Carrying it Forward:

Overcoming Violence as a Barrier to Education in Mozambique

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Acknowledgements

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Abbreviations

CJCP   Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention
CRC   Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSO   Civil society organisation
DRC   Democratic Republic of Congo
EFA   Education For All
Frelimo   Front for the Liberation of Mozambique
MEPT   *Movimento de Educação Para Todos*
NGO   Non-governmental organisation
PARPA II   Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PEEC   Plan for Education and Culture
PRA   Participatory rapid appraisal
Renamo   Mozambique National Resistance Movement
UN   United Nations
UNIFEM   UN Development Fund for Women

Executive summary

Mozambique has been described 'as a dialectic between forces of integration and those of disintegration'.[1] This is perhaps because Mozambique's past has been fraught with colliding ecological, social and political challenges that have left much of the population fractured by violence. The country's long civil war (1977–92), which started shortly after independence, had a devastating effect on the population. Some 4–5 million civilians were displaced and fled to refugee camps in Zambia and Malawi. At least a million people were killed as a result of the war, and even more children were orphaned. A further feature of the war was the systematic destruction of Mozambique's economic infrastructure. The country's education system did not escape this devastation. Half of all primary schools in rural areas were damaged; 840 schools were destroyed or closed, which affected more than 150,000 children.

Following the war, Mozambique has embarked on several reform processes in an attempt to stabilise the economy and alleviate poverty. In addition, the realisation that education is critical to national development has resulted in the creation of key pieces of legislation aimed at increasing the quality and accessibility of education in the country. Despite these achievements, however, many problems persist. Even though the Constitution of Mozambique declares education a right and a duty of every citizen, less than half the population are literate, with the illiteracy rate for women estimated at 71%. Since the Millennium Development Goals and Education For All objectives were established in 1999, donors to Mozambique have increased their contributions to the expansion and reform of the country's education system. Funding, however, still falls short of meeting all the educational needs of children in Mozambique, specifically girl children.

The right of children to education is arguably one of the most significant of all human rights. All children have the right to education – but this education must be provided in a safe context, free of violence. If not, their right to dignity and security, and to live in safety, free from violence, also becomes unobtainable. Children's right to education is of critical importance in countries characterised by

poverty, under-development and high levels of inequality. When this right is denied, a great number of opportunities for self-advancement are inevitably also denied.

Recent experience in South Africa has drawn attention to the importance of addressing school-related violence by adopting an evidence-based approach that takes into consideration the local context. However, little nationally representative data on the experiences of violence against children as a barrier to education and as an infringement on human rights exists in the region, with the exception of South Africa and Malawi. This monograph details the findings of a study aimed at bridging this statistical gap.

To this end, the study was designed to:

■ collect scientifically based, reliable quantitative and qualitative data on the extent, nature and implications of school-related violence against children in three Southern African Development Community countries;

■ add substantially to the local and regional body of knowledge on children, young people, violence and education within each country;

■ contribute to the sharing of research skills and capacity building within each country; and

■ further regional and international advocacy efforts focusing on the prevention of violence against girls.

For the purpose of the study, the term 'violence' was used to encompass structural, direct and indirect forms of violence, as well as cultural practices that may be harmful to children and inhibit their access to education.

In Mozambique, 499 youths aged 12–19 years were randomly selected from areas in and around Maputo. Since the study was exploratory in nature it was not designed to be generalisable to all children in Mozambique. Thus, although the results presented in this monograph provide a glimpse of the violence experienced by young people in the country, it needs to be remembered that the findings are specific to the capital city, Maputo.

In line with recent increases in Mozambique's school enrolment rates, school attendance was high among those surveyed. However, the quality of learning was often found to be compromised due to violence within the school environment – an international phenomenon that is not peculiar to Africa.

The study results show that some learners in Mozambique are directly victimised at school, while others, although not personally affected by violent incidents at school, are keenly aware of such victimisation and often witness it. Actual or direct victimisation reported in the study encompassed threats of harm or violence (36.4%), verbal insults or teasing (33.1%), physical attacks (19.6%),

sexual assaults (being forced to do things with their body against their will) (4.2%) as well as being forced to do other things they felt were wrong and did not want to do (7.1%).

In addition to direct experiences of violence, learners often had to contend with other school-related issues that make it nearly impossible to receive quality education. These included poor resource allocation, lack of physical infrastructure, high learner–teacher ratios, overcrowded classrooms, lack of textbooks and other school materials, and a high percentage of unqualified educators. Despite these issues, learners generally demonstrated a favourable attitude towards their schooling.

The violence occurring at schools was often a reflection of what was happening in these young people's homes and communities. Addictive substances such as alcohol (67.8%), marijuana (27.4%) and other drugs (25.6%) were found to be easily accessible by those interviewed. This is concerning given that such access tends to increase the likelihood of violence occurring within a community. Not surprisingly, violence exposure in the areas in which the participants live was common. One in two youths had personally witnessed someone being hit or punched one or more times in their community. Nearly two-thirds had witnessed people in their community being pushed, grabbed or shoved one or more times, while more than a tenth of the sample had observed someone in their community being threatened or assaulted with a weapon, shot, sexually harassed or kidnapped by armed forces one or more times.

Young people were also subjected to violence in the home, both directly and indirectly. Furthermore, cultural beliefs and traditions pertaining to gender were found to contribute to gender-based violence in the home. These beliefs also impacted on children's access to education, particularly for young girls who tend to be kept out of school to assist with household responsibilities and because parents fail to see the significance of educating girls.

Violence infringes on children's right to learn in a safe and protected environment. The study demonstrates that children in Mozambique have very few spaces where they are safe and free from the threat of violence.

Mozambique does have an extensive legislative framework in place to address issues related to education and violence. In addition to the Constitution and various national policies, Mozambique has ratified several international laws and conventions; however, these laws are not enforced at a practical level. Based on the study findings, several recommendations are made herein, which, if implemented, would go some way towards ensuring that education – and more specifically, quality education – becomes a reality for all in Mozambique.

The Anonymous Teacher[2]

CARLOS DOS SANTOS

This is the real magician.

It can only be considered magic that a human being…
- with little or no training
- with little support and professional guidance
- who lives in a thatched hut, badly ventilated and scarcely illuminated
- with no shops close by, and water miles away
- at five or ten kilometres from school, that she or he will have to walk
- who receives a salary just enough to buy a week's food, how many times paid late
- And that doesn't even buy clothes or furniture
- two times a day (in the morning and in the afternoon)

… is able to make a child…
- who walked five to ten kilometres to get to school
- after a night sleeping on a ragged mat
- in a hut with many cracks and roaming cold
- not having eaten much
- after having had to complete diverse domestic chores

… learn to read, write and count…
- in the shadow of a tree
- sitting on the ground
- in groups of 70 children
- with no chalk nor didactic means
- with no books nor notebooks
- with no pens nor pencils

It's magic, for the esoteric; a miracle, for the religious. Heroism, for the people and for each child who, from that nothing, acquires knowledge and develops skills.

These are the anonymous heroes of each nation. They are not heroes of war. Their only weapons are a tremendous love for children and a tenacious desire to contribute to a better world. They are the heroes of peace.

Introduction

'For many children, the biggest threat to their right to education is not discrimination or lack of access to schools, but violence within or near their schools that undermines their ability to learn, puts their physical and psychological well-being at risk, and often causes them to drop out of school entirely. Children's right to education entails not only the presence of schools and teachers, but also an environment that allows them to learn in safety.'

Human Rights Watch

The right of children to education is arguably one of the most significant of all human rights, creating as it does the opportunity to access a wealth of opportunities that might otherwise not be within reach. The issue is clear: all children have the right to education[3] – *but* education in a safe context, free of violence. This is particularly so in countries characterised by poverty, under-development and high levels of inequality. Where violence in any form inhibits or prevents equitable access to education, young people's right to dignity, security and to live in safety, free from violence, is also inhibited.[4]

Violence in and around schools is one of the major contributing factors to non-enrolment in and non-completion of schooling. While a global phenomenon, this is particularly so in various sub-Saharan African countries.[5] In fact, enrolment in primary schools on the African continent is among the lowest in the world.[6] But even for those children who remain in school despite experiences or fears of violence, their ability to achieve within the classroom and to perform academically is likely to be compromised. Violence thus negatively impacts on education in terms of access, retention and achievement.

Violence as an inhibitor to education affects both boys and girls; however, the

nature and form of the violence often affects girls very differently to boys. Gender-based violence, acts of sexual harassment, sexual assault, rape, and similar are experienced at far greater rates by girl children than boys, usually as a result of existing systemic and institutionalised gender inequalities.[7] Yet much of the emphasis in addressing this phenomenon (where it has received attention at all) has been on how girls should protect themselves, rather than addressing the fundamental and systemic drivers of this violence.

Notwithstanding this, there are a number of common characteristics to the violence experienced by children at school in many countries in the region.[8] Violence may occur both at school (on or immediately surrounding the school premises) and on the way to or from school. Violence may be inflicted by fellow learners, other children not at school or adults, including educators and principals. The latter may include instances of criminal violence or institutionalised violence such as corporal punishment. Violence related to school is not limited to physical violence but includes bullying, verbal abuse and emotional violence or abuse.

While legislation throughout the region has banned corporal punishment in the classroom, it is still commonly used by teachers as a method of punishment and as a means of imposing authority and control in the classroom. Recent studies conducted by Save the Children (Sweden) in Zambia, for example, showed that 38% of children reported being hit with an object as punishment in the classroom, while 32% reported being beaten by hand.[9] In South Africa, a 2008 study showed that 70.1% of primary school and 47.5% of secondary school learners reported being physically punished at school.[10] Educators may be complicit in violence in other ways, too. In Malawi, a 2005 study revealed that almost one-third of children at school reported that their teachers demanded sex from learners in return for good grades, entering into so-called 'love relationships'.[11]

Emerging forms of indirect violence – such as human trafficking, child labour and adults using children to commit crimes – are found in countries throughout the region and result in both short-term tangible and long-term emotional injury to children. Violence in different forms experienced by caregivers, parents or other family members also impacts on the well-being of the child. In addition, a child who has been emotionally abused at home, for example, is unlikely to feel motivated to attend school or to perform well at school. Children's ability to form positive attachments is negatively impacted, and they are less likely to trust and form pro-social relationships. In this way, violence not only endangers their health and well-being but prevents them from engaging in activities to which they are entitled as children, particularly the right to schooling and education. Violence therefore affects the entire psycho-social development of young people.

Furthermore, high levels of violence against learners have longer term societal and economic consequences. Children can fail to develop adequate pro-social behaviours and positive social capital, which undermines the development or sustainability of healthy, caring communities as they grow into adulthood. Young

adults who are poorly equipped emotionally and socially are likely to engage in violence and to inflict violence or aggression on those around them, including their own families, thereby perpetuating violent environments.[12] Stunted educational outcomes also limit the economic opportunities (in both the formal and informal sector) available to children as they mature. This has long-term and intergenerational implications for them and their families. Simply stated, violence against young people on any scale is likely to undermine efforts to reduce poverty and promote democracy in the region.

Recent experience in South Africa has pointed to the importance of an informed, locally specific and evidence-based approach to formulating interventions that address violence in schools, thereby enhancing children's access to the education system. However, very little nationally representative data on the experiences of violence against children as a barrier to education and as an infringement on human rights exists in the region, with the exception of South Africa and Malawi. Where studies have been conducted, these have tended to focus largely on quantitative methodologies or very limited qualitative methodologies that do not reflect the real scale of the problem. These studies have also not allowed for the formulation of a coherent and integrated strategy to deal with violence. The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP) therefore embarked on a three-country study in 2009, aimed at exploring violence as a barrier to education in Namibia, Mozambique and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). While all three countries under study can be classified as post-conflict, each is in a very different stage of development and reconstruction.

Mozambique gained independence from Portugal in 1975. Its early years of independence were, however, marred by civil war as well as violence related to the fight against apartheid in South Africa and the struggle for independence in Zimbabwe. Independence was marked by economic collapse, although substantial progress has been made in rebuilding the Mozambican economy. Mozambique is for the first time currently engaged in comprehensive data collection on crime and violence at a community level.

Overall, the study was guided by four distinct objectives, namely to:

- collect scientifically based, *reliable quantitative and qualitative data* on the extent, nature and implications of school-related violence against children in three Southern African Development Community countries;

- *add substantially to the local and regional body of knowledge* on children, young people, violence and education within each selected country, through a process of data collection, analysis and dissemination;

- contribute to the *sharing of research skills and capacity building* within each selected country by developing local partnerships with identified non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and academic institutions; and

■ *furthe*r regional and international *advocacy* efforts that focus on the prevention of violence against girls, such as the Plan International strategy and the Osisa Action Aid campaign.

The study in Mozambique commenced with a one-day roundtable discussion held on 3 November 2009. The roundtable, which was run in partnership with *Movimento de Educação Para Todos* (MEPT), brought together sector experts, academics and representatives of civil society organisations (CSOs) engaged in the education field. The purpose of the roundtable was to disseminate information about the study relevant to stakeholders and to collect existing information, data and in-country experience relating to the topic under study.

A desktop collection of all available data on existing research concerning school violence, violence against girls and violence as a barrier to education in each of the three countries was undertaken, facilitated by the roundtable discussion. This was followed by the primary fieldwork component in Mozambique, which comprised quantitative and qualitative research methods.

For the quantitative component, a household survey was administered to 499 young people between the ages of 12 and 19 years in several communities in and around the capital city, Maputo. Access to the communities was sought by engaging with community or traditional leaders and informing them about the intended study and the various processes involved in it.

Following the consultations, a household questionnaire was used to elicit information on young people's experiences of violence – both direct and indirect

Figure 1: Data collection process
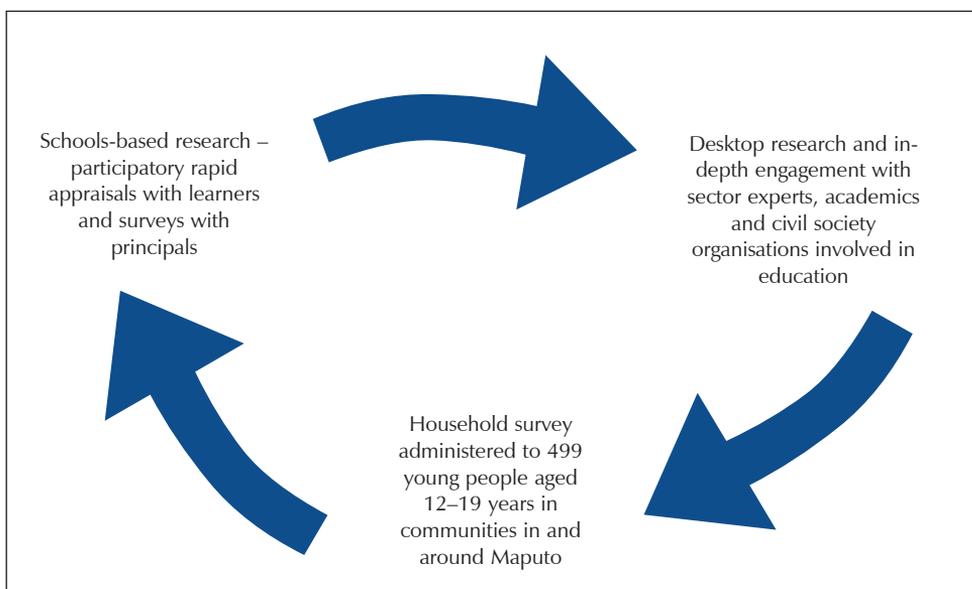
Table 1: Demographic profile of the sample (n=499)

		%
Age* *Mean age (15.05 years)	12–14 years 15–17 years 18–19 years	37.8 49.1 13.1
Ethnicity	Shangaan Maronga Machope Other Sena Makonde Makua Machangana Manhebane Portuguese Anamongo Indian Swazi	55.8 11.4 9.0 5.5 4.3 4.1 3.9 3.3 1.6 0.6 0.2 0.2 0.2
Gender	Females Males	54.7 45.3

– at school, in the home and in the broader communities in which they live. Female (54.7%) participants aged 15–17 years (49.1%) and those belonging to the Shangaan ethnic group (55.8%) accounted for the greater part of the study sample (see Table 1).

The quantitative component was complemented by a number of participatory rapid appraisals (PRAs) conducted at schools. This ensured that the experiences and perceptions of children both at school and those not attending school were captured in the study. School-based surveys were also administered to the school principals to explore their perceptions of violence at school. This approach provided the advantage of capturing and quantifying experiences, as well as obtaining perceptions that allowed for a richer description of the data.

Education in Mozambique

THE PAST

Mozambique has been described 'as a dialectic between forces of integration and those of disintegration'.[13] This is perhaps because Mozambique's past has been fraught with colliding ecological, social and political challenges that have left a large proportion of the population fractured by violence.

Mozambique was colonised by the Portuguese in 1505 and became independent in 1975. Under colonial rule many Bantu-speaking inhabitants were forced to work for European land-owners and there was no interest in providing educational opportunities for the indigenous population. The minimal education that was provided to them was either inadequate or inaccessible, and by 1900 only 1,195 indigenous children attended school.[14] During the Salazar regime – a Portuguese dictator who came to power in 1926 – it was virtually impossible for indigenous people in Mozambique to obtain an education. This racial barrier to education continued as late as 1966, when 90% of Mozambique's indigenous population was found to be illiterate.[15]

Around 1962, nationalist groups united to form the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (Frelimo). An armed struggle for national independence was launched and Salazar's colonial education policies were reviewed. During this time primary education was made compulsory and secondary schools were expanded to increase educational accessibility to the African population. Education was deemed a right for all people and a means of liberation from colonial oppression. Additional schools were built to make education more accessible, and by 1967 more than 10,000 children were enrolled in Frelimo primary schools.

Mozambique gained independence in June 1975 and the new Frelimo government immediately set about introducing education and health reforms. By the early-1990s illiteracy rates had dropped from 90% to 60%.[16]

Frelimo created a socialist state and actively supported the elimination of white minority governments in the region, providing base camps for various anti-government organisations. The white governments in neighbouring Rhodesia and South Africa thus perceived Mozambique as a threat to their existence[17] and endorsed the counter-revolutionary movement, the Mozambique National Resistance Movement (Renamo or MNR) – as did other Western capitalist countries.[18] This led to a devastating 16-year civil war in Mozambique. More than four million civilians were displaced, fleeing to refugee camps in Zambia and Malawi.[19] At least a million people were killed and even more children were orphaned.[20] The war also saw the systematic destruction of economic infrastructure, bridges, electricity supply lines, agricultural and industrial machinery, plantations, transport and health-care centres.[21] Half of all primary schools in rural areas were damaged; 840 schools were destroyed or closed, which affected more than 150,000 children.[22]

A peace accord was signed between the Frelimo government and the Renamo leadership in 1992, and several rehabilitation and restructuring programmes were created in an attempt to make education more accessible. Over a million refugees were repatriated and reintegrated into Mozambique, many of them children who grew up or who were born in refugee camps and were illiterate. Various international organisations attempted to train people to become teachers to cope with the influx of school-age children returning to the country and in need of an education. This was deemed important in rebuilding a country whose political history had a devastating effect on the lives of the majority of the population.

THE PRESENT

Following 30 years of conflict, Mozambique has made significant strides in achieving economic growth and poverty reduction.[23] Even so, Mozambique ranks 172 out of 177 on the United Nations (UN) Human Development Index, suggesting that quality service delivery remains a major challenge, particularly in the health and education sectors.[24]

Mozambique is a low-income country with approximately 20 million inhabitants. Even though the Constitution of Mozambique declares education a right and a duty of every Mozambican citizen,[25] less than 50% of those living in the country are literate[26] and the illiteracy rate for women is estimated at 71%.[27] Since the cessation of conflict, primary school (grades 1–5) enrolment rates over the period 1992 to 2006 have increased from 34.2% to 67% for girls and from 43.8% to 71% for boys.[28] Close to 2,000 additional schools were built in the five-year period between 1998 and 2003, increasing the number of available schools from 6,114 to 8,077[29] and allowing for the enrolment of 3.8 million children in primary schools in 2005.[30]

However, for those granted access to primary education, the quality of learning is often compromised by a number of factors, one of which is violence. The impact

of these factors on the continued education of children in Mozambique becomes palpable when considering that the net enrolment rate for secondary school is only 7–8%.[31]

The right to education is enshrined in the Constitution of Mozambique. Chapter 5, article 88 states that:

1. In the Republic of Mozambique, education shall be a right and a duty of all citizens.
2. The State shall promote the extension of education to professional and continuing vocational training, as well as access to the enjoyment of this right by all citizens.

Chapter 3, article 113 further maintains that:

1. The Republic of Mozambique shall promote an educational strategy that aims towards national unity, wiping out illiteracy, mastering science and technology, and providing citizens with moral and civic values.
2. The State shall organise and develop education through a national system of education.

These laws were complemented by the development of several sector-specific policies. Central to the education reform process in post-war Mozambique was the implementation of the National Education Policy in 1995, which identified basic education and adult literacy as the government's main priorities.[32] This initial policy led to the development of the Education Sector Strategic Plan 1999–2003, which aimed to increase access to educational opportunities for people at all levels of the education system.[33]

The Mozambican government allocates on average 20–23% of the total government budget to education – a substantial amount in line with Education For All (EFA) suggestions. Despite this, the government continues to experience major difficulties in attempting to remedy the severe lack of infrastructure, the need to build new schools, poor working conditions, the inability to remunerate teachers adequately and the lack of teaching materials – all a legacy of more than three decades of conflict.

Government initiatives have increased the number of schools; however, the expansion of schools in certain provinces has not kept pace with the increasing number of pupils enrolled in schools each year. Since the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and EFA objectives were established, donors to Mozambique have markedly increased their contributions to the expansion of the education system.[34] But funding still falls short of meeting all the educational needs of children in the country, specifically girl children.

The education sector is currently not able to cater for some 50% of school-age children, which is fuelling the illiteracy rate in the country. Illiteracy rates in

Mozambique are currently estimated at 37.9% for those aged 15–19 years (48% among teenage girls) and 50.7% among those aged 20–29 years (61% among young women).[35] These rates are higher than the average for sub-Saharan Africa.

Importantly, the recruitment of teachers has not kept pace with the increased enrolment of children at schools in Mozambique. Schools have therefore been compelled to operate in two or three shifts in order to cope with the increasing number of learners and the shortage of qualified educators and available classrooms.[36] The teacher–learner ratio has in fact increased from 1:61 in 1997 to 1:66 in 2003 and 1:74 in 2005.[37] The Mozambican government has therefore been forced to rely more and more on unqualified educators to help carry the load, resulting in the proportion of unqualified educators doubling in the six-year period between 1997 (20%) and 2003 (42%).[38]

The physical conditions in which educators are compelled to teach further compromise the quality of education afforded to Mozambican children. School buildings are often in a state of disrepair and lack roofs, windows, desks, chairs and electricity.[39] Water and sanitation facilities are also lacking at many schools. Where ablution facilities are available, there are often no separate toilet facilities for males and females, posing a safety risk for young girls. School materials, specifically textbooks, are often a scarce resource at many schools. The implications of this lack of infrastructure and resources become glaringly evident when one considers the differences between rural and urban schools (see text box, *below*).

Drop-out and grade repetition rates are high in Mozambique, with nearly half of primary school children dropping out before Grade 5.[40] The language of instruction at schools has been found to be a contributing factor to the country's high repetition rates. Mozambique's official language is Portuguese, and this was the sole medium of instruction at schools until 2004. Despite Mozambique being a multicultural and multilingual society, Portuguese was chosen as the official

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Rural versus urban schooling in Mozambique

Enrolment and completion of education is significantly lower among children living in the rural areas of Mozambique compared to their counterparts who live in urban areas of the country. Teachers in rural areas are much more likely to be unqualified: 47% of teachers in rural areas have no formal qualification compared to 25% of teachers in urban areas and only 1% of teachers in rural areas have a higher education degree compared to 11% of teachers in urban areas. This is a concern because most of the population (62–70%) live in rural areas, implying that the low quality of education present in rural areas is affecting the majority of children in Mozambique.

Source: Insitituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice (IIMA), 'Statement on the Situation of the Rights of the Child in Mozambique'. Submission to the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review, 2010. Available at http://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session10/MZ/IIMA_IstitutoInternazionaleMariaAusiliatrice_eng.pdf [accessed 29 March 2011].

Figure 2: Barriers to girls' education
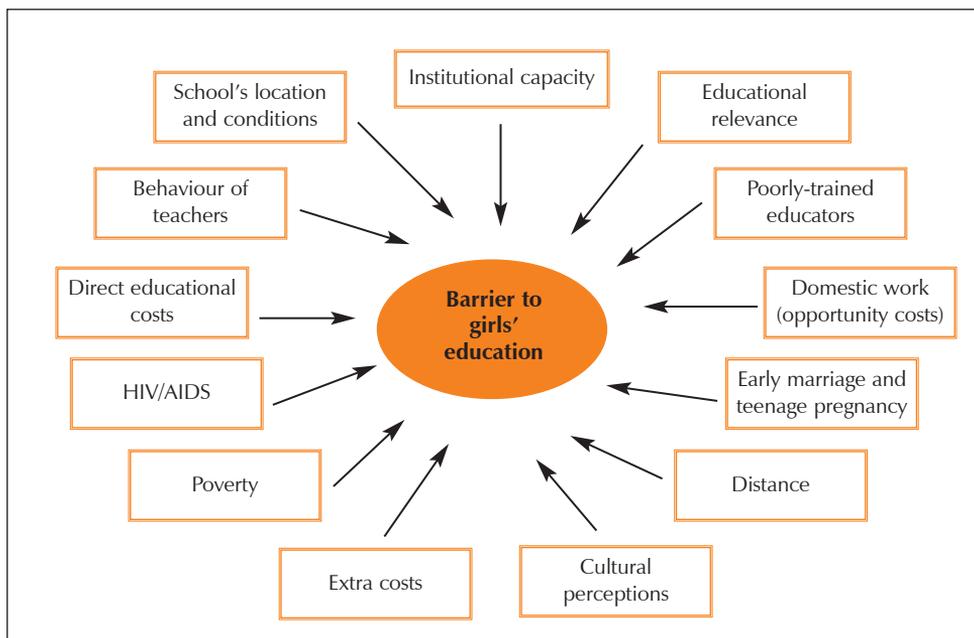
Model adapted from Justiniano M, Nielsen NS, Xerinda H & Oksanen P, *Multifaceted Challenges: A Study on the Barriers to Girls' Education, Zambezia Province, Mozambique*. Cida, Danida and UNICEF, 2005. Available at http://www.unicef.org/mozambique/Barriers_to_Girls_Education_-_2005__ENG.pdf.

language in the early-1960s in an attempt to unite the linguistically diverse population.[41]

In many countries in Africa, provision is made to include mother-tongue education in the early school years, with a shift to the official language in later grades. The introduction in Mozambique in 2004 of local language instruction for grades 1–3 is seen as a positive step towards better quality education for children in the country.[42]

Available statistics highlight the gender gap with regard to education in Mozambique. According to Isaacs,[43] in 2004 only 28% of girls and 40% of boys completed primary school in Mozambique. The gender disparity in education is a result of many factors (see Figure 2). These include families not placing enough importance on girls' education, the socio-economic status of families, which often results in girls being kept home to assist with domestic chores or income generation,[44] early marriage and teenage pregnancy.[45]

The low number of female educators – in 2005 less than a third (31%) of educators were female – has also been associated with the low enrolment and retention rates of girls in Mozambican schools. According to a recent study, the presence of female educators reduces the risk of sexual harassment and violence perpetrated by male educators.[46] The presence of female teachers is also believed

to raise awareness among parents and community members at large regarding the significance of education for girls through the positive role-modelling they provide.[47]

Furthermore, schools in rural areas are often situated far from children's homes. Many girls either drop out of school or parents are reluctant to send them to school for fear of victimisation while travelling to and from school.

Broader social issues also impact negatively on children's lives and their educational opportunities. Poverty and HIV/AIDS are two specific examples. The Mozambican economy is based largely on agriculture, with the majority of the population living in rural areas and being involved in farming, forestry and fishing.[48] Mozambique is, however, one of the least developed countries in the world.[49] While the economy has grown steadily between 1997 and 2003, and the proportion of Mozambicans living below the poverty line has decreased from 69% to 54% over this period, Mozambique remains among the world's 20 poorest countries.[50]

Poverty is a deep-rooted problem for children as it affects their educational opportunities as well as their short- and long-term health and well-being. Poverty not only inhibits access to education because parents cannot afford to pay for uniforms and school materials, but also determines the quality of schooling that a child is afforded since the schools situated in poorer areas are usually under-resourced. Although the Mozambican government abolished school fees in 2005, many families still face indirect costs related to schooling.[51] The inability to meet these costs results in children dropping out of school as many must work to help generate income to sustain the household.

HIV/AIDS is another major factor affecting education. It is estimated that 1.2 million people in Mozambique are currently living with HIV/AIDS. The HIV prevalence rate among those aged 15–49 years is 13%, although in some areas the rate is higher than 20%.[52] HIV/AIDS is the main contributing factor to Mozambique's low life expectancy (46.7 years), which has to date left more than 1.2 million children orphaned.[53] Children who are directly affected by HIV/AIDS show a marked deterioration in educational performance due to the responsibilities they are often required to take on when a parent dies,[54] such as caring for younger siblings and working to support the household.[55]

Being a conflict-affected country, violence has significantly impacted the lives of Mozambican citizens both directly and indirectly – and continues to do so even today. This is evident when one considers the current state of education in the country, and specifically the violence that occurs in and around schools and which negatively impacts access to education.

This monograph explores the current challenges facing education in Mozambique and discusses how violence acts as a barrier to education. Although violence takes on many forms, the monograph will focus only on those types of violence that most directly impact children, specifically in relation to their access to formal and informal education systems.

Learning amidst the disorder

LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Following decades of civil war, Mozambique has made remarkable strides in achieving political stability. The education system has not been excluded from this rapid reform process. Increases in enrolment rates for primary school learners from 1.7 million in 1997 to 2.8 million in 2003, attest to this growth.[56] Of the 499 youths surveyed for this study, nearly all (98.8%) indicated having ever attended school, with 95.4% of the respondents attending school at the time of being interviewed for the study. In terms of their highest level of completed education, one in two participants had completed some form of secondary schooling (51.4%), 45.7% had completed some form of primary schooling, and 2.9% had completed their secondary education. While education has become more accessible to children and youths in Mozambique, their learning experience is, however, often compromised due to a number of factors.

Those who had never entered the formal schooling system or who had left school prior to completing their education, attributed this primarily to an inability to afford the fees associated with schooling (52.2%), followed by the need to contribute financially to the household (13%) – findings that are testament to the widespread poverty in Mozambique. These findings have deleterious implications for the educational opportunities and outcomes of children and youth, particularly girls.

The Constitution of Mozambique has stipulated since 2005 that all primary school–age children are to receive a free education. However, the poor fiscal support given to education means that parents are often requested to contribute to the cost of schooling to cover the shortfall in school budgets.

Although Mozambique's gross domestic product has increased over the years, 70% of the population inhabits rural areas and 58% of children in Mozambique live below the poverty line.[57] Many families therefore struggle to afford the costs

associated with schooling. The inability to pay school fees means that children are often withdrawn from school.[58]

A study undertaken by Roby, Lambert and Lambert[59] in 2009 linked household income directly to school enrolment rates of children. Their findings suggested that parents often fail to see the tangible benefits of educating their children (daughters especially) when fiscal resources are scarce within households and when the family's daily survival is seen as the more pressing need.[60] This issue is exacerbated by the cultural views informing the roles and responsibilities of male and female children within the domestic environment.

In addition to lack of financial resources, unplanned pregnancy (26.1%) was another common reason for non-completion of schooling. Teenage pregnancy is of grave concern given that:

> ... uneducated girls slip easily to the margins of societies, ending up less healthy, less skilled, with fewer choices, and ill prepared to participate in the political, social and economic development of their communities. They, and their children, are at higher risk of poverty, HIV/AIDS, sexual exploitation and violence.[61]

In Mozambique, pregnant girls are permitted by law to attend school; however, families and communities often tend to discourage this practice.

Having left school for various reasons, young people often fail to access the necessary skills that would enable them to contribute meaningfully to the economy. Less than a quarter (23%) of youths who had either completed their education or who had left school prior to completing their schooling had received *any* form of skills training. Where such instruction was accessed, trade skills such as carpentry and panel work (15.4%) were the most common skills received, followed by an English language course (14.4%), computer programming (12.5%), computer literacy (4.9%), farming (4.9%), and nursing and home-based care training (1.9%).

Those fortunate enough to remain in school often struggled to perform academically due to the many challenges involved. These included difficulties in having to physically access the school, regularly attend classes and successfully transition from one grade to the next.

A total of 74.7% of the survey respondents walk to and from school each day. For most (63.8%), the journey (one way) takes approximately 30 minutes or less, while for others the trip takes up to an hour (24.5%) or longer (10.9%). The distance to school plays a major role in parental decisions whether or not to send children to school and is therefore a contributing factor to low enrolment and attendance rates.

Absenteeism was also not a rarity: nearly a third (31.8%) of the respondents had been absent from school between one and three times in the past year; 14% had missed school four to nine times in the past year; and 7.9% had been absent

from school 10 or more times in the past year. When present at school, children's ability to concentrate is often hampered by hunger. The survey found that 10.8% of respondents had gone to school hungry one to three times in the past year, while close to a tenth had been forced to go to school on an empty stomach four or more times (3.7% had gone to school hungry four to nine times and 4.7% had done so 10 or more times). Still, 2.8% indicated not knowing how many times they had experienced this scenario in the past 12 months.

One of the more telling indicators of an education system's efficiency is the rate of transition from one grade to the next.[62] The study results show that one in two (53.4%) respondents had ever repeated a grade. Although most (61.1%) had repeated a grade only once, 31.9% had done so twice, 6.2% three times and 0.8% had repeated a grade four times in their school career. On the whole, the findings support Brophy's[63] argument that grade repetition is more prevalent in developing countries and is most likely to affect poorer children, working children and children residing in rural areas. This is due to such factors as the cost of schooling, remoteness, illness and malnutrition, as well as the quality of schools and the language of instruction.

The poor recruitment of educators is another factor that severely compromises the quality of education in Mozambique (see text box, *below*).

VIOLENCE AT SCHOOL

Violence within the school environment is an international phenomenon. Earlier research studies have demonstrated that some learners are directly victimised at school, while others, although not personally affected by violent incidents at school, are keenly aware of the victimisation experienced by children at school.[64] Four out of five participants stated that violence was a big (17.4%) or very big (63.9%) problem at their school, suggesting that learners in Mozambique are no exception to this rule.

Poor recruitment of educators

Despite the increased enrolment rate of children at schools in Mozambique, the recruitment of teachers has not increased at the same rate. In 2005, UNESCO found that there was one educator for every 66.3 learners. Educators are often compelled to work double or triple shifts to meet the demands of their profession. In addition to overcrowded classrooms and lack of educators, the poor qualifications of educators further compromise the quality of education that children in Mozambique receive. It is estimated that only 59.8% of primary school educators are formally trained and meet the professional requirements for their posts across the country.

Source: UNESCO, 'Education Statistics for Mozambique'. Available at http://www.childinfo.org/files/ESAR_ Mozambique. pdf; Isaacs S, *Survey of ICT and Education in Africa: Mozambique Country Report*, 2007. Available at www.infodev.org/en/Document.419.pdf [accessed 29 March 2011].

Table 2: Youth perceptions of violence at school

Females	Males
Types of violence girls are most likely to experience	***Types of violence boys are most likely to experience***
• Physical abuse (including corporal punishment) (30.5%) • Sexual abuse or harassment (30.1%) • Emotional or verbal abuse (including intimidation) (23.8%) • Child labour (10.9%)	• Physical abuse (including corporal punishment) (40.2%) • Emotional or verbal abuse (including intimidation) (27.0%) • Child labour (14.2%) • Sexual abuse or harassment (12.5%)
Persons most likely to perpetrate these acts of violence against girls	***Persons most likely to perpetrate these acts of violence against boys***
• Other male learners at school (26.2%) • Other males outside of school (25.7%) • Male educators (19.4%) • Other female learners at school (9.3%) • Other adults at school (6.0%) • Principal (4.2%) • Female educators (4.0%) • Other females outside the school (3.1%)	• Other male learners at school (28.2%) • Other males outside of school (23.8%) • Male educators (19.5%) • Other adults at school (10.0%) • Other female learners at school (6.0%) • Other females outside of school (4.6%) • Principal (3.0%) • Female educators (1.8%)

The respondents were asked a number of questions regarding youth perceptions of violence at school. Physical and sexual abuse were identified as the types of violence most likely to be perpetrated against female learners, while males were more likely to fall prey to physical and emotional or verbal abuse. Male learners at the school as well as other males outside of the school were primarily implicated as the perpetrators of the violence affecting girls and boys within schools (see Table 2).

School violence takes on numerous forms. For many learners, school – typically thought of as a place of safety – appears to be an environment that elicits feelings of fear. A total of 11.2% – one in ten participants – reported experiencing fear when travelling to and from school. Furthermore, 18.4% indicated that there was a particular place at school where they felt fearful. These places generally tended to be toilets (49.5%) and open grounds on the school property (14.3%). Females reported higher levels of fear in both scenarios compared to their male counterparts (see Figure 3).

Their fear seemed warranted since the likelihood that they would be victimised at school was great. Actual or direct victimisation reported in the study encompassed threats of harm or violence (36.4%), verbal insults or teasing (33.1%), physical attacks (19.6%), sexual assaults (being forced to do things with their body

Figure 3: Fear at school, by gender (n=489)
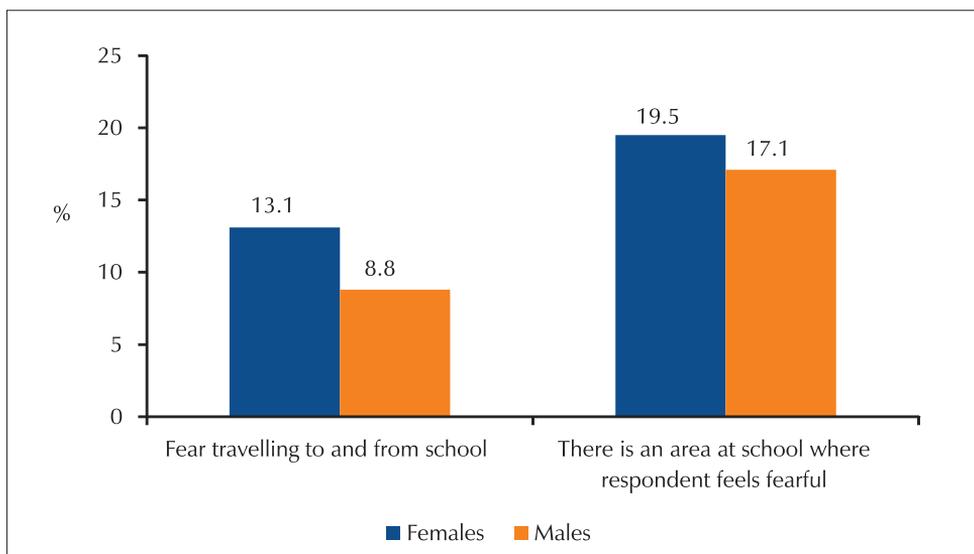
against their will) (4.2%), as well as being forced to do other things that they felt were wrong and did not want to do (7.1%) (see Figure 4).

Although emotional forms of violence were most prevalent, mainstream literature shows that this type of violence can be as psychologically damaging to children, if not more so, than physical violence.

Girls were most vulnerable to nearly all of these victimisations compared to their male counterparts, with the exception of being forced to do something

Figure 4: Direct experiences of violence at school (n=484)
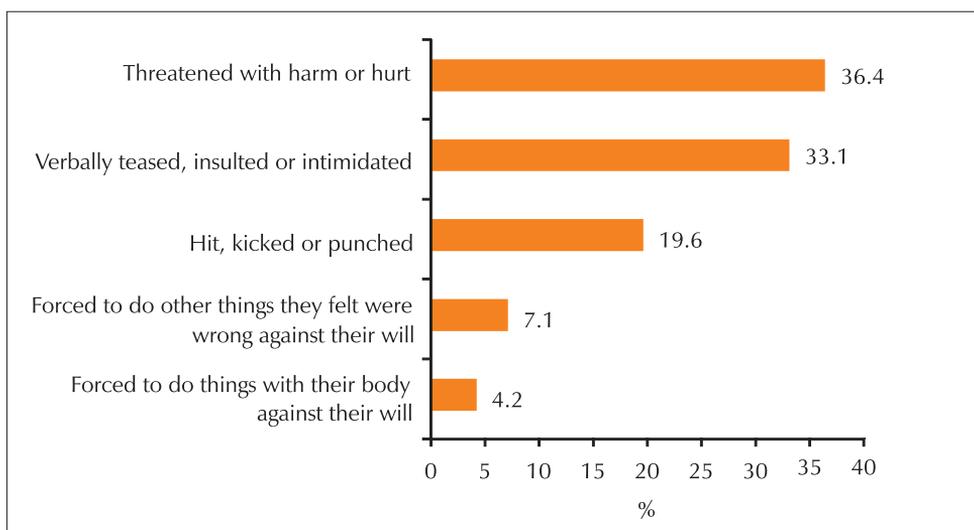
Figure 5: Violent experiences at school, by gender (n=484)
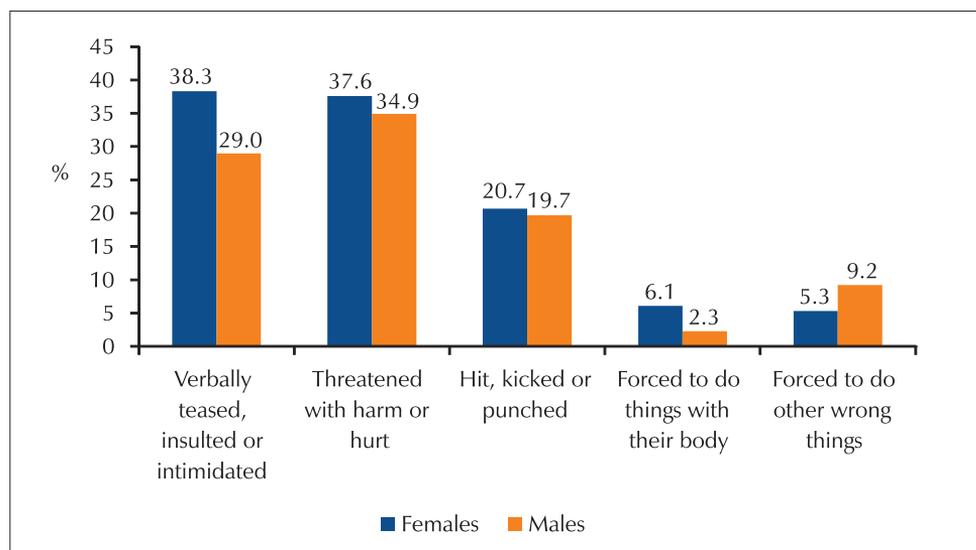
wrong that they did not want to do. Close to two-fifths of the females participating in the study had reportedly been threatened with harm (37.6%) or verbally insulted or intimidated (38.3%), compared to 34.9% of males who had been threatened and 29% who had been verbally insulted while at school. Furthermore, 6.1% of females had been forced to do things with their body against their will, compared to 2.3% of males who had experienced sexual assault at school. Interestingly, there were no significant differences observed between male and female participants when it came to the rates of physical assaults experienced at school (see Figure 5).

Classmates and other learners at school were most frequently identified as the perpetrators of the violent threats, verbal insults, physical attacks and sexual assaults experienced by these Mozambican children and youths. This suggests

Table 3: Perpetrators of violence experienced at school (%) (n=484)

	Threatened with harm or hurt	Verbally insulted or intimidated	Hit, kicked or punched	Forced to do things with their body against their will
Classmates	37.4	42.0	29.0	33.3
Other learners at school	25.9	30.2	28.0	6.7
Other children outside of school	25.0	17.3	21.5	33.3
Teacher or principal	2.9	4.9	12.9	6.7
Other adults at school	8.0	4.9	7.5	13.3

Table 4: Frequency of victimisation at school (%) (n=484)

	Threatened with harm or hurt	Verbally insulted or intimidated	Hit, kicked or punched	Forced to do things with their body against their will
Once	38.3	40.0	52.5	55.6
2-5 times	38.3	27.9	22.2	33.3
6-10 times	5.7	9.7	14.1	5.6
More than 10 times	17.7	20.0	10.1	0.0

that the biggest threats to learner safety stem from within the school environment (see Table 3).

Teachers and principals were implicated as the perpetrators of violence at school, although to a much lesser degree than the respondents' peers. Other children from outside of the school were also common perpetrators of the violent acts and were responsible for a third (33.3%) of sexual assaults, a fifth (21.5%) of physical attacks, nearly a fifth (17.3%) of verbal insults and a quarter (25%) of threats of violence reported by the study participants.

The data suggest that young people who fall victim to violence at school often experience repeat victimisation – a finding that is not surprising given the close proximity of the victims to the perpetrators (typically classmates or other learners at school). The findings recorded in Table 4 demonstrate that while most victimisations are a one-off experience, one in six youths who had been threatened with harm at school had experienced this more than 10 times, 20% of those who reported being verbally insulted or intimidated at school had been subjected to this more than 10 times, and 10.1% of victims of physical attacks had been assaulted in this way more than 10 times (see Table 4).

Although sexual assaults occurred less frequently than the other victimisations asked about, the rates were still alarming: one in three (33.3%) victims had been forced to do things with their body or had things done to their body against their will two to five times while at school (see Table 4).

Victimisations occurring at school were seldom reported either to school authorities or family members. Half (50.3%) of the verbal insults and intimidations experienced were NOT reported, while two out of five threats (42.9%), physical attacks (43.4%) and sexual assaults (42.9%) experienced were NOT reported by the victims – this, despite the fact that the majority of participants felt comfortable asking their teachers for help with problems they may have (93.9%). Most participants also stated that their school encourages them to report bullying and aggression (65.3%), and most believed that teachers do take action to resolve the problem when bullying and aggression is reported to them (76.4%).

This discrepancy may be explained by the primary reasons for non-reporting, which were found to be the belief that it was not important or not necessary to

Table 5: Comparative victimisation experiences at schools in Namibia and the DRC

Participants who had ever been ...	
Namibia (n=381)	**Democratic Republic of Congo (n=360)**
• Verbally teased, insulted or intimidated while at school (22.6%) • Hit, kicked or punched while at school (18.8%) • Threatened with harm, scared or hurt in any way while at school (17.3%) • Forced to do things that they felt were wrong and did not want to do, while at school (11.6%) • Forced to do things with their body against their will while at school (5.7%) • Hit, caned or spanked by a teacher or principal for wrongdoing (corporal punishment) (72.6%)	• Verbally teased, insulted or intimidated while at school (41.7%) • Hit, kicked or punched while at school (15.0%) • Threatened with harm, scared or hurt in any way while at school (25.8%) • Forced to do things that they felt were wrong and did not want to do, while at school (14.0%) • Forced to do things with their body against their will while at school (8.9%) • Hit, caned or spanked by a teacher or principal for wrongdoing (corporal punishment) (54.8%)

report such experiences, that reporting would not help the situation, and being too embarrassed to do so. In some instances victims were threatened with harm if they told anyone.

Mozambique has a progressive legislative framework that protects the rights of children and ensures their access to quality education: however, these policies and procedures are often not implemented at a practical level. Lack of policy enforcement at schools has resulted in children being denied their rights, specifically their right to physical integrity and human dignity.[65] While the Constitution of Mozambique guarantees children the right to protection from torture, inhuman and degrading punishment, corporal punishment continues to be a socially acceptable means of effecting discipline within schools.[66]

A total of 13.8% of respondents reported that they had been physically hit, spanked or caned at school when they did something wrong. However, physical punishment for wrongdoings is yet another means of modelling aggressive behaviour for children and teaches them that violence is an appropriate means of conflict resolution and expression of anger.[67]

It is therefore not surprising that learners themselves often view physical punishment as an appropriate form of discipline and fail to report incidents to their headmasters or parents.[68]

According to Lansford and Dodge,[69] societies that use corporal punishment to discipline or teach children have a higher prevalence of adult perpetrators of violence. In addition, they have greater numbers of adults who hold attitudes that are favourable towards violence and thus endorse the use thereof. In short,

Figure 6: Attitudes towards school (n=499)
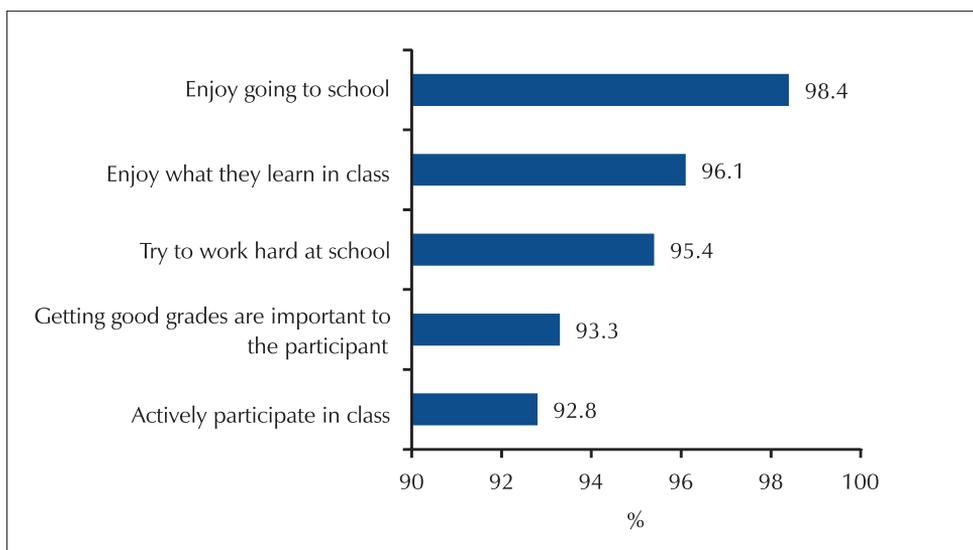
corporal punishment promotes anti-social behaviour and continues the cycle of violence in broader society.

Lack of policy implementation has also inhibited pregnant learners' access to education. These young girls are compelled to attend evening classes because of their physical condition, but this presents its own set of risks. There are safety and security concerns as the pregnant girls must travel long distances to attend the evening classes, which are not available at all schools.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS SCHOOL

Despite the odds being stacked against them, young people in Mozambique were found to demonstrate positive attitudes towards school, as shown in Figure 6. Nearly all the young people surveyed indicated that they enjoy going to school,

The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention undertook a youth resilience study in 2007 designed to explore why young people refrain from engaging in criminal activities despite being raised in environments fraught with risk factors known to increase their susceptibility to crime. The study intended to identify protective factors – that is, factors which counteract the risk factors for anti-social behaviour. Nine protective factors emerged from the study, which juxtaposed two samples (offending and non-offending youths). One of these was youth's attitudes towards their schooling. Youth who demonstrated an interest in their schooling by working hard to obtain good marks were found to be 31 times more likely to refrain from anti-social activities.

Source: Leoschut L & Burton P, *Building Resilience to Crime and Violence in Young South Africans*, CJCP Research Bulletin, No. 4, 2009.

enjoy what they learn in the classroom, try to work hard at school, and actively participate in classroom activities by asking questions or responding to questions posed by their educators.

Still, nearly a tenth of participants were of the opinion that school was boring (9.8%) and a waste of time (9.1%). Close to a third (30.9%) of the sample viewed education as more important for boys, and males (46.6%) were more inclined to believe this than females (18%). This view reflects the opinions of the broader Mozambican society.

Home: A place of refuge and safety?

HOUSEHOLD DEMOGRAPHICS

The households surveyed in the study comprised an average of seven members, three to four of which were children under the age of 18 years. Although there were approximately three children within each household who were of school-going age, only 2.8 actually attended school. This suggests that within these households not all children of school-going age receive formal schooling. See Table 6.

Two-fifths of the sample (41.2%) were resident in two-parent households, while more than a quarter were living in single-parent households (23.9% lived with their mothers and 3.7% lived with their fathers). Respondents who were not living with their parents indicated residing with grandparents (10.1%), other relatives (8.7%), siblings (7.9%), non-relatives (1.2%), spouse (0.8%) or partner (0.6%). The respondents cited displacement (28.9%) and parental death due to natural causes (21.1%) or as a result of conflict or violence (5.9%) as the primary reasons for not living with their parents at the time of the study.

Table 6: Size of the household (n=497)

	Mean	SD
Number of people (including respondent) who normally live in the household	7.01	2.849
Number of children 18 years of age and younger who live in the household (including respondent)	3.69	1.869
Number of school-going age children in the household	3.03	1.511
Number of school-going age children who attend school	2.80	1.485

Portuguese was the primary home language spoken by more than half (53%) of the sample, followed by Shangaan (23.7%), Maronga (7.5%), Tsonga (4.7%) and Tonga (2%).

Since the study was not intended to directly explore the respondents' socio-economic conditions, several questions were asked to derive a description of their living conditions. The findings show that 77.6% of the youths interviewed live in free-standing houses, while the remaining participants reportedly live in a shack or informal room (4.4%), low-income housing (4.4%), hostel (3%), other formal housing (4.2 %) and other unspecified housing types (6.3%).

Half (51.4%) of the youth claimed to have water piped in their homes, a quarter (25.5%) accessed water from a tap in their own yards and 12.4% collected water from communal taps. Other sources of household water included boreholes or wells in their yards (8.2%), springs, rivers or dams (7.2%), and boreholes or wells outside their yards (5%). One in two (51.4%) homes had access to flush toilets, while 44.5% used pit latrines and 4% had no ablution facilities.

When asked to indicate the number of individuals in their household who had permanent work or a stable source of income, the research results indicated that the overwhelming majority of these households had a permanent source of income. In fact, less than 2% of households did not have a stable source of income. On the whole, 40.7% of households had at least one person who was permanently employed, 31.1% had two members who were permanently employed and 17% of households had three members who had a stable source of income, suggesting that these households had an average of one to two members who had a stable source of income (*M=1.61, SD = 1.440*). A total of 14.7% of the households also receive some form of government grant.

Amenities such as working televisions (80.9%), radios (78.2%) and mobile phones (70.7%) were easily accessible in these households, while other amenities such as primus cookers or hot plates (50.5%), electric or gas stoves (52.4%), fixed landlines (24.9%) and working computers (24.3%) were less so. Less than a third (32.7%) of households owned a working vehicle.

Even though most households had a stable source of income, 16% of the youths still claimed that they did not always have enough food to eat. A total of 7.4% admitted going to bed hungry at least one night a week (3% usually go to bed hungry one night a week, while 4.4% go to bed without having eaten, or eaten enough, two to five nights a week).

Literature indicates that there are a number of factors stemming from the household that relate directly to school enrolment and attendance rates of children. These factors include the household level of income[70] and the education levels of the household heads. With regard to the latter, research purports that household heads with little or no education may fail to see the relevance of educating their children, specifically female children. This is often fuelled when families live in poor communities since the schools in these areas are typically under-resourced, lack basic facilities such as water and sanitation, lack school

materials, have a shortage of qualified teachers and feature overcrowded classrooms.[71] These factors increase learner susceptibility to different types of victimisation, including transactional sex between male educators and female learners, as well as 'sugar daddies' and 'sugar mommies'. This gives parents even more reason not to send their children to school.

VIOLENCE EXPOSURE AT HOME

Children and youth who are victimised at school primarily turn to their parents or family members for support. Study results show, however, that the level of support that children are able to receive within their families is often compromised since family members themselves are often caught up in cycles of violence.

A fifth of the sample – a total of 20.4% – had witnessed members of their family intentionally hitting, kicking, pushing, shoving, punching or attacking one another with a weapon. Weapons were used in 19.4% of the attacks witnessed – primarily sticks (61.9%), bottles (19%) and knives (9.5%). The victims in these attacks tended to be mothers (27.8%), siblings (26.8%) and other relatives (23.7%), while the perpetrators were typically identified as fathers (28%), other relatives (26.9%) and siblings (20.4%).

Furthermore, a total of 14.9% of respondents reported that their family members sometimes hit each other when they become angry. Parents or caregivers also typically use physical violence as a means of effecting discipline within the home (13.8%).

In addition to physical violence, emotional forms of violence were also common within these families. More than a fifth of the respondents admitted that

Figure 7: Witnessed family members intentionally hurting one another (n=476)
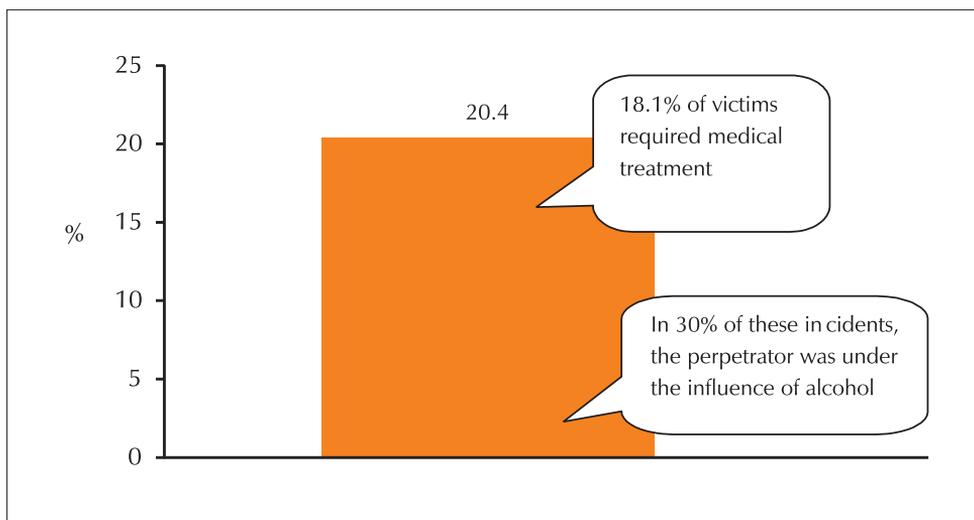
Figure 8: Emotional violence in the family (n=480)
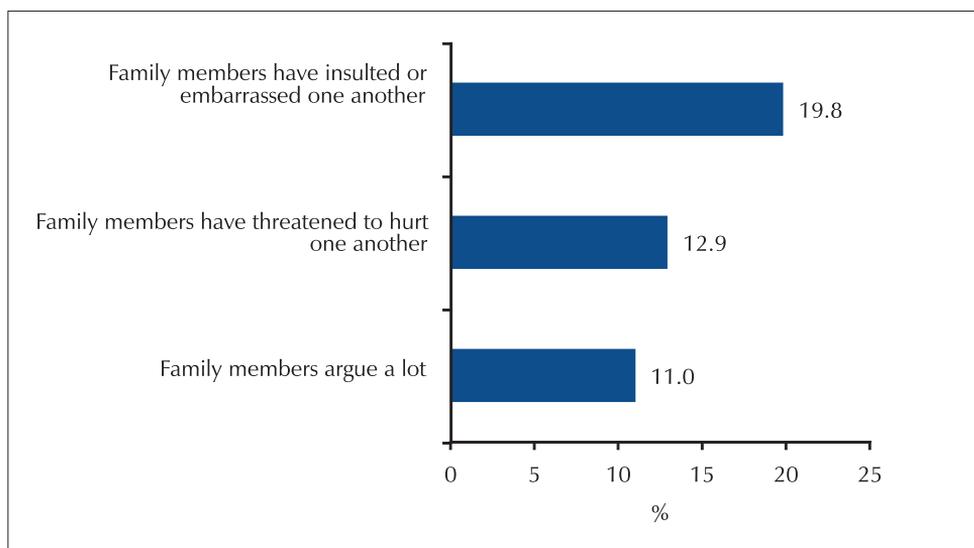
their family members at times insult or embarrass one another (19.8%), while more than a tenth claimed that people in their family had threatened to hurt one another (12.9%) or argue a lot (11%) (see Figure 8).

Even so, nine out of ten (89%) respondents believed that people in their family look out for one another.

CULTURAL OR TRADITIONAL FAMILY PRACTICES

Cultural violence is less obvious than direct physical violence; however, its effect can be just as damaging and can have serious long-term consequences. This is because cultural violence serves to legitimise physical violence, as well as norms and values that might serve effectively to exclude children from the education system.

The main source of income for many families in Mozambique is agriculture, and due to widespread poverty in Mozambique this is often the only source of income. As a result, many children are required to help with domestic chores and to assist in generating income for the household. These labour-intensive chores occupy most of the children's free time, both before and after school.

The findings depicted in Table 7 bear testimony to this. More than half (55.6%) of the sample indicated having to assist with household chores such as cooking, cleaning or fetching water every morning before going to school, while 43.5% engage in these activities every day after school. Looking after younger siblings or children in the household is also a chore that 50.5% of youths are responsible for on a daily basis. Furthermore, 12.5% of children and youths sell or trade goods at the local market all five days of the school week.

Table 7: Number of days per week respondent spends doing ... (%) (n=499)

	Never	1 day	2 days	3-4 days	All 5 days
Household chores (e.g. cooking, cleaning and fetching water) before school	20.8	7.9	7.1	7.5	55.6
Household chores (e.g. cooking, cleaning and fetching water) after school	32.3	8.7	7.7	6.7	43.5
Looking after younger children in the household	33.9	7.3	4.5	2.6	50.5
Working in the fields before school	79.8	5.1	3.8	1.4	8.7
Working in the fields after school	86.5	2.8	1.2	1.2	7.1
Selling or trading goods at the market	79.4	2.2	3.2	1.4	12.5

Nationally, 32% of children between the ages of seven and 17 years are engaged in some form of economic activity, with rural youths being much more likely to be economically active (40%) compared to their urban counterparts (16%).[72] At times, children are kept home from school to meet household responsibilities.

According to mainstream literature, traditional cultural beliefs have prevented many children from accessing an education. These beliefs may disapprove of girls' education or place greater emphasis on the education of male children.[73] The high cost of education prompts families to make decisions about who will have the opportunity to attend school, with girls often being kept at home to assist with household chores and responsibilities. This is because the direct and indirect costs of girls' schooling are high for poor households. In other words, the amount of time that a girl spends at school is perceived as a loss of opportunity to generate income for the household.[74]

On the one hand, poor struggling households – which is the case for many households in Mozambique – often keep their girls from attending school since their physical labour is more beneficial financially for the family. Boys, on the other hand, are often afforded the opportunity to complete their schooling. The differential treatment of girls and boys within the home often results from the patriarchal traditions and beliefs inherent in many societies. This is reflected in the beliefs and attitudes towards gender evident among the respondents. Although most of the youths believed that girls should have the same freedoms as boys, are as smart as their male counterparts and should receive the same encouragement to complete their schooling, many young people still maintained stereotypical views regarding the roles and responsibilities of males and females, and thus the relevance of education for women (see Table 8).

More than a quarter of the youths surveyed disagreed (28.1%) or strongly disagreed (1.4%) with the statement 'on average, girls are as smart as boys', while nearly a third expressed their agreement with the statement 'girls should be more concerned with becoming good wives and mothers rather than desiring a

Table 8: Attitudes towards gender (%) (n=499)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Girls should have the same freedoms as boys	24.5	27.6	41.6	6.4
On average, girls are as smart as boys	28.5	36.4	28.1	1.4
More encouragement should be given to sons than daughters to complete their schooling	6.8	13.6	61.5	16.9
Girls should be more concerned with becoming good wives and mothers rather than desiring a professional career	9.1	22.5	50.8	16.7
It is sometimes okay for a man to hit is wife	3.1	10.1	52.8	33.6
It is more important for boys than girls to do well in school	8.7	14.4	64.5	11.5
In general, the father should have greater authority than the mother in making family decisions	19.4	21.9	49.7	7.8

professional or business career'. In addition, more than a fifth of respondents felt that it is more important for males than females to do well in school, and males should therefore receive more encouragement to complete their schooling (see Table 8).

UNICEF describes child marriage as 'one of the most pernicious manifestations of the unequal power relations between females and males'.[75] Research studies have consistently highlighted the link between early marriage and low levels of schooling.[76] While this cultural practice was initially established to protect the sexual integrity of young girls and to provide them with a sense of economic security, this practice has come to infringe upon young girls' right to education in Mozambique. Once married, domestic chores, household responsibilities and other family pressures leave little time for schooling.[77]

The community

VIOLENCE EXPOSURE IN THE COMMUNITY

Much of the violence that young people in Mozambique experience and are exposed to within the home and school environment seems to reflect what is happening in the broader communities in which they live. Fights were believed to be widespread in the respondents' residential areas and were reported by 27.6% of the sample. Crime was also believed to be common, although to a lesser degree, and was reported by 12.9% of those interviewed.

Addictive substances such as alcohol (67.8%), marijuana (27.4%), and other drugs (25.6%) were found to be easily accessible to children and youth living in and around Maputo (see Table 9). The ease of access to these substances is a serious concern as they have been identified as high-risk factors for interpersonal violence as well as for risky sexual behaviour. The latter is particularly relevant in a country where HIV/AIDS is the primary cause of death.[78]

Young people's access to alcohol in rural areas (69%) did not differ significantly from that which pertains in urban areas (67.8%). Similarly, there were no significant differences between male and female youths' access to alcohol (68.1% and 67.5% respectively). Older individuals were, however, more likely to have easier access to alcohol than their younger counterparts, with 59.6% of

Table 9: Access to drugs and weapons in the community (%) (n=497)

	Easy to access	Difficult to access
Alcohol	67.8	30.2
Marijuana	27.4	66.7
Other drugs (excluding marijuana)	25.6	65.6
Firearm	14.5	75.7
Other weapons such as knives	39.1	56.7

Table 10: Easy access to substances and weapons in the community (%) (n=497)

	Alcohol	Marijuana	Other drugs	Firearm	Other weapons
Area					
Rural	69.0	33.3	29.2	20.7	35.2
Urban	67.8	20.4	21.6	7.5	43.4
Gender					
Male	68.1	32.0	24.8	6.2	39.1
Female	67.5	23.6	26.2	8.2	39.1
Age					
12–13 years	62.2	19.7	28.0	17.5	41.3
14–15 years	59.6	20.2	23.7	12.3	43.4
16–17 years	73.0	35.6	25.9	12.1	31.6
18–19 years	80.0	33.8	23.1	18.5	46.2

participants aged 14–15 years reporting easy access compared to 80% of 18–19-year-olds. While this is to be expected, it is important to note the ease with which so many youths under 15 years are able to access alcohol in their neighbourhoods (see Table 10).

When considering marijuana and other drugs, these substances were reportedly easier to obtain for youths living in rural areas around Maputo (33.3% and 29.2% respectively). While females indicated easier access to marijuana, males were more inclined to indicate easier access to other drugs in their living areas.

The figures in Table 10 attest to the ease with which children and youths are able to access addictive substances in their community: one in five children aged 12–13 years (19.7%) and 14–15 years (20.2%) claimed they could easily obtain marijuana in their residential areas. Furthermore, 23.7% of those aged 14–15 years and more than a quarter (28%) of respondents aged 12–13 years maintained that it would be easy for them to obtain other drugs (excluding marijuana) in their community if they wanted to.

Alarmingly, drugs were not the only harmful things young people had easy access to. Table 9 shows that 14.5% of youths claimed it would be easy for them to obtain a firearm in the area in which they live, and 39.1% asserted that other weapons such as knives were easily obtainable in their neighbourhoods.

Easy access to firearms differed significantly between urban and rural areas (*p< .001*). More specifically, 20.7% of the urban youth claimed it was easy to access firearms compared to 7.5% of those living in more rural areas around Maputo. Females (8.2%) reported slightly easier access to firearms compared to males (6.2%). Firearms were found to be easiest to access for respondents in the 12–13 (17.5%) and 18–19 (18.5%) year age cohorts, with one in six youths in these age categories indicating that they would have no difficulty accessing weapons such

Table 11: Relationship between access to drugs and accessibility to weapons (%) (n=499)

	EASY access to firearms	EASY access other weapons (excl. firearms)
Alcohol		
Easy to access	16.9	45.7
Difficult to access	9.3	26.0
Marijuana		
Easy to access	37.5	69.9
Difficult to access	6.0	27.2
Other drugs		
Easy access	40.9	67.7
Difficult to access	6.1	27.0

as firearms in their community if they wanted to. Similar trends were observed for access to other weapons, excluding firearms, in the community. See Table 10 for these and other comparative percentages.

Overall the results point to a relationship between access to addictive substances and access to weapons. According to the findings, children and youth who reported easy access to alcohol, marijuana and other drugs were significantly more likely to report easy access to firearms and other weapons in their community (*p*< .001). Respondents who had easy access to alcohol were nearly twice as likely to indicate easy access to firearms and other weapons compared to those who said it was difficult for them to obtain alcohol. Those with easy access to marijuana and other drugs were nearly three times more likely to indicate easy access to other weapons (besides firearms), and more than six times more likely to have easy access to firearms compared to those who did not have easy access to addictive substances (see Table 11). It is argued that the availability of weapons in Mozambique is due to the large number of arms left behind following the war.[79]

Communities characterised by easy access to weapons and addictive substances are at high risk for most types of violence.[80] Exposure to violence was found to be a common occurrence in the communities in which the surveyed youths live.

On the whole, one in two youths had personally witnessed someone in their community being hit or punched one or more times, while a total of 23.5% had indicated witnessing such violence many times. Nearly two-thirds of the sample had witnessed people in their community being pushed, grabbed or shoved one or more times, while 30% had observed such violence many times. Although less frequently, more than a tenth of the sample had observed someone in their community being threatened or assaulted with a weapon, shot, sexually harassed or kidnapped by armed forces one or more times (see Table 12, *next page*).

**Table 12: How often respondents had witnessed people in the community being ...
(%) (n=499)**

	Never	**Once/ twice**	**A few times**	**Many times**
Hit or punched	49.6	18.4	8.6	23.5
Pushed, grabbed or shoved	35.1	25.1	9.6	30.0
Threatened with a weapon	86.3	8.6	1.6	3.3
Assaulted with a weapon	86.5	9.2	1.2	2.7
Shot	85.9	12.3	1.0	0.6
Sexually harassed	85.5	9.6	2.2	2.5
Kidnapped by armed forces	86.3	10.2	1.6	1.4

Witnessing violence in the community tended to be more prevalent among those living in urban areas, specifically in cases where youths had seen someone being hit or punched, threatened with a weapon, assaulted with a weapon or being shot. The respondents who live in more rural areas reported seeing more frequent instances of others being pushed or shoved, or sexually harassed. Similar percentages of youths living in urban and rural areas had witnessed people in their community being kidnapped by armed forces (see Table 12).

See Table 13 for comparative rates of exposure to community violence in Namibia and the DRC.

ACTUAL VICTIMISATION

Violence exposure in the community was not limited to witnessing others being victimised; young people often fell prey to this type of victimisation themselves. Such victimisation ranged from being teased or insulted to being physically harmed either at home or in the community. Verbal victimisation appeared to be

Table 13: Exposure to community violence: Comparative rates in Namibia and the DRC

Ever witnessed someone in the community being ...	
Namibia	**Democratic Republic of Congo**
• Hit or punched (51.7%) • Pushed, grabbed or shoved (38.6%) • Sexually harassed or assaulted (20.7%) • Assaulted with a weapon (16.4%) • Threatened with a weapon (14.2%) • Shot at (4.3%) • Kidnapped by armed forces (3.7%)	• Hit or punched (71.1%) • Pushed, grabbed or shoved (67%) • Sexually harassed or assaulted (31.5%) • Assaulted with a weapon (14.1%) • Threatened with a weapon (18.8%) • Shot at (21.5%) • Kidnapped by armed forces (16.3%)

Figure 9: Personal victimisation in the home and community (n=481)
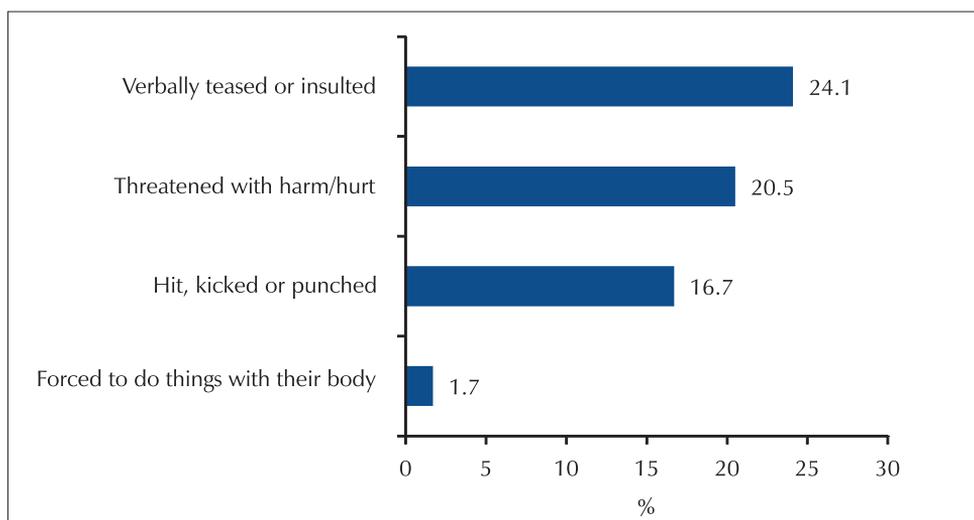
most common, with a total of 24.1% of the respondents having been verbally teased or insulted and 20.5% having been threatened with harm while at home or in the neighbourhood. These threats were seldom one-off experiences: 35.4% had been threatened two to five times; 7.1% had been threatened six to ten times; and close to a fifth (17.2%) had been threatened more than ten times.

Physical violence was reported by 16.7% of the sample. Although 50% of the victims had been subjected to such violence only once, 26.3% of youths had been victimised in this way two to five times, 6.3% six to ten times, and 17.5% – nearly a fifth – had been hit, kicked or punched more than 10 times either at home or in their neighbourhood.

Friends (24.7%), fathers (13%), unknown males living in the same area (11.7%) and known males living in the same area (10.4%) were typically implicated as the perpetrators of the physical attacks. More than a third (34.6%) of the incidents were NOT reported to anyone, largely because the victim did not think reporting would help (50%) or did not think it was important to inform anyone about the attack (19.2%). Two-thirds of the victims, however, did report the physical abuse to someone they know, most often parents (37.3%).

Being forced to do things with their body against their will was reported by less than two per cent of the sample (1.7%). Although known males in the community (28.6%) and friends (28.6%) were the most common perpetrators of the sexual violence experienced by these youths, fathers were implicated by 14.3% of the victims of sexual assault. Sexual assaults were often not (55.6%) reported to anyone. Feelings of embarrassment (60%) and fear (as a result of being threatened if they told) (40%) were given as reasons for not reporting the victimisation. Where these incidents were reported, parents (50%), friends (25%) and other family members (25%) were often the individuals informed about the assaults.

Figure 10: Victimisation, by gender (n=481)
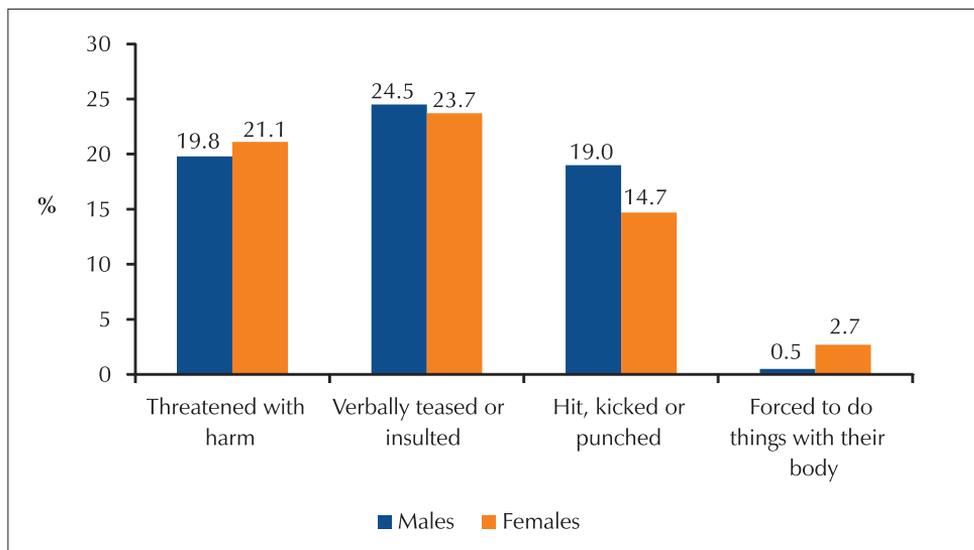
Females were more likely to fall victim to threats of violence (21.1%) and sexual violence (2.7%), while their male counterparts reported higher rates of verbal insults (24.5%) and physical attacks (19%) (see Figure 10).

PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF VIOLENCE

The effects of all types of victimisation are detrimental to children's psycho-social development and their general well-being. When asked whether they had noticed any changes in their behaviour following exposure to and experiences of violence, 26.1% – one in four study participants – responded positively. Feeling fearful when outside their home (38%), being more careful (24%) and being afraid to speak to other people (13%) were the most common behaviour changes noted by these respondents. Other changes included difficulty sleeping (9%), having trouble concentrating at school (7%) and changes in their appetite (2%). Further to this, more than a quarter (27.8%) had nightmares and 22.5% had difficulty with their temper.

The psychological impact reported by the youths in the sample affects their daily functioning and impacts on their education as they may not be able to concentrate due to the violent experiences. One in ten (10.2%) participants claimed that they had been forced to miss school as a result of their experiences.

As with corporal punishment, other types of victimisation also lead to increased levels of anxiety, depression, substance use, risky sexual behaviour and other self-destructive behaviour, suicidal ideation and lowered self-esteem.[81] The trauma associated with victimisation can thus have far-reaching consequences in the lives of children.

Access to support services

Children and youths living in Mozambique are subjected to violence across many different settings, both as witnesses and as direct victims thereof. Unfortunately, they are often not provided with the necessary support to cope with these psychologically harmful experiences. A main reason for this is their lack of knowledge of available support services.

On the whole, only 38.1% of respondents indicated knowing what help or assistance would be available to them if they were ever a victim of crime. Three out of five participants claimed to know where to go for assistance if they ever fell victim to crime (59.2%), while 40.8% did not know where to go for assistance.

Figure 11: Where respondents would seek assistance if the victim of crime (n=291)
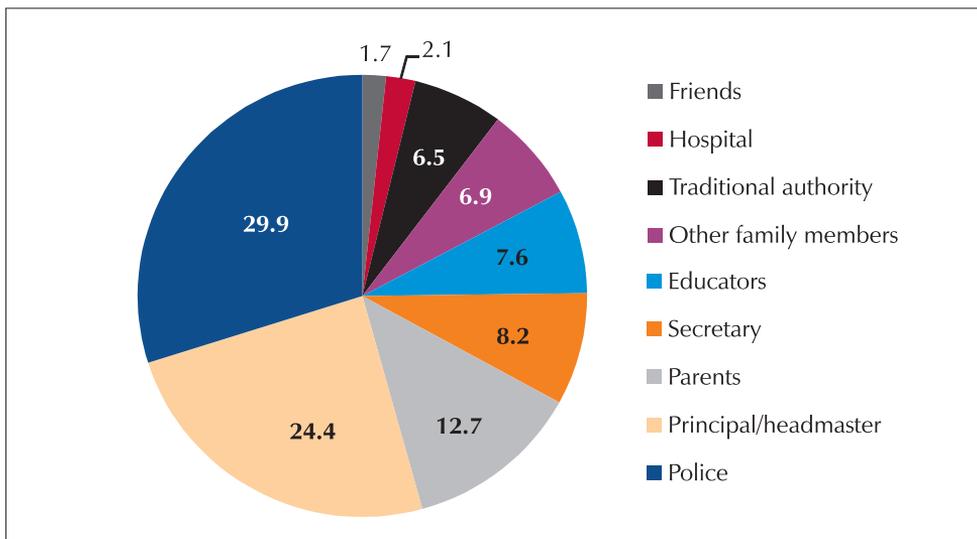
Those who responded positively stated that they would seek assistance from the police (29.9%), principal or school headmaster (24.4%), parents (12.7%) or the school secretary (8.2%) (see Figure 11, *previous page*).

Less than half of the young people knew where to obtain information (48.1%) on how to protect themselves from harm. Despite this, nearly all the youths interviewed reportedly knew where the nearest police station (97.1%) and health centre (95.7%) were. Only 27.3% of the young people knew where the closest social welfare office was.

Seeking assistance from adults for a sensitive violation such as sexual harassment can be embarrassing or even difficult for young children and teenagers. The results indicate that just over half (55.6%) of the youth knew an adult at school who would provide emotional support. The vast majority (96.5%) had a family member they could confide in and 92.8% had a friend that provided emotional support. The first person that the majority of the youth would seek help from was a parent (54.4%), while 19.2% would seek help from other relatives and 14% would confide in a sibling.

View of the future

In order to explore their sense of agency, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the following statements:

- *I have specific goals in my life I want to achieve.*

- *My own efforts and actions are what will determine my future.*

- *I have a good idea of where I am headed.*

- *I feel that I would be able to cope with difficult situations in the future.*

- *Given your current life situation and circumstances, do you think you are able to meet your ambitions in life?*

- *No matter how hard I try, I will never be able to achieve my goals in life.*

On the whole, the results showed that nine out of ten youths surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that they had particular goals they wanted to achieve in life, that they were largely responsible for determining their future (by means of their own actions and efforts), and that they had a clear idea of where they were headed in life.

More than 80% of the participants expressed confidence both in their ability to cope with difficult life situations that may occur in the future and in their ability to meet their desired goals and ambitions despite their current situation and circumstances.

In line with this, the majority of youths disagreed (55%) or strongly disagreed (29.5%) with the statement: 'No matter how hard I try, I will never be able to achieve my goals in life.' (See Figure 12, *next page*.)

Figure 12: Youths' perceptions of their future (n=484)
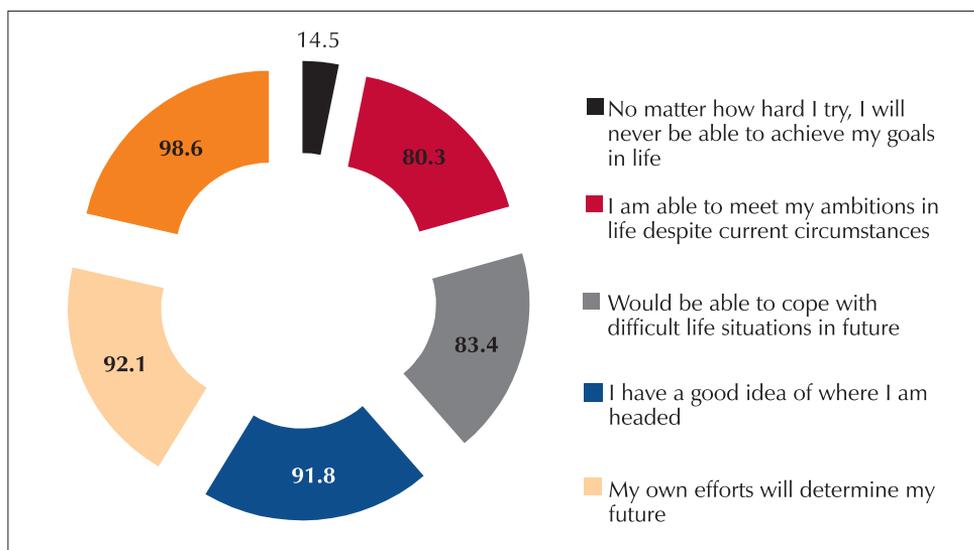
The respondents' views regarding their future professional opportunities were also explored. More than 90% of the sample maintained they would graduate from high school (52.7% strongly agreed and 42.6% agreed with the statement), four-fifths were positive they would end up getting a job they really wanted after completing school, and nearly three-quarters claimed they had enough skills to do a job well (see Table 14).

Interestingly, females were more likely than males to believe they would find a job easily and that they possess the necessary skills to do a job well. Older youths between the ages of 18 and 19 years were less inclined to indicate they would find a job easily or that they possess the necessary skills to do a job well (see Table 15).

Based on the youths' personal perceptions of their future opportunities to prosper and be successful, the majority believed their opportunities were many (43.5%) or limitless (20.7%). Even so, more than a quarter (25.3%) felt that their future opportunities were very limited, while a tenth (9.3%) believed they had no future opportunities to prosper and be successful (see Figure 13).

Table 14: Perceptions of future occupational opportunities (%) (n=484)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I will graduate from school	52.7	42.6	2.7	1.2
I will get a job I really want	30.8	49.7	10.0	0.6
I have enough skills to do a job well	25.1	48.8	17.6	0.4

Table 15: Perceptions of future occupational opportunities, by age and gender (%) (n=484)

	Graduate from school	**Find a job easily**	**Possess the skills to do a job well**
Age			
12–13 years	96.4	82.5	74.5
14–15 years	95.5	85.6	73.0
16–17 years	93.6	80.7	80.7
18–19 years	96.8	65.6	54.8
Gender			
Males	95.5	78.4	67.9
Females	95.1	82.1	78.8

Figure 13: Perceptions of future opportunities (n=484)

9.3
20.7
25.3
43.5

■ My opportunities are limitless

■ I have many opportunities

■ My opportunities are very limited

■ I have no opportunities at all
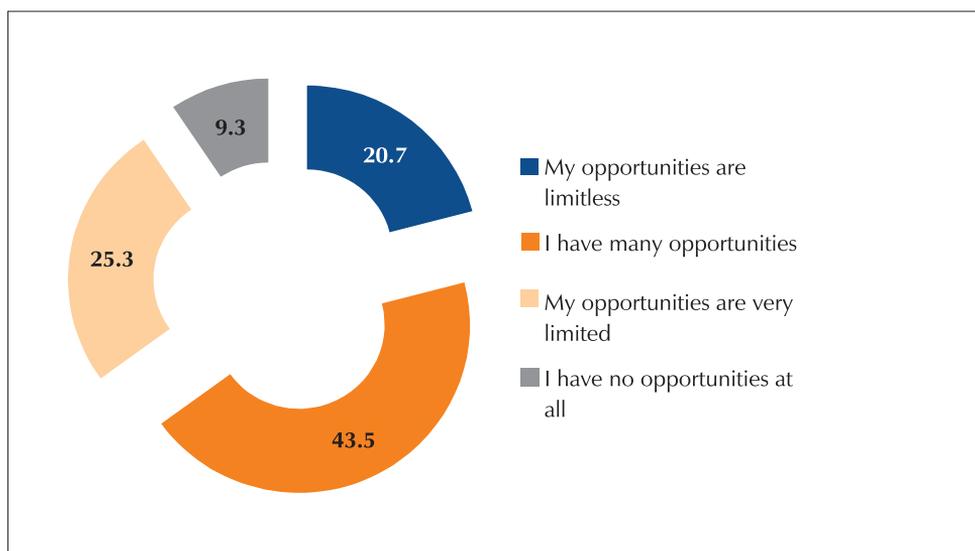
Education and violence: The legislative framework

EDUCATION

Mozambique has a progressive legislative framework, with a constitution that guarantees children the right to life, physical integrity and a life free of torture, cruel and inhuman treatment. The right to education is also enshrined in the Constitution. According to article 88: 'In the Republic of Mozambique, education shall be a right and a duty of all citizens.'

To render effective this right, the Government of Mozambique has committed itself in article 113 to promoting: '... an educational strategy that aims towards national unity, wiping out illiteracy, mastering science and technology, and providing citizens with moral and civic values.'

In line with this, a number of sector-specific policies have been developed in Mozambique. The first of these is the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP), which covered the period 1999–2005 and focused on three strategic areas: access; quality; and capacity building.[82]

The second strategic Plan for Education and Culture (PEEC) covers the period 2006–2010/11 and addresses:

- extending access to all school-age children;

- providing educational opportunities for out of school youth and adults; and

- improving quality and relevance to ensure that increasing numbers of children have access to secondary levels of education.[83]

The PEEC incorporates the government's commitment to the EFA initiative and UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The strategic plan aims to ensure that by 2015, every Mozambican child can complete seven years of schooling. Further aims include improving the curriculum, upgrading the quality and

efficiency of education, and promoting equity in terms of gender and regional disparities in education.[84]

Overall, the three key objectives are to:

■ expand access to basic education throughout Mozambique;

■ improve the quality of education services; and

■ strengthen the institutions and administrative framework for effective and sustainable delivery of education.

These objectives are important in addressing issues relating to poor resource allocation and infrastructure, which are among the primary reasons for the substandard quality of education in Mozambique. In line with these objectives, teacher training and accelerated construction programmes have been implemented to deal with the high enrolment rates, lack of qualified educators and poor infrastructure. This policy also acknowledges the importance of HIV prevention for education.

To complement the PEEC, the Minister of Education and Culture introduced a new primary education curriculum in 2004. The localised curriculum includes new subjects and emphasises bilingual education, and has made education more relevant to the current context of Mozambique. These improvements have led to a reduction in the country's high drop-out and repetition rates.[85] While improvements aimed at quality and relevance have been welcomed, lack of resources and infrastructure in many schools in Mozambique stand in the way of these achievements.

Education is also outlined in Mozambique's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PARPA II). PARPA II initially covered the period 2006–2009, but has been extended to 2011. It emphasises the relationship between education, poverty reduction and economic growth, as well as the importance of girls' education. PARPA II reaffirms education as a right for all and supports the shift in primary school financing from parents to the state through the abolition of school fees, direct financing grants to schools and free textbooks.[86] Specific reference is made to educational inclusion on the basis of gender, vulnerability and special needs. PARPA II includes strategies to increase girls' education by addressing sexual abuse at schools. Moreover, health and nutrition are recognised as playing a vital role in learning. The government has therefore highlighted its commitment to developing school feeding programmes, facilitating access to children affected by HIV/AIDS, combating stigma and creating HIV prevention programmes.[87]

Mozambique is also a signatory to several international conventions and laws which, according to article 18 of the Constitution, are binding upon the state. International legislation such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child serves to protect the rights of children and encompasses civil rights and freedoms,

family environment, basic health and welfare, education, leisure and cultural activities, and provides special protection measures for children.

According to article 28 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by Mozambique in 1990, member states shall:

1. Make primary education compulsory and available free to all.
2. Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need.
3. Make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means.
4. Make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children.
5. Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.

By ratifying the convention and the specific laws in the Constitution, Mozambique has shown that it is committed to improving education in the country. In order to decrease the drop-out rate, schools were made free of charge, and in many poorer rural areas children do not need school uniforms to attend school.[88] However, implementation of the legislation remains a concern. While there are various scholarships, subsidies and fee exemptions in place, there are currently no provisions that allow for free basic education for all children. A school social action fund exists which provides some relief to economically deprived children, but the eligibility criteria to access this fund does not meet the requirements of free basic education for all.[89] Moreover, many families are not aware of their rights regarding funding and fee exemption opportunities, thus highlighting the need for more concerted awareness-raising efforts.

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights devoted General Comment No. 11 to article 14 of the ICESCR and commented on the actual meaning of free education:

'The nature of the right to primary education free of charge is unequivocal. This right is expressly formulated so as to ensure the availability of primary education without charge to the child, parents or guardians. Fees imposed by the Government, local authorities or the school, and other direct costs, constitute disincentives to the enjoyment of the right and may jeopardize its realization. They are often highly regressive in effect. Their elimination is a matter which must be addressed by the required plan of action, required by article 14 of the Covenant. Indirect cost, such as compulsory levies on parents (sometimes portrayed as being voluntary, when in fact they are not), or the obligation to wear a relatively expensive school uniform, can also fall into the same category according to the Committee.'

Millennium Development Goals:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Achieve universal primary education
- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Reduce child mortality
- Improve maternal health
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Develop a global partner

As alluded to earlier, Mozambique is concerned with meeting the MDGs and the EFA initiative goals. The MDGs delineate several targets that need to be accomplished by 2015. In attempting to achieve universal primary education, the target is to ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling by 2015. The goal is also to eradicate poverty, which is a serious barrier to education, by halving the current percentage of people living in poverty. Another MDG related to education is the promotion of gender equality and empowering women. The target is to reduce gender disparity at all levels of education, as well as to halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and other diseases.[90]

The 70-member EFA movement was established in 1999 and comprises NGOs, religious institutions and trade unions.[91] The EFA movement highlights the importance of literacy for Mozambique's development and places particular importance on addressing the gender disparity in education by taking action to encourage more girls to enrol. The problem, however, with the MDGs and EFA is that they do not provide specific action plans for achieving the goals and are thus difficult to achieve practically.

Although Mozambique's impressive legislative framework shows its commitment to education, there are many shortcomings in terms of the implementation of these laws so that they apply to all children.

The remainder of this chapter considers gender-based violence, corporal punishment and other practices that inhibit access to education, such as child labour, teenage pregnancy and early marriage. Mozambique's educational goals will not be attained without addressing these concerns.

CHILD LABOUR

Child labour exists throughout the world, particularly in Africa, and encompasses unpaid work by children in the home, on family farms or in family enterprises, as well as paid work in the labour market. According to literature, child labour affects girls and rural children disproportionately: twice as many rural children are working compared to urban children, and girls are far more likely to be involved in household chores than boys.[92]

Mozambique has ratified numerous international conventions and laws prohibiting child labour, including:

- Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- African Charter on Human and People's Rights
- African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
- Convention Concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment
- International Labour Organization

Child labour flourishes in poverty-stricken communities. It is a difficult task motivating impoverished and poorly educated caregivers to recognise the importance of education for their children, especially when there are so many financial, social and cultural barriers.[93] In areas where schools have unqualified educators, poor curricula, insufficient teaching materials and high school costs, education is seen as being too costly and offering no long-term economic benefits.[94] Many parents therefore opt to teach their children a skill (such as agriculture) that can help to supplement the family income. As a result, child labour is a serious barrier to education and stands in the way of achieving the EFA and MDGs, especially regarding universal primary education.

According to Mozambique's labour law, the minimum age of employment is 15 years. Furthermore, the Constitution of Mozambique, 2004, plainly states in Chapter IV, article 121.4 that: 'Child labour shall be prohibited, whether the children are of compulsory school-going age or any other age.' However, children between the ages of 12 and 15 years can work under specific conditions if they have parental consent and if the work is not detrimental to their physical or psychological well-being. Although Mozambique is a signatory to various international conventions and laws that govern the issue of child labour (see text box, *below*), these laws are difficult to enforce. This is especially the case where social and cultural practices fuel the problem.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

While government directives advise against the use of corporal punishment in the school setting, there is no explicit prohibition against it in the law. Ironically, corporal punishment is prohibited in the penal system but not in alternative care settings and institutions of child care.[95] Article 40 of Mozambique's Constitution states that all citizens have a right to life and to physical and moral integrity, and they shall not be subjected to torture, or to cruel or inhuman treatment.

The legal protection for children from ill-treatment and abuse is not interpreted in the Constitution as including corporal punishment.[96] Furthermore, provisions against violence and abuse in the following frameworks are not interpreted as

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was ratified by Mozambique in 1994. The following articles in the convention address the issue of violence and abuse of children:

Article 19 requires states to take: '... all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation including sexual abuse, while in the care of a parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.'

Article 37: '... no child shall be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.'

Article 3 states that the best interest of the child shall be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children.

Article 6 requires that the survival and development of the child be ensured to the maximum extent possible.

Article 28 requires states to take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with a child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention.

prohibiting corporal punishment: Statute on Jurisdictional Assistance for Minors (article 108), Penal Code (articles 359 and 367), Family Law (2004) and Children's Act (2008 – articles 4, 7, 17, 20).

Besides these national laws, Mozambique has several international obligations. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is monitored and interpreted by the Committee on the Rights of the Child. The committee clearly interprets the convention as including corporal punishment and requested in 2002 that Mozambique prohibit by law the use of corporal punishment in schools and care institutions as well as in the family. It also requested that the Mozambican government promote positive, non-violent forms of discipline as an alternative to corporal punishment.[97]

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, ratified by Mozambique in 1998, also prohibits all forms of physical and mental abuse, including corporal punishment and any other humiliating punishment of children. In addition, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights has been interpreted by the Human Rights Committee as protecting children from corporal punishment.

Since Mozambique has ratified these conventions it is required to take steps to explicitly prohibit this form of punishment in all settings. Corporal punishment is detrimental as it is yet another form of violence perpetrated against children and impacts on their well-being. It is virtually impossible for children to obtain a quality education when they fear physical punishment at school, and this practice

goes against their right to learn in an environment free of violence, where they are safe and protected.

ISSUES RELATED TO WOMEN

Teenage pregnancy and early marriage are barriers to education for girls, causing them to drop out of school. Gender-based violence is a further concern for the well-being of women and children.

TEENAGE PREGNANCY AND EARLY MARRIAGE

Teenage pregnancy has severe implications for the retention of girls in the education system. Although pregnant girls in Mozambique are permitted by law to attend school, in practice many schools do not tolerate pregnancy and pregnant learners are often immediately expelled.

Some schools do, however, allow pregnant teenagers to attend evening classes.[98] But this accommodation has a number of safety risks. Since evening classes are not available at all schools, young girls must often travel long distances at night to access the classes. Many girls drop out of school for fear of victimisation, and the school re-entry rate after they have given birth is very low. Stigmatisation and discrimination by learners and adults at the school also plays a large role in the low re-entry levels of girls.

School policies pertaining to learner pregnancy fail to acknowledge the role that the school environment itself plays in the increased risk of teenage pregnancy vis-à-vis transactional sexual relations between male educators and female learners, or the sexual abuse that occurs on school property. Furthermore, teenage boys who impregnate their female classmates usually face no real consequences.

Mozambique's current policies are clearly not favourable to the goals of retaining girls in the education system and bridging the gender disparity in education. According to a number of Mozambican civil society organisations, these policies need to be reviewed in order to keep girls in school both during and after pregnancy. In addition, awareness-raising programmes need to be put in place to overcome the stereotypes and traditional attitudes on the matter.[99]

It is important to bear in mind that many teenage pregnancies in Mozambique do not occur outside of marriage. Early marriage practices are commonplace in Mozambique and girls often discontinue their education as a result.

Up until 2004 the minimum age for entering into marriage in Mozambique was 14 years for girls and 16 years for boys. Under the new Family Law (2004), however, the minimum age is 18 years for both boys and girls. Despite this, a 14-year-old girl and a 16-year-old boy can still marry with parental consent, and a 16-year-old can be married in special circumstances involving public or family interest. There is, however, little enforcement of these legal provisions, especially in rural areas.

Article 119 of the Mozambican Constitution states that:

3. In the context of the development of social relations based on respect for human dignity, the State shall guarantee the principle that marriage is based on free consent.
4. The law shall establish forms in which traditional and religious marriage shall be esteemed, and determine the registration requirements and effects of such marriage.

Early marriage practices are affected by traditional and religious environments,[100] and many parents support the practice due to the financial gain that the family receives from dowries.

Health outcomes are, however, compromised as many girls who marry young do not have the platform from which to negotiate safe sex practices and are at risk of HIV/AIDS infection.

Early marriage also violates girls' right to education. In Mozambique, 36.9% of married girls between the ages of 15 and 19 years have no education.[101] It is therefore imperative to address the issue of early marriage because of the impact this practice has on girls' education and well-being. The impact has far-reaching consequences because educating girls adds to the economic and social development of a country, since educated girls are more likely to support the education of their own children. In this way, poverty and illiteracy are tackled in subsequent generations.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Gender-based violence stems from the unequal power dynamics between men and women and takes on many forms including physical, emotional and sexual abuse. The lowered status of women in patriarchal societies and cultures leaves women vulnerable to various forms of violence.[102]

Article 36 of the Constitution of Mozambique states that: 'Men and women shall be equal before the law in all spheres of political, economic, social and cultural life.' Despite the recognition of equality in the Constitution, gender disparity exists in Mozambique due to cultural and traditional beliefs about gender roles and stereotypes. This disadvantages women in many respects as they

Mozambique has ratified the following international instruments pertaining to gender-based violence:

• Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1997)
• Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)
• Gender Declaration of the Head of States of SADC (1998)
• Protocol for the African Charter on Human and People's Rights

have limited access and control over economic resources, limited decision-making in the family and public life, limited control over their bodies and less access to education compared to men.[103] The effects of gender-based violence are therefore not only physical but also psychological, social and economic.[104]

A 2009 report by the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)[105] found that 54% of women had been victims of physical or sexual violence in their lives. However, much gender-based violence goes unreported as there is a veil of silence and tolerance surrounding it, as well as a belief that it is a private matter.

In an effort to address the issue of gender-based violence in Mozambique, gender equality objectives are outlined in PARPA II, the National Gender Policy (2006) and the National Plan for the Advancement of Women (2007). The new Family Code (2004) provides for gender equality in matters of family law, which includes consent to marriage, divorce procedures, child custody and the sharing of household assets.[106] More recently, the Domestic Violence Act (2008) was passed, but no sanctions are made regarding marital rape. Mozambique has also ratified numerous international conventions that deal with gender equality (see text box, *opposite*). Once again, however, there is a lack of practical implementation of these laws. Some reasons for this are given in the text box below.

While Mozambique recognises various conventions and policies that support gender equality, and while gender equality is set out in the country's Constitution, certain issues are overlooked (such as marital rape). Many women are also not aware of their rights. Better dissemination of information is therefore needed so that women can exercise their rights effectively.

In short, laws and rights concerning gender equality are present in Mozambique, but these are at times too vague and do not incorporate broader definitions of issues. Also, the rights that are explicit are not always enforced.

Stakeholders interviewed attributed the lack of policy implementation to the following factors:

- Inadequate laws to complement legislation.
- Legislation is relatively new and difficult to interpret.
- Lack of understanding and/or awareness of the legislation.
- Under-reporting of violence against children.
- Lack of institutional capacity to enforce and implement legislation.
- Lack of monitoring systems to hold civil servants accountable for lack of implementation.

Policy recommendations

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNMENT

In a broad sense, good governance is about the processes, policies and institutional arrangements that connect the many stakeholders in education. Good governance outlines and defines the responsibilities of national and local governments in such areas as finance, management and regulation.

Governance rules stipulate who decides what, from the national finance or education ministry down to the classroom and community. By developing good governance practices for provincial and local government as well as for school administration, the education system can foster a more inclusive and responsive system that addresses the needs of children and communities.

Although a signatory to numerous international conventions, many of Mozambique's policies exist on paper only and have not been implemented at a practical level. The following recommendations are therefore made:

➤ *Enforce legislation and policies aimed at protecting children and at providing equitable access to education*

■ In line with this, government needs to ensure that legislation is crystallised into practical policies and laws that can be implemented by key authorities.

■ Government should provide relevant training and technical support to stakeholders who will then be responsible for implementing the policies at grassroots level.

■ Mechanisms should be put in place to monitor and hold these stakeholders accountable for their responsibilities, and parties found guilty of non-compliance should be penalised.

■ Government should channel the necessary fiscal and material resources to enable the implementation of policies and legislation. According to Mozambique's Constitution, access to primary education is free. In order to render effective this right, government needs to provide the necessary infrastructure (ie. build schools and provide school materials) to ensure access to a quality education.

■ Ongoing monitoring and reviews of existing policies and legislation are needed to ascertain their relevance to Mozambique's current educational context.

➢ *Promote the professional training of educators*

■ Professional training of educators has been sorely lacking given the poor investment in the education system. This is of grave concern considering the number of children who are being taught by poorly qualified educators.

■ Government should therefore invest in the professional training of educators and ensure an increase in the number of female teachers.

■ Teacher training should extend beyond mere academic content and should include modules on the psycho-social development of children, as well as classroom and behaviour management techniques, specifically positive disciplinary methods that can be used instead of corporal punishment.

■ Teachers need sufficient training on legislation and policies that are relevant to education, violence and child protection and safety so as to prevent the infringement of children's rights within the school environment. Educators also need to be provided with user-friendly guidelines on how to implement these policies.

■ Educators should be adequately trained to identify any tell-tale signs of abuse and violence, and should be knowledgeable on how to respond if cases of school-based and other violent incidents are brought to their attention. This is particularly relevant in terms of reintegrating previous child soldiers into the formal schooling system and responding adequately to the special needs of such learners.

➢ *Recruit qualified educators*

■ Following investment in the professional training of educators, government should embark on the recruitment of qualified educators only. These qualified educators will, however, need to be remunerated sufficiently and opportunities for their promotion within schools must be made available. This

will not only improve the quality of teaching but will make teaching a viable profession.

> ➤ *Develop educational programmes that cater for the needs of pregnant learners*

■ Programmes should be easily accessible to pregnant learners to minimise the risk associated with travelling long distances to and from evening classes.

> ➤ *Explore alternative informal education programmes and systems to meet the educational needs of children who are out of the formal schooling system*

■ Many children in Mozambique have never been to school. The development of alternative informal education programmes would address the needs of these young people and would facilitate their participation in the economy.

> ➤ *Ensure the coordination of key stakeholders to facilitate engagement around issues of school safety*

■ These stakeholders should include school bodies, the police, CSOs and community leaders who need to have a shared vision of school safety.

■ This shared vision should form the basis for a coordinated response to violence and school safety, and should be included in the training of government officials and civil servants responsible for child protection and safety.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CIVIL SOCIETY AND OTHER COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANISATIONS

Government is not designed to function as a community interface. Instead, CSOs provide the link between government and the community at large. They therefore play a crucial role in ensuring that policies and legislation filter through and impact the lives of ordinary citizens in Mozambique.

> ➤ *NGOs and CSOs need to work in a coordinated manner to hold government accountable for its commitments*

■ In order to do this, NGOs and CSOs need to capacitate themselves and be aware of the country's legislative framework and the provisions that are made within this framework. Only once they are aware of these policies can they advocate for the implementation thereof.

■ NGOs and CSOs should mobilise communities to claim their rights from government.

> ➤ *Provide input into the review, development and implementation of legislation and policies*

■ NGOs' and CSOs' experience at grassroots level enables them to highlight both the strengths and weaknesses of current policies and to suggest possible alternatives by drawing on international and local best practices.

> ➤ *Participate in targeted awareness campaigns at a national and regional level*

■ These campaigns should be aimed at educators, learners, parents and the general public, and should intend to raise awareness about human rights, specifically pertaining to the safety and protection of children and their right to education.

■ Awareness should also be raised on the legislation and provisions made by government and how to ensure the uptake of these rights.

■ The information should be user friendly and should be disseminated via various media that are easily accessible to the general public.

■ Other topics covered in the campaigns should enable parents, educators, learners and the general public to identify what constitutes as violence, and they should be informed of the appropriate responses to violence. In line with this, communities, and specifically children, should be made aware of the importance of reporting violence perpetrated against them, and in so doing encourage a culture of reporting.

> ➤ *Assist in the development of standards and practical guidelines for policy implementation and assist government in building the capacity required for the enforcement of these policies*

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

> ➤ *Develop policies and procedures that are consistent with national guidelines on child protection and safety within the school environment*

■ Schools should develop codes of conduct for learners and educators, as well as other policies and procedures relating to learner safety.

■ Schools should develop and implement training tools for school safety. This will ensure that educators and principals are aware of the appropriate responses to violence against learners.

➢ *Involve educators, parents and learners in decision-making processes at the school*

➢ *Develop and implement anonymous reporting mechanisms*

■ Schools should ensure that these mechanisms are monitored on a regular basis for reporting.

■ Schools should ensure that action is taken when cases are brought to their attention.

➢ *Incorporate human and children's rights in teaching plans*

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PARENTS, PRIMARY CAREGIVERS AND COMMUNITIES

The involvement and encouragement of primary caregivers, other family members and the communities within which children live is critical for ensuring that children are afforded the education that is rightfully theirs.

➢ *Hold authorities (i.e. schools) accountable for their rights*

■ Children in Mozambique are often not sent to school due to an inability to pay the fees or costs associated with schooling. Even though the Constitution affords children access to primary education free of charge, educators, principals and other school staff continue to demand the payment of tuition fees. Parents need to be aware of the provisions made for them in the Constitution so that their rights and those of their children are not infringed upon. This highlights the need for communities to work in collaboration with CSOs.

➢ *Encourage and support traditional and religious leaders in advocating for violence-free schools*

■ Community leaders should advocate for access to education for all children, as well as for school environments that are free from all forms of violence. Traditional and religious leaders should become involved in these advocacy campaigns, given their prominent role in communities and their influence on what is considered acceptable and unacceptable in society. In this way, community leaders will reinforce the importance of education, specifically for girl children, and the need for a safe school environment that encourages quality learning.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL AID AND OTHER DONOR AGENCIES

➢ *Recognise the importance of supporting the education system in Mozambique*

■ Education, even at a basic level, creates the opportunity for individual growth and development. It is the single most powerful tool to lift people out of poverty as it allows access to a wealth of opportunities that might otherwise not be within reach. Donors to Mozambique have in recent years increased their contributions to the expansion of the country's education system; however, funding still falls short of meeting all the educational needs of children in Mozambique. Giving financial support to initiatives that target the education system would therefore contribute greatly towards achieving a society that values human and children's rights.

➢ *Actively partner and engage with the Mozambican government to prevent the misappropriation of funds*

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