

Teaching disaster preparedness

Strengthening the role of the formal and informal educational sector in disaster risk management in Mozambique

Because enthusiasm in disaster preparedness generally fades once an emergency phase is past, schools offer a good entry point for keeping communities alert and making disaster risk management more sustainable. Highly-educated teachers, community leaders, students and their parents can all play an important role in disseminating knowledge and keeping their communities well-prepared. On behalf of the German Foreign Office, InWEnt supports them by inviting relevant institutions to co-operate in the development of strategies for introducing disaster preparedness measures in local schools and communities.

A number of the most vulnerable communities in the Northern Region (Niassa, Cabo Delgado and Nampula) have been identified and subsequently encouraged to form local disaster management committees of 20 to 25 people. Some of the committee members ensure that any warnings are received by everyone in the community. Others are trained in evacuation, first aid, shelter and relief. Simulations help all participants to practice the necessary steps in case of an emergency.

Disaster awareness to become part of teacher training

Over a period of two years, a learning plan, pedagogical guidelines and didactic material – including brochures, maps and an educational video – are being developed in cooperation with the University Eduardo Mondlane and the Technical University of Mozambique, and will

be presented to the National Institute for Disaster Management (INGC) for approval. At the same time, training on disaster related issues for primary and secondary school teachers will commence in the pilot region.

Advances are to be reflected in the electronic and printed media through co-operation with local journalists. The distribution of information material such as leaflets, posters, printed t-shirts, and an educational movie will be part of efforts to popularise the entire process.

After a thorough examination of any lessons learnt in the pilot regions, the final aim is to develop and introduce a concept for teaching disaster prevention in schools. This will then become an integral part of training for teachers in general primary and secondary schools.



Mozambique is one of the poorest countries in the world, as well as one that is frequently and severely affected by natural disasters such as floods, cyclones, earthquakes and droughts. Disaster preparedness is still low. A war lasting 25 years has stunted institutional development, and Disaster Risk Management only began to capture attention in politics and civil society after the conflict ended a decade ago.



"The national system of education constitutes one of the main instruments of leadership in the development of self-confidence and self esteem. Education has the potential to change today's – and all future – generations for the better."

National Master Plan for the Prevention and Mitigation of Natural Disaster by the Council of Ministers of the Mozambican Government, March 2006

Timeline of InWent's activities in the field of disaster risk management in Mozambique on behalf of the German Federal Foreign Office

– from 2002 InWent begins providing support for the National Disaster Management Institute of Mozambique (INGC) with institutional capacity building on both provincial and national levels. Its programmes also target INGC's multi-sector partners and civil society through raising awareness and training.

– from 2004 The above activities are extended as best practices to a regional cooperation between member states of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). A train-the-trainers programme kicks off within the INGC on national and district levels. Workshops on disaster risk management reach out

to journalists from Mozambique and other SADC countries.

– from 2006 The focus shifts to the educational sector at both formal and informal levels. Local disaster management committees in the northern provinces receive encouragement and support. Teachers receive materials and training for the introduction of disaster preparedness as a subject in school. Ongoing institutional capacity building for the INGC continues.

Between 2002 and 2008, severe flood events several times led to the declaration of a state of emergency. Project activities had to be postponed.

"With regard to disaster management, there is a fundamental difference between what is taught at universities and the reality on the ground. However, it is even more serious that only a few universities have started to explore the field of disaster management altogether."

Prof. Dr. Rui Maia (UDM) and Luis Artur (UEM)

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Simulation of an emergency scenario

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Local disaster management committee in the district of Moma

