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Capacity

Developing Sustainable Assessment Systems in Africa: Mozambique

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CENTRALIZED YET COLLABORATIVE STRUCTURE SUPPORTS MOZAMBIQUE’S NATIONAL ASSESSMENT EFFORTS



ASSESSMENT TEAM

- Mozambique’s **Department of Assessments** is housed within the **National Institute for Education Development**, operating under **Ministry of Education and Culture** oversight.
- The Department leads national and sample-based assessments and has **two main sub-units**:
 - **Planning Unit**: Develops budgets, timelines, sampling strategies, and stakeholder coordination.
 - **Instrument Development Unit**: Designs test items, pilots instruments, and organizes data collection tools



TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

- A multidisciplinary body consisting of **Ministry officials, external partners, and donors** that advises on technical quality, procurement, and operations.
- **Universities are engaged for technical review** of test design, psychometric analysis, and sample design.



STEERING COMMITTEE

- All assessment budgets, plans, and reports must be approved by the **Ministry of Education’s senior leadership** (through the Permanent Secretary and Provincial Directorates).
- Data collection and school access are coordinated through provincial and district-level focal points under Ministry authority.



EXPANDING ASSESSMENT COVERAGE THROUGH COMPREHENSIVE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

Mozambique conducts large-scale national assessments and participates in selected international programs, helping inform education reforms and track learning outcomes at different stages of the system.

NATIONAL ASSESSMENTS	REGIONAL ASSESSMENTS	INTERNATIONAL ASSESSMENTS ¹
• NLA (<i>National Learning Assessment</i>) - Conducted every 3 years; assesses Portuguese, Four National Languages and, Mathematics in Grade 3.	• SEACMEQ (<i>Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality</i>) - Conducted every 4 to 5 years; assesses Reading and Mathematics in Grade 6.	• PASEC (<i>Program for the Analysis of Educational Systems of CONFEMEN</i>) - Participating for the first time in 2025; will be conducted every 5 years; assesses Reading and Mathematics in Grades 2, 6 and 10.

This is our great challenge, because we do not have specialist – or people – who can analyze the data [in our department]. For example, when we go for the pilot, for us to select the questions to take to the main test, we need to analyze them. We could do what we call pedagogic and psychometric analysis. We can do pedagogy analysis, but we cannot do psychometric analysis. So we need the university to help us...

BUILDING A MORE RESILIENT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM THROUGH LOCAL AND INSTITUTIONAL REFORM

Mozambique faces notable technical and funding challenges in implementing large-scale assessments, but promising pathways lie in localized partnerships, cross-sector collaboration, and phased capacity-building investments.



CHALLENGES

- **Heavy dependence on external expertise:** External consultants often lead data analysis, psychometric work, and report writing.
- Local teams have **limited exposure to advanced tools and methodologies**.
- Assessment data only representative at the provincial-level and not the district-level due to cost considerations.



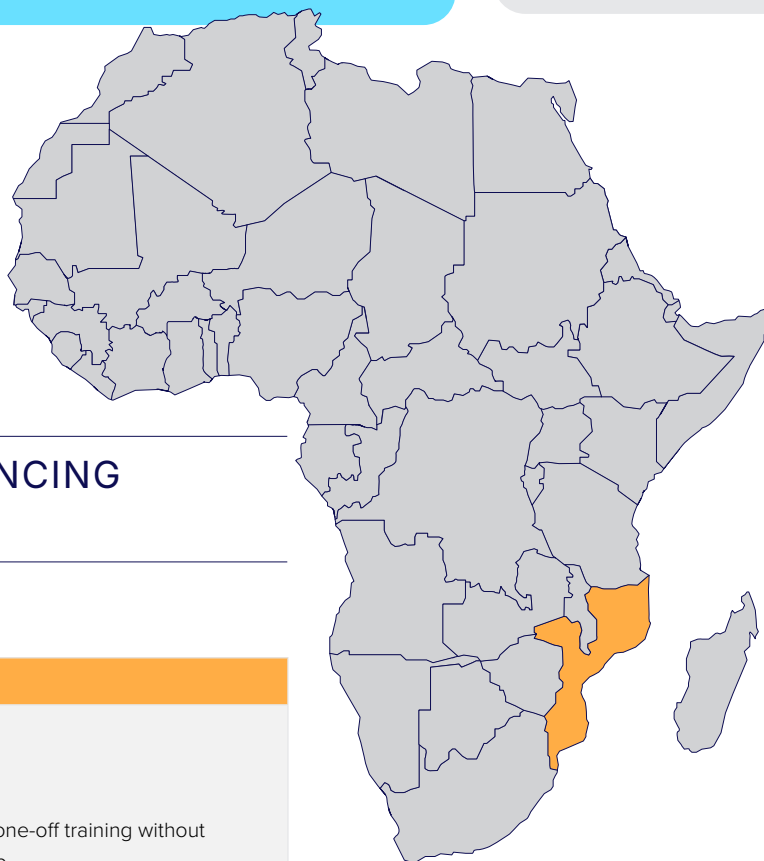
POTENTIAL STRATEGIES

- Develop formal arrangements with universities to train psychometricians and embed technical expertise locally.
- **Create localized tools** (e.g. summary dashboards, training materials) for teachers and inspectors to act on data.
- **Embed assessment in broader policy dialogues** to ensure assessments inform teacher training policy, curriculum review, and resource allocation.

Source	Description	Frequency	Duration	Participation
PASEC	Training on data analysis	TBD	2 weeks	NLA team and all involved in large scale assessments
SEACMEQ	Training on data analysis and how to effectively communicate results.	Before and after data processing of every SEACMEQ study	2 to 3 days	NLA team and all involved in large scale assessments
NLA	Training on data analysis and how to effectively communicate results	Before and after data processing of every NLA study	2 to 3 days	NLA team and all involved in large scale assessments

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If the objective is improving, you should know where you are not doing well... If the assessment result is that only 2% of the students can read, I'll have to address this with the education authority – they need to know.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENHANCING ASSESSMENT IMPACT

Recommendations for International Organizations:

Start Doing	Stop Doing
Train local staff in psychometrics, item design, and data use.	Stop delivering one-off training without deeper follow-up.
Invest in strategic communication and policy engagement.	
Focus assistance on supporting long-term system development.	

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Take staff training as a priority and understand that assessment is an investment if you want to guarantee quality... For you to know if you are doing well or not, you need to assess. You cannot do better if you can't assess. So first, take assessment training as a priority and see assessment as a strategy for planning education improvement. If you do not have data, how will you project the improvement?