



*Ligas Juveniles*  
*Políticas na cidade de Maputo,*  
*Moçambique*  
Investigating Political Youth Leagues in Maputo  
city, Mozambique

Master Thesis

By: Michele Portatadino  
s1462830

ResMA in African Studies  
*Afrika Studiecentrum Leiden - Universiteit Leiden*  
The Netherlands

*Supervised by:*

Prof. Dr. Ton Dietz, *Afrika - Studiecentrum*, Leiden  
Prof. Dr. Fantu Cheru, *Afrika - Studiecentrum*, Leiden

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*Força, Coragem, Determinação e Perseverança!*

## **Abstract**

This thesis presents the results of a six-month fieldwork research in Maputo city, Mozambique, on the youth leagues affiliated to the three main Mozambican political parties, Frelimo, Renamo and MDM. Specifically, the author investigated the role and motivations of the members of such youth leagues to participate in the formal politics while most people of their age do not seem to show any interest in political participation. Since the intention of the author was also to contribute to more general knowledge on the assessed matter, the three youth leagues and the research context are briefly sketched in the introduction, including a resume of Mozambican history, in order to frame the overall research context and explain the political fractures persisting in Mozambique until the present day. The problem statement, that is, the current condition of Mozambican youth in politics emphasizes the issue of exclusion of most youngsters from formal politics. Dealing with youth, however, arguably requires a better definition of who may be considered as “youngster” in Mozambique, and a merely numerical definition might not be satisfactory. A sociological approach might allow to understand the phenomenon that is the limbo between childhood and the life of the adults affecting Mozambican youth. Theory assessed by the author regarded general studies on youth participation, the same issues in the African context, and, finally, Mozambique and its capital city Maputo. As the present study deals mostly with qualitative data such as personal experiences, a qualitative methodology that combines a historical and ethnographic approach was preferred. Findings reveal that the historical inheritance of the assessed youth leagues is still fresh and intertwined with their present identity. Yet, the most vital part of fieldwork regarded the interviews the author handled himself with the members of the three youth leagues. Data emerging from their responses might prove a genuine commitment to their political cause, contradicting the typical label of “lost generation”.

**Keywords:** Maputo city; Mozambique; youth leagues; youth; politics; political participation

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Research Question

The role of youth participation in national politics has been an object of interest in the social sciences since a long time, and plenty of research on different dimensions of youth and politics is readily available. De Castro affirms that present-day discussion on the social and political participation of the youth is of fundamental importance in academic research since indicators of contemporary societies state that youngsters have no interest in politics.<sup>1</sup> Among others, Checkoway argues that youth participation is relevant, because “when young people participate, it draws upon their expertise, enables them to exercise their rights as citizens, and contributes to a more democratic society. It also promotes their personal development, and provides them with substantive knowledge and practical skills.”<sup>2</sup>

It is important to note, however, the situation is different from country to country, depending on history and local politics, as is the case in Mozambique. This research focuses on the youth leagues associated with the three main Mozambican political parties:<sup>3</sup> Frelimo’s *Organização da Juventude Moçambicana* (Mozambican Youth Organization, OJM), Renamo’s *Liga Nacional Juvenil da Renamo* (Renamo National Youth League, LJR) and the *Liga da Juventude do Movimento Democrático de Moçambique* (Mozambican Democratic Movement Youth League, LJMDM).

The original idea for the present thesis was triggered by the author’s own academic background of political studies and his eager interest in Mozambican politics. Further, his personal experience of political activism stimulated his curiosity to investigate youth political involvement in a developing country setting, and Mozambique offered a very useful test-case. The research methodology combines historical and ethnographic approaches in almost equal proportions, with the historical analysis providing the background for the empirical ethnographic inquiry. To such purpose, a six-month fieldwork research was carried on in the Mozambican capital city Maputo (1 March 2015 - 31 August 2015), with mentioned members of the three youth leagues as research targets, assessing

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<sup>1</sup> Castro (de), Lúcia R. (2008); *Participação política e juventude: do mal-estar à responsabilização frente ao destino comum*, *Revista de Sociologia e Política*, 16 (30), p.253-268

<sup>2</sup> Checkoway, B. (2011): What is youth participation?, *Children and Youth Services Review* 33, pp. 340–345

<sup>3</sup> Henceforth also referred to as “the three leagues” or, even more simply, “the leagues”, also when indistinctly mentioned

the meaning of political participation to these youth leagues members and the motivation behind their participation. Better rephrased:

**What attracts Maputo city youngsters to become members of a political youth league?**

In the course of the country's history, mentioned Mozambican political parties have made use of their youth leagues in their public mobilization strategies. The research question this study shall investigate may be sub-divided into the following questions:

- I. How is the history of youth participation in youth leagues associated with the main political parties? When did such political engagement of youth start? What were the motivations of youth to join youth leagues aligned with political parties?
- II. What are the main reasons why youngsters become members of the three youth leagues in Maputo city today?
- III. What impact does youth participation in a youth league have on the vitality and dynamism of political parties? What is the relationship of the youth with the party elders and how much are they influenced by them? Are youth simply foot soldiers of the old political party leaders, or do youth group bring new issues to be included in the political manifestos of political parties?

## 1.2 The Three Youth Leagues in a Nutshell

The present paragraph gives basic information on the object of investigation of the study: the three youth leagues. While thoroughly detailed information on the history, evolution and present structure of the three leagues is contained in chapter 7, emerged data from the interviews with the three groups of members is given in chapter 8.

The quantity of data varies significantly among the three youth leagues, due to the different historical moments of their foundation. The Frelimo youth league (OJM) was created two years after Mozambican independence in 1975, in what would soon be an authoritarian regime, as the supporting youth branch for the political force that ruled the one-party state, and subsequently became the youth league of a democratically elected ruling party after the end of the civil war in 1992. For such reasons, the data at disposal concerning this youth league is considerably more than its two counterparts. The Renamo youth league (LJR) was founded only after the peace agreement, while the MDM youth league (LJMDM) is only six years old.

### *The Organização da Juventude Moçambicana (OJM)*

The OJM is the youth league affiliated to long-time ruling party Frelimo and the oldest of the three. Founded in 1977 as an association meant to perpetuate the independence ideals of the anti-colonial struggle fought by Frelimo, its origins are profoundly intertwined with the early history of Mozambique as an independent country. The first generation of OJM members are youngsters belonging to the so-called 8 March Generation, from the day when the first President of Mozambique and President of Frelimo party, Samora Machel, directed a patriotic call to youngsters to rebuild the country from the rubbles of ten years of independence war.

The official foundation of the OJM corresponds to the first National Conference of Mozambican youth, held in Maputo from 29 November to 3 December 1977. The first OJM statute was written in that same year, defining the OJM as the association of young Mozambicans that unifies, mobilizes and organises the youth to the correct application of Frelimo's program and ideology, and it educates its members to the values embodied by the independence war which they had to promote and respect. In the early years of its existence, the young members were involved mostly as voluntary workers in a plethora of ambitious projects envisioned to drive a national economy based on socialism-inspired principles. Nevertheless, with the civil war breaking out and the increasing economic burden for the national economy from the 1980s onwards, most projects were *de facto*

impossible to accomplish. In civil war times, the mission of the OJM was to educate its members and all Mozambican youth, to the value of patriotism, represented by the armed forces. The national army and national security forces recruited most of their members largely among youngsters and it was the task of OJM high-ranked cadre to dispense military education services for such purpose. Not infrequently, battalions of young cadets were OJM members at the same time.

The end of the civil war and the signing of the Peace Agreement of Rome, in 1992, constituted a turning point. The OJM was now the youth wing of a political party in a liberal democracy and therefore had to adapt to completely different political circumstances. However, as the Frelimo party repeatedly won democratic elections held every five years since 1994, the OJM remains the best organized and most solidly structured political youth association in the country ever since. From the responses of the interviewees, a sense of continuity with the socialist period still persists, however, rather in terms of patriotic duty and perpetuation of the values of the freedom fighters, rather than actual socialist ideology, except for a few details explained below (see paragraph 7.1). As many interviewed members declared, in democracy times, the OJM has been typically entitled with rallying responsibilities for its senior party cadres, whenever elections occurred and has been a source of party cadre since its origin, to an extent that a number of OJM members occupy political positions in Maputo City Council and even Parliamentary and Ministerial seats.

### ***The Liga da Juventude da Renamo (LJR)***

The LJR is the youth association representing the youngest members of the former guerrilla army and presently main political opposition party in Mozambique, Renamo. As will be explained in chapter 2, Renamo was originally a counter-revolutionary guerrilla army supported by Rhodesia and South Africa. When the civil war came to an end in 1992, Renamo had to re-organize itself in order to be able to compete in the first national elections of 1994 as a proper political party.

On the agenda, the foundation of a youth league was officially achieved when the party presented its new foundation statutes in 1992, including its youth branch, back then denominated *Juventude Nacional de Moçambique* (Mozambican National Youth, JNM). Such organization would integrate all Mozambican youngsters between 10 and 18 years of age, either through a decision made by their families or, alternatively, decided by their own free will to join the organization.

Written information concerning the early years of the JNM is quite not as abundant as for the OJM, however, a series of interviews with former members now serving in the senior party, confirmed a few patterns in common with the



OJM. The youngsters of the LJR are on the frontline as elections mobilizers and in general the senior party relies on them for any kind of “dirty work”. Although membership in the LJR has its benefits, as former members of the youth league are today party cadre and MPs, opinions collected among the interviewees showed a feeble tendency to impatience towards the senior party, nonetheless, the predominant impression is that of youngsters motivated by the claimed ideals of concrete democracy and freedom of expression that Renamo party and the LJR proclaim to embody, in contrast to a mere façade of political tolerance prompted by Frelimo.

Interviews also clarified a doubt concerning the name of this youth league. Apparently, the denomination was changed to *Liga Nacional da Juventude da Renamo*, (Renamo National Youth League, LJR) during a Renamo party meeting in Quelimane, Zambezia province, in 2006. Such denomination acquired official status in 2008, when the Mozambican Ministry of Justice granted the LJR its juridical identity.

### **The *Liga da Juventude do Movimento Democrático de Moçambique* (LJMDM)**

Compared to its counterparts, the LJMDM is the most recently created youth league in Mozambique. It is the youth league affiliated to the MDM party, second main opposition party in Mozambique, originally a splinter group which separated from Renamo in 2009.

In the same year, the founding statute of MDM party states its creation as the party organization oriented towards the promotion and mobilization of youngsters.

The following year 2010, the LJMDM officially initiated its activities, with its first national conference in Chimoio, Manica province. In 2011, the MDM party initiated an establishment of Youth Political Committees in the provinces and districts, to revitalize youth participation within the activities of the party, after the effects of enthusiasm for the 2009 general elections began to fade.

As it is quite obvious, the quantity of information concerning the LJMDM is remarkably less abundant than the previous two, yet, what is most intriguing regarding this youth league is its future perspective. As will be illustrated in chapter 2, despite its young history, the MDM party is so far the only relevant political alternative formation to the historical rivalry between Frelimo and Renamo, with political representatives at national and also local level. The attention devoted to the youth was mentioned repeatedly by all interviewees of the LJMDM as the main motivational driver behind their affiliation, along with its fresher message focused on social problems of youngsters such as poverty or unemployment. Frequently, these interviewees declared the “language” spoken by the senior party and by its

youth league are almost the same, given the youth is officially stated as the top priority by the MDM party, perhaps the only feature distinguishing it from the other two. Yet, among the three groups, the LJMDM members were those who complained the most for not receiving enough attention by the senior party cadre to the issues of the youth league.

### **1.3 A Few Key Facts on Maputo city**

As introduced, the research site was essentially the capital city of Mozambique. The present paragraph gives a few facts regarding its political origins and current conditions.

Formerly known as Lourenço Marques, from the name of an not clearly identified Portuguese explorer, it became the colonial capital city of the Portuguese colony of Mozambique in 1898 for exquisitely economic reasons, namely commercial contacts with the Boer Republics of Zuid-Afrikaanse Republiek/Transvaal and Natal and later with the British Colonies of South Africa. Due to its proximity to the South African border, the metropolitan area of Maputo is strictly intertwined with the economies of Johannesburg and the current South African province of KwaZulu - Natal. After the independence of Mozambique (see chapter 2 for more details), the name of the city changed to Maputo on 13 March 1976 and it remained the political capital of the country. Maputo is still the main commercial and political center in Mozambique. Moreover, it concentrates all the principal academic institution in the country, for example Eduardo Mondlane University.

Administratively speaking, it is a municipality divided into seven urban districts, with an elected City Council and a mayor. Since 1980 it also has a provincial statute. In 2013, the National Statistics Institute accounted for some 1.2 million inhabitants.<sup>4</sup> Although free elections were introduced in the country in 1994, Maputo City Council has been elected only since 1998. Until the present day, the 64 representatives of the City Council and the mayor are elected every five years (see Table 1.1 and Table 1.2). Currently, the Frelimo party has the political majority with 37 seats, while the sole opposition party, and the only other party represented, is MDM with 27 seats.<sup>5</sup> According to the Mozambican Constitution, it is the prerogative of the President of the Republic to nominate provincial governors, however, the first governor of Maputo city was only nominated in 2005 (see Table 1.3). As it is evident from the tables, the capital city has always been a political turf of ruling party Frelimo.

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<sup>4</sup> *Instituto Nacional de Estatísticas, Estatísticas de Indicadores Sociais 2012-2013*, Maputo, Mozambique, 2012, p.16

<sup>5</sup> Hanlon, J. (2013): Mozambique Political Process Bulletin, *Centro de Integridade Pública* and AWEPA - European Parliamentarians for Africa, n°54, part 2 of 2, p.1

**Table 1.1** Maputo city Executive Council Presidents (1980 - 1997)

Empowerment Date	Executive Council President (Nominated)
17 June 1980	António Hama Thay
1 December 1982	Gaspar Horácio Mateus Zimba
28 May 1983	Alberto Massavanhane
12 March 1987	João Baptista Cosme
20 November 1997	Artur Hussene Canana

**Table 1.2** Maputo City Council Presidents (1998 - 2014)

Empowerment Date	City Council President (Elected)	Party
27 November 1998	Artur Hussene Canana	Frelimo
19 November 2003	Eneas da Conceição Comiche	Frelimo
7 February 2009	David Simango	Frelimo
7 February 2014	David Simango	Frelimo

**Table 1.3** Maputo city Provincial Governors (2005 - 2015)

<b>Nomination Date</b>	<b>Provincial Governor</b>
11 February 2005	Rosa Manuel da Silva
16 January 2010	Lucília José Manuel Nota Hama
19 January 2015	Iolanda Maria Pedro Campos Cintura

Tables source: <https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maputo>

## 2. RESEARCH CONTEXT

### A Resume of Mozambican History

Discussing on political participation arguably requires a few key details on the research context. The present paragraph accounts schematically for the political history of Mozambique since its independence until the present day, with only a brief excursus of its colonial past. Amongst the literature on colonial and postcolonial Mozambican history, a preciously detailed report has been made by Malyn Newitt, in Patrick Chabal's History of Postcolonial Lusophone Africa.<sup>6</sup>

### The Colonial Inheritance (XVI - XX century)

Mozambique is a seemingly long-limbed territory of South-Eastern Africa, of approximately 1800 km of length and some 2470 km of eastern coastline on the Indian Ocean. Its current national population is approximately 25 million, divided into ten provinces. From north to south: Cabo Delgado, Niassa, Nampula, Zambezia, Tete, Manica, Sofala, Inhambane, Gaza, Maputo Province and Maputo city.<sup>7</sup>

In African historiography, the year 1498 it is generally considered as the initial date of the establishment of Portuguese colonial rule in the country, from the arrival of the nautical expedition led by Vasco da Gama. Nonetheless, Portuguese settlements were limited to the coastline since penetration in the inland was complicated by several factors. Absence of transports, except for the horizontally-crossing rivers, and large areas infested by the *tse-tse* fly, to quote but a few. Through the centuries, the geographic position of Mozambique allowed it to grant access to the Indian Ocean to landlocked countries of the Southern African interior, such as former Rhodesia and Nyasaland, today Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi. However, such fact determined that the different regions of Mozambique developed deeper economic connections with foreign bordering countries rather than with the other Mozambican areas. The most evident example is the capital city Maputo, still strictly intertwined with the economy of South African metropolises of Johannesburg and Durban, and, to a minor extent, Swaziland. As another example,

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<sup>6</sup> Chabal, P. *et alteres*, (2002): History of Postcolonial Lusophone Africa. For the chapter by Malyn Newitt, see pp. 185 - 235

<sup>7</sup> In the present text, with the name Maputo, also without "city" the author always means the capital city and not the province

until the late 1800s, the northern coastline and islands, and the central province of Sofala were part of the Omani-ruled commercial trade network of the western Indian Ocean. The very name of the country probably derives from the name of the first known ruler of these territories, Mussa Bin Bique, from which derived the Portuguese denomination *Moçambique*.

Therefore, from XVI to late XIX century, Mozambique witnessed a variegated presence of different groups ruling specific regions. Approximately, twenty linguistic ethnicities still stretch from north to south. Marked ethnic, religious and cultural differences separated all these groups and chieftaincies for centuries. As mentioned, Portuguese effective rule simply did not occur due to aforementioned constraints, until the Berlin Conference of 1885. In the same period, the economic engine ceased to be ivory and slave trade in favour of natural resources and agriculture, and the administrative capital city was moved from northern Ilha de Moçambique to Lourenço Marques (today known as Maputo) in the south. Yet, Newitt argues such colonial rule in fact contributed to further fragmentation since the Portuguese crown preferred granting concessions (*prazos*) to largely autonomous companies rather than implementing a proper State-directed governance.

Such companies typically installed plantations of crops such as cashew, rice, sugar, tea and cotton. A tradition of migrant labour flourished with the development of the mining sector in South Africa which ultimately led to an improvement of transports and port facilities. In the anti-colonial rhetoric, such national economic system privileged white settlements on the coastline as ending points of commercial routes with neighboring countries, with absolutely no interest for the rural areas of the interior, which remained considerably underdeveloped. Moreover, the migrant labour policies were directed towards unskilled black majorities of peasants, *de facto* forcing them to periods of migrant wage labour (*chibalo*) and resembled slavery to many extents.

As Newitt states, however, a missions-educated African and *mestiça* urban bourgeoisie did develop, although mostly limited to Lourenço Marques and the coastal city of Beira, in the central province of Sofala.

A turn in the colonial administration occurred when colonial policies of the 1930s promoted by the authoritarian Portuguese regime of Salazar, the *Estado Novo* (the New State), restricted freedom of expressions and perpetrated political repression of dissidents. One among all, the tragically iconic massacre of Mueda of 16 June 1960 when the Portuguese military police opened fire on a manifestation of local agricultural labourers in Mueda district, in northern province of Cabo Delgado. The number of casualties is still uncertain.

## The Independence War (1964 - 1974)

The war between Frelimo and the Portuguese armed forces has to be framed in a wider context of general uprising of Portuguese African colonies, besides Mozambique: Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, São Tomé e Príncipe and Angola, inspired by the general sentiment of African nationalism, which flourished in the 1960s. These countries are notorious for being the last group of African colonies to achieve independence (if we exclude Namibia) and, arguably, it was the “African War” which ultimately led the authoritarian regime of Salazar to its collapse.

However, let us proceed with order. On 25 June 1962, a few anticolonial movements founded the *Frente da Libertação Moçambicana* (Mozambique Liberation Front, Frelimo) in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and the first historical leader was US-educated PhD in Sociology Eduardo Mondlane. In its original message, the Frelimo was inspired by a marked anti-colonial ideology rather than socialism and concretely initiated the violent struggle two years later. The very first outbreak of the independence struggle is considered to be an armed attack by Frelimo forces in Chai district, Cabo Delgado province, on 25 September 1964. According to a 1964-written CIA bulletin, Frelimo was supported by military instructors from Tanzania, which was also its military host, and funded by the Organization of African Unity and People’s Republic of China. Among its initial 2,000 alleged fighters, an elite group of 150 under the command of General Filipe Magaia even received guerrilla training in Algeria.<sup>8</sup>

Following the assassination of Mondlane on 3 February 1969, a triumvirate made by Uria Simango, Marcelino dos Santos and Samora Machel led Frelimo until Machel emerged as one man in power and marginalized his two other associates to an extent he confined Simango in a re-education camp and had him executed along with his wife, Celina. Marcelino dos Santos survived until the present day. From such point onwards, Machel assumed the leadership and increased armed attacks, strategically delivered following guerrilla war tactics. The Portuguese response was a massive military effort with deployment of heavy artillery, air forces and even trained groups recruited among the local population, to a total of some 30 thousand effectives. Most of these local recruits were originally from the central and northern provinces. In fact, Frelimo obtained most of its propaganda successes among the Makonde of Cabo Delgado and the Shangane in the area of Lourenço Marques - Maputo, while it never managed to heal the controversies with the ethnic groups of central and northern Mozambique. An issue that would not be indifferent a few years later.

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<sup>8</sup> Central Intelligence Bulletin, 22 October 1964, Central Intelligence Agency, USA. Approved for release on 11 April 2003



Nevertheless, after ten years of war, the economic burden for Portugal and the manifested exhaustion of the armed forces resulted in a bloodless coup in Lisbon, the *Revolução dos Cravos* (Carnation Revolution), which overthrew the regime of Marcelo Caetano, successor of Salazar, on 25 April 1974. An Agreement was signed in Lusaka, on 7 September of the same year. Such Agreement established a transitional government to prepare Mozambique for independence. Yet, several issues were left unanswered: state debt, private property, the new national army and the new Constitution among others. To an even worse extent, the power transition process was hastened without considering troublesome problems such as the demilitarization and integration of Mozambican black units who had fought in the Portuguese armed forces; the position of white settlers, be it skilled workers, property owners or colonial civil servants (and as a matter of fact, the latter two categories mostly fled, leaving factories or any other facility either not functioning or wrecked); guarantee of civil rights and/ or political pluralism; a national economy with no support by aid packages, etc. The relations with neighboring countries were also not settled. Frelimo itself took over power on 25 June 1975, with no electoral legitimization whatsoever. When Machel triumphantly declared the independence of the country, the future scenario unveiling on Mozambique was a somber one.

### **The Civil War years (1976 - 1992)**

What is generally agreed in academia is that all projects envisioned by Frelimo to rebuild the country had no success, either in the economy or society, in fact such failures accelerated the disarray left by a faulty transition. Natural disasters worsened already perilous circumstances and the civil war delivered the final blow. In 1977, Frelimo officially declared its adherence to socialism, and proclaimed itself the sole representative of the Mozambican people as head of a one-party regime established by the Constitution of the People's Republic of Mozambique. Vast programs of reform targeted all aspects of society, however, with hardly any success. Frequently, these reform blueprints were grandiose in their purpose, yet hardly realizable. As it concerns the economy, for example, the newly independent country aspired to achieve national autarky, thereon a State-planned economy had to be created. Yet, all sectors suffered from lack of skilled personnel and a series of natural catastrophes made the situation worse. Industrial production fell to abysmal levels: in 1985 it was 25% of what it had been in 1973. Moreover, attempts to reform the “customary” society of Mozambique alienated the sympathies of large sections of the population, specifically in the central and northern hinterland of the country. Foreign relations were no better. Mozambique had declared its

support to black majorities oppressed by the racist regimes of Rhodesia and South Africa. Concerning the former in particular, it decided to adopt UN-sponsored economic sanctions, closing *de facto* the Rhodesian border and suspended any transport directed to the hinterland. Rhodesia responded by creating the Mozambican National Resistance (MNR), later on known as *Resistencia Nacional Moçambicana* or Renamo.

Renamo was initially meant to be an armed force against the assaults of Zimbabwean independence movements hosted and even trained in Mozambican territory.<sup>9</sup> Much literature has debated over the real origin of Renamo, arguing it was a counter-revolutionary movement inspired by a feeling of betrayal of the ideals of freedom by Frelimo, or a reaction by certain ethnic groups to the attempts of Frelimo of destroying the cultural traditions of Mozambican society. On the other hand, the suggested idea is that of a selected group of combatants trained by Rhodesian armed forces for purely political objectives. No certain answer is available yet. A plausible explanation regards a strategic military defence policy by a regime threatened by foreign-supported attacks, which managed to win the sympathy of those ethnic groups particularly dissatisfied with Frelimo. Such as the Ndaou from the central regions. The ethnic cleavage is a variable to take into account, yet it was not the primary nor the most relevant factor to understand the Frelimo-Renamo controversies.

Following the independence of Zimbabwe in 1980, the role of Renamo protector and military host was assumed by South Africa. From such year onwards, the civil war escalated to national and even international level. Scholars agree that Mozambican civil war was in fact a proxy war, as the many others which constellated the Cold War years, with South Africa actively supporting Renamo, while several offices opened to represent the interests of Renamo in West Germany, Great Britain, the US and Portugal. On the other hand, East bloc countries assisted Frelimo in analogue terms.

As it concerns the history of Renamo itself, among the corpus of literature dealing with such topic, a precise account is already made by the research work of Alex Vines on the military inception and operations of Renamo in the civil war.<sup>10</sup> One recurring pattern in his report regards the systematic episodes of brutality featuring Renamo guerrillas against civilians. The tragic conditions of the country first led to the unsuccessful Nkomati Accord in 1984 as Renamo continued to receive South African support for a few years. The death of Samora Machel in 1986

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<sup>9</sup> ZANLA and ZIPRA, see: Stapleton, Timothy J. (2011) : “Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) and Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA)” in “The Encyclopedia of War”

<sup>10</sup> For more details, see: Vines, A. (1991): *Renamo: Terrorism in Mozambique*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press

is considered to be too suspicious not to doubt of the responsibility of South African secret services. Machel was replaced by Joaquim Chissano.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union and some significant changes in South African politics under the presidency of De Klerk, the two counterparts were encouraged to sign the General Peace Agreement (GPA) of Rome on 4 October 1992.

### **The GPA and Multiparty Democracy: Two-Party Rule (1990 - 2009)**

The General Peace Agreement of Rome, signed by Frelimo and Renamo in 1992 marked the effective beginning of political liberalization of the country. Even before the signing, Mozambique had accepted IMF-sponsored liberalization reforms of the economy and even adopted a new Constitution in 1990. Several international donors patronized the first democratic elections and Renamo transition from a guerrilla armed group to a political party. Since the option of a coalition government was impracticable due to mutual distrust, the first democratic elections assumed a “winner takes all” connotation. From 27 to 29 October 1994, a Frelimo government was elected, with Chissano as President of the Republic.

Since 1994, every five years, all electoral turnouts elected the Frelimo candidate as President of the Republic: Chissano in 1994 and 1999, Armando Guebuza in 2004 and 2009 and, recently, Filipe Nyusi in 2014. On the other hand, Renamo has always presented its long-time military leader Afonso Dhlakama as presidential candidate and never refrained from accusations of electoral fraudes. Virtually, no other political party has ever had any influence or relevant representation at the Assembly of the Republic until 2009. Also, the regional pattern of votes mirrors the historical divergences, with Renamo getting most of its support from central and northern provinces, while Frelimo has its electoral bastions in the south and the extreme northern Cabo Delgado province.

### **New Tensions Rising: a New Political Contender (2009 - 2013)**

As mentioned above, since 1994, Mozambique’s political party system has been characterised by a two-party rule, *i.e.* two parties have always obtained the biggest slices of the electoral pie. On one hand, Frelimo was continuously confirmed as the ruling party by all electoral turnouts. On the other hand, Renamo was the main opposition party and all-time critic towards the electoral procedures and results. However, the two-party rule was contested in 2009, when a new party, the

*Movimento Democrático de Moçambique*, (Mozambique Democratic Movement, MDM) split away from Renamo, under the leadership of the mayor of Beira, Daviz Simango, son of Frelimo's historical member Uria Simango, and himself expelled from Renamo in 2008. Officially created on 7 March 2009,<sup>11</sup> the MDM ran for the 2009 national elections, with only six months of history and performed quite modestly, winning only 8 parliamentary seats (out of a total of 250). Although Frelimo's influence on the National Elections Commission and general widespread irregularities should not be underestimated,<sup>12</sup> MDM electoral performance was underrated by both Frelimo and Renamo leaderships as a futile attempt to contest the overwhelming magnitude of the two main parties.

Nevertheless, the year 2013 constituted a turning point. Major popular criticism targeted the governance of then President Armando Guebuza<sup>13</sup> and tensions with Renamo deflagrated in open conflict in the central province of Sofala. The issue of the dispute was the never resolved integration of Renamo guerrillas in the new national Defence and Security Forces. The President and leader of Renamo, Afonso Dhlakama, symbolically returned “to the bush” of Satunjira mountains, Gorongosa district, ancient military headquarters of Renamo during the civil war. Scholars are unsure whether such military skirmishes should be labeled as a new civil war, yet, what matters for the present thesis is that in the same year, administrative elections were held. As Renamo boycotted such elections, the MDM replaced it as main opposition party and won the mayoral seats of Quelimane, Nampula and Gurúé (all in traditional provincial Renamo strongholds), besides confirming its leader Daviz Simango as mayor of Beira, and even scoring a 40.53% of votes in Maputo city. Such performances outclass any electoral result ever obtained by any other opposition party, including Renamo.<sup>14</sup>

## The Latest National Elections (2014)

The most recent national elections were held on 15 October 2014. After signing a Second Peace Agreement on 5 September 2014, Dhlakama initiated a series of public rallies to support his own candidature to the Presidency of the Republic. Despite massive popular participation to his rallies and the relatively good result obtained, the elected President was once more the candidate of Frelimo, Filipe Jacinto Nyusi.

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<sup>11</sup> *Estatutos do Movimento Democrático de Moçambique*, (Versão aprovada na AC 07.03.2009)

<sup>12</sup> Hanlon, J. (2009), 2009 Mozambique Political Process Bulletin, n°43, p.1-4

<sup>13</sup> *Verdade online: Balanço da governação do presidente Guebuza - Escrito por Mahadulane*, verdade.co.mz, 30 October 2013

<sup>14</sup> Hanlon, J. (2013): Mozambique Political Process Bulletin n°54, part 2 of 2, p.11

The National Election Commission declared the victory of Frelimo on 30 October 2014. Amongst all statistics, worth mentioning are the low participation rate, 48.64%, and the number of MPs for Maputo city won by the three parties, respectively, 11 by Frelimo, 3 by Renamo and 2 by the MDM<sup>15</sup> (See Table 2.1 for more details on presidential candidates and Table 2.2 for number of seats in the Parliament, in all national elections). Observers with great expectations on MDM's electoral performance were quite disappointed by the modest outcomes. Simango preferences for the presidential race dropped from 8.6% obtained in 2009 to 6.4%, whereas the MDM as a whole increased its results, from 3.93% to 9.1%, and, therefore, its parliamentary seats from 8 to 17.<sup>16</sup> Notwithstanding an unquestionable improvement, such statistics-supported data may signify that the two-party rule is long from being overcome and, arguably, the MDM might have wasted a precious opportunity

**Table 2.1** General Elections  
Presidential Electoral Results (% of votes)

Year	Frelimo	Renamo	MDM
1994	53.3	33.7	-
1999	52.3	47.7	-
2004	63.7	31.7	-
2009	75.0	16.4	8.6
2014	57.0	36.6	6.4

<sup>15</sup> Hanlon, J. (2014): *Eleições Nacionais 2014: Boletim sobre o processo político em Moçambique*, n° 74

<sup>16</sup> *O País* online: *Frelimo volta absoluta ao parlamento, mesmo com progressão da Renamo e do MDM*, opais.sapo.mz, 31 October 2014

**Table 2.2** General Elections  
Parliamentary Seats (tot. 250)

Year	Frelimo	Renamo	MDM
1994	129	112	-
1999	133	117	-
2004	160	90	-
2009	191	51	8
2014	144	89	17

Tables source: Manning, C. (2010): Mozambique's Slide into One-Party Rule, *Journal of Democracy*, 21 (2), Johns Hopkins University Press (until 2009).

### Post-Electoral Turmoils (2015 - ...): What Future?

The present paragraph accounts for the most relevant post-electoral events, which occurred in the country in the six months (March - August 2015), corresponding to the period of time the author spent in Maputo city for his research fieldwork.

Contemporary turmoils in Mozambican politics required an up-to-date documentation, possible through a large use of local media, such as newspapers *O País*, *Verdade*, *Savana* and *Canal de Moçambique*<sup>17</sup>, tv daily news by public tv channel TVM and private channels STV and *Miramar*, radio channels and the internet, mostly to obtain the online version of mentioned newspapers wherever the printed version was not available. The main driver behind such decision was the necessity to be constantly updated on the latest developments. Local media news used for the present research dates up to 28 August 2015, approximately the end of the research fieldwork period. Reasonably enough, however, developments in the Mozambican political landscape did not cease there.<sup>18</sup>

Approaching a significant occasion such as 25 June 2015, celebration day of the 40th anniversary of independence, political tension seemed dangerously close to explode once again. However, mounting (or never-ending?) tension, arguably contributed to more stimuli for the interviewees, considering how profoundly

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<sup>17</sup> The former two are daily newspapers, whereas the latter are weekly-published

<sup>18</sup> Information relative to the period September - December 2015 may be found in **Appendix A**

Mozambican political scenario was (and still is) intertwined with the topics assessed by the present research. Following the contested results of the latest national elections, Renamo claimed its right to rule five provinces (Manica, Sofala, Tete, Zambezia, Nampula) where it obtained the relative majority of votes, and Niassa province on the basis of voting frauds in favor of ruling Frelimo. Its Parliamentary group had presented a law project to the Assembly of the Republic, to create so-called “provincial autonomies”. Nevertheless, the Frelimo majority rejected the project on 30 April 2015, based on alleged juridical incompatibilities with the Constitution.<sup>19</sup>

On 11 June 2015, Renamo decided to abandon the Conference Center “Joaquim Chissano” where the never-ending political negotiations took place on the integration of residual Renamo armed forces in the Police of the Republic and Defense and Security Forces of Mozambique, and carry on its provincial autonomies implementation project in the course of its National Congress in Beira, Sofala province, central Mozambique.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama had declared on 9 June 2015 to be prepared to recur to armed violence whenever the necessity would require it.<sup>21</sup> Such grim prophecy realized five days later, when two members of the Defence and Security Forces were shot, and one lost his life on the way to the hospital, in a brief shootout in Zóbuè, Moatize district, central province of Tete.<sup>22</sup> Such event was the first outbreak of armed violence<sup>23</sup> between the two counterparts in nine months, since the second Peace Agreement<sup>24</sup> signed on 5 September 2014.

However, on 12 June 2015, during the press conference for Renamo’s Congress conclusion, Renamo’s National Congress in the person of Afonso Dhlakama, pronounced an open ended verdict, which in fact signified the renounce to its original provincial autonomies project in favor of a more inclusive Constitutional reform proposal about the decentralization of the provincial administration, besides accepting *de facto* another round of negotiations and the refusal to recur to armed violence.<sup>25</sup>

As fundamental point of debate between the two counterparts, an agreement on public offices liberalization from party biases was finally signed on 23 June 2015.<sup>26</sup> As months passed, Dhlakama openly admitted to have ordered the attack in Zóbuè

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<sup>19</sup> *O País* online, *Frelimo vota pelo fim do projecto das “autarquias provinciais”*, opais.sapo.mz, 1 May 2015

<sup>20</sup> Raiva, F. (2015), *O País: Conselho da Renamo decide impor autarquias provinciais*, 12 June 2015

<sup>21</sup> André, C. (2015), *Savana, Dhlakama disposto a reeditar Satunjira*, 12 June 2015

<sup>22</sup> *O País*, *Editorial: Confrontação armada volta a matar nove meses depois do “acordo de paz”*, 17 June 2015

<sup>23</sup> Popularly and sarcastically nicknamed “*carinho militar*”, military affection

<sup>24</sup> The first General Peace Agreement is the one signed in Rome

<sup>25</sup> André, C. (2015), *Savana, Falha “fumo branco” para forçar províncias autónomas*, 19 June 2015

<sup>26</sup> *O País* online, *Assinado acordo sobre despartirização*, opais.sapo.mz, 24 June 2015

for alleged “provocations” by Defense and Security Forces. Moreover, the Government accused, on 10 August 2015, Renamo residual armed forces of five more attacks in Tsangano district, Tete province, between July and August, officially with no deadly consequences,<sup>27</sup> with five more armed confrontations in Mojo, in the same Tsangano district on 22 August. The same day, Dhlakama ordered his representatives in Joaquim Chissano Conference Center to suspend negotiations. On Sunday 23 August 2015, the President of the Republic Nyusi sent an official invitation to a *vis-à-vis* dialogue to Renamo leader during a religious ceremony of Pentecostal *Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus*, Universal Church of the Kingdom of God.<sup>28</sup> An even more clamorous declaration by Dhlakama is reported in the weekly newspaper *Canal de Moçambique* of 26 August 2015, in an exhaustive interview with Dhlakama himself, announcing the imminent Renamo governance in the so-called provincial autonomies<sup>29</sup> and his refusal of the invitation to a personal dialogue with President Nyusi.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Mapote, W. (2015):, *Governo acusa Renamo de mais cinco ataques na província de Tete*, *O País*, 11 August 2015

<sup>28</sup> Salema (de), E. (2015); *Nyusi e a IURD enquanto “plataforma de milagres”*, *Canal de Moçambique*, 26 August 2015

<sup>29</sup> Guente, M. (2015), *Canal de Moçambique: Grande entrevista com Afonso Dhlakama*, 26 August 2015

<sup>30</sup> *O País* online, *Afonso Dhlakama recusa encontro com Presidente da República*, *opais.sapo.mz*, 28 August 2015



### 3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

As mentioned, the Mozambican population is on average very young and such statement is confirmed by national statistics. The *Instituto Nacional de Estatísticas* (Statistics National Institute, INE) accounts for a national population of approximately 25.727 million in 2015, whereas the percentages regarding youth are only updated to 2012-2013. Nonetheless, what emerges from this survey is incontrovertible: more than 45% of Mozambicans are under 15 years of age<sup>31</sup>.

However, a recently produced fieldwork study by a Mozambican civil society organization illustrates quite a merciless verdict regarding youth political participation. This organization is the *Parlamento Juvenil de Moçambique* (Mozambican Youth Parliament, PJ), a civil society politically *super partes* movement, advocating for proactive, creative and impartial participation of the youth in decision-making processes. Its May 2014-published study report<sup>32</sup> on youth and political participation had targeted an aleatory sample of 3000 youngsters (43% women, 57% men) between 18 and 35 years, with a combination of quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (open interviews, debates and roundtables) methods,<sup>33</sup> in three main urban areas of Northern, Central and Southern Mozambique. Respectively: Lichinga, Tete and Maputo city (1000 interviewees per city), the latter specifically interesting for the present thesis as the research area was essentially the Mozambican capital city for reasons explained below (see chapter 4).

According to the study's results, although youngsters account for majority large part of the Mozambican population, the formal politics, from political parties structures<sup>34</sup> and up all the way to ruling positions and relevant seats in the national administration, are still largely an adult concern. The PJ study results confirmed the majority of the interviewees answered they knew the meaning of "political participation", and three quarters of them (75%) answered they had previously taken part in the political process. Nonetheless, to most of these interviewees, this meant exclusively voting in the elections, whereas the percentages of those participating in events such as: public consultation (6%), public debates (4.6%), party meetings and activism (1%), pacific manifestations (7%), specialized reunions (6%) and others (4%), are minuscule in comparison.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> *Instituto Nacional de Estatísticas, Estatísticas de Indicadores Sociais 2012-2013*, Maputo, Mozambique, 2012, p. 13-17

<sup>32</sup> For more details on the study, see: <http://parlamentojuvenil.org/> and Youth Parliament, (2014); *Juventude e Participação Política em Moçambique*, Maputo, Mozambique

<sup>33</sup> *Juventude e Participação Política em Moçambique*, (2014), p. 5-11

<sup>34</sup> Excepting those parties with stated quotas of youth participation, PJ report (2014), p.8

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, p.28

The report argues the youth lacks the competence for a proper participation, *i.e.*, participants in decision-making policies and political processes in general must possess adequate knowledge, information and education. However, according to the report, Mozambican youngsters are hardly in such conditions, trapped as they are in precarious social conditions, moreover with a generally faulty information system and lacking openness to dialogue by national political institutions.<sup>36</sup> As a consequence, the youth is marginalized in decision-making processes, as these form of participation do not *per se* significantly affect the national political agenda and disillusionment is frequent, also considering that, even in the electoral process the mere act of voting is an expression of a passive, spectator-like participation.<sup>37</sup> Perhaps, a slightly more active participation happens at local level, in the *bairros* (neighborhoods). The PJ study presents a concrete example, documented in the newspaper *Verdade* of 26 February 2014 when public protest against the decision of the secretary of *bairro* Chamanculo “D”, Maputo city, to install sewer drains underneath a sports pitch, which would have converted it into a latrine, almost degenerated into a riot.<sup>38</sup> Such pitch was highly attended by local youth for sports activities.

The mentioned case would suggest Mozambican youth is indeed concerned with such issues of political participation, however, the marginalization they experience generates inside them a feeling of alienation from the politics, hence they perceive no stimuli to participate at all. Therefore, as specific purpose of the present thesis, research targets were those who are members of youth leagues affiliated to political parties, therefore supposedly involved in first person in issues of political participation. The overarching research question dealt with what these youngsters consider worth their participation and, thereby, why they participate in a youth league while most Mozambicans at their same age are either too skeptical and/or disillusioned to participate at all. As stated in paragraph 1.1, what attracts Maputo city youngsters to become members of a political youth league?

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<sup>36</sup> For more details, *ibidem*, pp. 33-34

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, p.28

<sup>38</sup> *Ibidem*, p.32

#### 4. RESEARCH APPROACH

Before the study is presented, it has to be stated the geographic area for the research fieldwork was limited in terms of time and space to the Mozambican capital city Maputo and it is the author's wish this study might contribute in any possible measure to further analysis at national level. The original idea envisioned a comparative analysis between two different political contexts (Maputo city and Beira, Sofala province capital city, central Mozambique), due to the overwhelming influence of the ruling political party on the former and the general prevalence of opposition parties in the latter. Unfortunately, unexpected constraints made such analysis impossible to perform, hence the operationalization area was restricted to one, although interesting enough, city: Maputo. Another crucial point worth clarifying is present thesis subjects of interest, the "youngsters". The implicit question is when a person may be defined as "young", even more specifically, when a person can be defined as "young" in Africa. Terms such as "youth" or "youngsters" are not universally agreed and unquestionably stated. The Mozambican government officially defines "youth" as the period in human life between 15 and 35 years of age, as specified as well by the Youth African Charter<sup>39</sup>, which Mozambique ratified in 2006, in an African Union meeting in Banjul, Gambia.<sup>40</sup> Quite remarkably, quoted INE survey considers as youngsters people between 0 and 14 years, and as adults people between 15 and 64 years of age on the basis of their economic productivity.<sup>41</sup> To an even more complicated extent, international organizations such as the UN and Unicef establish the space between 15 and 24 years as 'youth'. The fluidity of the age gap reflects its highly variable sociocultural nature, especially in southern hemisphere countries. Notwithstanding the disagreement on exact numbers, in the present study, most interviewees' age fell within 15 and 35 years. However, rather than the age discriminant, the author of the present thesis preferred another criterion to classify the interviewees as "youngsters". Such criterion was outlined by Mozambican social anthropologist Professor Alcinda Honwana who has done extensive research in Mozambique. She states that it is not unfrequent that African youngsters live today in a shady zone between childhood and adulthood, where they are no longer children dependent on their parents, however they cannot be completely independent either, as the chances to obtain a stable job are almost zero.

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<sup>39</sup> See: [http://africa-youth.org/youth\\_charter](http://africa-youth.org/youth_charter). For the definition of "youth", see: *Projeto Carta Africana da Juventude, Definições: "Jovem"*, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 2006.

<sup>40</sup> Nonetheless, not all the assessed youth leagues accept memberships applications by applicants under 18 years of age

<sup>41</sup> *Instituto Nacional de Estatísticas (INE), Estatísticas de Indicadores Sociais 2012-2013*, p. 15

## 5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The logic behind the theoretical framework previewed to begin from a general perspective, that is, essential framing literature on the most general issues such as the youth and political participation, thereafter adjusting the focus on African youth and political participation, to successively restrict the focus specifically on Mozambique and even more punctually to its capital city.

Barry Checkoway lays the first stone for a discussion on youth participation. Amongst his general propositions on what youth participation *de facto* is, substantiated by research or practice, the author found several of mentioned propositions suitable for the present research case. Firstly, “Youth participation is a process of involving young people in the institutions and decisions that affect their lives”, it “refers to the active engagement and real influence of young people, not to their passive presence or token roles in adult agencies”. Arguably, the most appropriate proposition regards the exclusivity feature of youth participation, *i.e.*, the non-representativity of small groups of youngsters involved in participation while most of them are uninvolved or minimally involved. Whereas, it might not be the Mozambican case assuming that young people are “competent citizens rather than passive recipient of services”, first of all, since, as mentioned earlier in chapter 3, competences are what young Mozambicans still lack to properly participate in politics, not to mention they are hardly benefiting from any kind of service.<sup>42</sup>

Continuing on the general trend, the qualitative research of Lúcia Rabello de Castro has many resemblances with the present research, since she conducted her fieldwork in an urban social environment and privileged a qualitative approach as the author of the present thesis did. De Castro focuses her attention on the life of the youth in the large urban agglomerate of Rio de Janeiro and argues that life in a large urban area, wherever it may be, exposes the youngsters to a radical experience of confrontation with “others”, inducing them to understanding efforts on the (non-)existing links between themselves and these “others”.<sup>43</sup> As it regards the youth’s adhesion to the cause of political parties, de Castro states the latter is related to the desire of social transformation and the expectation of a better, fairer world with fewer social inequalities. She even presents a critical assessment of the conditions motivating the interviewed youngsters to be active in political parties and student movements.<sup>44</sup> Although what is argued by de Castro might well

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<sup>42</sup> Checkoway, B. (2011), pp.341-343

<sup>43</sup> Castro (de), Lúcia R. (2008); p. 254

<sup>44</sup> *Ibidem*, pp.256-257

correspond to youth participation in general, the experiences she refers to are quite specific to the case of Brazil.

Hence, the focus has to be adjusted to the African context. Towards such direction, the work by Jon Abbink on youth and politics in Africa constituted an excellent framing piece of literature.<sup>45</sup> Abbink presents a genuine picture of the situation of the youth in Africa, highlighting all the problems of the youth quoted by the PJ report. He even states African youngsters “do not seem to have the future in their own hands” and argues they are “marginalized in national state policies and have a weak legal position”. Nonetheless, despite such initial pessimism, what he also outlines is that the insidious temptation of researching youth in Africa is concentrating on the picture of misery and crisis that the available studies and research reports seem to confirm over and over again. In his opinion, many positive exceptions do exist, moreover, surviving in such dire circumstances must require adaptability skills which, it may be stated is also true in the present case. The historical assessment he presents supports his theory of marginalization of the youth in politics, however, what perhaps is not explored deeply enough in the analysis made by Abbink is the sociological relevance on the definition of youth. He pragmatically agrees on the age bracket usually used (he quotes 14 - 35 years) and highlights the scarce attention to gender cleavages in youth studies.

However, such sociological feature is assessed by Honwana in her book *O Tempo da Juventude* where she addresses, among others, the specific case of Mozambique and its capital city. Honwana argues that in the definition of “youth” (in general) more attention should be devoted to the sociological point of view rather than numerical ones and she introduces the concept of “suspended age” or “waithood”.<sup>46</sup> All social problematics affecting African societies, especially unemployment and lack of social welfare in the urban areas, exasperate the majority of youngsters, who live in a sort of limbo where, despite their age, they are not recognized as adults. They aspire to achieve economic independence so that it would be possible to get married and maintain their own offspring, as, according to Honwana and confirmed by several interviewees, it is not rare that youngsters already have partners or children, yet they keep living in their parents house with their own family due to economic constraints. Hence they cannot assume all the social responsibilities typical of an adult. And year after year, massive unemployment causes more and more youngsters, who sometimes are already in their 30s, to be permanently trapped in such situation.

Nonetheless, Honwana highlights the waithood must not be considered as a pathology or a “failed transition”, as social transitions frequently depend on local

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<sup>45</sup> Abbink, J. (2005), Being young in Africa: the politics of despair and renewal, from *Vanguards or Vandals: Youth, Politics and Conflict in Africa*

<sup>46</sup> Honwana, A. (2013); *O Tempo da Juventude: Emprego, Políticas Mudanças Sociais em África*, Johannesburg, RSA, p.26

political, economic, social, cultural and historical factors. In Africa, youngsters in waithood strive daily to reach their status of social adults with any resource at their disposal.<sup>47</sup> Hence, the waithood is indeed a problematic condition, yet, Honwana claims it stimulates African youngsters not to wait passively for improvements, and to elaborate multiple strategies to guarantee their survival and that of their children, as many of them are already parents although not formally married. Either in part time, underpaid jobs or in the informal economy “many African youngsters struggle, facing extraordinary challenges” amongst which disillusionment and desperation to see their ambitions frustrated.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> *Ibidem*, pp.27-29

<sup>48</sup> *Ibidem*, pp.49-50

## 6. METHODOLOGY

Introducing the research methodology, a qualitative research approach was preferred for the following reasons. Qualitative methods are “appropriate when the phenomena under study are complex, are social in nature, and do not lend themselves to quantification” as Liebscher outlines.<sup>49</sup> Further, the qualitative paradigm is the most obvious choice when “understanding the cultural context from which people derive meaning is an important element of a study”<sup>50</sup> as it was arguably the case of Mozambican youth leagues members.

The multidisciplinary approach to the present study demanded different methods for the different research parts. An initial phase devoted to archival research in the library of Maputo African Studies Center, Eduardo Mondlane University, revealed precious data regarding the foundation and development of the three youth leagues. Here, however, a few specifications are required. Documents reporting crucial events of almost 40 years ago<sup>51</sup> were at disposal to data mining, at least for the OJM and one particular interview provide the data to fill the few blank spaces. In the case of the other two youth leagues, necessary information was not as abundant as for the OJM. In the LJR case, scarce written information had to be integrated with a few specific interviews to long time members, whereas, in the LJMDM case, all necessary data on its history was retrieved from the internet. Nonetheless, in all three cases, specific attention is dedicated to illustrate the historical context in which the three youth leagues were created and to what needs they had to respond, circumstances intertwined with the fundamental events occurred in the course of the political history of Mozambique. One last remark on this research part regards language. All assessed texts, every interview and even daily routine was conducted by the author in Mozambican official language, Portuguese. The author’s own language proficiency allowed him to carry on a thoroughly archival analysis with no necessity of research assistants. Further concern on the language issue is explained below (see chapter 8).

Yet, documentation alone was not enough to analyse thoroughly the research case. Indisputably, in such circumstances as fieldwork, precious research data emerge from interviews with the directly interested, *i.e.*, youth involved in first person in political participation as members of the three youth leagues. Therefore, the author engaged in a series of open interviews with these members. A considerable contribution on aims, uses and issues of qualitative interviews, is illustrated in the

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<sup>49</sup> Liebscher, P. (1998): Quantity with Quality? Teaching Qualitative Methods in an LIS Master’s Program, *Library Trends*, 46 (4), University of Illinois, USA

<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 669-671

<sup>51</sup> In the form of typewritten documents dated 1977

guide to qualitative research methodology<sup>52</sup> by Nouria Brikci and Judith Green. Besides mentioned guide, the author was convinced to recur to qualitative methodological literature directed explicitly to novice researchers, complete with practical advices on the use of interviews, such as the methodological study on novice researchers by Margarita S. Peredaryenko and Steven Eric Krauss, or the valuable interview design guide by David W. Turner III. According to Turner design classification,<sup>53</sup> the alternative privileged for the present study resembles what he calls the standardised open-ended format.

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<sup>52</sup> Brikci, N. ; Green, J. (2007) A Guide to Use Qualitative Research Methodology

<sup>53</sup> Turner, D. W., III (2010) Qualitative interview design: A practical guide for novice investigators. *The Qualitative Report*, 15(3), 754-760. Retrieved from <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR15-3/qid.pdf>.



## **7. RESULTS: Findings**

As explained in the introductory chapter, the present research study includes an historical analysis of the origins and establishment of the three youth leagues. Since the amount of collected data exceeded the expectations, research results were divided into two separate chapters, with the former illustrating results from archival analysis, while the latter contains the information extracted from the qualitative interviews with the members of the three youth leagues the author conducted during his fieldwork research. Specifically, the present chapter 7 accounts for all information that emerged in the course of the text analysis/ archival research performed by the author in the library and archives of Maputo's African Studies Center, Eduardo Mondlane University. Such information was integrated with a few specific interviews with long-time members of the youth leagues, that is, current members of the senior parties who had been members since their respective youth leagues were founded.

The period considered here begins in the early years of independence, when Mozambique acquired the status of sovereign State. Under the leadership of the liberation movement Frelimo, Mozambicans fought for their independence from Portuguese colonial rule. Independence was achieved at last in 1975. In these years a socialism-inspired rhetoric prompted an authoritarian regime institutionalization, with Frelimo as a marxist-leninist vanguard One-Party. Socialist ideologies permeated every facet of the political agenda of the newly independent country. Amongst its policies, the One-Party felt the necessity to educate the new generations to its principles and therefore, along with the omnipresent party-created organs and institutions, a youth league was meant as the political point of reference for young Mozambicans.

## 7.1. A *Geração 8 de Março*: the OJM

The roots of what would become the OJM plunge back in history, in fact, beyond the time this specific youth league had even such denomination. Remarkable was the involvement of the so-called *Geração 8 de Março* (8 March Generation), as the generation of 1977 youngsters and first OJM members is popularly known in Mozambique, from the day of the reunion between delegations of youngsters and Samora Machel in Maputo, dialoguing on the necessity to rebuild the country from the ashes of the independence war. The author conducted a large interview in OJM national headquarters<sup>54</sup> with a member of the 8 March Generation, Vince,<sup>55</sup> who confirmed the participation of the most eminent figures of that time in the OJM foundation: Marcelino dos Santos, Joaquim Chissano, George Ribeiro, José Oscar Monteiro, Jacinto Veloso, Alberto Chipande, Raimundo Pachinuapa, Armando Guebuza and Graça Machel.

Once invested by the supreme authorities in the country, the official first day of the OJM was 29 November 1977, nonetheless, a party youth organization, the “Frelimo Youth League”, had existed since 1975, with its original denomination in English, appointed as anti-colonial youth association. Following independence, such association was reorganized to become the OJM in 1977.

The official proclamation of Frelimo as one-party ruler of the newly founded People’s Republic of Mozambique, happened on 7 February 1977, in Tofo, Inhambane province. In such circumstances, the first independent Mozambique’s Constitution was officially proclaimed as well.<sup>56</sup> On 8 March 1977, President Samora Machel pronounced a call directed to youngsters efforts to rebuild the country. Such circumstances required a more solidly structured party youth organization. Vince affirmed that on 12 April 1977, Frelimo created a Provisory National Secretariat, with the task to prepare a Statute for the organization and ensure the conditions for the First Conference of Mozambican Youth, while the second task regarded the development of organizational structures throughout the whole national territory. Such Secretariat was appointed *Ad interim*, since it had not been elected by the members. According to Vince, the first, appointed national Secretary was Amour Zacarias Kupela, replacing the former leader of Frelimo’s Youth League, Francisco Valentim Cabo. As confirmation to such events, unquestionable evidence emerged from the dusty archives of Maputo’s African Studies Center library, Eduardo Mondlane University, in the form of typewritten 1977 documents.

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<sup>54</sup> In *Rua Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*, Maputo city, Sommerschild *bairro*

<sup>55</sup> Pseudonymous

<sup>56</sup> The author personally visited such locations

A Program Project for the first OJM statute was redacted in that same year. It presents the OJM as the association of young Mozambicans that unifies, mobilizes and organises the youth to the correct application of Frelimo program and ideology,<sup>57</sup> it educates its members to the values embodied by Frelimo in the independence war, which they must promote and respect. Moreover, the OJM affiliates sympathize with all youngsters in the world who fight for the socialist cause. A Proposal Statute<sup>58</sup> reiterates the idea of a democratic centralist mass organization inspired by Frelimo political line<sup>59</sup> and describes the duties and rights of the affiliates. Any Mozambican from 14 to 30 years of age can request affiliation to his or her closest OJM representative, independently of sex, ethnicity, social position, education or religious beliefs<sup>60</sup> and has the right to participate to any OJM event, elect and being elected in any OJM organ.<sup>61</sup>

As it concerns the organs of the organization, the National Conference is the fundamental decision organ, reuniting OJM members. It convenes every five years, elects the 40 members of the National Council and votes the agenda proposed by the same Council. The latter convenes every six months and rules when the Conference is not operating. Amongst its members, the Council elects the National Secretary. The National Secretary represents the OJM at national and international level, applies the decisions of the Council and rules when the Council is not operating.<sup>62</sup> The same structure is replicated at Provincial and District level, whereas the *circulo* (circle: factories, cooperatives, schools, neighbourhoods... ) only have an Assembly and a Secretariat, and when the circle would be too large or densely populated, it shall be sub-divided into *células* (cells), each with its own Secretary. To conclude, the national headquarters are in the capital city Maputo and it shall be exclusively a prerogative of the Conference to alter the Statute.<sup>63</sup>

All such preparation was officialized in the context of the first National Conference of Mozambican Youth held in Maputo, from 29 November 1977 to 3 December 1977.

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<sup>57</sup> *Ibidem*, points 1-3

<sup>58</sup> *Proposta de Estatuto da OJM*, OJM National Secretariat, Maputo Eduardo Mondlane University African Studies Centre library archives, 1977

<sup>59</sup> *Ibidem*, Article 1

<sup>60</sup> *Ibidem*, Article 5

<sup>61</sup> As it concerns the ruling organs, these are defined by articles 11-22. More information on this point is explained in sub-paragraph 5.1.2 below

<sup>62</sup> *Ibidem*, art. 11-22

<sup>63</sup> *Ibidem*, art.27-28

## The Early Years (1977): The First National Conference of Mozambican Youth

The *Relatorio da OJM à I Conferencia Nacional da Juventude Moçambicana*<sup>64</sup>, a report on the first grandiose event organised by the OJM, describes with no lack of triumphant rhetoric the crucial phases of the Mozambican struggle for independence and how vast was the participation of the youth. In the presence of thousands of youngsters from all over Mozambique and representatives of youth leagues from Tanzania, Zambia, Angola, South Africa, Zimbabwe, East Timor and the Arab Republic of the Sahara, the report is introduced by the salute to all the attendants, youngsters who fight for the cause of socialism.<sup>65</sup> The speaker, Zacarias Kupela,<sup>66</sup> sums up the tragedies Mozambican youth was victim of during the colonial years and how the oppressors attempted to annihilate its energy.<sup>67</sup> However, after the foundation of Frelimo on 25 June 1962, youngsters largely uprose to achieve national independence in the *Luta Armada*<sup>68</sup>. Although a vast majority supported the Frelimo cause, there were episodes of “reactionaries” amongst the youth, some who even betrayed and cooperated with the enemy, as victims of the cultural-ideological “brainwash” operated by the Portuguese colonial power,<sup>69</sup> with the paradoxical result they rejected their Mozambican identity, nonetheless, they were not truly accepted as Portuguese.<sup>70</sup>

Then, the introductory discourse mentions the transition period and the formative seminary held in Mocuba (Zambezia province, central-northern Mozambique) on 25 February 1974. Between the *Revolução dos Cravos* (25 April 1974)<sup>71</sup> and the official proclamation of independence (25 June 1975), there was a large deployment of youngsters in the dynamizing groups of factory workers to maintain production after most Portuguese settlers<sup>72</sup> left the country, and the organization of cultural events as well. The core mission was to prepare and educate the soon-independent country to the values of the socialist struggle. The report then verts on OJM’s agenda in those seven months from its creation until the Conference, in other

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<sup>64</sup> The OJM Report on the I Mozambican Youth National Conference, hereby also mentioned as the Conference, OJM National Secretariat, Maputo Eduardo Mondlane University African Studies Centre library archives, 1977

<sup>65</sup> *Ibidem*, p.1

<sup>66</sup> The OJM National Secretary

<sup>67</sup> *Ibidem*, p.2

<sup>68</sup> As the independence war (1964 - 1974) is popularly known in Mozambique

<sup>69</sup> *Ibidem*, p.5

<sup>70</sup> The *Relatorio* mentions that the old Frelimo Youth League had become dominated by “reactionaries” who accused Frelimo party of atrocities committed in the independence war

<sup>71</sup> Carnation Revolution, the bloodless military coup that overthrew the Portuguese regime of Marcelo Caetano, successor of Antonio Oliveira de Salazar

<sup>72</sup> Amongst whom, wealthy private company owners

words the *Acção Desenvolvida pelo Secretariado Nacional da OJM desde a sua criação*.<sup>73</sup> Since the OJM National Secretariat had to develop an action plan, and the OJM needed an internal structure, the Action Plan consisted of a twofold strategy, both internally and externally-oriented:

- Internal:

a general mobilization and an ideological offensive as well that massively involved the youth;

- External:

i. international propaganda of the OJM activities in Mozambique to promote the First Conference;

ii. creating liaisons of cooperation between the OJM and other African youth leagues, and between the OJM and socialist students associations worldwide;

iii. OJM promotion at global level, to obtain moral and material support for its cause from the youth and students international movement<sup>74</sup>.

As it regards the internal structure, it consisted of:

One National Secretary;

Five National Departments:

1. Mobilisation and Organization<sup>75</sup>: entitled to send delegations to Mozambican provinces and districts to assess the youth grievances and necessities. District conferences were to elect representatives to attend a conference at provincial level. Here, issues that had not emerged at the district conferences were debated over. Provincial conferences had to elect their representatives for the First National Conference.<sup>76</sup> In the meantime, fund raising campaigns were launched throughout the country to sponsor the Conference.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> The following is a sum up of pages 9-21, dealing with the OJM operate, from its foundation on 12 April 1977 until the here mentioned Conference of 29 October - 3 November 1977

<sup>74</sup> Although what is meant here with “student international movement” is not clear and no more explanation is made in the report, p.9

<sup>75</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 10-12

<sup>76</sup> These events occurred between September and October 1977, a few in November

<sup>77</sup> Although praising the efforts made, the report also lamented faulty organisation in some Districts which had repercussions at Provincial level

2. Information and Propaganda<sup>78</sup>: OJM activities advertisement at national level, building libraries<sup>79</sup>, mass media such as radio programs<sup>80</sup> and the spread of newspapers and magazines.<sup>81</sup>

3. Cadre Formation<sup>82</sup>: was responsible for OJM's personnel formation and the education of future public functionaries in all national structures. A joint Commission with the participation of the Ministries of Public Works and Agriculture opened an OJM Formation Centre.<sup>83</sup> It was among this department's duties to sponsor amongst the Provincial Secretariats, internships and formation courses at the Ministries of Internal Affairs, Marine and Transports and Communications.<sup>84</sup>

4. Administration<sup>85</sup>: OJM's bureaucratic office, responsible for finances, transport and logistical support. Operated mainly at national level, however, it also supported provincial Secretariats. In the period immediately antecedent the I First Conference, it focused all its efforts to its organisation.<sup>86</sup>

5. Foreign Relations<sup>87</sup>: international propaganda and First Conference advertisement were its main tasks. This department was also appointed to send OJM representatives to several African countries (the report quotes the youth league of the Tanzanian ruling party *Chama cha Mapinduzi*<sup>88</sup>) and East bloc countries (quoted: USSR, GDR, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria) and invite youth delegations from these countries to visit Mozambique. OJM high-level cadres were also sent to formation courses in East Germany and Cuba. Further, the department supported Mozambican students sent to East Europe or the Caribbean to study, by Frelimo-sponsored scholarships, and manifested solidarity to South African ANC students protesting in Soweto.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 12-13

<sup>79</sup> Although this point is mentioned to be still at an embryonic phase in late 1977

<sup>80</sup> At national level, the weekly program *Juventude e Revolução*, at Provincial level, example of monthly *A Vitoria Organiza-se* in Zambezia province, soon imitated by Inhambane and Sofala

<sup>81</sup> such as the vanguard magazine *Tempo*

<sup>82</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 13-15

<sup>83</sup> Operative in 1978

<sup>84</sup> Provinces mentioned are Maputo, Zambezia, Sofala and Gaza

<sup>85</sup> *Ibidem*, p.15

<sup>86</sup> Lamented limited and /or scarce activism in some Provinces, faulty organisation and several difficulties

<sup>87</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 15-18

<sup>88</sup> The youth league of *Chama cha Mapinduzi* party traveled to Mozambique in September 1977

<sup>89</sup> Officially proclaimed on International Students Day, 17 November 1977, p. 18

Continuing with the internal structure of the OJM, the report mentions:

- 10 Provincial Secretaries with identical functions in all provinces;
- 100 District Secretaries with identical functions in all districts;
- An undefined number of cells and circles at minor level, i.e. in the cities. The report does not give an exact number of all *células* and *círculos*, (OJM operative units below city level) in the whole national territory.

OJM's National Secretariat was also active in cultural and sports events nationwide, cooperated with the Political Commissariat of the Defence and Security Forces and prepared official considerations on the points emerged in the First Conference.<sup>90</sup> Vince affirmed two themes were predominant. First of all, the liaison between urban workers and rural peasants as the cornerstone to rebuild the country. Secondly, and most important to the present dissertation, the voluntary work of the youth, from the mantra repeated by Machel: "*O trabalho voluntario é a nossa militância*", ("voluntary work is our militancy") through which the youth had to rebuild the country. According to Vince, in 1977, Mozambique had a population of some 10 million people and between 75% and 90% were illiterates. Hence, it was a responsibility of the 8 March Generation to educate themselves and help educating all Mozambicans.

### The OJM in the Civil War (1977 - 1992)

As Vince put it, even before the civil war, Machel had declared that the youth can be revolutionary but also reactionary. And time was to prove these very words. In late 1970s, a civil war broke out, and the role the OJM had to play changed to adapt to those tragic events. The education of OJM members verted on a patriotic propaganda task, insisting on military service as a civic duty. The national army and national security forces recruited most their soldiers among youngsters and to make them aware about what they were doing, OJM cadre dispensed military education services. Vince affirmed it was not rare that the young recruits were in fact OJM members attracted by the perspective of a military career. To prove his words, he declared many of those who were young cadets back then, today are army officials. Meetings were held everywhere to debate about military service,

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<sup>90</sup> Amongst whom, it proposed a trio of Commission to break down the organisation difficulties at District and Provincial level, p. 20

however, in these same years, OJM members were not exclusively involved in military initiatives.

Several development projects flourished on the one-party agenda in almost all provinces and almost all such projects witnessed or demanded a massive young involvement. In Niassa province, Frelimo established the headquarters for a development project in 1979. Niassa province was barely populated at the time, hence, some 700 inactive youngsters were transferred there from all provinces to initiate the (in)famous *Operação Produção* (Operation Production). According to Vince, rural towns (he mentioned Unango) were built in those years by voluntary brigades replaced periodically each three months.

Frelimo also organized the reconstruction of rice plantations in Gaza province, destroyed by floods in 1978 and the same was done with sugar cane cultivation in Sofala province. Vince was personally involved, alongside with today Minister for Public Works, Carvalho Muária, in a mining project in Moatize district, in the central province of Tete. In the spirit of international cooperation among youth organizations,<sup>91</sup> political delegations from East bloc countries were welcomed to cooperate, sharing their expertise and economic means. Vince mentioned the project in Moatize witnessed the presence of the *Freie Deutsche Jugend*, Free German Youth, socialist youth movement of the Democratic Republic of Germany. Even further, OJM contributed to public infrastructure works, such as paving cement roads to link provincial capitals with the districts.

As last remark regarding this period, Vince admitted no matter how grandiose all mentioned projects were and no matter the commitment of the OJM, these projects were almost all unrealizable in practice, both for economic and war constraints.

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<sup>91</sup> Praised by the I Conference and highlighted by several other interviewees as well



## **The OJM after the Peace Agreement (1992 - ...)**

Vince argued that even in a different context, a few issues remained. For example, patriotism is something a country needs, even in peace times. He openly admitted Mozambican civil war had devastating repercussions and the country was torn apart. Nonetheless, he mentioned, the OJM contribution to military service remained. It was unclear by his words whether he intended to say that military tension never ceased completely between the two war enemies, therefore the youth had to keep alert in case homeland security was on stake again. In fact, episodes of violence exploded in 2013 and more recently in 2015 and this seemed to confirm his words. Besides the military aspect, he remarked how the change of regimes did not signify the OJM ceased to exercise its role of youth mobilizer for Frelimo. He remarked several times how the OJM forges the future leaders of Frelimo party and many of those sitting in the Parliament, local and national institutions were educated in the OJM. Machel declared that the OJM would be an inexhaustible source of future cadre. However, as he sees it, the OJM must be prepared, be flexible to better adapt to the necessities of Frelimo and must always pay attention to the strategies of the party to govern Mozambique and create welfare for Mozambicans. Such sense of continuity was recurrently quoted by OJM interviewees (see chapter 8).

Nonetheless, times change. In civil war times, the priority was fighting to protect the homeland, while in times of peace, being more robust and adapting has to be the top point on the agenda. Vince admitted that, nowadays, voluntary work cannot possibly be enough to cover all activities. He nostalgically referred to his own experience as volunteer at the dawn of the OJM, and stated that evolving does not mean eliminating the voluntary work, which, in his opinion is still crucial to forge the new generations properly as it used to do in the 1980s. Surviving in a new regime with political pluralism requires resources since, until the 1990s, the OJM was the only youth association existing in Mozambique, hence, whenever a youngster wanted to be politically active, there were no alternatives. However, after 1992, along with multiparty democracy, many other youth organizations emerged, which also competed with OJM for incrementing their numbers. To still be able to exercise attraction on the youth today, the organization must be more robust in its structure, with more economic resources to devote to its projects, which otherwise remain abstract and not doable in practice.

Quite interestingly, Vince argued the OJM should be more sensitive to the contemporary social environment of Mozambique, for example, considering more initiatives dealing with HIV-prevention campaigns. He admitted he had been involved in first person in a EU Parliamentarians for Africa - sponsored venture of HIV prevention for children and families in Mozambique and he believes such are

the types of initiatives the OJM must include more consistently in its agenda. In his words, the OJM needs to adapt to new social circumstances and such circumstances include HIV spread, quite undoubtedly an emergence in Mozambique and, specifically its capital city (included by the UN in the world 20 most “affected” cities<sup>92</sup>). His point of view might be interpreted in two different ways. Either may it be a suggestion to the OJM to go beyond the sole politics and realize that present social emergency demands its attention. On the other hand, he might as well have presented a strategic policy to become more attractive to the youth compared to the new competition, which sprouted with the advent of multiparty democracy.

### OJM National Structure Today (2010 - ... )

The current organization chart is explained in the fourth chapter of the OJM Statutes (its latest version approved in 2010) and it is briefly presented here.<sup>93</sup> First of all, the Statutes specify the OJM is structured according to the administrative division of the country, following a bottom-up description.

1. *Célula* (Cell), the basic organization of the OJM:
  - a. Cell Reunion
  - b. Cell Secretariat
  - c. Connection Elements to the Jurisdictional Council
  
2. *Círculo* (Circle):
  - a. Circle Conference
  - b. Circle Committee
  - c. Circle Secretariat
  - d. Connection Elements to the Jurisdictional Council
  
3. *Zona* (Zone):
  - a. Zone Conference
  - b. Zone Committee

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<sup>92</sup> O País online: Nações Unidas colocam Maputo entre as 20 cidades do mundo em que é urgente combater HIV/Sida, opais.sapo.mz, 8 December 2015

<sup>93</sup> *Estatutos da OJM (2010), Capítulo IV, Órgãos da OJM*. Here quoted artt. 39 - 46

- c. Zone Secretariat
- d. Zone Jurisdictional Council

4. *Distritos e Cidades* (Districts and Cities):

- a. District or City Conference
- b. District or City Committee
- c. District or City Secretariat
- d. District or City Jurisdictional Council

5. *Província* (Province):

- a. Provincial Conference
- b. Provincial Committee
- c. Provincial Secretariat
- d. Provincial Jurisdictional Council

6. *Órgãos Centrais* (Central Organs), national level organs:

- a. Congress (largest OJM organ, convened by the Central Committee who determines date, place of reunion and number of delegates)
- b. Central Committee
- c. Secretariat of the Central Committee (with a Secretary-General as Chief)
- d. Central Jurisdictional Council

The organization chart given above is merely a sketch of a much more complex structure. Nevertheless, a few remarks are worth mentioning. Former Secretary-General Pedro Cossa, mentioned in his interview that all members work in five areas: Mobilization and Propaganda; Organization and Cadres Formation; Administration and Finances; Students and Voluntary Work; and, lastly, Cooperation and Development. The latter two are present only at national level. Present day OJM structure preserved most of its original outline as it concerns the sub-division of its branches from central to local level, and what is persisting until the present days are also the “original” OJM flag, symbol and official hymn.<sup>94</sup> On the other hand, the Statutes do not refer to the activities of the various

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<sup>94</sup> With explicit references to socialism, see: *Estatutos da OJM* (2010), p.35 for the hymn

Departments.<sup>95</sup> Moreover, the age span for requesting membership was altered from the original 14 - 30 years to 15 - 35 years of age.<sup>96</sup> Former OJM National Secretary-General, and Frelimo party MP Pedro Cossa declared that the OJM currently accounts for some 2 million members in the whole of Mozambique. If that is true, it would mean that close to a quarter of Mozambique's youth would be a member of OJM, which is honestly hard to believe.

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<sup>95</sup> More information on the latter are contained in chapter 8

<sup>96</sup> See: *OJM Estatutos* (2010), art. 7

## 7.2 After the Civil War: the LJR

### Rethinking the Identity in the Civil War Aftermath

One of the most gruesome civil wars of the XX century was over in 1992, after sixteen years (1976-1992) and a million of lives lost. Although the Mozambican civil war is a fascinating (as much as tragic) research issue, the present dissertation already verted on it in chapter 2. Nonetheless, a few facts about the aftermath of the war are worth repeating. A Constitution granting political pluralism was passed in 1990 and the first free elections the country had ever witnessed, approved by the international community and the UN, were on their way. Hence war enemies prepared to become political adversaries. However, whether for Frelimo the task was not that much complicated, considering its long experience, the situation was quite more complex for its opponent, the Renamo.

With the end of the war, the Renamo had to rethink its role in the political arena and prepare its transition to a proper political party that could compete in the new democratic multiparty regime. In fact, the correct denomination of Renamo after the peace agreement is “Renamo Party” to distinguish it from its guerrilla past. Amongst its priorities in its transition to a political party identity, the Renamo leadership envisioned a youth association to aggregate all its youngest members and, presumably, become more attractive to youth participation. To such purpose, the first youth league of Renamo was founded in 1992.

### The Renamo Party and Statute: The Foundation of JNM (1992 - 2008)

Once again, the Maputo African Studies Centre archives produced precious, although insufficient, research data. A Renamo Party *Programa e Estatutos*<sup>97</sup> establish the key points of Renamo political agenda in multiparty Mozambique. Amongst these points, the foundation of a youth league is, telegraphically, reported in the section “Special Organisations”: “The *Juventude Nacional de Moçambique* (Mozambican National Youth, JNM) will integrate all the Mozambican youngsters between 10 and 18 years of age, whose families identify themselves with the Renamo principles, or, alternatively, who decide by their own free will to join the organization. The JNM is directed by a National President and a National Secretariat, which will integrate representatives from all Provinces”.<sup>98</sup> First Secretary-General was Rui de Sousa.

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<sup>97</sup> Program and statutes, with the signature of Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama himself

<sup>98</sup> *Programa e Estatutos do Partido Renamo*, Renamo Party Program and Statutes, A. Dhlakama, Maputo Eduardo Mondlane University African Studies Centre library archives, 1992, p. 21

Today, Renamo's youth league is known as *Liga Nacional da Juventude da Renamo*, (Renamo National Youth League, LJR). The issue of the name of such youth league troubled the author until a LJR interviewee clarified the doubt. Apparently, the youth league name was officially changed to *Liga Nacional da Juventude da Renamo* after a Renamo party congress in Quelimane, Zambezia province, in 2006. The same interviewee who clarified mentioned doubt, Augusto, was also the "historical" Renamo youth league member who kindly supplied missing written information on the early years of the league.

Nevertheless, his words were quite cryptic. He admitted a youth association project had been in progress even before the end of the civil war. Between the late 1980s and 1990, the year when he joined the party and even fought on the frontline as a guerrilla, Renamo was drafting the first proposal of what would become its youth representative and even established a central headquarter where the future cadres of the party, among whom, the first leaders of the youth league had to receive some political education. When the author inquired on more details, Augusto limited himself to the answer that he was uncertain on the exact location of such headquarters, although he presumed it to be in Gorongosa, Sofala province. True, he mentioned he was a member of the armed force and after the peace agreement was relocated to different military bases around Sofala province, before returning to Beira in 1996 and then moved to Maputo in 1999, where he worked for the Central Cabinet of Elections. In 2001, he declared, he started working with former league President Rui de Sousa and from such date onwards, he has been an administrative member.

From his response, however, a few doubts arise. It might have been the case, given his career in Renamo military forces that Augusto was genuinely unaware of more intelligence on the early years of the league. On the other hand it might as well have been the case that he did not intend to reveal too much concerning an issue still quite "classified" to a stranger foreign researcher. In any case, information covering more extensively the history of the Renamo youth league in the period from 1992 to recent times was not available, except from mentioned Renamo party 2006 congress in Quelimane which officialized the adoption of the new name for the youth league, from then onwards.

## The LJR Structure today (2008 - ...)

In order to gather more data on the structure of the LJR, Augusto provided the author with the latest version of LJR Statutes. On 23 April 2008, the Mozambican Ministry of Justice recognized the status of juridical person to the LJR. Within the Supplement of the Republic Bulletin such Statutes are included.<sup>99</sup>

What is peremptorily stated in the very first article is that “the Renamo Youth League (LJR) is an organization aggregating all young Mozambicans fighting for democracy, peace, freedom and human rights, without distinction of race, color, ethnicity, religious beliefs, profession, social origin, place of birth or residence”. It might be argued that this is a quite vague way of including as many categories of youngsters as possible, quite similar in fact to its counterparts. However, what is peculiar of the LJR is referred to in art. 6: “Members of the LJR may be all young Mozambicans from 15 years of age...” therefore there is no maximum age limit established. Such point shall be furtherly debated below (see paragraph 8.4).

The national organization chart is contained in chapter 5 of the Statutes, which accounts for the national organs:<sup>100</sup>

- a. National Conference (largest body of LJR members)
- b. National Council (deliberating organ of the youth league between two reunions of the National Conference)
- c. Fiscal Council<sup>101</sup> (elected by the National Conference, bureaucratic organ entitled of the officialization of the activities of the youth league and administration of economic resources)
- d. Directive Council (permanent directive organ of the youth league)

As it concerns the local level organs, they are listed in chapter 9 of the Statutes, in a top-down order:

1. Province:
  - a. Provincial Conference
  - b. Provincial Council
  - c. Provincial Direction Council

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<sup>99</sup> From: *Boletim da República, III série - Número 23, 4º Suplemento*, 10 June 2008, Maputo, Mozambique

<sup>100</sup> See: *Boletim da República, III série - Número 23, 4º Suplemento, Liga da Juventude da Renamo*, art. 13. For more details on different functions of mentioned organs, see chapters 6 - 8

<sup>101</sup> The competences of the Fiscal Council are detailed in chapter 10

2. District and city:
  - a. District or city Conference
  - b. District or city Council
  - c. District or city Direction Council
  
3. Administration area:
  - a. Administration area President
  - b. Administration area Council
  - c. Administration area Direction Council
  
4. Locality:
  - a. Locality Conference
  - b. Locality Council
  - c. Locality Directive Council

Similarities with the OJM structure are blatant, starting from the National Conference. At art. 14.2, the Statutes quotes: “The number of delegates and Renamo party’s representatives invited to the National Conference is deliberated by the National Council”. While, at art. 16 it is specified that “The National Conference is reunited every five years except for extraordinary cases requested by the Directive Council or one third of the members of the National Council of the Renamo Youth League”. By the mere words, the LJR Statutes appear to be written along the lines of the OJM’ s. The National Conference corresponds to the OJM Congress, whose numbers are established by a directive organ, the National Council (the OJM’s Central Committee) and even the periodicity of plenary meetings is exactly the same (every five years).

As it concerns local level organs, these are reduced to four, whereas OJM structure accounts for five sub-divisions, the two lowest ones with different names, however following the same logic.

Such similarities surface doubts. Nonetheless, it is presumable that the general frame of an older youth political association was used as reference model to draw the LJR Statutes, simply because there was no other pre-civil war example to use, in fact, the OJM used to be the only political youth association existing in the country until the 1990s. As a final remark, art. 24 of LJR Statutes states the Direction Council of the youth league is composed of a President, a Secretary-



General and five members elected by the National Council. However, at the time of present thesis writing, the highest authority of the youth league was President Ivone Soares, also Secretary-General *ad interim*,<sup>102</sup> also, Ms Soares did not specify the exact number of members at national level.

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<sup>102</sup> In her interview, Ms Soares informed the author the election of a new Secretary-General was on the agenda, although she mentioned the exact date was still uncertain

### 7.3 The “Unwanted Third”: The LJMDM

#### The MDM *Liga da Juventude*: LJMDM (2009 - ... )

Most information on the *Movimento Democrático de Moçambique* (MDM) are quoted above (chapter 2). In the course of the history of the Mozambican multiparty system, the MDM might constitute a concrete breakaway from traditional two-party rule. Analysing the MDM in its early years, Mozambican scholars, such as Sérgio Chichava, highlight the lack of originality of the MDM political message, and little difference between the MDM's political program and orientation and those of other parties, especially Frelimo and Renamo.<sup>103</sup> Furthermore, Nuvunga and Adalima stated that the MDM is “the same food that the Mozambicans are used to. The difference is that this food is served in new plates. More broadly, the MDM is not substantively different from other parties.”<sup>104</sup> Arguably, the definition of the youth as the MDM's greatest priority is one of the very few differences in the political program of this party.<sup>105</sup>

A party with no direct connection to the civil war or armed struggles might in fact being more alluring to a generation of youngsters, in fact the majority of Mozambican population, who are born after 1994, hence after the end of the civil war and to whom the political messages of both Frelimo and Renamo may sound distant and, therefore, less attractive. As it concerns the LJMDM, in the MDM 2009 founding Statute, its creation is stated in Section VII, art. 36.3<sup>106</sup>: “The *Liga da Juventude* (Youth League) is the party organisation oriented towards the promotion and mobilization of youngsters” and the appointment of the leadership of the league took place in Beira on 17 May 2009 for the sectors: Mobilization, Information, Administration and Finances, Planning and Studies, Culture and Sport, and the League National Council chief.<sup>107</sup>

Officially, the LJMDM initiated its activities with its first national conference in Chimoio, Manica province, on 8 and 9 August 2010. Such national conference elected Sande Carmona as first LJMDM President for a five-year mandate.<sup>108</sup>

Since 2011, the MDM initiated the establishment of Youth Political Committees in the provinces with the aim of revitalizing the party at the province and district levels.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Chichava, S. (2010), p. 16

<sup>104</sup> Nuvunga, A. ; Adalima, J. (2011), p. 4

<sup>105</sup> Chichava, S. (2010); p.16-17

<sup>106</sup> *Estatutos do Movimento Democrático de Moçambique* (2009)

<sup>107</sup> See: *O País* online: *MDM empossa direcção da sua Liga Juvenil*, opais.sapo.mz, 17 May 2009

<sup>108</sup> See: *O País* online: *Liga da juventude do MDM formaliza seu funcionamento*, opais.sapo.mz, 6 August 2010

As it concerns the LJMDM organization chart, no printed version was available yet, and hence the author had to collect information through other sources. its description was provided by current Maputo city President of MDM's youth league, Sid, integrated with information extracted from other interviews:

A National Conference, meeting at determined periods, entitled to elect the President with a five-year mandate. The President is also the 11th member of MDM party Permanent Political Commission. Four LJMDM members in each Province are elected to seat in the National Council.

Five Departments are in charge of the activities of the league: Mobilization, Head Information, Culture and Religion, Finances and Studies & Projects. Each Department has a Chief and a Deputy.

A Direction Council of ten members is present, with the league President as holder of the 11th seat, like in the party Commission. Regarding the total number of members, the LJMDM President for Maputo city affirmed the league accounts for approximately 250 - 280 thousand affiliates at national level, although it is reasonable to doubt on the truthfulness of such numbers.

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<sup>109</sup> Nuvunga, A. ; Adalima, J. (2011), p. 13

## 8. RESULTS: Interviews

As mentioned above in chapter 7, research results were divided into two separate chapters for practical reasons. The present chapter 8 contains the information extracted from the qualitative interviews with members of the three youth leagues the author conducted during his fieldwork research. A list of interview questions was elaborated, and underwent several modifications in order to facilitate the comprehension by the interviewees as much as possible. The question list included so to say “technical” questions on each youth league structure and functioning and also more “personal” questions on the experiences and opinions of the interviewees. As already mentioned above in chapter 7, a few specific interviews were used to integrate the collected archival information on the evolution of the three leagues through the years, presenting how they are structured and work in the present time at national level, whereas, the results presented here concern specifically the structure of the youth leagues in Maputo city.

Chapter 8 was divided into six paragraphs, the first three discussing all “technical” details on the structure and functioning of the three youth leagues in the city, while the last three paragraphs concern “personal” information. Each paragraph reports the answers given by the interviewees and it is divided into three sub-paragraphs, one for each youth league. Interviews are not reproduced integrally as such procedure would require a too large amount of space. Whereas, what is emphasized are recurring patterns among members of the same youth league, as emerged from their answers to the same question. A conclusive fourth sub-paragraph, “Comparisons” confronts patterns from different youth leagues regarding the same question. Such conclusive sub-paragraphs also contain the author’s personal reflections on the collected data, with additional caution for differentiation variables such as gender.

As it concerns the network of interviewees, it was built starting from 3 cell phone contacts<sup>110</sup> and successively by kindly asking further potential contacts, indistinctively men and/or women, to the interviewees, following the logic of so-called “snowball method”. The author contacted personally each potential interviewee either through email, SMS, phone calls or Whatsapp and successively arranged a *vis-à-vis* meeting. Before each interview, the author stated the purpose of the research, certified by a written credential generously prepared by the Maputo African Studies Center, UEM, as his academic host. The interviewees were asked whether they would accept to reveal the following personal data: full name,

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<sup>110</sup> Kindly given by Mr Felizberto Mulhovo from the Embassy of the Netherlands in Mozambique and administration council member of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD), to whom goes the author’s deepest appreciation

age, year of affiliation and current position in their respective youth league. All those who accepted to be interviewed agreed on these terms without the need of a written consent, nor such consent was ever requested from the author by any interviewee. Nonetheless, as mentioned above in chapter 6, in order to protect the privacy of the interviewees, the author decided to replace their names, wherever mentioned in the present chapter, with pseudonyms, except for those very few specific cases when interviewees are public functionaries accustomed to be interviewed and therefore these interviewees are quoted by their real names.

As a premise to all information presented here, all interviews were conducted in Portuguese with no presence of interpreters. Notwithstanding the author's linguistic proficiency, it must be remembered he is not a Portuguese native speaker, contrary to most (if not all) his interviewees. Moreover, the author's personal reflections on his own role as a foreigner white European researcher in an African context, with all the related implications, are present as well.

## 8.1 Maputo City Structure

The first step in the interview procedure was investigating what are the structures of the three leagues in the city today. To such purpose, the author targeted mainly the three top-ranked members in the city, for each one of the leagues and directly asked them to explain the organization chart of their own league in Maputo city. Further, interviewees were asked to describe the various organs of their league in the city, their denomination and responsibilities. Thereon, discussion regarded the number of members. This point was merely to have an idea of which one of the three leagues has the highest number of affiliates, hence, supposedly, is most attractive.

Quite unexpectedly, if what affirmed by the interviewees corresponds to the truth, Frelimo youth league OJM is not the one with most members in the city.

### The OJM

A quite accurate account of the OJM's structure in Maputo city was provided, among others, by a interview at OJM Maputo city headquarters, Avenida Lucas Luali<sup>111</sup> with the current Maputo city OJM Secretary, Dom. Compared with the "official" version contained in the OJM Statutes, the description made by Dom corresponds quite faithfully.

According to Dom's response, since Maputo city has a provincial statute, its structure has the Provincial Secretary (Dom himself) at the top. His description of the lower structure followed the sub-division logic of the Statutes: urban districts, zone secretariats, circles and, at lowest level, cells, each with their own secretariat. Cells are at the basis of the organization and account from 3 to a maximum of 15 members, circles from 16 to 30 members and zones from 31 to 100 members. Up to zone level, the number of memberships is the division criterium, whereas, for urban districts, divisions are made according to their geography. As for the, how Dom defined them, *áreas de trabalho* ("working areas"), what he mentioned agreed with the specifications made by Pedro Cossa (as given in chapter 7). The organization includes the Provincial Secretariat Cabinet and three working areas: Administration and Finance, Mobilization and Propaganda, Organization and Cadre Formation. At urban district level, there are only the Administration and Finance and Mobilization and Propaganda areas, besides the urban district Secretariat. Such situation is the same at zone and circle level. Finally, at cell level, there is only a Cell Secretary and an Assistant, which, as Dom remarked, makes

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<sup>111</sup> Also Frelimo party headquarters in Maputo city

perfect sense: a cell may comprehend only 3 members, therefore it would mean one Secretary and an Assistant and only one more member, hence, there is no reason for more complicated structures, although his answer was not as exhaustive as the OJM Statutes in terms of compositions of organs.<sup>112</sup> Urban districts are seven plus a “virtual” one, called “Academic District”. The reason is that in Maputo there is a high concentration of academic institutions, hence, many students come to the city from other provinces and they are not registered as residents in any urban district. That is the reason such “virtual” district was created, to regroup all members who are students from outside the capital city and currently living in Maputo. To summarize: eight urban districts, 27 zones, 278 circles and 931 cells. In total, Dom declared that the OJM accounts for 24,973 members in the whole area of Maputo city.

## The LJR

The President of the Renamo youth league in Maputo city, Cam, welcomed the author at the delegation of the LJR in Avenida Emilia Dausse, Maputo for a morning interview session. Asked to describe the LJR’s structure in the city, he began by stating the city representative is provincial, subordinated to the national representative. Besides the city President, the activities are subdivided among five different departments or areas: Mobilization, Information, Statistics and Projects, Recreation and Sports and, finally, Culture. Each area has its own chief and all their activities are coordinated from the LJR city headquarters, which are in fact a facility shared with Renamo party.

Cam lamented the youth league still did not have its own infrastructure in 2015. He proceeded mentioning that the same organization chart is repeated at urban district level as well, although in some urban districts such structure is not as solid. At local level, he admitted, membership responsibilities are often incompatible with other responsibilities, typically their job. Militance in the LJR is voluntary and its members, usually, have already families to maintain. Moreover, he mentioned, access to the formal job market is more than challenging for anyone who openly supports an opposition party in Mozambique, as, in Cam’s words, Renamo members are hardly ever taken into consideration by public employers. Hence, the only option left to LJR members is “moonlighting militance”.

Thereon, the discussion verted on numbers. To the latest statistics elaborated by the Renamo party, Cam said, the LJR accounted some 10,000 members in Maputo city in 2014. However, he specified that the number of effective participants should

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<sup>112</sup> See: *Estatutos da OJM* (2010), Chapter IV, Section I - III

be reduced approximately to a half. By the term “effective” participants, he declared he meant those members constantly present at the weekly or monthly meetings the LJR holds. Nonetheless, he recognized that (occasional) lack of attendance at these meetings might also originate from serious motivations, such as working reasons.

## The LJMDM

Inside data on the LJMDM organization chart in Maputo was mostly provided by Maputo city LJMDM President, Sid, welcomed by the author in his own provisional “office” at Maputo African Studies Center.

The outline that emerged from this interview was in fact quite dispersive and had to be integrated with more data from later interviews. What is illustrated here is a synthesis of all information collected on this point. From Sid’s words, a general national level structure is repeated at lower levels down to the *bairros* and consists of an elected President with a five-year mandate, while activities are delegated to five departments: Mobilization and Cadre, Information and Propaganda, Culture and Religion, Administration and Finances and, finally, Sports and Recreative Activities. Other top-ranked members, such as the former LJMDM Information and Propaganda department chief in Maputo, Job,<sup>113</sup> confirmed the division of the departments, although he did not use the exact same denomination for all of them. What was also confirmed is that each department has a chief and a deputy. A Permanent Commission of ten members, that is, the Presidential staff and the departments chiefs is present, with the President as holder of the 11th seat. As in all other provinces, four members of Maputo city LJMDM are elected by a national Conference members to seat in the League Council at national level, as stated above in chapter 7.

Finally, discourse verted on numbers and Sid appeared quite confident on the latter. He mentioned the LJMDM currently has some 28,000 members in Maputo city alone, although the truthfulness of such numbers is, at least, questionable. He also declared it was on the youth league agenda to increase the effort towards mass membership.

## Comparisons

The general idea of the organization charts of the three leagues emerging from the responses, is quite confusing in all three cases, although an evident common pattern regards the top-down logic behind their structural organization. Above

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<sup>113</sup> Job occupied this role from 2011 to 2013



mentioned interviews were the richest in details and most accurate in terms of numbers, however, the same question on organization chart was not exclusively asked to them. Although all interviewees interrogated on this issue agreed on the general outlines, it happened frequently they contradicted each other on the exact number of departments, their denomination and functions. In terms of numbers, it has to be stated there are no exact statistics at disposal, therefore it might be reasonable enough to presume that interviewed top-rank members were either approximating and/or exploiting the chance of talking to a foreigner researcher to do some propaganda for their own youth league.

Whatever the explanation might be, amongst the three youth leagues, the OJM appears as the one with the most elaborated and best organized structure at the present time in Maputo city, however, such fact may be easily elucidated by its much longer history of youth organization, and its connections to the ruling party as well, which would arguably allow it to institutionalize itself in the city and establish a much more solid structure compared to those of its counterparts. As concrete proof, the OJM is *de facto* the only one of the three leagues with its own national headquarters, based in Maputo as well, however Maputo city branch headquarters are still located inside a Frelimo party facility, whereas the other two leagues have to share their living space with their respective political party. Striking enough, if numbers provided by the interviewees are correct, the youth league with most members in the capital city would not be, as expected, the OJM, but the MDM youth league. Considering how Maputo city has always been a Frelimo political turf, such information is questionable. However, it might not be so absurd to presume what Sid affirmed is true, considering the latest electoral performance of the MDM in the capital city.<sup>114</sup> May these data correspond to truth, it would signify that the ruling party has lost its appeal on the young generations of Maputo to the MDM, which might lead to unpredictable consequences in the political landscape of the capital city.

As a final remark on this question, all mentioned information was mainly extracted by interviews with the three city heads of the youth leagues, who are all men and with an average age of 35 years.

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<sup>114</sup> Hanlon, J. (2013), Mozambique Political Process Bulletin n°54, part 2 of 2, p.11

## **8.2 Activities and Recruitment in Maputo city**

Immediately following the essential information on the structure of the three leagues in the capital city, the author inquired about the types of activities they hold in Maputo and how new members are recruited. These two details are of utmost importance since in all three cases participation is voluntary, moreover, each member has to contribute with a monthly fee. Therefore, it is reasonably presumable that crucial importance is attributed to the activity agenda, since miscellaneous initiatives would more likely appeal to a major number of youngsters.

Considering how disillusioned Mozambican youngsters are claimed to be, in none of the three cases the interviewees declared their own league is concerned exclusively with activities of political interest. Whereas, socially-oriented events such as HIV prevention campaigns or cleaning operations in the beaches right outside the city, were reiterated in all three cases, alongside with one type of initiatives particularly appreciated by the youth: sports tournaments.

However, all mentioned activities have a secondary, perhaps more subtle purpose to publicize their host. Propaganda or, as a few interviewees named it, political marketing, is what makes the difference. To be as visible as possible, all the three leagues use different means, from traditional leafleting to mass media, including the newest social networks.

### **The OJM**

When asked regarding the activities organized by the OJM in the city, Dom had certainly many things to say. One point corresponding to what Vince mentioned, is the voluntary participation of both members and organizers. From the Frelimo youth league it does not surprise that political meetings and debates are held mostly to propagandize the Government's policies for youngsters, especially in periods of time close to remarkable events, such as the 40th anniversary of independence. During this sort of events, allegedly open to everyone interested, discussions vert on issues of political interest, for example the country independence war (one very dear topic to Frelimo party and its youth branch), with former freedom fighters invited to discuss about it. More debates are held when the organization members meet to elect new representatives at city level and below. Moreover, Dom remarked how the OJM is actively socially-involved, carrying out trash cleaning campaigns, sports tournaments, conferences discussing delicate topics such as HIV diffusion, with experts on this matter invited to moderate the debate panels. When soccer tournaments are organized, each urban

district participates with its team and plays against other districts' teams. Cultural events are on the agenda as well: church choir groups who sometimes exchange with other groups to sing during service, traditional dance festivals, exchange experiences between youngsters from different districts or even scientific fairs. Last but not least, in terms of propaganda, the OJM is on the frontline, according to its statute (chapter 2, art. 4.1.<sup>115</sup> “Promoting patriotic education of youngsters, mobilizing them for the political and ideological objectives of Frelimo”), to ensure Frelimo party's victory in times of elections, thus, it is typically the OJM's duty to sponsor the party, coordinating its members for leafleting propaganda and, to a certain extent, being present in the Assembly of the Republic.

As mentioned above in chapter 7, former OJM National Secretary-General Pedro Cossa is a MP and to the OJM still belong Alberto Nkutumula, Youth and Sports Minister and Osvaldo Petersburgo, Labour Affairs Vice-Minister. Cossa also mentioned that, out of the 144 parliamentary seats Frelimo party obtained in the latest national elections, 28 are attributed to OJM members. As a conclusive remark, Dom mentioned upcoming internal representatives elections at Maputo city level between 2015 and 2016 besides confirming the general National Congress of 26 - 29 November 2015 which elected new OJM Secretary-General Mety Gondola. As a matter of fact, such Congress was held in Matola, Maputo city hinterland. Concerning members recruitment, gathered up interviews data showed the OJM deals with new memberships in both old and new-fashioned ways. Large mobilization campaigns include presentations in schools, and also, as confirmation of Dom's words, an OJM representative for university students in Eduardo Mondlane University, where the organization promotes its activities, its statute and is, in general, entitled of propaganda. However, as stated by more than one OJM top-rank interviewee, there are few partnerships with the University as institution. Anyone interested may fill in an application form and send it to the closest decisional apparatus of the league, usually the city or *bairro* committee, which examines the application and decides. When a candidate is accepted, he or she has to pay a monthly fee of 5 *meticais*.<sup>116</sup> Alongside with all these old-fashioned methods, the OJM has a public page present in most famous social networks such as Facebook and Twitter.

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<sup>115</sup> See: *Estatutos da OJM – Coleção VI Conferência Nacional*, Chapter 2 art 4.1: “Promover a educação patriótica dos jovens, mobilizando-os para os objectivos políticos e ideológico da FRELIMO”

<sup>116</sup> Mozambican currency. At the time of this thesis writing, 1 *metical* corresponded approx. to 0.02 euro

## The LJR

LJR activities in the city were mainly described by the chief-whip of Renamo parliamentary group and LJR national president, Ivone Soares. According to her description, since Renamo youth league is present in every province, including Maputo city, every province has its list of operating members there and also at urban district and *bairro* level, presumably so that the league is informed on the number of its members available for any necessity. In her words, activities range from league sessions, meetings, conferences and even door-to-door initiatives, to business travels where top-rank members represent the youth league at international level and even establish international partnerships with other African and international youth leagues and also international organizations. In the city, the LJR holds press conferences where its representatives divulge the league's opinion on diverse matters, do propaganda, which is crucial since, in Ms Soares words, the national public press itself does not broadcast youth leagues' activities, that is, youth leagues not affiliated to Frelimo.

As a consequence, to advertise their agenda in the city, the LJR has to pay for each minute on screen and in Mozambique, Ms Soares admitted, tv ads can be tremendously expensive. Therefore, the league largely uses the newest social media, for propaganda but also as a youth counselling space where youngsters can express their preoccupations regarding any matters, be it political, social, etc. To such function are destined the league Facebook, Twitter and Whatsapp profiles, while Skype is a handy option for conference calls. The issue of debate on social media deserves a separate mention. At the time of the present thesis writing, Mozambique political situation was on the edge of disarray once again due to a precipitating political tension between the national Defence and Security Forces and the so-called "residual" Renamo armed men (see chapter 2) and the (several) LJR Facebook profiles were authentic debate hot-spots. To conclude the discourse on social media, beyond activity organization these are used to constantly keep in touch online with all LJR members everywhere, including schools and universities. Transversal activities in cooperation with Renamo party are organised as well, and wherever possible witness the presence of Renamo President Afonso Dhlakama, be it radio broadcasting, tv shows and so forth.<sup>117</sup> One final remark regards radio broadcasting. On 22 August 2015, the author was kindly invited by LJR president for Maputo city, Cam, to attend a private radio channel *Rádio Terra Verde* ("Radio Green Earth") live morning session. Lasting approximately one hour, this live session was intended as an open space for sociopolitical discussion, professionally moderated by the radio dj, with Cam himself, two more LJR members and one

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<sup>117</sup> See Appendix A, "8 December 2015" for more details

private citizen as forum panelists. Listeners could call the radio number and ask their questions to the panelists, deciding whether they would like to state their name or prefer to remain anonymous. To the surprise of the author, almost none of the listeners was afraid to mention his or her name (mostly his, at least to the author's ear all voices and names sounded very masculine) and raise their doubts, promptly addressed by the panelists.

Regarding recruiting, Ms Soares mentioned a variety of contacts. The LJR spreads out news on its leaders' opinions on problems of the youth, and they have a dedicated section of the weekly - published informative bulletin *A Perdiz*, ("The Partridge", as this bird is the symbol of Renamo party<sup>118</sup>) and they exploit its social networks profiles, etc. All mentioned activities and initiatives rely on the will of the members, that is, they are all voluntary, hence the league still largely relies on membership monthly fees of 10 *meticais*.

## The LJMDM

In Sid's words, in the league's early years, 2009-2010, most activities took place in Eduardo Mondlane University (UEM), that is how he was involved himself for the first time, Sid referred. Such activities used to be student meetings and debates on the league and national politics, mainly for propagandising the league itself and the newly born MDM party. One further interview to a LJMDM lead member seating in Maputo City Council, Sonya, confirmed that the league nucleus in the UEM is still present, however the situation is different concerning high schools, as the law officially forbids political propaganda there. Nevertheless, the LJMDM activities are also directed towards high schoolers. Several other interviewees repeated the league is not particularly active at high schools level, which might in fact be a confirmation of Sonya's words.

To continue with Sid's response, in the course of the years, the LJMDM ventured outside its "academic" cocoon and began directing its activities in the *bairros*, within the city, to attract as many youngsters as possible. Nowadays, Sid declared the league's schedule includes: two special meetings per month, particularly addressed to those who are already official members and possess a general knowledge on the league working mechanisms, besides the membership card. Most interviewees confirmed that LJMDM members briefings are held in weekends, meant as updating reunions to discuss activities organization, the situation and necessities of the league, especially at local level. Eventual complaints and requests are taken to the MDM party attention. LJMDM members are entitled to participate in debates

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<sup>118</sup> *Boletim Informativo A Perdiz, Edição 139, Ano 3, 13 August 2015, Maputo, Mozambique*

and congresses organized by the party as well. Moreover, four times a month, almost all weekends of the month, public events are held to do some propaganda about the league activities and recruit new members. Discussions vert on present day politics, the MDM and the league situation, plans and internal issues. Propaganda is done to invite people to these meetings, debates and *fora*, even in television or radio channels. As a common point, many league members mentioned an utmost refusal of national tv channels such as *Televisão de Moçambique* (TVM) to advertise youth organizations affiliated to opposition parties, nonetheless, through other, private or minor tv or radio channels, programs and events are advertised and information of political interest, also at national level, is circulated. Some interviewees lamented not sufficient attention by the MDM party on these aspects.

On Saturdays, league members go out in the *bairros* to mobilize the youth: events, congresses and such are meant to convince the youngsters to commit to their city political life. LJMDM representatives are also invited to the *Conselho Nacional da Juventude* (Youth Council, CNJ)<sup>119</sup> meetings. In 2014, for the national electoral campaign, MDM party President Daviz Simango was hosted by the youth league in an event which led to a debate between Simango and the present youngsters on the national politics. Alongside with events of political nature, most LJMDM interviewees mentioned beach-cleaning campaigns and, in fewer cases, sports tournaments (specifically soccer).

Concerning the recruitment, Sid, and many others besides him, affirmed the league is in a constant mobilization and propaganda activity to such an extent that the *bairros* level branches compete in terms of best results for new affiliations. Public profiles on social networks such as Facebook, more than one in fact, and Twitter are present as well, however, Sid admitted they had some trouble with the league's Twitter profile, as it was hacked during the latest election times and a lot of misinformation was published. Several leisure activities such as soccer and basketball tournaments are organized in celebration days such as World Youth Day (12 August). The league's attention to social, cultural and sports event was a commonly emerged pattern, not just among top-ranked members. Following this lead, many LJMDM interviewees lamented little cooperation by the senior party, which would influence negatively on the league finances and, thereon, on its organization capacity beyond the social and towards a more political aspect, especially considering that the youth league is in charge of the "dirty work" in election times (leafleting *et similia*).

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<sup>119</sup> A politically *super-partes* organization whose leadership has been repeatedly accused of alleged bias towards Frelimo. More comments follow below

## Comparisons

By the data collected through the answers, it emerges clearly that in all three cases, activism in the three leagues is voluntary. Such detail may appear redundant, nonetheless, it is quite striking to notice these youngsters apparently demonstrate a genuine interest in political activism, since there is no economic compensation for the time they dedicate to their own league, in fact in order to be members they have to contribute with a monthly fee, be it 5 or 10 *meticais*. The issue of fees shall be furtherly discussed below. Moreover, in all three cases, it was not unusual interviewees remarked the difficulties they encounter to convince potential members to join the cause, as in their words, Mozambican youngsters are way too materialistic to be interested. Such detail deserves more space and it shall also be further explained below. One more clear feature is that all mentioned interviewees of all three youth leagues consider initiatives of a more social rather than purely political connotation as activities of “political” interest. It might be reasonable to presume they all consciously realize that sponsoring a sports tournament is more appealing to youngsters rather than a mere agenda full of frontal debates between a panel of experts and an audience. Religious and cultural events are typically a common feature as well, however it is not the purpose of this thesis to indulge in considerations of cultural aspects or, even more complicated, religious influence on local politics. Continuing on common features, interview data illustrates how in all three cases, youth leagues members are aware of the potential of newest social media in terms of impact and accessibility, especially among the young generations. Contrary to “classic” media such as press, radio and television, social media are free and accessible to everyone in possession of an internet connexion, or, to put it simple, a smartphone, which in an urban context such as Maputo city is definitely not a rarity amongst youngsters.

Amongst the three, however, the OJM appears in an advantage position if compared to its counterparts, presumably due to the influence of its senior party on national public media. What the three cases share as well, although in negative terms, are several contradictions in terms of details regarding the events organized. That is, it was not rare that differences emerged among the answers of members of the same league concerning the same topic, be it the league’s schedule or the nature of organized events. The reasons behind such contradictions are unclear, although it might be supposed, despite the availability of latest telecommunication technologies all the three leagues suffer from a faulty internal communication which has inevitably repercussions on the activities organization. Remarkably, a note of blame on the party they represent was put in particular by the LJMDM members, which may constitute an affirmation of separate identity from the senior party or even a desire for more independence.

### 8.3 Partnerships

One detail the author was curious to explore is whether the three youth leagues have their own networks of connections in the city. Arguably, the politics are a quite dispendious domain and an organization operating in such field often welcomes partnerships with other associations, either since they share a common political view or they are socially active and appreciate to sponsor the activities of political youth leagues in the social sector. Further, political youth leagues from different countries may both bring expertise or share experiences on youth political militancy in diverse political context. For the interest of this thesis, the emphasis should be on the attraction exercised by the international vocation of a youth league.

The present paragraph accounts for the responses given by the three groups of interviewees concerning existing partnerships between the three youth leagues and any other organization, either with political or nonpolitical interests, public or private and, lastly, either Mozambican or international.

#### The OJM

Amongst OJM interviewees who provided significant data in terms of partnerships the OJM has with other either political or nonpolitical organizations, was once again former Secretary-General Pedro Cossa.

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the OJM has 28 representatives sitting in the Assembly of the Republic and it is granted a 20% quota in all Frelimo party lists. Such fact emphasizes how the OJM has indeed partnerships at high level, which might be once more explained by its history of, in Cossa's words, *catalizador* ("catalyzer") of all Frelimo youth-oriented projects in Maputo city (and not only here, presumably). Such partnerships may sometimes translate into not indifferent negotiation power, which was arguably the case of the Government-sponsored *Fundo de Apoio as Iniciativas Juvenis* (Youth Initiatives Support Fund, FAIJ) creation, as it was mentioned by the OJM Administration department secretary for Maputo city, Lidia. In her words, funds of such nature are the fruit of OJM lobbying pressure, however, they are still not enough to tackle the appalling levels of youth unemployment. Besides the national political authorities, the OJM is also in close contact with another relevant youth organization, the *Conselho da Juventude* (Youth Council) whose umbrella includes both public and private, political and civil society youth organizations.

Nonetheless, OJM influence on the Youth Council has been relevant, since both the current and former Youth Council Presidents come from OJM ranks and in the latest presidential campaign opposition parties youth leagues even decided to



boycott the elections. Further, OJM representatives are also invited to the debates hosted by the Youth Parliament (PJ). Worth mentioning is the attendance as panelist of Youth and Sports Minister Alberto Nkutumula, as mentioned still an OJM member, at a PJ-promoted *forum* on “Youth and Peace” held on 6 July 2015, to which the author was kindly invited as well. There, the Minister addressed a relatively very young audience, crammed in PJ *Sala dos Grandes Actos* (Conference Room) as much as allowed by the living space, to present their concerns on several delicate topics: youth unemployment, education quality and the contemporary situation of Mozambican youth in general.

Such an occasion would be a great opportunity for many youngsters to interact directly with the highest national authority in terms of youth policies. Notwithstanding the availability of the Minister to listen to any sort of question and the large variety of issues addressed, it has to be mentioned the author was slightly disappointed by the debate turnout. It was his expectation (and by post-event informal discussions, it was also the opinion of several other people of the audience) that the Minister would present the national policy agenda on youth matters and perhaps illustrate his work results and invite the addressees of such policies to express their point of view on it. Whereas, the *forum* resulted in a series of question and opinions expressed by the audience with no proper debate between the present youngsters and the Minister.

## The LJR

Concerning existing partnerships the LJR holds in Maputo city, it has to be admitted interviewed members were unfortunately not particularly exhaustive in terms of details. Once more, amongst those who provided more in-depth data was LJR National President Ivone Soares. In Ms Soares’ words, the LJR enjoys both national and international partnerships with other African and international youth leagues and also international organizations. Where the former are usually youth leagues of other African opposition parties joining the LJR in relevant occasions, the latter may also be Western associations such as NGOs, or even political organizations patronizing the league’s events and activities. To such purposes, business travels requiring the participation of LJR top-rank members have been realized and when international partners come to Mozambique to visit, they are generally hosted in Maputo city.

Concerning partnerships within the city itself, Ms Soares remarked how her youth league is also represented at the CNJ (Youth Council), even if with above mentioned biases issues and is also invited to other *super-partes* organizations events, such as the PJ (whose current President is a former Renamo party member).

Moreover, as concretely demonstrated by Cam's invitation to the author, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, the LJR has a partnership network with private media, both tv channels, radio broadcasting stations and even newspapers.<sup>120</sup> Remarkably, when the discourse verted on visibility, most LJR interviewees lamented the bias that public mass media have in favour of Frelimo party and its affiliated organizations (hence, including the OJM), which compels them to rely on privately-financed media or the newest social media.

## The LJMDM

Concerning partnerships, the MDM youth league is also represented in the CNJ, as almost all interviewed members confirmed. And, once again, numerous were the complaints regarding such organization's biases towards Frelimo. Two LJMDM members, Luiz and Tom, were heavily critical towards the CNJ, lamenting a scarcely concrete inclusiveness in an allegedly *super-partes* organization which is *de facto* monopolized by OJM members, with little or no real interest to hear different voices. However, they also quoted the PJ as a virtuous example, more inclusive and open to different ideas. They continued by mentioning cleaning initiatives with civil society organizations operating to clear Maputo beaches from trash, although, between the two, Luiz was way more eager to have his point heard and proudly mentioned past partnerships with international NGOs from Europe (specifically, from the Netherlands and Germany, although he did not mention their names) which, in his words, contributed with political formation courses for the league's cadres. Another interviewee, Vic, discussed of *fora* on geopolitical themes, organized with youth leagues of other African countries, such as Angola, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Zambia, South Africa and Tanzania.

International contacts in Europe emerged several other times. Raul, member of Maputo city Political Commission of the LJMDM informed the author on the existence of representatives of the league also in Italy and Sweden. Former Information and Propaganda department chief, Job, quoted the PJ and cooperation with civil society associations operating in the social sector, charity initiatives and also women rights. Regarding this specific point, amongst the LJMDM interviewees who introduced first the alliance existing between the youth league and the *Forum Mulher* (Women Forum) was Maputo City Council member Sonya. She herself declared to be a member of this Forum, basically a network of feminist associations promoting gender equalities in the whole country.

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<sup>120</sup> For example, *Canal de Moçambique* or *Savana*

## Comparisons

The above presented paragraph was meant to illustrate the results of an investigation on existing partnerships in Maputo city between the three youth leagues and any other organization, either with political or nonpolitical interests, public or private and, lastly, either Mozambican or international. The trend of patterns emerging from the responses show an existing public-private identity cleavage, that is, marked differences between the OJM and the two opposition youth leagues in terms of partnership connotations, with the OJM typically privileged by national public donors and the opposition youth leagues either sponsored by private networks and/ or international NGOs. Almost all interviewed OJM members remarked their cooperation with public figures and institutions which might arguably be the consequence of being the youth league of the ruling party. For whatever initiative, the OJM can count on high-level connections, be it directly the Assembly of the Republic or the Minister of Youth himself. Even in an allegedly *super-partes* organization as the CNJ, the OJM influence seems unmatched by no other youth association, at national as well as at Maputo city level. To summarize, OJM partnerships typically have an official nature and enjoy the patronage of public institutions. Such patronage arguably contribute to a sense of belonging to the ruling party and this point was typically described in terms of proud patriotism by most OJM interviewees, confirming how the love for the home country may exercise a considerable appeal on the young members.

On the other hand, the opposition youth leagues seem to have the tendency of establishing partnerships with private, or, at least, not public associations, be it NGOs, civil society groups and so forth. To this category do not belong exclusively Mozambican partners, since both opposition youth leagues interviewees consistently mentioned international contacts and donors. As a reason behind the search for private or even international associations, the emphasis was frequently put on the biases public organizations and institutions have towards the OJM and even an allegedly *super-partes* youth association as the CNJ is heavily criticized for its bias towards the OJM, whereas, international NGOs, especially Western ones, tend to encourage political plurality in so-called “imperfect” democracies such as Mozambique, thereon they would potentially be more interested in supporting a youth league belonging to the opposition. Regarding Mozambican private associations, the reason behind a generally positive opinion by the opposition are the alleged biases by public associations towards the ruling party.

As proof, some interviewees mentioned, it is the blatant fact that the CNJ was created by a (Frelimo-ruled) Government resolution in 1996 and its Presidents always come from the OJM ranks; on the other hand, a private youth association as the PJ was defined as significantly more open and concretely *super-partes*. In both

opposition youth leagues, interviewees demonstrated their enthusiasm with international partnerships, since, as they see it, a dynamic youth league is also an attractive youth league. However, while LJR members underlined the economic advantage deriving from a network of international donors, LJMDM interviewees insisted on the importance of such international partnerships in terms of contribution to political education for the league members. Dealing with local alliances with private organizations also surfaced a few differences. Renamo youth league members stressed more the importance of a private network of media allowing their voice to be heard, whereas among LJMDM interviewees were more recurrent references to the league commitment to social initiatives. As a conclusive remark, the LJMDM was the only case where a clear reference to partnerships with gender equalities organizations was made, however it might be argued it was only a coincidence that the interviewee was a youth league and a feminist association member at the same time.

## 8.4 Personal Experiences and Motivations

After the more “technical” details, the author was curious to discover the main drivers behind the interviewees’ participation in their own youth league. *I.e.*, what motivated the interviewees to join and participate in their respective youth league. In their accounts, personal life experiences often intertwined with family indoctrination. In many cases, a sense of profound dissatisfaction pushed the latter two groups towards the opposition youth leagues.

### The OJM

Since the present paragraph contains interviewed OJM members’ personal motivations behind their membership, one striking feature regarding this group of interviewees is that collected answers patterns were very similar to each other, in fact, almost identical.

Almost all OJM interviewees emphasized patriotism and the love for their home country, which they consider the founding value at the basis of Frelimo party, hence at the basis of the OJM as well. Frequently, interviewees admitted they had personal connections, sometimes even blood inheritance to the generation who fought for Mozambican independence and proudly remarked this sense of belonging. Typically, they were raised in families dominated by Frelimo rhetoric and the importance of youth commitment to the politics seen as national civic duty. Therefore, it was a natural consequence that, once reached the required age for affiliation (15 years), they filled in their application form and obtained the *Cartão Vermelho* (Red Card). Even in cases where no family members had personal contacts with independence fighters or relevant historical Frelimo members, OJM interviewees repeatedly mentioned they became interested for either family influences or personal curiosity, apparently stimulated by a lingering sense of social responsibility which convinced them to become involved with the politics. And the choice for the OJM, in their words, was the most obvious, as in their words, it has always been the one which attracted them for its historical reputation of supporting youth political participation and enhancing collectivism before individualism and self-interest.

Thereon, many referred their political activism initiated at *bairro* level, that is, they initially affiliated to the closest OJM branch in their native *bairro* and started with low-level activities such as leafleting, promoting the league’s activities, recruiting new members or taking part in seminars on social initiatives. Moreover, for many of them, militancy within the youth league coincided with militancy in the party and, through the years, they ascended towards higher levels, from zones to

urban districts and then at city level. In a few cases, even at national level. Such was the career path even for high-ranking interviewed members, such as Pedro Cossa or another former OJM Secretary-General, Basilio Zefanias Muhate.

As a conclusive note, amongst all OJM interviewees there was little difference regarding motivation between men and women. Except for one specific case, Susana, an OJM top-ranked member in Matola (as mentioned, Maputo city hinterland). She vehemently repeated nobody convinced her to join the league and, to an even more distancing extent, she was the only OJM female interviewee to stress the difficulty for a woman to reach high positions within the league hierarchy. All other female interviewees insisted on patriotism and commitment rather than desire for emancipation as women, and in no other case such issue was so promptly highlighted. Lidia, for example, reported an impressively detailed account of her responsibilities as administration department secretary, however, such responsibilities were more remarked than everything else in terms of motivations.

## The LJR

LJR interviews were particularly convincing regarding the motivations behind their membership. As ever-present pattern, the utmost majority of them, in fact the total group of interviewees, declared to be profoundly discontent with the current political *status quo* in the country, thereon, they made the decision to join the main opposition ranks. Such discontent was in fact repeatedly close to cross the fine line with hatred for Frelimo. Quite obviously, this pattern was recurrent among the oldest among LJR interviewees, who admitted to have had a military experience, when the party still was a guerrilla army, although these interviewees are a very exiguous number.

Yet, a sense of continuity is undeniably confirmed by reports of the youngest members. Most of them claimed that Mozambican history does not account properly for Frelimo authoritarian regime, which, in their words, was an oppressive dictatorship, a betrayal of the ideals of freedom behind the independence struggle. Therefore, they decided to join the ranks of the “fighters for democracy”, even if in peaceful times, the fight they are continuing is done in peaceful terms. In Maputo city at least. Arguably, such point means family or at least, the influence of an older generation is a not an indifferent driver also within this group of interviewees.

Nonetheless, the sense of dissatisfaction that motivates the youngest members, that is, members under 30 years of age, apparently derives from the social condition they are in rather than from civil war memories. In their description, Frelimo’s

politically invasive presence precludes job vacancies for anyone who does not belong to the ruling party and such situation is felt as a huge injustice fomenting unemployment and, hence, bitter frustration among the youth in general and such hard feeling is preponderant in the southern urban area of the capital city, a long-time Frelimo political bastion.

Separated mention is necessary for the gender issue. Amongst the three youth leagues, the female LJR interviewees were undoubtedly those who stressed this point in their answers more consistently, from league President Ivone Soares to lower-level interviewees. 22-year-old Mira clearly stated she learnt how to valorize herself as a woman thanks to her membership in the league, from which she comprehended the value of girls scholarization, sexual education on premature weddings and pregnancies, etc. This is quite a remarkable fact, considering that the LJR Statutes<sup>121</sup> do not grant representation quotas for women, contrary to the other two youth leagues.

## The LJMDM

MDM youth league interviewees were the group who put the emphasis specifically on youth problems as the main reason which convinced them to join. Sid, for example, mentioned that in 2009, the year when the MDM and its youth league were founded, Mozambican youth was poorly taken into consideration by the two main parties, neither under the political, nor the social point of view. Whereas, he remarked, what convinced him was the fact the MDM stated immediately the value it attributed to the youth, confirming in this sense what Chichava,<sup>122</sup> Nuvunga and Adalima<sup>123</sup> quote in their respective researches.

Others had had a past experience in either one of the other two youth leagues, such as Tom, who was previously an OJM member and expressed discontent for its alleged narrow-mindedness and systematic intolerance for opinions diverging from the leaders' ones, as Frelimo does not apparently allow much space for youngsters who attempt to bring new ideas. Renovation is not encouraged, and those in favor of it are regarded as a source of problems. On the other hand, Izzy used to participate on the Renamo's side, however he decided to leave the LJR for quite the same motivations presented by Tom, namely intolerance and not enough concrete attention to youth problems. Quite to the contrary, in his and almost all

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<sup>121</sup> The LJR was recognized as juridical person by Mozambican Ministry of Justice on 23 April 2008, with the new Statute published on the Republic Bulletin supplement. For more details, see: *Boletim da República, III série - Número 23, 4º Suplemento*, 10 June 2008, Maputo, Mozambique

<sup>122</sup> Chichava, S. (2010): *Movimento Democrático de Moçambique: uma nova força política na democracia moçambicana?*

<sup>123</sup> Nuvunga, A. ; Adalima, J. (2011): *Mozambique Democratic Movement (MDM): an analysis of a new opposition party in Mozambique*

others' words, the youth is the symbol of the MDM, and is entrusted by the party, there is much more transparency, democracy and freedom of expression. Open-mindedness allows fair competition as well within its members for relevant positions.

A quite recurring pattern was remarking how their own party was new and exempt from a military past, moreover, in most LJMDM interviewees' opinion, the other two parties' rhetoric is too ancient and does not appeal to youngsters anymore, their cadre are not renovated and the leaders are all old. In this sense Job was even more direct. Since, he affirmed, the MDM party hierarchy at both at low-level and top-ranking positions has people of around 45 years of age, with a few exceptions, hence, the youth league and the party speak basically the same "language" and fight for the same cause: contrasting the exclusion of youth from the economic improvements Mozambique has been obtaining recently. Regarding this point, another interviewee, Mac mentioned youngsters are tired of the current *status quo*, as many of the existing problems (problems and challenges shall be discussed in the following paragraph), one above all unemployment, could be resolved however, Mac admitted, what is lacking is political will.

As it concerns the gender issue, besides mentioned Sonya's remark of belonging to feminist associations network *Forum Mulher*, no other female interviewee in the LJMDM group differentiated herself quite as much.

## Comparisons

Among the three groups, of interviewees response patterns diverged significantly in their content. OJM interviewees almost exclusively underlined the feeling of patriotic love for their country, in their opinion embodied by the ideals of Frelimo party and therefore their own youth league, with little or no differentiation between men and women. To a certain extent, their declaration of patriotism corresponds to the necessity of accomplishing the "historical designation of Mozambique development, within the frame of continuation from previous generations".<sup>124</sup>

At the basis of LJR members motivation, there is apparently disappointment and frustration for a faulty political and social situation where anyone who does not belong to Frelimo party is, in their words, systematically excluded and discriminated. For the oldest among them, who in a few cases are old enough to have fought in the civil war, this bitterness was remarked in terms of old war rivalries, while the youngest lamented a biased labour market where personal

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<sup>124</sup> OJM Statutes (2010), art.4.11



connections and party affiliation are more relevant than anything else. Worth repeating, female LJR interviewees were the proudest in their declaration regarding their role as women as the motivation for their own enrolment.

Similar dissatisfaction was also expressed by LJMDM members, however, they definitely were the group who emphasized youth issues the most as main driver behind their choice of affiliation. Their words seemed to confirm MDM party openness to youth issues, as much as what the assessed theory reports. They almost all blamed the other two parties and respective youth leagues to be too “ancient” in their messages and not concretely directed to the youth in their policies, to an even worse extent, they explicitly accused the other two sides of a tendency to authoritarianism in their hierarchy, with no tolerance for any member who attempts to express a different point of view than that of the leaders, sometimes even presenting life experiences as proof. In the LJMDM case, the female interviewees did not emphasize the gender cleavage as much deeply as for Renamo’s youth league.

## **8.5 Opinions on Each Youth League's Challenges in Maputo city**

Once illustrated the results on the investigation on the main drivers behind the decision of the interviewees to join their respective youth league, the present paragraph presents the recurrent patterns on the opinions collected, concerning a delicate point: what the three youth league members think on the challenges their own league is facing in the city in present times. Such question was meant to have the interviewees discuss on whatsoever difficulty their own youth league confronts in the city, yet, regarding this point, presumably the question was formulated openly enough to leave room for diverse interpretations because only a few mentioned their own league problems and no more.

On the other hand, most interviewees did not limit their answers to a discussion of their own league problems at city level in terms of organization or structural difficulties, they referred to their members' problems, to the entire Maputo city youth and also Mozambican youth difficulties in general. Moreover, they mentioned what are or, in their opinion, should be the priorities of their youth league. Formulated with different words, it is arguably probable most interviewees revealed not exclusively what they find attractive themselves, whereas also what might entice more youngsters.

Curiously enough, only a few interviewees mentioned explicitly gender inequalities among the challenges.

### **The OJM**

As introduced, from gathered data it is presumable that most interviewees intended the question on their own youth league's challenges in more general terms than simply regarding the capital city. OJM members were no exception.

Among the first challenges mentioned, the financial issue was nominated countless times, especially by top-ranking members. Pedro Cossa himself admitted one major challenge regards resources to materialize the league's projects. He specified that the structure itself is solid both at city and at national level, remarking that in the entire country the OJM has more members than Renamo and MDM parties combined (although 2 million members sounds quite as an exaggeration), however, as the organization grows, more resources are needed since organizing the logistics and the bureaucracy becomes more and more complicated and is negatively influenced by scarce financial support by the members as the league still relies on membership fees. The fee issue was remarked by several other members since, frequently, membership fees are past-due or not paid at all.

The issue of youth participation itself was presented as well by most members. In a multiparty context, every single political party in Mozambique targets the young generations, hence, competition for an increase of young affiliates is considerable and the OJM constantly faces the challenge of being the most alluring alternative in the eyes of the youth. To this matter, a solid budget allows more initiatives and more initiatives attract more members. Dom remarked the OJM's nature as a non-profit organization is perhaps a double-edged sword which prevents the league to establish profitable commercial partnerships. Therefore, in his opinion, such point needs to be modified since financial resources are essential in politics.

Alongside with structural problems, Dom explicitly mentioned that the challenges the OJM is facing today are youth challenges in general, since, quite obviously, the OJM is a youth organization after all. He defined as the greatest ones, education and unemployment. Regarding the latter, he quoted Government-created funds (already mentioned in paragraph 8.3) as a possible yet not sufficient solution.

Which leads the discourse to endemic unemployment, reaching tragic levels in the capital city as much as in any other urban area. Lidia mentioned the OJM encourages its members to pursue income-generating initiatives however, she declared the greatest problem is that the State, the largest formal employer does not have enough jobs for everyone and whenever a vacancy opens, there is a real struggle to fill it. And what is worse in her opinion is that it may happen OJM activities contrast with a job vacancy search. In her words, it is a league's responsibility to find new solutions, presumably because supporting its members in this sense is also positive propaganda. As further example, Lidia discussed another, apparently unclear issue: public transports.

As unrelated as it may seem, public transports influence the lives of the members considerably more than it would be expected and the author experienced it himself. The word "chaotic" is an euphemism to describe the road traffic in the Mozambican capital city, where the most largely used form of public transports are the minibuses popularly known as *chapas*. Passengers are crammed inside beyond any physical space and mentioned traffic causes a few kilometer-long trip to last hours in the worst conditions. Therefore, Lidia's words make perfect sense: youth league members prefer to stay at home rather than being compressed inside a *chapa* to come to a league meeting or attending an OJM-organized event. She insisted the OJM must not underestimate these apparently insignificant details which however sometimes can make a difference between a successful or a disastrous outcome of a league activity. However, Lidia also mentioned that sometimes difficulties are beyond constraints such as transports and regard personal attitude.

The youth league might successfully organize whatsoever activity, nonetheless members may not care about the significance behind the event, what they are

interested in is the mere event itself. Towards this matter, she affirmed the youth league must engage in a serious members' education effort to stimulate their civic conscience. In her vision, the youth league should in fact involve high school students as well, since another troublesome difficulty for the city youth regards access to university. The capital city concentrates all the best university education institutions, both public and private ones, almost all with limited admittance numbers. Hence, competition is ruthless and many applications are rejected. Lidia remarked how failed applicants try over and over for years and in the meantime the condition they verse in exasperates their frustration. Hence, they may recur to other means to survive, either legal or illegal, to this extent confirming what Honwana mentions in her research work.

In Lidia's words, the Government is endeavouring to tackle the problem, however the OJM has to contribute. She proposed the organization of seminaries to convince 12th graders who could not make it to university to choose a technical curriculum to have a concrete job on their hands. And in her opinion, the OJM's education task for the youngest generations should go even further to confront alcohol and drug abuse among the youth.

Regarding the social role of OJM, Susana was even more specific. She highlighted what huge challenge is keeping the young female members in the organization. Frequently, she sustained, girls are forced to quit for multiple reasons, and she put the emphasis on premature pregnancies, as she sees it, an authentic scourge for the entire country. She mentioned it is normally assumed women should get pregnant only after a certain age, therefore whenever a girl gets pregnant prematurely, she quits the organization out of shame. In her opinion, in this sense supporting Lidia's words, the OJM should educate the youth as much as it educates its members to become party cadre. She presented herself as a living proof of her own words. Education is what forges the youth. She also mentioned what all other interviewees quoted, both in specific terms for the league and youth problems in general, however her discourse verted mainly on female membership, arguing how she would not want girls to feel like temporary guests in the OJM, to the contrary, she expressed the desire to promote a sense of integration among them, despite all the mentioned difficulties.

## The LJR

Discussing challenges proved to be a quite entertaining stimulus for LJR members. Most of them addressed their own league's difficulties, which to many extent resembled those quoted by their OJM counterparts. Answers became more heartfelt when the discourse moved from structural problems of the league and verted on members and youth in general. For the latter category, within the lexicon used by interviewees, one word was quoted, more or less explicitly, more than any other: discrimination. Specifically, when dealing with the labour market, discrimination based on party affiliation bias systematically excludes all youngsters who admit to be supporters of the opposition or, even worse, affiliates.

Proceeding with order, Ian, a young Renamo MP and LJR member, schematically resumed the league's structural problems, more or less quoted by all interviewees. The first great challenge is internal organization, however, as he sees it, such problem arises from the fact the league had recently (2014) elected a new presidential entourage (with Ivone Soares as new President), then what the league had to do is "putting the right stones in the right places". Secondly, financial resources, as mentioned not as much differently from what interviewees from other leagues mentioned. Such issue influences negatively the league activities, in terms of both quantity and quality. Ian remarked how not even the senior party has many financial resources, let alone the youth league. Similarly as what Cam said, Ian lamented the fact the league did not even have its own headquarters as late as 2015, and it shares its working space with the senior party both at national and city level. In his opinion, having a private space exclusively dedicated to the league, where it would be possible to work at will, could help, also, to encourage the affiliates to be more responsible for their conduct within the league.

Ian's comments on lack of financial resources were, as mentioned, confirmed by most other LJR interviewees. In João's opinion, lack of resources negatively influences the whole league's planning agenda and he presented a concrete example: as member, he would appreciate to contribute with his ideas and proposing several different activities and *a priori*, this would not be a problem. However, a dwindling budget always convinces the league departments to opt for the cheapest alternatives and thereon, results are lacklustre. Potentially, from his words it might be presumed such mediocre results negatively influence the number of memberships as well. Nonetheless, João himself remarked how lack of financial resources may also be a challenge in more positive terms, that is, elaborating sustainable low-budget projects which may produce positive outcomes because organizers' intelligence is continuously stimulated.

Concerning problems beyond the league's budget, many interviewees discussed the condition of LJR members and, as mentioned, one recurring term was

discrimination. Many LJR interviewees classified political discrimination among the challenges the youth league members face almost on a daily basis and some openly admitted to have suffered unpleasant situations themselves as, in their words, the mere fact of being a Renamo youth league member, or, more in general, supporting Renamo party, is enough as justification to be socially excluded. Or worse. João himself declared that Maputo city is politically dominated by Frelimo and anyone affiliated in any way to Renamo is still considered the enemy. His answer confirmed what LJR Maputo city president Cam said regarding moonlighting membership. Renamo youth league members often refrain from identifying themselves, be it in public or during a job interview and the reason is simple. Whether they do identify, their party affiliation is enough as an excuse to be rejected or, in the case they are already employed, to be fired.

Mira specified that among the difficulties LJR youth has been facing, the greatest is to convince the public to accept the fact that Mozambique is for everyone and Renamo is now an institutionalized political party. Dealing with discrimination at the workplace, in any job interview, the first thing a person is asked is to which party he or she is affiliated. And shall that person answer something different from Frelimo, what the job interviewer replies is basically a threat of rejection when that person does not change his or her affiliation and does not provide a *Cartão Vermelho* as proof. Amongst those who admitted to have experienced such situations themselves, a few interviewees were very specific with places and details. Mira also mentioned such discrimination is not unusual in university institutions as well. In her own university, the *Instituto Superior de Relações Internacionais* (International Relations Institute, ISRI) she declared that is what happens. Professors doing political propaganda in front of the class, praising Frelimo party for building an international relation school. On the other hand, if a professor expresses ideas not favorable to Frelimo, he or she risks firing and she presented the case of António Augusto Eduardo Namburete, founder of Eduardo Mondlane University *Escola de Comunicação e Artes* (School of Communication and Arts, ECA), Renamo member and current MP. However, she specified, selection procedures tend to privilege students with an affiliation to Frelimo or even personal contacts with influential members in the ruling party, even if the entrance exams results or their grades are lower than other students, thus precluding possibilities to someone else with more merit.

Consequences of such discrimination may degenerate in much worse than losing a job vacancy or a university scholarship. Whoever is wearing a shirt with the Renamo logo in the wrong *bairro*, may risk a lot, from being looked at with suspect, insulted or even lynched. Although she mentioned Mozambicans in general are

still not prepared to accept Renamo as a Mozambican party, her words agree with those of several others that the situation in the capital is actually improving.<sup>125</sup>

Ivone Soares was more inclusive in her answer. She remarked how much necessity there is for more space for all youngsters, even those belonging to the opposition. The façade of political inclusion falls confronted with the reality of mass unemployment which is a tragic reality especially for youngsters who are not affiliated to the ruling party. As mentioned, this pattern is quite recurrent in this group of interviewees. Ms Soares's answer then turned to the social aspect of challenges, presenting education as another Achilles' heel of Mozambique, especially concerning premature marriages and HIV. Ignorance on this matter is vast, she declared, and many are convinced that having intercourses with young kids can prevent them from contracting the virus. Thus, many children are abandoned when they develop the symptoms of the illness. She affirmed such circumstances must not be ignored, otherwise, children and youngsters will enter the adulthood physically and mentally traumatised. That is the reason why the league accepts members from 15 of age upwards, confirming what contained in the Statutes, art. 6 (see paragraph 7.2). Further, she mentioned sensibilisation campaigns on other social problematics such as drug abuse, public health and poverty.

Quite surprisingly, not even Mira, who clearly referred to gender issues, as illustrated in the previous paragraph, mentioned gender inequalities among the challenges, however it may be presumed she did not want to reiterate a concept already expressed answering a previous interview question. To conclude the present sub-paragraph, the author has to admit given all these difficulties, it is surprising how LJR members keep on participating, however, the answers to such implicit question might be several: either they exaggerated with their descriptions or their motivation drivers are stronger than discrimination.

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<sup>125</sup> Although some recent facts may prove otherwise. See Appendix A: "29 December 2015"

## **The LJMDM**

In general terms, what the LJMDM interviewees expressed in terms of challenges resembles the answers of the other two groups, although a few substantial differences emerged. To respect the order used in the previous two paragraphs, here are firstly presented the interviewees' most commonly emerged patterns on the LJMDM problems in terms of organization itself and secondly, their opinions as it regards the league members and, more in general, Maputo city youth. Little or no substantial difference emerged between male and female interviewees, as all LJMDM interviewees agreed on every aspect of the situation illustrated below.

To begin with, it shall be reminded once more the MDM youth league is relatively very new compared to its counterparts and though such freshness may exercise attraction on the youth, it also has its drawbacks. Sid himself expressed his concern on the league's institutionalization. Back in 2009, he referred, members were all volunteers, in present days what the league would need is a proper, stronger structure, with financial revenues and a more solid organisation. He hoped for a more institutionalised MDM youth league and a more professional attitude, as, in his words, the league shall grow only if people working for it become more and more professional and dynamic. Sid's words were echoed by almost all his fellow interviewed members. Generally speaking, with roughly six years of existence, several of them admitted the league is still immature and its members have little experience. Frequently they remarked how a more solid LJMDM structure goes side by side with a proper activity planning agenda.

Dealing with the league's structure, amongst all accounts the perhaps most interesting response came from 27-year-old teacher Ricardo. He was the only one to discuss openly the internal situation of the league, or, at least, more in-depth than any other interviewee. What he brought to the attention of the author, deserves its share of attention. In his words, the first challenge he mentioned for the league deals with its own internal rules. The league has its Statutes, however they are not always well received by the members and even seen as restrictions. Then, he repeated the points quoted by his colleagues in terms of organic structure improvements. He admitted several youngsters become members allured by the possibility of concrete benefits, or even a career in politics, however, he specified, the main point for the youth league is promoting the youth and not annihilating its existence in favour of the senior party. Such affirmation is arguably a strong declaration of separate identity as youth association, and no other member stated it so clearly.

Moreover, he continued with arguing neither the league nor the party are well structured yet and also freedom of thought is lacking as the existing structure is very vertical and not horizontal. One commands, the others do not discuss. In this



sense such point is a challenge, to broaden the space for dialogue and allowing more internal freedom of expression, which are all reasons stated by the league and the MDM party to criticize the other two parties. However, as he sees it, criticizing one's neighbor (even more presumably he was referring to Frelimo in particular) when things are the same in one's own house is hypocrisy.

However, what may sound as a rebel declaration, was in fact more resembling an invitation to self-criticism. He agreed with his fellow members on the fact that the league needs a stronger organization which could revitalize the structure in the city. In his opinion, a sense of post-elections apathy is currently draining motivation from the basis who feels the activity planning has become monotonous, both in terms of meetings and organized events. And monotony is not attractive for the youth. The youth, as he said it, needs stimuli, otherwise there shall be lack of commitment.

To be finally able to mature, many interviewed members discussed the league's establishment in the city, fundamental to being concretely present, all the way from the micro to the macro level through trustworthy representatives in all Maputo urban districts, and down to every *bairro*. As one specific interviewee, Vic, expressed it, doing politics is also making yourself visible, not being recluse from the people. He advocated for more public events held in the *bairros*, open to public attendance with discussion themes focused on specific concerns of each *bairro*, since, as Vic underlined, to different *bairros* correspond different circumstances. As a concrete example, he referred to the *bairro* of *Alto Maé*, south-west Maputo, where his interview took place. Issues there, he argued, are different from any other, each *bairro* has its own problems, that is why public debates are organized consequently (although he did not mention what such problems are). In his opinion, this is how the league should act and to underline his point of view, he used the specific expression "permanent political marketing".

Then, quite similarly to their OJM and LJR counterparts, most LJMDM interviewees mentioned the financial issues. Sid affirmed that currently, owners of a MDM youth league membership card are entitled to pay a monthly fee of 10 *meticais*, and that such is the main source of economic entrance, besides MDM party financial support. Which, remarkably was not infrequently classified as not sufficient. Concerning this point, almost all interviewees agreed the budget at disposal is too tight. Consequences are multiple and all negative, yet in their words, there is little to be done given present circumstances. Tom declared that the procedures for funding applications require long times in terms of bureaucracy and since the LJMDM represents an opposition party, he commented that applying for publicly sponsored funds is a lost cause. (Which arguably introduces the issue of discrimination, discussed thoroughly below). Hence, many activities are delayed from the agenda or cancelled due to absence of funds.

As far as he was concerned, Luiz sustained that one major difficulty is merely logistical, *i.e.* lack of physical space. The realization of public events depends frequently on available public space. And since the LJMDM belongs to an opposition party, he lamented they are denied public spaces by the City Council to hold their meetings. And even when they are not, renting a congress room or any other place is highly expensive, whereas Frelimo youth league members are granted these spaces for free and with no complications whatsoever. Tom expressed immediately his agreement on logistical constraints, adding that, although (translating literally) they are a youth league of a major political party and they are officially an autonomous organization, nonetheless, they do not have their own headquarters and even those shared with the party lack efficient computers, internet access, and even basic materials such as chairs or tables. Such lack of solid infrastructure, also in terms of headquarters, was confirmed by basically all interviewed members. Vic declared sometimes they are hosted in private houses or schools. However, he specified, such places are not properties of the league, therefore, the members can not call them as “theirs” or hang a flag out of a balcony. In one word, it is financial autonomy that is lacking.

As mentioned above in paragraph 8.3 the same problems with public spaces occurs for public media sponsorships. On this matter, Vic admitted the activities of the MDM youth league have too little resonance in the media and sometimes they have to open their way with bribes to be broadcasted. Ricardo admitted his fellow members would love to be more active also in the media such as tv, radio and newspapers, however they always find all rooms filled by somebody else.

As opposition representatives, he declared they are systematically excluded by possibilities to make their voices heard and one clear example is the quoted CNJ. Which introduces the issue of discrimination, in very similar terms to those lamented by LJR members.

Words such as “discrimination” or “exclusion” recurred in all interviews to LJMDM members with no exception. Beyond mentioned discrimination in terms of the league itself, what all of them lamented was more systematic, almost institutionalized. To an extent that, as Mac expressed it, it generates fear of commitment in the youth, since commitment to the opposition may signify permanent unemployment, as for many job placements the (in)famous *Cartão Vermelho* is mandatory and, in Mac’s words, that card is all that matters to employers. Sonya commented that when confronted to such risks reluctance among youth rises and, considering the current levels of unemployment such materialism is justifiable. Despicable, perhaps, yet, justifiable. Although, as mentioned, all interviewees affirmed being a member of the opposition involve personal endangerment, risk accounts varied from workplace discrimination to more serious vexations, such as burnt party flags, insults and physical violence.

One final remark echoes what already expressed in previous sub-paragraph for Renamo youth league's members. First of all, LJMDM interviewees preferred to concentrate on the material difficulties their own league is facing and, subsequently, they all mentioned political discrimination and none of them stressed gender inequalities as a challenge the youth league is facing. Concerning the situation depicted, it is presumable for LJMDM members as well that personal motivation or whatsoever sense of moral duty prevents this group of interviewees to quit, even when confronted by such discrimination.

## **Comparisons**

In terms of challenges their own youth league itself is facing, the three groups of interviewees present several similarities. In fact, for all three groups, the respective interviewees accounted for as current challenges: structural flaws, financial difficulties and complicated activity planning as the most quoted. Although in all three cases, the interviewees blamed scarce support by the affiliates, whose membership fees are always past due, the LJMDM group presents the only case where a slightly bitter critic was explicitly directed towards the party.

Continuing with similarities, as mentioned, all three groups intended the question as more comprehensive on youth problems in more general terms. Consequently, they abundantly discussed the social difficulties faced by youngsters in the city, from education to transports, drug and alcohol abuse, a few interviewees also mentioned unsustainable costs for housing and, one above all, chronic unemployment. Regarding this issue, responses were relatively similar in all three cases. The interviewees confirmed unemployment in the city reaches worrisome levels and it should be their own league's social duty to contribute to the solution to such problem in any way possible. Reasonably enough, most interviewees specified that the problems of the youth are their own league's problems, since they are all youth associations. Quite the same discourse may be done for all other quoted problematics of the youth.

However, on the very same matter, opinions diverged diametrically between the OJM and its opposition counterparts. Whereas the former did admit the troublesome condition of most youngsters and little more, the latter heavily blamed the invasive Frelimo presence in the labour market, which, in the words of opposition youth leagues' members, precludes any possibility to all those youngsters who are not Frelimo affiliates and typically made reference to the party Red Card as symbol of the dispute.

Even harsher criticism targeted public institutions and media, accused of bias in favour of the ruling party, bias which frequently degenerates into discrimination in

various sectors. As the members of the opposition youth leagues describe it, job interviewers of public companies tend to privilege applicants who are in possession of the Red Card and thus can prove their loyalty to Frelimo, bypassing any other merit or even a candidate in possess of a good resume simply because he or she is not affiliated to Frelimo. Public media do not cover opposition youth leagues' activities and deny them space to do propaganda, therefore, they have to rely on private media or pay their ad time with conspicuous sums.

Nonetheless, assuming what interviewed members of Renamo and MDM youth leagues declared is true, mentioned discrimination is merely the tip of the iceberg. In a political environment historically dominated by Frelimo in the capital city, the sole fact of being a member of the opposition is a sufficient justification to suffer personal safety endangerments, such as vexations or worse.

As two conclusive remarks, firstly, members of the two opposition youth leagues advocated for a more concrete inclusiveness, since from their accounts, they are confronted with systematic exclusion based on political bias, and such fact arises a question on why then these youngsters consciously choose to participate in the opposition and a probable answer might be the improvements they are advocating are a driver stronger than fear of discrimination. Secondly, it might surprise how in almost no cases gender inequalities were accounted among the challenges. To be honest, the author does not possess an unequivocal answer to such doubt. OJM member Susana might have considered such issue as too heartfelt not to be stated out loud, quite intriguing since the OJM officially grants a, at least 40% quota to female members in all its organs, "with no prejudice of necessary capability and competence".<sup>126</sup> According to the interviewees, the LJMDM grants quotas as well, whereas the LJR does not have such quotas at all, however no interviewed member of the opposition youth leagues mentioned gender equalities as a challenge. Another plausible explanation could be that LJR and LJMDM interviewees genuinely do not consider their female members, and the latter do not consider themselves, as inferior compared to the male members. Which might in fact open new intriguing research scenarios, however, despite how intriguing it may be, such investigation is not the object of the present thesis.

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<sup>126</sup> *Estatutos da OJM* (2010), chapter II, art.6: "Em todos órgãos da OJM, sem prejuízo da necessária capacidade e competência, deve-se garantir a participação da mulher em pelo menos 40%."

## **8.6 Youth and Politics in Maputo city**

All interviews were concluded with the author asking the interviewees a final consideration on the current status of youth political participation in the city, according to their own point of view. Almost all interviewees in all three groups, however, did not limit their answers to the capital city alone, whereas, they frequently made comparisons between the situation of Mozambican youngsters participating in politics in general at national level and the situation in the capital city, typically drawing examples from their personal experiences.

Moreover, in almost all, if not all cases, they exploited the possibility they were given to remark what should be improved to encourage more city youngsters to participate or, at least to have a better consideration of the politics. Further, it was not infrequent that they expressed with no avarice of details what opinion they had on the attitude of people of their same age concerning the politics.

The author worded such question to permit a twofold answer by the interviewees: firstly, he aimed at precious information to enrich his general knowledge on the current situation of Maputo city (and to a certain extent of Mozambican) youth in terms of political participation. Arguably such information is more significant and completes what was already learned from any secondary source, since it is on-the-field data by people who are constantly involved in the matter in first person. Further, the second purpose of such question was to let the interviewees express their own opinion on themselves, being themselves politically active youngsters. Even more relevant, this specific question was the opportunity to discover what is the interpretation of the interviewees of the term “participation” in politics.

Results differ significantly once again following the cleavage ruling party - opposition youth leagues, however, not exclusively. Not rarely discrepancies emerged within the same group of interviewees.

### **The OJM**

OJM interviewees showed a consistent pattern of positive opinions on the issue. Pedro Cossa was one of the most peremptory, arguing the general status of participation is good, presenting his own youth association (and relative senior party) as a praiseworthy example of political involvement of the youth. As he mentioned, only the Frelimo party has a 20% youth quota in all its lists of candidates, to an extent that, whenever an election occurs, be it at national or at any lower level, at least 20% of the candidates in the lists of Frelimo party must come from the OJM's ranks. From his position of MP, he underlined how amongst Renamo MPs sitting in the Assembly of the Republic, out of 89 deputies only 3 or 5

are youngsters, whereas in the MDM there is only 1 out of 17. On the other hand, Frelimo has 28 out of 144. Hence, he concluded, the general status is good.

Generally speaking, all other OJM interviewees agreed with such statement. Dom remarked that it is thanks to the OJM that some space to youth participation is granted, defining his own league as a “channel” prioritizing youth participation in politics.<sup>127</sup> As Maputo city secretary, he participates himself in Frelimo party sessions in Maputo city province (as mentioned, Maputo city has its own provincial status, not to confuse with Maputo province). In mentioned debate sessions, it is his duty to voice the concerns of the OJM members in Maputo city in the presence of the representatives of the senior party. He declared being proud of Frelimo party granting such participation. He also confirmed the existence of 20% youth quotas for political candidates, either for the Assembly of the Republic or in any other elections at whatever level. To further proof of his words, he reiterated what already was mentioned by Pedro Cossa (see paragraph 8.2 above) *i.e.* that even some Ministers are OJM members, Youth and Sports Minister Alberto Nkutumula, and Labour Vice-Minister Osvaldo Petersburgo. Besides, current CNJ president, Manuel Formiga also comes from the OJM. From such evidence, Dom appeared quite positive when he affirmed the youth is included in decision-making organs, in fact, Mozambique is an example of excellence for what concerns youth inclusion in the politics and Frelimo party is it too with its youth quotas. Further, Maputo is specifically a virtuous example, also since it has always been ruled by Frelimo. Almost all other responses resemble what Dom stated. OJM interviewed members declared that youngsters in Mozambique do participate actively in the politics, although they did not always specify what they exactly meant by participation. However, when they did, they typically referred to voting.

As an OJM interviewee, Roger, stated, at least in the capital city, youngsters are convinced that participating in the politics or voting are their rights, therefore, he would say the general current status of participation is positive. Roger also admitted perhaps most youngsters distanced themselves from the politics during what he defined as a “brief crisis” in the country, presumably referring to the latest skirmishes between the national Defence and Security Forces and Renamo armed men, which exploded in 2013 in the central region of the country. Notwithstanding what happened back then, as Roger saw it, they decided that continuing to participate was for the best. He concluded his interview with a slightly bitter critic towards the attitude city youngsters have towards the politics. As youngsters, they tend to see national development as the mission of the politics, hence, they demand the resolution of issues such as housing, employment, education, sanitation and health among all. Within his words, a sense of nuisance was hardly

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<sup>127</sup> As literally translated from the Portuguese expression he used: “*Um canal de participação*”, meant as a metaphor

masqueraded. In his opinion, youngsters in the city have the tendency to presume such problems must be tackled immediately and automatically resolved. And if the Government cannot do it, they put the blame on it since they generally do not appreciate enough the value of patience (to refine the expression used by Roger), expecting problems to be resolved by a miracle. Hence, quite obviously, such way of thinking generates frustration when these issues are not resolved instantly. As a consequence they might be assuming participating in the politics is not useful, since they do not see their exigencies resolved shortly.

Notwithstanding their agreement, other interviewees mentioned youth participation also outside the mainframe of Frelimo party. Lidia explicitly mentioned political participation within other parties, at least the other two main opposition parties. She acknowledged that opposition parties Renamo and MDM have their own youth leagues as well, although she affirmed to be unaware of their inner functioning. As she explained it, the two main parties participate in the decision-making process, however, she declared not to be quite sure regarding the concrete possibilities the oppositions give to their youth to participate. The OJM youngsters are present in the party organs and certainly are present in the decision-making process, be it in the Assembly of the Republic, seminars, discussion *fora* and any other Frelimo-organized activities in the capital city and throughout the whole country, the OJM has always been there. Her answer followed pretty much the same *leitmotif* of her colleagues from such point and onwards. She mentioned the work of the Youth Ministry, which in her words regards every single youngster, and also praised the CNJ for its conduct, with a concrete example (the celebration of 19th anniversary of the CPLP<sup>128</sup>, held in Zimpeto national stadium, Maputo city outskirts), sponsored by the CNJ. She clearly mentioned this is a form of participating. Another point of discussion regarded the youngsters in the Government, for the ongoing mandate there are mentioned Vice-Minister and one Minister, she wondered whether there would soon be more and she also affirmed in the public administration there is participation indeed, though she was not more specific.

In her opinion, however, whether youngsters decide to participate or not, the point is that such decision depends on the will of the single individual, since, even for those who do not want to affiliate to the OJM, in Maputo city there is a multitude of opportunities, whether political or non-political. The whole Mozambique is full of associations of any nature and kind, and occasions for debates or conferences are numerous. She affirmed that whenever opinions rise among the youth, there are ways to have them heard, even by the President of the Republic. Lidia mentioned an initiative called *Presidencia Aberta* (Open Presidency) a space offered

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<sup>128</sup> *Comunidade de Paises de Lingua Portuguesa*, Community of Portuguese Language speaking Countries, created on 17 July 1996

by the Presidency of the Republic to communicate with the youth. Quite obviously, the OJM members are invited there and allowed to make their voices be heard in front of the President. The OJM has the further privilege to meet the President in party meetings since he is the president of Frelimo party as well. More generally, though, all have the right to participate there, whether they belong to a party or not.

Only very few OJM interviewees were less optimistic. Amongst them, Susana. As she saw it, there are still youngsters who think that politics is an elderly issue and a waste of time. She added that, from her own point of view of a woman in politics, the idea that women in politics only serve to influential men for indecent purposes is still lingering within the youth, and several other distorted perceptions as such do not attract youngsters to the politics, especially girls. Mostly, these are interpretations by someone who is not involved and has no idea how the political process really works. Susana argued that politics are much more than what they think, discussions, debates, decisions and so forth. However, in her opinion, Mozambican youth still believes in all mentioned stereotypes and keep distance. Others only see the politics as an access to power and that is it. It might be reasonable to presume that, from her words it is intended the perspective of a career in the politics within the ranks of Frelimo party plays a considerable role as a major attraction. Albeit the stereotypes, she admitted that, honestly, she did not see any obstacle to political participation *per se*. Her party, for example, does not impede anyone to participate, since establishing obstacles would contrast with the policy of the league to “massify” membership numbers. She argued that if the party wanted to put obstacles, than requirements would be established to join the OJM, however that is not the case at all. To apply for membership in fact, applicants only need to be Mozambicans between 15 and 35 years of age. As more youngsters join, the better this would be for the youth league, hence no obstacle is created by the OJM. What emerged from her words seems repeating to a certain extent what was quoted by her colleague Lidia: the real issue is personal intention to engage oneself in political participation or not.

## The LJR

Patterns of opinions among LJR interviewees reflected considerably more discontent than those that emerged from the responses of OJM members, in all aspects discussed. Firstly, they argued the imperfections in current governance are what concretely presents obstacles to the youth to participate, more specifically, whomever does not conform his or her ideas with those promoted by the ruling party. Once again, therefore, the mainly recurrent term, even though not always



pronounced, was discrimination. Which escalates in a Frelimo political stronghold such as the capital city. Although a general pattern of negative opinions on the current status of youth political participation is undeniable, they were also quite self-confident when they declared youngsters are not to blame. They did not refer to their own youth league or party so extensively as OJM interviewees did, rather, their answers addressed the issue of youth participation both in the city and at national level in more general terms, presenting several examples to sustain their points of view.

João argued that, today, in the city there are more organizations dealing with the politics than how it used to be even a few years before (amongst all, he quoted the PJ), and it is normal for the youth to have discussions about politics. As he declared, however, this is also the main concern, since such vivid discussions are confined within the informal level. Youngsters adore to discuss, the sole problem is that they do so in the wrong places, for example in the minibuses *chapas*, bars, everywhere except for the rightful places. In João's words, the city youth is very sensitive to socio-political issues: unemployment, housing, low levels of education quality, faulty public services and health are their favourite trends of discussion. However, as he specified, despite the commitment to discuss, such enthusiasm does not always translate into active participation. Results are emerging, nonetheless. Thereon, João underlined how such passage to active participation is whether a youngster decides to join the opposition since, even in organizations such as the CNJ, which should theoretically provide a youngsters-to-youngsters dialogue, its members are nominated by the Government, and some youth associations are excluded. That, he argued, is a censored way to promote discussion. He insisted quite much on the concept that ideas which do not conform with the Frelimo-ruled majority are not considered. Further, he added, the Minister of Youth and Sports holds a forum where it is possible to participate only as association, not as individuals, hence, the associations present there are exclusively pro-Frelimo and those who criticize the most are marginalized. Fear of exposing oneself is what prevents most youngsters from openly criticizing the flaws of current governance, both in the capital city and at national level. Since the State is the largest national employer, expressing critics publicly may signify remaining unemployed for life. Most LJR interviewees agreed with the issues expressed by João, however, in some cases the emphasis was put on different problems.

Mira mentioned the youth is much more concerned with economic profit. And they know that parties do not pay their members when they request affiliation. Quite to the contrary, being a member requires monthly expenses, activities are voluntary and often there are not even enough financial resources to provide bottles of water to everybody during such activities. On the other hand, some youngsters participate because of influence from their parents who push them to

attempt a career within the party, or facilitate access through nepotism. This last point was repeatedly confirmed by almost all her colleagues.

What surprised the author, however is the critic that Mira uttered afterwards, directed towards her own party. She argued youngsters themselves would be interested to participate indeed, also in Renamo's youth league, yet, the other two main parties are, in her opinion, more attractive to the youth, in the whole country as well as in the capital city. As she saw it, the MDM looks more like a party concretely devoted to the youth since all its high-ranking members in the youth league are young and so it is for the senior party, whereas regarding Frelimo, what allures most affiliates are the personal advantages in joining the ruling party. Therefore, regarding the Renamo party, she admitted youngsters might not be interested to join because, in one way or the other, not much space is *de facto* granted to the youth. First of all, she argued, the leader is not young. And in her opinion, even establishing a youth association does not necessarily imply granting space to the youth.

Labelling an organization as “youth league” is not enough when leaders are all in their 30s or 40s, which could arguably derive by the fact the LJR Statutes do not establish a maximum age for participation (see paragraph 7.2). Mira was not done yet. She defined the other two major parties as much more creative with activity planning, not strictly concerning the politics. Youngsters enjoy leisure activities, such as manual jobs laboratories or a cooking club. In her opinion, even such activities are fundamental, since youngsters have thus something concrete to do, relaxing and instructive at the same time. Which is still missing in LJR's agenda and, in her words, such is a great flaw. Rather than leaving its young members with nothing to do, such, so to say, leisure activities help them to invest their physical and mental energy into a healthy hobby, rather than spending time in a bar drinking beer all day, or worse. Granting room to the youth goes beyond the politics and not proposing such leisure activities is also bad propaganda. To stress her point, Mira explicitly used the commercial ad comparison. No attractive activities means fewer youngsters would approach the LJR. Alongside with political education, which is fundamental indeed, there has to be something else. She argued many youngsters love dancing, singing, playing soccer, etc, hence there must be room left for such activities, both relaxing and enjoyable. In Mira's opinion, this is the greatest obstacle to youth participation in general, not showing enough attention to these aspects and merely using the youth for electoral campaigns. As admirable as it might be, Mira's opinion was a quite isolated example, as her colleagues preferred to highlight other aspects. As mentioned above, most LJR interviewees blamed the current Frelimo governance for promoting political intolerance, with all consequent negative effects on youth participation outside the ruling party mainframe.

Cam was amongst the most specific on this point. Belonging to the opposition is an obstacle in Maputo and he gave an example. Whenever a roundtable is organized and the attendance belong to different youth leagues in equal proportions, it is typical of the Frelimo representatives to feel like the owners, sometimes because organizers belong to their party, hence they are always a majority. He lamented how the party, the State and the Government are intertwined to a confusing point that party affiliation is more relevant than any other requirement, including education. His words were particularly vitriolic on this matter. In his opinion, most difficulties originate from a clear separation of the State and all public institutions from the party. Though in different words, all other LJR interviewees had no doubts such statement corresponds to the truth. Some went even further, declaring the Government promotes political intolerance. Behind the façade of open-mindedness and acceptance of differences, there is no real acceptance of differences. Hence, in the political debate, youngsters who are in fact interested, keep their opinions to themselves in their own house, at bars, *chapas*, and do not discuss where they are supposed to do so. In the opinion of several LJR members, such intolerance is in fact a limitation of basic fundamental human rights such as freedom of expression.

Ian clearly affirmed that the governance, both in the city and in the country, is faulty hence the politics is discredited among youngsters who rather remain at a distance, considering it an issue for elders. He openly admitted the existence of widespread disillusion and materialism among youngsters. Such governance installed even fear for politics among the young generations. Belonging to a different party, even in what officially is a multiparty democracy, is an excuse for marginalization. He mentioned he was himself victim of such marginalization, which is also why many youngsters are unemployed and risk to suffer such condition for life. However, in his opinion, an improvement of the present condition is possible and it goes through education, fundamental to free the minds of the youth as it has the power to free and motivate. Ian argued this is a society challenge in general, to bet more on education to propagate the true values of democracy. Despite the difficulties, he declared he had hope that his own generation (people born in the 1990s, which is the author's generation as well), shall remove all problems to political participation.

He concluded the interview with a truly interesting detail. Being the youngest MP of the current legislation (at 26 years of age) he argued his party is not afraid to put youngsters in important positions, however, not simply because they are young, but, because they deserved it. In other words he despised the youth quotes so much praised by OJM interviewees, arguing that meritocracy is central and goes beyond age. Entrusting youngsters with positions of power exclusively because they are young, in Ian's opinion, made no sense. Renamo party does not have youth quotas,

differently from the other two main parties and he ironically wondered whether granting a quota would mean that youngsters have only 20% or 30% of the intelligence of an adult. Theoretically, he mentioned, even more space should be granted in case there were enough youngsters who can prove they deserve a possibility. On the other hand, quotas only encourage lethargy among the youth, since they might assume they would be automatically granted opportunities and therefore, do not devote their energies to their own party's cause. He revealed quotas are not granted neither for youngsters nor for women, both in the party and in the youth league.<sup>129</sup> Anyone sitting in a relevant position is there because he or she earned it.

## The LJMDM

As quoted in the introduction to the present paragraph, data collected from the responses of LJMDM interviewees resembled what emerged in the LJR group, at least as it concerns problems and obstacles to youth participation in the city. However, amongst all three groups, the LJMDM interviewees were the most pessimistic in their descriptions of the current situation, while only very few times they discussed their own league in details. They all argued Mozambican youngsters have their own life priorities and, in almost all cases, political participation does not feature among them. More generally, the consideration they expressed on people of their own generation is definitely less generous compared to the general opinion of LJR interviewees. Quite opposite to the enthusiasm showed by OJM members for their youth quota granted in the senior party, apparently the same reason did not mean much to the LJMDM members, even if the quotas granted to youngsters in the MDM party are higher than those of Frelimo: 30%.

Nonetheless, LJMDM members also admitted the main reasons for the current scarce participation result from a national socio-political situation which leaves much to be desired, including in the capital city. Youngsters do not participate thoroughly as they should and when they do, they have an opportunistic behaviour. Vic mentioned they ponder which party is likely to win the elections and consequently they support it, seeking their own profit rather than sharing its political project. There is little genuine interest in one political project rather than another one, political volubility amongst youngsters is frequent. As it concerns obstacles to participation, some patterns emerged quite constantly.

First of all, Frelimo's discrimination strategy against anyone who thinks differently from them. Secondly, job requirements based on party affiliation, Thirdly, a

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<sup>129</sup> See: *Boletim da República, III série - Número 23, 4º Suplemento*, on Renamo Youth League Statute, 10 June 2008, Maputo, Mozambique

political education deficit. As consequence, critical skills among the youth are deficient, which, according to Vic, is useful to the elite in power who will keep onto its power.

Amongst the most negative opinions, Tom was the most concise and straightforward. In his opinion, most youngster do not care at all about the politics, their only interest is to find a job and, supposing they do not succeed, they lose interest for anything else, including the politics and even their own studies.

Luiz explained more thoroughly the reason is much simpler than it seems: unemployment. Even in the capital city, rates of unemployment for people under 35 years of age are, in his words, catastrophic. He blamed 40 years of false promises made by Frelimo, also in the labour market. As a result, abstention percentages in the elections are higher and higher and youngsters in the capital city are disillusioned and exclusively think with their wallet. They do not believe in the politics at all, with generally no distinction between political colours. Since Frelimo has told nothing but lies to them for so long, they believe everyone involved in the politics is basically a liar.

Such dismal assessments dovetail with those uttered by all other LJMDM members, though they mostly used these concepts in milder terms. They agreed participation is generally very weak and youngsters prefer to abandon themselves to apathy assuming it is not their own responsibility to solve their own problems. Job was not so tragic as his colleague Luiz, however his description of the catatonic state of most Maputo city youngsters was quite ruthless. He mentioned that youngsters adore to delegate responsibilities to anyone else, be it the rich, the Government or the Almighty. They stroll around with a bottle of beer in their hands, surrounded by problems, such as lack of sanitation services, trash in the streets, car accidents, unemployment, yet they think it is not up to them but to someone else to find solutions. What Job invoked was a heartfelt civic commitment by youngsters as citizens: the governance has to be analyzed critically and after five years, they must consider whether to renew the contract or not, as if rulers were employees. Yet, at maximum they are exploited in the 30-45 days of electoral campaign, to propagandize whatsoever candidate and then nothing else happens. The youth is the most fragile age group and it remains fragile, even though they are the majority. They lack critical vision and they are positive their vote will not change anything. In Job's opinion, such way of thinking is already a psychological defeat. This goes beyond lack of will, this is lack of self-confidence. As Job called it, a mutilated participation, empty of significance and with no profound motivations.

One feature shared by almost all of these interviewees is how frequently youngsters aim at political participation for opportunistic motives. Even in party participation, all they are interested in is having their names in an electoral list, whereas in the day-by-day activities, they are not as serious. The idea of a future

political career is very appealing, yet, as most LJMDM interviewees stressed it, envisioning a future career as MP, governor, or City Council member for the sake of the career itself is wrong. It is a distorted portrayal of political participation. As Job declared, what is missing is a personal acknowledgment of ideals at the basis of participation. The youth must be conscious their ideals come first, and choose to participate because in one specific political formation they can see the solution to the problems of the society and a good management of public welfare. However, that is hardly the case.

To an even more complicated extent, provided some youngsters indeed decide to participate, besides basing their choice on personal gain, they typically rely on nepotism to facilitate their access. As Ricardo affirmed, such fact is of a strategic importance to the party in power, there are few youngsters in the politics and those who are, they are there thanks to their father or another relative working in some national institution. It is hard to find youngsters with such profile that do not have liaisons with someone in the party in power. Ricardo declared that youngsters are typically the most critical towards failures in the administration, therefore, such disillusionment is in fact favourable to the ruling party. There is interest to chase away the youth from the politics so that they would not see who those in power really are. Significant to this purpose is the slogan: “*E’ a Frelimo que fez, é a Frelimo que faz*” (“It is Frelimo who did, it is Frelimo who does”). Thus an inefficient system of corruption, nepotism, deleterious management and so forth is protracted.

To the eyes of the youngsters all politicians are liars and thieves and nothing will change that, so there is not even sense in participating, the best is accepting the *status quo* and live on. This, as Ricardo called it, intentionally promoted idea, allows those in power to remain on their seats and the youth would never see the other face of the coin. Youngsters have three priorities: a job, economic independence and their own welfare. Priorities are all revolving around money. Since in order to have a job is the *Cartão Vermelho*, the only option left is acquiring it and all their concerns are resolved. Hence, it makes no sense for them to participate in the politics. Here Ricardo mentioned an intriguing detail. He declared as far as the LJMDM is concerned, it does not have problems with double card owners, their own and the Red Card, since surely the league does not want its members to be unemployed for life. Thereon, what he suggests is a potential solution to overcome economic constraints as a barrier to participation in the LJMDM.

Above mentioned responses were largely agreed in their content by most interviewees in this group, however, some optimism on future perspectives was not so inexistent as it might be presumed. Albeit a minority, a few points of view are less gloomy. Sonya appeared quite confident when she affirmed something is changing, in the capital city at least. A few years ago, any youngster asked about the politics would not have known what to answer, as she put it, they did not have the

slightest consideration. Honestly, Sonya admitted, the situation is not that much different today, however, given the present difficulties, youngsters at least ask questions and have their own opinions. They wonder why the politicians are not doing anything, they are more interested and demand to receive answers, they protest, to summarize, she concluded, they are more integrated now in the political life than before. The author has to admit he is not sure whether Sonya's opinion derives from a sentiment of authentic *bona fide* or from the fact she is 25 years old and at the same time LJMDM member and representative at Maputo City Council for the MDM party.

## Comparisons

In the course of the interviews, the author meant this topic as a conclusive remark to allow the interviewees to express their own opinion on the current status of youth political participation in the city. Nevertheless, most interviewees did not limit their answer to the capital city, whereas, they illustrated their point of view in more general terms and frequently exposed their opinion on Mozambican youngsters and their relation with the world of politics. Regarding the issue of the present paragraph, differences were more than similarities between the three groups, almost all alongside the cleavage ruling party-oppositions.

OJM interviewees were undoubtedly the most optimistic, presenting their own party and youth league as outstanding examples of youth involvement in the world of politics. As self-evident truth, countless times the fact was brought to the attention of the author that Frelimo party grants a 20% youth quota in its electoral list, therefore, as all (literally, all) OJM interviewees concluded, the level of youth participation is good, in fact the stimulating possibility of pursuing a career in politics is at the disposal of everyone and even in those cases where youngsters do not participate, it depends on their own personal choice. A quite scornful opinion on those youngsters, who are scarcely interested in the politics, emerged.

Opinions expressed by interviewed members of the opposition youth leagues argued quite the contrary, in fact that such OJM interpretation is limited and quite narrow-minded. LJR interviewees mainly focused on the existing problems to a more extensive participation, problems they unilaterally attributed, once again, to a systematic political intolerance promoted by Frelimo governance, remarkably in one of its political bastions such as the capital city. Moreover, they argued youngsters would theoretically be interested in politics, however, due to the difficulties they face on a daily basis, especially if they are affiliated to the opposition, they prefer to fend for themselves and concentrate on their own survival. When they mentioned their own youth league, LJR members were

confident the reason why many Maputo city youngsters are reluctant to join their league is to be found within above mentioned causes. Amongst LJR voices, in very few cases, *de facto* one, the reason behind scarce youth participation was attributed to an insufficient real attention to necessities of the youth, which reflects negatively on the attraction the LJR exercises on the city youth.

On the other hand, the LJMDM group was the most pessimistic under all points of view. Their responses followed the discrimination pattern already emerged for LJR members, thus aligning with mentioned ruling party - opposition cleavage. Yet, their judgement of most people of their own age was definitely the most severe. Quite remarkable, the fact of granting an even higher youth quote to their members was not enough for a justification to qualify the current status of youth political participation as “good”, contrary to what was argued by OJM interviewees. The descriptions of the LJMDM members resemble the portrait of a “lost generation”, lost in selfishness and apathy, however, these interviewees specified it is not entirely their fault, whereas they blamed the socio-political flaws of Frelimo’s governance. Further, although most opinions on this matter were quite negative, a few LJMDM interviewees did admit the general situation, at least in the capital city, is slowly improving.



## **9. SUMMARY and CONCLUSIONS**

The purpose of the present dissertation was to cast some more light on what motivates members of youth leagues affiliated to the three main Mozambican political parties to participate in a political youth league while most Mozambicans at their same age are either too skeptical and/or disillusioned to participate at all. As expressed in the Research Question: what attracts Maputo city youngsters to become members of a political youth league?

The current chapter summarizes the results of the research and draws a few final considerations on emerged data, in all research fieldwork phases. Regarding the archival research on the three leagues' histories, the main issue was finding enough information, which the author resolved with relative luck. Material on the origin and establishment of the OJM was abundant and accessible, although not always thorough in details, therefore, the author had to integrate such data with interviews to long-time members. Such interviews were even more precious to the investigation on the history of the LJR since existing written information on the history of this youth league is, as mentioned, scarce. In both cases, results emerging from these interviews were indeed interesting for their first-person experiences nature, however, it might be argued what emerged was the mere point of view of the interviewees rather than an "official" version of the history of these organizations. Relatively easier, for its much more recent history, was retrieving enough information on the origins and establishment of the MDM youth league. Considerations on the second part of the research are quite diverse and evidence collected in the interviews shows both resemblances and contradictions with previous research results and theory assessed by the author. To begin with, inquiring over the three leagues' structure and functioning in Maputo city surfaced a quite often contradicting reality, with plenty of discrepancies between different descriptions by different interviewees regarding organization charts, organs functions and even exact numbers of members. Nonetheless, the general picture emerging from fieldwork data indeed shows examples of youth associations committed to their duty, whether this may signify educating Maputo city youngsters to the values of a healthy democracy, being socially active or merely drawing more members, hence votes, to their cause. Albeit a far from being flawless structure, interviews data reveals the three youth leagues are fundamental to their respective parties to involve the majority of the Mozambican population in the formal politics. Arguably, it is concerning such point where most intriguing data emerged. The relation between any of the three youth leagues and the senior party they represent was an issue rich in contradicting aspects, considering it was

never directly asked as object of an interview question, yet, since it arguably constitutes an affirmation of identity, it might thereon be a possible answer to the main research question. In general, all interviewees declared themselves as dedicated to the vision and mission of their parties, which many of them, both from OJM and the opposition youth leagues, confirmed by underlining how many high-ranked members of the senior party began their political *cursus honorum* in their respective youth league. Therefore, being a member might be considered a remarkable source of attraction for youngsters, since it represents the chance of a career in politics, with consequent upward mobility. As mentioned, the most “loyal” to their duty of party “catalyzers” for the youth appeared to be the OJM members; whereas responses expressing discontent, dissatisfaction, even quite an impatience towards the “seniors” emerged more frequently among the members of the opposition youth leagues. Even between these, however, a few differences are worth mentioning.

While Renamo youth league members did express some discontent towards the senior party, such complaints were rather sporadic. On the other hand, the LJMDM interviewees were the most critical towards an allegedly not sufficient attention to their necessities by their own party. The discourse becomes even more complicated when interviewees expressed their opinions on their counterparts. As members of opposition youth leagues manifested a harsh criticism towards Frelimo pervasiveness in all aspects of national politics and the biases such circumstances produce, OJM members consider such critics towards its party unjust, presenting the self-evident truth Mozambique’s overall conditions significantly improved since 1975, although even they recognise flaws in national policies tackling mass unemployment, facilitations to credit access, education reforms and the inefficiency of national institutions.<sup>130</sup> Arguably, discussion on the agendas of political parties is framed within a much broader consideration that interviewees mentioned out loudly, which is the situation they face constantly, arguably what distinguishes them from most Mozambican youngsters. Despite so, as Honwana rightfully claims that youth leagues affiliated to political parties are the exception rather than the rule and their example cannot be assumed as a comprehensive portrait of youth’ political participation in Maputo city, let alone the whole country. On this point the author shall not argue, as his fieldwork research did not assess any non-party-related youth association.

From the answers on personal motivations, OJM interviewees indicated patriotism, inspired by the glorious history of Frelimo freedom fighters of whom they are the rightful heirs and whose ideals they perpetuate, with almost no differentiation between men and women. LJR members are mainly driven by a feeling of

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<sup>130</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 143-145

bitterness and desire to see concrete implementation of multiparty democracy, while they claim that at present status, anyone who does not belong to Frelimo is systematically excluded and discriminated in the politics and beyond. At the basis of such bitterness there is also the aim for a more equal society where public services function properly and youth unemployment is tackled seriously. Worth repeating, female LJR interviewees remarked more frequently the valorization of themselves as women as the driving motivation for their own militancy. As it concerns LJMDM members, they accentuated the major attention devoted by their party to youth issues, when confronted with the messages of the other two parties, as main driver behind their choice of affiliation. In their words, they accused the other two parties, and respective youth leagues of being too outmoded and even authoritarian. To corroborate their opinions, most of them described life experiences in one of the two other youth leagues and criticized the inexistent tolerance for anyone who dares to contradict the leaders. For these interviewees, the gender cleavage did not emerge as much as for the LJR.

Most interviewees confirmed they all see the youth, hence themselves, as a potentially driving force in Mozambique and yet, constantly excluded. General patterns in their answers presented many resemblances with data contained in the PJ report on youth political participation, especially as it concerns the issue at the basis of non-participation. Notwithstanding the generally residuous youth participation, such fact does not necessarily mean youngsters are not interested in the politics, rather, as the PJ report puts it and most interviewees from the opposition youth leagues confirmed, they are mostly disillusioned. Such concept is perhaps the most quoted as many interviewees highlighted widespread disillusionment as the main reason at the basis of scarce political participation of Mozambican youth and yet, they still find their own motivations to continue their work. Factors such as low levels of education quality, saturated public transports, drug and alcohol abuse, expensive housing contracts and chronic unemployment are among the causes of the hardest challenges for their respective youth leagues, besides structural flaws, financial difficulties, complicated activity planning and, in the LJMDM group case, insufficient attention by the senior party. Quite critical opinions by interviewed members of opposition youth leagues regarded the challenges the youth is facing. Challenges exacerbated by systematic discrimination perpetrated by the Frelimo party against anyone who is not affiliated to it, or, even worse, is a member of the opposition. As a result, for the latter the access to the formal labour market is tremendously complicated.

The responses given by interviewees on the current status of youth' political participation presents similarities to the assessed theoretical framework, as contemporary Mozambican youth was often described as too materialistic, besides, as mentioned, too disillusioned to participate, thus confirming Honwana's

fieldwork data.<sup>131</sup> However, on this specific point of discussion, different patterns emerged consistently between OJM members and opposition youth leagues members, with the former generally more optimistic on the current national political status and the latter definitely less content. OJM interviewees remarked how their own party champions youth involvement and grants a 20% youth quota in all its electoral lists, therefore, as they concluded, the level of youth participation is good. Further, what such fact implies, is that every youngster may aspire to a career in the politics, nonetheless, to deal with the politics, appropriate education is necessary and that is not always the case, both at national level and in the capital city.

The interviewed members of opposition youth leagues argued quite the contrary. LJR interviewees concentrated their answers to condemn the systematic political intolerance promoted by Frelimo governance, particularly afflicting in one of its political bastions such as the capital city. As mentioned, existing difficulties are often an insurmountable obstacle for the youth, therefore they concentrate on their own, typically economic, problems rather than being interested in political participation. Among all LJR interviewees, only one argued the reason behind scarce youth participation in this specific youth league derives from insufficient real attention to necessities of the youth, which consequently attracts fewer members compared to its two counterparts.

The LJMDM group was the most pessimistic under all points of view. Their responses followed the discrimination pattern that already emerged for LJR members, however, they were not as generous towards people of their own age and frequently described them as selfish, materialistic and apathic. Nonetheless, they also admitted Frelimo governance is to blame for the existing socio-political flaws in the city. And mentioning the ruling party, both groups of members belonging to Frelimo youth league and to the LJMDM declared their own party grants a quota to their youth. However, one striking difference between the two is that, in the LJMDM case, the fact that the senior party grants an even higher youth quote than Frelimo, was apparently not enough to qualify " the current status of youth political participation as "good". Although most opinions on this matter were quite negative, a few LJMDM interviewees did admit the general situation, at least in the capital city, is slowly improving.

All mentioned problems and faults of an imperfect Mozambican democratic system contribute to the maleficent reputation surrounding the politics, with the majority of young Mozambican believing all its flaws infect anyone who belongs to such rotten world. The three groups of members did show discrepancies between one league and the other, and also within the same league, yet, a common thread is

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<sup>131</sup> Correspondence of hiring discrimination based on the *Cartão Vermelho* (Red Card) ownership, symbol of official affiliation to Frelimo party, Honwana, A. (2013); p. 142

evident. In their opinion, their youth, that is themselves, has an enormous unexpressed potential which is impeded to surface.

And here we find the greatest contrast with all assessed theory arguing the formal politics despise them as a “lost generation” or do not have any consideration for them at all. A consistent general pattern in their answers suggests how, through history, Mozambican politics has always had a huge debt towards its young generations and the formal politics in Mozambique has an enormous interest in engaging the youth. Though such interests may be exclusively opportunistic, the experiences told by the interviewees demonstrated how participating in one of the assessed youth leagues may signify more than being a mere foot soldier, in fact, may be the first step for an upward mobile career in politics as representative of the senior party in the future, even at the highest levels. Hence, this is a significant driver of attraction.

However, it should not be forgotten how, although their, so to say, unusual status amongst youngsters, these groups of youngsters share, at least in most cases, the unpleasant permanence in the waithood limbo with many people of their age, which may lead to not encouraging future scenarios where exacerbated frustrations might eventually lead to another wave of protests in Mozambique. And such social circumstances are quite worsened in a country with lingering military tension which already deflagrated in open conflict in some areas of the country.

As a final consideration, the author has to admit he agrees with Honwana when she states that African youth was the first to perceive the waithood,<sup>132</sup> nevertheless, such condition is shared by youth worldwide, including the developed West. Whether youth problematic relations with the world of politics emerged in this research fieldwork represents a parcel of a major phenomenon of youth contestation, the author will leave the readers to decide.

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<sup>132</sup> “*A juventude africana foi a primeira a sentir a waithood*”, *ibidem*, p. 218-223

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Most Relevant Events (September - December 2015)

As mentioned in chapter 2, the present Appendix contains a brief resume of the most relevant political occurrences in Mozambique in late 2015. Although the author concluded his fieldwork research on 31 August 2015, he decided to keep track of the latest turns of the events in the country, as the political situation is dangerously near to another crisis. All quoted updates were mostly retrieved from the websites of Mozambican daily newspaper *O País* and online media portal *Folha de Maputo*.

**10 September 2015:** Renamo parliamentary group proposed another, more inclusive project of Constitutional revision, aiming to attribute to provincial assemblies the priority to propose the nominees for the provincial governors. Afonso Dhlakama declared he was positive such objective might have been enforced with violence, if necessary.<sup>133</sup>

**12 September 2015:** Tensions exploded once again when Afonso Dhlakama and his entourage were victims of an armed ambush in Chibata, Chimoio district, in the central province of Manica, resulting with officially 4 people wounded.<sup>134</sup>

**25 September 2015:** A shootout occurred in Amatongas, Gondola district, once again in Manica province.<sup>135</sup> Official data on casualties are controversial, as the the police announced 20 dead, Government spokesperson Mouzinho Saide mentioned 23 dead, whereas Renamo party spokesperson António Muchanga talked of only 7 people killed.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> *O País* online: *Renamo volta à carga e propõe revisão pontual da Constituição*, opais.sapo.mz, 10 September 2015

<sup>134</sup> *O País* online: *Afonso Dhlakama emboscado em Manica*, opais.sapo.mz, 13 September 2015.

<sup>135</sup> *O País* online: *Homens armados matam 20 pessoas e ferem seis no distrito de Gondola*, opais.sapo.mz, 28 September 2015

<sup>136</sup> *O País* online: *Com quem está a verdade?*, opais.sapo.mz, 30 September 2015

**9 October 2015:** The police assaulted in the morning the residence of Dhlakama in Beira, Sofala province, and arrested his personal security guards. The reason of the attack was not explained. The intervention of external mediators avoided the arrest of Dhlakama himself. Not confirmed sources refer of an alleged attempt by the police to retrieve the weapons supposedly taken by Renamo armed men in the attacks of 25 September. The Chief Whip of the parliamentary group of Renamo, Ivone Soares, declared such actions are an attack to the rule of law and criticized the mere façade of intentions to dialogue presented by the Government and Frelimo.<sup>137</sup>

**12 October 2015:** A more detailed report refers that seven hours after leaving Gorongosa woodlands where he was hiding after the attacks of 25 September, the *Unidade da Intervenção Rápida*, (Police Rapid Intervention Unit, UIR) a special intervention elite group of the police, heavily armed with machine-guns, bazookas and AK47s, surrounded the residence of Dhlakama in the *Bairro das Palmeiras*, Beira. Apparently, the UIR negotiated the surrender of Dhlakama security guards and arrested them when they refused. Beira citizens and all Mozambicans remained astonished and feared a bloodbath.<sup>138</sup>

**22 October 2015:** Ivone Soares, Chief Whip of Renamo parliamentary group, did not refrain from expressing harsh criticism towards the “cowardice” of the ruling party, demonstrated in Beira on 9 October and declared “it was no accident”. Further, Ms Soares affirmed such orchestrated operations aimed to divert the attention of Mozambicans from the debate on the real problems of the country.<sup>139</sup>

**7 December 2015:** The Assembly of the Republic rejected the project of punctual constitutional reform submitted by Renamo parliamentary group. Specifically, the project aimed to modify the following articles: art.8, on unitarian State; art.160, on the competences of the President of the Republic in the domain of the Government; art.271, on the objectives of the power of local administrations and art.272, on the categories of local autonomies. Submitted as possible solution to political and military tension lingering in some provinces, specifically in the

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<sup>137</sup> *O País* online, *Polícia assalta residência de Dhlakama na Beira*, opais.sapo.mz, 9 October 2015

<sup>138</sup> *O País* online, *PRM encurrala Dhlakama e desarma seus guardas*, by Francisco Mandlate opais.sapo.mz, 12 October 2015

<sup>139</sup> *O País* online, “*Ataques à Renamo visam distrair os moçambicanos do debate dos verdadeiros problemas do país*”, opais.sapo.mz, 22 October 2015

central region of the country since the national elections of 2014, this project had succeeded the initial project on local autonomies presented on 30 April.<sup>140</sup>

**8 December 2015:** A discourse by Afonso Dhlakama is published on YouTube. Dhlakama intervened through the phone at a meeting of the Renamo youth league, LJR, in Maputo on 30 November. He affirmed the long period of silence (Dhlakama has not appeared in public since the attacks of 25 September) was justified by the preparation of his strategies to “make the Frelimo regime fall” and that he would begin his governance after Christmas 2015. However, he declared it would not be his intention to fight another war, yet, Renamo armed men would respond to any attack against them.<sup>141</sup>

**16 December 2015:** Private tv channel STV broadcasted a phone speech by Dhlakama given to a press conference with major Mozambican media representatives and Renamo MPs in Maputo. STV news informed that Dhlakama decided to intervene the same day that the President of the Republic, Nyusi delivered his official declaration on the general status of the country.

The leader of Renamo declared he was in Satunjira, in the old military base of Renamo in Gorongosa district at the time of the call. He despised the attitude of Frelimo for the lack of concrete intention to dialogue peacefully (referring to the attacks of 25 September) and that therefore Renamo would rule the six provinces where it obtained the majority of votes starting from March 2016, although he did not specify how he intended to proceed. Exclusively, that he would not recur to military occupation of the six provinces.<sup>142</sup>

**29 December 2015:** Defense and Security Forces impeded a manifestation march organized by Renamo in Maputo city, officially for considering it illegal. Some one hundred men of Defense and Security Forces surrounded Renamo delegation in Avenida Emilia Dausse, Maputo city, since the early morning. On this day, Renamo members and MPs were kept inside the delegation by the UIR, Police Rapid Intervention Unit, present with armored vehicles, anti-riot equipment and police dogs. The UIR was blocking the access to Renamo headquarters, ready to react to any provocation. Witnesses interviewed by *O País*, referred the entire operation

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<sup>140</sup> *O País* online, *Parlamento chumba “cavalo de batalha” da Renamo*, opais.sapo.mz, 8 December 2015

<sup>141</sup> *Folha de Maputo* online: *Dhlakama diz que vai governar depois do Natal (AUDIO)*, folhademaputo.co.mz, 10 December 2015

<sup>142</sup> For the entire video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oGJJJ-D-HJc8E>

started around 5 am.<sup>143</sup> On her Facebook profile, Ivone Soares published several pictures of the events and informed that the national headquarters in Avenida Sékou Touré were being surrounded by the UIR as well. At 4.55 pm a Facebook post on Ms Soares' personal profile declared that the "political prisoners had been released". During the presence of the police, a few moments of tensions occurred. Renamo members and the police confronted each other and the officers shot tear gas grenades and rubber bullets, although with no serious consequences on the civilians. According to the report made by *O País*, a tobacco shop and a car were damaged. Such facts are a further confirmation of the escalating level of political tension in the country.

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<sup>143</sup> *O País* online: *Forças Armadas de Defesa e Segurança inviabilizam manifestação da Renamo em Maputo*, opais.sapo.mz, 30 December 2015