weaknesses.....	11
3.3 Opportunities.....	12
3.4 Threats.....	12
Stakeholder Analysis.....	13
Stakeholder matrix.....	13
List of Documents Reviewed	14

List of Acronyms

ADEMO	Associação dos Deficientes Moçambicanos
CESC	Centro de Aprendizagem e Capacitação da Sociedade Civil
CSO	Civil society organisation
EFA	Education for All
ESA	Education Sector Analysis
ESP	Education Sector Plan
FASE	Fundo de Apoio ao Sector de Educacao
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GCI	Gender at the Centre Initiative
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GPE	Global Partnership of Education
IIEP	Institute for International Educational Planning
JSR	Joint Sector Review
KII	Key Informant Interview
LEG	Local Education Group
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEPT	Movimento de Educacao Para Todos
MINEDH	Ministry of Education and Human Development
MOE	Ministry of Education
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TVET	Technical, Vocational Education Training
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative

Context and overview of planning process

Although the last two decades have seen considerable progress on global commitments to address gender disparities in education, many challenges remain. Girls in Sub-Saharan Africa are still furthest from equality in educational access and achievement, with factors such as poverty and location compounding with discriminatory gender norms to exclude girls from education (UNESCO 2022b). Through the [Gender at the Centre Initiative \(GCI\)](#), a program that encourages Ministries of Education to embed gender equality at the heart of education systems, a study was commissioned to examine how gender equality is integrated in education sector planning in 8 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (Chad, Mali, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nigeria, Niger and Sierra Leone). The synthesis report identifies examples of good practice, opportunities and threats to promote gender transformative education systems. This country report presents the findings of the analysis for Mozambique.

The report focuses on the Education Sector Plan (ESP) 2020-2029 planning process for Mozambique. Findings presented here come from eleven interviews conducted with ministry staff, development partners and civil society organisations (CSOs) in Mozambique, as well as a short documentary review. It is based on an Education Sector Analysis (ESA) completed in July 2019, with UNESCO's support. The ESA builds on pre-existing strategies and plans such as the Gender Strategy for the Education sector (2016-2020), the ESP 2012-2019 and associated reports, especially the Education Policy Review (2019) developed by the Ministry of Education and Human Development (MINEDH) and UNESCO.

The ESP was led by the MINEDH with support from several consultants recruited by UNESCO and other relevant actors. These included deconcentrated education actors, development partners and CSOs. The consultative process took place at the district, provincial and central levels between 2019 and May 2020. An operational plan 2020-2022 was finalised in May 2020. The ESP appraisal was completed in May 2020 by an external consultant, using the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) appraisal framework. In the ESP, gender is approached as a cross-cutting issue across its six programmes (pre-school, primary school, secondary, adult literacy, teacher training, institutional & administrative development, and higher education & technical, vocational education training (TVET)).

Mozambique operates in a challenging context. The country has been impacted in recent years by a national debt crisis, several natural disasters in 2019, and more recently, a violent conflict in the north of the country. Children under the age of 18 represent 52 per cent of Mozambique's population¹. The country regularly ranks low on global indices such as the Human Development Index (ranking 185 out of 191) and the UNDP Gender Inequality Index² (ranking of 136 out of 191 in 2021) which is a composite index of reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market.

¹ [The Situation of Children in Mozambique 2021.pdf \(unicef.org\)](#)

² <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/GII>

There were 11 Key Informants interviewed for this study:

- 4 Ministry representatives, 3 CSO/ NGO, 1 youth representative and 4 Technical partners
- 8 women and 3 men

Thematic Findings

Political Economy

Political will

The interviews show there is political will to increase gender equality in education and an ambition to tackle the barriers through policies and plans, as shown in both the ESA and ESP. The existence of a Gender Strategy for the Education Sector (2016-2020) also highlights this political will with real engagement to provide equal access to education for boys and girls.

However, findings from the interviews highlights otherwise; a respondent emphasized that accountability in implementing the Gender Strategy was poor during years of implementation, particularly due to the limited budget allocated to it and lack of targeted indicators.

Another main constraint is the lack of resources dedicated to gender and inclusion. There is no national budget dedicated to this, and the sustainability of this effort relies on development partners' willingness to continue pushing for gender equality and committing resources to this, according to all interviewees.

Accountability

Accountability mechanisms exist and are being used as part of the ESP implementation. Joint Sector Reviews (JSRs) are held every year and include CSOs representative (Movimento de Educacao Para Todos (MEPT)) and relevant development partners. There is a complete report for each review, that highlights all aspects of the ESP implementation, including gender aspects within the six programmes. The monitoring framework is reviewed at each JSR and ESP indicators are populated accordingly.

However, the ESP monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework mostly includes quantitative indicators on gender. Activities and strategic areas identified with a strong gender-responsive component, for example preventing of harmful social practices like female genital mutilation (FGM), early marriage and identification of violence at school, do not have indicators to report on, which leads to reduced accountability on these aspects during JSRs. Some interviewees felt that there is a need to set clear targets for gender equality to make progress, so that all parts of MINEDH are held accountable.

“This component needs to be more highlighted, with clear goals for gender equality. Because it is cross-cutting, some activities stay outside of the ESP currently. My understanding is that we need clear, qualitative objectives in terms of reduction of gender-based violence for example. Specific goals which highlight the challenges” - MINEDH

Relationships

Power and decision-making

MINEDH made a clear effort to follow a more participative planning process, by creating six working groups – one per programme – to design the six ESP programmes, and by sharing drafts of chapters to each relevant working groups for comments. However, UNESCO mentioned the planning process being complex, with short deadlines, making it difficult for each working group to go deep enough in their review.

The Gender Division lacks guidance on their role and responsibilities, and technical capacity, which results in low power of influence at MINEDH, according to donors. MINEDH needs to dedicate more efforts to the decentralisation of decision-making on gender.

Even though a broad range of actors are consulted on the surface, it seems that decision-making power for what is included into the ESP mostly lies with the Planning Directorate, according to donors. The Planning Department can be influenced by donors as development partners bring additional budget for specific themes, including through the Education Sector Support Fund/Fundo de Apoio ao Sector de Educacao (FASE).

Shifting the way decision-making works is a long and hard process, according to CSOs. It can be noted that all the participants having some gender expertise were women³, while main MINEDH Directors, who play a key role in decision-making for the ESP, are all men, and maybe, according to participants, less sensitive to gender issues.

Networks and Coalitions

CSOs are well-regarded and consulted in Mozambique in the education sector,

³ Gender consultants recruited by UNESCO, staff from MEPT and development partners)

mainly through the MEPT network, which gathers more than a hundred local NGOs and CSOs with an interest in education and gender equality.

The Local Education Group (LEG) with its relevant working groups clearly exerts significant influence. It is a way for CSOs to advocate for specific themes, for example the intersectionality of barriers for rural girls and girls with disabilities. The MEPT is part of all the thematic working groups and the Joint Sector Reviews and works with MINEDH through the Education Sector Support Fund (FASE). When included, CSOs have contributed with gender-responsive and gender-transformative propositions in the planning process. For example, MEPT prepared an advocacy document for the inclusion of gendered social norms in the ESP. CSOs have joined working groups where relevant and feel that some of their propositions were considered, for example to tackle social norms around child marriage and initiation rites at the community level. When other propositions were not accepted, they feel it was mostly because of budget constraints and gender not being a priority. Some interviewees from MINEDH feel that the planning process should be even more participative, with CSOs actively involved in the design at district, provincial and central level, because of their good knowledge of the local contexts.

The cross-cutting thematic working group (covering gender) was instrumental during the ESP design process to analyse issues around gender and propose areas of focus. Their inputs should be fed into the planning process through the MINEDH representatives but according to some respondents, this does not happen efficiently. As an alternative, the working group focal point informally communicates around their work with other working groups, including Planning, to make sure these inputs are considered⁴.

Donors also have a strong influence because they bring financial resources, and gender being a rising priority for all areas, they can push for a focus on gender in national policies⁵.

Voices

Gender Expertise

Within MINEDH, there is a Cross-cutting Department and a Gender Division. There are also gender focal points in each of the central level departments, in each provincial education administration, and at the district level. However, participants agree in saying that there is generally a lack of gender expertise within MINEDH, and that most gender focal points have been named without having previous gender expertise or knowledge. They often lack clear terms of reference and decision-making power. The Gender Division is small (4-6 people), most staff are

⁴ GIZ ITW

⁵ For example, the UNICEF pushed for inclusion of a reporting mechanism on violence at school level and is also funding most activities linked to this.

untrained, and donors agree in saying they can be considered gender-sensitive, but not gender-transformative. The ongoing trainings on gender-sensitive planning by UNGEI and UNICEF could be an opportunity to strengthen their capacities if coupled with on-the-job coaching.

The ESP design process was led by the MINEDH Planning Department which does not have any specific gender expertise even if they are, according to respondents, more sensitive to gender issues than a few years ago. The Cross-cutting Department and Gender Division staff were able to join any of the six working groups as preferred. They have also been specifically invited on a few occasions to discuss topics linked to gender, for example violence at school and how to tackle it. However, while interviewees agreed by saying that they mostly provided inputs to the primary level working group and the institutional & administrative development working group, which limited their capacity to influence and include gender-transformative aspects throughout the ESP. Their contribution to the other four working groups was reduced, partly because of a lack of understanding of their role.

Some interviewees also mentioned that better understanding of the gender-related issues in the Cross-cutting Department would make a difference, as they would need to input into all working groups, and they should bring their own propositions and solutions.

Development partners and CSOs bring most of the gender expertise available in the country. They are organised within the Local Education Group into several thematic working groups, led by development partners. The cross-cutting thematic working group deals with gender and inclusion issues and is led by GIZ. This group also includes representatives from UNICEF, UNESCO, several bilateral organisations (Finland, Sweden, etc), CSOs (MEPT), and the Cross-cutting Director and Gender Director at MINEDH, even though the last two do not often attend the meetings.

Gender specialists within donor organizations usually agree that a gender-sensitive approach is largely used within MINEDH and in the planning process, for example on disaggregated data for access and retention, or a general awareness of specific barriers for girls. However, they agree that gender-transformative ideas, for example tackling poorer learning outcomes for girls and the social norms behind it, have been mostly discarded.

An interviewee from MINEDH pointed out that the collaboration with the Ministry of Gender should be strengthened, to benefit from their gender expertise. This was not the case for this planning process.

Voices of young people and communities

Youth and communities have not been systematically included in the planning process. Besides the MEPT in the cross-cutting working group, according to most actors, there has been little involvement of youth groups, women's groups, or other

CSOs, particularly at the district and provincial level. Disability and inclusion CSOs were not involved in the design of the sector plan either. These actors have only been invited to presentation workshops.

“MINEDH people designed the plan and presented it to us, with no intention to significantly alter it based on the feedback they would receive. People with Disabilities should be included in this kind of design work” - CSO representative

Society

Social norms

Social norms do appear in the ESA and ESP as factors explaining specific difficulties affecting girls and root causes of gender inequalities. They also appear somewhat in the proposed specific objectives⁶, demonstrating a clear will to address these, but are not reflected at all in the log frame. There is also more focus on individual norms (families marrying their daughters for dowry for example) than on systemic norms prohibiting gender equality and girls' empowerment in the education system (cultural norms discouraging girls to speak in public, take leadership or aspire for higher education, etc).

However, respondents generally think the barriers related to social norms have not been largely understood, especially the intersectionality of different barriers, for example between rurality, gender, poverty and disability. One of the reasons mentioned by CSOs is a lack of capacity within MINEDH on gendered social norms and gender bias, and the fact that the gender focal points who are supposed to lead on including this thinking in the Ministry are also the fruit of their own sociocultural reality, including the same stereotypes and gender bias. An interviewee mentioned that in the future, MINEDH should work towards changing social norms and challenging behaviours.

“There is a very low understanding of how gendered social norms influence results, on top of other more tangible barriers. If these go unaddressed, then the root causes of exclusion will remain, and it is likely that progress will be only in numbers and not on quality” - CSO Representative

⁶ For example: tackling harmful social norms, improvement of learning environment including eradication of violence at school, reintegration of girls who left school due to early pregnancy and forced unions

Some actors mentioned that it is a missed opportunity not to have engaged more closely with traditional, community and religious leaders during design, as these actors are often the ones showing most resistance to change, and they have the power to stop progress at local level if they want to.

Resistance

A respondent confirmed that there is still resistance to gender equality with the Ministry at all levels, central, provincial and district, and some people for whom gender is a danger to their culture and a western concept only. Similarly, several interviewees identified that there is a strong resistance in the communities, as people often do not understand well what is meant by gender equality and are not willing to change social norms and gender roles.

Gender is still viewed by decision-makers as something separate, that concerns only the gender division or gender specialists, and not the whole ministry. Most people struggle to understand the transversality of gender and how a gender lens should be applied throughout all six ESP programmes. A respondent mentioned that MINEDH needs a clearer leadership across the sector on the need to put gender at the centre.

SWOT Analysis

3.1 Strengths

An existing Gender Policy that shows understanding of the main challenges girls face in accessing quality education, including harmful social practices and social norms.

A large evidence base on gender equality issues in education: such as numerous studies and analysis and disaggregated data at provincial and district level.

An existing cross-cutting working group within LEG which covers gender issues, gathering education partners, CSOs and the MOE.

An existing cross-cutting department and gender division within the MOE.

3.2 Weaknesses

No cross-sectoral approach and limited to zero collaboration with Ministry of Women or Ministry of Health during planning.

An unclear scope of work, weak capacity and training of the gender division staff and gender focal points which significantly limits their contributions.

Reduced collaboration of the gender division and the cross-cutting department with other parts of the MOE.

Reduced gender expertise within the group of people with decision-making power on the ESP, mainly the planning department.

3.3 Opportunities

On-going training on gender-sensitive planning and other relevant topics through UNICEF, UNGEI, and others, with a possibility to merge these and offer additional coaching to ensure that this new knowledge is used.

Significant external funding dedicated to gender-related themes in education currently and in the future⁷, which could be used to strengthen the gender equality the education system.

A CSO network that is strong and dedicated to gender equality in education, and able to push for stronger gender-sensitive planning in the future.

3.4 Threats

The lack of sustainability of gender-related budget if donor funding stops or reduces, in the absence of any state budget for this.

Potential shift in ministry and donors' priorities due to the on-going conflict in the North and potential natural disasters which increase existing pressures on the education system.

The lack of specific gender-related indicators which result in poor accountability on those aspects.

⁷ large World Bank Girls Ed programme, Finland, Canada, UNICEF, committed to this

Stakeholder Analysis

Interviewees were asked to plot where they felt various actors sat on the following scale. While opinions varied, the matrix below does give an indication as to which groups could be targeted with different engagement strategies.

Stakeholder matrix

Within key informant interviews the researchers included a stakeholder mapping exercise. KII's were asked to plot actors on two axes: level of power and influence; and commitment to positive change on gender equality in education.

This exercise resulted in a mapping of actors in four groupings:

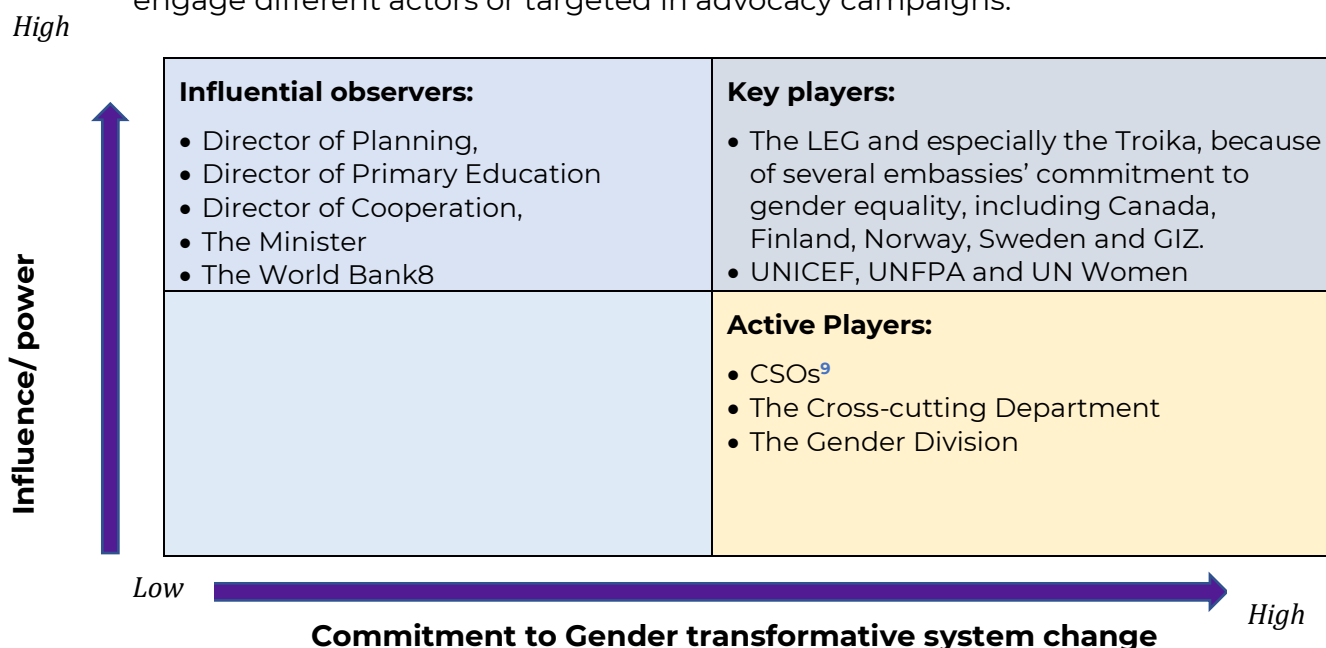
Influential observers: High power, low commitment to gender equality

Key players: High influence and high commitment

Active players: High commitment, lower influence

Observers: Low influence, low commitment

The results are valuable at country level to consider methods of influence to engage different actors or targeted in advocacy campaigns.



⁸ For the World Bank the explanation was that WB is investing a very important budget for girls' education through their programme, but do not supervise in detail what is happening as they have staff shortages in Mozambique.

⁹ Especially the MEPT and the CESC - Centro de Aprendizagem e Capacitação da Sociedade Civil.

List of Documents Reviewed

1. GCI. (2021). 'Gender at the Centre Initiative Baseline Study: Country-level Report - Mozambique.' April 2021.
2. GCI. (2022). 'Gender at the Centre Initiative Annual Report 2021: Report on GCI Activities and Achievements between January and December 2021.'
3. MINEDH. (2016). 'Estrategia De Genero Do Sector De Educaco E Desenvolvimento Humano Para O Período/Gender Strategy, 2016-20'. The Ministerio Da Educaco E Desenvolvimento Humano, Republic of Mozambique.
4. MINEDH. (2020). 'Plano Estrategico da Educacao/Education Sector Plan 2020-29'. The Ministerio Da Educaco E Desenvolvimento Humano, Republic of Mozambique.
5. MINEDH (2020). 'Mozambique Education Sector Plan, Appraisal Report.' May 2020.
6. MINEDH. (2021). 'Plano Estrategico De Educaco, Reuniao Anual de Revisao/Joint Sector Review, 2021.' The Ministerio Da Educaco E Desenvolvimento Humano, Republic of Mozambique.
7. MINEDH. (2022). 'Plano Estrategico De Educaco, Reuniao Anual de Revisao/Joint Sector Review, 2022.' The Ministerio Da Educaco E Desenvolvimento Humano, Republic of Mozambique.
8. Education Sector Analysis for Mozambique, 2019.
9. Mozambique Operational Plan 2020-22.