

*Republic of Mozambique*

*Terre des Hommes*

**Prostitution, Sexual Abuse and Child Labour in  
Mozambique**

**Anti-child sexual abuse Campaign**

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## **1. Introduction**

As the title suggests, the present study is concerned with the question of child abuse and prostitution in Mozambique, as well as with other behaviours which go against Children's Rights, such as for example, the use or exploitation of child labour force.

The attempt to approach issues related to the youths and children in Mozambique does not constitute a new aspect. Several studies have been conducted, under different perspectives and covering a variety of problems, in regard to these age groups. Nevertheless, given the persistent economic, political and social crisis faced by the country in the last decades, some of these problems are not part of the priority agenda, of government executives and of various national and foreign organisations. In addition, for several years it was not possible to systematise studies covering, for example, the rural and urban environment due to the recent civil war.

In the last years, due to the arrival of peace, the introduction of the multiparty system and decentralisation of the economy, huge transformations in various domains of the Mozambican society are taking place. Obviously, these transformations should be followed by the development of scientific research, for a better interpretation of society and the adoption of adequate tools for its further development. It is in this context that the importance of the study of sexual abuse, children labour and prostitution in Mozambique should be viewed.

The need for analysing these questions, besides closing in itself the society's concern in relation such issues, that is, its fight, comes on one hand, as a result of the persistence of such problems, and on the other hand, by the observation of the lack of forces and means in society which can fight against these phenomena.

The present study, taking into account the social development of Mozambique, is conducted in a moment when it is already possible to extend and deep the research in urban areas, semi-urban and rural in a consequent, systematic and free way.

The re-establishment of the population and the development programs implementation process enables to distinguish, for example, prostitution motivated by commercial reasons (for instance, tourism, the big development projects such as the development corridors) and from conjunctural (motivated for example by the absence of subsistence means), as well as from the use or exploitation of child labour force. Beneficial differentiation for the government's future actions and other entities involved in the rational development of actions, in the struggle against these phenomena.

Apart from this new situation where the study fits, there are aspects possible of being systematised with the relative stability of the country, such as:

- (i) - a coverage not only of the phenomena, but also and mainly the presentation of proposals which are aimed at changing the situation;
- (ii) - the need to give priority to the alternatives and previsions of the own communities for the solution of their own problems.

However, this analysis, has the particularity of being complex and delicate, because apart from the inherent problems, it deals with the lives of human beings. Several factors contribute for this complexity, varying from causes, motivations, cultural aspects, socio-political situation, up to the stimuli to these phenomena. It is worth highlighting the multi ethnic and cultural dispersion of the country, probably with different social models. The reason for this highlight is related to the fact that these are phenomena, which are observed in all population groups and in all areas, rural and urban, though with differences in terms of motivation and degree. Besides, this is an issue still under debate and analysis, not only in Mozambique, in the African continent, but also in the worldwide.

In this context, the study covers these relevant aspects of societies, with the aim of advancing alternatives for their solution. Nevertheless, solutions which are local, with the participation or involvement of communities, because:

1. They carry a moral strength and other qualities in the areas and populations;
2. When applied in its truly space and situation, they can guarantee a positive articulation and fitting of the approaches;
3. A third factor is directly related with the individual. Communities are composed of concrete individuals, full of existential density, who cannot be considered as mere objects. Any human being can live in harmony with him/herself and with their society, when he is aware of his space and limitations. Thus, there is a need that the study should be related to the individual so that it can be easy for him/her to find his/her place and identify him/herself with it.

In spite of the fact that the study has been conducted in a favourable environment, there are obviously some limitations among which the following:

- (i) - the fact that the research has taken place only in the provinces of Maputo, Nampula and Tete, not covering all their districts; a situation which dictates the lack of more comprehensive records;

- (ii) - the difficulties in approaching the cases, which having actually happened are closed or hidden in the family 'bunker'.

Nevertheless, some authors believe, that a direct contact in the field, with public and private institutions, as well as the civil society in general, in the areas of education, health, commerce, justice, etc. up to a certain extent, can minimise the above mentioned disadvantages.

### **1.1 - Rational and Objective**

The study on sexual abuse, prostitution and child labour is justified by the following:

- (i) - the struggle against these phenomena requires the existence of means and a combination of efforts from all intervenients, mainly, from the communities. Effort which should be applied in a rational way, being therefore important to carry out a diagnosis of the level of the abuse, prostitution and work; the kind, the adjustment of government and NGOs measurements and classification to the local reality, efforts and alternatives predicted by the population.
- (ii) - Mozambique presents a demographic growth of more than 2% while the basic survival conditions do not follow such growth, resulting in a high number of unemployed and cheap labour force, being necessary to set strategies and measures for involving everybody in the struggle against these problems.

Note that socio-economical changes in the society's structure have contributed for a major social stratification, marginalisation and poverty of the population. It is thus necessary to be aware of the factors conditioning these phenomena. So, the social impact of economic adjustment measures is unfavourable to many layers of the population and the gap between the poor and rich is increasing, a situation which up to a certain extent also raises the index of marginalisation and criminality in the country.

Therefore, the objectives of the study are summarised below:

1. Identify and point some of the factors which affect or are determinant in these attitudes;
2. To know the awareness and consciencialisation to these cases, ways of fighting them, attitudes adopted not only at the level of the government, but also by the civil society in general; call people's attention to the current state of sexual abuse, work and child prostitution and the stage of implementation of measures for reducing or eliminating the situation, identifying vulnerable groups.

3. Analyse the question in different contexts and settings (urban, rural, educational and cultural levels,...), trying to see the relevance of the issue and its dimension;
4. Evaluate the extent to which proposed policies and classifications by the government and various other international institutions as well as the civil society fit into the reality;
5. Signal/note possible solutions and recommendations for different situations in analysis, as well as possible steps to be implemented;

On the other hand, the study's conclusions are useful for:

- the identification and differentiation of prostitution by option or by conjunctural motives; the differentiation between prostitution, tradition and abuse in the Mozambican context;
- the definition of use or exploitation of child labour force in the Mozambican context.

Thus, the study should be understood as an analysis of phenomena, of a country which is confronted with concrete experiences in its social, political and even economical evolution, taking into account that it is not possible to calculate the circumstance/phenomena in statistical terms, in what concerns its evolution because there are no national figures and these are issues which not even come as an item in national indicators. As a matter of fact, due to the lack of control ability on the part of the authorities, the numbers related to sexual abuse, prostitution, child labour and even regarding sexual transmitted diseases, are fictitious because, several times, the cases only appear in their terminal stages.

## **1.2 - Question**

The socio-economical and political crisis, which affects the world economy, in the recent decades, is reason for the definition or redefinition of development strategies.

With the social sciences creating a considerable number of social change theories which not always constitute in itself a homogeneous set in which the main objectives are not classified and not even the kinds of theories well determined, it should be highlighted the fact that most of them, having a local implementation, were not able to get it in its global defence (Boudon, 1989:11).

Concerning the present study and according to various scholars, when determining prostitution, sexual abuse, as well as child labour, different perspectives can be distinguished: one from States and Governments, another from the subjects themselves, others obtained from participatory analysis, from external observers, etc.

If, for example, in relation to child labour force, in the international classifications and even national it seems to be a consensus<sup>1</sup>, demanding more knowledge or alternatives for its elimination; the same does not happen in relation to child prostitution, sexual abuse or even of the meaning of the concepts child/under age or abuse.

Consider that the ideas of childhood, prostitution or under age are approached from different views: biological, psychological, social/cultural (gender and class), historical, etc. Therefore, approaches can depend on different factors and contexts; what makes the concepts problematic.

For example, prostitution, commonly defined as *'an activity where sexual intercourse occurs in exchange for a payment'* (Lee & O'Brien, 1995:4), is also culturally and historically determined, and varies a lot from society to society and according to the circumstances (ibid: 7). As a matter of fact, in the definition of prostitution, as a sex trade, from the economical point of view, it would be imperative the correlation between the cost and income what can be arguable, but what we mean is that it requires a careful analysis of indicators and approaches in their complexity. Note that in the case of Mozambique, in different communities, in the definition of prostitution, maternity plays a major role. Only the fact of a woman having children from different fathers and/or having more than one sexual partner, independently of her intention to get any money, being therefore promiscuous, was/is enough to be seen as a prostitute. It is possible that a woman in the first stage can be considered prostitute and another with more than one child from different fathers cannot be, due to her social status, being considered, for example, as a single mother *'a family girl who committed a mistake'*. So, several times the social context determines the definitions, what may not correspond to other contexts.

In the case of the definition of childhood/child, Hewitt (1992:40) for instance, considers that western perceptions on *'childhood'* are created by adults expectations in the west on their children, namely, that they up to adolescence go to school and do not need to look for a job; they should have a *'house'* where to live, either in the family or an institution. And so, proponents of this notion of childhood find it difficult to accept other realities unless as wrong.

But, as written by White (1982:468), childhood *"is not a universal or absolute category; its definition varies from one society to another, from one epoch to another, and also according to the gender and social class"*. As a result, he calls the attention to the fact that *"research should construct the childhood category (...) identifying the social, economical and political factors which contribute to the mutational character of the definition and the activities set as adequate to children"* (quoted by Hewitt: 40).

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<sup>1</sup> For example, the Mozambican parliament approved a law which enables 15 year old individuals to start work (Notícias, 28.10.98).

Note that even in the occident, childhood is today defined to mean “*a child identity separated from adults*”; it is a recent creation, from the XX century (Jorgensen, 1995: 16). In previous epochs, children were treated as “*miniature adults*” and people used to live in big crowds. Household was composed of a number of adults and children, with a blood relationship or not, all contributing for the maintenance and support of each other. “*The major focus of the household was not privacy, but socialisation. The notion of privacy and intimacy between a small group within the boundaries of the nuclear family of parents and children is a concept of the XX century. Children in past households related to a variety of adults, and the roles they played and the tasks they performed were similar to those of adults, such as hunting and agriculture*” (Jorgensen, 1995: 17).

The new conception of childhood which extends the period for looking after and protection far beyond the first childhood (0-5 years), altered the role of women as guardians of the children or (*‘child carer’*) and housewife or (*‘homemaker’*). This conception comes from the XVIII century, *‘when the idea of a child stable personality was linked to the existence of more intense ties with few adults, specially the mother and father, rather than to other related adults’* (ibid. 18).

The United Nations Convention on Children’s Rights, adopted the age of 18 to define all those who are below it as children. Nevertheless, several scholars defend that such definition is more *‘supportive’* (and *‘rehabilitative’*) as defended by UNICEF, which operates in *‘poor countries’*, arguing that the notion of childhood being reduced to the *‘first childhood’*, in extreme poverty and deprivation conditions would leave individuals aged 6-18 to neglect, because the parents in such circumstances, with the scarce resources might have to provide assistance to their first children, leaving the latter to *‘God will provide’*, endangering their preparation (physical, emotional and cultural) to face adult life.

Thus, childhood is not a universal or absolute category; its definition varies from society to society, from one epoch to another, as well as it contributes to the definition of activities set as adequate to children (Hewitt: 40). For example, if international organisations such as the United Nations or OAU, define a child as being an under aged of 18 years<sup>2</sup>, how to fit this in the Mozambican social context, where the law authorises a 15 year old individual to start work? *“How to keep 18 years as a limit if the truth rejects this aspect? How to deal with children workers and those who are married, recognised by local communities and in considerable numbers in the country? Note that the practice is the truth”*<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, Art. II - Adopted by the Twenty - Sixth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia - July 1990.

<sup>3</sup> Depoiment of the interview conceded by Ms. Isabel João Tembissa, Director of Education in Ressano Garcia.

In this context, and according to subject analysts, everything seems to indicate that the approach as well as the policies to fight these phenomena can be a success if structural measures take into account the context in which they are developed. That is, from the kind of development forces which are possible for intervention or guidance, but also from which areas in change due to spontaneous dynamics. Indeed, measures set without the knowledge of its connections can regulate inoperative aspects, producing different results from the expected and desirable ones.

Within the scope of the present study, different evaluation criteria, considered as relevant, are used, such as economical, political and cultural in the sense that the panorama of the Mozambican population is vast, involving an extensive national territory. However, in spite of its pertinence, taking into account the characterisation of different groups, such criteria were adjusted in conformity to the social changes, which are taking place in the country, and in the groups themselves. So, as observed, the concepts are complex and difficult to define.

### **1.3 - Method and Sources**

This study is a result of a research work in the field, resorting to interviews, observations of studies on Abuse, Prostitution and Child Labour in general and, in particular in Mozambique.

The approach method was inductive. Data were collected from the populations.

Regarding the techniques, in spite of not being so fundamental, a participatory observation was conducted using questioners who live in the respective communities. The participatory observation enabled at first to check whether the communities are highly affected or not.

The determinant technique was the interview (face to face) with standard questions in the questionnaire. As a procedure, the questioner asked questions and registered in the model questionnaire the answers provided.

In order to permit uniformity of methods and efficiency of interviews, questioners were selected and tested from/in the communities.

Various written sources were also used as basic material in the elaboration of this study, from books, magazine articles, newspapers, newsletters and consultation reports. It is worth noting the insufficiency of bibliographical material related to the colonial period and the period immediately after independence with a deep and balanced analysis of the country's situation.

In several Mozambican institutions, mainly those working in the area of children and women, material has been collected and consultation work was conducted on those profound aspects related to the issue.

Despite the interviews, several meetings, formal and informal were conducted by /with researchers, journalists, public workers and different layers of the population, as an attempt to reach or attain a half truth in those issues or polemic aspects, because Abuse, Prostitution and Child Labour in most periods of the history of Mozambique did not receive great interest in terms of research and academics.

In this aspect, it is worth stressing that most of the contacted people, mainly, victims, and fear to see their names mentioned in the study.

#### **1.4 - Presentation of the Study**

The present study is composed of **5 chapters**, resulting from the need to analyse the interlink or inter-relationship between different factors which have conditioned the observance of the phenomena above mentioned, and of the concern to provide a better reading and comprehension of the theme and its different aspects:

- In **Chapter I**, different forms which can constitute violence against the child are mentioned, namely, Sexual Abuse, Prostitution and Child Labour; there is also a reference to the causes, context of occurrence of such phenomena, respective classification as well as political, cultural and socio-economical fundamentals, vulnerable groups and consequences.

- In **Chapter II**, there is a reference to the particularities of the Mozambican situation, its social, cultural, economical and political basis.

- **Chapter III**, questions whether there is a need to fight these phenomena, how to do it, highlighting the level and impact of government and NGOs interventions, their foundations, among others. It is divided into two sub-chapters. The first one, questions whether these phenomena can be included in the global problems of human development and the second questions the possibility of developing a regional agenda to fight these phenomena.

- **Chapter 4** tries to suggest alternatives to fight these phenomena.

- At last, **Chapter 5** presents a final synthesis of the study, which is expected to come to be an important contribution to the question of Sexual Abuse, Child Labour and Prostitution.

## **I - Violence Against Children<sup>4</sup>**

Youths as victims of the violation of human rights, have been a major concern to the communities, not only at the national level, but also at the international one. This violence has been conducted under various forms: physical, sexual, moral, psychological, ...what affects their development in a negative way.

In this context, the present chapter covers different forms of this violence, being thus important to focus on the indicators which are extremely important to determine the index.

According to the Mozambican National Directorate of Statistics<sup>5</sup>, “(...) every indicator is a phenomenon to which an observer gives a specific connection with another of causal effect. This connection is usually subject to verification (mediation) and it is not always definitive. For example: delinquency can be originated from existent social and economical conditions in a particular society, such as the high level of unemployment and low salaries, but also by the social organisation (...)”.

Thus, indicators serve as moderator variables since they are determinant to draw conclusions on the existence of such phenomena and its level. They indicate to what extent such control variable affects or change these phenomena. It still has a lot of importance because in the research on prostitution, abuse and child labour, it is considered that these phenomena are related to many others and also to concurrent factors.

In this context, the selection process of the present study takes into account the family or household, the community, place of work, context, existent data and sources which provide them. All these imply awareness to the socio-economical and political particularities where the communities are situated.

From this principle, the main indicators of prostitution, sexual abuse of children and child labour are:

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<sup>4</sup> For the present study, the term child refers to individuals who, to the society and formal law, cannot establish contracts without the intervention of their parents or tutors. Therefore, for a better specification and focus, refer that 18 years, according to the United Nations Convention on Children’s Rights, is adopted to define all those who are below it as children; also following the Mozambican legislation, consider adults those individuals above 18 years, and establishing a certain protection to all those who are below this age.

<sup>5</sup> Social, economical and demographic indicators to follow the situation of family households.

- (i) - size, income and composition of the household; this enables to get data on the number of unemployed, sub-employed and the application of child work; data on the work contributes for an awareness to the physical and / or intellectual involvement of the household and its sustenance. The correlation between family income, size of the household and expenditures help to calculate the socio-economical level of the family. The pertinence of this indicator is due to the fact that many families in Mozambique are numerous and poor, and resort to prostitution and child labour because generally most of them are unemployed and this diminishes the income per capita.
- (ii) - education or educational level; - this indicator enables to see the expenditures of the family in the domain of education; withdrawals and its motives, because in general, poor families are not able to support all the formal education expenses, that is, for all the children and as a result there are many withdrawals or occasional failures due to the lack of financial means on one hand or, for cultural/traditional questions, mainly in relation to the girls who should be educated as generators of the continuity of the family<sup>6</sup>; this kind of situations can contribute for a deviation; the importance of education is due to the fact that this is a vehicle in the transformation of the installed social order, changing the structure, behaviour and value models.
- (iii) - family stability/disintegration - the importance of this indicator is defined in the family as a social body, which sets the form of social integration. To certain extent, it determines the group's expectations. For example, the absence of the head of the household in search for employment; total abandonment from the head of the family, generally the man; the conflicts existent in the family, affecting mainly the children and the bad treatment in relation to them; these are factors which can condition the healthy development of the children.
- (iv) - number of partners which are sexually related; - sexual intercourse with more than one partner can be considered as an indicator of prostitution, when motivated by economical reasons.
- (v) - sexual violation (rape); - the obligation, by the use of force/violence for the consummation of the sexual act, constitute in itself an abuse/violence.
- (vi) - forced marriages, by inheritance, substitution, incest, etc.; - these are attitudes which demonstrate a manifestation of abuse or insensitive violence, because the victim is not given an opportunity to choose.

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<sup>6</sup> Chiefly in rural areas, girl's education is not a priority. As stated by one of the respondents to the interview, (Osório, 1997: 13), "*education is good, but girls should not forget that they are the only ones who can bear children*".

- (vii) - development and underdevelopment; - in many occasions, the phenomena of child prostitution, as well as the use or exploitation of child labour force are associated to development or underdevelopment. For example, in Nacala city or in Namialo village, the dynamic of the Nacala corridor is pointed as one of the causes of the arise of a high number of prostitutes.

For the present study, these indicators are relevant, despite the complex use and some uncertainty such as the criterion for the definition of prostitution, abuse or even child; they are relevant in the sense that they enable more or less objectively to evaluate the state of prostitution/abuse/child labour in which a singular person/family/community is placed. Though it is noted that there should be a conjugation of indicators, because a single one does not provide or help to draw conclusions about the level of prostitution or abuse in a certain community.

Another method in this evaluation, would be the one based on the revenue or income obtained in exchange for material/sex/work or use of force.

However, the first method has the advantage of presenting a single variable; while the revenue is important, it is applicable when there is information on it and on the expenses.

Following, there is a specific presentation of the analysis of different forms of violence against children referred to in this study.

## **I.I - Sexual Abuse**

The concept Abuse, in this study, does not only refer to the question of something which implies violence, such as for example, rape in itself or a pedophile act<sup>7</sup>, but also possible cases where there is the victim's consent, such is the case of prostitution. As a matter of fact, child prostitution is in itself considered as abuse, according to Article 34 of the United Nations Charter on Children's Rights<sup>8</sup>.

Therefore, in general terms, it refers to situations in which men get involved with children in an abusive way, that is, without any perspectives; an intelligent man seduces a child, promising to give her something, mainly material goods (sometimes there is even no need to do that). So, "*abuse, refers to everything which hurts a person's feelings,*

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<sup>7</sup> The term paedophile (word from Greek origin which means love for children), is usually used to refer to an adult, whose personality suffers mental disorders which include a sexual interest focused on children which have not reached puberty. The majority of pedophiles are male and their victims are either girls or boys (Woman, 6/1999:8).

<sup>8</sup> The reason for the exclusion of prostitution in this sub-chapter is due to the fact that several times, there is, though forced, consent from the victim. As stated by Mussá Nurdine in Ressano Garcia, "*it is difficult to classify what is abuse because sometimes the victims approve it*".

*dignity and freedom, when she is considered an object and not a free individual with personal rights; everything which is not done with love and which goes against freedom; the action between two people who don't want each other well*"<sup>9</sup>, *"everything, in terms of human relations which go against the law"*<sup>10</sup>. As can be observed in these definitions, what is highlighted and meaningful is the fact that any unbalanced sexual contact, from caress, kisses, touching and the real act, in which one of the parts does not or cannot give his/her consent voluntarily, cannot be accepted.

In relation to the actors or offenders, in general, actions of this nature are conducted by relatives or people closed to the children, and they happen either in the urban or rural environment. So, in the majority of cases, individuals who perform this deviation belong to the same sociocultural group<sup>11</sup> what differs, for example from prostitution, as will be later observed, in which the migration factor plays a major role.

For instance, in all cases of sexual abuse judged by the Judicial Court in Nampula, from rape of children, women, kidnapping, etc., the authors were national individuals, black and known to the victim, differently from child prostitution or trade (tourism) in which the customers are foreigners - black and white.

## **Causes**

As can be observed from the following section, the causes, which justify these actions, are of a varied nature, from political, cultural, educational, socio-economical, and religious, among others.

In the case of Mozambique, as causes of the increasing abuse, the following factors were mentioned:

- (i) - the high number of orphans as a main consequence of the war, which originated a great desegregation of families, resulting in that many children do not live with their direct parents (as illustrated in table 1)<sup>12</sup>;

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<sup>9</sup> Statement from the interview given by Sister Ilse Lúcia Biasibetti, in Ressano Garcia.

<sup>10</sup> Statement from the interview given by Dr. Luis Djedje, President Judge of Nampula Provincial Court, 11.12.98.

<sup>11</sup> Though there are cases of rape consumed by wrongdoers, during assaults or even ambushes with that purpose.

<sup>12</sup> In 1998, only in Maputo city, the NGO "Médicos Mundos", registered about 500 cases of abandoned children (Notícias, 05.09.98).

**Table 1. Children who live with their parents or other individuals**

Percentage distribution of children under 15 years who live with their parents or other people, according to the situation of parents, by age of the child, sex, residence and provinces, Mozambique 1997.

Characteristic	Live with parents	Live with the mother		Live with the father			Live with other people			
		Father alive	Father is dead	Mother alive	Mother dead	Father & mother alive	Father alive	Mother alive	Both dead	Mother alive/Father disappeared
<b>Age</b>										
0-2	76.4	16.9	2.5	0.7	0.4	1.4	0.4	0.1	0.1	1.2
3-5	67.2	14.7	3.6	3.5	1.1	7.4	0.7	0.4	0.3	1.2
6-9	58.1	13.5	5.2	4.2	3.0	10.0	1.9	1.5	0.5	1.9
10-14	45.2	13.1	8.0	3.9	4.3	12.8	3.4	3.2	2.5	3.7
<b>Sex</b>										
Male	60.7	14.7	5.5	3.4	2.2	7.3	1.7	1.7	1.2	1.6
Fem.	58.8	14.0	4.9	3.0	2.8	9.8	1.9	1.3	0.9	2.7
<b>Residence</b>										
Urban	56.4	15.9	4.2	4.4	3.0	9.6	1.3	1.8	0.9	2.5
Rural	60.7	13.9	5.5	2.9	2.4	8.2	1.9	1.4	1.0	2.1
<b>Province</b>										
Namp	57.0	18.0	4.3	3.2	1.0	12.0	1.3	1.3	0.7	1.2
Tete	63.6	12.0	5.4	1.0	2.3	7.0	3.0	2.2	1.0	2.4
Maput	42.2	22.5	4.9	3.3	0.2	19.7	0.9	2.7	1.1	2.5
Maput City	57.6	18.6	4.8	4.8	1.7	7.3	0.8	1.1	0.5	2.9

**Source:** INE, 1998:18

- (ii) Unemployment;
- (iii) Lack of attention from the families (abuse can be a result of differences in a particular household); *“the woman is obliged in Ressano Garcia, to support the family because the father is a miner or works in another place; she works the whole day and the child stays alone; it is difficult to find couples; it is rare to see a husband/wife together”*<sup>13</sup>.
- (iv) Lack of information and education on sexuality and abuse; what makes many adult men state that they prefer children or youths as a way of avoiding particular sexually transmitted diseases and of feeling more sexual pleasure because the latter haven't been used a lot;

<sup>13</sup> Sister Ilse L. Biasibetti, op. Cit.

- (v) Culture/tradition and religion, etc.; *“there were cases of parents raping their daughters, and when questioned they advocated to have been under the effects of bad spirits and that they could not remember”*<sup>14</sup>.
- (vi) Psychological issues; in what concerns the seduction capacity of people of the same age<sup>15</sup>.
- (vii) And, in general, the customary law, which regulates social relations in the country, when, tolerating relationships, which can be considered unbalanced, for instance, premature marriages.

Nevertheless, this way of facing sexual abuse of the under aged is more rooted in rural and semi-urban areas, mainly, because the upper classes participate more in the networks of children prostitution or even in sexual tourism. It is in the rural areas, where the girls are obliged to live with men who allegedly pay compensation to the parents. Given the economical deprivation, *“the families value more monetary compensation than the children’s health”*<sup>16</sup>.

For instance, regarding religious beliefs, many believe that the materialisation of some wish or objective, such as financial power, the involvement with something or somebody pure, in this case, a child, or its death or sexual abuse is the basis for success. In this context, it is often observed that incest or intercourse between brothers and sisters, uncles and nieces, etc.<sup>17</sup>

However, several aspects which negatively contribute to the persistence of these phenomena are taken as the causes of the increasing abuse against children, from the public opinion, type of education, lack of knowledge of the laws, etc.

For example, the fact that in these communities, rarely, the families resort to courts either by lack of information or because legal mechanisms are time consuming and complex (as demonstrated in Table 2, in what concerns Nampula province), or even

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<sup>14</sup> Statement from the interview given by Mr. Simão Fazenda, Commandant of the Police of Ressano Garcia.

<sup>15</sup> In rural areas in Mozambique, and not only, various situations of incest are described, due to the fact of the mother having a baby and the parents’ lack of any alternatives outside the house. *“Some people state that in the absence of fish the baby is eatable because the taste can be the same; what these people do not say is that yearly there is a period of compulsory pause in the catching of fish in order to enable small fish to grow bigger”*. - Statement of the interview given by Mr. Manuel Aurélio, General Secretary of the Mozambican Red Cross, Nampula Delegation.

<sup>16</sup> Statement from the interview given by Ms. Sara Samuel Jane, civil servant at the Provincial Directorate for the Co-ordination of Social Welfare in Nampula.

<sup>17</sup> Stressing that these are the most difficult relations to get information, because they happen within the families and are kept secret because they guarantee the family sustainability.

because of trying to solve the situation through a material compensation<sup>18</sup>; “besides being afraid of reprisals from the families of the accused, because several times they go to the policy to withdraw the complaints previously presented”<sup>19</sup>. “So, children are abused, people don’t go to court and the girls become women”<sup>20</sup>; this enables to understand the reasons not only cultural, but also economical.

**Table 2. Cases of Sexual Abuse recorded in Nampula Provincial Court: 1991-1996**

Year	Victim Age	Race	Place	(Un) known	Age of aggressor	Crime	Punishment
1991	27 years	Black	Nampula	Known	24	Violate.	In jail - not
1992	14	“	“	“	17	Rape	sentence
1993	12	“	Angoche	“	28	Violat.	“
1994	12	“	“	“	28	“	“
1995	32	“	Nampul	“	18	“	“
	14	“	“	“	20	Rape	“
			Namapa	“	Adult	Violat.	“
1996	3	“	Nampula	“	24	Violat.	“
	5	“	“	“	20	“	Escaped
	12	“	“	“	24	Rape	Arrested
	“	“	“	“	20	“	“
	10	“	“	“	25	Violat.	“
	13	“	“	“	33 & 22	Rape	“
	12	“	“	“	19	“	N/arrest.
	24	“	“	“	“	“	“
	13	“	“	“	40	Violat.	“
	32	“	“	“	30	Rape	“
	12	“	Angoche	“	28	Violat.	“
	25	“	Moma	“	32	Rape	Arrested
	26	“	Nacala	“	35 & 35	Violat.	N/arrest.
	13	“	“	“	35	“	“
	33	“	“	“	29	Rape	“
	25	“	“	“	25	Violat.	“
	11	“	Ribaue	“	17	“	“
	12	“	“	“	31	“	Arrested
	13	“	“	“	30	Rape	N/arrest.
	12	“	“	“	13	“	Arrested
	25	“	Nampula	“	45	“	N/arrest.
	14	“	“	“	18	Violat.	“
	13	“	“	“	23	Rape	“
	12	“	Nacala	“	25	“	Arrested
	16	“	Nampula	“	19 & 19	“	N/arrest.
	32	“	Nacala	“	26 & 30	Violat.	“

**Source:** DPCAS, Nampula, 1998

Thus, as the majority of cases are not reported, it is difficult to know the actual extent of the problem.

<sup>18</sup> And even in relation to children’s health, the families only take them to hospital in case of any visible physical injury.

<sup>19</sup> Simão Fazenda, op. cit.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

## **I.II - Child Prostitution**

Prostitution is commonly defined as an '*activity where sexual acts are conducted in exchange for a payment*' (Lee & O'Brien, 1995:4); defined in this way, as handing over the body, taking sex as a commercial means; a situation in which the person who sells her body is reduced to the sexual pleasure taken from her. So, "*the prostitute is an object of social exploitation, by the society in general and men in particular*"<sup>21</sup>.

Nevertheless, there is a need to refer that this act is practised not only by the under aged, but also by adults who are the first protagonists<sup>22</sup>.

As noted by Lee & O'Brien (1995:4), "*The vast majority of customers are adult men*". These are adult individuals with a relative financial stability, who rape adolescents; apparently they become vicious and active subjects, while the adolescents become prostitutes or victims and are passive and accomplices in this process and action.

Thus, "*Child Prostitution refers more to the behaviour of adults and society in general than on the children and youths*" (ibid. 67), "*because children are not born prostitutes*"<sup>23</sup>. It somehow reveals the sexual behaviour of adults, which make sex for the simple pleasure as if it was an entertainment, on one hand, and on the hand, "*it reveals the opportunistic sense of man*"<sup>24</sup>. "*Therefore, instead of sexually abused children, I think they should be termed sexualised children*"<sup>25</sup>.

Probably, that is way the slogan of the "*English Collective Prostitutes*" is "*For the Prostitutes and Against Prostitution*" (Adams et al. 1997:137).

## **Causes**

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<sup>21</sup> For the current study, it is important to take into account this definition, because the great dimension of the discussion on Prostitution in Mozambique is adjusted to this context.

<sup>22</sup> 1998 figures from the Ministry for the Co-ordination of Social welfare indicated that only in Maputo City there were about 200 children under 18 who were undertaking child prostitution; it is believed that this number does not represent the reality (Notícias, 03.1098).

<sup>23</sup> Statement from the interview given by Mr. Pedro Luis Weltemave, Administrator of Ressano Garcia district, on the question approached by this study.

<sup>24</sup> Statement from the interview given by Mr. Mussá Nurdine, MCJD's representative in Ressano Garcia.

<sup>25</sup> Pedro L. Weltemave, op. cit.

The factors intervening and causing this phenomenon are multiple and cumulative, as observed in different communities.

The family is appointed in the first place, as the nuclear cell of society, which, sometimes, does not assume its role as educator of children. Forgetting that *“there are only children’s rights starting from the family itself”*<sup>26</sup>. Family instability can be one factor conditioning prostitution and child labour, though poverty can also be a starting point for instability in the household; *“parents who don’t question about the whereabouts of their children or the sources of their money due to material poverty”*<sup>27</sup>. The consequences of the abandon or absence of the head of the family can result in, for example, the woman looking for a new husband or abandoning the children, a situation which can produce premature marriages and youths delinquency or children’s neglect of the households, in search of survival means.

Linked to the family, is the society, which is, pointed because of its attitude of indifference and silence relatively to the defence of moral values, social, cultural and ethnical, ... *“which were present in the past”*. Within the society prevails a non-critical spirit towards phenomena from other realities, thus favouring the assimilation of everything, which is observed, such as soup operas, for example.

As a matter of fact, McKeganey (1996) observes that prostitution is stigmatised and its discussion is surrounded by myths, one of them being the belief that the *“others”* are the ones who get involved in it, never *“we”* or *“our”*; *“the woman who sells sex is never our mother, our daughter, or our sister, but anonymous, infinitely more desperate than the people we love. Equally, the man who buys sex is never our father, husband or boyfriend, but somebody else we don’t know nor we are willing to know”* (p.1). This myth that prostitution involves *“others who are anonymous”* is supported by the secrecy which surrounds the exchange of sex for money; the prostitute is socially inferior; though, women and men who are involved are people like any others, and have faces which are recognisable and they are normal citizens in other areas.

Another cause is the fact that, often, prostitution in young girls is a result of the neglect they suffered from their partners, what makes them look for other partners who can provide certain stability. *“The only thing men know is to use them and sometimes leave them with children without taking any responsibility, abandon them with this load. It is normal that they revolt and they are right because they have lots of expenses to cover. So, sex has an important value of use and exchange for survival. Man only looks for it for pleasure. Therefore, the women are not the ones to blame, it is our fault, the society’s fault”*.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Statement from the interview given by Mr. Lorul Amim, trader in Ressano Garcia district.

Linked to this aspect is the fact that children are defined as the problem (and penalised); and not the adults who abuse them, not even the social, economical, legal and cultural conditions, which increase the vulnerability of young people to exploitation and which, contribute to their involvement in prostitution.

Another factor, considered as the most important in the Mozambican social context, is poverty, though there are opposite positions concerning this aspect, because poverty is not a defined social category; because the poor can be found in all occupations, and in all economical fields, what means that the problem has a great dimension; understanding, on one hand, that the term refers to people or regions from the point of view of the observer, exclusively, (Silva & Condy, 1993:39). *“Even in regard to adultery, currently, it can be stated that the majority is motivated by economical reasons. If I marry a beautiful girl and I don’t have money to satisfy her, the likelihood of her getting involved with another man is very high. A stable home is the one, which has everything, and both, man and woman, prefer to maintain their respective goods. It is not by chance that parents advice their children to marry people who are economically stable”*<sup>28</sup>.

Those who adopt a different position claim that in this context, adolescents use poverty as an excuse for trading sex because there is a need to take into account that it is not always that the absence of income can condition these phenomena, that is, it is not always that sex constitutes a form of survival. Sometimes, several youths resort to these attitudes as a way of finding additional means for such ends or purposes their parents do not regard as a priority, and therefore do not or cannot satisfy them: *“many girls see the others well dressed and they want to do the same; this is not often possible due to the low salaries of the parents which only serve to cover some expenses”*<sup>29</sup>. *“Note that if these girls who are from social unfavourable classes stay in the streets, waiting for customers, those who are from middle or upper classes do not need to do so because they can just use the telephone, the contacts”*<sup>30</sup>.

Another cause referred to be the government, which in its multiple actions enables propaganda, which favour moral depreciation.

It is accused in the communities of several times, instead of promoting the family, tries to solve problems related to sexual moral, by means of campaigns, which invite to sexuality. The distribution of preservatives (despite the common knowledge of the existence of AIDS, as illustrated in tables 3 and 4) and family planning, recognising their importance, are considered as some of the sources which lead people to practice sex

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<sup>28</sup> Mussá Nurdine, op. cit.

<sup>29</sup> Statement from the interview given by Ms. Ângela Maria, Deputy Provincial Secretary of the Mozambican Women’s Organisation in Nampula.

<sup>30</sup> Statement from the interview given by Mr. José E. Tinto, Labour Resources Expert, Provincial Directorate for Labour, Nampula.

without the due fear in terms of respect and consequences. *“Family planning prevents pregnancy and its control is difficult; preservative is presented in the same way”*<sup>31</sup>. *“Currently, it is claimed that with preservatives it is possible to prevent pregnancy and diseases, what can be an incentive for child prostitution; and note that they are very cheap”*<sup>32</sup>; however some people disagree with these positions, due to the fact that *“in rural areas despite the existence of preservatives and their free distribution, people still not use them”*<sup>33</sup>. In this context, it can be said that condoms or preservatives stimulate more the action of customers than that of the victims.

**Table 3. Awareness to AIDS, according to source of information: women**

Percentage of women who are aware of the existence of AIDS and percentage according to source of information, by selected features, Mozambique, 1997

Feature	% of AIDS aware	Radio	TV	News paper / Magazine	Pamphlet	School	Talks
<b>Age</b>							
15-19	81.2	38.4	10.2	8.0	7.6	6.5	5.6
20-24	84.7	45.6	6.7	8.0	7.8	1.5	9.8
25-29	84.3	46.2	6.7	7.9	9.3	1.3	7.4
30-39	82.1	44.9	6.3	7.5	9.7	0.8	9.3
40-49	78.8	40.7	4.6	3.0	7.6	0.7	6.9
<b>Civil Status</b>							
Married	81.2	41.5	4.5	5.4	8.8	0.8	8.3
Married Before	86.3	46.5	6.1	8.2	9.3	0.8	7.2
Never married	84.4	49.3	19.8	14.1	6.1	9.9	6.2
<b>Area</b>							
Urban	96.2	77.6	27.0	23.5	7.3	3.6	12.9
Rural	77.9	32.5	0.7	1.9	8.8	1.8	6.3
<b>Educ.</b>							
N/Educat	73.5	31.6	1.3	1.3	8.8	1.1	6.0
Primary	88.2	49.4	7.9	8.3	7.8	2.4	8.7
Secunda / +	96.7	83.3	52.7	47.2	13.5	10.5	15.9
<b>Provin.</b>							
Nampula	87.8	40.0	2.8	5.3	25.4	0.8	10.4
Tete	96.7	68.6	0.9	4.0	1.3	6.9	6.5
Maputo	92.1	65.1	27.3	19.7	9.7	5.1	14.3
Maputo City	94.8	76.0	46.0	35.6	8.4	4.1	4.4

Source: INE, 1998: 165

**Table 4: Knowledge/Awareness to AIDS according to source of information: men**

<sup>31</sup> Pedro L. Weltemave, op. cit.

<sup>32</sup> Ângela Maria, op. cit.

<sup>33</sup> Simão Fazenda, op. cit.

Percentage of men who are aware of the existence of AIDS and percentage according to source of information, by selected characteristics, Mozambique, 1997.

Feature	% of AIDS aware	Radio	TV	Newspaper / Mag.	Pamph.	School	Talks
<b>Age</b>							
15-19	89.5	66.9	18.1	20.9	10.0	6.2	5.3
20-24	93.9	53.9	15.1	17.2	17.2	6.8	5.7
25-29	98.8	69.2	18.4	30.2	19.1	0.8	7.8
30-39	95.9	70.0	14.7	25.2	17.1	1.0	8.0
40-49	93.7	61.1	9.5	19.6	15.9	0.5	7.8
50-64	90.9	55.0	6.0	11.8	14.3	0.0	9.1
<b>Civil Status</b>							
Married	95.6	62.2	10.9	20.5	16.7	0.7	8.2
Married before	87.6	68.4	24.3	30.2	14.7	0.5	3.7
Never married	90.1	65.9	19.8	21.3	12.7	7.9	5.4
<b>Area</b>							
Urban	96.8	83.1	41.3	47.7	15.9	2.3	8.9
Rural	92.7	55.8	3.1	11.0	15.5	2.5	6.8
<b>Educa.</b>							
N/educ.	85.9	44.7	2.4	1.7	10.5	0.2	5.4
Primary	95.2	64.2	10.9	20.0	15.0	2.8	6.9
Second. or +	99.8	91.6	52.1	63.5	28.8	4.1	13.8
<b>Provi.</b>							
Nampula	89.3	43.9	6.5	16.6	24.1	0.0	17.4
Tete	98.1	87.1	2.6	23.7	4.1	5.9	7.9
Maputo	96.6	75.3	41.1	37.6	17.3	0.6	8.1
Maputo City	98.6	89.0	63.9	59.4	18.9	1.9	6.0

Source: INE, 1998: 166

Finally, the lack of jobs faced mainly by women. Note that the employment market in Mozambique in general presents characteristics, which restrict the admission of employees, especially women. And the fact that particular regions in the country lack alternatives also contributes in a considerable way.

For instance, the land of Ressano Garcia does not favour the practice of agriculture and there are no economical infrastructures, which can employ the available labour force. Consequently, the youths, as a way of surviving, adopt sex exchange or work in the informal sector or even develop illegal activities such as '*mukero*'; "*very often the girls or women themselves are the ones who besiege men*"<sup>34</sup>.

An observed fact in the provinces under study is that, for instance, the owners of several restaurants, either male or female (predominantly the latter) use the youths in order to attract customers. And in this the own dynamics of development, principally in the communication and tourism corridors also play a role. "*Therefore prostitution*

<sup>34</sup> Pedro L. Weltemave, op. cit.

*becomes a more urban aspect than a rural one, more linked to the big development projects or where there is a huge concentration of people with goods*<sup>35</sup>. *“In the countryside, people’s behaviour is different from that of the urban environment; hence with the land people have alternatives in terms of survival, what does not happen in the cities”*<sup>36</sup>. For instance, while the phenomenon is more visible in Ressano Garcia, in Namaacha little can be seen what is justifiable by the dynamics of the RSA when compared to Swaziland; *“for example, in Ressano Garcia district, as a border area crossed by miners from and to South Africa it is normal to find several houses with them queuing, waiting for their turn, mainly in their return from South Africa”*<sup>37</sup>.

Therefore, migration/immigration plays its role. As a matter of fact, almost always, the customers of the prostitutes are either national tourists or foreigners; as well as some of the prostitutes are from the region where they exercise their activity. So, the miners start to have a second family in Ressano Garcia, in the same way that the foreigner or national, outside his/her habitat, single or married starts looking for second partners. This situation can be explained by the social stigmatisation, which involves this activity. So, the main customers are migrants from other areas and, when they are locals, *“they are State employees with a respectable job and position who try to seduce the girls”*<sup>38</sup>. As stated by a young man interviewed in Nampula: *“they don’t want us because we don’t have money; they prefer directors who have money; there was one in a disco who refused to dance with me because I don’t have anything and she accepted an old man, probably, about the age of her father because he could pay”*.

In general, these are considered as the causes of the increasing child prostitution. Nevertheless, it is necessary to take into account *“that not always the sexual involvement of a woman with several partners is solely motivated by material needs. Biological satisfaction and psychological effect can also play their role”*<sup>39</sup>; *“note that several men affirm that they look for the services of children because with them they feel much pleasure because they are not overused; though I see it as a way of escaping because if a man comes to me, he knows that I will pose all my problems, from children who are not enrolled in school and the rent which is still to be paid; so, he prefers a young girl because he knows that with only 100.000,00 MT he can solve his problem”*. Also linked to these aspects, is the fact, mainly in the case of male customers, that the need to look for a new sexual experience is a great motivation; *“tired of vaginal sex they look for other*

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<sup>35</sup> Sara Samuel Jane, op. cit.

<sup>36</sup> Ângela Maria, op. cit.

<sup>37</sup> Remember that weekly Ressano Garcia receives about 3.000 illegal migrants coming from South Africa (Simão Fazenda, op. cit.).

<sup>38</sup> Simão Fazenda, op. cit.

<sup>39</sup> Statement of the interview given by Ms. Flora Augusto Jamisse, Director of Ressano Garcia Health Centre.

*experiences such as the oral, anal sex, etc., in different positions which they cannot practice at home; many men who come after me are looking for oral sex because, I think, that the respective wives don't do it or cannot do it; in fact, most women do the same when they find a man who practices oral sex, mainly when the husband doesn't know him*"<sup>40</sup>. Therefore, the freedom men have outside their houses to develop new sexual experiences.

### **I.III - Child Labour**

In the Mozambican society, it is common to find children employed in different sectors such as work in the field, work for other families, migrants, in both the formal and informal sector, domestic work, as servants, baby-sitters, etc.

The question of child labour is very complex. The problem is linked, though not restricted, to poverty, inequality and social exclusion and other factors of cultural and economical nature, as well as the social organisation of communities production. There is in the country, a culture of valuing the work, which involves children as a labour force as a means of avoiding a possible delinquency. On the other hand, there are factors related to traditional and familiar forms of economical organisation, specially in the small scale agricultural production and even in relation to the medium and large enterprises which mobilise child labour, mainly during harvest. Besides, opportunities offered by the employment market in urban areas affect considerably the participation of children as labour force who despite their rights are still not protected, either in regard to children's rights or in the social and work sphere.

Thus, child labour is a serious problem in the Mozambican society, being a chronic social problem.

#### **Causes**

Presenting in a more systematised way, the causes for this phenomenon are:

- (i) - lack of employment faced by trained youths up to a certain level; for example, the salient absence of economical units in the rural areas in Mozambique.
- (ii) - lack of professional training and life perspectives of the youths in the countryside and not only. Very often the level of teaching provided in rural areas is the most basic possible, and also the number of schools is not enough for all children. "*What changes occur in Ressano Garcia with the existence of grades 6 and 7 in the communities?*"<sup>41</sup> In a context of this nature, the future of the youths is

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<sup>40</sup> A prostitute in Tete.

<sup>41</sup> Ilse Lúcia Biasetti, op. cit.

limited and the school “*can even be a waist of time because as they finish grade 5, children are limited because as the parents do not have economical power they cannot afford to send the children to areas where eventually they could carry on with their studies. In addition, very few parents will have the courage to send their children, only with grade 5 to another city, given that they are not responsible enough to growth up away from the parents*”<sup>42</sup>.

- (iii) - the fact that in the communities child labour is considered as a way of preventing youths delinquency, abuse or drug traffic. “*Child labour is preferable to delinquency. Working, the child/boy is doing something useful, he can even build a hut*”.
- (iv) - demographic factors.
- (v) - cultural factors: “*We are African and, according to our principles, the distribution of tasks in societies is according to the age. It is true that children should work and have always worked, though there are some criteria related with the type of tasks for them, which cannot be ignored. If we don’t follow such criteria we will be using or instrumentalising children*”<sup>43</sup>.

Thus, child labour is intimately related to economical condition. When a child works very often under circumstances, which endanger his/her health and life expectancy, there is no way out: because the parents rely on the child for survival. And, if the work is only able to ensure the provision of food for survival, education becomes an inaccessible luxury and the future does not exist.

In fact, the government of Mozambique acknowledges its inability to face and solve the phenomenon of child labour. The Labour Ministry refers that this inability derives from the lack of a comprehensive education network in the country, as well as the high index of poverty, which affects the majority of people in the country. “*Statistics from the Ministry of Education according to the documentation source of the Ministry of Labour indicate that from the 2.596.755 children in compulsory school age, there are 331.570 who do not study due to the small number of schools*”, existing therefore, “*children aged 7 who work under several conditions*”. So, “*it is not possible to evaluate the actual number. The National Institute for Employment and Professional Training (INEFP) indicates that there is a record of 5.740 children in the employment centres, figure which does not correspond to the reality*”<sup>44</sup>.

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<sup>42</sup> Pedro L. Weltemave, op. cit.

<sup>43</sup> Statement of the interview given to the MediaFax dated 16.09.1998, by Mr. Francisco Zunguza, from the National Syndicate for Employees of the Metalwork’s Industry.

<sup>44</sup> Abílio Mussanhane, Director of the Department of Studies from the Ministry of Labour, interview given to the MediaFax, 16.09.98.

So, “in case the government demands the strict observance of the legislation referring to the minimal age, such measure will have a negative impact on many families with poverty problems. Many of these children working are sources of income for the respective family aggregates and to forbid them to work, on the basis of this law, will lead to the destabilisation of many domestic economies. So, it is a delicate issue”<sup>45</sup>.

It was probably this context which might have contributed to the fact that the Labour Act in Mozambique, enables individuals under 15 years to start work and that to fight this phenomenon does not constitute one of the country’s main challenges.

#### **I.IV - Vulnerable Groups**

In this sub-chapter, it is intended to highlight the most affected population groups or the ones who are more vulnerable to these phenomena.

In general, the most affected are the children. Street kids, those from orphanages, social services and from poor families in general are obvious examples of children who are vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation of cheap labour force by adult individuals, who occupy respectable positions or authority ones or even by small or medium enterprises.

By definition, these are emotionally deprived children and in most cases do not live with their parents. They face material deprivation and the adults (strangers, neighbours and relatives) can manipulate them making them accomplices in the abuse from which they are victims.

In relation to prostitution, involving children, evidence show *that ‘the vast majority of children involved in prostitution had severely disrupted lives’* (Lee & O’Brien, 1995: 7). That is, major part of children practising prostitution come from poor sectors and from the less privileged ones in the society.

In a specific way, vulnerable groups are those which are in the eminence or risk of falling in a situation of absolute poverty, because, not possessing sustainability means, they are the closest in undertaking these kind of phenomena, not as customers, but victims.

Vulnerability can have conjunctural or structural reasons.

In Mozambique, the successive wars produced thousands of deaths, maimed, traumatised, forced migrants, split families, orphans and widows, etc. After the General

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

Peace Agreement, in 1992, there was a demobilisation of soldiers - from the Government and Renamo; they did not have any source of income.

The number of vulnerable individuals is still not known but it is estimated in thousands. In his studies, Green (1991: 59-60) considers that family or household vulnerability can be summarised in 7 causal characteristics, namely:

- a great level of dependency (few hands work to feed lots of mouths);
- women as heads of families (with few employment opportunities and with a conflict between the possibility of getting income and other necessary activities);
- no member of the household earning a salary;
- lack of access to security and fertile land;
- recent migration - normally forced - to the urban areas, limited opportunities in rural areas;
- localisation in a recent area severely affected by natural disasters and/or emergency due to insecurity; and, lack of a link with social networks with a support capacity.

Thus, in relation to vulnerable population groups, prostitution and child labour it is necessary to consider among others:

- children of women heads of families (who exist in large numbers as illustrated by Table 5); this group is specified by the fact that in the traditional family hierarchy, the control over the household is a male domain, the women being restricted to the reproductive role and look after the house, even when they are the ones ensuring the provision for the household;

**Table 5. Composition of the Households**

Percentage distribution of family aggregates, according to sex of the head, number of customary residents and presence of adopted children, by area of residence, Mozambique 1997.

Characteristic	Residence		Total
	Urban	Rural	
<b>Sex of Head of the Household</b>			
Male	79.5	71.8	73.2
Female	20.5	28.2	26.8
<b>Number of common residents</b>			
1	7.1	10.2	9.6
2	8.8	14.6	13.5
3	9.6	18.3	16.7
4	13.7	16.0	15.6
5	12.9	12.9	12.9
6	13.3	10.9	11.3
7	10.4	5.8	6.7
8	8.6	4.1	4.9

9+	15.6	7.2	8.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Average number	5.6	4.4	4.6
Households with parentless children*	26.5	20.5	21.6
*Percentage of households with children under 15, whose parents do not live in the household.			

Source: INE, 1998: 17

- children of returned;
- children of refugees/displaced; - in many areas in the country, such is the case of Ressano Garcia, prostitution increased with the war displaced who didn't have any survival means<sup>46</sup>;
- children of unemployed;
- children of disabled for work;
- children of war demobilised.

Thus, due to the fact that the parents do not have any means and capacity for surviving/supporting the household, very often, children look for alternative ways of solving these domestic problems. *“That is the reason why, girls, mainly, aged 15-16 are already in a position to feed the whole household”*<sup>47</sup>.

In fact, the problem of vulnerable groups is well present in the growing number of beggars in the cities, marginal and delinquent children, women; among children who undertake prostitution in order to survive and homosexual boys, what means that poverty contributes for these phenomena herein being studied. But there is a need to take into account, as observed, that poverty *“is not a defined social category”*. If in regard to child labour it can be the main reason, though there are others such as the absence of alternatives in terms of education, jobs, etc., for female prostitution, it cannot be stated that the vulnerable group always appears as participant.

Nevertheless, there are some variations, according to the phenomena. If in regard to sexual abuse and prostitution, the main victims are female children or girls (as illustrated in Table 6, in relation to Nampula Province), relatively to child labour and paid one, the main victims are male children or boys.

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<sup>46</sup> Mussá Nurdine, op. cit.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

**Table 6. Recorded cases of Children in prostitution in Nampula, 1988**

<b>District</b>	<b>Number of Children</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Nampula City	17		17
Lalaua	9		9
Monapo	7		7
Meconta	2		2
Mogovolas	4		4
Ribaue	2		2
Malema	2		2
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>		<b>43</b>

Source: DPCAS, Nampula, 1998

### **I.V. - Consequences**

The consequences of phenomena such as sexual abuse, prostitution and child labour are described as being of several natures.

As previously mentioned, sexual abuse is an act of violence. During the abuse children are faced with sexual experiences which are not adequate to their age, interfering with their physical development, their sexuality, making them have inappropriate sexual experiences. In fact, sexual abuse is considered as one of the potential causes for child prostitution.

Abuse also results in a loss of trust and security in children's future relations, because they can be manipulated, hurt or threatened precisely by those they trusted. It produces a stigmatisation which can mark the child for the rest of her life, and she can come to the conclusion that everything which happens in her life is beyond her control due to the fact of not having been able to prevent and terminate a situation of abuse.

Indeed, all cases of sexual abuse if not resulting in the death of the victim<sup>48</sup>, produce severe traumas, which vary from healthy problems, that is, they endanger the physical growth of children who are morally, emotionally and spiritually affected. The child becomes traumatised and unable to face his/her personal life, schooling and in terms of relationships as a human being. This condition can be permanent if the victims are not attended, being therefore pushed to a life of survival, in which practices, such as prostitution, can imply the source and means of support<sup>49</sup>.

Several women, mainly young ones, suffer severe physical injuries as well as psychological, sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS and complications

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<sup>48</sup> For example, up to November 1998 in Maputo city, two girls, one aged twelve and another six, lost their lives as a result of rape (Notícias, 03.11.98).

<sup>49</sup> There are elements which may or may not affect the consequences of abuse: its duration, if taking time or not; emotional support or its absence from the family after the discovery of the situation; type of abuse and the use of violence.

resulting from abortions under risky conditions, what increases mortality rates and contributes to the reduction of life expectancy affecting society as a whole. “For example, in Ressano Garcia major part of people suffering from Sexually Transmitted Diseases are youths of both sexes between 15 and 20 years”<sup>50</sup>.

Another consequence or risk is the transmission of poverty from generation to generation. Silva & Condy (1993: 14) stress that “children from poor households develop in a frame of social and economical limitations which determine high probability of continuing in this situation in their adult life”, because the average age is 15, due to the high levels of reproduction and mortality, resulting in a high level of dependence which is translated in low revenues, distributed by many dependent, unabling the children to have a good nutrition and health, apart from schooling. Active members have high rates of unemployment and sub-employment. These children having a low bio-physiological development, low education do not inherit capital goods and not even social relations which enable them to undertake independent economical activities or to obtain productive jobs which provide adequate income. “So, children from poor households who survive tend to inherit their parents’ poverty and in their turn they will pass it to their children, developing therefore a vicious poverty circle” (ibid., 15).

It is thought that poor population is increasing from generation to generation, if we consider that poor households in general have a higher number of members, are less able to support their children’s education (Table 7). Consequently, when they grow up without any profession, they continue poor, opening a new poverty circle which can also result in child prostitution and labour force, contributing to the desegregation of the social network, starting from the household.

For instance, in 1991, in Maputo city, “the heads of poor households were characterised by their high level of illiteracy” (Silva & Condy, 1993:9).

**Table 7. School Attendance**

Percentage of population from the households, from 7 to 24 years of age who go to school, by age, sex and residence, Mozambique 1997.

Age group	Male population			Female pop.			Total		
	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total
6-10	76.5	46.9	53.3	76.1	39.2	47.0	76.3	43.0	50.1
11-15	78.9	65.8	68.9	68.3	48.4	53.7	73.3	57.3	61.3
16-20	45.0	27.3	33.4	23.3	6.0	10.3	35.3	15.2	21.1
21-24	20.3	5.3	9.9	9.6	0.3	2.4	14.5	2.1	5.4

Source: INE, 1998: 21

This situation has got an impact in the country’s development. Premature or early marriages, for instance, result in children withdrawal from school. With these

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<sup>50</sup> Flora Augusto Jamisse, op. cit.

phenomena, the reduction of life expectancy is a reality. Note that for development itself, schooling and human resource training is considered, as a permanent must.

## II - Particularities of the Mozambican Process

When analysing the question of violence/abuse against children in the country, inevitably, two stages should be stressed: one referring to the colonisation period and the other referring to the post independence period, distinct periods with their respective particularities.

In regard to the colonial period, it is worth noting that the very limited literature on prostitution in Mozambique presents arguments of historical character. Nevertheless, it can be stated that prostitution, labour and sexual abuse of children constitutes the most remarkable traces of colonialism itself.

Note that in the colonial period the majority of economically active population relied on family agriculture and worked in exchange for very low and ridiculous wages; child labour force was also present and in addition there was the regime of forced or compulsory cultures “*we used to work in the priest’s home or in his field or church; there was ‘xibalo’; we used to go and pick cotton at what age?*”<sup>51</sup>. Good land was in the hands of the colonisers and of foreign monopolist enterprises. Professional, administrative and specialised work posts, as well as the commercial network were all dominated by the Portuguese, what means that major part of natives had to look for alternative ways of survival.

However, if large part of the population was in rural and semi-urban areas and had a very limited access to cities mainly the poor ones, though there was prostitution in cities and villages this manifested itself in a different way, because it was somehow organised and circumscribed to particular areas. On the other hand, the access to the urban environment was not extensive to all layers of the population what illustrated a strong repression on the part of the colonial power. If Araujo Street was regarded as the main prostitution centre in Lourenço Marques City, in Nampula, Namutequeliua neighbourhood, Gato Preto Restaurant was also famous. Similar situations in part linked to colonial soldiers, “*the relief of the soldier in the colonial period; a certain military imposition which probably stayed in the people; note that Motenpuez, similarly to Nampula was the commands training centre; indeed this reality is well visible, for instance, with the existence of lots of coloured individuals, children of unknown fathers in Mueda; somehow, this still have an effect today*”<sup>52</sup>.

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<sup>51</sup> Pedro L. Weltemave, op. cit.

<sup>52</sup> Statement from the interview given by Mr. Calisto Nperua, General Secretary of Mozambican Red Cross, Pemba Delegation.

On the other hand, in this period, probably as a way of maintaining the colonial power, traditional values were very rooted in the communities, which enabling their observance somehow were not fought or unauthorised by the state power what did not happen after independence. *“Today, as a fruit of independence, children do not speak their parents’ languages or do not follow traditional rituals even taking into account that not everything they practice is positive”*<sup>53</sup>.

The fact that education in this period, mainly rudimentary, in rural areas, was administered by religious (catholic and protestant) missions played a great role because it imposed a certain moral to societies. So, the work of religious missions and congregations and the role of the church were considerable, though education was not extensive to all communities.

But it is also necessary to take into account the own dynamic of development. For example, the country did not have access to television, videoclubs, satellite TV, Internet, etc. Note, for instance, that there was a strong limitation of children’s access to evening films, apart from the restriction of vulnerable groups to discos, restaurants, etc., as previously mentioned. Today these places are considered as centres for the promotion of child prostitution. In urban areas they were limited to a small number of the so-called assimilated, and this made that the dimension of these phenomena was not noticed, excepting that of child labour. There is a need to take into account that, existing socio-economical conditions were minimal. There was not a major capacity (or even concern) of discussing/approaching these phenomena, from a critical point of view. *“Therefore, development is important in the analysis of some of these phenomena, mainly in relation to prostitution; there is a need to take into account that children today want to imitate everything from the Western world. Nowadays, when children come back from the cities they are transformed”*<sup>54</sup>.

### **Post-independence situation:**

With the country’s independence, the new government, guided by an ideology based on Marx-Lenin, struggling to establish its own legitimacy, tried to break somehow radically with the colonial structure, in a context in which development strategies from different sectors ignored to certain extent the circumstances existing in the country.

The situation in Mozambique started to be determined by an organisation model characterised by a centralised planning and by a strong repression of situations and aspects which were against the ideals of the new regime, illustrated by prostitution at all levels, mainly child prostitution. Note that in this period only the simple fact of a citizen being polygamous did not give him the right to become a member of FRELIMO party

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<sup>53</sup> Pedro L. Weltemave, op. cit.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

(Abrahamsson & Nilsson, 1994). Initiation rites were forbidden, 'lobolo' - the brideprice, for example, was considered an element of oppression. *"The fact of being considered prostitute or idle was enough to be sent to re-education camps. People were aware of that and were afraid; consequently the reduction of the practice of these phenomena. Note that there was a strict control in the neighbourhoods on the part of the so-called dynamic groups; remember that even in order to travel inside the country there was a need for a permission letter, actions which not being considered democratic repressed certain phenomena<sup>55</sup>".*

Thus, the concept of 'tradition' was immediately associated to an obstacle to development<sup>56</sup>.

This repression up to a certain extent caused deficiencies in the control and evaluation of the concerned phenomena, because the society was not able to reach a consensus on the living values and regulations in a multi-ethnic community, given the strong political-ideological interference in the forms of social living.

For instance, as seen before, in the colonial period, the churches used to shelter girls and boys; due to the nationalisation this action was suspended because the State took the churches properties. This permits to observe to what extent there were isolated analyses of phenomena in the country's social, cultural and economic contexts, what demonstrates that some problems had not been totally identified and interpreted.

However, the country, in the last decades has suffered a persistent and severe economical and social crisis. In a context of stagnation and absence of growth, the over use of resources did not allow the satisfaction of the needs and guarantee of the maintenance and reproduction of infrastructures. Civil war, with the displaced in cities and towns, without any survival means, worsened the picture and the existence of these phenomena<sup>57</sup>. The economy manifested a drastically change in nature and dynamics of its activity, with the decadence of the formal sector and, the informal sector starting to ensure a large part of employment in urban areas, resulting a serious erosion of trust and internal production.

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Though it is not enough to state that the 'mutation' is necessarily destructive or even, in the opposite sense, which includes 'progressive' characteristics of a desirable future (modernity), assuming the rejection for all that resembles tradition (Torres, 1995-1996).

<sup>57</sup> Civil war is pointed as being very negative and conducive to sexual abuse of children, prostitution, etc. Soldiers from both sides have never respected women and children and the whole situation was characterised by high levels of violence; it should be noted that most of them were married and spent too much time far from their families, fighting, what contributed to these phenomena.

It was observed the deterioration of the structures of education, health, and employment with dramatical consequences for the citizens<sup>58</sup>. This climate characterised by economical, political and social crisis determined the implementation of PRE in 1987.

Figures from the National Report of the Mozambican Government<sup>59</sup> reveal that in the cities there are 25% of the population, 80% of which in the semi-urban areas and 2/3 under the poverty line.

For David Plank (1993: 23), Mozambique with a population estimated in more than 17 million inhabitants and a year tax of 2,0% (as shown in Table 8), is among the countries most dependent from international aid, with something like 60% to 70% of GNP counted as foreign aid.

**Table 8. Population and growing rate, 1950 - 1991**

Evolution of the total population by sex and growing rate, Mozambique 1950-1991

Date	Total	Men	Women	Natural Rate	Growing
1950	6,466	3,131	3,335	-	
1955	6,954	3,368	3,585	1,5	
1960	7,595	3,683	3,913	1,8	
1965	8,407	4,081	4,326	2,0	
1970	9,408	4,572	4,836	2,3	
1975	10,627	5,171	5,456	2,4	
1980	12,130	5,909	6,222	2,7	
1991	14,420	6,977	7,443	2,6	

Source: INE, 1997: 5

Due to war, thousands of families lost their houses and all subsistence means. The population tends to go back to their lands of origin characterised by a lack of production means. This linked to the precarious conditions, draught, and sometimes floods, makes the economical structure in the countryside very weak.

Many areas in the country are still mined affecting the return to agricultural production, re-establishment of the population and agricultural commercialisation.

The increase of internal and external migration resulted in overcrowding in the cities by people looking for a better protection and security and worsened the problem of criminality and employment, lack of consumption products, lack of transport and houses. Demographic movement from the countryside to cities and vice versa is increasing the tendency of urban '*ruralization*' either in the life style as well as in the individual behaviour resulting in physical and moral degradation of the cities. Cities are overcrowded; it can be observed a rupture of the capacity installed. And the government,

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<sup>58</sup> Life quality indicators in the Mozambican society demonstrate that 39% of the population have access to health, 48% of women and 27% of men do not have any schooling or education (Notícias, 26.09.1998).

<sup>59</sup> Report presented by Mozambique in the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, Denmark, 06-12 March 1995.

due to financial incapacity, did not invest enough capital in the basic infrastructures. There is a lack of houses and many people live in inappropriate areas.

With massive dismissals in the enterprises, unemployment is growing, the cost of life is high, and the informal sector became predominant and stable. It is today one of the sectors which takes a large number of the labour force, characterised by a high number of children and is the major source of subsistence of many families.

Currently, major part of Mozambican families undertakes multiple activities in order to survive. In general, in the cities and countryside, populations live in very large families with a small number of employed members. So, the income does not enable a healthy or balanced diet; poverty is high and it can be found individuals in a state of absolute poverty both in formal and informal sectors.

PRES created an imbalance between the prices and wages resulting in a reduction of the purchase power and emphasised the gap between the rich and poor, making people looking for survival alternatives where prostitution and child labour can be considered. These phenomena increased with the country's political democratisation because the strong repression observed immediately after independence does not exist anymore. So, the index of poverty contributes for the increase of prostitution as well as increase in the use or exploitation of child labour force. In fact, as noted by Osório (1997: 7 & 8), social, economical and political alterations in the country result in that some traditional elements repressed in the past are incorporated in the communities in order to promote its stability, legitimating these values and behaviours. For instance, '*lobolo*' - the bride price, considered as a means of oppressing the woman, just after independence, among the populations was considered the promotion of dignity and defence of the woman, because if she has a price it means that she is accepted and respected by the community.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that "*the struggle for survival has always existed. Even in the colonial period it was normal to find rooms around restaurants as a way of attracting customers who provided more profit. Women were recruited from the countryside to the cities. Even with repression, the practices continued because it is the logic of survival*"<sup>60</sup>.

Thus, social degradation facing the country contributes for the occurrence of the phenomena in study. Take into account that in the past, to marry a virgin was a reason of pride, not only for the couple, but also for their families and communities; this does not happen today. In fact it was observed that during the civil war several girls have been kidnapped and raped psychologically and sexually, what may be reflected in the present.

This social degradation worsened with a certain justified anarchy, for example, for long the lack of regulations to restrict the access of children to evening discos on one hand, and on the other, the lack of means and ways of ensuring the observance of the

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<sup>60</sup> Pedro L. Weltemave, op. cit.

legislation in order to penalise those who support these practices and discourage them from future tendencies.

Therefore, by independence, if the Mozambican government was willing to eliminate such forms of violence and abuse against children and women mainly, this aspect seems to be inverted. Indeed, the current situation is remarkably far from the desirable goal. In this context, the gap between the will or desire, ambition and reality became unattainable. It should be acknowledged that civil war contributed to this situation. Note that during the 80s about half of the 6.000 schools in the country were destroyed and currently about 50% of school aged children are not covered by the educational system (Abrahamsson & Nilsson, 1995: 124).

### **III - What should be done and why?**

The aspects seen so far are conducive to the conclusion that prostitution, child labour, poverty and even sexual abuse are serious phenomena and somehow related, with a magnitude far from reality (if taking into account that there are hidden offences or crimes, or which generally are not reported), and attempts in the sense of eliminating them, involving risky situations, without its correct and realistic interpretation. As stated by Mr. José Tinto, in his interview, in relation to the struggle against child labour and prostitution: *“if I know that my source of survival is my job and you look for ways of destroying it I am going to the witch or wizard in order to revenge; or in other words, how to fight prostitution if her whole life the prostitute has never had a hoe in her hands?”*.

The need to fight these phenomena is resumed to the fact that childhood and adolescence demand a special attention from social policies, while stages of the life circle which should be destined primarily to biological, psychological and social education and training of individuals.

However, there is a need to consider some aspects: beforehand it is important to note that in Mozambique, the operation of the state and nation, concepts from the western modernity, lacks a solid social and local root. The state based on the international and constitutional law, as a unique legitimate agent, responsible for the division of power, protector and guaranty of individual freedom and national unity, in the communities is just a mere fiction.

Thus, it should be considered that the fight against these phenomena seeming justifiable, sometimes in a western perspective, is not going to be more than an effort, if there is no common willingness from the society. It is necessary to observe that even the struggle for human rights does not reveal as a universal standard - such as the concepts of prostitution, child abuse, etc. If not taking these aspects into account, a vicious helpless circle can be formed and this situation will continue as long as the country does not find its own solution, because definitions and external strategies when out of date and/or

inopportune, even when “*well intentioned*”, constitute a risk against the solution<sup>61</sup>. It is necessary to consider that each society has its own past and assumes it in a conscious way or not, in its self-image and in its particular way of solving current problems. This has to do with the culture and with what is referred to as cultural identity. Indeed, acculturation (loss of cultural values) should not be confused with transculturation (change of cultural values) (Torres, 1995-1996).

The study of the past is still very important and a lot still to be said in this respect, not just as historical fact which positive or negatively had a certain interference which ended up being decisive in the lives of the communities, but also because the knowledge which through can be obtained from the uses and customs (even if sometimes in a distorted vision), is particularly useful, if not indispensable to understand several aspects of the current society.

For example, knowing that “*a child is somebody who economical, affective, educational and psychologically depends on other people for his/her development, depends on the support of other people to develop their skills and potentialities, varying according to culture, economical condition, society’s education, religion, society’s organisation, etc.*”<sup>62</sup>; who is a child in the Mozambican context?

For instance, many sectors of the society have advocated as one way of solving the situation of various abandoned children, its adoption or establishment in a substitute family. However, in the case of the north of Mozambique, mainly in Nampula, it is argued that Islam forbids adoption, but allows that couples who have or cannot have children can look after other people’s children, without changing the names of their biological parents<sup>63</sup>. Because the child who has lost the parents name and the contact of their relatives may accidentally marry one of their kin brothers without knowing, resulting in a deformed descendance, both mental and physical, as well as moral disruptions, when the family bound between them is discovered (Habibo Amade, Domingo, 13.09.98).

It can be noted, for example, that there are cases of children who are registered by the name of their step fathers or mothers when couples split, i.e., those who hadn’t registered their children. Due to family instability, later on these children can be abandoned resulting in complications not foreseen (ibid.).

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<sup>61</sup> There is a need to consider that very often-dominant ideologies are those of the most powerful ones.

<sup>62</sup> Sister Ilse L. Biasibetti, op. cit.

<sup>63</sup> The Koran, chapter 33:4, states that God did not put two hearts in men’s chests, not even in that of their wives who repudiated through “Zihar” are for you like your mother, not even that your adoptive children can be considered as your own children. These are the vain words former mouths. And God said the truth and showed the way. 5 - Give them their real parents’ surnames. That is fairer for the Lord. And if you do not know their parents, then, they will be your brothers in fate and will be under your protection. And there will be no sin for you in the mistakes without any intention, but if your hearts participate in it, this will be a sin for you.

In regard to the Mozambican reality, the solution for cases of sexual abuse has been the payment of a fine. If, the young girl is pregnant the tendency is to marry her to the author of the abuse and apply a matrimonial compensation and not a judicial resolution as can be observed from tables 9 and 10 (referent to Nampula province).

**Table 9. Sexual Abuse in Nampula in 1998**

District	Number of Cases	Male	Female
Nampula City	69		69
Angoche	23		23
Mongincual	28	11	17
Meconta	4		4
Memba	7		7
Mogovolas	15		15
Murupula	7		7
Monapo	68		68
Nacala-Porto	35		35
Lalaua	211	118	93
<b>Total</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>338</b>

Source: DPCAS, Nampula, December 1998.

**Table 10. Processes taken to Nampula Provincial Court**

Year	Kidnap of a child	Assault of a child	Rape	Rape of a woman
1992	2	3	1	1
1998		5		3

Source: Nampula Provincial Court, 1998.

Thus, premature marriages<sup>64</sup>, forced, by inheritance or replacement<sup>65</sup>, etc., being attitudes which demonstrate a manifestation of abuse or violence, because the victim does not have the opportunity to choose, and often the people did not know each other previously, resulting in future consequences<sup>66</sup>. In the analysis it is important to take into account the differences between the urban and rural environment, where, for example, aspects which are subject to censorship from the moral and criminal point of view constitute the norm and are not considered as abuse because, those are accepted survival mechanisms<sup>67</sup> and promote the stability of communities, such is the case of initiation rites, etc. There is a need to take into account, for instance, “*if these things are revealed in the adult woman, in a conclusive way, the components of submission, or whether it is in the young girl that the destiny is traced and subordination is projected*” (Osório, 1997:

<sup>64</sup> “*In rural areas, a 16 year old girl, in terms of domestic work, does everything the mother does and is considered as an adult and is appreciated by the neighbours due to these characteristics which are relevant for marriage; the same happens with the boys*” - José E. Tinto, op. cit.

<sup>65</sup> Though, specifically, in urban areas are more and more rare.

<sup>66</sup> “*Interference in the choice of partners for marriage, impedes freedom and development of the couple, what is observed in these models; for instance, if one of the couple’s son dies, the load goes to the woman, creating a new problem*” - Sister Ilse Lúcia Biasibetti.

<sup>67</sup> By the victims themselves.

2). In fact, “*violence against women is exercised in a discrimination context, expressed in the same way that power relations are structured at the various levels of the social reality*” (Ibid., p.5), thus, there is a need to reflect on the various aspects of ideological, moral and legal intervention in society and in its multiple means of belonging. “*Note that in the countryside, when the spouse is not able to satisfy the husband in sexual terms, he can choose a replacement from within the family and very often these are young girls; these are behaviours which are accepted by the community*”<sup>68</sup>.

It is necessary to consider that the child in rural areas is a resource or an investment. And his/her action, for instance as a paid labour force, besides being a work and an occupation, also constitutes a relief of expenses in the family domain. “*It is a positive action, it becomes negative when the child works outside her physical context and without a timetable*”<sup>69</sup>. “*Note that in my function as a judge, I have never received a process of a parent complaining for the fact that his/her child is working*”<sup>70</sup>. How to eliminate child labour without eliminating poverty, without providing basic education, secondary and medium?

As stated before, Mozambican society is extremely hierarchically, where the difference results in inequality, a model of society, which places children and women in a vulnerable situation. “*In Mozambique, man is always above the woman. There are men who do not take into account the women’s effort with the daily activities and want to have an available woman whenever they wish even if she is not willing to. Despite the fact that the formal law can consider as a bodily offence simple or classified, how to apply it in the rural environment and even urban, where some individuals aged 12 are considered adults and where there are customary logic? And note that in case the woman complains and if the husband is taking to court and condemned, when he returns home she is send away because she is the one to blame for him being taken to court and imprisoned. Is it possible to have formal transformation without a real change?*”<sup>71</sup>.

Thus, there is also a need to consider positive aspects, which existed in the communities, which contributed a lot for children’s education<sup>72</sup>. “*They had an education with a strong cultural component. Circumcision was done at a certain age and it meant the growing of men. There were strong taboos on sex. When the girls get their first menstrual period, the community is informed. There was a specific language to call the parents. There were police patrols to check the kind of movies shown, but this doesn’t happen anymore with videotapes, satellite TV, computers, etc. We can even state that*

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<sup>68</sup> Ângela Maria, op. cit.

<sup>69</sup> Pedro L. Weltemave, op. cit.

<sup>70</sup> Dr. Luis Djedje, op. cit.

<sup>71</sup> Tradition is not irrelevant for modernity.

<sup>72</sup> Simão Fazenda, op. cit.

today there are no rules. So, with the present situation, it can be stated that evolution/development contributes for social degradation of children”<sup>73</sup>. “In relation to prostitution itself, in order to fight it, it is not by chance that in the Muslim religion man is authorised to get married to four women”<sup>74</sup>. Though not a positive justification, it has its effect in a society where there are more women than men do.

Consequently, it has been noticed that certain concepts of formal law/rights (and even occidental), such as the right to protection and the right to decide freely on marriage can not have an equivalency in the customary law in particular contexts. And, there is no point in transferring concepts if the men who are going to use them do not receive any training. And it is not just a question of training following a strict functionalism. These concepts should obviously be adapted to the economical and social needs without being in shock with religious taboos, mythical traditions or even those customs which are deeply rooted, because otherwise its use can be rejected or will end up being abandoned, despite the good intentions. In a single word, the concept can only play its role if inserted (not attached) in the frame of mental, cultural and social representations of men who freely choose and use them. (Torres, 1995-1996).

As a matter of fact, in order to build the present in the Mozambican society, it is assumed the need to rely on the previous reconstruction of the conceptual matrix, which explains it and serves as a guide. Hence, there is a need to set limits, question them previously, and create a memory, which rationalises facts and equates the myth in the place it belongs to in the cultural tradition itself. Solve the present without previously clarifying such data can imply high costs. The analysis of phenomena cannot and should not be limited to the polarisation between ‘*tradition*’ and ‘*modernity*’, though there is not necessarily an epistemological gap which justifies it, if it is understood that the problem does not rely in rejecting one in a destructive way in order to adopt another, but try to find ways which ensure the passage from the former to the latter, integrating, recovering or eliminating gradually all negative factors in this change.

In fact, “*social life demands tradition*”, because if the social world does not present a high order number, several regularities to which men adjust, they would live in a permanent anxiety state, frustrated and terrified. The development of traditions has a similar role to the development of theories. Scientific theories are tools with which some order can be imposed over the chaos in which human beings live, in order to make it predictable (...). In the same way, the development of traditions (similarly to a considerable number of laws) has the same function: impose a particular order and the predictability of the social world in which we live. So, as soon as tradition is gone, the incentive to rebuild the world will also disappear (ibid.).

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<sup>73</sup> Simão Fazenda, op. cit.

<sup>74</sup> Mussá Nurdine, op. cit.

The so-called *'traditional'* society is not necessarily static and not even resistant to change as stated. Instinctively, it mainly fears short-term change because, as in all societies, its effects can be destabilising, and are felt as a threat to the coherence and the social structure itself.

Nevertheless, there is no way of going back and nothing would be solved in trying to do that. What is necessary is to restate by the living conditions and needs, essential values to human life. Tradition is beyond our control and can betray us if we trust it. We cannot abandon the principal of individual freedom; there is a need to rebuild it. We cannot restore the past society, even if the mist of history hides its bad habits. We should rebuild society taking from the past the lessons and advice which can teach us (ibid.).

### **Government's Policy on Prostitution, Sexual Abuse and Child Labour**

Having identified the groups which are vulnerable to prostitution and child labour it is logical to comment on the government's policy on these groups, taking into account that it does not have a specific policy to fight, for example, prostitution or even child labour; except that of criminality. In fact, as observed, these phenomena on themselves cannot be eliminated through repression.

Regarding these groups, aware of the complexity of the problem, in 1990, the State Secretariat for Social Welfare (today Ministry for the Co-ordination of Social Welfare) was founded. Apart from this organism, in the context of PRE, in 1990, the social component was added and it was latter designated as: PRES, Social and Economical Rehabilitation Program.

According to the Government's Program for the period 1995-1999, approved by the Act no. 4/95, of May 9; Republic's Assembly (1995:1), the objectives and priorities of the government are:

*"...Reduction of levels of absolute poverty, aiming at eradicating them at a medium term and improvement of the people's life conditions, with major focus on education, health, rural development and employment. The definition of these actions as main objectives of the government results in the observation that peace and stability are the basic conditions for the reactivation of economical and social activities. Only with the growth of the internal production will be possible to eliminate poverty and promote a self-sustainable economical and human development..."*

It is a fact that the growth of the GNP is important for a better social stability and reduction of poverty indexes, but apart from this, it urges providing an answer to the question of mechanisms adopted for the effect. It is known that the elevation of the GNP can result in an intense labour activity with low salaries but, on the contrary, the absence of a fair distribution of the labour income can lead to an increasing social polarisation

between the poor and the rich. If this was the scenery, then it could be concluded that GNP is not trying to eliminate famine, but is making the poor poorer and the rich richer.

In vital social sectors such as education, health and employment, and in regard to poor population it is essential to mention that the Government, according to its program (p.26), guarantees *“equality of opportunities of access to all levels of education, expanding the net of respective institutions and providing financial and material means for the assistance of citizens coming from families of scarce economical resources”*.

In the domain of work, among other aspects, it considers the increase of employment possibilities *“giving priority to investments which result in intensive employment of the labour force; provision of major support to the development of the informal sector, following the mobilisation of financial means for the realisation of programs aimed at the establishment of small scale employment or self-employment generation projects”* (ibid. p.36).

For the concretisation of its program, the Government is facing a series of favourable and unfavourable factors.

Among the favourable ones it should be stressed the relative peace climate resulting from the end of the war.

Unfavourable ones, the starting points for the implementation of the program, which includes the economical chaos, and the state of destruction characterising the country and the heavy external debt. The State does not have conditions, chiefly, economical, in order to implement social programs. Indeed, the conditions imposed within the scope of the Structural Adjustment Programs reinforce this position.

Another factor is related to the difficulties of cultural/traditional nature at the level of communities, which impede the dissemination of information on sexuality, reproduction or fertility, use of preservatives or condoms, etc. Apart from initiation rites, for example, and due to the fact that the lessons of democracy in Mozambique are not yet well assimilated, being wrongly interpreted and generating anarchy, what to certain extent worsens the observance of these practices<sup>75</sup>. There are cases of attempts to raise obstacles for the implementation of different programs on the part of certain politicians or political organisations, for instance, campaigns for the control of natality. *“Problems can only be solved applying dictatorship; the government must adopt a strong position and should not be pressed by parties, associations, etc., in respect to these phenomena; for example, in relation to criminals, what should be the task of the police force - to talk or to repress? I believe that the function of the police is to repress and fight crime; freedom implies the*

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<sup>75</sup> Anarchy is pointed by many as one of the main vehicles for the phenomena of prostitution and sexual abuse because children do not respect their parents, cinemas do not control age limits to certain kinds of movies, and also discos and pubs which promote prostitution, etc.

*absence of authority; the child should have limits; this dictatorship though with limits should be applied against these phenomena*<sup>76</sup>.

On the other hand, the fragility of the national civil society still emergent, the level of absence of updating in concern to criminal legislation (for example, the Penal Code dates from 1966), and sometimes the conflict of interests, contribute to this unfavourable environment in relation to the implementation of governmental projects. This is understood if taking into account that the level of discussion/approach to these issues is much higher in comparison to the colonial period or even before the democratisation of the country.

Therefore, with the increasing number of unemployed, there is also a growth of famine, which in its turn incentivates the criminality indexes, prostitution and use or exploitation of child labour. And, while the government has other responsibilities added to the fight of these phenomena, the lack of establishment of an organisation or occupation for the age group in question, is a utopia to talk about fighting against these problems. In order to fight against child labour, for instance, the country should have the capacity to answer in terms of placing the active labour force. In this respect, the legislation states that all those who employ children should pay specific fines; in this context, in the current situation of development in the country, probably is not just a question of fines and the application of the existent legislation; but, the need for the establishment of mechanisms *“that, at least, forces the employer to pay a minimal salary to these children and to guaranty their social security; in case the government is not in a position to apply these measures, then it should create conditions, through the Social Welfare in order to take care of these children, conversely from leaving them without any protection*<sup>77</sup>, this aspect is less probable<sup>78</sup>.

The economical crisis and the situation of extreme poverty in the families, added to the lack of perspectives for children takes a great number of families to use the girls as resource, marrying them early, on one hand, and on the other it forces lots of youths to look for sustainability means (Osório, 1997: 14).

Nevertheless, apart from economical considerations, there is a need to see to what extent actions are taking place at the level of the community aimed at developing the

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<sup>76</sup> José E. Tinto, op. cit.

<sup>77</sup> Statement from the interview given to MediaFax (16.09.98), by Mr. Armando Tovela, from the National Syndicate of the Workers from the Construction Industry, woods and Mines.

<sup>78</sup> Probably this is the aspect which, though, apparently the government is not going to forbid completely the work market for children, it places a lot of difficulties to this group and also to the employers. For example, the Labour Act, in its Article 79, states that in order to employ a child, apart from the authorisation of the tutor, he/she should get another one from the Ministry of Education and Health; the question is how is the Ministry of Education going to right authorisation statements for individuals who do not study or for a child who has not finished basic compulsory education?

awareness to the duties and rights of children, hazards of sexual abuse, prostitution and child labour, awareness to the Penal Code, government's collaboration with communities/households and civil society in general.

In this scope, the conciliation of the Customary Law and Formal Law is a major difficulty for the existence of a consistent policy from the government against these aspects. For example, though the customary law establishes a series of prohibitions related to sexuality, from marriages between people from the same lineage, sexual intercourse before puberty, during menstruation and after menopause, on the other hand, the establishment of Community Courts acknowledges the uses and customs in the normalisation of citizens behaviour (Tempo, 15.03.98).

There is a need to observe that many of the country's legislation date from the colonial period. Regarding sexual abuse and children prostitution, Decree 417/71 defines the penalties set for offenders. For example, in relation to children under 16, abuse committed against them, the law does not consider as a qualified violation, but an attempt against decency or rape; in case of rape, there is a need to find out whether the man seduced the girl and if she was a virgin; this is very difficult to prove<sup>79</sup>.

Thus, rare are the cases of sexual offences against children, which are reported to judicial authorities, though the number of abused whom report to hospitals is increasing. The cases reported to judicial authorities, very rarely have a trial, because, in one hand, take the claim to this body aims essentially to satisfy the demands established in the light of the customary law, and in another by the fact that in Mozambique the processes at the level of police and court take a lot of time and onerous and their conclusion coinciding with the imprisonment of the aggressor does not solve the social problem caused by the abuse, with the caused traumas and worse of all if the child is pregnant.

Therefore, the government should explore aspects, which do not shock with community practices. The regulation on the right of access of children to public places of evening entertainment and videoclubs is already a big step and surprisingly it did not cause any controversy<sup>80</sup>. *"The law has the advantage of aiming to regulate a visible or*

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<sup>79</sup> Dr. Luis Djedje, op. cit.

<sup>80</sup> On 2nd November 1998, the Republic's Assembly approved the Act, which regulates the access of children to evening clubs. The law claims that *"The father, the mother, the legal representative, tutor or any other person who facilitates, favours or in any way urges the entry or permanence of children in public places of evening entertainment, as well as their participation in recreational activities or clients entertainment, will be penalised according to the penal legislation for crimes of corruption of children and similar, according to the quality of the offender.*

*According to the Penal Code, corruption crimes, crimes of corrupting children and similar are punished with prison sentences which vary from six months to two years and correspondent fines and, with the suspension, for a period of twelve years, of the right of the tutor or member of any family counsel to teach or direct or even apply for the direction of any instructional or educational institution.*

*In what concerns the lack of classification of establishments, the offender should pay a fine ranging from 10 to 100 million MT, values, which can reach 20 to 250 million in case of reincidence. This penalty is*

*observable fact, whose violation does not give the right of refusal and demand evidence. In a disco, everybody is able to see the presence of children, conversely from many other laws which in order to be understood require a competent person able to interpret them”* (Roberto Chitsondzo, Notícias, 04.11.98).

## **The Role of NGOs and Civil Society**

In parallel to government’s efforts aimed at minimising the effects of prostitution, child labour and sexual abuse, the Church and several Non Governmental Organisations can contribute considerably in assisting, reporting and appealing against these phenomena, besides the moral intervention and condemnation.

Several humanitarian organisations working for the rights of children have been established in recent years, aimed at supporting and attending the child in the struggle against these phenomena<sup>81</sup>.

Nevertheless, several times, what is felt is the lack of a conjugation of these factors, in on the part of different actors, who act with an independent logic; sometimes due to the lack of capacity and other times due to a shock of interests. Very often there is a notion that there is no deep collaboration between the State, whose policies are fundamental in the struggle against these phenomena, and the different NGOs which are pioneers in the country, in what concerns the struggle against these problems and constitute spaces linked to the civil society and are worried or concerned with these problems, when there is a need to develop and maintain a permanent collaboration what can enable the resolution of these problems<sup>82</sup>. On the contrary, the number of children in a difficult situation will increase day after day. It should also be recognised that some NGOs contribute for the reinsertion of returned and displaced population, giving them working tools as well as sheltering traumatised children, orphans and victims of violence. And even taking into account the fact that many of them face economical constraints, living from funding and some of them became professional teams in the real sense, demanding increasingly high funding and a much-complicated specialisation.

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*followed by a cancellation of the respective license and closing of the establishment”.* Another important data from the law, article 19 is that *“all those who do not observe the norms related to the sale of alcoholic drinks and tobacco will be punished with a fine of 10 to 150 million MT. The reincidence of the breach of these regulations will be punished with a prison sentence up to a month and a fine of 20 to 250 million MT and also the cancellation of the license for a period up to five years and closing of the establishment for a similar period”* (Notícias, 03.11.98).

<sup>81</sup> Data from the Ministry for the Co-ordination of Social Welfare indicated that up to September 1998, there were in the country, among national and foreign, about 60 NGOs working in defence of children’s rights.

<sup>82</sup> For example, in 1998, Massangulo, an NGO operating in Ressano Garcia had sheltered about 670 children. There was a pressure for the education system from Grade 1 to 6. However, despite Massangulo’s economical power there were difficulties in recruiting teachers and accommodate them, as well as in curriculum design, etc. This is something the government was in a position to solve, and in fact it did it.

For instance, currently, a program of reuniting family members is taking place, and it consists in identifying lost or abandoned children and integrates them in their real or substitute families; these actions have a positive impact. However, very often, this reunification is done following a punctual support to the families who are going to receive these people, and there is no survey in order to find out to what extent are these actions beneficial to the children, because in general in the Mozambican context, *“the child living with his/her original parents always has a different treatment from the sheltered non biological child. A full reception demands determined social conditions, which in the countryside and even urban areas major part of family aggregates do not have. In the case of Ressano Garcia, for example, it should be noted that most families, which shelter these children, have a goal and a price. In fact, generally, preferred children are female ones, i.e., girls, and several times they have to pay for the shelter through prostitution. That is, she is forced to prostitute and, not having alternatives on one hand, on the other, feeling safe in the house she is even able to call her friends only mentioning positive aspects. In regard to boys, they only serve as labour force, working in their protectors’ stalls”*<sup>83</sup>. *“If a step mother does not treat her step children well, imagine a child who does not have where to go”*<sup>84</sup>. *“Besides, several times, when the child knows that she/he is not living with the biological family decides to abandon it because she/he does not feel comfortable there”*<sup>85</sup>, given that the *“child should always have a family bond; the family is always better than the institution or protectors, chiefly for the African who have very powerful family ties”*<sup>86</sup>.

Acknowledging the importance of the process, given that not all sheltered children are abused, *“it is preferable than leaving them in the street being abused at any time and moment”*<sup>87</sup>, these are actions which in their majority are a mere business because the children go to families which are temporarily responsible, opportunists and who use them as production tools. *“Which preparation have the families, which affective and economical stability which guarantees the adoption of a child”*<sup>88</sup>? Indeed, *“if each economically stable family adopted these street children they would no longer exist; paradoxically the ones who do so are those who do not have any property”*<sup>89</sup>.

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<sup>83</sup> Pedro L. Weltemave, op. cit.

<sup>84</sup> Simão Fazenda, op. cit.

<sup>85</sup> Flora A. Jamisse, op. cit.

<sup>86</sup> Sister Ilse L. Biasibetti, op. cit.

<sup>87</sup> Mussá Nurdine, op. cit.

<sup>88</sup> Sister Ilse. L. Biasibetti, op. cit.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

It is due to the complexity generated by these situations that particular NGOs prefer to be the ones to look for these abandoned children. However, in the majority of cases, girls are excluded because *“the girl gets easily free that the boy, mainly when there is no blood or family bond. Perhaps this is the fact that makes, for example, Massangulo NGO to shelter only boys”*<sup>90</sup>. *“But several times, here in Ressano Garcia, boys tend to run away from the reception centres and prefer to work in the stalls or undertake ‘Mukero’, or even become guides of legal migrants with the purpose of earning some money”*<sup>91</sup>. What is suggested is that the establishment of reception centres should be followed by the existence of conditions which can help children in their development and their future life as adults, *“and not as re-education centres”*<sup>92</sup>.

Thus, there is a need for involvement and co-ordination of all those fighting and denouncing these situations.

Note for example, that urban areas are gradually freed from individuals who still practice forced marriages, marriages by substitution, etc. This is partly influenced not only by education but also by social pressure through NGOs and social communication against these cases<sup>93</sup>. Besides the recent civil war which resulted in a major population concentration in urban areas, and conditioned the fact that these people became aware of the minimal of the law and transformed themselves. *“Do not forget that the environment changes people”*<sup>94</sup>. *“Probably, this is one of the facts which, for example, in the rural environment, despite the existence of such questions, they do not raise a great debate or action of awareness for its elimination, as it is observed in urban areas”*<sup>95</sup>.

### **III.I - Global Problems?**

The world’s economical situation at present is characterised by an increasing globalisation (logic guiding the openness of economies and their integration in international market, with new agents, which do not distinguish what occurs inside the

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<sup>90</sup> Pedro L. Weltemave, op. cit.

<sup>91</sup> Simão Fazenda, op. cit. For example, in Maputo city, the project Street School aimed at educating strayed kids was facing problems concerning its continuity due to the fact that children enrolled there preferred to start working in order to get some income. (Notícias, 05.09.98).

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> If taking considering that major part of citizens in Mozambique are originally peasants.

<sup>94</sup> Mussá Nurdine, op. cit.

<sup>95</sup> Luis Djedje, op. cit.

borders of a country and within the nations (Bauchet, 1991: 12)). States face more difficulties in managing and planning the socio-economical, political as well as cultural development of their respective countries. It is evident that the emergence of this New World economy manifesting a change in internal and international relations is reflected in all sectors, social, economical, political and cultural.

Today, problems related to drugs, child labour, terrorism, prostitution and so on is presented in a global dimension and thus represents the need for elimination.

In regard to children the international community acknowledges that the attention to children constitutes a central element in the formulation of any social development plan. The existence of conventions, agreements and international legislation on the protection of children in all spheres calls for this globality. However, these realisations only represent attempts to solve society's problems. In fact there are various examples which illustrate the globality in relation to these problems:

- In October 1998, in Lancaster House, London, Derek Fatchett in regard to the Europe-Asia International Conference on Child Prostitution, stated that *"it is a world problem which has to be faced together by all countries in the world; it does not affect only Asia, where it is growing with the economical crises, but it became a world problem, from the streets of Moscow to the USA, where 350 thousand children are prostitutes"* (Notícias, 06.10.98).

- UNAIDS - United Nations Program on AIDS? HIV announced in October 1998, that one of the causes of the expansion of the disease on the part of adolescents is child prostitution.

- In December 1996, the United Nations Peace Forces Commission presented the existence of claims against their forces in relation to sexual abuse of children in Angola, Cambodja, Mozambique, Rwanda, Serbia and Croatia at the same time it announced the beginning of an investigation. The most severe case was denounced by a soldier against the Canadian General, Lewis McKenzie, responsible for UNPROFOR in Serbia; the claim was that he took four Serbian girls from a concentration camp to his residence in order to abuse them sexually<sup>96</sup>.

- In 1993, in Paraguay among attempts and violations/rape approximately 101 cases were counted<sup>97</sup>.

- More than 100.000 Philippine children live in prostitution, whose clients are mainly foreign tourists<sup>98</sup>.

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<sup>96</sup> Croatia Information Centre, Zagreb, 13.12.96.

<sup>97</sup> Maria L. Rodriguez in Violence Magazine En Contra de La Mujer, No. 153, p.5.

- Spanish studies, indicate that 22,5% of Spanish women and 15,3% of men have suffered different forms of sexual abuse when they were children; what means that one among each four women and one among each six men have been victims of these problems<sup>99</sup>.

- In Recife - Brazil, a study conducted by the Centre of Women from Cabo, an NGO, in 1997, indicated that there were parents who sexually abused their daughters and fed the prostitution industry. They collaborated annually in about 20% of children and adolescents who left Zona da Mata to feed the prostitution industry in the capitals in the Northeast of the country. A study conducted in 1991 by the Brazilian association for the Prevention of Abuse and Childhood Negligence (Abapani), indicated that for each sexually abused boy, there were ten raped girls; 97% of men were responsible for aggression against children, and from these, 75% belonged to the trust circle of the child<sup>100</sup>. Still in Cabo, Recife, in 1997 was reported the case of a child, M.J.B.S. of only 9 years old who during three months was systematically raped by the father, Heraldo J. Silva, aged 45, who in the absence of the mother, working, conducted his intents<sup>101</sup>.

In regard to child labour, there are various reports on the use of children not only in agriculture, but also in industry in developing as well as developed countries, such as Spain, Portugal, etc.

As can be observed, this is not a phenomenon restricted to poor countries.

Thus, the actions compete with development at a world level. Besides the fact that the dynamics of development at a global level plays a major role with the increasing differentiation between the rich and poor resulting from this situation, in addition to the capacity of controlling or the communities struggle in relation to these cases which has reduced remarkably. *“It should be noted that today it is difficult to educate our children as we used to in the past. As long as the child switches on the television, has access to satellite TV or internet, she can have images and information of aspects related to sex, Note, for example, that the term homosexual was heard and introduced in our society by outsiders or people who had lived abroad such as sailors, miners, etc. Today, it is not possible to run away from these phenomena; in the case of rape, very often, girls are considered guilty and provocative due to their way of dressing”*<sup>102</sup>.

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<sup>98</sup> ASEXORATE - Sexology Information Bulletin, No. 17. Spain

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Magazine, Urban Life, Recife, 03.07.1997.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Pedro L. Weltemave, op. cit.

Currently, on national and international television channels women are always used as a publicity means; this aspect has a lot of influence due to the lack of respect in relation to women, because “*it creates the idea that the world is something erotic as the form of a woman*”<sup>103</sup>.

And taking into account that a boy or girl can invent something never seen or experimented before, because the objects and acts, which do not exist in the child’s environment, do not appear in their fantasies. It is possible that a child describes the events in a different way, but she will never say anything, without an experience of sexual abuse.

### **III. II - A Regional/World Agenda?**

There is no doubt that the interaction and co-ordination are the strategic key not only in the fight against poverty, but also for development.

However, there are aspects to consider given national differences and specificities.

How to conciliate the differences, for example, between Zimbabwe and Mozambique? For example, in 1998, all women dressed in an erotic way<sup>104</sup> in Zimbabwe, faced serious risks of being victim of physical violence, because of not being decently dressed. A situation which occurred not only in the street, but also at colleges, universities, etc. (Notícias, 24.10.98); these are aspects, for instance, which nobody pays attention to in Mozambique.

Note that according to formal law, forced marriages, mainly of children with adult men are defined as sexual abuse, the same happening with the sexual trade. However, socially, the customary law does not approve some of these cases.

Besides, an education/co-ordination program in this context demands special conditions, such as availability of financial means and structures on the part of all partners, in addition to a certain harmonisation of the laws for penalising these phenomena.

For example, in Argentina, in relation to sexual abuse the sentences range from 6-15 years if the victim is younger than 12 years, and the sentence increases to 8-20 years if there is evidence of a severe damage to the health of the victim. Still in this country, it is considered rape a sexual intercourse with children aged 12-13 years, and the sentence increases from 3-6 years to 6-10 years when there are antecedents (Moira Soto, op. cit.).

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<sup>103</sup> Moira Soto, Magazine Derecho Y Legislation, No. 184/185, p.5 - Argentina.

<sup>104</sup> Shorts, mini skirts tight clothes in general.

In relation to child labour, which concerted regional action can be implemented taking into account the sub-development of these countries<sup>105</sup>?

Thus, different cultures, development levels, occupations, etc. can impede the constitution of a regional/world agenda. *“If that was possible, there would not be no need for the Mozambicans, both male and female, to move illegally to RSA to undertake these phenomena”*<sup>106</sup>. *“The RSA paradise is a great attractive to the youths of this country”*<sup>107</sup>.

Being important to promote international or regional co-operation, with the above mentioned conditions, a fundamental aspect to take into account is the need for programs and strategies which are adequate to the socio-economical and cultural reality, because fighting strategies need consistency and cannot be understood as voluntary and free choices, in the sense that a government can freely select an isolated fighting strategy.

Co-operation will improve depending on several circumstances, motivations, crises and political will in each of the countries of the region as well as at the global level. Being Human Rights considered universal, valid in the whole world this co-operation is thus possible. However, some forms and concepts cannot be applied in all countries of the region, without effecting alterations, even if the principles, norms and values can be reinvited as valid for the fight. Considering that we are talking about countries (some) where the human life conditions are severely ruined or destroyed, with traditional systems of political power, etc.

International co-operation should, therefore, be a catalyst and complementary element of policies aimed at eliminating these phenomena, each country according to the priorities defined internally should develop them. In this sense, major importance relies on the dissemination of positive experiences.

If the countries of the region were to reach an agreement on the definition and respect for the defence of children, as well as its institutionalisation in its co-operation structure, such fact would constitute a contribution of a new quality to fight these phenomena at a regional level. At the same time, such definition would have a beneficial impact on co-operation in the social area, leading to a collective responsibility on the part of the countries what would be unable on one hand, the existence of violations of Human Rights with the excuse of national sovereignty, and that necessary external interventions should be the basis of an agreed conduct code.

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<sup>105</sup> The Mozambican Republic Assembly did not ratify the conventions of the International Labour Organisation because it reached the conclusion that the country does not have the conditions to respect them.

<sup>106</sup> Lorul Amim, op. cit.

<sup>107</sup> Sister Ilse L. Biasibetti, op. cit.

Probably, in a first stage at the level of regional co-operation to fight these phenomenon, this would enable a co-ordination at the level of prevention, protection, recuperation and reintegration of children in some range, for example, establishing a regional association against sexual exploitation of children; implementation of capacitating activities aimed at improving the academic level in specific issues of traffic and sexual exploitation of women and children; initiatives which can represent new achievements and the regional reaction against these phenomena.

#### **IV - Alternatives and Recommendations**

A viable policy at the national level, even without the ratification of international conventions, and a preparation either from the Government or the civil society in relation to children is important.

Thus, education is extremely important. Either in the family domain or in the society in general. There is a need to take into account that only with education it is possible to win the fight for development in all its areas. Education is one of the basic factors in order to eliminate abuse and violation against children. As a system, education helps children and society to develop cognitively, emotionally and socially. Indeed, society has an important role to play in the struggle against these phenomena. As previously seen, there are children rights only starting from family action and behaviour. As stated by R. Chitsondo, Member of Parliament in the Republic's Assembly (Notícias, 04.11.98), the family is the basis of all the individual's education. If the social net is not cohesive, there will be severe consequences in society, characterised by a manifestation of behaviours, which are condemned. Society should be able to assume its responsibilities. Each adult element has the right to educate a child so that he/she is able to distinguish what is right from wrong. A person who drinks and smokes should educate the child so that he/she cannot follow his example.

At the school level, a deep reflection on the part of public and private education authorities aimed at changing the current pattern and develop teaching and learning models which demonstrate the differences and plurality of societies, being incorporated these differences, including civic and ethical training, etc. As well as the conception and production of correspondent texts, aimed at giving the youths a sense of values, which enable them to face such phenomena as violence, family disintegration, drugs, etc. If the school is deprived of essential values such as, for example, methodical, nationalist, universal, preventive, communicative, moral and disciplined then logically it cannot achieve the objectives set<sup>108</sup>, and note that it is an area very often seriously affected by phenomena, such as demonstrated in table 11.

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<sup>108</sup> Relevance of education and its curriculum. Programs which demonstrate the harmfulness of the consumption of alcohol, tobacco, drugs; sex, etc. Though it is common knowledge that the elaboration and modification of educational systems are long term tasks, because education is in itself a slow process. For

**Table 11. Education level reached and reasons for abandoning school** - Percentage distribution of women aged 15 to 24 who enrolled a school and who are still studying or not, according to the highest level of schooling reached, by area of residence, Mozambique, 1997.

Reasons for abandoning school	Primary education incomplete	Primary complete	Secondary and superior	Total
<b>Total</b>				
<b>Enrolled in school</b>	10.2	23.0	57.9	14.3
Got pregnant	5.8	18.7	10.1	6.8
Married	16.5	9.6	4.4	15.2
Had to look after children	1.9	0.1	0.0	1.6
Had to help the family	4.7	0.1	0.0	4.1
Could not pay fees	22.3	15.8	9.4	21.0
Had to work	1.0	2.9	2.1	1.2
Trained, enough school	2.9	1.5	1.6	2.7
Negative marks	6.0	17.1	7.7	6.7
Did not like school	4.5	0.1	2.6	4.2
Difficult access to school	1.9	4.4	0.1	1.9
Another	15.3	1.7	0.1	13.5
Doesn't know/didn't answer	7.2	5.0	4.0	6.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	2,094	127	174	2,395
<b>Urban area</b>				
<b>School</b>	18.0	10.4	62.2	25.2
Got pregnant	6.5	25.0	9.5	8.8
Married	7.0	11.1	4.2	6.9
Had to look after children	1.9	0.1	0.0	1.4
Had to help the family	4.7	0.2	0.0	3.4
Could not pay fees	33.7	19.2	4.7	27.1
Had to work	2.4	3.4	2.4	2.5
Trained, enough school	1.1	1.9	1.1	1.2
Negative marks	7.3	18.7	8.6	8.7
Did not like school	2.8	0.2	2.7	2.5
Difficult access to school	1.7	2.8	0.1	1.5
Another	8.6	1.9	0.0	6.4
Doesn't know/didn't answer	4.5	5.1	4.4	4.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	603	82	150	835
<b>Rural area</b>				
<b>School</b>	7.0	45.8	30.0	8.5
Got pregnant	5.5	7.4	13.6	5.7
Married	20.3	7.0	5.6	19.7
Had to look after children	1.9	0.0	0.0	1.8
Had to help the family	4.6	0.0	0.0	4.4
Could not pay fees	17.6	9.7	39.6	17.7
Had to work	0.4	2.0	0.0	0.5
Trained, enough school	3.6	0.6	4.8	3.5
Negative marks	5.4	14.1	2.1	5.6
Did not like school	5.2	0.0	1.9	5.0
Difficult access to school	1.9	7.2	0.0	2.1
Another	18.0	1.1	1.1	17.3
Doesn't know/didn't answer	8.3	4.9	1.3	8.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

example, 15 years are necessary so that a person can go to school and get a basic academic diploma (Abrahamsson & Nilsson, 1997: 121).

Number	1,491	45	24	1,560
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Source: INE, 1998: 28

Only in 1997, in Ressano Garcia Primary School - Low level, there were 7 girls who got pregnant and by the time of data collection for the present study, in 1998, a student had withdrawn for the same reason<sup>109</sup>. *“In the Muslim school in Ressano Garcia, at the beginning of 1997, there were 200 students, from which only 60 reached the end of the year”*<sup>110</sup>.

In this context, for example, sexual education is a demand. Only with a correct sexual education it will be possible to overcome the problems inherent in the Mozambican society, such as early pregnancy, AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

So, the State has a primary role in this action. The government has the obligation of educating its citizens, mainly those who lost the opportunity to study due to war. NGOs’ actions or objectives should provide an opportunity to those who are not covered by government’s action.

An important aspect is the need to provide more means for the educational sector, so those children get the conditions to acquire favourable skills and knowledge, so that they can improve their life condition. Social justice should be recovered, in conformity with the respect for fundamental children’s rights, and in particular the right to education, expanding it to the national level and increasing its quality. It is important that in the Mozambican context, the definition of children, beyond the age, should not incorporate social status. That is, that we should stop thinking that the daughter of a boss or leader is a child and the servant sometimes of the same age is just a servant. There is a need to loose the fear and report these phenomena. The social context of public freedom linked to the fight for the constitution of an equalitarian society on the basis of education should produce results.

Linked to this aspect, there is a need of a major relationship between the society and community. Communities know the people and the places these practices are conducted. Therefore its importance in assisting the people. There is a need to question whether parents participate in the education of their children. Are they aware of contents lectured and their importance?

In regard to substitute or adoptive families, there is a demand for a permanent follow-up, observing the preparation of such families, their stability what guarantees the adoption of children. For them, there should be a guarantee of the right to education. To what extent is the integration of the child in an adoptive family beneficial to both? In this, the crucial importance of educators, social assistants, psychologists, etc. However, taking

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<sup>109</sup> Isabel J. Tembissa, op. cit.

<sup>110</sup> Lorul Amim, op. cit.

into account the socio economical situation of the country - Mozambique, the establishment of reception centres becomes necessary.

Another mean to consider should be the jurisdictional factor, which requires to be adequate or adjusted on the light of the Convention on Children's Rights, that is, adequate the Convention's dispositions in the country's legislation, aspect which doesn't seem to have occurred up to the present moment.

A third way of fighting which is also a priority is the role of information, its power in denouncing and fighting these phenomena, including the danger of AIDS represented through manifestations, pamphlets, theatre, talks, etc.

There is a need to develop a national plan for the prevention and punishment of any forms of violence against children and women involving ministries which deal systematically with these aspects, such as education, health, justice, social welfare, etc., setting concrete actions. Current responses on the part of the State and civil society are important. It is necessary, for example, that police stations and hospitals should have specific departments for attending these cases, with judges and agents to assist the victims in a free regime. In urban areas, the establishment of SOS telephone lines, with NGOs participation is also relevant. There is a need to generate a strong social movement, able to demand and get the observance of the law in society and families.

So, the involvement and punishment of adults in this campaign should count with the participation not only of government, but also from the whole civil society. In fact, "*The vast majority of clients are male adults*". Indeed, as observed, "*Child Prostitution refers more to adults behaviour and society in general than of children and youths*" (Lee & O'Brien, 1995: 7 & 67). Therefore there is a need to stop these violations with punishment. Not only of offenders, but also of those who promote these acts, favour them or facilitate the exercise of prostitution or the practice of sexual intercourse, exploiting situations of abandonment, physical incapacity or economical need, or even those who use children in photographs, films or porno records.

Thus, even with the community's participation<sup>111</sup>, educational campaigns, even in relation to the use of anticonceptives (though many times rejected by tutors or parents<sup>112</sup>) are fundamental. For example, in regard to the regulation on the right of access of children to public places of evening entertainment and videoclubes, having a significant importance, may not produce any effect, in case there is no family/community participation. The best supervision is not done by the police or security people in discos or videoclubs, but by the society itself, which has to be vigilant. What is the point of preventing children's access to videoclubs, if at home parents and children watch the

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<sup>111</sup> And the example they should offer to the youths and children.

<sup>112</sup> Peter Piot, Executive Director of UNAIDS - United Nations Program on AIDS/HIV, states that, 'restrict the access too sexual education is a violation of the children's rights' (Notícias, 06.10.98).

same movie, sitting side by side? It is necessary to consider that penalties and prohibitions cannot in themselves solve the problem<sup>113</sup>. This, on the other hand demands the establishment of entertainment places and training for the youths, which, for example stimulate the practice of sports; thus the relevance of the action of NGOs, the Church in supporting the youths.

On the other hand, the increasing improvement of the life quality and levels of community should be a reality in the country because the resort to moral and ethical values may not result in success due to pressure and the socio-economical reality if this contributes for instability and insecurity in development. As can be observed, prostitution, for example, is more linked to urban areas and to economical factors; crowded cities, large families without any sustenance means.

Therefore, the State, their policies in all areas play an important role in the struggle against these phenomena. It should create conditions for the adoption of actions from several actors, which should be complementary. So, the reduction depends on a general policy for the country. If it does not have educational, housing, industrial or job policies these phenomena may increase because the number of children is increasing with population growth, so it is not going to be possible to solve this situation.

There is a need for a multidisciplinary action. The elevation of the life condition of the communities includes many factors. For instance, there is a need to create conditions in the countryside, in order to clear the cities, developing structures, which offer increasing opportunities to communities. We cannot talk about fighting child labour in a situation in which, even with the existence of compulsory education, there are no schools and other basic life needs. In this context, landmine clearance in order to enable that people can start producing is a priority action. *“It should be noted that without money nothing can be done; without means to support children, they become supports; if the father does not have money to buy shoes for the son, he can go and look for them”*<sup>114</sup>.

In regard to child labour, national action plans for children should include measures in order to produce changes in social perception, stimulating investment, not only in public sector, but also in the private one. Basic education should be compulsory and accessible to all children, including those working.

Laws, penalties and campaigns can only produce results when everybody becomes aware that there are not barriers, fundamentally socio-economical, which govern all social differentiation and classification.

In fact, Silva and Condy (1993: 39-41) argue that (i) fertility diminishes with the growth of revenue and life quality; (ii) high levels of fertility and mortality among poor

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<sup>113</sup> It is proved that no matter the penalties, these do not prevent no threaten offenders (Maira Soto, op. cit.).

<sup>114</sup> Lorul Amim, op. cit.

households are translated in a predominance of dependants and a smaller number of active members, with high taxes of unemployment and subemployment, and the large size of poor aggregates conditions a major reduction of revenue per capita.

Apart from social, cultural and economical considerations, the spread throughout the country, of actions undertaken by the Centre for Psychological Rehabilitation from Maputo Central Hospital in supporting children's recuperation is an urgent and important action<sup>115</sup>.

## V - A Final Remark

To conclude it should be acknowledged that we have not reached a full comprehension of such phenomena as sexual abuse, prostitution and child labour, in their complexity. It is known that the problems are linked, though not restricted to poverty, inequality and social exclusion. It is also known that there are other factors, equally important, such as cultural, which are related to traditional life forms of the community. It is known that we cannot wait longer to provide alternatives of change which enable to act either on poverty or on family demands which impose these phenomena.

Violence against children as well as against women and sexual crimes, though violence does not distinguish victims, is among the most common crimes. And, in this moment, it is observed a lack of public policies and co-ordination mechanisms of state efforts through the Ministry for the Co-ordination of Social Welfare (MICAS), Ministry of Health and institutions, which work, for the defence of children.

Sexual abuse, child labour and prostitution constitute some of the problems which demand a major state intervention in the formulation of public policies which involve several sectors which can participate in prevention and attention to these phenomena, given that up to now the defence of children's and women's rights has been restricted to the ratification of international agreements and conventions, individual interventions on the part of ministries such as MICAS, Ministry of Justice, Health and several NGOs, interventions which do not follow an integral policy because each of them work with an independent logic and without a co-ordination for fighting these phenomena.

In order to eliminate these phenomena, it is necessary to create a forum which gathers all civil organisations working in this area, and state institutions are indispensable for the implementation of a consequent action so that several units can intervene in an

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<sup>115</sup> Only in 1996, 86 cases were attended at the Centre for Psychological Rehabilitation of Children and Youths at Maputo Central Hospital (Osório, 1997: 22). In 1998, the centre "assisted 440 cases from 0 to 25 years, being 129 new cases and the remaining normal appointments from the previous year. From the 129 new cases recorded, 96 were sexual abuse, being major part of these victims, 60, female students from lower primary education (EP1) and 24 from upper primary education (EP2), what means that these are in the age group ranging from 06 to 14. Other 46 victims are female students from secondary education and two from technical education" (Savana, 05.03.99).

integral way, what would enable a more comprehensive vision of the causes of these phenomena.

The government is the principal responsible for the definition and implementation of policies, legislation, strategies and actions to eliminate prostitution, sexual abuse and child labour. Governmental action has an unreplaceable role to play in fighting poverty, inequality and social exclusion. Communities and NGOs have, however, a very important contribution to give. The elimination of these hazards demands the commitment of the society as a whole.

Nowadays, the sustainability of any social policy should be based in a constant relation between the government and society, in which the action of one supports the other's activity, without mixing the functions, autonomy and responsibilities. It is important that that the term *Intelligent Partnership* cannot be summed up solely to economical effects of development. Intelligent Partnership broke the traditional dichotomy, which used to exist between the public and private areas, when private was synonym of business and public meant State.

But, these new intervention forms demand that more surveys should be conducted on these phenomena as well as more experience sharing between the countries of the region, and not only. There is a need that such surveys or research should always have in mind that in the search for global solutions it is necessary that, on one hand, solutions can occur at local level, taking into account each community, country, region or continent's specificity's; these differences which are determined in the form these phenomena manifest themselves and in appropriate alternatives for their elimination. There is no universal formula to eliminate these phenomena.

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