

EFA/FTI
In-Country Cooperating Partners Assessment of the Proposal from
Mozambique
March 20, 2003

General Comments:

The Government of Mozambique and the Ministry of Education (MINED) in particular have shown continued commitment to this process both at a political and technical level. The MINED team has worked extremely hard and in close consultation with the Cooperating Partners. Substantial progress has been made specifically in the short time since Mozambique turned in the first proposal to be considered at the November meeting in Brussels.

The view of the Cooperating Partners in the Education Sector in Mozambique is that this proposal constitutes a sound basis for accelerating progress towards UPC and gender parity. We are also happy to note that MINED has decided to use the EFA/FTI in the revised ESSP for Primary Education for the period 2004-2008, thus enabling a coherent and harmonized approach to the implementation of the ESSP. It is now critical that the EFA/FTI be integrated as the core primary education component of Mozambique's PRSP.

Assuming the continuing successful implementation of the Education Sector Strategic Plan, the following three important tasks ("triggers") were identified in November by the Cooperating Partners.

1. Elaboration of the (draft) teacher education strategy including capacity building for in-service teacher training.
2. An action plan for addressing regional gender disparity.
3. An action plan for school construction, including capacity building in this area.

A fourth trigger was added which asks for the development of an action plan for prevention and mitigation of HIV/AIDS.

Whereas Cooperating Partners welcome efforts undertaken by MINED to satisfy triggers 1, 3 and 4, one area of concern remains: addressing regional gender disparity. However, since a consultant has been hired recently, it is hoped that by May the action plan will be in place. In this context, the Cooperating Partners continue to offer to MINED any extra assistance that may be necessary for the completion of these tasks.

The Cooperating Partners recommend approval of this proposal at the meeting in Paris on March 25, 2003. However, implementation remains subject to recommendations outlined in this document and in particular the gender action plan, which is to be assessed by in-country donors.

Section A. Evidence of Country Ownership

Assessment:

1. MINED has engaged in the development of the FTI in an active and persistent manner over the past several months and used the process as an opportunity to revise the primary education component within the ESSP.
2. The process of developing the proposal has helped MINED to focus on key constraints, enabling the Ministry to move forward in their policy development.
3. The model provides a useful instrument, which for the first time enables MINED to cost various policy options on the basis of projections.
4. Some key stakeholders have already been involved in the process.

Recommendation:

- Participation of stakeholders should now be broadened, both at different levels of MINED, especially the provinces, other sectors and with Civil Society.
- The model should now be shared with the working groups to inform their development of operational plans and to feed back into the policy development process.
- The resource implications of the FTI need to be incorporated into the MTEF.

Section B. Key Sector Issues, Constraints and Strategies to Achieve the Expected Results

Universal Primary Completion by 2015:

Assessment:

1. The constraints are well identified and analyzed in the document. The shift in focus in the EFA/FTI policy framework to Universal Primary Completion (UPC) has assisted MINED in the analysis.
2. Cooperating Partners view the proposal as a policy framework for the ESSP to be implemented. We feel considerable progress has been made since November and want to reinforce our commitment to continue discussions regarding implementation and monitoring mechanisms to ensure success.
3. Efforts have been made to develop national strategies for teacher training, infrastructure and HIV/AIDS.

Key Constraints

1. The shortage and low quality of teachers in general and female teachers in particular.
2. Deployment and management of teachers' salaries including timely payment.
3. The weakness of the school cluster (ZIP) support system, particularly in relation to in-service teacher training.
4. The number and qualifications of teachers for upper primary (6th and 7th grade) will need to be discussed further.

5. Access to schools. This is addressed in the document through the development of models of low cost construction with community participation.
6. HIV/AIDS: The effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic on the Education system.
7. The cost of introducing schoolbooks for the new curriculum has been addressed, even though it is still expected to be considerable.

Recommendations:

- All the above issues need to be addressed by the development of the various strategic components of EFA/FTI (gender, teacher training, infrastructure and HIV/AIDS).
- It is recommended that MINED continues to monitor the cost of schoolbooks with a view to developing a realistic financial framework.
- As the HIV/AIDS operational plan is now ready, it should be incorporated into the ESSP.

Gender Parity by 2005

Assessment:

1. The gender gap continues to show severe regional disparity. In the south of the country and some urban areas the gender gap is closing. However in the majority of the country, gender disparity in primary education remains substantial, particularly in rural areas in the north and central regions.
2. The target of closing this gap by 2005 will therefore not be reached, and more needs to be done.
3. MINED has not yet produced an operational plan.

Recommendation:

In order to accelerate girls' completion, it is recommended as a matter of priority that special targeted programs be implemented in the north and center of the Country. It is expected that the recently contracted gender consultant will assist MINED to address those issues with urgency. However, Cooperating Partners wish to reinforce their continued interest in providing any help needed in this context.

Section C. Cost and Financing

Assessment:

1. According to the projections extra funds needed for 2003 within the EFA/FTI context, can be paid through FASE (Education Sector Support Fund). We realize, though, that the EFA/FTI policies will allow a more efficient use of resources; therefore, we are committed to seek adequate resources according to the rate of implementation.
2. Although discussions have started with the Ministry of Planning and Finance, it is not yet clear if public resources can be made available and what new expenditure ceilings might be determined.
3. The question remains whether MINED has the capacity to absorb the proposed extra funds since past performance has been less than satisfactory. However, a number of new initiatives may well increase spending capacity

substantially in the coming months. These include the commitment to decentralization and the involvement of provincial and district authorities in implementation outlined in the proposal. It is also expected that the FASE (which is currently being established) will ensure that resources are channeled effectively to local levels.

Recommendations:

1. It is recommended that the implementation period be 2004-2006, to coincide with the planning and financing cycle of the ESSP.
2. We are of the opinion that the model should more explicitly reflect ESSP policy commitments by MINED and partners. This implies revisiting the projections of EP1 and EP2 and reconsidering the number of teachers needed. These in turn will clearly have implications for teacher qualifications and training and the resulting salary options and financial scenarios.
3. Cooperating Partners want to stress that in order to build a sustainable system, discussions with MPF need to be continued to guarantee the availability of sufficient public resources dedicated to the education sector in the context of the MTEF. We welcome very much that the Ministry also acknowledges the long-term financial implications of expansion. We also appreciate that MINED will continue discussions with the Ministry of Planning and Finance (MPF) and with Ministry of State Administration (MAE) over teacher salary scale options to achieve expansion while ensuring sustainability and look forward to discuss these in due course.

Section D. Risks and Capacity

Assessment:

1. Weak institutional capacity is a major risk, as is inferred in the document. MINED is engaged in addressing this issue through a modernization and restructuring program in the framework of Mozambique's Public Sector Reform program. The Cooperating Partners continue to support and monitor overall development in this area.

Recommendations:

1. Cooperating Partners appreciate the efforts made in terms of projections. However, we recommend that projections be revisited due to absorption and capacity constraints, specifically in the initial years of the plan. Furthermore, even though the plan already constitutes a prioritization of activities, the Cooperating Partners feel that due to the implementation constraints an incremental approach to scaling-up should be considered.

Section E. Monitoring and Evaluation

Assessment:

1. As noted above, EFA/FTI constitutes the primary education component of the ESSP. Progress will therefore be monitored by the established procedures, including performance and process indicators.

Related Issues:

In addition, the Cooperating Partners group would like to continue to draw the MINED's attention to the following related issues. It is suggested that they be discussed in the context of the ESSP revision:

1. The question of education costs to households, especially the poorest. Currently the situation is unclear, but evidence suggests that there are a variety of formal and informal costs to families in sending their children to school. It is proposed that MINED carry out a study to clarify the situation with a view to further informed discussion.
2. Strengthening community involvement in education through School Councils and other means is implicit in the proposal. The Cooperating Partners would like to see more explicit attention to this issue as the EFA/FTI process develops, as this will be crucial to achieving better quality education for all.
3. Since FASE has been established at the beginning of 2003, Cooperating Partners see an opportunity to follow the utilization of funds and thus gain a better and more realistic idea about the absorption rate during the preparatory phase of gearing up the EFA/FTI.
4. Cooperating Partners reemphasize the need for MINED to "continue work with (those financial agencies that cannot join the (...FASE)) on a bilateral basis provided the investments are part and parcel of the Ministry's annual framework of activities. This (...according to the Ministry) will be necessary to reach the EFA/FTI objectives."(p.28)

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