

Strategic Conflict Assessment

Mozambique

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April 2006

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study examines the risks affecting development in Mozambique, possible scenarios for conflict and policy responses. It identifies specific possibilities for peace-building by the UK team in Mozambique (DFID, BHC and MOD). It is based on the methodology of Strategic Conflict Assessment developed by DFID applied by a team of three consultants working for a 2-week period in country.

Relevant features of Mozambique today are-

- Centralized power based on a patronage system (clientelism);
- Exclusion of the political opposition;
- Regional imbalances;
- Grievances around corruption in service delivery;
- Voter alienation.

On the positive side, external involvement is no longer a serious threat to Mozambique. Ethnicity and religion issues are not likely to be the initial cause of conflict, but could be mobilised around severe political differences or a breakdown in governance. Economic disparities are a more significant feature of the current situation than social identities. Although Mozambique displays an impressive rate of economic growth, the benefits are patchy and have yet to make much impact in the rural hinterland. There is an emerging problem of alienated educated youth and unemployment which has yet to be fully analysed. The issue is not absolute deprivation but rising expectations that may not be met and increasing concentration of power and resources within a limited group.

In terms of dynamics, there is a disturbing interaction of 'greed' and 'grievance' elements that shows no sign of resolving itself and may become more intense. There is no immediate prospect of violent conflict and the risk is low-medium even in the longer term. But there are reasons for concern, especially as aid is closely connected with the processes that could lead to trouble.

Electoral processes are an obvious trigger for violence, and in the next three years there will be three sets of elections. There are also risks of crisis arising from poor response to natural disasters and external economic events, such as sudden increases in the price of fuel. Conflict might develop along lines of contention between elite groups, but then mobilise the grievances of the rural poor and ultimately take on ethnic and religious characteristics. A history of conflict and hidden caches of weapons make Mozambique a country in which the risk of conflict cannot be ignored.

Governance is the key issue, and here donors face a dilemma. Clientelism and patronage may become more intense because the checks and balances in the political system are weakening and the demands for patronage are always increasing. The justice system is already highly politicized. The political opposition is currently ineffective, partly because of its own failures and partly because it has been deliberately and systematically undermined by the ruling party. The political opposition could collapse or withdraw from

electoral politics, leaving a single-party system. Civil society has not been effective as a restraining influence and is being drawn into the same circuit of patronage. Despite the appearance of a multi-party state, in practice Mozambique is controlled by an oligarchy within the ruling party which purchases support through patronage, much of which derives from aid.

Representing more than half the national budget, aid is a major element in the patronage system but this does not necessarily mean that it is ineffective. The problem is that it operates in a strongly politicized environment and has profound political impacts. Although the state uses the language and forms of pro-poor development, it is not clear whether this represents a commitment that transcends other interests. Ideology is notably absent in the new brand of FRELIMO and pro-poor development often seems little more than an extension of the patronage system into the rural areas.

In this context, democracy provides the strongest incentive for development. So long as FRELIMO needs to please the voters, most of whom are poor, there is a clear incentive for development. But if democracy erodes then the pressure for patronage within the elite may take full precedence over development. The dilemma is that a sudden withdrawal or reduction of donor aid is itself one of the potential shocks that could trigger conflict but maintaining the flow of aid uncritically will compound the underlying problems of governance.

One of the principal reasons for concern about democracy in Mozambique is the phenomenon of voter apathy. There has been a steady decline in voter turnout from 88% in 1994 to around 40% in recent elections. This is partly due to lack of confidence in the electoral system and partly due to falling support for both the political parties. As the number of voters decreases, the possibility of a sudden political swing cannot be ruled out. A RENAMO victory might be positive in terms of democratic balance but disastrous in practice because FRELIMO has developed a stranglehold on state institutions and there could not be a smooth transition of power. The possibility of a RENAMO victory might provoke a violent reaction on the side of the ruling party. Both ways, the current situation is unstable.

An argument increasingly heard, even among donors, is that authoritarianism might be the answer. Authoritarian states have the reputation for delivering short-term benefits but there is a tendency for absolute power to lead to absolute corruption. In a situation where corruption in the form of clientelism is already endemic, and where there is no clear ideological commitment to development of the poorest, authoritarianism is a very risky proposition. It is important that donors maintain a clear position on this as it will be very difficult to reverse the erosion of democracy. On the contrary, donors should vigorously oppose authoritarianism in the interests of poor people.

A better approach would be to seek to engage the people more closely in the process of development by spreading information more widely, listening to complaints (especially about corruption) and preventing the capture of development by political actors. With

greater awareness of development issues, elections are more likely to succeed and political parties will be led to give them higher priority.

One of the problems is that Mozambique has been categorized by donors as a ‘success’ and aid policy now reflects this positive assumption. Donors have moved towards budget support, collective action and a flexible approach in order to accommodate government interests. The monitoring of government programmes is largely conducted by government institutions, without external scrutiny. This has many merits but it institutionalises the assumption of ‘success’ and makes it more difficult to apply pressure in sensitive ways. With so many disappointments in Africa, and aid budgets rising, Mozambique will be expected to absorb yet more funds and there is a danger that funding will increase regardless of capacity.

It would be unwise to assume that the more aid flows to Mozambique the more stable it will become. Aid may fuel greater demands for patronage on a wider and more lavish scale, exacerbating competition among ‘greed’ elements and increasing the grievances of poorer people. In many ways Mozambique is still a ‘fragile state’. Donors should continue to bear in mind the DAC Principles for working in fragile states and, in the case of DFID, the cautions enjoined in the ‘Fragile States’ paper. Such an approach would put more focus on contextual analysis, more emphasis on justice, independent monitoring of government’s performance on poverty reduction and balancing the powers of the state with other institutions including civil society. In summary this report proposes a more cautious approach, with greater recognition for the potential negative effects of aid and the fragility of the political system.

Conclusions and recommendations

Despite Mozambique’s positive progress and willingness to engage with the agenda of donors, the trend is towards centralization and consolidation of power within a narrow elite, which will be obliged to offer patronage to a wide and ‘greedy’ circle of clients. The tendency towards corruption will undermine development and also undermine democratic processes, potentially creating a vicious spiral. Many of the underlying problems in the civil war, notably regional disparities, remain unresolved and could be mobilised in conflict between elites.

The UK team in Mozambique should work with other donors to–

- Spread information about the PARPA to poor people;
- Develop independent means of monitoring the impact of the PARPA;
- Monitor the use of decentralized district funds;
- Ensure that electoral processes are scrupulously fair and perceived to be so;
- Support the effective functioning of the political opposition;
- Insist on prosecution in cases of corruption related to aid and development;
- Build the national capacity to respond to natural disasters;
- Reduce regional asymmetries;

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- Build the capacity of civil society especially in the neglected regions;
- Support civil society to hold government accountable to the people in relation to development;
- Apply the cautions and principles for working in Fragile States;
- Develop contingency plans for sudden changes in the level of aid support.

As a new peace-building project, the UK team should develop a framework for ACPP funding to include-

- A programme for information dissemination on development issues;
- Support to elements of civil society that seek to hold the state accountable to the people, notably specialist bodies to conduct and disseminate independent analysis of government budgets at district, provincial and national levels;
- Capacity building and financial support for specific peace-building NGOs;
- Support to the security services for disaster response;
- Research on the issue of unemployed or alienated youth.

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Bibliography

ACRONYMS

ACPP	Africa Conflict Prevention Pool
BHC	British High Commission
CAP	Country Assistance Plan
DFID	Department for International Development (UK Government)
FRELIMO	Frente de Libertacao do Mocambique (Mozambique Liberation Front)
INE	Instituto Nacional de Estatistica (National Institute of Statistics)
MOD	Ministry of Defence
PARPA	Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty
PDD	Party for Peace, Democracy and Development
RENAMO	Movimento do Resistencia Nacional
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SCA	Strategic Conflict Assessment
TOR	Terms of Reference

Disclaimer

This report has been written by a group of independent consultants for DFID. The views expressed are those of the team, and do not necessarily represent those of DFID

Introduction

This Strategic Conflict Assessment (SCA) was commissioned by DFID Mozambique in order to contribute to the development of a new Country Assistance Plan (CAP), to contribute to debates around the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PARPA) and also to suggest priorities for the Africa Conflict Prevention Pool (ACPP) in relation to Mozambique. See Terms of Reference –Annex 1. Specifically the SCA team was requested to analyse the ‘nature, dynamics and causes of conflict’ as well as linkages between different factors, regional and international dimensions and also the relationship between poverty and conflict. The team was requested to make recommendations in relation to-

- Donor strategies
- Integrating conflict into development planning and activity relating to governance
- Conflict prevention
- Potential peace-building activity

The methodology for SCA was developed by DFID and published in 2002 as ‘Conducting Conflict Assessments –Guidance Notes’ -see DFID website. The methodology is highly appropriate for the tasks set out in the TOR. Essentially it begins with a mapping of potential causes of conflict and leads to an examination of the linkages between these elements and dynamics. The mapping includes local, national, regional and international levels. In the second stage, current responses are considered, notably those by government, donors and civil society. The third stage is a comparison of the conflict mapping with the current responses and identifies ways forward.

In practice, the SCA process in Mozambique may be viewed as a ‘negative check’. Development policy analysis tends to make positive assumptions about the direction of progress. SCA makes a negative assumption, looking for the problems and tensions that could disrupt development processes.

The team comprised-

-Amandio Mavela from Angola, who has extensive qualifications and experience in peace-building;

-Joao Pereira from Mozambique, who has written extensively on issues relating to elections and governance and is currently Lecturer at Eduardo Mondlane University (Department of Political Science);

-Jennifer Stuttle, Conflict Adviser from DFID London, who has special responsibility within DFID for the SCA methodology;

Tony Vaux, UK-based consultant, who helped develop and apply the SCA methodology for DFID and visited Mozambique regularly during the conflict of the 1980s.

The time allowed for this mission was very short and was shortened further by a national holiday to just 13 days of active work plus a few days for reading and reporting. This is considerably less time than is normal for an SCA process. Nevertheless the team could address the problems adequately, partly because two similar studies had been conducted

in 2003¹ and also thanks to the extensive contacts and strong local support from Joao Pereira. Over 30 interviews were conducted in Maputo and Beira, covering a wide range of stakeholders including government, opposition, public institutions, academia, media, Mozambican NGOs and donors. The main omission was direct discussion with people in rural areas but we were able to draw upon existing research.

We thank the DFID office for their support, particularly Sam Bickersteth who directed the process and Paulo Gentil who identified and made available an extensive range of literature.

Section One: Social and Economic Issues

1.1. History of conflict in Mozambique

Today, Mozambique is better known for a successful end to war rather than as a country giving concern about new conflict. But as World Bank research has indicated, the strongest indicator of future conflict is that such conflict has occurred in the past². This means that Mozambique must be regarded as 'at risk' at least in principle.

The war between FRELIMO and RENAMO was instigated and supported from outside Mozambique –by elements within Rhodesia/Zimbabwe and South Africa. The regional context is very different today and such external involvement is unlikely to lead to conflict. But this does not mean that war can be discounted. The civil war was also driven by internal factors such as reaction against FRELIMO's socialist policies, especially collectivisation, and the grievances of traditional rulers and religious groups who felt side-lined by FRELIMO. There was an underlying confrontation between city-based modernity and deep-rooted tradition. Problems of disparity between the regions and the treatment of different ethnic groups became features of this conflict and date back into struggles that have recurred throughout Mozambique's colonial history.

Many of the weapons that fuelled past wars remain hidden around the country. The remoteness of Maputo from the rest of the country and underlying problems of regional disparity provide suitable conditions for guerrilla warfare, as they have done in the past. As FRELIMO adopts a new form of modernism, characterized by market economics and an open door to the influence of foreign investment and ideas, old resentments might become caught up in new struggles. The trigger may not come from neighbouring states, as in the past, but from within Mozambique.

¹ Grobbelaar and Lala (2003) and Population Studies Centre of the Eduardo Mondlane University (2003)

² Collier et al (2003)

Although the risk may be small, the consequences of conflict would be so devastating that they should never be discounted. Conflict could rapidly undermine everything that has been achieved in the fourteen years of peace. For this reason alone, we consider that a 'conflict check' is a necessary element in strategic review. In the two following sections we examine potential causes of conflict in Mozambique today, dividing them into social, economic and political factors. In Section Three we consider how security issues interact with these factors and in Section Four examine the dynamics for further conflict and then current responses in Section Five. Conclusions and recommendations are presented in Section Six.

1.2. Social Exclusion

Ethnicity. Although Mozambique is divided into 16 major ethnic groups, ethnicity has had remarkably little influence on the conduct of previous wars. Under colonial rule, the Portuguese manipulated the multiple ethnic groups, and inter-group conflict, by implementing a conscious policy of 'divide and rule' but never created the kinds of division that were the colonial legacy elsewhere in Africa. In the last few years there have been some minor violent episodes relating to the use of different ethnic languages in churches and to elections, but none of these has been on a large scale. The reasons for this phenomenon are complex but there is little doubt about the overall conclusion; none of our respondents rated ethnicity as a significant cause of conflict although most acknowledged that it could be mobilised to intensify conflict if it already existed³.

In relation to most other African countries, ethnicity in Mozambique plays a minor role in politics. While more recently there has been a symbiosis of different ethnic groups in government, there is still a perception that members of Southern ethnic groups enjoy better opportunities through the political system in Mozambique than those from the central and northern parts of the country in terms of jobs, political positions and business opportunities. In this view, FRELIMO is dominated by elites of the Shangana-Ronga and Makonde groups, while opposition parties are seen to be controlled by the Ndaw, Sena, and Makwa. In general, divisions in the country currently revolve around regional differences and relate to economic factors rather than around the social issue of ethnicity but there remains a possibility that ethnicity could be mobilised during a desperate political struggle. It might not be the immediate cause of conflict, but it could be the form in which conflict manifested itself; therefore ethnicity cannot be discounted.

Religion. According to the 1997 census, the population distribution according to religion is as follows: Catholic -24 percent; Protestant -8 percent; Muslim -18 percent; Zionist churches -18 percent; Others (including those with no religion) -32 percent. Religious communities tend to draw members from across ethnic, political, economic, and racial lines although there is some tendency for Catholics to side with FRELIMO and protestants with RENAMO.

³ This is consistent with Collier (1998) who argues that highly diverse societies are less likely to suffer conflict than relatively homogenous ones with just two or three major ethnic groups.

The Northern provinces and the coastal strip are strongly Muslim. Muslims constitute 62% of the population of Niassa but this is still a small number within the total population since Niassa is the least populous of the provinces. Muslims are 55% of the population of Cabo Delgado. The greatest numerical concentration of Muslims occurs in Nampula province, but they only account for 39% of the population of that province. Although there are both Shias and Sunnis there is no sign of tension between them. There has been an influx of funding from the Middle East for mosques and Koranic schools but it is almost inconceivable that Islamic extremists could gain a foothold here. Islamic practice is so lax that sterner Muslims would receive no support from local people. Money may create some manifestations of religious formality, but these are likely to be superficial. Tension between Christians and Moslems is remarkably absent, with virtually no episodes of such violence in recent history.

During the socialist period of the 1970s and 1980s, FRELIMO intervened in the internal affairs of religious institutions, nationalized hospitals and schools, and forbade citizens to attend religious ceremonies. Catholic and Muslim institutions were marginalized from the social and political life of the country and tension developed between churches and the State. FRELIMO was more ambiguous towards the Protestant Church than the Catholics. During the civil war, RENAMO developed different strategies to gain religious support, avoiding attacks on churches, protecting priests, nurses, and pastors, and allowing citizens to pray and to attend religious services.

Race. There continues to be an element of reaction against the colonial social order in which white, coloured and Indian people were dominant. There is a tendency to sideline these groups from the most senior posts in government. Although businessmen from those communities wield considerable political influence, they are not given high-profile positions. This may be in deference to public perceptions that non-blacks have profited disproportionately. In reality black Mozambicans from a range of ethnic backgrounds have also profited, especially in recent times. The situation is complex. There remains a possibility that minorities could become scapegoats in a political crisis, but since these are very small minorities, this would not lead to violent conflict.

Family. The family remains the strongest social unit in Mozambique. Each family will protect its own interests and provide employment for its own members even to the detriment of others. This tradition is a major source of social security but it is also a source of patronage, nepotism and corruption. There are signs that the ruling clique is increasingly defined in terms of family relationships rather than wider political connections.

Gender. The status of women in Mozambique is extremely low, with limited rights and sharply defined gender roles. Literacy and levels of education for women are much lower than for men. This means that women lack information on which to make political choices and have difficulty in contributing to such debates, especially when discouraged by men. If they judge by their own experience, health and education services are likely to be significant factors in how they vote. This may mean that the importance of these

services is under-rated, and problems that women face may not be addressed. Corruption in the health and education services, for example, could be a major determinant in women's voting patterns. The neglect of women's education and participation could increase the volatility of electoral results. Moreover, women's education has consistently been identified as a critical factor in lifting families out of poverty⁴. Greater involvement of women in political and development issues is likely to have a positive effect in relation to conflict.

1.3. Economic Exclusion

Plunder of state resources by elites. At the end of the civil war, strong pressures from the international community led to a rapid process of privatisation which has enabled an elite group to acquire extraordinary wealth and to use this wealth to reinforce and consolidate political power. The process of bank privatisation in particular led to the disappearance of huge sums of money. Journalist Carlos Cardoso was assassinated when he tried to identify and hold to account those who were responsible. A senior official who tried to follow the same course was similarly assassinated and those responsible have yet to be brought to justice. Indeed, the justice system is tightly controlled by those with political power.

Public funds have been used on a massive scale to bale out the banks and other failed privatisation ventures⁵. In effect, money is taken away from national development and given to the extractive clique. But the effect is masked so long as aid replaces the losses. Perhaps the most serious impact is the subsequent failure of privatised industries. This has contributed to unemployment, and also closed off the opportunities of employment for the younger generation. With dramatic increases in levels of secondary and university education, Mozambique needs a flourishing economy simply to absorb the new aspirations of the middle class. Mozambique is becoming another example of the problem of chronic unemployment among educated youth –a phenomenon associated with rising crime and potential for conflict. As far as we could ascertain this phenomenon has not yet been studied and it is difficult to provide detailed estimates of its extent and more specific characteristics.

Corruption. The political elite have gained not only through privatisation but also by exploiting their official positions. External investors are often forced to give shares and partnerships to ministers in order to gain the necessary approvals and certificates⁶. This has deterred internal as well as external investors and tended to limit commercial development to larger schemes. Corruption had a low profile during the post-

⁴ See for example IFPRI (2004) Research project 132 *Rebuilding after war: microlevel determinants of poverty reduction in Mozambique*.

⁵ For a much more thorough analysis of Mozambique's economic weaknesses see for example Population Studies Centre (2003) p43 onwards and Ratilal (2001)

⁶ According to our sources; published material on this may be lacking.

independence period⁷ but has now become open and obvious, spreading to the lowest levels of officialdom. Nearly half the people in one study had been victims of corruption in the previous six months. The most common demands were in health (30%) and education (27%)⁸. This may be partly because government salaries have been reduced under external pressures for structural adjustment, but the effect is to create grievances against government.

Corruption also opens the way for illegal exploitation of natural resources such as timber. This occurs on a wide scale and contributes to a general sense of exploitation of remote rural areas by a greedy central authority.

Water and power. Mozambique's geography as a coastal strip between the plateau of Southern Africa and the sea leads to the location of dams, notably the massive Cahora Bassa, along its western borders. The economic domination of South Africa enables it to maintain control of the water flow and electric power and Mozambique is forced to buy back the electric power at a greatly inflated rate. If South Africa were to withhold power there could be a serious shock to the Mozambican economy. Similarly, the flow of water in Mozambique's rivers is determined to some extent by the policies of its neighbours and their own projects of dam-building and water use. This has given rise to some apprehension that conflict within the region could develop from disputes over natural resources.

External investment. There is a general perception that South African and Portuguese businesses have exploited Mozambique's weakness at the end of the war. This may be an element in the racial tensions described above. There has also been criticism of the IMF and World Bank for pushing forward with privatisation under conditions of open competition before a black Mozambican middle-class had been able to develop. The result, so the argument goes, is that the advantages of peace have accrued mainly to foreigners and Indians; black Mozambicans have never been able to develop as entrepreneurs and remain caught in the informal sector, which has been treated by government as practically illegal. This gives such Mozambicans the feeling of being excluded from business in their own country.

Land-grabbing. At the international level, there have been extensive incursions by Malawian farmers into Niassa, challenging Mozambican understandings about the borders. Although there is no indication of any military confrontation, the practice seems to be persistent and could possibly lead to tension between the two countries. The crisis in Zimbabwe has led to an inflow of Zimbabwean businessmen with the economic power to obtain disproportionate advantages for themselves. There have been tensions, for example, around the allocation of large tracts of land in Manica. There is a remote danger that Zimbabweans based in Mozambique might become engaged in political activity to topple President Mugabe. But the governments of the region have been assiduous in

⁷ Hanlon considers that corruption was non-existent whereas others such as de Brito have claimed that corruption existed but was hidden.

⁸ Etica Mocambique, Estudo sobre corrupcao Mocambique 2001, Maputo 2001

avoiding any suspicion that they would support such activity, to the extent of condoning Mugabe's actions rather than challenge him.

FRELIMO's legacy of collectivisation has created uncertainties about land ownership throughout Mozambique and this has given rise to local tensions. But this is one of the few areas where effective legislation combined with dynamic interventions by NGOs has greatly reduced the problem.

New mineral resources. There are rumours of new discoveries of oil. One such rumour is that oil has already been discovered in the RENAMO heartlands of Sofala and that this is being kept secret in order to make sure that RENAMO gets no benefit from it. Such rumours may be untrue or wildly exaggerated, but in a country lacking independent sources of information, rumour may have greater influence than truth, and give rise to actions that might surprise outsiders.

Regional asymmetry. The most important form of economic exclusion is the inequality in development between Mozambique's regions, known as 'regional asymmetry'. The central provinces of Sofala, Manica, Tete and Zambezia have long perceived themselves to be neglected, perhaps deliberately, as a result of government policies. There appears to be some truth in this. The UNDP Human development Report indicates that although incomes in Maputo have risen consistently, provinces such as Zambezia have actually become poorer and that the overall ratio between the richest and poorest provinces has increased⁹. The critical factor, however, is that the poorer provinces are those showing the strongest support for RENAMO. Arguably the major factor in recent years has been the decline of Zimbabwe rather than policies coming from Maputo. Sofala relies on Zimbabwean trade to enrich the port of Beira and without such trade, Beira inevitably faces economic stagnation. But most of the large recent investments have been in the south and the perception remains that the central region is being punished for its support to RENAMO¹⁰.

Although there are also considerable disparities between Districts, these have less significance as potential causes of conflict because they are less likely to relate to people's identities or to the key disparity between Maputo (as seat of government) and the rest of the country.

Lack of development impact. Mozambique has a reputation of being a 'success' and the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PARPA) is proceeding more or less according to plan, but the fact remains that Mozambique is still among the lowest countries in the world on the Human Development Index¹¹. Economic growth is often cited as the reason for Mozambique's 'success' but GDP is not a good indicator of pro-poor development and in a post-war situation increases in GDP are practically inevitable. In the case of

⁹ UNDP (2001)

¹⁰ DFID reports that poverty has fallen most in Sofala; the resentments being articulated may be focused more on lack of development than poverty reduction.

¹¹ 170th out of 173 in 2002. Progress in the future will be reduced by the impact of HIV/AIDS on life expectancy.

Mozambique, GDP is particularly unreliable as a measure of satisfaction among the people. Commerce and services account for about half of GDP but employ only about 15% of the workforce whereas over 80% are employed in agriculture, of whom 72% rely on subsistence agriculture¹². There has been growth in agriculture but this is largely in the commercial sector. For subsistence farmers increased yields are almost entirely the result of cultivating more land following the end of the war and higher productivity following the demise of collectivisation. During the civil war, Mozambique suffered a profound recession and despite progress in recent years the per capita income is still lower than it was in 1975¹³.

In relation to conflict the critical question is how people perceive these issues. Interviews for this SCA showed that perceptions of positive development were highly qualified, particularly by region. There were more roads and some small factories around the major urban centres. But unemployment was persistently raised as a serious problem¹⁴ and remote rural areas were thought to have gained little or nothing from recent progress. Rising prices and corruption were commonly cited as grievances.

Rural people are dissatisfied because they had been promised schools and hospitals as one of the major issues in electoral campaigning. In some cases these have now been built but the quality of services is not considered to have improved. Corruption had increased the cost of services and there was a lack of staff for the new buildings; the level of morale among staff was thought to be low. Overall surveys suggest that people in rural areas are less impressed with the country's progress than are the donors. Household surveys conducted over the last few years by the national Statistics Institute (INE) indicate that about a third of people think they are worse off, and a third that they are better off with the remaining third thinking that things are about the same¹⁵.

1.4. Conclusions

Social factors such as ethnic and religious divisions are much less significant than might be expected whereas Mozambique's particular form of economic development is much more problematic than might be thought. There is an almost complete lack of interest in the possibility of secession and widespread respect for Mozambique as a single political entity, despite the major imbalance caused by 'regional asymmetry'. Those who are critical of the political system do not propose the division of the country. This suggests that any conflict in the future is likely to take the form of a struggle by economically-excluded groups to gain greater power within the central government, rather than to form a break-away movement. People regard themselves as Mozambicans first and are conscious of a common heritage but of course this does not mean that they will not compete for power.

¹² Lala (2004) p4

¹³ Population Studies Centre (2003) p42

¹⁴ In Public Sector Reform Technical Unit (UTRESP) (2004) *National Survey on Governance and Corruption 2004* unemployment is identified as the most important of all problems in the public perception

¹⁵ INE (2001 onwards)

It should not be assumed that Mozambicans have renounced violence for ever following the appalling devastation of the civil war. Analysis of conflicts in Africa suggests that desperate poverty does not cause conflict; people simply suffer and die. Conflict occurs on the back of rising expectations, as development begins to show results and where there is much to be gained by state capture¹⁶. The generous scale of aid in itself presents a valuable resource to those in power. The ruling elite can plunder aid, or more exactly use aid in order to achieve and maintain power through patronage. Thus, aid itself could be something to fight over.

Section Two: The Crisis of Governance

2.1. Voter alienation

Over just a decade the situation has reversed from 88% of people voting in 1994 to 70% in 1999 and around 40% turnout in 2004¹⁷. It seems likely that this is for two reasons. Firstly, the main political parties have been unable to mobilise voters who have supported them in the past and secondly there has been some loss of confidence in the electoral system, especially among RENAMO supporters. Whatever the explanation, the main problem today is that election results continue to be unpredictable. Although it is widely assumed that FRELIMO will continue to consolidate power and may achieve better results in future elections this is by no means certain. Election results in the past have been very close indeed. In the 1999 election, the tally of the total provincial votes translates into support of 57% for RENAMO and 43% for FRELIMO although, because of the peculiarities of the Mozambican electoral system, this did not translate into a corresponding number of seats¹⁸.

Even in 1994, at the end of a bitter war, RENAMO won 45% of the seats compared with 55% won by FRELIMO. Studies of the electoral results suggest that minor variations in the electoral system or its functioning could have led to a different result. In 1999 RENAMO claimed that the elections were not properly conducted and rejected the results, claiming that the international observers did not investigate deeply enough and did not scrutinise the process after the initial votes were cast. RENAMO supporters suspect that Western countries wanted a FRELIMO victory and therefore rushed to confirm the results without proper process. In the 2004 elections there may have been as

¹⁶ One Africa-wide study 'What makes us secure: African views on security' by the Commission on Human Security and Africa Institute of South Africa in 2004 places poverty and lack of basic needs as top on the list of security concerns ahead of war etc. But this refers to personal vulnerability (human security as defined by the Commission); it does not imply that poverty leads to war.

¹⁷ Nuvung (ed) (2006) pp2-4. DFID cites official estimates of turnout at 36% and figures from EISA indicating 43%.

¹⁸ Grobbelaar and Lala (2003) p18

many as 2 million non-existent voters, allowing the electoral authorities huge scope for manipulation¹⁹. Even independent observers have concluded that the process of international observation has been unsatisfactory²⁰.

FRELIMO leaders are much more aware of their precarious position than outsiders, and act accordingly. The functions of the state are systematically co-opted to ensure electoral success. The composition of the electoral commission and the 'independent' observatory are tightly managed, with the full weight of political power. There are signs that FRELIMO is extending its control, with those serving the state even at the lowest levels being threatened with loss of jobs if they do not join and support FRELIMO. This has now become the widespread practice in universities, government and in the health and education services.

A sense of scepticism combined with lack of information and debate may be some of the factors underlying voter alienation. Newspapers have only a tiny circulation and are subject to state control either through advertising revenues or through other pressures and threats. Although the state-owned Radio Mozambique reaches most rural areas it does not focus on information and is closely under the control of FRELIMO. Many interviewees lamented the absence of community radio but said it was not a viable business proposition because of lack of advertising revenue. With such a lack of reliable sources of information, the issue is not so much what is actually happening but what rumours are circulating. If voters become less willing to believe promises they may be swayed by 'scare stories' or imagined threats. Such a system is highly unpredictable and easily manipulated by those who might want to use violence to achieve their ends.

2.2. Political Opposition

At the end of the civil war, Mozambique could have gone in the direction of a government of national unity, with power sharing between the parties as in South Africa. But the peace negotiations led instead to an adversarial style of democracy based on a limited form of proportional representation in Parliament. Essentially it is a 'winner takes all' system. RENAMO seems to have agreed to this because it was confident of electoral victory. It has focused on achieving absolute power rather than on acting as a 'responsible' opposition. Indeed, the notion of opposition as a necessary and satisfactory role was completely discounted by interviewees and does not seem to tally with Mozambican perceptions. The idea is simply to achieve power.

But it would be wrong to discount RENAMO completely. Firstly, there is no other check on FRELIMO. Secondly, RENAMO still has real popular support. It is true that RENAMO was largely created by outsiders but it was built up from blocks of deeply-rooted grievance. Its roots are in rural tradition and conservatism but over the last years it has also gathered around itself the more modern type of conservatives –those who chafe

¹⁹ Gloor (2004)

²⁰ Ruigrok (2004)

at the dominance of the state and the corruption of state institutions. Today, RENAMO exhibits two different personalities. There is the traditional rural-based and ethnic-oriented conservatism of the leader, Afonso Dhlakama. He has guarded his power carefully and ejected those who show any sign of independence. FRELIMO has found it easy to manipulate him with pecuniary gifts and this has weakened his credibility without inducing him to share power. The other side of RENAMO is more like a conventional opposition or ‘anti-FRELIMO’ faction that is less committed to rural conservatism. Some of the RENAMO MPs have conceptions of a different type of state. The Mayor of Beira, for example, has cleaned up the city (in all senses), by making local government work effectively –in striking contrast with his FRELIMO predecessors.

Other parties have made little impact on the dominance of FRELIMO and RENAMO. In the Mozambican system, parties have to achieve 5% of the vote to gain any representation at all. The PDD broke away from RENAMO under Raul Domingos but has not succeeded in developing electoral support. No other party seems able to mount a serious challenge.

The threat to security lies in the lack of restraint on the ruling group within FRELIMO combined with strong pressures for patronage. For RENAMO to mount an effective challenge it would have to find an accommodation between its ‘backward’ and ‘forward’ elements and this seems unlikely while Dhlakama remains in power. This leaves the possibility of renewal from within FRELIMO, and this too seems unlikely. The more plausible scenario is further concentration of state power –and the only constraint on that power coming from within the system of patronage.

2.3. Culture of Impunity

Despite massive fraud, especially in the process of privatisation, no senior government representative has been convicted and corruption continues with impunity. It occurs not only on the grand scale but persistently in the abuse of government property and authority. Cars provided for government use are appropriated by the relatives of Ministers. Because cars and offices are treated as status symbols, this leads to spectacular extravagance, often at the cost of aid budgets. Mozambican attitudes towards such practices are mixed. On one side, the ‘big man’ is expected to display extravagant wealth and power. On the other, people in rural areas develop a general sense that they are being cheated.

It has been claimed that 45% of the money need to replace funds lost in bank collapses came from donors²¹. Debt relief has certainly enabled Mozambique to spend more on development, but new debts are mounting up as the country continues to borrow funds from the World Bank that will never be repaid. Although this issue is constantly on the donors’ agenda, aid has continued to flow and increase, despite the culture of impunity.

²¹ Hanlon (2002) p9

2.4. Clientelism

From the outset, Mozambican leaders have shown little sympathy for the notion of separating the state from the Party. The Constitution gives the President wide-ranging powers, including the direct control of the police, judiciary and security forces. This power has been used to protect FRELIMO's supporters and sympathisers. It prevents the development of independent state functions including effective oversight bodies, except where absolutely demanded by the donors.

The socialist ideology of FRELIMO has long since been replaced by pragmatism, opening the way for decisions and policies based on patronage. Relations based on extended families (and in some cases ethnic affiliations) determine access to state resources and political power. FRELIMO operates as a state within the state. In practice, formal official relationships may not be as important in decision-making as relationships between Party members. This leads to the exclusion of those outside the Party and the clique within the Party. Within FRELIMO there appears to be a tension between the President's group and the former power group associated with Chissano²². Behind all this is a murky world of financial relationships and trade-offs. Such a system delivers general benefits for the country almost by accident or as a result of external pressure. Where formal bodies are established to regulate government activity, Party linkages will eventually undermine their independence.

Loyalty within such a system has to be constantly fuelled with rewards and power can only be exerted by those who have resources to control. Hence, the formal financial processes are shadowed by informal financial processes that reflect patronage relationships. Even the political opposition becomes part of the same system. But the rewards of patronage as opposition are nothing compared with the rewards of actual power. Up to now, RENAMO has contented itself with the prospect of victory in future elections but with that hope fading, will they be content with more modest rewards? The answer may be that RENAMO will always be on the lookout for ways of achieving direct power, and might use violence to do so. Therefore it is important to keep a focus on the tensions in society –for these are the tools that will be used by anyone who seeks power.

2.5. The Role of Aid

The poverty reduction strategy (PARPA) is specifically aimed at addressing absolute poverty and other donors have focused on economic development. But household surveys in the rural interior indicate only a very modest sense of improvement in the lives of poorer people and suggest that these improvements fall short of expectations. Independent observers have suggested that the PARPA is too easily deflected from the top priority areas of health and education and have criticised cuts in the education

²² Graca Machel, widow of the former President, has brought some of these issues out into the open but the debate remains limited within a narrow elite

programme²³. Against this, according to Hanlon at least, aid is ‘effectively encouraging corruption and state capture.’²⁴

The preponderance of aid in national budgets creates a situation in which the state is accountable to donors rather than to the people. Donors influence government strategies, whether they intend to or not. The process of achieving the ‘agreed’ goals is monitored by the donors who can turn the tap one way or the other. Since the goal of the political elite is to maximize aid rather than reduce poverty, Mozambique willingly presents a cooperative ‘front’ to the donors. Government is sometimes able to pass the blame for economic shocks on external donors notably the World Bank and IMF.

In theory the poverty reduction strategy (PARPA), like the electoral process, is subject to public scrutiny and influence through the ‘Observatories’ in which civil society representatives sit with government officials. But even civil society can be controlled by FRELIMO through its secretive network of incentives, threats and linkages. If government decides to control a process there is little that can be done to stop it. The media have never played an important role in such processes but until recently academics and intellectuals offered alternative views. Interviewees generally commented that this is now impossible. Academic independence has been severely undermined and the outlets for publication of other views are tightly controlled.

But the real constraint is that the patronage system means that there is no-one to listen to such views, nor any interest in them. Most people are concerned with the world of patronage and advancement rather than what outsiders might regard as the ‘real’ world of development. The perceptions are reversed with development seen by the Mozambican elite as something unreal and irrelevant.

Mozambique is moving in the direction of being a single party state, or perhaps something like a royal court in which favour and advancement depend on informal relationships. The danger comes from those who receive no benefit from the system or who consider that they do not benefit enough. As demands and expectations rise, it will become more and more difficult for the state to satisfy everyone; and as resentments grow, those in power may have to resort to repression rather than rewards.

2.6. Conclusions

Far from being an exception to African problems of governance, Mozambique exhibits many of the same problems of what Africa Watch has politely called ‘democratic minimalism’²⁵. A client-based form of governance necessitates a relentless need to extract resources from the state in order to fuel patronage. The result is that development impact is reduced. So long as elections continue there is a semblance of democracy and a

²³ Hanlon (2002) p4

²⁴ Hanlon (2002) p1

²⁵ Ostheimer (2001)

theoretical option for change. But such regimes exhibit a tendency to erode constitutional protections over time and ultimately use violence to achieve their ends.

The problem for donors is that aid is an important tool in the centralisation of power. It helps to satisfy enough grievances to maintain stability but does little to increase the influence of poor people in electoral choices. Aid is not creating a rights-based and assertive culture among poorer people but possibly serving to alienate them from political processes. Because funding for health and education comes from donors abroad, government cannot be held fully accountable; the state can always argue that deficiencies are the result of donor policies. It is difficult for people to assert control over services through user groups when the policies and practices are largely negotiated between donors and the government rather than between the government and the people.

Economic development and rising aspirations will create greater tensions, at least among the educated and wealthier classes. The process of providing patronage will reach its limits, and then must consolidate in order to deal with demands that cannot be met. One of the critical factors in this is a rising generation of educated young people who will not be able to achieve the rewards and benefits that the older generation has acquired through patronage. The economic base has not kept up with the spread of education –there is little for this new aspiring generation to do.

Section Three: Security Issues

3.1. Controlling crime

Mozambique has an increasing rate of crime and a decreasing rate of prosecutions and convictions²⁶. The standard of the police and judiciary is extremely low. A US government report for 2004 concluded that- '*Police continued to commit numerous abuses, including unlawful killings, beatings in custody, and arbitrary arrests and detentions.*'²⁷

Human security is based on patronage and wealth rather than citizenship. The ordinary citizen lacks security while rich people employ private security services, many of them armed. Security companies are reputed to arrange for people who do not pay for their services to be robbed. They are immune from the justice system because they operate through criminal networks linked into the police and judiciary. The price for assassinations in Maputo is reputed to be below \$50 and falling.

²⁶ Population Studies Centre (2003) pp34-36

²⁷ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (2005) *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Mozambique* www.state.gov

Similarly, human rights depend on political conformity. The same US report noted that- *'The government's human rights record remained poor; although there were some improvements in a few areas, serious problems remained.'*²⁸ The alienation of the urban middle class is a potential risk from this process but the more immediate danger, from a conflict perspective, lies in the consolidation of organised crime into powerful units that interact with the Party and the state. This is now extending far beyond petty protection rackets in Maputo. Mozambique has become the regional centre for drug smuggling into southern Africa, and it is inevitable that this involves large mafia-style groupings with extensive international links. According to Hanlon, *'Money laundering is common and Mozambique has become an important drug warehousing and transit centre, with senior officials involved'*²⁹.

Criminal networks have no interest in stability. On the contrary, they thrive on insecurity and have often shown an interest in destabilising the state. In Mozambique, the government has been ineffective in controlling criminal networks, perhaps deliberately so. Donor programmes aimed at strengthening the effectiveness of Customs may achieve limited success because of these linkages. Perversely, they could lead to instability if they brought about a confrontation between the state and the criminal networks. This is not an argument against such programmes, but indicates the need for careful handling within a broad strategic context.

On a more positive note, there is no basis in Mozambique for international terrorism, at least of the Al Qaeda variety. As noted above, the style of Islam in Mozambique would not accommodate extremism. It is just about conceivable that, in the event of a threat to its survival, the government might use 'terrorism' as the necessary language to secure international military support, as was done in Nepal for example. Such support might then be deployed to crush political opposition, but this remains a distant and unlikely scenario. Currently the focus should be on preventing the situation deteriorating to such a point.

3.2. Response to disasters

Mozambique has been beset by natural disasters in recent years. This has evoked a massive international response but for many Mozambicans this has highlighted the failure of the armed forces and of government to respond. The Mozambican armed forces made a particularly poor showing in the floods of 2000 and the total dependence on foreign aid was a matter of national shame.

Failure to respond to natural disasters has sometimes been a significant factor in triggering power struggles³⁰. People in Mozambique may be prepared to wait for development but response to disaster is a more urgent requirement and falls within the

²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ Hanlon (2002) p1 drawing on Gastrow and Mosse (2002)

³⁰ Failure to address the drought of 1982-3 may have been a significant factor in the spread of war in Mozambique.

duties of a patronage system. Surveys indicate that people regard the FRELIMO/state entity as a 'father' with an obligation to provide such help in times of need. It is conceivable that in the event of a mismanaged disaster, people might take to the streets and such violence could then develop into other and more threatening forms.

This is a threat to stability that might be addressed reasonably easily by support to Mozambique's disaster response capacity, including the police and military. There is an argument for doing this as part of a wider response aimed at preventing conflict.

3.3. Regional Security

In the past, Mozambican wars have been strongly influenced by external factors, especially apartheid in South Africa and Rhodesia. Both Zimbabwe and Malawi are going through periods of political turbulence and there are weaknesses even within South Africa. But external intervention seems very unlikely today. This is perhaps the most significant reason why tensions within Mozambique may remain at the political level rather than descending into violent conflict. Although Mozambican opposition groups maintain links with their counterparts in the surrounding countries, this could not be converted into any kind of armed struggle, at least in present circumstances. Mozambican commentators seem to be relatively unconcerned about the instability in Zimbabwe.

Southern Africa is characterised by governments that have evolved out of Marxist and socialist movements³¹ with opposition parties tending to take more centrist or conservative positions. There is a possibility that the victory of any one of the opposition parties in the region could have an influence on the others. This could have a domino effect within the region, creating instability as the neo-socialist group of governments resisted change. Consequently, a change in the tide of politics outside Mozambique could be taken as a potential conflict indicator.

SADC presents an important counter-force to such a threat. Mozambique has been an active member of SADC and plays a leading role in the Organ for Politics, Defence and Security (OPDS). Within this structure, policies are being developed to enhance conflict prevention, management and resolution in the region. Mozambique has expressed willingness to take part in regional security exercises and plans and has already sent small contingents to Burundi, DRC and East Timor.³²

3.4. The Security Services

The armed forces are little more than the remnant left over from the civil war and includes both FRELIMO and RENAMO units. The integration of armed forces at the end

³¹ ANC in South Africa, ZANU PF in Zimbabwe, MPLA in Angola, SWAPO in Namibia and FRELIMO in Mozambique.

³² For more detail and a general overview of Mozambique's involvement in regional security see Lala (2004) p25 onwards.

of the war, together with the process of demobilization, is generally considered successful³³ although RENAMO officers within the security forces are increasingly vocal in complaints that they have been passed over for promotion in favour of FRELIMO cadres.

Weapons remain scattered across the country in hidden caches and there is evidence from Operation Rachel that new weapons are being smuggled into the country. It appears that people may be more willing to offer information about these weapons, even without payment. UNDP is developing a new programme for small arms reduction but the mission was unable in the time available to establish whether there is a clear need for support from DFID.

There has been relatively little investment in the armed forces and they keep a relatively low profile in political affairs. The integration of the two parties within the forces and their general weakness makes it more difficult to use them to suppress dissent. On the other hand, this leaves Mozambique without effective security forces if violence developed suddenly –or with security forces that might divide according to their political affiliation.

3.5. Conclusions

In terms of security, the main danger comes from the possibility of a closer link between organized crime and the political elite. The need for international aid currently outweighs the need to seek alliances with organized crime. But if there were a reversal in the process, for whatever reason, the need for patronage payments could turn the attention of the elite towards the huge resources available from smuggling and protection rackets. Even if this occurred on a small scale it might result in further alienation of the international community, sudden withdrawal of support and precipitate a crisis.

Section Four: Conflict dynamics

4.1. Greed and Grievance

In the international discourse, conflicts are sometimes characterized as an interaction of ‘greed’ and ‘grievance’. Greed is taken to mean the predatory self-interest of elites, while grievance represents the difference between expectation and reality among marginalized groups. Mozambique presents a good example of this interaction. On the ‘greed’ side, political and economic power is highly centralized within a group that has substantial

³³ World Bank (downloaded 2006)

predatory interests in relation to the state. External development inputs as well as foreign investment tend to benefit this group both in terms of economic wealth and political power. On the ‘grievance’ side, significant sections of the elite are excluded from power and many of those who are part of the patronage networks feel that they are not getting enough. Educated youth considers that its legitimate expectations are not being met. People in the rural areas are dismayed by what are perceived to be broken promises and corruption. The interplay of Greed and Grievance can be mapped out as follows, using the SCA method-

Table: Fundamental Causes of Conflict in Mozambique (summary)

	Security	Political	Economic	Social
International		Aid supports FRELIMO		
Regional	SADC	Political change	Water and power	
National	Criminal networks	State capture Clientelism Weak opposition	State assets used for patronage	
Local	Hidden arms	Voter apathy Weak civil society	Regional asymmetry Corruption Unemployment	Ethnicity Religion

The danger is that different grievances may become linked together (such as regional asymmetry, unemployment, corruption). Groups might form around such combined grievances and could then be exploited by ‘greed’. Intransigence of the elite group within FRELIMO and rising expectations around the country could create trends towards conflict. Lack of confidence in the electoral system makes the situation more volatile and the whole structure is based on low levels of information and understanding.

4.2. Trends

The central features of the conflict ‘map’ are clientelism and voter apathy with regional asymmetry as the important background factor. The main negative trend is towards authoritarianism and the single party state. The government has shown little inclination to allow the development of a meaningful opposition but it has responded to voter interests by addressing corruption at local level. There have been some significant steps towards decentralization although whether these amount to increased local control or increased FRELIMO control at local level remains to be seen. A few relatively small economic projects have been located in traditionally RENAMO areas. The government’s objective may still be to control RENAMO but it seems to be using the carrot rather than the stick. RENAMO is beginning to display greater political maturity in its middle ranks but has not been able to resolve its leadership problem. On the whole there are enough positive signs to lead to the conclusion that peace is likely to prevail, but there are several serious risks.

4.3. Triggers and scenarios

Among the possible triggers for political crisis are-

- Schism within FRELIMO, possibly along the Guebuza/Chissano faultline
- Schism within RENAMO, possibly along the old/new faultline
- Economic shock such as hikes in price of fuel and power
- Natural disaster
- Sudden withdrawal of donor support

But as a trigger for actual conflict, the election process is pre-eminent. A RENAMO win, although still distinctly possible, would have destabilizing effects, largely because the political system is currently based on the exclusion of RENAMO. Many of the key state institutions, including the police and judiciary, are staffed and controlled by FRELIMO cadres who might refuse to cooperate with RENAMO. Any separation of power at Presidential, provincial and district levels could make the country practically ungovernable. With elections due to take place in 2007, 2008 and 2009 this possibility cannot be discounted.

A failed election, marred by extensive violence, would be another scenario that could lead to conflict. Fearing long-term marginalisation, RENAMO might use such a scenario as a pretext for a return to armed conflict. It has already threatened to do this in the past and Dhlakama continues to refer to such a possibility. A rather alarming finding from an Afrobarometer survey is that a high proportion of people in the centre (37%) and north (52%) approve of resort to violence in a 'just cause'³⁴. In this scenario, conflict would probably develop along regional and ethnic lines or possibly as a deeper divide between modernism, represented by FRELIMO, and tradition, represented by RENAMO.

Clearly all outside parties have a key interest in the entire electoral process, but they also have an interest in the issue that are likely to count in such elections –and these relate closely to aid. They include delivery of services, notably health and education, as well as the failures of such services through corruption and mismanagement. The shape and style of economic development is an important tool in addressing the problem of unemployment among educated youth. The aim should not be to support a particular party, of course, but to create the conditions in which electors abrogate violence as a solution to their problems. This means an acceptable standard of service delivery, but it also means information and participation; and those seem to be the elements that are currently lacking.

³⁴ Afro-Barometer Survey –Mozambique, unpublished 2002 quoted in Population Studies Centre (2003) p73. The figure for the south is 19%.

Section Five: Current Responses

In this Section we examine the ‘positive’ activities and trends in relation to conflict, identifying what is already being done to address the problems, and the inherent capacities to cope with challenges, using the categories of the SCA. We consider how the ‘greed’ and ‘grievance’ factors can be balanced for maximum stability, leading towards conclusions and recommendations.

5.1. Social and economic responses

Civil society can act as a communication channel conveying information between the ‘greed’ and ‘grievance’ elements. If this channel is effective, behaviour can be moderated on one side and participation increased on the other. In Mozambique the ability of NGOs to play this role is limited both by historical factors³⁵ and by current trends, notably the co-option of NGOs by FRELIMO. Although evidence on this is anecdotal, there seems to be a conscious strategy by FRELIMO to take control of important NGOs either by offering rewards, infiltrating them with FRELIMO supporters or restricting those that it dislikes. This important issue deserves further attention and study –ideally a long-term study of FRELIMO’s interaction with civil society.

Elements of civil society other than NGOs are remarkably strong, and the most important from a conflict perspective are the religious organisations. These bodies have played a moderating role during the war and a very important role in the peace process. They continue to exert a moderating influence today. Many churches and mosques acknowledge a responsibility to increase the understanding and participation of their congregations and promote democracy. During the elections they have been a major and in some areas unique source of information about the voting process and its significance.

This positive role reflects Mozambique’s history of ethnic and religious tolerance and is now supported by peace-building work by NGOs such as CEDE which has been able to intervene quickly to reduce tensions following violent incidents. For example, CEDE diffused tensions following the death of 119 RENAMO cadres in Montepuez after the 2004 election.

5.2. Political responses

FRELIMO has often made policy changes when necessary to secure popular support and has become increasingly pragmatic following the abandonment of socialist ideology. Soon after the end of the war, FRELIMO readily embraced structural adjustment (in 1986) in order to gain international support³⁶ and in 1989 FRELIMO quietly but formally

³⁵ FRELIMO’s socialist period offered no space for civil society and NGOs could not develop during the war

³⁶ Pereira (2005) pp8-9

abandoned Marxism, probably for the same reason. RENAMO has not really adapted its background of rural conservatism to keep up with its role as opposition to FRELIMO.

The relatively narrow victories of FRELIMO in elections have had positive effects in relation to poor people. Both parties are now more conscious of the need to impress voters in the regions. The government has allocated \$300,000 for development in each district. This has been perceived by RENAMO as an attempt to extend FRELIMO patronage into its territory. RENAMO supporters assume that, despite assurances to the contrary, the district funds will be given exclusively to FRELIMO supporters. There are plans for civil society to monitor this process but as they may also hope to be beneficiaries this is not an entirely satisfactory arrangement.

For its part, some elements within RENAMO have recognised that they must demonstrate better performance than FRELIMO if they are to be elected. This is the driving force behind some remarkable local successes, such as the Mayor of Beira referred to above.

The key issue is to maintain democratic pressure so that patronage has to extend more widely than the narrow circles of Maputo. If people in poor areas can exert enough leverage they too can make demands as clients. To do this they need information and a much higher level of mobilisation. Although civil society has scored a few significant victories it is very far from mobilising a general pressure on governance, as is needed. The important implication for donors is that the role of civil society is not so much to assist in service delivery as to mobilise public pressure around it. This requires a particular form of support and genuine independence.

Section Six: Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1. Conclusions

Relevant features of Mozambique today are-

- Centralized power based on a patronage system (clientelism);
- Exclusion of the political opposition;
- Regional imbalances;
- Grievances around corruption in service delivery;
- Voter alienation.

On the positive side, external involvement is no longer a serious threat to Mozambique. Ethnicity and religion issues are not likely to be the initial cause of conflict, but could be mobilised around severe political differences or a breakdown in governance. Economic disparities are a more significant feature of the current situation than social identities. Although Mozambique displays an impressive rate of economic growth, the benefits are

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patchy and have yet to make much impact in the rural hinterland. There is an emerging problem of alienated educated youth and unemployment which has yet to be fully analysed. The issue is not absolute deprivation but rising expectations that may not be met and increasing concentration of power and resources within a limited group.

In terms of dynamics, there is a disturbing interaction of 'greed' and 'grievance' elements that shows no sign of resolving itself and may become more intense. There is no immediate prospect of violent conflict and the risk is low-medium even in the longer term. But there are reasons for concern, especially as aid is closely connected with the processes that could lead to trouble.

Electoral processes are an obvious trigger for violence, and in the next three years there will be three sets of elections. There are also risks of crisis arising from poor response to natural disasters and external economic events, such as sudden increases in the price of fuel. Conflict might develop along lines of contention between elite groups, but then mobilise the grievances of the rural poor and ultimately take on ethnic and religious characteristics. A history of conflict and hidden caches of weapons make Mozambique a country in which the risk of conflict cannot be ignored.

Governance is the key issue, and here donors face a dilemma. Clientelism and patronage may become more intense because the checks and balances in the political system are weakening and the demands for patronage are always increasing. The justice system is already highly politicized. The political opposition is currently ineffective, partly because of its own failures and partly because it has been deliberately and systematically undermined by the ruling party. The political opposition could collapse or withdraw from electoral politics, leaving a single-party system. Civil society has not been effective as a restraining influence and is being drawn into the same circuit of patronage. Despite the appearance of a multi-party state, in practice Mozambique is controlled by an oligarchy within the ruling party which purchases support through patronage, much of which derives from aid.

Representing more than half the national budget, aid is a major element in the patronage system but this does not necessarily mean that it is ineffective. The problem is that it operates in a strongly politicized environment and has profound political impacts. Although the state uses the language and forms of pro-poor development, it is not clear whether this represents a commitment that transcends other interests. Ideology is notably absent in the new brand of FRELIMO and pro-poor development often seems little more than an extension of the patronage system into the rural areas.

In this context, democracy provides the strongest incentive for development. So long as FRELIMO needs to please the voters, most of whom are poor, there is a clear incentive for development. But if democracy erodes then the pressure for patronage within the elite may take full precedence over development. The dilemma is that a sudden withdrawal or reduction of donor aid is itself one of the potential shocks that could trigger conflict but maintaining the flow of aid uncritically will compound the underlying problems of governance.

One of the principal reasons for concern about democracy in Mozambique is the phenomenon of voter apathy. There has been a steady decline in voter turnout from 88% in 1994 to around 40% in recent elections. This is partly due to lack of confidence in the electoral system and partly due to falling support for both the political parties. As the number of voters decreases, the possibility of a sudden political swing cannot be ruled out. A RENAMO victory might be positive in terms of democratic balance but disastrous in practice because FRELIMO has developed a stranglehold on state institutions and there could not be a smooth transition of power. The possibility of a RENAMO victory might provoke a violent reaction on the side of the ruling party. Both ways, the current situation is unstable.

An argument increasingly heard, even among donors, is that authoritarianism might be the answer. Authoritarian states have the reputation for delivering short-term benefits but there is a tendency for absolute power to lead to absolute corruption. In a situation where corruption in the form of clientelism is already endemic, and where there is no clear ideological commitment to development of the poorest, authoritarianism is a very risky proposition. It is important that donors maintain a clear position on this as it will be very difficult to reverse the erosion of democracy. On the contrary, donors should vigorously oppose authoritarianism in the interests of poor people.

A better approach would be to seek to engage the people more closely in the process of development by spreading information more widely, listening to complaints (especially about corruption) and preventing the capture of development by political actors. With greater awareness of development issues, elections are more likely to succeed and political parties will be led to give them higher priority.

One of the problems is that Mozambique has been categorized by donors as a 'success' and aid policy now reflects this positive assumption. Donors have moved towards budget support, collective action and a flexible approach in order to accommodate government interests. The monitoring of government programmes is largely conducted by government institutions, without external scrutiny. This has many merits but it institutionalises the assumption of 'success' and makes it more difficult to apply pressure in sensitive ways. With so many disappointments in Africa, and aid budgets rising, Mozambique will be expected to absorb yet more funds and there is a danger that funding will increase regardless of capacity.

It would be unwise to assume that the more aid flows to Mozambique the more stable it will become. Aid may fuel greater demands for patronage on a wider and more lavish scale, exacerbating competition among 'greed' elements and increasing the grievances of poorer people. In many ways Mozambique is still a 'fragile state'. Donors should continue to bear in mind the DAC Principles for working in fragile states and, in the case of DFID, the cautions enjoined in the 'Fragile States' paper. Such an approach would put more focus on contextual analysis, more emphasis on justice, independent monitoring of government's performance on poverty reduction and balancing the powers of the state with other institutions including civil society. In summary this report proposes a more

cautious approach, with greater recognition for the potential negative effects of aid and the fragility of the political system.

Despite Mozambique's positive progress and willingness to engage with the agenda of donors, the trend is towards centralization and consolidation of power within a narrow elite, which will be obliged to offer patronage to a wide and 'greedy' circle of clients. The tendency towards corruption will undermine development and also undermine democratic processes, potentially creating a vicious spiral. Many of the underlying problems in the civil war, notably regional disparities, remain unresolved and could be mobilised in conflict between elites.

6.2. Recommendations

The UK team in Mozambique should work with other donors to–

- Spread information about the PARPA to poor people;
- Develop independent means of monitoring the impact of the PARPA;
- Monitor the use of decentralized district funds;
- Ensure that electoral processes are scrupulously fair and perceived to be so;
- Support the effective functioning of the political opposition;
- Insist on prosecution in cases of corruption related to aid and development;
- Build the national capacity to respond to natural disasters;
- Reduce regional asymmetries;
- Build the capacity of civil society especially in the neglected regions;
- Support civil society to hold government accountable to the people in relation to development;
- Apply the cautions and principles for working in Fragile States;
- Develop contingency plans for sudden changes in the level of aid support.

As a new peace-building project, the UK team should develop a framework for ACPP funding to include–

- A programme for information dissemination on development issues³⁷;
- Support to elements of civil society that seek to hold the state accountable to the people, notably specialist bodies to conduct and disseminate independent analysis of government budgets at district, provincial and national levels;
- Capacity building and financial support for specific peace-building NGOs;
- Support to the security services for disaster response;
- Further investigation into small arms reduction, and possible programme support;
- Research on the issue of unemployed or alienated youth.

³⁷ Local radio may be an area worth exploring but this mission was unable to study the issue in depth.