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# **Contribution of the sector-wide approach to improvement of the quality of basic education in Mozambique**

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## CONTRIBUTION OF THE SECTOR-WIDE APPROACH TO IMPROVEMENT OF THE QUALITY OF BASIC EDUCATION IN MOZAMBIQUE

Background paper prepared for the 2005 Education for All Monitoring Report

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In examining the relationship between the Sector-Wide Approach (SWA) and the quality of education in a given context, the problem of attributing changes in quality to the SWA vs. other factors should be noted. It is possible that such changes are in part resulting from trends or factors (wider processes of socio-economic and cultural change, longer-term characteristics of the Government's education policies, externally supported projects) that existed already before the introduction of SWA. Some of the links between SWA and issues of education quality are nearly tautological (e.g. that SWA is conducive to a comprehensive view of these issues), on some there is a wide consensus among observers of a given country context, while others are more open to different interpretations and prognoses.

### 1. Evolution and characteristics of the SWA in the education sector in Mozambique

A high degree of dependency on external funding has had a fundamental influence on the development of the education sector in Mozambique. Until the mid-1990s, this influence was increasingly manifest in the proliferation of projects, funded by multi- and bilateral agencies and NGOs. The number of projects operating in the education sector ultimately surpassed 150. In such a situation, the role of the Government of Mozambique in determining priorities was limited and serious imbalances ensued in the allocation of resources, both geographically and between the different sub-sectors. Moreover, operational responsibility for the projects was typically entrusted to separate implementation structures, with weak links to the regular administrative structure in the sector, and the capacity of the Ministry of Education to contribute to the planning and monitoring of the numerous projects was overstretched (Education and Health in Sub-Saharan Africa – A Review of Sector-Wide Approaches, The World Bank 2001, pp. 117-8; Takala, Tuomas & Marope, Mmantsetsa: Partnerships between Ministries of Education and international funding and technical assistance agencies – the case of Mozambique. ADEA Working Group on Education Sector Analysis, UNESCO 2003).

From the mid-1990s onwards, a turn towards adopting the SWA took place. In 1995, the newly elected government of Mozambique issued a new National Education Policy which covered the entire education sector. Building and expanding on this policy, the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) was then prepared and was approved in 1998. The ESSP is the product of a series of collective reflections and analyses carried out by the Ministry of Education (MINED) both at central and provincial level, and of a consultation process that involved the Ministry's main external cooperating partners, local NGOs and other representatives of civil society. In this process, MINED assumed leadership from the outset and committed itself to the principles of SWA, which also were

strongly espoused by some of the external funding agencies. The ESSP I document prepared for the period 1999-2003 is not yet truly sector-wide: it covers primary schooling (grades 1-7) and non-formal basic education, which more recently have been complemented by strategies for the general secondary and vocational sub-sectors.

MINED has disseminated the aims and content of the ESSP in an effective manner and a widespread sense of ownership of the ESSP is found from the national to the school level (Takala & Marope op.cit.). Nevertheless, dependency on external financing has remained high: in 2000, external funds accounted for 28 per cent of total education sector expenditure (time-series data on this share are not available) (Mozambique Education Sector Expenditure Review 2002, p. 31). With the goal of universal primary school completion set for 2015, the need for continued external funding to the education sector cannot be foreseen to decline – in the absence of significant cost-efficiency gains during the next decade, this dependency could even increase.

Harmonization of the funding agencies' management procedures is one of the cornerstones of SWA. Such harmonization has in the case of the ESSP progressed more slowly than initially expected by the main actors. Achievements in this regard include establishment of a common planning and monitoring cycle, including annual review meetings and a series of joint technical missions. A major step forward was establishment of the Education Sector Support Fund (ESSF), operational from 2003. This fund is an off-budget arrangement for the pooling of several agencies' contributions and is seen as an intermediate arrangement in the eventual move towards sectoral (or general) budget support. The ESSF is also intended to become an instrument to geographically more equitable allocation of external funding than has been the case with previous and ongoing projects. Of the activities that have been targeted for support through the ESSF, those aimed at improvement of the quality of basic education have initially been familiarization of teachers with the new curriculum, and training of instructors and production of materials for adult literacy classes. In addition, there are un earmarked ESSF funds for flexible procurement of TA, which is contracted directly by MINED.

Apart from the newly established Education Sector Support Fund, the ESSP has during its first phase been a policy framework for externally funded projects, which contribute to implementation of the Plan, are managed according to agency-specific procedures, but are mutually better coordinated than was the case before adoption of the SWA. Overall, the process of applying the SWA in the education sector in Mozambique has been a combination of definite strides, acknowledged by all parties, and tensions between MINED and the external funding agencies and within the latter group.

## 2. Quality of education in the Education Sector Strategic Plan document (ESSP I)

Improvement of the quality of education is one of the three principal components of the ESSP – the other two are expanding access to education and development of institutional capacity in the education sector. In comparison with documents previously prepared for externally supported education projects, the ESSP I document reflects clearly the basic fact that adoption of the SWA is conducive to a comprehensive view of the quality of education. The document also deals briefly with the risk that accelerated growth of enrollment could overwhelm national capacity to safeguard a minimum standard of educational quality (here reference is made to the negative experience of the immediate post-Independence period, when it was unavoidable that a large number of untrained teachers were recruited into the system). Acknowledging this risk, the ESSP is a commitment to

policies that would not only maintain, but would enhance the quality of primary education. The strategic means outlined for this objective are:

- Systematic monitoring of the quality of education through national surveys of learning achievement,
- A thorough revision of the curriculum,
- Giving “highest priority” to development of pre-service and in-service training of teachers and subsequent pedagogical support,
- Raising the salaries of teachers and improving their other conditions of service,
- Improving the training of school directors, in order to better equip them to i.a. support quality improvement at school level, and
- Providing textbooks and other essential learning materials to all pupils and kits of basic materials to teachers (Government of Mozambique: Education Sector Strategic Plan, pp. 18-24, 31-32)

### 3. Policy dialogue on issues of quality

A review of studies of the education sector that have been conducted in Mozambique between 1990 and 1998 found that in these studies as a whole, a considerable amount of attention has been devoted to the quality of basic education, particularly to issues of curriculum reform and teacher training. Recurring important themes in the quality-oriented studies have been the relevance of the primary school curriculum in the wider socio-economic and cultural context and the question of introducing pupils’ mother tongues as mediums of instruction at the early grades. These analyses have prepared ground for the quality components of the ESSP, but the review also notes some discrepancy between the general thrust of the studies’ recommendations and the content of the ESSP (Mario Mouzinho et al.: Review of Education Sector Analysis in Mozambique 1990-1998, ADEA Working Group on Education Sector Analysis, UNESCO 2002, pp. 27-29, 41).

The principal forums of dialogue on educational policy are the annual meeting of the national Coordinating Council for the education sector, and the annual joint review meeting (ARM) of the ESSP, which brings together representatives of MINED, the Provincial Directorates of Education and most of the funding agencies that operate in the education sector. While composed differently, these two meetings have largely overlapping agendas. Issues of educational quality are dealt with comprehensively and in some detail in the Coordinating Council. Much of the discussion that has taken place at the ARMs has focused on the procedures of ESSP implementation and management of external funding. Information-sharing and dialogue concerning substantive issues of educational development at these meetings has been underpinned by reports prepared by MINED, the ESSP Technical Council and by joint missions. Frequent dialogue between MINED and the SWA-minded funding agencies has also taken place in the Joint Coordinating Group for the ESSP.

In addition, the organs established to facilitate ESSP implementation include a number of thematic working groups, one of which was designated to have a catalytic and coordinating role in development of the quality of education. The composition of this group reflects the aim of bringing together key actors from different directorates of MINED and from institutions with roles in teacher training, but in reality the group has not been able to significantly contribute to the intended function. This experience demonstrates the importance of the regular MINED structure as the framework for the implementation and further development of the quality component of the ESSP, and is in contrast with the more positive record of some of the working groups dealing with other

issues (Mario, Mouzinho & Takala, Tuomas: Evaluation of the Implementation of the Education Sector Strategic Plan, for the Ministry of Education of Mozambique, 2003).

Within the educational quality component of the ESSP, issues of teacher education policy have been the most prominent topic for continuous and intensive debate. In Mozambique, a multitude of models exists for pre-service teacher education and for in-service training, and the situation has been complicated by projects funded by different external agencies, with a limited geographical focus. These have typically been conceived as promoting innovation within the system, but at the same time they may well have been largely supply-led and have definitely had a fragmenting effect. This situation has repeatedly been deplored by the actors concerned and improved coordination has been called for. Notably, however, it is only after adoption of the SWA that teacher education has been analyzed and discussed in a comprehensive manner, taking into account issues of demand, supply and deployment, professional career structure and motivation, and the content of pre-service and in-service training. Systematic consideration of these issues has also been facilitated by the establishment of a new National Directorate for Teacher Training within MINED, in 2000.

An important outcome of the dialogue concerning teacher education is a sub-sectoral strategy which was finalized in 2003 and is intended to guide the activities in this area during the period 2004-2015 (MINED 2003: Strategy for Teacher Education 2004-2015). In its preparation, the Directorate for Teacher Training was assisted by ad hoc working groups and international consultants. Drawing on the experience gained from the various models co-existing in Mozambique, the strategy defines a future unified system of teacher education and in-service training. Acknowledging the constraints in the foreseeable supply of candidates to teacher training, the qualification requirements for lower and upper primary level teachers will be maintained as at present (7 + 3 years/ 10 + 3 years of general education plus teacher education, respectively), while in the medium term the intention is to upgrade the training of lower primary level teachers to be based on completed grade 10.

In a late stage of preparing the strategy for the teacher education sub-sector, there was also a link with Mozambique's proposal to the Education For All Fast-Track Initiative (FTI). Mozambique submitted a first version of its proposal for the FTI in November 2002 and a revised version in March 2003. In the assessments made by the FTI Secretariat and the external funding agencies supporting the ESSP the issue of teachers' salary level was raised as a concern. Together with the projected increase of the total number of primary school teachers, the high level of teachers' salary costs (relative to GDP per capita) would entail continued high dependency on external funding and hence constitutes a risk to the sustainability of the policy through which the proposal seeks to achieve universal primary school completion. Notwithstanding this kind of leverage exercised collectively by the funding agencies, the option of significantly revising the existing teacher recruitment and remuneration policies, in order to contain the cost increase resulting from expansion of the system, is politically quite contentious. Decision-making on such an issue is possible only through a process of consultation between MINED, the Ministries of Finance and State Administration, and the Teachers' Union. At the same time, some cost containment has already happened during recent years by default, through increased recruitment of untrained teachers into primary schools, in order to meet the demand caused by growing enrollments and loss of trained teachers due to HIV/AIDS. As mentioned above, the risk of sacrificing educational quality in the process of rapid quantitative expansion was already acknowledged in the ESSP I basic document.

Another important area for dialogue during the lifetime of the ESSP has been development of adult literacy and other adult education activities. The need to complement the ESSP basic document in this respect was identified at the first Joint Annual Review Meeting in 1999, and political priority given to this sub-sector was strengthened by the preparation of the national Plan of Action for the

Reduction of Poverty. In 2000, a joint evaluation of adult and non-formal education was carried out, and a strong analytical input was also provided by the World Bank, as part of its broader interest to contribute to development of this sub-sector. The outcome of these analyses and deliberations has been a national sub-sectoral strategy (MINED: *Estrategia para Alfabeticaçao e Educacao de Adultos*, 2001), which signals renewed emphasis on adult education in partnership with civil society, after nearly two decades of low activity. Within MINED, the Directorate for Adult and Non-formal Education has also been re-established. In plans to expand provision of basic education for adults the quality of education is of paramount importance, as the demand for such education is even more dependent on perceived quality than is the case with formal primary schooling. Incipient activities in the area of adult education include preparation of culturally sensitive curricula and experimental materials and training of instructors for literacy classes. These are largely funded from external sources and the Government budget allocation to this sub-sector remains still very marginal. A related theme in policy dialogue has been the concern about lack of non-formal education opportunities for out-of-school children and youth with incomplete primary education, i.e. criticism of a narrow conception of Education for All, but the impact of this has been negligible.

The processes of preparing the sub-sectoral strategies for teacher education and adult education have heightened awareness of the importance of these areas and forged a consensus on the strategic direction of their development. The essential content of both strategies has been incorporated into the ESSP II document, prepared for the period 2004-8 (MINED: *Plano Estrategico de Educacao 2004-2008*). As in parallel the ESSP II document has also come to encompass the general secondary and vocational education sub-sectors, it has now come close to sectorwide coverage, with the exception of tertiary education.

Another major task completed during ESSP I has been the preparation of the new primary school curriculum, which is implemented from 2004 onwards, beginning at grades 1, 3 and 6. In the curriculum reform process, initiated in 1995, national leadership has been particularly strong, including widespread consultation with stakeholder groups. The fact that the curriculum reform has not been prominent on the agenda of MINED's dialogue with the funding agencies reflects this leadership rather than a lack of views on the agencies' side concerning curriculum issues. Here it is also noteworthy that the Mozambican education system is less dependent on the curricular model of the ex-colonial power than is typically the case in former French and British colonies. Support to the key institution in the curriculum reform process, the National Institute for Educational Development (INDE), has been provided by bilaterally funded projects, but within these, the volume of technical assistance has been relatively modest and has been primarily geared towards building capacity within INDE (*Promoting the Transformation of Basic Education Curriculum in Mozambique, Mid-Term Review of the Project*, 2000).

In the reform of the curriculum, the emphasis placed on solid acquisition of reading and writing skills led to the decision to introduce local languages at grades 1 and 2, and the aim of increasing the relevance of school learning in relation to the local socio-economic and cultural environment led to the inclusion of a so-called local component within the curriculum (20 % of total teaching time). The decision concerning use of local languages has been made with explicit strong support from the funding agencies' side. In addition to the above-mentioned changes in the curriculum, the reform also introduces English and Moral and Civic Education as new subjects at grades 6 and 7 (Ministerio de Educacao: *Desenvolvimento da Educacao, Relatorio Nacional de Mozambique*, 2001, pp. 48-51)

#### 4. What data are available on learning achievement and inputs to quality?

The most direct information regarding the quality of education is provided by studies of learning achievement. In Mozambique such research has been conducted by INDE, with support from consecutive externally funded projects, for more than a decade - i.e. beginning already before introduction of SWA. These studies have used both quantitative and qualitative approaches (preparation and administration of tests for large representative samples of pupils; content analysis of learning materials and relating these findings to typical learning difficulties observed among pupils). The quantitative studies have focused on the subjects of Portuguese, Mathematics and Science at grades 2-5. In addition, during recent years Mozambique has participated in the assessment of learning at grade 6, carried out under the SACMEQ regional cooperation arrangement (Southern Africa Consortium for the Monitoring of Educational Quality).

There have also been attempts to analyze the relationships between measured learning achievement at school level and factors that possibly have an effect on achievement (INDE, *Projecto Avaliacao Educacional: Avaliacao das Capacidades dos Alunos da 3a e 4a classes na Cidade de Maputo, Provincias de Maputo, Zambezia e Cabo Delgado*, 2000, pp. 140-151). The results of these analyses, however, are confined to demonstrating statistical co-variation (e.g. that availability of desks in the classroom is correlated with achievement scores) – in order to investigate possible cause and effect –relationships, more sophisticated multivariate analysis would be required.

Although the above activities have been carried out under the auspices of bilaterally funded projects, one clear consequence from the SWA is that there has during recent years been a shared interest of all partners involved in the ESSP towards the information provided by the surveys of learning achievement. The needs to monitor the quality of education can thus be served by building on already existing capacity and practice, rather than having to establish such a system from the beginning. During the lifetime of ESSP, technical assistance for the long-term institutional capacity building at INDE has partly been provided on a bilateral basis, partly it has been recruited internationally, and the need for external expertise to support the work of INDE will continue in the foreseeable future.

As a tool for monitoring progress in ESSP implementation, a limitation of the achievement surveys is that no longitudinal results that would serve as an indicator of progress (“measurable learning outcomes” as one of the list of global EFA indicators) are yet available from these studies in Mozambique. Moreover, the fundamental change of the national curriculum that is introduced from 2004 onwards will diminish the commensurability of the results of future studies with those obtained from earlier tests that were designed on the basis of the previous curriculum. Related to this, the variability that will be brought about by implementation of the local curriculum component will lead to a less uniform standard of quality within the education system. These changes notwithstanding, longitudinal assessment of core skills will of course remain feasible.

Yet another issue that complicates the interpretation of changes in learning achievement and should be recognized in future attempts to monitor changes in the quality of education over time is that Mozambique has achieved a very rapid increase of primary school enrollment since the end of the civil war: GER has risen from 56 % in 1992 to 106 % in 2002. As a consequence, the schools also have to cope with a wider range of cognitive learning ability than has been the case with a more selective system with a high dropout rate. In a rapidly growing primary school system, even maintaining the previously existing level of quality may be a notable achievement, requiring as it

does provision of special support to children who are slower learners e.g. due to physical disabilities or psychological problems.

Among the agreed-upon indicators for monitoring progress in implementation of the ESSP, those related to the quality – and at the same time to the efficiency – of primary education are: pass rate at the end of the lower and upper cycles of primary education, rates of grade repetition, and the pupil:teacher ratio. Target values for the first two indicators have also been defined for the period 1999-2003. This kind of indicators reflect the performance of the system in relation to nationally defined standards, and collection of the respective annual data has been routine in Mozambique already well before the ESSP. In addition, some data regarding expenditure on inputs that bear on the quality of education are available from the education sector expenditure review conducted in 2002, and annual statistical figures are available on the proportion of trained teachers in the total primary level teaching corps. There have also been recommendations made by joint technical reviews and annual review meetings that a minimum package of learning materials and equipment be provided to each school as a matter of urgency, but no operational definition of such a package for implementation and monitoring has emerged.

More qualitative data on the performance of the education system during ESSP implementation has been provided by a joint technical mission in 2000, a jointly conducted mid-term review in 2002, and an evaluation of the implementation of ESSP I commissioned by MINED in 2003. In these exercises information regarding the quality of education has been gathered through interviews of education officers and teachers and through observations in schools.

##### 5. Record of ESSP I implementation on the dimension of quality (1999-2003)

During the implementation of ESSP I, values of the quality-related progress indicators have changed into opposite directions (Ministerio da Educacao, Direccao de Planificacao: Indicadores, 2003). Changes since 1998 that can be interpreted as reflecting a trend of quality improvement are, first, a rising nationwide pass rate at the end of the lower and upper cycles of primary schooling (from 63 to 67 per cent at grade 5 and from 55 to 60 per cent at grade 7). The latter of these figures meets the respective target exactly, whereas the pass rate at grade 5 remains short of the target of 75 per cent (in 2002, this figure had been reached in the capital city and in the surrounding province). Looking at the variation of pass rates across provinces during 1998-2002, we find that this has widened at the lower primary level but narrowed at upper primary. Second, national rates of grade repetition have declined at both the lower and upper primary level (from 27 to 23 and from 31 to 23 per cent, respectively), with no clear trend in the regional variation between 1998 and 2002. The reduction of repetition falls far short of the “reduction by half” –target that has been set for the first five-year period of the ESSP. To what extent such a situation should be characterized as poor performance, or alternatively as over-ambitiousness of the target, is of course debatable.

In contrast to the positive national trends of the above-mentioned indicators, the average pupil:teacher ratio at grades 1-5 has slightly worsened (from 61 to 66) during the period 1998-2003. Moreover, behind this national trend there are changes of very different magnitude and even into opposite directions in different provinces. The provincial figures for 2003 range from 60 to 91, and some provinces that have been disadvantaged in terms of access to primary schooling and have rapid recent increases of enrollment now have the largest average numbers of pupils per teacher (Ministerio da Educacao, Direccao de Planificacao: Indicadores, 2003). In addition, the percentage

of trained teachers, which is not among the ESSP progress indicators, has during 1997-2001 declined from 70 to 61 % at grades 1-5 and from 79 % to 65 % at grades 6-7 (World Bank: Mozambique Public Sector Expenditure Review, Phase 2: Sectoral Expenditures, 2003, p. 48). The latter trend is in large part a reflection of the growing recruitment of young secondary school leavers to meet the need for additional teachers.

Provision of textbooks is a major item in the external support to the sector, and the previous state-controlled system of publishing and distribution has gradually been liberalized. External funding to textbook provision is channeled through the so-called Caixa escolar –system, which pre-dates the ESSP and is a form of coordinated provision of parallel project funding for distribution of learning materials free of charge to the pupils. As a result, despite the rapidly increasing enrollment, textbooks have been made available for the vast majority of pupils. This in itself has been deemed to have led to “a strong improvement in the quality of education” (Report of the ESSP Third Annual Review Meeting, May 2001, p. 9).

The Education Sector Expenditure Review (2002, p. 22) noted that actual expenditure on teacher education – which the ESSP defines as a “highest priority” area - had fallen considerably short of the respective target set in the ESSP. In the provision of in-service training to teachers, insufficiently coordinated activities of bilateral and NGO -projects have remained prominent. In addition, the above-mentioned review recorded increased allocations to non-salary inputs but also a decline in the percentage of actual budget execution on this item from 1999-2001 (these figures relate i.a. to availability of paper and stationery in schools, but do not include textbooks). This decline is attributed to insufficient capacity in financial management, particularly in rendering of accounts at school and district levels (*ibid.*, pp. 30-31). In this respect, remote rural schools have probably been in a particularly disadvantaged position. To some extent, the situation has been mitigated by ongoing provision of direct external financing to schools, for the purchase of basic requisites, carried out in the project mode by some bilateral agencies in their specific provinces of operation and by the World Bank more widely.

In curriculum development, the participatory-consultative process led by MINED has been important in negotiating what shall be taught (the national core curriculum and the locally variable component). Another, more technical aspect is that research undertaken by INDE has provided feedback on what are feasible learning objectives at each grade level for the majority of pupils and on preferable teaching methods. Results of the learning achievement studies show conclusively that the primary school curriculum has been quite ambitious in relation to the actual level of learning. For instance, according to results from a study conducted in 1999, at grade 2 over half of the pupils had not reached the minimum level of mastery in the Portuguese language defined on the basis of the curriculum, and in Mathematics the corresponding share was one-third (Education for All 2000 Assessment, Report of Mozambique, pp. 34-35).

Feedback from the achievement surveys has been conveyed to inform development of the curriculum, learning materials and teacher training. This is facilitated by the fact that the mandate of INDE also includes development of the above-mentioned areas. Apart from the results of the quantitative studies, qualitative analysis of typical learning difficulties, particularly in the use of the Portuguese language and in arithmetics, has been useful. This research work has also introduced the new concept of an “acceptable answer”, which requires the teachers to move beyond straightforward correct/wrong –marking towards continuous assessment that is more sensitive to the pupils’ processes of thinking (Assis, Abel et al.: The ongoing assessment project in Mozambique: Background, project goals, strategies of implementation, results and limitations. In: Proceedings

from the Conference “Assessment in the Primary School in Mozambique – Looking Back, Looking Forward”, INDE 2001).

Another major achievement has been preparation of new textbooks and teachers' guides to accompany the introduction of the new curriculum. In order to prepare teachers for implementing the new curriculum, training activities of short duration have been organized and the crucial importance of this kind of training has been highlighted in a number of documents, including the Joint Mid-Term Review of the ESSP (2002, p. 24). Nevertheless, a recent evaluation found that the activities so far implemented are generally regarded as insufficient in terms of both their coverage of the teaching corps and their content. Confusion exists among teachers regarding such fundamental principles and prescribed practices as the local curriculum component (including the role of the communities), use of local languages in teaching, and semi-automatic promotion of pupils (Mario & Takala, op.cit). The above is partly due to slow initial disbursement of ESSF funds, which has restricted the activities of familiarizing teachers with the principles and content of the new curriculum (for the same reason, implementation of adult literacy activities has been slowed down). Until the deficit in training teachers is overcome, the curriculum reform could fall far short of its intended aims. Specifically, with respect to the principle of semi-automatic promotion, the actual practice in promoting pupils to the next grade could become more an administrative efficiency-improving measure than a significant contribution to quality improvement – the latter requiring concomitantly changing practises of teaching and formative evaluation of pupils' actual learning.

Training of school directors has been an important sub-component of ESSP implementation. It has contributed to the directors' capacity to better understand and manage i.a. issues of education quality (e.g. teachers' participation in in-service training and pedagogical support at school level). Establishment of school councils is a recent development, with considerable potential to enhance the democratic accountability of schools. However, their future role in discussing and influencing education quality remains yet to be seen.

## 6. Lessons learned

- In the case of Mozambique, some important elements of education quality improvement were in place already before introduction of SWA and, to some extent, prepared ground for the latter. The most important of these elements were collection of annual statistical data on key quality-related indicators, provision of textbooks with support from coordinated external project funding and initiation of national studies of learning achievement. MINED also launched the curriculum reform parallel to adoption of SWA. These factors should be seen as facilitating ones rather than as preconditions for SWA – in another country context they could have been established as part of the SWA process.
- Adoption of SWA has led to creation of new forums for dialogue between MINED and the external funding agencies. In this dialogue, all participants are exposed to the quality of education –issues in a comprehensive manner and there is a shared interest in monitoring educational quality over time, thus superseding the more narrow foci of agency-specific and geographically delimited projects.
- Adoption of SWA has made possible a comprehensive analysis and discussion of the complex issues of developing teacher education and the teaching profession, taking into account the linkages of these issues with other developments in the the education sector. For instance, tradeoffs between the goals of sustainable quantitative expansion and

preserving/improving the quality of basic education (e.g. the issue of teachers' qualifications and salary level) can be appreciated better and analyzed more systematically in a SWA context than in a situation of disparate projects operating in the area of teacher education and in-service training. Decision-making in the face of this dilemma of course remains a difficult issue.

- More specifically, the strategy prepared for teacher education and in-service training, defines the way to overcoming the fragmentation that has been brought about in this sub-sector by project interventions.

- Effects of change achieved at the levels of policy and strategy (including curriculum reform) on the school level can be constrained e.g. by bottlenecks in disbursement of funds, which are experienced in transition from the project mode to new financial management arrangements and which hamper implementation of activities that are planned to contribute to overall quality improvement and a more equitable geographical allocation of resources. Under such conditions, provision of direct support to schools in the project mode, for the purchase of basic requisites, serves as a short-term measure to safeguard the quality of education. Realization of the potential of SWA of course requires that such constraints are overcome.

- Building of institutional capacity to develop the quality of basic education has in the context of the ESSP taken place more through learning in the process of policy dialogue, implementation and monitoring than through systematic and long-term training efforts. In addition, technical assistance to preparation of the sub-sectoral strategies for teacher education and adult education, and project-type support to curriculum development and learning achievement studies at INDE have also contributed to capacity-building. The ongoing move away from bilaterally provided technical assistance to recruitment through the ESSF is intended to enhance the relevance and flexibility of such assistance.