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Women's Mobilisation, Gender, and Political Transformation in Mozambique
The Case of the Law against Domestic Violence

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**Women's Mobilisation, Gender,
and Political Transformation in Mozambique:
The Case of the Law against Domestic Violence**

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Abstract

Feminist literature has been demonstrating that women's mobilisation in general has played a relevant role in the promotion of political processes designed to tackle gender inequality. Regarding the specific context of Mozambique, the goal of this dissertation is to examine the role that women's organisations of civil society – framed in the context of a broader Mozambican women's movement – had in the struggle against domestic violence, which resulted in the approval of a law against domestic violence in 2009. This dissertation seeks to address two major lacunae in the literature. First there is no single study examining the political impact of the Mozambican women's mobilisation against domestic violence from a theoretical perspective. Second, there is limited empirical research on how such a mobilisation shaped the entire struggle against domestic violence. It is argued and empirically demonstrated that – integrated in the broader women's movement – women's organisations were able to become agents of social and political transformations in regard to the issue of domestic violence. Women's organisations played three distinct roles: articulators, agenda setters, and legislation shapers. Firstly, the organisations articulated the problem of domestic violence as a gendered process mostly affecting women. Secondly, the women's organisations placed the problem of domestic violence on the political agenda, contesting the lack of formal mechanisms that tackled the issue – particularly legislation – and trying to shape the social perception regarding such a type of violence. Thirdly, those organisations were able to shape legislative outcomes by drafting a law and successfully lobbying members of parliament for its approval. The empirical evidence for my argument was gathered through fieldwork in the greater area of Maputo. Following a qualitative approach, I conducted semi-structured interviews to members of civil society associations involved in the struggle against domestic violence and to members of the Mozambican parliament. My findings contribute directly to the literature on Mozambican women's movements and indirectly to the broad feminist theoretical and empirical work on tracing the action of civil society's groups and on women's movements as having a transformative impact on gender relations and formal politics.

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Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
AGP	General Peace Agreement, <i>Acordo Geral de Paz</i>
AMCS	Mozambican Women's Media Association, <i>Associação Mulheres na Comunicação Social</i>
AMMCJ	Association of Women in Judicial Careers, <i>Associação de Mulheres Moçambicanas na Carreira Jurídica</i>
AMUDEIA	Association of Underprivileged Women from the Sugar Industry, <i>Associação de Mulheres Desfavorecidas da Indústria Açucareira</i>
AR	<i>Assembleia da República</i> , National Parliament
ASSOMUDE	Women Association for Democracy, <i>Associação da Mulher para a Democracia</i>
AVIMAS	Association of Widows and Single Mothers, <i>Associação de Viúvas e Mães Solteiras</i>
AVVD	Association of Victims of Domestic Violence, <i>Associação das Vítimas de Violência Doméstica</i>
BDPA	Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
CAP	Centre for the Analysis of Policies, <i>Centro de Análise de Políticas</i>
CEA	Centre for African Studies, <i>Centro de Estudos Africanos</i>
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
CNAM	National Council for the Advancement of Women, <i>Conselho Nacional para o Avanço da Mulher</i>
CNE	Commission of National Elections, <i>Comissão Nacional de Eleições</i>
DEVAW	Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women
FOCADE	Forum of Non-Governmental Organisations of Cabo Delgado, <i>Fórum das Organizações não Governamentais de Cabo Delgado</i>
FORCOM	Mozambican Community Radio Forum, <i>Fórum da Rádio Comunitária Moçambicana</i>
Fórum Mulher	Women's Forum – Coordination for Women in Development, <i>Fórum Mulher – Coordenação para a Mulher no Desenvolvimento</i>
FRELIMO	Liberation Front of Mozambique, <i>Frente de Libertação de Moçambique</i>
GAMC	Bureau Desk for the Woman and the Child, <i>Gabinete de Atendimento à Mulher e Criança</i>
GDI	Gender Development Index
GDMR	Group for the Development of the Woman and Girl, <i>Grupo para o Desenvolvimento da Mulher e Rapariga</i>
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GMP	Caucus for Parliamentary Women, <i>Gabinete da Mulher Parlamentar</i>
GOAM	Operative Group for the Advancement of Women, <i>Grupo Operativo para o Avanço da Mulher</i>
GPSI	Gender Policy and the Strategy for its Implementation
HDI	Human Development Index
HOPEM	Network Men for Change, <i>Rede Homens pela Mudança</i>

INE	National Institute of Statistics, <i>Instituto Nacional de Estatística</i>
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
LADVAW	Law against Domestic Violence Perpetrated against the Woman, <i>Lei contra a Violência Doméstica Praticada contra a Mulher</i>
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
LDH	League for Human Rights, <i>Liga dos Direitos Humanos</i>
LEMUSICA	Stand Up Woman and Follow your Way, <i>Levanta-te Mulher e Siga teu Caminho</i>
MALVD	Movement for the Approval of the Law against Domestic Violence, <i>Movimento para Aprovação da Lei da Violência Doméstica</i>
MASC	Mechanism for the Support of the Civil Society, <i>Mecanismo de Apoio à Sociedade Civil</i>
MINT	Ministry of the Interior, <i>Ministério do Interior</i>
MISAU	Ministry of Health, <i>Ministério da Saúde</i>
MMAS	Ministry of Woman and Social Affairs, <i>Ministério da Mulher e Acção Social</i>
MMCAS	Ministry of Woman and Co-ordination of Social Affairs
MP	Member of the Parliament
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
MUCHEFA	Woman Head of Family, <i>Mulher Chefe de Família</i>
MULEIDE	Women Law and Development Association, <i>Associação Mulher Lei e Desenvolvimento</i>
NAFEZA	Network of Feminine Associations of Zambezia, <i>Núcleo das Associações Femininas da Zambézia</i>
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NUGENA	Gender Core of Nampula, <i>Núcleo do Género de Nampula</i>
N'Weti	Communication for Health, <i>N'Weti Comunicação para a Saúde</i>
NWM	National Women Machinery
OMM	Organisation of the Mozambican Woman, <i>Organização da Mulher Moçambicana</i>
PARPA	Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty, <i>Plano de Acção para a Redução da Pobreza</i>
PRE	Economic Recovery Programme, <i>Plano de Recuperação Económica</i>
RENAMO	Mozambique National Resistance, <i>Resistência Nacional Moçambicana</i>
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAGPA	Southern Africa Gender Protocol Alliance
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
TCV	All Against Violence, <i>Todos Contra a Violência</i>
UEM	University Eduardo Mondlane, <i>Universidade Eduardo Mondlane</i>
UN	United Nations Organisation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WLSA	Women and Law in Southern Africa

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 The Puzzle

There has been an ongoing struggle in Mozambique of women collectively mobilising in civil society against domestic violence, a process which can be traced back to the early 1990s and which ended up being determinant in the development and approval of a law against domestic violence in 2009. The goal of this dissertation is to explain in which sense such a women's mobilisation resulted in social and political transformation in Mozambique in regard to gender equality and women's rights, namely respecting the issue of domestic violence and the approval of the referred law.

While attending a symposium at the University of Cambridge in 2009¹ I sat beside a prominent scholar² in the field of feminist political theory. Images recalling British feminist struggles of the 1960s and 1970s were being projected at the background. The scholar was unsure if one of the women activists in a picture was actually her, but after confirming it she shared a thought with me: *sometimes I wonder to what extent was it all worth?* Not questioning the role women's mobilisation may play in the struggle for gender equality this thought reflected the reality of societies in the global north and the global south: the quest for gender equality is an ongoing one, even when "equality" is part of legal texts and official discourses. There are examples throughout the world of women reaching presidential chairs and getting more seats at national parliaments. Nonetheless, one may theoretically question the meaning of such a presence and the nature of the space in which it occurs. Namely, does an increase in the number of women occupying formal positions in politics imply alterations in the ways in which social and political actors, institutions, and norms are gendered? Such a fact would ultimately correspond to the improvement of women's overall status quo.

Literature on the presence of women in formal political institutions and how this presence may be translated into substantive representation of women's rights have shed light on the above questions. If on the one hand, it presents evidence that women tend to perceive themselves as representing women (e.g., Carroll, 2002; Mackay 2001), hence working on corresponding agendas (e.g., O'Regan, 2000) on the other hand, it has demonstrated that presence in terms of formal politics may not always be a sufficient condition to transform the gendered structures that underpin gender inequality (e.g., Beckwith and Cowell-Meyers 2007; Childs, 2004; Cornwall and Goetz, 2005; Goetz, 1998, 2003; Hassim, 2003; Htun and Piscopo, 2010; Sawer, 2004). In that sense, there is also literature focusing on how the interaction of active feminist

¹ Organised by the Centre for Gender Studies on the 20th of May 2009, entitled "Oppression & Revolution: A Symposium Organised in Honour of Juliette Mitchell's Retirement from the University of Cambridge".

² For privacy reasons, the name of the scholar is not disclosed.

groups of civil society with formal politics can have a qualitative impact on women's substantive representation (e.g., Baldez, 2002; Banaszak, 2010; Basu, 1995; Beckwith and Cowell-Meyers, 2007; Disney, 2005). Therefore the debate can move forward and consider further spaces as political and further actors as political agents, specifically women's social movements. In fact, feminist literature on such a topic has been improving our knowledge on why is it worth having groups of women in civil society organising as such (e.g., Eschle, 2001; Banaszak et al., 2003; Selolwane, 2009; Wieringa, 1995); if these groups are in a better position to challenge the ways in which social and political actors, institutions, and norms are gendered (e.g., Weldon, 2002a); and finally if that mobilisation can substantively represent women's rights and interests (e.g., Kang, 2014; Weldon, 2002b, 2011). The case of the Mozambican women's mobilisation against domestic violence not only fits in this literature but provides further empirical evidence to support those that suggest that informal political actors can have a relevant impact in the quest for gender equality.

It is impossible to refer to the broad Mozambican women's mobilisation as an homogeneous phenomenon; in fact it can be said to involve professional organisations – for instance the Association of Women in Judicial Careers, *Associação de Mulheres Moçambicanas na Carreira Jurídica* (AMMCJ) – former regional non-governmental organisations (NGOs) – e.g., Women and Law in Southern Africa Research and Education Trust - Mozambique (WLSA) – women's rights NGOs – *Mulher, Lei e Desenvolvimento* (MULEIDE) – a party affiliated organisation the Mozambican Women Organisation, *Organização da Mulher Moçambicana* (OMM) – individual elements – academics, activists, researchers, bureaucrats – who have different areas of concern, expertise, or even approach to the their common goal of improving women's status quo. It is not a static phenomenon either; despite working towards the same general goal each element defines its priorities, has different and often conflicting conceptions of topics, opts for being involved with different struggles in different degrees, to work in networks with similar organisations, or to create alliances with multiple actors. But despite characterised as heterogeneous and mutable, it is possible to trace a continuous collective engagement and efforts of multiple women's organisations, constituting a movement for advancing women's rights and gender equality in Mozambique. The new family law – ordered by the ministry of justice and approved in 2004³ – was elaborated with the consultation of several organisations of civil society. The organisations Fórum Mulher, WLSA, Muleide, and the AMMCJ to name a few, were actively engaged in the processes of researching and drafting the law, guaranteeing that it would be in conformity with the universal rights of children and

³ For the reference of the official text approving the law please see appendix G, Republic of Mozambique, *Boletim da República* 2004.

women (see Disney, 2005, 2006, 2008). As another example, despite not having been consulted by the government in regard to the revision of the penal code, organisations such as for instance Fórum Mulher, WLSA, Muleide, AMMCJ and the Network of Men for Change, *Rede de Homens pela Mudança* (HOPEM), have joined efforts with multiple organisations of civil society working for the advancement of human rights under an informal group entitled “Platform for the Struggle of Human Rights in the Penal Code” (*Plataforma de Luta pelos Direitos Humanos no Código Penal*). That platform conducted multiple efforts to pressure the government to guarantee that such a revision would not include discriminatory aspects in regard to the overall human rights and women’s rights in specific.⁴ Such a collective engagement has been resulting in summative processes of legitimisation which make possible for the general public opinion, the government, and international actors to link such a mobilisation to multiple changes regarding women’s rights in Mozambique. That is also the case with women’s mobilisation against domestic violence, which was responsible for drafting the law against domestic violence against women.

Hence, the collective action around such an issue is analysed as part of a broader “contemporary women’s movement” (Disney, 2008) in Mozambique, one which differs from earlier women’s mobilisation in the nationalist movement. This “contemporaneity” reflects aspects such as women mobilising independently of any party, the inclusiveness of women across party lines, advocacy goals contrasting with “developmentalist” ones, the integration of men, the development of strategic alliances as well as regional and international networks (Tripp et al., 2009: xv, 81). In this context I deal primarily with women’s mobilisation against domestic violence theoretically framed as part of a broader contemporary national women’s movement.

It is reckoned however, that within such a broader mobilisation it is possible to identify “critical actors”⁵ in multiple women’s organisations of civil society, which I suggest that while acting collectively constitute the engines behind the struggle against domestic violence. In fact, several women’s organisations have been permanently working towards the same goals regarding advancing women’s rights and promoting gender equality and strategically coordinating their efforts. Besides the existence of a network of organisations, the Women’s Forum - Coordination for Women in

⁴ The penal code in effect in Mozambique until 2014 dated from 1886. The new penal code was approved in July 2014 (see appendix G for the reference of the official text approving the new penal code). During an interview with an activist, the founder and executive director of the organisation N’Weti, it was referred that certain discriminatory aspects regarding children and women’s rights were eliminated in the new penal code, due to the mobilisation of such a group (Denise Namburete, November 2014). Additionally, according to a brief published by the WLSA (see appendix G, WLSA 2015) despite the progresses made, since several discriminatory aspects were maintained, the Platform will continue to be mobilised until necessary, signalling a stable commitment of such a group with the cause.

⁵ Sarah Childs and Mona Lena Krook use this term to refer to “(...) those who act individually or collectively to bring about women-friendly policy change” (2009: 126-127), including “(...) legislators who initiate policy proposals on their own and/or embolden others to take steps to promote policies for women, regardless of the number of female representatives” (2009: 138). I employ the term to multiple women’s organisations of civil society and individuals, who were able to have a similar role to the above.

Development (Fórum Mulher) – which incorporates organisations of civil society, professional organisations, grassroots organisations, international and governmental actors, a Frelimo’s party women’s league, the OMM, as well as several women’s unions – in several occasions women’s organisations create alliances with other actors and develop networks of organisations which are able to amplify their impact regarding specific issues.

That was the case with the issue of domestic violence. While referring to the mobilisation against the issue of domestic violence during our interview, Maria José Arthur, a long time researcher and activist for women’s rights and gender equality in Mozambique and member of the organisation WLSA, referred to “we”, suggesting an identification of a group. When asked to specify the elements that composed such a group she noted that it was hard to do so. “By ‘we’ I refer to women’s organisations, the ones that are more notable such as the Fórum Mulher, the WLSA, the Muleide, and the AMMCJ. A lot more participated, but these may be the ones that participated in a more systematic way” (October, 2014). While some organisations are easily identified in terms of their protagonist role as heading some of the efforts as well as in terms of their permanent involvement with the cause, others were more discretely involved, by only joining the struggle at a certain point or having a limited role⁶ within it. But again, these efforts should be seen as collective efforts. Besides women’s organisations there were other actors directly involved in the struggle against domestic violence. Key individuals – such as Graça Machel for instance – and international actors were often indicated during the interviews as having favoured the collective actions of women’s mobilisation regarding this process. Hence, it is stressed that such efforts must be seen in terms of a women’s movement.

Nevertheless, it is also noted that the above mentioned “critical actors” may be perceived as constituting elite organisations and individuals, as contrasting with for instance grassroots organisations, as well as with the majority of the Mozambican population. Such critical actors have “skill capital” which is materialised by the access to specialized knowledge such as formal education, and social capital that is network of social ties which will translate into organisational resources and power⁷ (Perrucci and Wyson, 1999; see also Weldon, 2011). As it will be noted throughout this dissertation, within that broader movement there are several organisations that are funded by international actors and which are headed by highly educated women with a certain amount of access to the formal political sphere. Such a fact seen in opposition to for instance, local organisations operating in rural settings which in isolation may have no

⁶ A limited role measured for instance in terms of expertise, or allocation of resources.

⁷ Perrucci and Wyson (1999) use such categorisations combined with two more – investment and consumption skills to analyse how class in America is structured according to a distribution of social and economic resources. Laurel Weldon (2011) uses this categorisation scheme in her analysis of class as an intersecting factor with political representation.

access to funding or channels of political influence, may question the nature of the mobilisation against domestic violence. The conundrum lies in the ability of the overall women's mobilisation against domestic violence, as headed by elite urban organisations which in turn are headed by highly educated women, to represent the generality of Mozambican women. In that sense, I put forth the argument that while women's mobilisation against domestic violence was directly intended to generate social and legal changes other outcomes were actually achieved. The intended social and legal changes – namely to alter gendered power relations identified as being at the core of the practice of domestic violence, and to expand women's rights through a legal framework in which the practice of domestic violence became recognised as a violation to women's rights and as a public crime and – brought outcomes related to women's political participation and representation.

Mozambique's path toward gender equality is pointed out as a regional example, and progresses in advancing women's status in the society have been formally made. Such progresses were sustained by the existence of a formal political establishment that supports women's rights through the development of legislative frameworks and the promotion of executive measures. The existence of a pro-equality formal political establishment seems to be a necessary condition to the sustainable promotion and subsequent achievement of gender equality in a given context but apparently it is not a sufficient one. In fact, due to underlying gendered social structures and to political constraints faced by individuals in the formal political spaces (see Goetz, 2003; Selolwane, 2009) it is not rare to witness pro-equality formal institutions being unable to push for legislation dedicated to advance the status of women in a society, or when that type of legislation exists, to push for executive measures that correctly implements it. In fact, multiple studies analysing the legislative resistance to policies referring to women's rights, indicated norms tackling gender relations as the ones generating more controversy (e.g., Weldon, 2002b; see also Blofield and Haas, 2005; Tripp et al., 2009: 111-113). Hence, an analysis focusing on an issue that creates such a tension is expected to expose the complex dynamics around gender, space, culture, and politics. The issue of domestic violence presents that type of challenge (Abrar, Lovenduski and Margetts, 2000; Bush, 1992; Weldon, 2002b).

My research topic deals precisely with a context in which the existence of a pro-equality establishment was not a sufficient condition to promote legislation necessary to address a barrier to gender equality, one that specifically affects women. To be more specific, I analyse a context in which a considerable percentage of women representatives in the Mozambican parliament, which reached 34.8 in 2009⁸ – hence,

⁸ Data sourced from the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) (2009). Available at: [www.ipu.org/wmn-e/arc/classif310709.htm]. (Last accessed: May 2015).

an example of a pro-equality formal institution – was not a sufficient condition for the development of a law against domestic violence. In fact, concerted efforts of multiple organisations of civil society seem to have been the main engine behind the design of that legislation as well as its approval in July 2009. Therefore, I examine a case in which women’s collective mobilisation in civil society acted in representation of the rights of the overall Mozambican women to live free from a gendered type of violence, whereas women members of parliament (MPs) *per se* seemed unable to advance that agenda. Assuming that having women representatives – both within the formal and informal structures of politics – is essential for having a gender balanced society, the purpose of my research is to analyse how such a women’s mobilisation resulted in social and political transformation in Mozambique in regard to its key role in the legislative process of the law against domestic violence. In this sense, I analyse the concerted women’s mobilisation for the approval of the law against domestic violence against women, which can be formally traced back to 1998 – with the formation of the group All against Violence, *Todos Contra a Violência* (TCV) – until its approval, in 2009. Nevertheless, I extend my empirical analysis to the year of 2012⁹ as to better understand the changes produced by the overall mobilisation against domestic violence, which did not cease with the approval of the law.

The Mozambican case is relevant to address for four reasons. Firstly, the case of Mozambican women’s mobilisation and domestic violence illustrates the impact of such a type of mobilisation on a struggle for gender equality. The mobilisation of women as women is clear, both in terms of the actors involved as well as the nature of the claim. Although some men were involved in the mobilisation against domestic violence those are considered exceptions to the rule. Hence, this fact constitutes an opportunity to observe women mobilising *as* and *for* women. Secondly, the case reflects the occurrence of such dynamics in a recently formed democratic state whose formal institutions support gender equality. A transition to democracy increased women’s presence within formal politics and it formally increased general women’s rights, but has fallen short in challenging the existent gendered status quo. Specific issues that have a discriminatory basis towards women especially within the familial realm had remained socially and politically unquestioned had not multiple women’s organisations of civil society mobilised to address them. This case demonstrates the shortcomings of focusing on formal political spaces as the only possible avenues for women’s political representation. Thirdly, this case demonstrates the shortcomings of focusing solely on the quantitative aspect of such a representation – the number of women MPs, the existence of women political machineries (WPM) – rather than on the qualitative aspects of such a presence. Finally, in the fourth place, it constitutes a

⁹ Such a timeline goes further to the year 2012, when I conducted my last fieldtrip to Mozambique.

specific ground breaking case in which women's mobilisation has initiated a legislative process which culminated with the law 29/2009, "law against domestic violence practiced against women" (LADVAW).

1.2 Contextualisation and Contribution

Although the phenomenon of women's political activism occurs globally it is important that it is contextualised, even if within a broad geographical area. Work done on gender inequality and women's movements in contexts sharing social, economic and cultural patterns with Mozambique is helpful in identifying underlying gendered structures that may be better perceived from a regional perspective. That fact also applies to the nature and activity of women's mobilisation contesting such structures. Focusing on three different country cases, the work of Aili Mari Tripp et al. is sensitive to that fact as it refers to the context of Southern-African women organising acknowledging the existence of common "general patterns and trends" (2009: xi). Additionally, there are multiple single case studies referring to women organising in African countries in which the existence of patterns and trends can be confirmed. That is the case of the work by Filomina Chioma Steady (2006) which despite focusing on the context of Sierra Leone includes comparative insights from other African contexts, for instance the South African and the Nigerian ones. Although acknowledging the "diversity of African societies, cultures and women" (2006: 2) the author identifies three main common factors that roots women's collective action, namely the indigenous mechanisms of female mobilisation and cooperation; (...) the historical experiences of colonization, and (...) the present reality of corporate globalization" (2006: 1).

As such, while contextualising women's participation in politics and women organising as women in Mozambique, attention to a broader regional context may bring valuable insights to understanding the Mozambican context. For instance, referring to the global African context, Gisela Geisler notes that

[t]he observation that in Africa women's action space was severely curtailed by tradition and custom and further circumscribed by the state and ruling political parties, has led many African women to opt out or disengage from the state, seeking to pursue their specific agendas in whatever autonomous spaces are available (2004: 143).

Such an observation seems to be applicable to the Mozambican context, where the transition to democracy brought more women to the formal sphere of politics but also has increased the number of women opting to engage as women in order to advance their rights through other avenues. There are in fact, multiple works that although not directly considering the Mozambican case constitute a valuable contextualised source to understanding the formal political spaces available to women (e.g., Ahikire, 2003;

Bauer, 2008; Bauer and Britton, 2006; Bauer and Taylor, 2005; Geisler, 1995; Goetz and Hassim, 2003; Hassim, 2003; Hyden, 2006; Tripp, 2000; Tripp et al., 2006; Yoon, 2004), the nature of women's organisations and collective action, and its possible impacts (e.g., Bonnin, 2000; Fallon, 2008; Geisler, 2006; Hirschmann, 1991; Tripp, 2001b; Waylen, 2007b) which at the same time, offer an empirical route for someone analysing the role of actors from civil society in representing women (e.g., Kang, 2014). Following that same logic, an example is provided by the work of Sheila Meintjes (2003) on women's mobilising in civil society against domestic violence in South Africa. Such an analysis indicates several characteristics that are common to the Mozambican women's mobilisation against domestic violence, namely the existence of an engagement strategy between the women's movement and the state.

Regarding the specific context of Mozambique, there seems to be a consensus in the literature that gendered social constructions have generally undermined women's status quo, whether in terms of being free from discrimination and violence, or in terms of having equal access to resources and opportunities, a fact also true regarding the inclusion and participation of women in the formal sphere of politics (e.g., Arnfred, 2011; Casimiro, 2004; Osório, 2010; Osório and Macuácuá, 2015; Sheldon, 2002; Tvedten et al., 2008; Urdang, 1983). Hence, the importance of tracking the sources of such inequalities becomes imperative, a fact possible by using a gender lens.

Throughout different periods marked by different regimes, Mozambican women have been organising as women and forming groups, not only aiming at overcoming those types of inequalities but also to challenging their gendered roots (e.g., Casimiro, 2004, 2015; Disney, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2009; Osório, 2007; Tripp et al., 2009; Waylen, 1996). Research done by some of the major Mozambican women's organisations, such as from the WLSA and the umbrella organisation Fórum Mulher provide a rich source of information on domestic violence in Mozambique, both in terms of qualitative information as well as of statistical elements, and it can help tracing the evolution of a concerted women's struggle against domestic violence and for the approval of a law against it.

The journal published by WLSA, the *Outras Vozes* has several articles dedicated to that subject, but I highlight two in particular. The first one, by Maria José Arthur (2008) that referring to the discussion of the law against domestic violence, enquires the relation between the numbers of women in the Mozambican parliament and their role in developing a political feminist agenda. The author argues that empirical evidence indicates that for a variety of reasons, women in Parliament have not been substantively representing women. By describing a meeting held between the women's organisations of civil society and the Cabinet for the Parliamentary Women, *Gabinete da Mulher Parlamentar* (GMP) regarding the discussion of the law against

domestic violence, the author indicates that some women MPs were highly constrained by gendered notions of cultural values, and family roles, thus, posing obstacles for such a type of law to exist. Although this is not an academic article, its account was crucial to my perception of the overall role of the Mozambican women's organisations of civil society, which led me to explore the possible political role of the women's movement in terms of informal political representation. The second article that I highlight here is one by Ana Maria Loforte (2009), who focuses on the structural impact the Mozambican women's movements¹⁰ – with an emphasis on the role of the specific organisation WLSA – had on the issue of domestic violence. Following a gender mainstreaming approach, the author stresses the fact that these movements were able to denounce the issue and make it public. Consequently, it is argued, the issue of domestic violence was reconceptualised from a private issue to a public one. Overall, this article provides a reference in terms of the timetable of key events regarding the concerted struggle against domestic violence.

Similarly, a report on the short case study regarding the impact that WLSA had on the lobbying and advocacy process regarding the law against domestic violence is also most related to my analysis in terms of its topic (Johnsen, 2010). Despite the fact that this report, produced for the Movement for the Support of the Civil Society – *Movimento de Apoio à Sociedade Civil* (MASC) – is only dedicated to one of the organisations that was involved in the mobilisation against domestic violence, and its limited to its role on the stage of advocacy regarding the law against domestic violence, does not deprives it from constituting a source for my work. In fact, this report is one of the few texts regarding the law against domestic violence that was actually published after the approval of the law.

Finally, a publication of a research project conducted by WLSA deals specifically with domestic violence and the structures that were created to deal with the issue, e.g., the bureau desks specifically created for women and children at several police stations throughout the country the *Gabinetes de Atendimento da Mulher e da Criança* (GAMCs). This research provides a fundamental source of data regarding the legal framework existent prior to the approval of the law against domestic violence, a profile of the victims and perpetrators, and the numbers of domestic violence (Mejia and Arthur, 2004). The continuity of the work of Maria José Arthur and Margarita Mejia (2006) provides a similar picture, but adds a feminist analysis regarding the interpretation of the problem of domestic violence, suggesting that this type of violence is deeply rooted in the patriarchal structures of the society.

¹⁰ The author refers to "movements" in the plural.

In terms of academic literature, despite the existence of work on women's organisations in Mozambique (e.g., Casimiro, 2004), on women's mobilisation (e.g., Casimiro, 2015; Casimiro et al., 2005; Disney, 2003, 2008, 2009; Tripp et al., 2009) and its relation with the parliament and the impact of such a mobilisation on the legal framework (e.g., Disney, 2005) there is no academic literature regarding my topic. Both the approval of a law against domestic violence as well as the creation of the parliamentary caucus for women are recent events and have not until now been thoroughly addressed in the academic literature.

By revisiting such sets of literature one is able to identify a gap, related to the contemporary Mozambican women's movement¹¹ as an avenue for achieving social and political change in regard to the issue of domestic violence. It is to deal with such a gap that I address my main research question: *What was the role of the women's movement in the struggle against domestic violence?* I seek to make a direct contribution to the literature on Mozambican women's movements, with a specific emphasis on its ability to serve as an avenue for the substantive representation of women in regard to women's rights, specifically pertaining to the issue of domestic violence. I aim at empirically demonstrating that the women's movement was essential in pushing for the development of legislation against a systemic issue that affected mostly women. Such a type of mobilisation can be perceived as essential in the sense that it served to articulate the issue of domestic violence, to influence its placement at the formal political agenda, and finally to influence the legislative process regarding a law against domestic violence.

In this context this thesis contributes to theoretical discussions on the relations between gender, politics and space, reaffirming the validity of an extended version of politics. By doing so it allows for women's movements to be considered effective avenues for the representation of women's rights and interests. I argue that, in general, women's movements may be able to construct themselves as representative actors by affecting outcomes of formal politics, by generating a sense of group interest and making a claim around it, reconceptualising gender issues as social and political priorities, and influencing the production of norms.

1.3 Thesis Outline

Chapter 2: Analytical Framework

The first section of this chapter identifies the specific sub-research questions necessary to assess the role of the women's movement in regard to the development of the law against domestic violence. The second section presents the analytical

¹¹ I use the expression women's movement, women's mobilisation and women's collective action to refer to the concerted efforts of women's organisations of civil society in Mozambique regarding the struggle against domestic violence.

framework for my case study, which is inspired by a feminist literature on women and politics. This framework is informed by the idea that gender and politics intersect, creating unequal spaces and opportunities for women and men. Proposing an extended conceptualisation of politics, I suggest that women's movements may constitute effective avenues for women's substantive representation. Such a process of collective action is assessed by a tripartite framework based on the ability of the women's movement to articulate gender issues, to push for the inclusion of gender issues on the agenda, and the ability to shape formal political outcomes, such as legislation. The chapter analyses several theoretical tenets that underpin such a framework, related to the gendering of formal political participation; women's political representation; women's activism in civil society; and the role of women's social movements in such type of processes. Thirdly, the chapter describes the methodology of my research, beginning with my epistemological approach to this study, which is one based upon the concepts of reflexivity and intersectionality. I argue that the former permits a more rigorous relation between me, as the researcher, and the researched social reality. As for the latter, I believe that it allows me to better analyse the complexity of a specific social context. Regarding the selection of the geographical space for gathering empirical evidence, I assume that although the approval of the law is a legislative process that refers to a national scale, focusing my field work on the capital city – Maputo – was essential and sufficient. The two main reasons for that have to do with the fact that the capital city is the formal political centre of the country, and to the fact that the major women's civil society organisations are established in the city. As for the research methods, my main option is for a qualitative approach, examining existent documental evidence and gathering original data through interviews. Finally, I reflect on how my own identity affected my access to data collecting and, as a result, influenced my fieldwork.

Chapter 3: Gender and the case of Domestic Violence in Mozambique

In this chapter I look at the ways in which macro processes in Mozambican history – such as colonization, the liberation war, the independence process, and the democratization of the country – have contributed to shaping gender roles and ultimately the Mozambican social structures as a whole. It is demonstrated that through such processes, identities, spaces, roles and practices – especially the ones concerning women – were constantly altered as to serving social and political ideals. Yet, while discourses regarding women's status quo have been altered through such processes, gender as a concept that privileges men over women has been maintained.

My analysis starts with the argument that “gender” as conceptually encompassing categorisations based on binary and biological differences, must be carefully applied to

the context of Mozambican “traditional” societies as it was not always constructed in a static way. Nonetheless, this analysis recognises the existence of practices that were often discriminatory to women – such as polygamy – as well as practices that linked notions of power to notions of manhood. Afterwards it explores how the colonization period served to exacerbate such privileges, by conceptualising power exclusively as masculine and limiting women to a private sphere through a discourse based on the value of being “civilised”. Despite the fact that the independence war presented an opportunity for women to occupy spaces that were negated to them on the basis of such a “public/private” divide – namely by being able to participate in the liberation efforts alongside men – women generally occupied such spaces in a gendered way. Similarly, despite the idea that women’s emancipation should be part of the wider national liberation, marking both the periods of the national independence and the adoption of a socialist state, such a discourse proved limited in challenging the existent gender status quo. It is demonstrated that the country’s democratization process has not been able to ensure gender equality *de facto*, despite being accompanied by instruments that formally grant equality of rights to both women and men. It is within this context that the practice of domestic violence is framed as a gendered issue. The chapter provides an introductory analysis on the issue of domestic violence and on the women’s mobilisation around such an issue. It closes with a brief analysis on the contents of the law against domestic violence against women.

Chapter 4: Gender, Women, and Politics in Mozambique: Organising as Women

This chapter focuses on the intersection of gender, women and politics in Mozambique, emphasising women organising as women. It starts by engaging in a macro historical analysis of women’s engagement with politics, identifying the formal sphere of politics as constrained by gender, a fact that in turn produces a hierarchy of political actors and subjects that have been generally discriminating against women throughout historical periods. It discusses the ways in which such a patriarchal conceptualisation of formal politics limits women’s access to formal political spaces and its role within it, but also how it may influence the political agenda and the overall political outcomes. It critically exposes the obstacles as well as the opportunities presented to women in the field of formal politics, as well as identifies the ways in which women have chosen to informally engage with politics. It presents an overall perspective on the social environment in which Mozambican women’s organisations have emerged, and it analyses the formation as well and the continuation of women’s activism in Mozambique, focusing on women’s mobilisation against domestic violence. The aim of such an analysis is to emphasize the importance of alternative and

complementary avenues for women's political participation and representation in Mozambique, namely by considering an extended conceptualisation of politics through the acknowledgement of women's mobilisation in civil society as a force of change behind political outcomes. It is proposed that such an activism is a sign that women are being able to conquer further spaces as well as to shape social and political norms.

Chapter 5: Articulating Domestic Violence

Having Mozambique been often praised in the international arena for its formal commitment to women's rights and gender equality it may seem contradictory to find that the issue of domestic violence had been somehow overlooked. If mechanisms to deal with cases of domestic violence existed, those were limited to paying assistance rather than focusing on addressing its roots or legally framing its practice as a crime. It is proposed that one analyses this inertia as a "strategic silence" rather than an inability to address the issue. This chapter seeks to address the following research sub-question: *was the women's movement able to articulate gender issues within the Mozambican society, namely in regard to domestic violence?* Relying on empirical research, this chapter identifies the Mozambican women's mobilisation organising around the issue of domestic violence as the main engine behind the identification of the practice of domestic violence.

It argues that who articulates issues and how issues are articulated matters in terms of understanding how "power" may be challenged and exercised. Thus, it focuses on the role of the women's movement as an articulator of women's rights regarding the practice of domestic violence, able to identifying the practice and reconceptualise it as a gender based issue. It is proposed that this articulating ability *per se* is indicative of the movement's ability to serve as an avenue of representation. It explores how such an articulation is embedded in a political process of contesting sociocultural and political norms, which include women deconstructing the mainstream discourse and altering narratives regarding the practice of domestic violence. It is acknowledged that despite the fact that women's mobilisation was fundamental to the articulation of the issue of domestic violence, it benefited from a favourable national and international framework regarding the conceptualisation of gender-based violence as a violation to women's human rights. But if on the one hand such a framework was favourable, on the other hand there was tension regarding the international set of norms and the presence of international funding to implement them in Mozambique. Additionally, that type of tension was also felt in regard to concepts such as "feminism", a term that is often criticised as "foreign", even by women activists involved in the general struggle for gender equality. Hence, this chapter addresses the tensions that women's organisations involved in the struggle against domestic violence had to

manage in order to be able to reach consensus and articulate the issue of domestic violence in Mozambique as part of a cultural context that accommodated such a gendered practice.

Chapter 6: Domestic Violence: from an Invisible Issue into a Political Process

This chapter addresses the second sub-question: *in what ways was the women's movement able to place the issue of domestic violence on the political agenda?* It demonstrates how women's mobilisation brought the practice of domestic violence to the political agenda, contesting the lack of formal mechanisms that tackled the issue – particularly legislation – while simultaneously trying to shape the general social perception regarding that type of violence. While doing so, such a mobilisation challenged both the public/private divide which served to maintain the practice of domestic violence an invisible one as well as the gendered power relations behind it. Similarly, it challenged the notion of what constitutes a political issue, shaking notions of who holds social and political power. Through interviews, promotion of debates, and demonstrations, but also through seeking the engagement of formal political actors, the women's movement was able to push for the issue of domestic violence to become a public one, building a “feminine” constituency while gaining the attention of the general society, the media, and the international community. While analysing the arguments favouring and opposing the law against domestic violence against women, the chapter explores the tensions between equality and difference. Additionally it analyses the theoretical concept of autonomy applied to the overall women's movement and explores the intersections of informal and formal political spaces as well as the importance of key individuals as influencing the overall process.

Chapter 7: Producing and Shaping a Legislative Mechanism against Domestic Violence

This chapter seeks to answer my final sub-question: *was the women's movement able to shape legislative outcomes regarding the issue of domestic violence against women?* It empirically explores the ground-breaking initiative of women's organisations of civil society of drafting a proposal of the law against domestic violence. It is argued that despite being able to influence its contents and ultimately its approval, empirical data suggests that other factors were also important. Firstly, the proximity of the general elections¹² influenced the decision of the parliament of taking the proposal to be discussed at the plenary session and ultimately approved by unanimity. Such a fact

¹² I am referring to the General Elections held in October of 2009.

may reflect the formal political apprehension regarding the possibility of losing women's votes, which in turn, is indicative of the success of the lobbying actions of the organisations of civil society – and the overall women's movement – through the creation of a constituency amongst Mozambican women. Secondly, the pressure of the international community suggests not only a potential impact of international norms on state policies but also reveals insights about how those actors, as well as what they represent in terms of funding, may play a relevant role in influencing political agendas, reigniting the debate explored in chapter 5 regarding the tensions between foreign versus local. Finally, it looks at the impact of women's presence in the case of the approval of the law against domestic violence, performed informally by women's organisations of civil society and formally by women MPs. While doing so, it looks at informal and formal political spaces, in terms of what they are able to offer women at the level of representation.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

Stemming from the conclusions from all the chapters, this chapter summarizes my findings, mainly reaffirming the effectiveness of the contemporary Mozambican women's movement in contributing to the substantive representation of women regarding a gender issue. The case of Mozambican women's mobilisation against domestic violence confirms the broader literature regarding the fundamental role of women's movements in initiating social and political processes regarding women's rights and gender issues. It also confirms such a literature by acknowledging the positive effect of favourable national and international settings and the importance of multiple actors to the overall success of the positive gender outcome. Backed by empirical evidence, it theoretically rebalances the importance of the concept of autonomy with the concept of "strategic alliances" and the existence of "hybrid spaces". Following this, the chapter identifies the limits of this dissertation, and explores further research avenues in relation to Mozambique in particular and the political role of women's movements in general.

Chapter 2 Analytical Framework

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analytical framework according to which my case study is examined. It identifies the research questions – the main one and three sub-questions – and suggests the implications of my study. Secondly, it presents the theoretical approach that shapes my analysis, one bridging feminist perspectives stemming from political geography and political science. Thirdly, it reviews the corresponding literature focusing on aspects of women’s political participation and representation from a gender lens. Such a review lays the ground for strategically analysing women as a broad social group, and for considering an extended notion of politics, one allowing multiple spaces and actors to be analysed as part of the political. By doing so, it will then move to theoretically explore women’s activism as a political event, one in which substantive representation of women may occur. Fourthly, I present my option for a tripartite framework for assessing the effectiveness of women’s mobilisation against domestic violence. Finally, I deal with the methodology of my research, namely with epistemological considerations, identification of geographic space of research, research methods, and data gathering.

2.2 Research Questions

Mozambique’s path toward gender equality is often perceived as a regional example¹³ and progress in advancing women’s status within the society has definitely been made. This progress was strongly sustained by the existence of a formal political establishment that supports equality between women and men as well as the promotion of executive measures regarding women’s rights and gender equality. That political establishment is reflected for instance in the constitutional principle of universal equality, the creation of national women’s machineries (NWMs) – such as the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs, *Ministério da Mulher e Acção Social* (MMAS)¹⁴ – or the introduction of party quotas for women, which as of 2015, makes the Mozambican parliament rank amongst the top fifteen countries in terms of the proportion of women present in national parliaments for several years.¹⁵

The existence of a formal political establishment that is pro-equality seems to be a necessary condition for the sustainable promotion and subsequent achievement of gender equality in a given social space, but it may not be a sufficient one. In fact, in

¹³ In 2009 the NGO *Femmes Africa Solidarité* granted the “African Gender Award” to Mozambique as recognition of such advancements regarding women’s rights and gender equality.

¹⁴ After the general elections of October 2014 the Ministry was renamed as “Ministry of Gender, Child, and Social Affairs”.

¹⁵ The IPU provides detailed information on the number of women in the Mozambican parliament for several years. See [www.ipu.org].

general terms, it is not rare to witness pro-equality formal institutions unable to articulate gender issues, to push for legislation, or even to push for executive measures that correctly implement existent legislation. As suggested before, those facts may be reflecting underlying gendered social structures and consequent political constraints faced by women political representatives (see Goetz, 2003; Selolwane, 2009). Neither, the Mozambican parliament the *Assembleia da República* (AR), which by the time of the approval of the LADVAW in 2009 was an example of a pro-equality formal institution – with nearly 35 percent¹⁶ of women representatives – hence, an example nor the existence of a parliamentary women’s caucus, the GMP, were sufficient to elaborate and effectively promote the approval of such a law. In fact, the concerted mobilisation of multiple women’s organisations of civil society working on varied issues and collectively organising against domestic violence seems to have been the main engine behind the design of such a legislation as well as the main engine behind its approval in July 2009. Therefore, I examine a case in which such a collective mobilisation, as happening within the frame of a women’s movement seems to have constituted an avenue for the representation of women’s rights, whereas women MPs – the formal representatives – were *per se*, unable to push for such an agenda. By addressing concepts of gender, politics and representation, what I seek to assess is whether the women’s movement in Mozambique constituted an avenue for women’s substantive representation in the particular process of the struggle against domestic violence.

My main theoretical enquiry is directly related to a broader type of question about women’s movements as political entities. It questions the possibility of women’s collective mobilisation to constitute an act of political representation with a transformative impact on gender relations and formal politics. I am interested in knowing if such a type of mobilisation is able to challenge the ways in which social and political actors, spaces, and norms are gendered. In this context, my general empirical question is the following: *What was the role of the women’s movement in the struggle against domestic violence?* In order to answer to the empirical and theoretical questions, I address three sub-questions. Firstly, was the women’s movement able to articulate gender issues within the Mozambican society, namely in regard to domestic violence? Secondly, in what ways was the women’s movement able to place the issue of domestic violence on the political agenda? Thirdly, was the women’s movement able to shape legislative outcomes regarding the issue of domestic violence against women?

¹⁶ Data sourced from IPU (2009). Available online at: [www.ipu.org/wmn-e/arc/classif310709.htm]. (Last accessed: May 2015).

I will start by theoretically reflecting about the general potential roles played by women's movements as avenues for political representation. My answers to the research questions have implications in regard to the ability of women's collective mobilisation to affect formal politics in general and legislation on domestic violence in particular. Specifically, the sub-questions have implications in regard to the roles that such a movement may play in the promotion of pro-women political outcomes in terms of articulation of gender issues, influencing the formal political agenda-setting, and shaping of concrete formal political outcomes. The following section puts forth the theoretical approach underpinning my analysis.

2.3 Theoretical Approach

This dissertation bridges feminist theoretical contributions on the intersection of gender and politics from the broad fields of political geography and political science. My interest in such topics stems from the idea that gender and politics intersect and that such an intersection generally produces unequal opportunities for women and men, placing the former at a grave disadvantage. Additionally, I am interested in looking at those intersections in terms of space, and how space is both influenced by and influences gender norms.

A considerable amount of the political science literature on gender and politics within democratic regimes goes beyond the debates around the importance of women participating in politics and focuses on the theoretical concept of representation, namely debating the importance of being represented, the responsibility of the representative to represent, and the ability of the representative to do so (e.g., Beckwith, 2007; Carroll 2001; Childs, 2006; Childs and Krook, 2008; Dahlerup, 2006; Dovi, 2007; Goetz, 2009; Lovenduski, 2002; Lovenduski and Norris, 1993; Mackay, 2008; Norris, 1996; Phillips, 1995, 1998a; Wängnerud, 2009; Williams, 1998; Young 2000). But while revising the broader literature on women, gender and politics one is able to identify two major tendencies. Firstly, as noted by Karen Celis, Sarah Childs, Johanna Kantola, and Mona Lena Krook (2008) while much attention goes to the causality between an increasing number of women's presence at the level of the national parliaments – descriptive representation – with an increasing focus on the ability to represent “women's interests” at that same level – substantive representation – such an approach falls short¹⁷ in considering other actors, sites and modes of political representation. Secondly, the literature regarding politics and women's activism and social movements tends to focus on the latter's activities as modes of participation,

¹⁷ The critiques also point how such an approach fails to consider the differences between women representatives, as well as a possible interest of men representatives in “women's interests”. Nonetheless, while differences between women as representatives are acknowledged and dealt with in this dissertation, the possible interest of men in “women's interests” is something only briefly explored in the empirical chapters.

overlooking the possibility of regarding such activities as modes of representation. Nonetheless, such a tendency is contradicted by several works within the field of political science that consider a broader sphere of politics to include other acts as political (e.g., Alvarez et al., 1998; Banaszak et al., 2003; Waylen, 1994; 2007a; Weldon, 2002a); by works of feminist political geographers who consider politics as manifesting in multiple spheres and spaces (e.g., Cope, 2004; Fairhurst et al., 2004; Kofman and Peake, 1990; Staeheli, 1994; 1996; Staeheli and Kofman, 2004); and by several works which analyse the role of non-formal political actors as able to constitute mechanisms enabling representation (e.g., Celis et al., 2008; Kang, 2014; Weldon, 2002b, 2011).

Informed by the above sets of literature, the theoretical emphasis of this thesis is given to gender and political action – participation and representation – at the level of informal politics in the form of women’s social movements.

I analyse my case study through a framework that allows me to assess the ability of women’s movements to promote pro-women socio-political outcomes by serving as informal political representatives of women. Starting from the broad theoretical tenets and finishing in the framework, this section is divided into five parts: the gendering of formal political presence; women’s political representation; a broader sphere of politics and women’s mobilisation in civil society; women’s movements and informal representation; and a tripartite framework for assessing women’s movements effectiveness.

2.3.1 Gendering Formal Political Presence

“In public life, gender is normally a hierarchy in which men have more presence and power than women, a syndrome especially apparent in politics” (Lovenduski, 2001: 744). This type of affirmation is in consonance with multiple works of feminist scholars referring to different time periods as well as to different regional settings (see e.g., Bourque and Grossholtz, 1998; Geisler, 2004; Goetz, 2003; Krook and Mackay, 2011; Pateman, 1988, 1989; Phillips, 1991, 1995; Randal, 2002; Scott, 1988; Squires, 2000; Iris Marion Young, 1990, 2000; Waylen, 1996). Currently, women’s ability to participate in politics became a reality in many countries. But by carefully looking at the numbers of women as political representatives all over the world, it is clear that although progress has been slowly achieved men’s presence within political structures and organs is still dominant¹⁸ (see e.g., Paxton and Hughes, 2007).

This “masculinization” of politics becomes both reflected and perpetuated in its own structures, including in democracies whether the more established as well as the

¹⁸ See for instance the data collected by the IPU on the numbers of members of parliament divided by gender, available online at [ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm].

most recent ones (see Geisler, 1995; Phillips, 1991; Rai, 2003; Waylen, 1994). In fact, by being composed in its majority by men, in general terms these political organs will consequently be gendered and will reflect the male perspective of values and norms (Acker, 1992; Brush, 2003; Chappell and Waylen, 2013; Dahlerup, 1988; MacKay et al., 2010; Duerst-Lahti, 2002; Goetz, 2007; Krook and Mackay, 2011; Squires, 2000). Within the southern African region, women's political status have been transforming, accompanying transitions from traditional societies to colonial regimes and from there to processes of national independencies and "third wave" democratisations (see Bauer and Taylor, 2005; Geisler, 2004; Tripp et al., 2009). Nonetheless, such alterations do not necessarily correspond to an improvement in women's political status (see Waylen, 1994; Osório, 2007). As Carole Pateman argued "[f]or feminists, democracy has never existed; women have never been and still are not admitted as full and equal members and citizens in any country known as a democracy" (1989: 210).

Thus, it is clear that certain issues – mainly those more prone to be gendered and crudely characterised as "women's issues" – may become hierarchized as secondary as the majority of political decision makers may not relate to it. Proponents of a "critical mass" concept (e.g., Dahlerup, 1988) argue that as soon as the number of women present in offices reaches a certain point – proposed to be around 30 percent – their presence becomes able to influence not only the *modus operandi* of political institutions but the very own institutions, and consequently "pro-women" legislation is more prone to be passed¹⁹, not only altering politics but also altering several social structures. Hence, measures of positive discrimination, such as quotas for women, have been indicated as a path towards such results (e.g., Dahlerup and Nordlund, 2004; Krook, 2009). But on the other hand, as it has been referred in the first chapter, there is also literature showing that the increasing number of women in office may not lead to a substantive change. Therefore, one must conduct an analysis that goes beyond numbers and includes the qualitative aspect of political participation.

As noted earlier, formal political institutions are not gender neutral, and thus, they tend to replicate the existent gender status quo. Such a fact contributes to limiting women's presence in political offices to be felt, both in terms of their ability to shape the formal political space as well as the norms it produces. Thus, as noted above, a descriptive representation²⁰ *per se* may not constitute a sufficient condition for neither pushing for or passing what can be perceived as "pro-women" legislation, nor it constitutes a sufficient condition for altering the relation between gender and politics. This aspect brings this discussion to a deeper set of questions related to issues that I

¹⁹ Being the percentage of women in political assemblies between 15 and 30 percent.

²⁰ This concept will be dealt with in the next sub-section.

analyse as being connected, namely those of representation, civil society activism, and informal political agency.

2.3.2 Women's Political Representation: Conceptualisations

A) Representation

Hannah Pitkin (1967) presents four perspectives from which one may analyse political representation: the authorisation²¹, the symbolic²², the descriptive and the substantive. Since the interest of this dissertation relates to women's access and impact on the political the focus is on the last two perspectives of representation, the descriptive and the substantive. Descriptive representation refers to the individual social characteristics of the representative – for instance race or gender – giving emphasis to his or her identity, rather than to his or her ideas. Since the representative stands “by what he is” (Pitkin, 1967: 113) this perspective involves no specific agency from the representative. On the other hand, substantive representation means that “the represented thing or person is present in the action rather than in the characteristics of the actor (...)”, (Pitkin, 1967: 144). This perspective looks at the ways in which representatives show agency by consciously acting on behalf of the represented and, in the context of this dissertation it refers to women's ability to advance the overall women's status quo through the promotion of their interests.²³

Representation has traditionally been based upon the politics of ideas, overlooking the necessity of a descriptive representation on the premises that actions are far more important than the characteristics of the representative. A challenge to the notion that a conceptualisation of politics solely based on the ideas of the representative is enough is illustrated by the arguments of the importance of a “politics of presence”²⁴ in which “who” represents matter (Phillips, 1995). An illustrative example of a politics of presence is provided by the work of Mala Htun on the political inclusion and representation of intersectional disadvantaged sub-groups of Latin American women. The author suggests that the presence of such women in office was enough to “(...) render visible social identities and relationships long suppressed by racism and racialist ideology” (2014: 133). A strict interpretation of this argument risks to creating a continuum process of search for the authentic representative, one with virtually no end. And in fact, a “mirrored” representation matching individual intersecting characteristics of both representative and represented appears to be virtually impossible (Young,

²¹ In which the representative is perceived as been granted the right to act (Pitkin, 1967: 39).

²² In which the representative is perceived as standing for other symbolically (Pitkin, 1967: 107)

²³ Defining common interests and women as a group are contested quests. In fact these broad definitions suggest essentialist perspectives on women, but doing so constitutes an analytical strategy. Such an argument will be further elaborated in this chapter.

²⁴ Anne Phillips uses the term to refer to the demands for the equal presence of under-represented groups in politics (2003:5).

1997). Nonetheless, as the example above suggests, the material presence of women matters. Anne Phillips suggests that both “ideas” and “presence” must not be seen as exclusionary. For the author the problem arises when the two “are set up as exclusionary opposites: when ideas are treated as totally separate from the people who carry them; or when the people dominate attention, with no thought given to their policies and ideas” (Phillips, 1995: 25). While arguing for women’s political presence I share the theoretical assumption that a balance of both the politics of ideas and the politics of presence should be the base for a fairer representation, and that representation should be analysed beyond the perspective of descriptive representation in order to include a substantive one.

As previously mentioned, gendered constructions of politics have systematically kept women aside from its realm, transforming them into a disadvantaged social group (Iris Marion Young, 1990). Consequently, a representative system only based on a politics of ideas has generally proven to be insufficient when dealing with exclusion. On the other hand, a system exclusively based on the politics of presence seems too reductive and would be ignoring – and at the same time prioritising – several social axes that compose the identities of representatives. Thus, the case for combining the politics of ideas with the politics of presence through a gender lens requires us to debate the feasibility of women actually being represented as a group.

B) Women, a Group?

The debate around categorising “women” as well as “women’s interests” has been producing an abundant amount of literature. By considering the existence of common interests which globally unites women, several authors have contributed to the idea of a universal feminism and of the feasibility of a straightforward representation of women as a group (see e.g., Diamond and Hartsock, 1981; Sapiro, 1981; see also Fonow, 2005). Nonetheless, such a type of generalisation may be seen as exclusionary. In fact, postcolonial feminists argue that “gender” has been conceptualised from a privileged viewpoint (see e.g., Basu, 1995; Mohanty, 1988; 1991; Ong, 1998). For those authors, there is a linkage between power and representation, leading to the exclusion of the ones with less or no power. According to such an argument, the definition of women as a category needs to be deconstructed to include other social axes such as, for instance, race. Other authors go further and argue that the concept of gender as encompassing fixed categories is questionable (see e.g., Butler, 1990; Wittig, 1981). Altogether these latter sets of literature criticize essentialist approaches to women’s commonalities based on their biological characteristics.

Once more, agreeing with the logic of both sides of the debate, I consider that they do not have to be mutually exclusive, and that for analytical purposes, commonality and singularity may be brought together (see Sardenberg, 2007). Societies are built upon varied social categories – such as class, race and gender – and to a different extent, each society creates a hierarchy and a set of norms which defines the position of each individual within that specific form of social organisation. As individuals, our experiences are shaped by the existence of social categories and by how one is located within such categories. Then our bodies become social instruments and, depending on the way a society is organised, vehicles for acceptance or discrimination by other members of the society (Bordo, 1989; Puwar, 2004). Thus, the sense of belonging to each social category will generate, in broader terms, socio-cultural experiences that become common to other individuals belonging to the same social category. As Diana Richardson puts it, “[g]ender is a key organising concept of institutions and practices in culture and society” and as such it “has subsequently been variously theorized as personality traits and behaviours that are specifically associated either with women or men (...)” (2008: 3). Therefore, through social and political gendered practices and performances individuals are pressured to identify with a group based on their sexual characteristics, eventually creating affinities and commonalities with the rest of the group's members (see Duerst-Lahti, 2008).

Assuming that women may share common interests with each other does not imply that women have to be analytically regarded as a monolithic entity. As Allison Weir argues, “(...) our identifications, our commitments and values – our solidarities – shape our designations of identity. For we participate in the constructions of our identities” (2008: 111). In the same way, given the intersection of several different axes, women's experiences are multiple and may not only vary according to historical and cultural contexts but also from individual to individual (see Collins, 1990; Crenshaw, 1989, 1991; hooks, 2000). Thus, it is not assumed here that women are a homogeneous group of individuals with shared identities. Nonetheless, women – as men – are part of a socially constructed category which makes them share similar gendered experiences and concerns that may eventually lead to similar perceptions regarding interests (Phillips 1995; Iris Marion Young, 1990). Consequently, considering the context of patriarchal societies one may assume that women – to a more or less extent and still depending on other social axes – may have similar needs and demands derived from their position as marginalized subjects (Williams, 1998: 119).

Instead of focusing on the individual level, Iris Marion Young relocates the attention to the interactions between individual and social structures (Young, 2000; 2005; see also Weldon, 2008: 200). Hence, by focusing on the category “women” as a social structural location one is in better position to eliminate the necessity of attributing

women or men “(...) a single or shared identity” (Young, 2005: 22). Additionally, as argued by Anne Phillips, reckoning the multiplicity of women’s interests does not contradict the claim that such interests are influenced by gender (1995: 68). Such arguments help validate the assumption that women may share experiences and interests based on their social structural location. Consequently, while analysing the role of women’s organisations in Mozambique, I consider that women constitute a broad social group that has been politically under-represented and that mobilises as *women* to advance what it is assumed to be women’s shared interests, in this case the end of a gendered type of violence, which is domestic violence.

2.3.3 A Broader Sphere of Politics and Women’s Mobilisation in Civil Society

Women’s social movements may be considered simultaneously “a response to the limitations of democracy and as a source of new democratic possibilities” (Eschle, 2001: 2). Although not wishing to disregard the role of the state, instead of a state-centred approach I follow a framework that perceives other actors as political ones, reflecting an extended definition of politics (see Alvarez et al., 1998; Banaszak et al., 2003; Celis et al., 2008; Waylen, 1994, 2007a; Weldon, 2002a). As Georgina Waylen argues,

[t]he narrow traditional definition focused entirely on the activities of public sphere can only incorporate those formal activities within the conventional political arena. This definition excludes many of the activities in which different groups of women are often prevalent. A wider definition that incorporates informal political activity associated with communities and social movements will give us a different picture of the nature of women’s political participation (2007a: 5).

Politics thus, may occur within multiple spaces not only limited to “public” or “formal” ones such as state’s institutions (see Cope, 2004; Fairhurst et al., 2004; Hirschmann, 1991; Kofman and Peake, 1990; McClure, 1992; Staeheli, 1994, 1996; Staeheli and Kofman, 2004).

This conceptualisation of politics may be coupled with a decentralized approach to power. It is assumed that power is not static, and it can be exercised not only through institutions, but also through cultural practices and discourses. It is also assumed that to a greater or lesser extent, these are capable of influencing each other. Laurel Weldon captures that logic by emphasizing a structural analysis that is dynamic in terms of “causality”. According to the author,

[s]ocial structure refers to a mode of social organisation, a set of relationships that position people relative to others. A social structure is composed of the norms, rules, and institutions that provide organisation to everyday life and collective decisions (Giddens, 1982; Young, 2000).

Social structural analysis of how policy affects social groups, then, involves examining how policies determine, and are determined by, *relationships* among social groups (2002b: 179).²⁵

Hence, in order to fully understand the role of the women's movement in Mozambique one must look at how such a type of mobilisation may be able to affect political structures and create further opportunities to advance their claims, but also to the social structure in which it emerged. The same logic of reciprocity applies to the relationship between distinct dimensions, especially the social and the political one. I will not only look at the ways in which gender as a social structure affects the Mozambican political context, defining for instance women's relation with politics, but also how the political context affects social constructions of gender, for instance prioritising or not women's rights. In this context I am acknowledging multiple sources of power and micro-levels of political agency (Staeheli and Kofman, 2004). One of the sites where power and agency may be visible is within civil society.

The scepticism on the existence of a civil society within the African context (e.g., Gellner, 1994; cf. Obadare, 2014) is contradicted in the literature regarding such a topic. As Michael Bratton notes, "[w]hile many precolonial cultures in Africa may have lacked states, they certainly did not lack civil societies, in the broad sense of a bevy of institutions for protecting collective interests" (1989: 411). But even if in general terms civil societies in Africa were strangled by multiple contexts of colonialism, associational life benefited from processes of independence and democratisation. Although newly independent regimes may be seen as tightly controlling such associational spaces (Makumbe, 1998) weak state control over social issues has been often indicated as favouring them (Bratton, 1989). Subsequently, transitions to democracy have legitimised and further increased such spaces, including for women to organise as women (see Fallon, 2008; Geisler, 2004; 2006; Tripp, 2001a; Tripp et al., 2009). Hence, looking for political spaces within the Mozambican civil society is not only a valid quest but a necessary one.

Acknowledging the complexity in defining the concept of civil society, both in general terms as well as within the African context (Makumbe, 1998) I opt for one definition that allows me to look at civil society as not necessarily in direct opposition to the state (Bratton, 1989: 418). While referring to the general context of African women organisations mobilising for gaining political voice or against gender based violence, Hanna Britton and Taylor Price point that those organisations are "(...)working in collaboration with, and sometimes in opposition to, the government" (2014: 294). Furthermore, a gender blind approach to civil society renders invisible how such spaces too are embedded with gender constructions, and how norms are produced

²⁵ Italicised in the original.

and reinforced in a gendered way that may undermine women's agency (Goetz and Hassim, 2003; Howell, 2007) a fact also true regarding the broad African context (Mama, 2005 cited in Britton and Price, 2014: 295). Hence, definitions that tend to construct civil society as, for instance, excluding the family may come at odds with a feminist quest for spaces where agency can be exercised. Hence, for the purpose of this dissertation, civil society is understood as

(...) an aggregate of institutions whose members are engaged primarily in a complex of non-state activities – economic and cultural production, voluntary associations and household life – and who in this way preserve and transform their identity by exercising all sorts of pressures or controls upon state institutions (Keane, 1988: 14, as cited in Britton and Price, 2014: 295).

It is precisely by looking at spaces of the civil society and to women mobilising within those spaces as political agents, that I examine the validity of such actors as informal representatives of women's rights and interests (see Celis et al., 2008; Kang, 2014; Weldon, 2002b, 2011). I turn to a feminist framework on social movements in order to analyse the concerted mobilisation of women within civil society.

A) Women's Activism, Organisations and Movements

Notwithstanding the global experiences of women organising, within the literature on social movements the concept "gender" has been somehow overlooked (Waylen, 2007a: 52; see also Beckwith, 2000). Consequently, the theoretical frameworks underpinning research on women's social movements have usually been the ones developed to analyse social movements in general, a fact that has been pointed as problematic within the feminist literature regarding the topic (e.g., McBride and Mazur, 2008). Nonetheless, this does not mean that a study on women's social movements should or has to be gender blind.

Women's social movements are present in multiple regions of the world, and vary in their scope, their organisation, their strategies, and their impact. Thus, defining women's social movements is not a straightforward task (see e.g., Beckwith, 2005b; Eschle, 2001; McBride and Mazur, 2010; Outshoorn, 2010) and as a result different definitions are often put forth. But as referred by Maxine Molyneux (1998), the work conducted in the late 1970s by authors such as Sheila Rowbotham, and Olwen Hufton "suggested that women's political involvement was of a distinctive character and significance. As political actors women were seen to impart to their struggles, practices, strategies and goals, certain gender-specific qualities" (Molyneux, 1998: 220). Hence, although it is common in the literature to identify women's movements within the broader field of social movements as a "subset" type I will focus on Maxine Molyneux's

(1998) definition, which directly regard women's movements and, secondly, combine it with Karen Beckwith's (1996) definition of such a type of movement based on gender "differences".

Maxine Molyneux's treatment of women's movement is based upon the characteristics of "size" and "effectivity". According to the author,

[t]o speak of a movement then implies a social or political phenomenon of some significance, that significance being given both by its numerical strength but also by its capacity to effect change in some way or another whether this is expressed in legal, cultural, social, or political terms. A women's movement does not have to have a single organisational expression, and may be characterised by a diversity of interests, forms of expression, and spatial location. Logically, it comprises a substantial majority of women, if it is not exclusively made up of women" (1998: 224).

But if such characteristics are important in the sense that they suggest consistency, in order to better grasp the essence of a women's movement that is acting against a gendered issue I would also like to stress the aspect of a gendered involvement. In that sense I bring forward the argument of Karen Beckwith (1996) considering that women's movements may be defined

(...) as political movements characterized by the primacy of women's gendered experiences, women's issues, and women's leadership and decision making. The relationship of women to these movements is direct and immediate; movement definition, issue articulation, and issue resolution are specific to women, developed and organised by them with reference to their gender identity (1996: 1038).

With reference to the latter definition however, instead of assuming that a common "gender identity" is possible, the argument used in my analysis is that such a mobilisation happens with reference to women's gendered experiences and interests which despite being multiple, share commonalities based on women's social structural location.

Due to the multiple natures of women's movements, I also need to specify that my analysis focuses on a form of women's activism which accompanied the emergence of contemporary women's movement in Africa (Disney, 2008), and which represent "a shift more directly into politics and advocacy and away from the earlier strictly 'developmental' and welfare approach of women's organisations" (Tripp et al., 2009: 2). Women in Mozambique have organised for multiple causes, and created organisations dedicated to address multiple women's interests (see Casimiro, 2004), but the fact that a structural inequality regarding women's status remain unaddressed

with the country's independence and later democratization²⁶ has created a struggle common to the generality of Mozambican women's rights activists, that is the struggle for gender equality. It is within this broader struggle, and in line with the literature, that I identify the existence of a broader women's movement (see Casimiro, 2004; Disney, 2005; Tripp et al., 2009), one hardly homogeneous in terms of actors, agendas, approaches, preferences or priorities, but one that is able to coordinate all of these to address an issue that has been identified as targeting women as women, and as a product of gendered based discrimination. It is then that a women's movement may be seen as going from a "loose network" of actors to a "formalised structure" (Hassim, 2004: 2). Hence, it is also by arguing that – specifically regarding the struggle against domestic violence – the women's movement in Mozambique can be perceived as a formalised structure that I build my case for it to be able to be considered an informal representative of women's interests.

I would like to stress that the women's movement in Mozambique is neither homogeneous nor static and has been adapting in all sorts of manners – including during the process of the struggle against domestic violence – whether in terms of choosing its strategic approaches as well as in terms of its own composition. It is a movement constituted by varied organisations – including but not limited to professional organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), a party affiliated organisation – individual elements – academics, activists, researchers, bureaucrats, majorly women but also men, from different races, ethnicities, classes and with different backgrounds – who despite being advocating for "women's interests", and to a more or lesser extent for altering gender relations, do not all consider themselves to be "feminist". Nonetheless, one key important feature of the overall women's movement is that it seeks to both advance women's rights as well as to promote gender equality. In that sense, despite the heterogeneity within it, and the intersecting individual features which make each member unique, the movement is able to advocate for shared interests. Following, I will make the case for considering the existence of "shared interests".

B) Differences and Shared Interests

As a consequence of my focus on a gender differentiated social movement, gender "differences" must be acknowledged in the sense that the latter are able to produce unequal opportunities for women and men (Iris Marion Young, 1990; 2005). Nonetheless, such an approach is critiqued by authors who argue that a focus on gender differences may be actually emphasizing difference and facilitating discriminatory practices (e.g., Lorber, 2000). On the other hand, opting for a gender-

²⁶ Such a fact will be discussed in detail in chapter three.

neutral lens that ignores the differences that are produced by such a hierarchy may undermine the quest for gender equality. Actually, by ignoring differences, one may be overlooking the fact that they constitute discrimination. In fact,

[d]ifference-blind equality assumes that so long as no attention is paid to social difference, it will have no effect. In fact, as long as we pay no attention to difference, we will never overcome the inequalities that difference has been used to justify. Inequality that follows the lines of social difference means, perhaps paradoxically, that difference can only stop mattering when we have effectively addressed the deep and subtle ways in which it does matter (Williams, 1998: 238-239).

Authors such as Anne Phillips stress the importance of strategically recognizing difference in order to neutralize the consequences of the inequalities derived from gender constructions (Phillips, 1991). Similarly, while building a critique of the liberal concept of impartiality as one that masks social hierarchies and perpetuates a patriarchal structure of society, Iris Marion Young (1990) suggests that in order to achieve justice, differences within social groups should be acknowledged. According to the author, there are certain social groups who are persistently marginalized and oppressed, thus, what is needed to overcome that fact, is what she calls a “politics of difference” (1990). Since women as a social group are being discriminated even when there are *de jure* mechanisms that are designed to provide them equal rights to men's, a type of positive discrimination is justifiable. The suggestion given by Young is that “equality as the participation and inclusion of all groups sometimes requires different treatment for oppressed or disadvantaged groups” (1990: 158). Consequently, Iris Marion Young advocates that “members of oppressed groups need separate organisations that exclude others, especially those from more privileged groups” (1990: 167). By embracing a “politics of difference” one is advancing the interests of a group that is perceived as oppressed and, consequently, aiming at empowering that group. Building on this framework I argue that a social movement, composed by women, for advancing women's rights is not exacerbating gender inequality, rather, it is aiming against it. Thus, these types of social movements should be framed regarding its “gender awareness” specificities. Everything considered, “women” can be strategically considered a group of discriminated subjects, as potential representatives and, as such, as actual agents of change.

Though my analysis is based upon a generic conceptual framework about “women” I do not neglect the relevance of particular social contexts. That framework is partially built upon concepts that may be perceived as Western liberal ones – such as democracy and civil society – therefore it needs to be contextualised. In order to explore the women's movement role as a political actor, I opt for a contextualized

theoretical analysis which is sensitive to the idiosyncrasies of social structures, which reflect a variety of differences and shared interests.

Besides acknowledging the ability of women's movement to be political actors that tackle differences by representing the interests of other women across distinct social contexts, I must also theoretically acknowledge the specific ability of women to act as agents of change in regard to political institutions, as the case of the law against domestic violence illustrates. Hence the next step lies in explaining in which sense women's movements can play a role in informal representation, particularly by having an impact over formal politics such as the approval of legislation.

2.3.4 Women's Movements and Informal Representation

In an article regarding women's substantive representation, Karen Celis, Sarah Childs, Johanna Kantola and Mona Lena Krook argue that the conceptualisation of representation should be

(...) open for exploration rather than requiring that it be defined a priori by researchers, who in the process, may overlook the diverse ways in which actors work within and across locations to articulate various visions of what it might mean to act for 'women' as a group (2008: 100).

This argument suggests that avenues for substantive representation other than the one expected to exist within the formal sphere of politics may be possible. If several authors look at the ability and role of NWMs in advancing women's interests (e.g., Banaszak, 2010; Celis et al., 2008; Stetson McBride and Mazur, 1995) others focus on actors outside the formal political sphere. In theoretical terms then, when women in formal politics are unable or unwilling to substantively represent women, can civil society groups serve as informal representatives of women's interests?

There are authors who suggest that they can (e.g., Kang, 2014; Weldon, 2002a, 2011). As Iris Marion Young argues,

[i]n a formally democratic society where there are structural social and economic injustices, many of those who suffer such injustices are likely to be excluded, silenced, or marginalized in the formal democratic political process as well. This political inequality tends to create conditions in which the social and economic injustice or marginalization is not likely to be addressed as a problem by legislators and other public officials (2000: 165).

Thus, the author continues, "[c]ivil society offers a way out of this circle, one of the only ways" (2000: 165). But if authors such as Iris Marion Young do not see civil society as the preferable source for promoting democracy and social justice (2000: 156), authors

such as Laurel Weldon tend to perceive NWMs as well as women's movements – in the sense they represent a group perspective – as providing

(...) more effective avenues of expression for women: in combination they give women a stronger voice in the policy-making process than does the presence of women in the legislature. Thus, studies of representation for marginalized groups would do well to consider institutional changes and increased political mobilisation as potential sources of political representation. The point is not that bodies provide *no* representation, but that bodies are extremely limited as an avenue of *substantive* representation and that *multiple* sources of representation should be considered and compared²⁷ (2002a: 1153).

Further building on this argument the author refers that in general in established democracies "(...) social movements provide a vital form of democratic political representation, through both conventional and newer avenues of political expression" (Weldon, 2011: 4).

The case I address refers to a country that shifted from a socialist regime to a democratic one and where women have increasingly conquered political spaces and gained political relevance. I emphasise the fact that such relevance is not only present at formal but also at informal level. As a democracy the country is expected to have formal political institutions that are able to effectively represent its citizens, whether they are men or women. Hence, it seems that the argument that groups as a collective phenomenon are more effective to represent groups can also be applicable at the level of the parliament as MPs are, in principle, able to form groups even if they only do it on a partisan level. In fact, as mentioned earlier, the Mozambican parliament has a women caucus which constitutes a forum for all women MPs independently of party affiliation, but such a group has been pointed out as not always acting *as a group* on behalf of women's interests. Thus, I tend to generally perceive the lack of ability of representatives in formal politics to effectively represent women's interests not as a question of individual versus collective articulation effectiveness but in terms of structural limitation (see Waylen, 2014) based on cultural assumptions that are able to undermine women's claims even if they are presented by women MPs as a group. Consequently, while being alert for the possibility of individual actors in formal and informal politics constituting "critical actors" (Childs and Krook, 2009), I do focus on women acting as a group.

By considering the concerted women's activism against the practice of domestic violence, I am focusing on a group and considering its role as a group. Thus my case study contributes to the theoretical understanding of the ability of women in civil society to advance women's interests at the political level and, by doing so, to confirm their

²⁷ Italicised in the original.

legitimacy in exercising representation and ultimately in reconfiguring the politics of a country in favour of gender equality. Also, I am arguing that in the process, gender relations are being shaped as firstly, women occupy spaces that were by its gendered nature considered off-limits to them; secondly, women alter the political discourse; and thirdly, women influence social perceptions regarding gender inequality and women's rights.

2.3.5 A Tripartite Framework for Assessing Women's Movements' Effectiveness

As it has been suggested in this dissertation, substantive representation of women may be taking place through the Mozambican women's movement. Nonetheless, one still needs to theoretical reflect about women's movements in general as avenues for political representation before moving to assess the above mentioned possibility in regard to the issue of domestic violence. Laurel Weldon argues that one can assess if a group is well represented by asking "(...) whether their attitudes and views are articulated as part of the political process and whether these priorities are reflected in policy agendas and outcomes" (2011: 7). The author observes that, in general terms,

[w]omen's movements are important in getting violence against women on the governmental agenda because they are the first to articulate and draw public attention to the issue. They put it on the public agenda, where it can be taken up and made part of the governmental agenda by government bureaucrats, legislators, and other policymakers (2002b: 67).

These arguments were rearticulated by Georgina Waylen, who while referring to women's movements during transitional processes to democratic regimes as influencers of positive gender outcomes, provides us with a way to measure their effectiveness in terms of "their ability to articulate gender issues, put them on the agenda, or even to shape policy outcomes" (2007a:53; see also Waylen, 2008).

I am adapting the measurements proposed by both authors – Laurel Weldon (2002b; 2011) and Georgina Waylen (2007a; 2008) – to identify in which ways the women's movement against domestic violence in Mozambique served as an effective representative of women's rights and interests. I propose that, in general, the promotion of pro-women political outcomes by women's movements may be assessed through three distinct roles they may play – as articulators, agenda-setters, and shapers. In order to assess the specific case of the women's movement against domestic violence in Mozambique, I slightly alter the above mentioned third role proposed by Georgina Waylen regarding policy outcomes focusing instead on the shaping of formal political outcomes such as legislation.

As a framework, the first role serves to assess the ability of the women's movement to identify an issue and articulate it as a gendered one. The second role, serves to assess the ability of the women's movement to place an issue on the agenda, by turning it into a public concern and by generating dynamics of contestation in order to push for social and formal political change, such as the establishment of a new institution or the approval of a new law. Lastly, the third role serves to assess the ability of the women's movement to participate in the process of political change, by shaping it, going beyond the second role. The third role refers to the specific participation of the women's movement in a legislative process, a process normatively dependent of formal politics, which means shaping the process directly, going deeper than the influence felt at the level of the first and second roles. By applying this framework to my case, I argue that the women's movement against domestic violence in Mozambique enabled women's substantive political representation, playing all the above mentioned three roles. I seek to demonstrate how the women's movement articulated the problem of domestic violence into a national wide problem of gender inequality that needed to be addressed by formal political institutions; how that movement inserted the problem into Mozambican political agenda and contested the lack of legislation in the sphere of civil society; and lastly, how the previous roles led to the effective shaping of political outcomes, given that by advising and putting pressure over formal political representatives at the national assembly women's mobilisation contributed determinately to the existence of the law against domestic violence against women. While doing so, the movement has challenged the ways in which social and political actors, institutions, and norms are gendered.

The following section identifies the methods through which I seek to demonstrate the empirical validity of my argument.

2.4 Methodology

Given my goal of analysing the role of the Mozambican women's movement in the case of the law against domestic violence, this section presents: i) the epistemological assumptions that guided my research; ii) the selection of the geographic space for this research; iii) which research methods were used; iv) the process of data gathering; v) and finally the process of analysing data. Regarding my epistemological approach, it was based upon the concepts of reflexivity and intersectionality. The former allows a more rigorous relation between the researcher and the researched social reality and the latter allows me to better analyse both social contexts as well as the information gathered. As for the geographic space, it is limited to the city of Maputo. As for methods, I opted for using mostly a qualitative perspective, although I do look at existing statistics to trace general social patterns. My primarily

source of data are interviews. These were complemented by the data collected through “moderate” participant observation (Spradley, 1980), and by the analysis of official documentation, research from women’s organisations, as well as evidence from academic literature. As for the gathering of data, I conducted it while associated as a researcher at the largest national university, the *Universidade Eduardo Mondlane*.

2.4.1. Epistemological Assumptions

As a researcher, I must be aware of the social nature of my object of study and of my own position as observer in order to avoid grave disturbances in the process of “producing” knowledge. Those dimensions affect the way I characterise social knowledge and how I analyse the information used to build it, so they must be explicitly taken into consideration. They can be understood in terms of intersectionality and reflexivity, the former referring to the multiple social axes present in each individual and the latter to the circular relationship between the observed and observer.

In relation to intersectionality, since I observe patterns of collective behaviour that originate from individual choices, I will not disregard the impact that different social axes have on the experiences lived by Mozambican women and the consequent impact that these women may have in the development efforts of the Mozambican society (see Disney, 2008; Pijenburg and Nhantumbo, 2002; Tripp et al., 2009). To produce social knowledge requires us to consider that the factors and “causal” mechanisms behind the behaviour of actors have multiple and complexly related origins. The intersection of axes such as class and age definitely shape these women’s ability to be involved and to participate in formal politics, women’s organisations and in the broad women’s movement. Such an intersection of axes can also make women experience the ability or inability to deal with the practice of domestic violence, as well as the ability or inability to negotiate women’s rights with political elites. Therefore, using the concept of “intersectionality” may contribute to our understanding of how the interactions of axes generate multiple opportunities on the one hand, or barriers on the other hand (e.g., Crenshaw, 1991; Weldon, 2006a, 2008). Similarly, in order to produce findings as objective as possible, I tried to constantly remind myself of my own “intersectional” position as a researcher, as a woman, and as an “outsider”.

Such an effort reflects my awareness of the concept of “reflexivity” as a methodological approach. The first implication of such a choice regards the inherently subjective production of knowledge. Since the framing of research is done by an individual, its subjective preferences end up affecting the framework that is supposed to produce social knowledge. Hence, apparently objectivity is impossible to achieve. In my case, I try to mitigate subjectivity through the introduction of general analytical roles – articulators of gender issues, agenda setters, and legislation shapers – that frame my

analysis and, ultimately, my argument: a women's movement functioned as an avenue for women's informal political representation in Mozambique. However, despite the fact that such a framework is useful in clarifying my argument and examining my findings, it is subjective in the sense that I was the one highlighting what I consider to be the most important dimension of informal political representation and the extent to which a social group can be a representative. Therefore, I recognize that the parameters of social knowledge are always subjective, though a clearly defined analytical framework is useful in producing collective perspectives on a particular dimension of society.

Besides the subjective construction of research, it is essential to acknowledge my own position in the social context I seek to examine and to be aware of the ways in which such a position can interfere with that context. Although the fact that, derived from my own experiences, I have been looking at the Mozambican women's movement from a feminist Westerner women's point of view, I sought to be conscious of the socio-cultural specificities of the reality and the subjects I was analysing as well as my own. To use a reflexive epistemological stance was fundamental to frame my action as a researcher, inspired by standpoint epistemological approaches such as the one offered by Jill McCorkel and Kristen Myers (2003). Reflexivity is essential in the sense that it leads me to identify my position as a researcher as it also leads me to identify my social position as an individual and assess to what extent it would help or impede my own forms of understanding (see also Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Thus, reflexivity as a methodological approach, accompanied my entire research process.

2.4.2. Selecting the Geographic Space for this Research

My fieldwork in Mozambique was conducted in the area of the Maputo province, mainly in the capital city, Maputo. If I was focusing on the origins of domestic violence in Mozambique, on national patterns of domestic violence, on the implementation of the law against domestic violence, or on the effectiveness of that implementation I would surely need to explore geographic spaces beyond the capital city. Given my research purpose, the fieldwork centred in Maputo was sufficient to gather empirical evidence. Although the approval of the law is a legislative process at national scale, the capital of Mozambique was the essential geographic space that I needed to explore.

The first reason for choosing the city of Maputo is related to the physical localisation of the major women's organisations involved in this mobilising process against domestic violence. Even if some organisations also had branches outside Maputo, it was in the capital city that their actions converged and where the campaign of the movement against domestic violence was more evident. Secondly, the national parliament is located in Maputo. It was there that I gathered data on the formal steps of the legislative process regarding domestic violence through the GMP, interviewed MPs

and met other parliamentary staff. Thirdly, Maputo also hosts other formal political institutions which are relevant to this study, particularly the MMAS, which centralises information on gender inequality in Mozambique, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MINT). Fourthly, the National Institute for Statistics (INE) – where I also obtained statistics on general social trends and gender inequality in Mozambique – is also located in Maputo.

2.4.3. Research Methods

I used qualitative methods to address my research questions. Qualitative methods permit an in-depth approach proper to a case study that seeks to thoroughly trace a social process which involves subtle mechanisms that lay beyond statistical information. In fact, for the purpose of my research, statistical secondary data serves exclusively to identify general social trends in Mozambique (e.g., development indexes), measurable tendencies of gender inequality (see Lawson, 1995: 452), and domestic violence indicators. Consequently, my analysis relies mostly on interviews, “moderate” participant observation (Spradley, 1980; see also DeWalt et al., 1998), as well as on the analysis of documents. This triangulation of data sources, instead of aiming at a cross-validation convergence seeks to bring out the “(...) complexity and richness of understanding” (Hesse-Biber, 2012: 137). Specifically, it aims at better capturing the multiple aspects regarding the motivation for mobilising against the issue of domestic violence on the one hand, the resistances for approving a law against domestic violence against women the on the other hand, and the strategies of the actors involved in such processes.

A) Interviews

Regarding the interviews, they constituted fundamental tools to address the core of my research and these are perceived as data generating processes (Baker, 1997). I have conducted both formal and informal interviews (Fontana and Frey, 1994). Through semi-structured interviews I was able to apprehend the essential details of the process I seek to explain as such an approach allowed me to cover themes that I perceived as fundamental to my research, but also to be alert to the unique insights of each participant. Consequently I had the chance to adapt to the responses of the interviewees, and formulate immediate contextualised questions (Kvale, 1996). Although I had prepare two different question guides for the interviews – one destined to the interviews with activists and researchers and the other to the interviews with members of official organs, such as with MPs – I often found that division to be inadequate regarding the Mozambican context in which the separation of such realities is not always obvious. In that sense both question guides were often used

simultaneously to the same individual and they were constantly altered throughout the research process.²⁸

The most relevant types of interviews were the ones concerning members of key women's organisations who were most significantly involved with the elaboration of the domestic violence law draft, and which were more actively involved in its promotion; the ones referring to the MPs – from the two major parties the Liberation Front of Mozambique, *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique* (Frelimo) and the Mozambique National Resistance, *Resistência Nacional Moçambicana* (Renamo) – and who were active during the legislative process, especially when the law was approved in July 2009; and the ones regarding elements from the Women Parliamentary Group, especially the one with its president. Adding to this, I conducted formal interviews with for instance, elements from academia, from a research centre, women's rights activists, an element from the MMAS, and lawyers (see appendix C for a list of the interviews). Overall, the interviews I was able to conduct reflect an effort of also being sensitive to intersectionality as an empirical approach (see Hancock, 2007, 2013; Disney, 2008). In fact, despite being all Mozambican, the interviewees represent different races, classes, gender and ages. All the interviews were conducted in Portuguese, and the quotes used in this thesis were translated to English by me.

Regarding ethical considerations, all participants were informed of what my research consisted of. The participants in formal interviews have read and signed a consent form, and in the case of the interviews through Skype an email was previously sent and consent was orally given. All the participants were asked whether they wished their participation to remain anonymous or not. When the participants chose to remain anonymous, and when the participants were not actually sure about anonymity, I have used random names to identify them but maintain the minimal information regarding their affiliation. Nonetheless, in such cases some participants decided to be identified as "anonymous", and some specifically asked not to be identified by name or by their organisation. In such cases, participants are identified by their position within the organisations in question. The relevancy of their participation is assured by their involvement with the struggle against domestic violence. Additionally, for confidentiality reasons of the interviewees' schedules I have chosen not to specify the exact dates of each interview, choosing to indicate only the month and the year in which they were conducted.

Several meetings – both arranged as well as casual ones – also constituted valuable sources of data. Although not formally considered as interviews neither by the participants nor me, arranged meetings with elements who were related to the topic of my research or who could provide technical information regarding the issues in

²⁸ Refer to Appendix F for a general topic guide for interviews.

question took the form of in-depth conversations, during which I was able to ask some questions and take immediate notes. These meetings were treated with ethical consideration, for instance, I always assumed that no personal information was to be disclosed, unless suggested or agreed by the person in question. Unlike formal interviews, these were not recorded. Casual conversation with individuals from multiple backgrounds also provided valuable insights regarding the overall Mozambican social arrangements, individual experiences regarding gender issues as well as regarding the specific issue of domestic violence. In such cases, the conversation had no predetermined specific purpose, and the topics were less related to specific types of expertise, and more related to individual standpoints. In such cases I would take posterior notes. The above mentioned meetings and encounters are analysed as informal interviews, and identified as such (see appendix C).

B) Participant Observation

Participant observation refers to "[t]he process of learning through exposure to or involvement in the day-to-day or routine activities of participants in the researcher setting" (Schensul et al., 1999: 91). During my fieldwork I realised that an exposure or involvement in the day-to-day or routine activities of MPs and elements composing the women's rights movement for instance, would improve my understanding of how space and its permeability to gender categorisations may ultimately influence the role of political actors and the production of social and political outcomes in Mozambique. Nevertheless, any idea of conducting active participant observation – as a method through which the researcher is actively engaged in the routine activities of the participants in the researcher setting (see DeWalt et al.; 1998; Spradley, 1980) – was discouraged by my tight schedule arrangements in Mozambique. Even if I would have been able to engage in certain day-to-day routines, in terms of time I felt I would not be able to do it to the extent of becoming an insider, or an "active" or "complete" member (see Adler and Adler, 1987). Nevertheless, several practical issues provided me several opportunities for being exposed to such day-to-day activities – in certain cases to a higher degree than I was expecting – and to be routinely "present at the scene of the action"²⁹ without actively participating in it, understood by James Spradley (1980) as "moderate participation" (see also DeWalt et al. 1998: 262). My presence as a researcher was noticed, and the purpose of my presence was always made clear.

In fact, during the period of my second fieldwork, I was able to spend several days at the parliament³⁰, not only conducting interviews or visiting the archives, but also observing. Several scheduled interviews were repeatedly delayed from the

²⁹ Expression used by James Spradley (1980: 59).

³⁰ During a two week period between March and April 2012.

morning period to the afternoon, or postponed from one day to the other. I took advantage of such a waiting time to observe with a purpose, and to take notes. Even if I could not participate as an insider, I was able to have insider glimpses of certain routines, practices and institutional culture, as well as of the space itself and how it was organised. I was often accompanied by staff, namely a secretary for the Frelimo parliamentary wing, with whom I learned about practical issues regarding the functioning of the parliament, and by the main secretary of the GMP, where I was able to spend a couple of afternoons making contacts.

The process of the approval of the law against domestic violence culminated in 2009, a year and a half before the beginning of my research. Nonetheless, women's mobilisation against domestic violence did not cease with the approval of the law, and such an activism could be observed during my fieldtrips in 2010 and 2012. My understanding of the overall mobilisation against domestic violence was enhanced by being able to attend a public debate on gender based violence, organised by WLSA in collaboration with other organisations of civil society on the 28th of March 2012, in Maputo. Elements of the major organisations behind the struggle against domestic violence were present, being some of them the speakers, and the topics discussed led to the specific issue of the law 29/2009. This was an important event for me in terms of my research. I had the opportunity to witness the dynamics of a debate regarding the focus of my research, and to observe which issues were brought out, and by whom. Additionally, I was able to pose questions and interact with the participants.

In order to collect materials and make contacts I visited the headquarters of several organisations, such as for instance the WLSA, the Fórum Mulher, and the Muleide. Such occasions happened throughout my first and second fieldtrips, and on both times I usually spent a couple of days in each organisation. In fact, the majority of the interviews conducted to activists happened at the headquarters of the organisations to which they belong, and similarly to what has been described above, I used the "waiting time" to observe and take notes. By visiting these spaces, I was able to have brief views on the day-to-day activities of the major organisations involved in the overall women's movement, and on how the issue of domestic violence was still on their agenda.

C) Documentary Research

Documents remain as "(...) 'physical traces' of the culture that has produced them" (Corbetta, 2003: 296), and in that sense, several documents were identified as relevant to analysing the overall struggle against domestic violence in Mozambique. My selection of documents to be analysed was based on the relevance of the contents and on the relevance of the authors. Since the overall struggle against domestic violence

involved multiple actors – e.g., international actors, the women’s movement, the government – multiple documentary sources were consulted (a brief description of the documents can be found in appendix G). This data provides valuable information regarding i) the international framework on women’s rights and gender equality Mozambique has chosen to bind to, ii) the national framework regarding women’s rights and gender equality in general and regarding the issue of domestic violence in specific, iii) the efforts of women’s organisations of civil society regarding the struggle against domestic violence in Mozambique, and iv) the interaction between and/or the feedback by the different actors involved in the process regarding the law against domestic violence.

I consulted documents that can be categorised as international, national official documents, and organisational documents. Regarding international documents, here are included for instance treaties ratified by Mozambique, reports from international donors regarding human rights in general and women’s rights in specific within the Mozambican context. These are important in the sense they signal an official overture in promoting women’s rights and gender equality, as well as some of the barriers to achieve it.

As for national official documents, these are for instance official records of the national plenary sessions discussing the approval of the law against domestic violence, or the texts of national gender related mechanisms. The goal, while analysing such a type of documents, was to grasp the official perspective regarding the status of women and gender equality in Mozambique, and in specific, the framework regarding the issue of domestic violence. Hence, during my fieldwork periods I visited several documental centres and archives. I initiated my documentary research at the documental centre of the MMAS and at the INE. I was looking for more generalist documents that would provide me a broader notion of the context which I was researching. Following, I looked for more specific documents regarding the process of the approval of the law against domestic violence. In order to do so, I visited the parliamentary archives searching for documents from the parliamentary commissions involved in the process – namely the 1st Commission, the Commission of the Constitutional Affairs, Human Rights and Legality³¹, and the 3rd Commission, the Commission of Social Affairs, Gender, and Environment³² – and records of the plenary sessions in which the law was discussed and voted. Such documents mark the evolution of the legislative process, and reflect the dynamics involved in the overall process, especially since several have handwritten annotations and comments to the original texts.

³¹ In Portuguese, 1ª Comissão - Comissão dos Assuntos Constitucionais, Direitos Humanos e de Legalidade.

³² In Portuguese, 3ª Comissão - Comissão dos Assuntos Sociais, do Género e do Ambiente.

Regarding the documents of local organisations these include for instance, documents from women's organisations of civil society regarding the draft of the law against domestic violence, informative brochures, posters, and communications done to the press. As mentioned before, I visited several organisations that have been mobilising against domestic violence, such as for instance, the WLSA, the research Centre of African Studies, *Centro de Estudos Africanos* (CEA), the Muleide, and the Fórum Mulher. The documents collected at these organisations are essential to trace the mobilisation process against domestic violence, the key actors behind it, to identify women's organisations' agenda, and to analyse their strategies, their partners, and the main obstacles they face. Namely, I use data gathered by different key women's organisations – for instance WLSA and Fórum Mulher.

2.4.4. Positionality within the Research

My field research in Mozambique was conducted in two periods, the first one in December of 2010, and the second one between March and April of 2012. The first research period in Mozambique resulted in an exploratory experience regarding my methodological and theoretical approaches. Despite having chosen a theoretical framing for my thesis such a framing was opened to new perspectives during such an exploratory period. An example is provided by the assumed existence of separate groups of interviewees as mentioned above, which made me rethink not only the scheme of the interviews but also the theoretical importance of some concepts.

All interviewees were Portuguese native speakers, regardless of some being also native speakers of a particular regional dialect. Hence, by also being a Portuguese native speaker I have not required an interpreter. That fact allowed me to have direct access to the sources and to do my own interpretation of the data I collect, from documentation to interviews. While in Mozambique, my research was conducted holding the position of visiting researcher at the Centre for the Analysis of Policies – *Centro de Análise de Políticas* (CAP) – at the Eduardo Mondlane University (UEM), in Maputo. As part of the centre's informal practice of allowing associate researchers coming from abroad to be accompanied by an undergraduate student of the department, I was assisted by Jantone Mahumane, who volunteered to guide me around the campus and the city.

By being a researcher at the CAP I had the opportunity to meet academics from Mozambique and from abroad as well as to contact with research centres of the UEM such as the before mentioned CEA. From there I was also able to build a reliable network that ultimately connected me with academics, politicians, and activists working on women and gender issues in Mozambique. In fact, data gathering was facilitated by the social networks I was able to establish in Mozambique. Social circuits in Maputo

proved to be much delimited and while collecting data, asking for interviews, or scheduling appointments it was extremely valuable to have some type of social reference, a mutual friend, or some reliable institutional affiliation.³³

Following the same pattern of building a social network, during my first trip to Mozambique I was based for a short period with the *Doroteias* – a women’s Catholic congregation – in Fomento, in the city of Matola. This period allowed me to contact with the projects they are developing with poor local women and the strategies they use to maintain such projects. I was introduced to their communities, which itself constituted a valuable source of information through informal conversations in regard to gender roles in the Mozambican society.

As an outsider I faced both advantages as well as basic difficulties. For instance, the fact that I was an outsider worked in my favour when I visited the Parliament. Within the corridors of the Parliament the relations between the two major parties – Frelimo and Renamo – were cordial, but a certain degree of “uneasiness” between elements of the two parties was latent. By being an outsider I was not affected by it. As I could not be related to any of the two parties I was well received by both. Adding to this, after spending a few days at the Parliament, I became known by the staff – who already referred to me as the “researcher from London” – who was always keen to help me in all sort of ways.

I had never been to Mozambique prior to beginning my PhD. By being unfamiliar with both the society and with the geographical space I had anticipated several difficulties. I was afraid that Mozambique’s colonial past would somehow influence the attitudes people would have towards my presence there – by being Portuguese – and that Mozambican people in general would feel reluctant to participate in my research because, above all, I was an outsider. That fear proved to be wrong. As mentioned before, the fact that I was affiliated with CAP was an important platform to build trust with my interviewees. I was in general terms very well received and both activists as well as MPs were really keen to participate in my research, being extremely cooperative. Also, by being conducting research on gender and dealing with the issue of domestic violence I was afraid that my work would cause some biases. Additionally, I was aware that the term “feminist” would not always be well received. I was partially right with the latter assumption, and outside the university I did avoid using the word “feminist” and switched it to “advocate of women’s rights”, even when talking to some activists. What I did not anticipate were the difficulties of accessing some data. Due to poor facilities, lack of staff, or even the absence or unavailability of data I had to find alternative ways to overcome such shortcomings. For instance, the lack of access to

³³ These are of course involved in dynamics that can work both ways, constituting an advantage or a disadvantage depending on the specificities of context.

working photocopier machines at a key documental centre meant that I had to transcribe a few excerpts by hand, prolonging my visits to that specific place. Additionally, my tight schedule in Mozambique was exacerbated by the delay or postponement of several meetings and interviews. Some interviews were later conducted through Skype while some others failed to happen.

2.4.5. Analysing Data

In order to answer my main research question – *What was the role of the women's movement in the struggle against domestic violence?* – I needed to understand the relation between the actions of the Mozambican women's movement and the social and political transformation happening regarding the issue of domestic violence. Such a relation is then perceived in terms of the women's movement ability to a) articulate domestic violence as a gender issue b) to place the issue on the agenda and c) to influence the legislative process regarding a law against domestic violence. Instead of addressing the above mentioned abilities with straightforward validating/invalidating answers, this analysis explores the reasons why the women's movement initiated such processes, the methods employed in each, the actors involved, the opportunities and barriers to succeed, and the results. Hence, an analysis of the data, more than solely aiming at establishing a causal relationship between the actions of the women's movement and the production of social and political change aims at bringing out the above mentioned issues.

The material collected during my two field trips to Mozambique is constituted by several audio files – that is, records of the interviews – two handwritten notebooks – resulting from general notes, from the informal interviews, and from observation notes – several original brochures and a pile of photocopied documents. After returning from my second fieldwork I was able to conduct several interviews through Skype which were recorded and the respective audio files added to that material (please refer to appendix C for information regarding such interviews). Additionally, my choice of transcribing all the formal interviews verbatim further added to the bulk of materials to be analysed. While collecting the data and reviewing my notes and audio records I was simultaneously conducting analytical work, one which would inform new sets of interrogations that I would seek to address while conducting further interviews or observations (see Balsiger, 2014). Nonetheless, the process of writing my analysis was more intense after returning from each fieldtrip.

For practical reasons I started by organising the collected material by type, e.g., interviews, observation notes, and documents. Within this setting, I have then organised the data collected in broad thematic groups, a category creation scheme initially based on theory driven strategies (see Glaser and Laudel, 2013). Such

categories are as follows: i) international and national frameworks on women's rights and gender equality (including instruments), ii) social categorisations of gender, iii) intersections of gender and politics, iv) women's movement and the process against domestic violence v) the GMP, NMW and domestic violence, vi) legislative process of domestic violence, and vii) the interactions between actors. Such a broad deduced coding allowed me to organise the data in separated folders, all identified by colours. If some data would refer to multiple themes – for instance, interviews covered a broad range of topics, so when thematically coded they corresponded to multiple themes – a corresponding number of copies of the segment were made, highlighted with the respective theme colour, and tagged with a reference to the integral text. Hence, whenever segments of a text were analysed, I was able to retrieve the complete text and visualise them in their original context.

Such a method also provided a way for thinking about the data. In an iterative and reflexive process I proceeded to comparing the signalled segments of the texts, looking for patterns, contrasting arguments, and unexpected information (see Miles and Huberman, 1994). I did a cross-comparison between segments within the same type (see table 2.1 on the following page); between types within the same category (see table 2.2 on the following page); and between types and categories (see table 2.3). By continually revising the interviews – audio records and transcriptions – my notes on informal interviews and observation notes, and the documents collected I was able to include a further category based on data-driven strategies: viii) flexibility of political spaces.

Table 2.1. Comparing segments within the same Type, examples:

Type: Documents		
a) Between Different themes:	b) Between the Same theme:	c) Between Different and Same themes:
International and National Framework on women's rights and gender equality (i) E.g., Mozambican Constitution (Principle of Equality)	Legislative process against domestic violence (vi) E.g., Annotated Copy of the Bill against Domestic Violence (Assembleia da República, April, 2006)	Women's Movement and domestic violence (iv) E.g., Booklet the Cycle of Violence (WLSA, 2009)
Social categorisations of gender (ii) E.g., FIDH and LDH Report, 2007	Legislative process against domestic violence (vi) Record of the Plenary Session number 35, VI Legislature, X Ordinary Session. (Assembleia da República, 17/07/2009)	Women's Movement and domestic violence (iv) E.g., Letter to the GMP, (Fórum Mulher, 2006)
International and National Framework on women's rights and gender equality (i) Text of the Maputo Protocol, ratified by Mozambique	Legislative process against domestic violence (vi) E.g., Record of the Plenary Session number 37, VI Legislature, X Ordinary Session (Assembleia da República, 21/07/2009)	GMP, NMW and domestic Violence (v) E.g., Bill of the law against domestic violence (MMAS, 2007)

Table 2.2. Comparing segments within the same Category, examples:

Theme: Interaction between actors (vii)		
a) Between Different Types	b) Between the Same Type	c) Between Different and Same Types
Interview E.g., Inês Raimundo, (September, 2014)	Interview E.g., Isabel Casimiro, (December 2010)	Observation note: E.g., Parliament, 30/03/2012
Observation note: E.g., Public Debate, 28/03/2012	Interview E.g., Terezinha da Silva, (December, 2010)	Documents E.g., Letter to the GMP, (Fórum Mulher, 2006)
Documents E.g., Comments of the Fórum Mulher to the Commission (Fórum Mulher, 2009)	Interview N. Mondlane (April, 2012)	Documents E.g., Comments of the Fórum Mulher to the Commission (Fórum Mulher, 2009)

Table 2.3. Comparing segments from different Types and Categories, examples:

Theme	Type		
	Interviews	Observation Notes	Documents
a) Different	Intersections of gender and politics (iii) E.g., I. Casimiro, (March 2012)	GMP and domestic violence (v) E.g., GMP (28/03/2012)	Women's movement and domestic violence (iv) E.g., Poster (WLSA, 2012)
b) Same and Different	Social categorisations of gender (ii) E.g., G. Macuácuá (February, 2014)	Social categorisations of gender (ii) E.g., UEM (20/12/2010)	Social categorisations of gender (ii) E.g., Report of Mozambique Beijing +20 (MMAS, 2009)

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter lays the theoretical ground that will be used in this dissertation, conceptualising women's social movements as political representatives of women's rights and interests. In order to do so it revisits key feminist literature dedicated to analyse how the general intersection of gender and politics is able to produce unequal opportunities for women and men, firstly in terms of access to formal political spaces and secondly in terms of decisional power within such spaces. It exposes the rationale behind the argument that the ability of women to be present within the realm of formal politics does not always confirm the ability to exercise representation or be represented. While doing so it proposes avenues presented by the literature regarding alternative political spaces, where women's political agency may be identified and from where discriminatory norms and patterns can be challenged in multiple ways. In order to make such an analysis, a configuration of "women" as "sharing interests and an identity" is strategically conducted. Similarly, it presents a decentralised notion of power as well as an extended interpretation of the "political".

Sustained by such a theoretical ground this chapter presents a tripartite framework to measure the effectiveness of women's mobilisation in representing women's rights and interests as a group. Identifying substantive representation in terms of a group interest being articulated as part of a political process, and such an interest being reflected in policy agendas and outcomes, justifies an analysis on women's

movements as articulators, agenda-setters, and shapers. The rest of the chapter describes my methodological approach and how such an approach was influenced by an exploratory period in Mozambique. The epistemological assumptions that guided this research illustrate how knowledge is subjectively produced, as well as how the concept of intersectionality and a reflexive approach may contribute to avoid making the assumption that one is producing universal truths.

Chapter 3 Gender and the Case of Domestic Violence in Mozambique

3.1 Introduction

“The man is the axe, the woman is the hoe”.³⁴ Using an analogy with traditional instruments of labour, this Mozambican proverb illustrates how men and women are perceived as having different characteristics based on their gender and, as a result, expected to perform different roles within the society. Throughout different historical contexts, being a man or being a woman in Mozambique demanded different obligations, and each were conceded different social and even legal rights. As a result, an analysis that recognizes the construction of gender roles is necessary to understand the nature of the inequalities that affect women in the contemporary society (see Oyewumi, 2011: 31; Walker, 1990), as well as to understand the ways in which women organise to overcome such inequalities. As such, in this chapter I analyse the construction of gender roles as a process and the ways in which such constructions have been structuring the Mozambican society, paradoxically producing both barriers and opportunities for advancing women’s rights and gender equality. Thus, without ignoring the discrimination women endure due to those barriers women must be considered agents that are able to recognize, create and seize the opportunities to advance their position in the society.

My analysis goes against the idea of women’s subordination as “natural”, as well as against the arguments that perceive the demands for gender equality as “foreign” to the Mozambican society (see Urdang, 1989). It is also argued here that in general terms gender roles are neither universally defined, nor are they static, and this is clearly visible in Mozambique’s case (see Sheldon, 2002). Intersecting social axes create distinct individual experiences which in the case of Mozambique may be said to derive from two major levels: from a general level, to which history contribute, and from an individual level, to which social axes such as race and class contribute. Despite assuming that such factors contribute to produce multiple nuances within each gender role, I suggest that they have also produced a common social structure – a product of the combination of various traditional practices and colonial influenced ones – which is currently based on patriarchal values. This fact alone favours gender inequalities that prevent women from seeing their human rights fully guaranteed. That is the case of domestic violence, a widespread phenomenon mainly affecting women that tends to be generally perceived as a “natural” and private issue, and consequently, to be overlooked by the generality of society.

³⁴ Mozambican proverb. In the original form “*O homem é o machado, a mulher a enxada*”.

Nonetheless, I propose that at the same time that the above-mentioned general and individual factors were able to generate gender-based inequalities paradoxically they were also able to generate opportunities for eliminating inequalities. In fact, in the case of Mozambique there is a formal discourse favourable to the advancement of gender equality. Moreover, there are several formal institutions specifically destined to advance and guarantee women's human rights, and the legal framework of the country has been incorporating mechanisms to deal with issues regarding such rights. It was within this setting that in 2009, after a long and full of controversy process regarding the issue of domestic violence – in which civil society organisations and the AR were involved – a law that specifically regulates that issue was approved.

All in all, I suggest that only by understanding both barriers and opportunities to gender equality, one may understand the gender based phenomenon of domestic violence in Mozambique, the processes of discussion and approval of the law against it, and ultimately, the women's mobilisation against domestic violence which resulted in the existence of such a law. This chapter functions as a background to the chapters directly addressing my research questions, namely chapters 5 to 7.

3.2 Mozambique: the Making of Gender

Situated on the East Coast of the southern African region, between the Indian Ocean and the edge of the southern African escarpment, lies Mozambique, a country with a vast territory, low population density, and a myriad of ethnical groups which is considered one of the poorest and least developed in the world³⁵ (see UNDP, 2015). Its national borders – an artificial geographic divide created by the European colonial powers – encompass several ethnic groups, several languages, as well as traditions (see e.g., Sheldon, 2002). Despite these multiplicities the people of Mozambique share common historical facts that I wish to revisit from a gender-sensitive perspective. In fact, from the nineteenth century onwards, Mozambique has been explored by a “backward” type of colonialism (Jenkins, 2001: 361), has engaged in an armed struggle for its independence, has defined itself as a socialist state, has been the stage of a brutal civil conflict, and has restructured itself as a multi-party democracy based on a free market economy.³⁶

Each one of these events was determinant in defining Mozambique's structures, from the political and economic spheres, to the country's social organisation, in which

³⁵ Despite progresses measured by the UNDP's Human Development Index, Mozambique is part of the list of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in the world since 1988. The *Human Development Report 2015 - Country Profile* ranks Mozambique at the 180th place, out of 188 countries in terms of its Human Development Index. The country profile is available at: [hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/MOZ.pdf]. (Last accessed: May 2015). The list of the LDCs is available at: [www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/cdp/ldc/ldc_list.pdf]. (Last accessed: May 2015).

³⁶ The facts presented here are organized following the chronological order of the events and not necessarily in terms of a progressive evolution towards the achievement of gender equality in Mozambique.

gender constructions are included. In fact, by acknowledging the general effects such events had on the Mozambican population, and on the construction of its institutions, one is better equipped to understand the current gender based barriers presented to women (see e.g., Sheldon, 2002: 1; Tripp et al., 2009; Urdang, 1989) but also the opportunities available to overcome such barriers (see e.g., Casimiro, 2004). As Oyeronke Oyewumi argues, gender is “(...) not only socially constructed but also historical” (2011: 30; see also Oyewumi, 1997). In that sense, this sub-section aims at providing an historical analysis of factors that I consider to be relevant for a further understanding of how “gender” in Mozambique has been constructed, the causes for gendered discrimination, as well as the opportunities and efforts for overcoming it. Thus, this sub-section aims at constituting a basis to the following ones regarding gender and women’s situation within the Mozambican society.

3.2.1. Traditional Gender “Roles”

The conceptualisation of gender “roles” within the general African context is a contested issue. Several authors argue that the conceptualisation of gender categories – as a set of binaries based on biological differences opposing men/women and on social differences opposing public/private – is in fact a product of the western culture, so they should not be perceived as universal and thus not straightforwardly applicable to the general traditional African context (Oyewumi, 1997; 2011; see also Amadiume, 1987; 1997; Zeleza, 1997: 97). On the other hand, accounts of traditional³⁷ practices that are indicated as discriminative to women – on the basis of their biological characteristics – are also recurrent within that same context (Urdang, 1989). My analysis wishes to avoid universal ideas regarding gender constructions and the position of women in traditional African societies (see Mbilinyi, 1992). Simultaneously, this analysis also wishes to avoid ignoring the discriminatory essence that some traditional practices or conceptions regarding gender constructions may have represented and may still represent to women’s lives.

The Mozambican “[h]istory discloses multiple and sometimes contradictory past experiences, where women were sometimes but not always oppressed by traditional practices. Alternatively, that past was not simply a pre-capitalist paradise of ‘primitive’ contentment. Reality was more tangled than either of these opposing constructions” (Sheldon, 2002: 1). In fact, factors such as societal system – i.e. matrilineal or patrilineal systems – or women’s social location within each system – defined by the intersection of axis such as age, or class – should be taken into account in order to grasp the position of women within the context of traditional Mozambique.

³⁷ Throughout this chapter the term “traditional” refers to the local practices and costumes of the Mozambican people, and not to a moment in time. It is recognized that those traditional practices are neither homogeneous nor static, meaning that they are varied, and that they have their own dynamics (see Johnson-Odim and Strobel, 1989: 36-37).

Nevertheless, one cannot affirm that in the matrilineal societies in the northern and central³⁸ Mozambique all women were free of discrimination, neither can be affirmed that all women were discriminated within patrilineal systems of the south.³⁹

Within matrilineal systems, familiar lineage is traced along the women side and thus children within such systems maintain their mother's family names, and the authority over them comes not from their father but from their mother's brothers (Pitcher, 1996: 82). In Mozambique these systems are usually matrilineal, meaning that the family is organised around the woman's kinship and that with marriage, it is the husband who moves in. For a year, the husband works their in-law's land in order to prove that he is a good worker, that he is able to have children, and that he is a good husband. If he succeeds, they can move to their own house. In case of a divorce, the woman is entitled to the children and the land (Sheldon, 2002; Urdang, 1989). Notably, even though women are the ones with access to the land within the matrilineal systems, the authority usually resides with the woman's older brother or with her maternal uncle (Arnfred, 2011: 95), thus the decisive "power" resides within the male figure (Arnfred, 2011: 96). Examples are found amongst the Yao where, "[t]ough entrusted with important ritual roles, women were considered helpless and dependent on men in conducting daily affairs" (Berger and White, 1999: 26). Polygamy and premature marriages – involving young women and older men – also reflected perceptions about a masculine "superiority". There were exceptions, such as the fact revealed by Mark Chingono, who noted that with seniority some women were able to gain social status and to attain a certain amount of power within their communities (Chingono, 1996: 214). Nonetheless, social structures were basically gendered and unbalanced towards men.

Likewise, not being homogeneous, the patrilineal systems trace back the familiar lineage on the men's side and are frequently patrilineal, meaning that with marriage the woman is resettled with her husband's family, where she is expected to serve them (Arnfred, 2011, 68). Within the patrilineal regimes there are several practices in which gender is determinant in defining individual roles. One of such practices is the *lobolo*, which involves a payment made by the groom to the bride's family as a compensation for "giving away" their daughter (Sheldon, 2002: 25). The main critique regarding this practice is that instead of being perceived as compensation, *lobolo* may be perceived as a "purchase" in which the husband becomes the "owner" and the wife the "commodity" (Urdang, 1989; Green 1999). Thus, in general terms the significance of *lobolo* becomes linked with notions of power – which is concentrated on the man and his family (Arnfred, 2011: 86; Urdang 1989: 201)

³⁸ Includes the regions of Tete, Sofala, Manica and Zambézia (see appendix A for the map of Mozambique).

³⁹ Includes the regions of Gaza, Inhambane and Maputo.

– and with the abuse of power from the husband. In fact, such an abuse of power is often linked to discriminatory practices that subordinate women, such as for instance domestic violence (Urdang, 1989: 211; Green, 1999: 37).

Social axes such as age, ethnicity, and class played a fundamental role within the organisation of each social system, and by intersecting with the axis gender they were able to create what I will call gendered flexible identities. In fact, in certain African traditional societies women and men's identities could "travel" between each gender category (see Amadiume, 1987, 1997; Berger and White, 1999: 7). In her description of different traditional practices related to gender in Mozambique, Kathleen Sheldon provides two examples that can be illustrative of such possibilities. The first one among the Yao people in northern Mozambique, where the experience of travel was part of their identity as men – and the *sine qua non* confirmation of their ethnic identity as Yao – therefore, the non-travelled man would be negatively compared to a woman and thus not considered Yao (Sheldon, 2002: 6). The other example is of Amélia's, a Tsonga ritual leader from southern Mozambique, who despite being a woman was powerful enough to have wives. By doing so "a powerful woman was recognized as having political and economic strength, as she was able to gain control of female labour, a domain that was commonly reserved for men" (Sheldon, 2002: 31).

If by the one hand these examples can constitute a proof that gender constructions in Mozambique were different from the western conceptualisation of gender – thus moving away from biological determinism – on the other hand, they can also prove that the notion of "power" was often socially constructed in ways intrinsically related to the idea of "manhood", thus coming together with the norms deriving from the patriarchal systems prevailing in the west. As a norm, the "power" of constructing an identity Yao and the Tsonga "power" to have wives were both attributed to men. Notwithstanding the differences between matriarchal and patriarchal systems, the fact was that the family authority generally fell on the male individual, uncle, brother, father, or husband (Arnfred, 2011: 24). I suggest that during the colonial period, these conceptualisations were exacerbated by mixing with the Portuguese perspective regarding gender as a divide, resulting in changes within the traditional roles.

3.2.2. Colonial Presence

Both matrilineal and patrilineal societies as they were traditionally organised were objects of western scrutiny during the colonial period. In fact, part of the colonizer's civilizing and Christianization mission was to break with traditional practices

that through a western perspective seemed “uncivilized”. That “mission” was reconfirmed by the article 2 of the Colonial Act of 1933⁴⁰, which stated:

it hails from the organic essence of the Portuguese nation to fulfil the historical mission of possess and colonize the overseas domains and to civilize the indigenous populations (...) and simultaneously exercising over them a moral influence⁴¹ (...) (Portuguese Republic, 1933).

While enforcing western social practices, the intersecting categories of race, class and gender were interpreted by the colonial society, giving space to metamorphoses of the traditional Mozambican ones. Consequently, new social spaces based on a public/private dichotomy and new social categories were created. Simultaneously, the pre-existent social hierarchies were reinforced. The more an individual assimilated the colonizer’s culture and habits, the more “civilized” he was considered to be and consequently, the more privileges⁴² he could have access to. A social category was created to those who were able to assimilate the colonizer’s culture, the *assimilado*. Although the official status of *assimilado* was not easily granted, the prevailing gender hierarchy within the society – which amongst other aspects favoured men over women in accessing education – made it even harder for a woman to attain it. According to a 1953 colonial census referred by Kathleen Sheldon, the number of “Africans” who were able to enter the category of *assimilado* was limited to 4,439, with women being in minority, that is 1,788 (Sheldon, 2002: 59). The white settlers and the *assimilados* reproduced the social structures and norms practiced in the “mainland” Portugal, which were highly conservative and based on principles in which men and women were respectively expected to performing public and private roles. With the creation of the category *assimilados* the colonial power also created the category *indígena*⁴³ in which the vast majority of the Mozambican population would fit. Through this pattern of categorizations, traditional roles – in which gendered ones were included – were shaped to meet the ones desired by the colonial power (Isaccman, 1996: 5).

Identities, traditional roles and practices were being shaped by the colonizers, a fact that had multiple effects on the lives of Mozambican women and men, and ultimately on gender relations in Mozambique. Mozambican traditional practices that were against the western perception regarding gender roles – e.g., polygamy, matrilineal traditions, and initiation rites – were rejected (Arnfred, 2004: 111). Traditional gender conceptualisations that brought an emphasis on women’s “power”,

⁴⁰ The Colonial Act (Acto Colonial) was incorporated at the Portuguese Constitution of 1933 by the decree n.º 22/465.

⁴¹ My translation from Portuguese.

⁴² As an example, one of the “privileges” was to be exempted from the practice of forced labour, called the “chibalo” system.

⁴³ Meaning indigenous in Portuguese. These categories based on race and class were institutionalized by a system called *indigenato*.

like maternity and fertility, become respectively reduced to “the education of the children in the seclusion of the patriarchal family” a mere “function of nature” (Arnfred, 2011: 111). Albeit the fact that several traditional practices could mean discriminatory practices to women – but again, that should not be universally assumed – gender equality was not being sought. In fact, other discriminatory practices were implemented and gendered structures were reinforced by the colonial power (see Chingono, 1996). Referring to the general African context, Gisela Geisler points how “[c]olonialism is held to have deepened, entrenched, re-enforced, and created public/private dichotomies. This effectively removed African women from the public domain and reified them in a Western inspired domestic or private sphere” (Geisler, 2006: 19).

Regarding the Portuguese tradition there were social and cultural predefined roles that continuously limited women's role within the society (see Cova and Costa Pinto, 1997) which were exported to its “overseas territories”. Thus, similarly to what was expected in Portugal, women in Mozambique were expected to fulfil that complementary role whether they were European or African. This is visible in several texts cited by Olga Iglésias (2007), authored by a proto-nationalist “black men's group” during the mid-twenty century, called “African Association of the Colony of Mozambique” – *Associação Africana da Colónia de Moçambique*. Especially referring to the urban black woman, the texts exalted the importance of preserving women's technical and professional role as family caretakers (Iglésias, 2007: 139). In fact, according to the colonizer's perspective, Mozambican women should aspire to the same role as white women did, one limited to the private sphere where they could be “rainhas do lar⁴⁴” (Arnfred, 2011: 123; see also da Silva Rego 1960: 26). Similarly, at the rural areas, women were expected to perform the role of “caretakers” whereas men should become the “breadwinners” (Sheldon, 2002: 59).

The economic transformation held by the colonial power was another aspect that shaped the ways in which gender roles and family were organised within colonial Mozambique (Arnfred, 2004; Sheldon, 2002). By looking at labour in colonial Mozambique through a gender sensitive lens, two paradoxical aspects come out. Firstly, the traditional conceptualisations of gender and its relation to labour were transformed, mainly due to the *chibalo* system, which amongst other things included low paid or unpaid forced labour as well as forced migration (see Isaacman, 1996). Examples of men who were forced to perform women's traditional work – such as working the land at sugar plantations (Sheldon, 2002: 51) – as well as women forced to produce inedible goods while they should produce food are illustrative of such a transformation. Migration movements, which were increased under the colonial rule

⁴⁴ This term is translated to English as “queens of the home”, which is similar in terms of meaning to the expression “the angel in the house”.

and the *chibalo* system, produced economic, political and social transformations (see Alpers, 1984) including within the traditional kinship and familiar structures⁴⁵ (see Sheldon, 2002).

Secondly, the western gender roles enforced in Mozambique by the Portuguese as the representative of “civilization” and “moral virtue” would be moulded according to the colonizers’ interests. In Mozambique, as in nearly all of sub-Saharan Africa, agricultural work has been perceived as a woman’s task, and linked with providing food for the family. But under the *chibalo* system women’s agricultural labour was done “(...) in a new context where the state could claim their labour and the proceeds of that work” (Sheldon, 1999: 69). Such a fact is illustrated by the degree to which the forced production of cotton in the Northern part of Mozambique – destined to feed the Portuguese textile industry – became majorly dependent on women’s work (Arnfred, 2004: 111). But while engaging in that type of work, these women were using the time and resources that they would use on farming edible goods to feed their families. Thus, at the demand of the colonial power they were actually forced to neglect their role as “caretakers” of the family. Signe Arnfred stresses that same paradox when he argues that “[t]he colonial regime, thus, depended on women’s double workload: In the official ideology they were (or ought to be) housewives; in actual fact they were major producers” (2011: 111).

On the other hand since men were expected to become the “breadwinners” the majority of the waged labour was occupied by them. Even jobs that, both within the traditionally as well as colonial perspective, were attributed to women – such as “domestic service, nursing, and teaching” (Sheldon, 2002: 65) were attributed to Mozambican men. It is interesting to notice that by that time in Portugal, such types of work were highly gendered and with only rare exceptions always attributed to women. This illustrate how waged labour was scant for Mozambican women, a fact that contributed to exacerbate their discrimination, but it also illustrates how the gender binaries based on the ones existent in Portugal became flexible in Mozambique, according to the interests of the settlers. This also constitutes another clue to understanding how the ideas of power and masculinity are intertwined, and how they were present in Mozambique during the colonial period. White men, independently of their education, or male *assimilados* – the ones whom amongst the men in Mozambique were perceived as having more social and economic power – would not perform such jobs. But amongst the less privileged part of the population, men were given the ability to have a waged job in detriment of women. In fact, gender intersected

⁴⁵ Often translated in marital separation, lower birth rates, familiar conflicts, and abandonment of the traditional kinship structures on behalf of more “modern” practices.

with race and class to produce multiple identities and experiences, but ultimately patriarchy was the norm.

As argued before, these facts did not affect all the Mozambican population in the same way and thus a multitude of experiences may be found, and accounts of women actually having some sort of benefit regarding their position within the society are indicated by several authors. Heidi Gengenbach, on her study of traditional Mozambican tattoos as part of women's communication, notes that

(...) as the Portuguese administration tightened its grip and male migration took its toll on the countryside, girls and women may have begun traveling more out of need than recreation; but whether motivated by sociability or survival, their overlapping movements enabled them to create new networks of female "fellowship" through the crossing of physical and visual paths beyond the confines of home (2003: 13).

The author points out how her interviewees described those moments as "(...) opportunities to enrich themselves by absorbing all they saw along the way" (Gengenbach, 2003: 13). Similarly, regarding the role of Catholic and Protestant missions in providing access to formal education to girls in Mozambique,

"[a]lthough girls' education was oriented to domestic education, criticism of a gender bias in that programme ignores the reality that some women and their families made deliberate choices to use that education to enter into new arenas of work during and after the colonial era" (Sheldon, 2002: 79).

What in fact was common during this period was that gender norms, roles, and practices were shaped according to the multiple colonial interests. Nonetheless, as the colonization process itself was contested so was this process of "gendered" colonization. In general terms, despite the fact that women were highly discriminated during colonialisms "(...) they also took initiative, both in resisting policies they viewed as harmful to them and in using new situations to their advantage" (Johnson-Odim and Strobel, 1989: 57). That applies to the specific case of Mozambique, as illustrated by the "Buzi strike", in 1947. This organised action gathered seven thousand women workers of cotton plantations, who by refusing to continue to grow cotton on the ground they were neglecting their children, were able to exempt "(...) pregnant women and mothers of more than four from planting cotton" (Sheldon, 2002: 53).

But a turn in Mozambique's history would bring new opportunities for women to enter spaces that under the traditional systems, as well as under the colonial rule, were denied to them. Such an opportunity came along during the Mozambican struggle for its independence from Portugal, when women were able to integrate the Liberation Front of Mozambique, which would become the political party known as FRELIMO.

3.2.3. The Liberation Fight and Frelimo's Socialist State

According to Frelimo's leader, Samora Machel, women constituted an important force in the society and therefore should be included in the liberation efforts (Urdang, 1978: 25; see also Sheldon, 1994: 34). Women's liberation and national liberation became officially perceived as part of each other. Through Frelimo's speeches, and later through the creation of the feminine wing of Frelimo in 1973 – the OMM⁴⁶ – women's position in the society became part of a political rhetoric. This fact formally opened new spaces for women that had until then been perceived as exclusive to men. In 1967 FRELIMO creates a "Feminine Deployment", the *Destacamento Feminino*, through which a group of 25 women was integrated in the armed struggle for the liberation of the country. This integration of women in the guerrilla force has been indicated as a turning point in women's social condition in Mozambique (Casimiro, 2004). In fact, they were able to integrate the liberation efforts and thus enter what were perceived as "masculine spaces". Some women were able to fight the Portuguese and some women were able to occupy chieftaincy positions⁴⁷ (see Urdang, 1989). Nevertheless, these were a small minority as the majority of women performed tasks that they usually performed on a daily basis, as part of their role within their families. Those were tasks such as producing food and transporting goods, but now being performed for the army. Despite performing "women's tasks" the simple fact of being doing so for the army, allowed women to do things that for the majority of them were considered "new". Women were "(...) travelling long distances, staying away from home for many days, and they were doing so on an equal footing with men!" (Arnfred, 2011: 24). Signe Arnfred points out that this period brought women and men together towards a common goal, and thus "[i]n this process, gender relations changed. Some women developed a new concept of themselves as women: new aspirations, new goals. A new female identity was emerging" (2011: 26).

These facts may present a sign of a more equitable social structure in which women were in theory considered as equal to men and consequently it provided new opportunities for women to integrate new spaces that have been until then generally exclusive to men. Nonetheless, "[i]n general, anti-colonial nationalist movements were more successful at putting women on the agenda as symbolic of the need for radical change, than for incorporating gender analysis and gender equity into the discourse of liberation" (Walsh and Scully, 2006: 3). In fact, during the Mozambican struggle for independence, while some women were able to be integrated in the liberation

⁴⁶ The importance of the OMM will be further discussed in the next chapter.

⁴⁷ For instance, Josina Machel was one of the women who were able to participate at the Frelimo's Feminine Deployment and who would later assume the Head of the Department of external Relations and Social Affairs.

movement and fought as *guerrilheiras*⁴⁸, the majority of the new spaces available to them were not totally free of multiple gendered constructions. Indeed, the political intentions were not automatically absorbed by the Mozambican society and, as a result, gender roles – as they existed within the household – were generally reproduced at these “new spaces” (see Urdang, 1989).

Therefore, despite the fact that the participation of women in the armed struggle offered opportunities for shaping social perceptions about their role in society, it failed to directly question the existent gendered division of labour (Casimiro, 2004: 141). As Signe Arnfred also points out, for the individuals integrated in the fight, during this period the structure of the authority shifted from the family to Frelimo (2011: 24). Nevertheless, the political structure through which Frelimo later defined itself was according to the author, “strongly androcentric” (Arnfred, 2011: 15). Consequently, as the patriarchal status quo remained solid, some gendered structures were maintained even within Frelimo and its liberated areas, thus persisting in the Mozambican society as a whole.

The liberation war ended in 1974, and with the “Lusaka Agreement” – signed between Portugal and Frelimo – it was agreed that Frelimo should constitute the transitional government. Finally, in June 1975, Mozambique became an independent country with Frelimo in power. After independence, the country was in a frail situation, contributing to such a situation the sudden transference of power from Portugal to Mozambique. The Portuguese settlers rapidly fled to Portugal, a fact that contributed to Mozambique's economic decay, both in urban areas – where they constituted the vast majority of skilled labourers (Minter, 1994: 22) – and in rural areas – abandoning their farms and destroying the machinery left behind (Maloba, 2007: 109-110; see also Hanlon, 1984). When Frelimo rose to power its efforts were concentrated in rebuilding the state, and creating new institutions. The party was now in charge of rebuilding a country which lacked a strong and informed society (Sumich and Honwana, 2007: 2), as well as immediate economic resources. At the same time Frelimo had to extend its political influence in order to guarantee national unity (Maloba, 2007: 111). Adding to this, the party also aimed at promoting a type of social order that would break with the colonialist tradition. For such purposes, as Signe Arnfred suggests, Frelimo had to go beyond the “idea of people's power” developed during the independence war and extend its influence beyond the rural peasantry that had been its major support during such a period (2011: 27),.

Women's experiences after independence were multiple. To achieve the above mentioned goals, not only the colonial exploitation of women was targeted by the

⁴⁸ The Portuguese word for women members of a guerrilla group.

ruling party but also traditional practices that were considered an obstacle towards the emancipation of women – such as polygamy, initiation rites, and the *lobolo* – were once more deemed as undesirable (see Johnson-Odim and Strobel, 1989: 53; see also Arnfred, 2004). Following an interventionist and state-centred approach, Frelimo extended education and health services, and nationalized the land and rented property (Pitcher, 2002: 27), giving the opportunity for its population – both women and men – to improve their lives, as it continued to argue for women’s full integration in the society as equal to men.

But despite the attempt to create a new social order in which women and men were perceived as equally important by trying to break with traditional practices as well as with colonial practices regarding women, some characteristics of both seem to have been maintained. As some authors note, the efforts to eradicate traditional practices considered backward were similar to the colonial ones in the sense that both were trying to suppress the same practices under the same argument (Arnfred, 2011: 33; see also Oyewumi, 1997). Most importantly, gendered practices were being targeted under the label of “traditional” or “colonial” again by assuming that they universally and homogeneously discriminated women, while the patriarchal status quo was not being eradicated from the Mozambican society.

As a Marxist-Leninist model of society was being directly applied to the newly independent Mozambican context, the position of women in the society became part of the political rhetoric and was “designed” to specifically fit the correspondent ideological frame. If during the liberation war women were supposed to be emancipated by their engagement in the struggle for liberation, after independence women would be emancipated by engaging in production (Arnfred, 2011: 34; see also Machel, 1977a). This may be seen as resulting from the ideological assumption of traditional Marxism that “class, not gender, is the central problematic (...). Women’s oppression is seen as a secondary phenomenon, a symptom of capitalist oppression” (Zeleza, 1997: 96). In Mozambique too the official discourse was that women and men were supposed to be considered equal, nonetheless “(...) the antagonist contradiction is not found between man and woman, but rather between women and the social order, between all exploited women and men and the social order” (Machel, 1977b; see also Arnfred, 2011: 32). Equality between women and men was advocated and to a certain extent being pursued, but instead of focusing on gender relations as the source for women’s discrimination, the focus was on labour relations. This meant that the necessity of carrying a struggle on gender discrimination against women was not acknowledged (Arnfred 2011: 32, 35).

3.2.4. The Civil Conflict and the Democratization of the State

As Jason Sumich and João Honwana put it, Frelimo's structure in the post-colonial period was marked by two contrasting factors: the party was able to “monopolise state power and create legitimacy among key constituencies” but, simultaneously, it originated “a system that excluded and alienated large sections of the population leaving it vulnerable to crisis” (2007: 1). Following an interventionist and state-centred approach, Frelimo extended education and health services and nationalized the land and rented property (Pitcher, 2002: 27). But while the industrial production was considered a key element for national economy – thus, receiving governments incentives – the family based agriculture sector was somehow neglected (Alden, 2001: 6). That fact had disastrous consequences for the Mozambican economy. As incentives to agriculture production dropped with the policies adopted by the state – e.g., collectivization of the sector, and a forced low-pricing – so did the production (Marshall, 1990: 29). Simultaneously, the Mozambican state lacked the financial ability to industrialize the country, as it lacked financial capacity to import raw materials essential to production.

But Mozambique's economic and social fragile situation would be further exacerbated by the civil conflict which emerged after the country's independence and that would last until 1992. The newly independent Mozambique, led by an ideologically pro-Marxist-Leninist party as Frelimo declared to be, was perceived as a menace to the survival of the white minority regimes of the region. Supported by those regimes – initially the Rhodesian and lastly the South African – a guerrilla movement was created to fight the Frelimo government, the Mozambican National Resistance, the *Resistência Nacional Moçambicana* (Renamo) (see Alden, 2001; Chingono, 1996; Vines, 1996). Renamo's attacks begun in the mid-1970s and were intensified both regionally and in scale by the beginning of the 1980s (Tom Young, 1990: 497). The main aims of those attacks were to destroy vital facilities and to install the panic amongst the rural population. Renamo's strategy was to “(...) discredit Frelimo as both unable to deliver on its revolutionary promises and also unable to provide security for the citizens of Mozambique” (Maloba, 2007: 126).

Adding to the atrocities brought by the conflict to the Mozambican population as a whole, women as bearers of culture constituted “special targets” (Maloba, 2007: 126) to the Renamo forces. Additionally, since the spatial foci of Renamo's attacks were the rural areas, women's main responsibility as food cultivators and child caretakers was disrupted (Sheldon, 2002: 196). Not able to fulfil their responsibilities in rural areas or simply to escape Renamo's violence, women were pushed to seek refuge in urban areas, or in neighbouring countries (Sheldon, 2002: 196), where many faced hardships as they had no land to farm nor any source of income. Renamo's strategies involved

forced recruiting of soldiers – including children – female slave labour, forced marriages – including child brides – and rape (Sheldon, 2002: 198; see also Baden, 1997; Seibert, 2003; Vines, 1996). In addition, control over women was part of the construction of dominance over local populations as well as a method of reinforcing hierarchy within the camps (Sheldon, 2002: 198). As Sally Baden noted violence against women and rape was not

(...) confined to the immediately conflict affected areas, or the sole preserve of soldiers during wartime. In refugee camps, and displaced accommodation centres, cases of rape and sexual harassment were reported by women, as well as beatings, particularly from husbands (1997: 29; see also Sheldon, 2002).

Consequently, “women were attacked on two levels: individually and socially”, (Maloba, 2007: 126). Yet again, although such specific attacks generally aimed at women on the basis of their gender, other social axes made women’s experiences during the conflict multiple.⁴⁹

In 1986 Joaquim Chissano assumed the place of Samora Machel as the President of the country. Chissano's approach towards the West would lead to the scenario of Mozambique working together with the Bretton Woods institutions (BWIs): the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (Alden, 2001: 10). Following, the adoption of a structural development programme (SAP) in 1984, and of the Economic Recovery Programme (PRE) in 1987, may be seen as “(...) providing the institutional and policy environment for the transition away from socialism to a market economy” (Alden, 2001: 81). The distancing from a socialist ideology made Western governments more willing to provide support to Mozambique (Alden, 2001: 18). This shift to a neo-liberal institutional focused development also meant an overture to international donors and non-governmental organisations (Arnfred, 2011: 131) which included those dedicated to advancing women’s rights.

In 1989, Mozambique's government and Renamo’s representatives met for preliminary talks. Several key factors contributed for the opening of negotiations between the two opposing forces. External conditions proved to be interfering with the conflict situation lived in Mozambique. The support of the Eastern Bloc – which was permanent in the 1970s until the mid-1980s – diminished in the late 1980s. The imminent collapse of the socialist system and Chissano's turn to the West, moving away from the Marxist-Leninist doctrine that characterized the newly independent Mozambican state coincided with that fact. In 1990 the state approved a liberal-democratic Constitution (Alden, 2001: 15; Jacobson, 1995). This Constitutional text

⁴⁹ Under the OMM several women were in fact trained as militia fighters, a situation replicated by Renamo (see Sheldon, 2002: 198).

contemplated a multi-party system and the principle of equality of women and men, by officially granting them equal political, economic, social and cultural rights (see Fórum Mulher and SARDC WIDSAA, 2006: 3).

In 1992 the Rome Agreement was signed ending the civil war in Mozambique. Regarding the generality of women, their specific experiences during the conflict were officially ignored in the peace process (Baden, 1997). Though the equality between citizens was constitutionally granted as above mentioned, during the peace accords there were no provisions regarding human rights violations, which meant that women's rights violation failed to be officially addressed. For instance, during the conflict many women were kidnapped by the guerrilla members to perform as "wives". In fact, although the demobilisation of soldiers was included as part of the peace agreement, there were no mechanisms to ensure that abducted women's returning was possible; secondly, when they did manage to return to their communities the stigma of being raped, "married" to a Renamo *bandido*⁵⁰ or having their child resulted in discrimination towards them (Sheldon, 2002: 202). On the other hand, remaining in the urban areas also meant facing adversities as these women lacked access to "(...) the new urban sources of income" (Sheldon, 2002: 201). Additionally, as noted by Kenneth Hermele, whereas the effects of the war were exacerbated in the rural areas, the situation within the urban areas suffered the consequences of the PRE, which to the majority of the urban population corresponded to "(...) a drastic decline in living and health standards" (1992: 170). Despite the adversities, many women sought alternatives to their traditional ways of subsistence and turned to informal vending at the markets. Such strategies are a reflection of women's agency and shed light on the ability of women in forging new spaces.

Nonetheless, women's resilience and agency was often neglected by emergency programmes, which during this period were focused on providing assistance and generally constructed "women" as a category, as "vulnerable" (Baden, 1997). Also Isabel Casimiro notes that during the SAPs, women were integrated "as poor and as having special necessities, rather than as citizens with human rights" (2004: 60). Again, "women" became a category that was part of a political discourse, one that reinforced female's identity as "passive" and thus, ignoring the agency that women had in defining their own lives and the overall Mozambique's history. Moreover, this also meant that instead of being addressed, unequal power relations were actually being reinforced as men were officially assumed as the "bread winners".

In 1994, the first multiparty elections in Mozambique were held, giving the presidency and the majority of the seats at the AR to Frelimo. Monitored by multiple

⁵⁰ The term – meaning "bandit" – was currently used to refer to Renamo's soldiers, evidencing their outlaw and marginal position.

international actors⁵¹, the elections were internationally perceived as a success, that is, relatively free and peaceful (Ostheimer, 2001). The elected government was in charge of a country that in relation to its size was considered the most heavily indebted country in the world, with a foreign debt five times its GDP (Hall and Young, 1997: 231). Official Development Assistance (ODA) which has been of crucial importance during the civil conflict remained essential to the democratic transition, both politically as well as economically. In fact, the relevance of international presence led authors like Carrie Manning (2002) to refer to a triad composed by Frelimo, Renamo, and the international donors to describe the political arrangements that marked the country's road to democratisation, one in which each actor balanced each other while simultaneously maintaining the general population somehow apart from fully engaging with politics (see also Harrison, 1996). Hence, an existent distance between the Mozambican state and its population was stressed by Carrie Manning (2002). As noted by the author,

[a] combination of factors, including Mozambique's high aid dependency and relatively macroeconomic success under an orthodox adjustment model, as well as the historical background of its conflict, have created a situation in which state-international community relations are more salient than state-society relations (2002: 20).

The same line of argument was maintained more than a decade later, as the government remained considerably dependent on donor and lender funding, conducting efforts to adjust to international requirements but maintaining a division between the political and the society. Several official efforts are being made by the government to decrease dependency on foreign aid, and those have become part of the government's strategy towards a total independency to be achieved by 2025 (see appendix G for documents regarding the vision of the public finance 2012-2025). Nevertheless, by 2010 that type of funding still composed nearly half of the budget of the state (see *Bulletin*, 2010). This has led several authors to note that "(...) the large influx of aid has tended to tilt the government's attention in the direction of donors rather than towards the population" (Arndt et al., 2009 cited in Tvedten et al., 2015: 8).

An illustration can be found for instance, regarding the individual standards of living and the levels of poverty. In an analysis regarding the multiple aspects of development in Mozambique, Joseph Hanlon and Teresa Smart (2008) note how improving social gains and growth rates have been hardly felt in multiple rural areas. In fact, the UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) for 2014 shows that the value attributed to Mozambique increased from 0.238 to 0.416 from 1980 to 2014, corresponding to a total of 75 percent and an annual average increase of 1.66 percent (UNDP, 2015). Nonetheless, the country is ranked 180 on a list of 188 countries,

⁵¹ Some of the actors included the UN, the OAU, and the Association of European Parliamentarians for Southern Africa.

hence, considered as having a low human development status. One of the measures⁵² for that index is the “decent standard of living”, measured by the gross national income (GNI) per capita⁵³ which was 543 in 1980 and 1,123 in 2014 (UNDP, 2015). This accounts for a total increase of 48 percent in the GNI per capita, which is lower than the total percentage of increase of the HDI index. Regarding the UNDP specific index for measuring multidimensional poverty (MDI)⁵⁴, data for 2011 indicates that 70.2 percent of the population fall under the category of “multidimensionally poor” while 14.8 percent live near multidimensional poverty (UNDP, 2015). While assessing the Implications of the “Action Plan for the Reduction of Poverty II” – *Plano de Acção para Redução da Pobreza (PARPA) II* – for Maputo between the period of 2007 and 2010, a Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI) report elaborated by Inge Tvedten (2011b) refers to “contradictory developments”. Poverty, as measured by consumption, had decreased in some neighbourhoods of the capital city, a fact that was accompanied by infrastructural improvements, access to health care, and access to education. But simultaneously, urban social uprisings happening in February 2008, in September 2010 (Tvedten, 2011b: 1), and later in 2012, reflected the desperate situation of parts of the population, who in that way reacted to the increasing prices of transportation and food.

‘Shocks’ in the form of changes in employment status and expenditures on basic necessities make people feel vulnerable and powerless. This has been exacerbated in Maputo, where communication between the government and the citizens has been inadequate (Tvedten, 2011b: 1).

Hence, these events should be understood in the light of an analysis to poverty as well as on the cleavages existing in society. In fact, Mozambique has been making an effort to adjust to international requirements, adopting multiple instruments in regard to the socio-political and economic development of the country, but such formal efforts coexist with structures that often fail to address inequalities.

This is especially valid to the situation of women in Mozambique. Since the first democratic elections in 1994 that Frelimo has been officially supporting the participation of women in politics including allocating a third of its seats at the AR to women (Sheldon, 2002: 209). Mozambique’s path towards democratisation encompassed an official commitment to creating further mechanisms destined to guarantee and promote the equality between Mozambican women and men, as well as the willingness to adhere to several international norms, not only those embracing a universal framework regarding human rights but also a framework that specifically

⁵² The other two measures are “a long and healthy life” and “access to knowledge”.

⁵³ According to the UNDP, this is expressed in international dollars being converted using purchasing power parity rates. The data used in this measure of the HDI is based on data from the World Bank.

⁵⁴ The MDI measures multiple deprivations in the same households in education, health and living standards. The education and health dimensions are each based on two indicators, while the standard of living dimension is based on six indicators.

addresses the advancement of the status of women. Since the mid-1990s the government has been creating political mechanisms that aimed at doing so (Loforte, 2004), and the latest constitutional text – of 2004 – ensures the principle of equality between women and men.

As a reflection of the international instruments regarding women's rights and gender equality Mozambique has bound to⁵⁵ "gender" became part of the political and social discourses, and a "gender agenda" was officially developed. In 2006 the government approved the Gender Policy and the strategy for its implementation (GPSI), defining areas in which the state should integrate a gender concern namely the political, the economical, the juridical, the socio-cultural, and the defence ones. The National Council for the Advancement of Women, the *Conselho Nacional para o Avanço da Mulher* (CNAM) created in 2004 was designated to coordinate the GPSI. Multiple NWMs were also created, such as the Ministry of Women and Coordination of Social Affairs (MMCAS)⁵⁶ in 2000 and the GMP in 2005. Several mechanisms related to women's situation within the Mozambican society – such as the Operative Group for the Advancement of Women, *Grupo Operativo para o Avanço da Mulher* (GOAM) – were generated under that ministry's umbrella. The goals of those instruments were to be a reference tool, and to provide training for both the public – e.g., policy-makers – and the private sector – e.g., NGOs – involved in programmes for the advancement of women (Fórum Mulher and SARDC WIDSAA, 2006: 3). Nonetheless, this formal inclusion of women did not mean that political or social structures were finally free of a gender-based hierarchy (see Arthur, 1998).⁵⁷ Even if the implementation of several gender equality mechanisms has been improving (see Osório and Macuácuá, 2015) rooted gender discrimination in the general society often weakens the practicability of equality principles and mechanisms, even in the present. Such observations may be useful in understanding the fact that although the current official discourse in Mozambique emphasises gender equality, "everyday life" shows that cultural constructions in which women are discriminated prevail.

There are several international indicators that shed light on the current situation of women in Mozambique. One of which is the UNDP Gender Development Index (GDI) which presents the HDI data disaggregated by sex.⁵⁸ In all the categories measured, women rank lower than men (UNDP, 2015). Another relevant indicator is

⁵⁵ Such instruments will be further dealt with in the next chapter.

⁵⁶ Created with the purpose of coordinating and executing policies regarding "women's empowerment in all areas" and to integrate the "needs and interests of women" in the national development agenda (Fórum Mulher and SARDC WIDSAA, 2006: 55). In 2005 the MMCAS gave place to the MMAS, which in turn with the general elections of 2014 gave place to the Ministry of Gender, Child, and Social Affairs.

⁵⁷ The relation between women and politics in Mozambique will be discussed in the next chapter.

⁵⁸ The GDI measures gender inequalities regarding the three basic dimensions of human development: health (which is measured by female and male life expectancy at birth); education (which is measured by female and male expected years of schooling for children and mean years for adults aged 25 years and older); and command over economic resources (measured by female and male estimated GNI per capita) (UNDP, 2015).

the UNDP Gender Inequality Index⁵⁹ (GII) – a measure encompassing the dimensions of reproductive health, empowerment, and labour force.⁶⁰ The data for 2014 shows Mozambique occupying the 135th place for gender equality, out of 155.⁶¹ On the positive side, for example, the Mozambican indicator regarding women parliamentary representation indicated that women held 39.6% of seats. On the other side, regarding education for instance, the percentage of female population with at least secondary education was merely 1.4% while the number of women’s labour force participation rate was 85.5% (UNDP, 2015). Nonetheless, the last indicator fails to indicate the type of market women engage with – formal or informal – or the type of work women do – waged or not. But if such an indicator is presented in comparison to other indicators, such as the percentage of “population with at least some secondary education” by gender – 1.4 for women and 6.2 for men – and contextualized with the accounts on how gender “roles” have been constructed throughout the Mozambican history, one may easily assume that the type of market and the type of work women are engaged in is in general terms more precarious and less valued – i.e. based on the informal sector, less waged or not waged at all – than the ones available to men. The official statistics of the Mozambican INE (2008) showed how the number of women working on “other” jobs category – i.e. including unpaid domestic work, work for cooperatives, or NGOs – is higher than the number for men (see table 3.1).

Table 3.1. Women and Men in Mozambique – Position in Labour Market (Percentage)*

Labour Market	Women	Men
Public Sector	2.0	7.0
Private Sector	2.0	12.0
Independent	57.0	69.0
Other Jobs**	40.0	12.0

Source: INE, 2008.

*This data refers to the year 2005. **Includes unpaid domestic work, work for cooperatives or NGOs.

⁵⁹ The GII is a composite measure presented by the UNDP as part of the International Human Development Indicators, reflecting gender based inequality measured by three dimensions: reproductive health – measured by the levels of maternal mortality and adolescent fertility rates - Empowerment - measured by share of each gender by the attainment at secondary and higher education, and of parliamentary seats held - and economic activity – measured by the levels of participation in the labour market by gender.

⁶⁰ Reproductive Health is measured by maternal mortality and adolescent fertility rates. The level of Empowerment is measured by the share of parliamentary seats held by each gender and by the attainment at secondary and higher education by each gender. Finally, the level of Economic activity is measured by the labour market participation rate for each gender. Nonetheless, the labour market participation rate is not divided between formal and informal participation.

⁶¹ Available at: [hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/MOZ.pdf]. (Last accessed: September 2015).

As Victor Agadjanian notes on his study on masculinity and informal work in Maputo

(...) in the context of an entrenched patriarchal gender hierarchy, women's employment in the formal sector still tends to be seen as unusual, whereas for men, formal sector jobs constitute not only the most appropriate and desirable work, but also part of their masculine status (2005: 261).

Thus, despite the legal and statistical progresses achieved in areas such as women's political representation, women's access to education and women's access to health care, "the socio-economic position of women remains weak and shows large variations between different parts of the country in key areas such as employment, agricultural productivity, income, and sexual and other types of abuse" (Tvedten, 2011a: 2). One of the darkest sides of inequality is related to gender based violence. Violence against women persisted within the Mozambican society, affecting women in all spheres of their lives. In fact, a report on the "feminisation of poverty" in Mozambique dating from 2008 indicated domestic violence as "perhaps the most serious condition (...) both for its practical and symbolic ramifications" (Tvedten et al., 2008: 13).

A general resistance to the demands of women organisations of civil society for the reformation of the family law and to the penal code to be altered – as producing alterations to the status quo within the family – illustrates the sociocultural barriers that concur to impede gender equality to be *de facto* attained. This sheds light on the issue of gender based domestic violence, that although recognized as a problem, has been socially and legally underestimated, not because of an inexistent gender equality favourable set of institutions, but because it touches on cultural assumptions regarding gender roles within the family. Ultimately, such a resistance questions the very basic principles of equality of rights and participatory democracy.

This sub-section provided a perspective regarding the ways in which gender as a concept has been shaped throughout different historical and political contexts in Mozambique, up to the current situation. It is demonstrated that such alterations to the concept of gender have served to define the patriarchal structure of the Mozambican society. Additionally, it is also noted here that the same general and individual factors that were able to generate gender-based inequalities were paradoxically able to generate opportunities for eliminating such inequalities. For instance, the generalized oppression of the Mozambican population from the colonial power – affecting both women and men – together with the necessity of including both women and men in the war for independence, has somehow promoted a period of "reconciliation" between Mozambican women and men, when the "other" became the colonizers. Women seized the opportunity, and during the war they were able to enter "masculine" spaces, opening a way to shape more equitable gender relations. Likewise, throughout different

historical and political contexts the role of women has been altered in relation to labour, or class, but maintained when gender relations are concerned. As Signe Arnfred indicates, “[w]ith regard to the field of politics and policies on gender, the lines of thinking of each new period can be shown to build heavily on the previous one” (2004: 109).

Regarding gender relations, women have been “universally” demanded and expected to be subordinated to men. The gender status quo has resulted in gender discrimination practices against women being universally settled, reinforced, and naturalized. Thus, the official construction of women’s gendered identities was “homogenized” independently of individual experiences. This “homogenization” of gendered identities however, has been seized by women as an aggregator tool for politicizing issues that affect them on the basis of their gender. That is the case of women’s organising during the above mentioned “Buzi strike”, or women organising to demand for a law against domestic violence against women. The “power” of the formal political sphere to adapt gender categories to its interests, as part of a narrative which aims at constructing subjects and identities, has recently begun being challenged by women organising at the level of civil society.

3.3. Women and Gendered Inequalities: the case of Domestic Violence

In 2008, a year before the approval of the LADVAW, the Mozambican parliament had a percentage of 34.8 women occupying its seats⁶² – ranking as the 13th worldwide – but had no legal framework to deal with the specific issue of domestic violence and had been reluctant in discussing such a framework.⁶³ What seems to be a paradox within the Mozambican society has been in its nature dealt with by several studies regarding gender issues in Mozambique. In fact several accounts suggest that regarding the context of Mozambique, changes favourable to gender equality are easier to attain if they aim at altering something at the institutional level – e.g., improving women’s access to maternal healthcare – and harder to attain if they aim at altering the status quo within the family (Blanco and Domingos, 2008; see also Arnfred, 2004; Tripp et al., 2009; Urdang, 1989). As argued here before, the fact that one recognises gender constructions as creating hierarchies in which women are subordinated, is not the same as assuming that such barriers to gender equality cannot be altered. Throughout the Mozambican history gender identities have been changing and thus, assuming that gender based discrimination may be altered is something that

⁶² As of December 31st. Source, IPU. Available online at: [www.ipu.org/wmn-e/arc/classif311208.htm]. (Last accessed: May 2015).

⁶³ This will be later dealt with in more depth.

should be perceived not only as highly desired but also as possible. After several years discussing the necessity of legally framing the issue of domestic violence against women – an issue that happens at the familiar level and that is recurrent in the country – the Mozambican parliament approved in 2009 the LADVAW. *Per se* the existence of that law does not guarantee the eradication of domestic violence against women, but it constitutes an official condemnation of that type of violence by the state and to a greater or lesser extent, it influences social perceptions regarding it.

The previous sub-section provides us a frame to better understand the link between the constructions of gendered roles and identities in Mozambique – in which the generality of women are linked with submission – with the prevalence of domestic violence against women. The aim of this sub-section is to explore the issue of domestic violence through a gender lens, and contribute to understand why an issue of such a magnitude has been generally neglected not only socially, but also politically. Contrarily, this issue has been on the agenda of several women's organisations of civil society, which recognize it as a gendered issue that undermines not only the rights of women, but the construction of an equitable society. This sub-section provides key elements that will be further dealt with in chapters 5, 6 and 7 regarding the specific work developed by women's organisations of civil society organising against the issue of domestic violence and for the existence of a legal framework which would consider it a crime as well as a gendered practice.

The practice of domestic violence does not always imply physical violence. According to the United Nations' (UN) Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women⁶⁴ (DEVAW), violence against women can have many forms such as it encompasses

(...) any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life (UN, 1993: 116).

Within the family, that violence can assume multiple forms, such as

(...) physical, sexual and psychological (...) including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation (UN, 1993: 117).

⁶⁴ The DEVAW (Resolution 48/104) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on the 20th December 1993, and constituted its first international human rights instrument to specifically deal with violence against women.

Despite the fact that domestic violence also affects men, they constitute a minority as victims, and this same declaration constitutes a proof of that fact. Indeed, in its text the UN General Assembly stresses that

(...) violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women, and that violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men (...) (UN, 1993: 115).

Maria José Arthur (2004), referring to the Mozambican reality, notes that several gendered social and cultural norms – based on a patriarchal structure – help to perpetuate the issue of domestic violence against women, by considering it “pedagogic” – meaning that it is used to teach and control women – acceptable – at private and public stances of the society – and natural. On the report “Women and Men in Mozambique: Selected Gender Indicators”⁶⁵ the INE has failed to produce statistics dedicated to the issue of domestic violence⁶⁶, despite the fact that the goal of the report was to provide a picture of the situation of gender equality in Mozambique (see INE, 2008). In 2012, the “Demography and Health Enquiry of 2011”⁶⁷ includes for the first time since its initial edition, the issue of domestic violence (see INE and MISAU, 2012). Additionally, in 2007 the annual report presented by the Attorney General of the Republic – *Procurador Geral da República* – to the parliament mentioned the issue of domestic violence as one of the most referred topics during the audiences with the public. Nonetheless, the report does not include data regarding the issue (see appendix G). In 2010 however, the annual report presented included data regarding domestic violence (see Reisman and Lalá, 2012). Similarly, the annual report presented in 2012 included relevant data regarding the issue (WLSA, 2012).

This *per se* may constitute evidence of the limited resources available to compile data regarding domestic violence, but more importantly, it constitutes evidence that for a long period, the issue has not been considered relevant nor considered a priority.⁶⁸ Nonetheless, the fact that such numbers are becoming part of official data means that the issue has finally been officially recognized. Roughly until this period the numbers available came from several police stations throughout the country, specifically from the GAMCs. Such numbers have been compiled by the MINT and by several organisations from the civil society, especially women’s organisations such as for instance the WLSA. The official data points to a total of 32% of women who claim to

⁶⁵ My translation. The original title is “Mulheres e Homens em Moçambique: Indicadores Seleccionados de Género”.

⁶⁶ In a study related to “Young adults and sexuality – 2003” some numbers are incorporated.

⁶⁷ My translation. The original title is *Inquérito Demográfico e de Saúde de 2011*.

⁶⁸ This fact will be further dealt with in Chapter 5.

have been victims of some sort of domestic violence at least once in their life time (INE, 2012), and ranks domestic violence in 4th place of the most committed crimes in the country (WLSA, 2012).

Two points coming out from the “Demography and Health Enquiry of 2011” regarding domestic violence are strikingly interesting. The first one is that the issue of domestic violence is indicated as being cross-cuttingly similar regardless of the age, the marital status, and the level of literacy of the victim (INE and MISAU, 2012). Being young and an educated women – thus presumably having access to mechanisms that protected them from domestic violence – does not mean they are safe from it. On the other hand, it might be that these women can easily identify certain types of practices as actually discriminatory ones – and thus recognize them as domestic violence – whereas older and illiterate women – since they might not have easy access to information – may tend to disregard certain practices as domestic violence. In fact, the “naturalization” of domestic violence tends to “(...) ignore the incidents of humiliation, the physical assaults that do not leave any marks, the threats and intimidation (...)” (Fórum Mulher and SARDC WIDSAA, 2006: 50). In whichever case, one conclusion that may certainly be taken from this is that the causes for domestic violence are not only related to poverty or illiteracy, but actually deeply embedded in the social structures and affecting women of different ages and social backgrounds.

The second remarkable aspect of these statistics is that the geographic distribution of cases of domestic violence against women is similar when comparing provinces in the north – e.g., Cabo Delgado – and provinces in the south – e.g., Maputo Province – of the country (see INE and MISAU, 2012). This is especially important if we think of these regions as being representative of respectively matrilineal societies and patrilineal ones. The results confirm that the issue of domestic violence is widely spread, geographically and socially, and that assuming that women from matrilineal societies are less prone to be affected by this type of violence does not seem to faithfully represent the reality⁶⁹ (see table 3.2).

⁶⁹ I was indeed confronted with this argument by several students while presenting my preliminary work at the University Eduardo Mondlane, who suggested that matrilineal societies were free from patriarchal structures and norms.

Table 3.2. Percentage of Women and Men Victims of Domestic Violence in Mozambique – From Husband/Wife/Partner by Province (2011)

Province	Women			Men		
	Periodicity					
	At least Once	Last 12 Months	Number of Women	At least Once	Last 12 Months	Number of Men
Niassa	16.1	16.1	304	9.0	9.0	94
Cabo Delgado	32.2	23.9	454	27.5	19.9	197
Nampula	35.2	34.0	885	3.4	2.6	329
Zambézia	28.2	26.5	1087	10.3	6.7	303
Tete	27.7	25.7	650	13.5	9.6	213
Manica	33.6	32.6	385	6.1	5.8	117
Sofala	36.0	23.9	557	12.9	7.7	132
Inhambane	32.7	25.5	342	6.9	6.9	60
Gaza	35.1	20.7	297	4.8	2.9	64
Maputo Province	33.9	21.0	375	13.3	8.4	116
Maputo City	33.4	20.8	274	18.9	15.7	82

Source: INE and MISAU, 2012.

In the late 1980s, when referring to the struggle for women’s liberation in Mozambique, Stephanie Urdang pointed out the persistent gendered nature of the division of labour within the household. The author argues that although women were encouraged to participate in several domains traditionally perceived as men’s – such as participating in the work force outside home – as a way to liberate themselves they were discouraged from “(...) engaging in a struggle for equality within the household” (Urdang, 1989: 24). In fact, this argument is still contemporary in Mozambique, and can be applied to any struggle within the household, whether it is against the sexual division of labour, or gender based violence. As mentioned earlier, as several analyses regarding the Mozambican gendered context suggest, the social norms that are easier to change are those that do not shake the established gendered roles, that is, the ones that do not menace the base of an established patriarchal system. Thus, as Eugénia

Blanco and Maira Domingos point out, the main barriers preventing certain gender inequalities to be addressed are based on “culturalist” and “essentialist” arguments that privilege culture over women’s individual rights and that perceive women’s subordination as natural rather than cultural constructed, thus, as an immutable fact (2008: 8). This naturalization of the subordinated position of women is assumed when the practice of domestic violence is concerned (see Fórum Mulher and SARDC WIDSAA, 2006; Osório et al., 2001). Moreover, not only did the practice of domestic violence against women become widely accepted, but also desirable for its “educational purposes” (Fórum Mulher and SARDC WIDSAA, 2006: 50) or “demonstrations of love” (da Silva, 2003: 150). In turn, these assumptions led to

(...) tolerance in police stations, in court and at family and community level. In a society where men head the main institutions and structures for conflict resolution, the sentences and sanctions for violent acts against women are practically non-existent, or are very limited (Fórum Mulher and SARDC WIDSAA, 2006: 50).

These facts contribute to explaining the reasons why in a country where gender equality – for instance in education or in politics – is perceived as fundamental, until the late 2000s, women were unable to see their rights to physical and psychological integrity within their household assured by a specific law.

“But, don’t you think that if a man beats a woman, it is a sign that he cares and loves her? Otherwise he would not make an effort”. These words came from “Guida”, a young middle class urban woman conducting a graduate programme at the UEM, who, during a casual conversation while walking by the university campus, tried to understand what my dissertation was about. She was referring to “a minor aggression”, just for the man – boyfriend or husband – out of jealousy to show the woman that he cared, almost in a complimentary way. Such a claim reflected the “naturalization” and acceptance – almost like a proof of “love” – of that sort of violence against women in Mozambique. But more strikingly, it also reflects the fact that such a naturalization and acceptance was transversal to gender, class, and age group. In fact, the practice of domestic violence against women has been recurrently practiced to the extent that it has become naturalized, even by women (see Arthur and Mejia, 2006).

But more than being naturalized by women, “[g]iven their crucial role as socializing agents, women also play a crucial part in defining certain acts as legitimate” (Green, 1999: 13). In fact, according to data collected in 2003 regarding women’s agreeing with being subjected to aggressions on the part of their husband were depending on the reasons provided – burning the food, arguing with him, going out without telling him, neglecting the children, refusing to have sex with him – between 24 per cent and 38 per cent were positive (UN, 2010: 229). The percentage of women

responding positively decreases with correspondence to a higher degree of education (see table 3.3).

Table 3.3. Percentage of Mozambican Women Agreeing with Causes for Justifying Domestic Violence by their Husband/Partner, by Level of Education (2003)

Burning the Food				Arguing with him				Legend: T: Total N: None P: Primary level S+: Secondary level or more			
T	N	P	S+	T	N	P	S+				
24	27	23	12	33	37	32	21				
Going out without his permission				Neglecting the Children				Refusing to have sex with him			
T	N	P	S+	T	N	P	S+	T	N	P	S+
37	41	36	22	38	41	38	26	34	41	33	15

Source: United Nations, 2010.

These facts reinforce the arguments presented earlier in this sub-section, that firstly, more educated women might more easily identify certain types of practices as actually discriminatory ones and thus do not recognize them as justifiable aggressions. Secondly, still there are women within the higher educated level that respond positively, thus showing that domestic violence is a widespread phenomenon that may virtually affect – and actually be considered justifiable by – any women in Mozambique. But these facts also shed light on the roles women perceive as theirs, the behaviours they perceive as the correct ones, and the acceptance of their subordinate position in relation to their husbands.

The construction of their own identities is shaped by the relations of power between women and men, and reinforced in their everyday lives through these gendered practices. On a booklet⁷⁰ prepared in 2009 by the women’s organisation WLSA, a specific cycle and patterns within episodes of domestic violence against women are identified. Based on the WLSA’s research on the issue, the booklet points out how that specific cycle goes in Mozambique. That cycle begins with a “moderate” control exerted by the husband and endured by the woman. Both these facts are socially expected and perceived as “natural” by many women interviewed by the

⁷⁰ This is a booklet titled “How domestic violence against women is justified”. For further information on this booklet refer to appendix G.

organisation (WLSA, 2009: 4), as “one who hits loves” (WLSA, 2009: 9). Then, there is an escalation of violence against the woman, whom is perceived as bearing the responsibility for it. Some of these cases are followed by attempts of “reconciliation” – usually involving the extended families, or local support structures⁷¹ – which usually suggest the man to be “more moderated” and the woman to subordinate to her partner as it is her responsibility to maintain the family stability. These perspectives are pointed out by WLSA as reinforcing gender roles in which women are subordinated and as perpetuating episodes of domestic violence (WLSA, 2009). In fact, within the Mozambican context the issue of domestic violence has had

(...) considerable social legitimacy due to a family ideology that gives the male head of the family the prerogative of using force to resolve marital conflicts and the right to control his wife or companion, her activities, her behaviour and her reproduction. At the local level this position is reinforced by community courts and local structures by neighbourhood secretaries and social affairs sections that are the closest instances for recourse in cases of domestic violence (Arthur and Mejia, 2007: 11).

Such perspectives reflect relations of power, and the difficulties of individual victims to break with such patterns of violence. Nonetheless, multiple experiences regarding the issue of domestic violence – not only from those who have personally experienced it – will trigger multiple reactions to it. Women choose to remain passive, to agree or disagree with it, or to actively act against it. In the case of Mozambique, a collective mobilisation against the issue of domestic violence struggled for its public and political recognition as a crime and as a matter of women’s human rights. Having in mind the ways in which political and social discourses are able to use “gender” as a tool, the act of organising against the issue of domestic violence may be in itself not only a way to challenge social norms but also a way to alter politics.

3.4. The Law 29/2009, Against Domestic Violence against Women

As it has been noted, in Mozambique there has been a formal discourse which is favourable to the advancement of gender equality, one which has been accompanied by the creation of several formal institutions specifically destined to advance and guarantee women’s human rights. Adding to this, the legal framework of the country has been incorporating mechanisms to deal with issues regarding such rights. Notwithstanding, a law specifically regulating the issue of domestic violence was missing and the issue was indirectly regulated by the general penal code. It was within this setting that in 2009, after a long and controversial process in which civil society organisations and the AR were involved, that a law specifically regulating and

⁷¹ For instance, the special bureau desks at police stations, that were implemented for dealing with issues of domestic violence, the “Gabinetes de Atendimento da Mulher e da Criança” (Bureau Desks for the Women and Children).

criminalising that issue was approved. This sub-section is dedicated to explore the legal meanings of the LADVAW and introduce the main discussions regarding it, a fact further analysed in chapter 7. The suggestion presented here is that, despite the debates behind it both at the official as well as at the civil society level, the existence of a law against domestic violence is in line with both national legal and constitutional frameworks as well as with the international commitments made by the Mozambican state regarding women's human rights.

In general terms regime transitions to democracy offer multiple opportunities for redesigning national legal and constitutional frameworks. Nonetheless, alterations to such frameworks are dependent of many factors – e.g., historical, cultural – and thus, easier to attain in some areas than others. As suggested by Aili Mari Tripp, Isabel Casimiro, Joy Kwesiga and Alice Mungwa (2009), the fact that many African legal systems incorporate a mix of legal traditions – for instance combining civil law traditions with customary law such as in the Mozambican legal system – may present difficulties for women to fully advance their rights, especially those rights that defy customary law. As noted by the authors, in African societies, altering norms that regulate the family or the clan is the hardest task when compared with altering norms that related to the “public” nature of social life, such as the right to vote, or the right to education (2009: 113-115). As previously noted in this chapter, that is also the case of Mozambique, and that is the case with the issue of domestic violence.

The Mozambican national legislation – highly derived from the colonial period – began to be altered in the late 1990s. The revision of the legislation provided an opportunity to integrate matters of gender where the legislation was silent, or where there was a clear discrimination towards women, namely the law of the Land in 1997, the law of labour in 1998, and the new family law in 2005. After a long period of discussion the “law against domestic violence against women” – technically identified as the law 29/2009 – was approved⁷². As stated in article 1: 1 (see AR, 2009) the LADVAW regulates all the types of violence against women that happen within her domestic environment or within her family, including present and past relations, whether there is a marriage or not.⁷³ The article 21 of the law defines domestic violence as having multiple types – physical, psychological, economic, moral, and sexual – and considers its practice to constitute a public crime. This means that the Public Ministry, police officers, other members of family, or anyone else have the ability of presenting charges, even if the victim fails to do so (article 23). The goal of the law is, as stated in article 2, to “prevent, sanction the perpetrators and give women victims of domestic violence the necessary protection, to warrant and introduce measures that

⁷² See appendix G for Bulletin of the Republic for more information regarding the official publication of the law.

⁷³ The exception is made in case the violence results in death of the victim, being then regulated by the Penal Code (article 1: 2).

provide the state's organs with the necessary instruments to the eradication of domestic violence".

The LADVAW legally regulates the practice of domestic violence, bringing the discussion into public and criminalizing its practice. In that sense, its approval was highly relevant regarding women's human rights in Mozambique, but in order to accomplish it several compromises had to be made. The social and political resistance against that law was high, and according to Maria José Arthur (2009) in order for it to be approved its text was modified in several ways. For instance by limiting the State's responsibility regarding the prevention, protection and assistance to the victims of domestic violence (articles 2 and 4); by limiting the cautionary measures regarding the protection of the victim (article 6) and the responsibility of the aggressor (articles 6 and 33); by limiting the responsibility of the actors dealing with domestic violence to counselling and denounce the cases (article 29); by excluding the measures of juridical assistance and juridical sponsorship that were present at the draft as article 31; the decrease of the time for sexual violence – called non-consensual copula – from two to eight years to six months to two years; and finally, the intent to regulate traditional practices that are considered as harmful to women was ignored.

Two articles that were included in the law by the official legislators were recurrently brought to my attention during the interviews I conducted with some of the elements that participated in the elaboration of the original draft of the law, and those are the articles 36 and 37 (see also Arthur, 2009). Article 36 refers to "Gender Equality", and states that "the dispositions of the present law are applicable to men in equal circumstances and with the necessary adaptations". The arguments presented to me during the referred interviews had to do with the importance of stressing the fact that women are the main victims of domestic violence, hence, this disposition only misrepresents the essence of the problem. On the other hand, since the Mozambican Constitution guarantees equality between all citizens, the legislators argued for the necessity of including this article, under the risk of making the law unconstitutional. Those alterations were, according to many activists involved in the struggle against domestic violence, more dictated by the willingness to preserve the current gendered status quo rather than by concerns with the Constitutional principle of equality.

The process of endowing the country with a law terminated in 2009, when the LADVAW was unanimously approved by the parliamentarians of the two parties represented at the AR during that specific legislature. Since that year the Mozambican legal framework became equipped with a law specifically dedicated to framing the practice of domestic violence, considering the practice a public crime. Nonetheless, the general applicability of the law is pointed out as falling short by several women's rights activists. If on the one hand, governmental sources explain this limitation with the

argument of scarcity of funding – for instance for the dissemination of the LADVAW throughout the country – on the other hand, organisations of civil society often mention lack of a *de facto* political engagement, which results in the absence of an effective implementation mechanism. Additionally, there is still the prevalence of cultural assumptions regarding the practice of domestic violence as a legitimate mechanism for controlling and educating women. Hence, Isabel Casimiro – a prominent researcher, academic and feminist activist who has also served as an MP for Frelimo – perceives the LADVAW as “only the initial steps of a struggle that has still a long way to go” (December, 2010), an opinion shared by several activists interviewed. In that sense, the struggle against domestic violence in Mozambique must not be seen as having ceased with the approval of the LADVAW.

3.5. Conclusion

As a socio-cultural concept gender has been generally dictating the existence of a hierarchy in which women are subordinated, defining the spaces women can occupy, and limiting their role within the Mozambican society. The latest transitions periods have been marked by the increasing granting of women’s rights, but have fallen short in altering gender inequality. That is visible in the multiple ways gender identities in Mozambique have been served as a “political tool” and shaped accordingly to historical periods and its political contexts. As argued in this chapter, despite the diverse political rhetoric used by the different regimes, from the colonial period onwards “the concepts of gender and connotations attached to gender have remained fairly stable” (Arnfred, 2011: 17), favouring a social system based on patriarchy (see Arnfred, 2004; Sheldon, 2002).

By understanding the nature of such constructions and how they became internalized both by individuals as well as by institutions, it becomes clear how the issue of domestic violence in Mozambique – which is so widespread and recurrent – was made legitimate and kept unaddressed. It also becomes clear why the process of the design and the approval of a law against domestic violence against women encountered so many resistances within multiple levels of the Mozambican society, even when there is a formal political discourse against gender discrimination and a set of institutions designed to eradicate it. Although being able to advance some women’s rights, it is argued that such discourse and institutions fell short in achieving gender equality. Simultaneously, this chapter also analyses how the mentioned historical periods and the shaping of gender identities paradoxically provided opportunities for women to promote women’s rights and gender equality. Finally, it provides a ground for understanding how gender and the political may intersect. The following chapter deals with such facts.

Chapter 4 Gender, Women, and Politics in Mozambique: Organising as Women

4.1 Introduction

This chapter puts forward the idea that only by understanding both barriers and opportunities presented to women in the sphere of formal politics can one understand the importance of alternative and complementary avenues for women's political participation and representation in Mozambique. Grounded on feminist literature on gender, women and politics it is proposed that the political should not be seen as producing universal concepts and neutral categories, instead, the political – its practices, institutions and actors – should be seen as interwoven with gender. Hence, this chapter focuses on the interaction between gender and politics in Mozambique and corroborates the argument of Karen Beckwith (2005b) that besides constituting a category gender also constitutes a process. As a category it means “ (...) the multidimensional mapping of socially constructed, fluid, politically relevant identities, values, conventions, and practices conceived of as masculine and/or feminine (...)” (Beckwith, 2005b: 131). As a process it allows structures to have a gendered effect on individuals, as well it allows individuals to act upon such structures and have a gendered impact. The extent to which this is possible seems to depend on hierarchies of power which are unequally distributed on the basis of gender⁷⁴.

While revisiting multiple historical periods this chapter provides a contextualised examination on how the relation between women and politics has been impacted by the hierarchical principles integrating the conceptualisations of “gender” as analysed in chapter 3. It is demonstrated that throughout different periods, women have been able to enter political spaces, but they have done so in a gendered way which replicated women's subordinated role in the general society. Evidence indicates that such a fact was true during the struggle for the Mozambican national independence in the 1960s as it is still true in the 2000s despite the creation of for instance, the women's caucus at the national parliament. But throughout the chapter it is also demonstrated that instead of constituting apolitical identities women have sought further avenues and created spaces where they could organise as women, spaces that were consciously or not created by women to challenge their general subordinated status quo. By doing so this chapter opens the door for analysing such spaces as informal political ones.

⁷⁴ Other axes intersect to create such hierarchies, for instance class or education. Nonetheless, “gender” is looked at as central for the purposes of this analysis.

4.2 Gender, Women and Politics in Mozambique: a General Overview

Despite the fact that intersecting factors – for instance, race, class, age, and especially for the case of this historical analysis, party allegiance – define the degree to which each woman is able to access and participate in the formal sphere of politics, the fact is that in the broad context of Africa – as in other regions of the world – the political has been generally perceived as a man's matter (see Parpart, 1986; Thiam, 1986; Tripp et al., 2009). This has also been the case in Mozambique (see Casimiro, 2004; Nuvunga, 2005; Osório, 2007; 2010).

Assuming that the political is gendered and that gendered concepts are social products as well as historical ones (Oyewumi, 2011) – and so mutable – this section revisits different historical periods in order to understand how different political constructions of the Mozambican state have been altering the available spaces for women to participate and integrate into the formal sphere of politics. By looking at the structural shifts that accompanied different historical periods – namely the shift from the pre-colonial to the colonial state, the shift from a colonial state to an independent state, and the shift from the socialist state to a democratic state – I examine how the relation of women and politics can be quantified as well as qualified. Though since national independence the political discourse has incorporated equal participation of men and women – thus increasing the number of women participating in politics – gender structures have been maintained and that fact is crucial for determining the configuration of women as formal political subjects and actors. The ways in which political participation and integration occurs can indicate women's general political status in Mozambique. By combining an historical overview with a gender sensitive analysis regarding the political spaces occupied by women, this sub-section aims at providing a basis for understanding the current overall status of Mozambican women within the formal political sphere.

4.2.1 From Little to Nothing: Mozambican Women and Politics from the pre-Colonial Period to the Colonial Rule

Regarding the general African context the relation of gender and political power differed within multiple social axes such as for instance ethnicity and class (see Bayart, 1993), but a generalization can be made in terms of how this type of power was gendered. This is also true for the Mozambican context. As argued before, the vast geography of the country as well as the richness of its cultural differences had a specific impact on the ways gender roles were traditionally constructed. Nonetheless, political power tended – as it still tends – to be concentrated on the hands of the male figure. For instance, regarding the traditional decisional power in Mozambican villages,

Stephanie Urdang notes that “(...) the ultimate decisions (...) were the domain of chiefs or councils of elders, depending on ethnic group, and such positions were always held by men” (1978: 26). Even if there are some accounts of women occupying local chieftaincy positions along with men, such as the *mapwiyamwene* (female chiefs) within the Makhuwa culture in the Northern district of Ribáuè (Arnfred, 2011: 236-251) this fact was circumscribed to certain local contexts and thus, should be perceived as an exception to the rule prevailing throughout the country. In general terms, women in Mozambique were perceived as holding “other” types of power, for instance the power of giving birth, the power of feeding the family – which resulted from women’s access to land and the engagement with farming – or the power of practicing female initiation rites a reality especially visible in the matrilineal societies of the North (Arnfred, 2011: 236). Hence, within the various traditional Mozambican realities a “(...) generalization can be made (...) that women lacked political power or real authority in their society” (Urdang, 1978: 26).

Following a pattern that characterized the western colonization of sub-Saharan Africa, during which political structures and “(...) masculinist notions that surrounded formal politics” (Fallon, 2008: 36) were imported, kinship structures in Mozambique were substituted by state-created institutions (Arnfred, 2011; Casimiro, 2004: 53). These institutions were designed to suit the colonizers’ ideals, including the ones regarding gender roles. Several aspects that were present within the multiple traditional conceptions regarding women and that might be perceived as a sign of women’s agency – such as the ones mentioned above – were especially targeted by the colonial society, undervalued and many deemed as “uncivilized”. As noted in Chapter 3, intersecting social axis – such as race, class, and gender – created a gap between citizens with rights and individuals with no rights at all. But these intersections must be seen as cross-cutting and thus even amongst those citizens that were entitled to rights, such intersecting factors contributed to creating hierarchical categories based on gender. In fact, within each category – based for instance on class or race – women were the ones with more limited rights. Overall, women “(...) were invisible, both from a social point of view as well as from a legal one” (Osório, 2007: 1). Additionally, regarding the concepts of leadership – including but not limited to politics – those were exclusively recognized as belonging to men and thus, separated from the realm that had been culturally constructed to women. Consequently, women were generally estranged from leadership roles, a fact that further limited women’s status within the society.

4.2.2 Formal Equal Integration: Women, Politics and National Independence

Efforts to gain independence from the colonial rule, initiated by Frelimo in the early 1960s, presented an opportunity for reshaping the Mozambican society, including women's status as political actors. For some women, their general contribution to the liberation struggle was limited to extending to the army their "domestic" role as caretakers (Casimiro, 2004: 173). Nonetheless, independently of their roles, by their own initiative women were able to integrate in the struggle for independence as active part of the fighting forces (Casimiro, 2004: 173). In order to protect the liberated areas, women asked Frelimo to be militarily trained (Casimiro, 2004: 173) thus paving the way to the creation of a women detachment in 1967, the *Destacamento Feminino* (DF) (Arnfred, 2011; Casimiro, 2004; Urdang, 1989). As Alcinda Abreu puts it,

[j]ust like men, women believe in freedom, democracy and peace. This is the reason why women in Mozambique participated in the armed struggle for national independence from 1964 to 1974 and after the independence developed strategies to take an important role in the destinies of the country on the path of democracy and development (2004a: 3).

Resistance to the creation of the DF – coming from men and women alike – were based in the gendered assumptions of women's "natural" condition as weak and vulnerable, and on the preoccupation of women being diverted from their primary role within the family (Casimiro, 2004: 174). Notwithstanding that resistance, the DF was created and it was much through it, while entering new spaces, that women were able to start shaping the gendered expectations regarding their role within the society as well as within politics (Casimiro, 2004: 174-175; Tripp et al., 2009: 77; see also Machel, 1970).

The DF was at the origin of the OMM, created in 1973 to incorporate women that were participating in the struggle, not only as fighters but in other multiple ways. The creation of such an organisation constitutes a further turning point for the advancement of women's overall status, but particularly for advancing women's status as political actors. In fact,

(...) by the time FRELIMO began a campaign (in 1978) to create party cells throughout the country, there was a conscious recognition of the need to seek actively to integrate women more broadly into political affairs, in part because of the obvious unequal representation of women then applying at all levels" a fact that lead the party to "redouble their efforts to mobilise, organise and integrate women (Urdang, 1983: 13).

It was then through the OMM that several women were able to step into the realm of formal politics.

Power structures were also being shaped by the existence of a women's organisation within Frelimo. As Signe Arnfred notes, the creation of the OMM altered the structure of authority, which shifted from residing within the family – authority of male family members over women – to ultimately residing within the organisation (2011: 24). This new authority “when necessary and for the time being supported women against men” (Arnfred, 2011: 24). “Authority” as a concept also became part of an institution in which women participated as women, where women were again conquering “new” spaces, and through which they could formally contest the established gender roles and advance their rights. Thus, the impact was dual, because while this fact contributed to alter gender relations (Arnfred, 2011: 26) it also contributed to create spaces for the generality of women outside the “private” sphere (Casimiro, 2004: 49). Therefore, despite the fact that the role of OMM – as an organisation created within Frelimo's structures – was ultimately limited by the party's lines and decisions, the impact that it had on women's political emancipation was considerable (see Disney, 2003). This is also illustrated by the remark of Kathleen Staudt on the importance of these women wings for the state, as a vehicle for the latter to conforming women's political participation to the one desired by many one-party states, especially within the African context (1986: 208). In effect, considering the fact that the OMM was since its beginning, an organisation of women within a political party, one may suggest that the organisation served as an “academy” for Mozambican women seeking to enter politics, catapulting women to multiple positions in political structures.

With independence, Frelimo's efforts concentrated in rebuilding the state and in promoting a type of social order that would break with the colonialist tradition, including bringing women to participate in that project. Consequently, “Frelimo introduced a policy of emancipating or empowering women, who acquired the right to freedom of expression and association. Women joined public life, created cultural groups and participated in adult education and literacy campaigns” (Nuvunga, 2005: 45). The first constitutional text of independent Mozambique – the Constitution of the Popular Republic of Mozambique of 1975 – granted equality between men and women⁷⁵ in all spheres of political, economic, social and cultural life (article 17). Regarding the political sphere, such a constitutional text stated that all citizens had the duty and the right to “participate in the process of the creation and consolidation of democracy at all levels of the society as well as of the state” (article 27) and granted the universal right of voting and of being elected (article 28).

⁷⁵ Despite this granted “equality”, discriminatory principles were officially maintained. For instance, women who married a foreign citizen would immediately lose the Mozambican citizenship (Casimiro, 2004: 182). Thus, *equality* was still granted on a gendered basis.

In respect to these articles there are three points that I would like to stress. The first one is that, although the right to vote and to be elected is granted to both women and men, such a right in itself was limited by the one-party nature of the regime, thus it should not be understood as the full “freedom” to choose or the “universal” ability to be elected. In fact, it meant that participation in formal political decisions and organs was limited. The second point is that, although equality was granted and women came to integrate the formal sphere of politics, the status quo of a patriarchal society was maintained. Since rights were granted uniformly – hence not addressing inequalities based on gender – inequalities were maintained and women continued to be discriminated on the basis of their gender. As Conceição Osório puts it “[t]his equality must be seen more as a formal expression of the revolutionary political speech rather than an alteration to the social relations of power that mark gender relations” (2004a: 145). Thirdly, the new constitutional rights were not accompanied by a change within the civil code nor within the sphere of the customary law (Disney, 2005), and cultural practices based on gendered assumptions were maintained unregulated by the state. As illustrated by Gisela Geisler’s remark, regarding Signe Arnfred’s⁷⁶ work on initiation rites in Mozambique,

(...) despite the state initiated ban on traditions detrimental to women’s dignity and emancipation, officials of the ruling Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) party enjoyed female party members performing versions of women’s initiation dances on national holidays through the 1980s, for their own and FRELIMO’s glory (2004: 24-25).

Furthermore, the inclusion of women within the sphere of formal politics was limited. As Jane Parpart notes,

[o]f the 249 delegates elected to Frelimo's Third Congress in 1977, only 12.2% from the provincial level and 7.5% on the Central Committee were women. Women have been encouraged to join the party, and some improvements have occurred at the local level. But at the national level, where authority and power predominate, women are conspicuous by their absence. There is no ministry for women and the only structure that might evaluate development plans for women, the Organisation of Mozambican Women (...) is rarely consulted (1986: 8; see also Kruks and Wisner, 1989; Urdang, 1978).

Frelimo’s limited conception of women’s emancipation coupled with the lack of autonomy of the OMM regarding the party (Disney, 2008) contributed to limiting women’s status within the social order. Looking at the formal political level, at the same time that there is an official discourse regarding equal participation – which was

⁷⁶ As referenced in Gisela Geisler’s work: Signe Arnfred, “An Analysis of Female Initiation Rites in Mozambique”, Part 4, unpublished manuscript, n.d.p. 6.

accompanied by formal equal rights – the gendered structures were maintained. This has contributed to the perpetuation of barriers for women to access politics and to limiting their role within it (see Osório, 2010).

4.2.3 Formal Equal Rights: Women, Politics and the Democratic Period

As previously mentioned, in the late 1980s Mozambique's need for financial support forced the country to distance itself from a socialist ideology and to approach the Bretton Woods institutions. That turn to the "West" resulted in a SAP⁷⁷, which according to Chris Alden "aimed at providing the institutional and policy environment for the transition away from socialism to a market economy" (2001: 81; see also Abrahamsson and Nilsson, 1995). As another consequence of such a turn, in 1990 Mozambique adopted a democratic Constitution. From that period onwards it was formally assumed in the Constitution that the Mozambican state "promotes and supports the emancipation of women and encourages women to play a full role in society (...)", it "recognises the participation of Mozambican women in the process of national liberation (...), values and encourages the participation of women in the defence of the country and in all spheres of political, economic, social and cultural activity" (article 57). It was also recognized that "men and women are equal before the law on all domains of the political, economic, social and cultural life" (article 67). This meant that, at least formally, women were recognized as equally participating in the political life of the country, granted the same political rights as men.

Along with this transition came the end of the civil war between Frelimo and the rebel movement Renamo. The signature of the General Peace Agreement, the *Acordo Geral de Paz* (AGP) in 1992 reinforced the constitutional provisions dated from 1990, which were later "tested" in the multiparty elections of 1994 (Brito, 2010: 22-23). The electoral process, accompanied by several international observers, was highly influenced by international organisations such as the United Nations, which stressed the virtues of democracy and the participation of all citizens, with a special focus on "women". According to Ruth Jacobson, the symbol of the National Commission of Elections – *Comissão Nacional de Eleições* (CNE) – was the image of a "woman wearing a traditional dress, with a baby on her back, against the rising sun", both representing the "importance of women's involvement" on the elections as well as the "re-birth' of Mozambique" (1995: 31). According to the author, a programme organised by several actors⁷⁸ called *Educação Cívica* – meaning "civic education" – was

⁷⁷ The adoption of the SAP was a condition of the Economic Recovery Programme imposed by such actors to the country.

⁷⁸ According to the author, the CNE had several supports "including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Association of Western European Parliamentarians (AWEPA), religious communities, aid agencies, including several of the major bodies operating in Mozambique such as the United States Agency for International

implemented during the pre-election period in order to “educate” voters on how to vote, and what democracy and human rights meant. Although data is controversial regarding the number of registered voters,⁷⁹ reports on the presence of women to the voting ballots suggest that women were massively present (Jacobson, 1995: 34).

The conflicts that most affected the modern history of Mozambique – the struggle for independence and the civil war – were key events for the relation between women and politics in Mozambique. As mentioned before, although multiple factors intersect to create different experiences for women – and that is also true regarding the sphere of politics – there were common events that constantly interfered with the generality of women’s ability to become both political subjects as well as actors. Aili Mari Tripp, Dior Konaté, and Colleen Lowe-Morna (2006) refer to such upheavals that Mozambican women had to endure – including the independence struggle between 1964 and 1974 and immediately after, the civil war between Frelimo and Renamo that lasted until 1992 – highlighting how struggle has “played an important part in attitudes towards the liberation of women, at a personal and a political level” (Tripp et al., 2006: 120; see also Bauer and Britton, 2006: 11). Both Frelimo and Renamo had women fighting on their sides, which meant entering spaces perceived as male ones. Both had within its structure women’s wings – respectively the OMM and the Feminine League, the *Liga Feminina* – which suggest that the spaces opened to women were in themselves a controlled experience. In turn, this suggested that the gendered status quo in that sphere would not be simply erased. As Conceição Osório puts it, regarding the case of Frelimo, “[d]uring almost twenty years (1975-1994), political intervention of men and women was controlled by an ideological system that shaped the limits and contents of political rights. For women, political participation was mediated by the Mozambican Women’s Organisation (OMM) (...)” (2007: 13), an organisation limited by the party’s guidelines.

From the late 1980s OMM’s position as the primary organisation which had been dominating the history of women and politics in Mozambique, started to change. The ideological contradictions within the organisation are perceived as one contribution for that fact (Osório, 2007). Conceição Osório stresses that the organisation “(...) continued with its vocation for the social inclusion of women, dealing with gender inequality through actions that did not really question the structure of discrimination” (2007: 14). A few years later, when the OMM tried to separate itself from the party – between the period of 1990 and 1996 – many women abandoned the organisation “to seek other spaces of affirmation, either in women’s associations, or other party

Development (USAID), Western organisations linked to specific political movements or autonomous promoters of democracy, and Mozambican non-governmental organisations (NGOs)” (Jacobson, 1995: 31).

⁷⁹ The numbers presented by EISA (Nuvunga, 2005: 2) point for 5.4 million people whereas, on a paper presented at a UN meeting Alcinda Abreu points for a total of 6,396,061 “where women constituted 54% and men 46%” (Abreu, 2004a: 5).

structures” (Osório, 2007: 14). That reality was made possible due to the adoption of a multi-party system consecrated in the 1990 Constitution, which allowed the creation of alternative ways for women to integrate politics contributing for the widening of democratic spaces available for women (Disney, 2006; Osório, 2007; 2010).

The turn towards a democratic regime also meant an involvement of the Mozambican state with international mechanisms that specifically addressed women’s status in politics. While some instruments as the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (see African Union, 2003) recommend states to include constitutional principles that encouraged states to commit to the participation of women in political and decision making processes (article 9), others like the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development (see SADC, 2008) are more specific and advance specific targets for women to occupy executive positions in political bodies (Osório and Macuácuá, 2015). In fact the state is formally following the principles it committed to and the numbers of women occupying formal political places has considerably increased, as we will see in the next sub-section. But, as Ruth Jacobson notes,

[d]espite the efforts to maximise the participation of women in the process (...) the underlying structural aspects of gender-based power relationships within the family, which affect women’s ability to participate in political and other activity in the public sphere, were not addressed (1995: 32-33).

Although this sentence is referring to the 1990 elections, it can be applied to the current situation of the country (see Casimiro, 2004; Disney, 2006; Nuvunga, 2005; Osório, 2007; 2010).

In fact there are several factors that persistently serve as impediments for women to participate, enter, and fulfil their role in formal politics, such as low level of education, lack of political experience, poor financial resources, little attention from the mass media for campaigning, and difficulty in conciliating it with family care (see Osório, 2004a; Nuvunga, 2005). As earlier discussed in chapter 3, multiple historical events – although not experienced by every individual in the same way – have produced social settings that commonly shape the lives of Mozambican men and women. A colonial hierarchy based on multiple axes like race and culture has dictated that those who were white and those who would adopt an “Europeanised” culture would be the ones holding more privileges within the Mozambican society, hence the creation of the categories “assimilado” and in opposition “indígena”.

With national independence the above categories were eliminated as formal ones, but some of the privileges they produced could not be instantly eliminated. In general, those individuals who for instance had access to formal education were in fact

those who were white or those who had assimilated the habits of the imposed culture, and who in that sense, had a clear advantage over the rest of the population. These categories would eventually intersect with the axis gender and produce different results for men and women, generally being the latter in disadvantage within each category. In fact, throughout time some hierarchies were confirmed while others emerged according for instance to party affiliation and level of education. Despite the fact that since the struggle for national liberation Frelimo invested in education programmes as a way to achieve freedom from the colonial indoctrination (Urdang, 1989) there are examples of how the level of education served as a discriminatory category even within the party. In fact, there are accounts of women who actively participated in the struggle for independence as members of the OMM and who, once the war was over, were unable to integrate formal political positions within Frelimo in detriment of women who were more formally educated, even when the latter were not as politically engaged (Arnfred, 2010; 2011). Those facts lead us to further enquire about the multiple aspects that influence women's ability to fully participate in formal politics. The next section will analyse such aspects, firstly by looking at the numbers of women able to integrate formal political institutions, that is, a focus on the quantitative aspect of women's participation within the Mozambican national parliament, and secondly by assessing the qualitative aspect of women's participation within the referred institution, specifically by looking at the women's caucus within the AR.

4.3 Women's Access to Formal Politics

The presence of women in political bodies within the sub-Saharan Africa region has experienced a substantial growth, especially within the last three decades (see Bauer, 2012; Bauer and Britton, 2006; Fallon, 2008; Geisler, 2004). If in the late 1980s, women in that region constituted less than 10% of Parliamentary representatives (Geisler, 2004: 9) in the present that number is estimated by the Inter Parliamentary Union to have reached 23.1%.⁸⁰ In Mozambique, despite the fact that women are still a minority within political institutions, the country is indicated as an example in regard to the numbers of women having access to positions in formal political organs. For instance, in terms of women's presence in national parliaments worldwide, Mozambique ranks at the 13th position in a list of 144 countries (see table 4.1) and 4th within the SADC's region.⁸¹

⁸⁰ Percentage for women in the lower or single House for 2015, as presented by the IPU. Available at: [\[ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm\]](http://ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm). (Last accessed: September 2015).

⁸¹ Based on the information provided by the IPU on "Women in National Parliaments – World Classification" for 2015. Available online at: [\[www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm\]](http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm). (Last accessed: May, 2015).

Table 4.1. Women in the Mozambican Parliament – Beginning of Legislatures

Legislature Year	2004	2009	2014
Percentage of Seats Occupied	30%	34.8%	39.2%
World Rank (Position Occupied)	15	14	12
World Rank Total	134	134	139

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union 2015.

Additionally, between 1999 and 2004 Mozambique had a woman prime minister, Luísa Diogo. As of 2015, and as a result of the general elections held in October 2014, the country has five women as heads of ministries, when in the previous legislature had seven; it has eight vice-Ministers, when in the previous legislature had five; two of the three parliamentary wings are headed by women, Margarida Adamugi Talapa for Frelimo and Ivone Soares for Renamo; and the AR itself has a woman president, Verónica Nataniel Macamo Dlhovo.⁸²

Acknowledging the importance of a “politics of presence” (see Phillips, 1995) as well as a “descriptive representation” this sub-section is dedicated to briefly analyse the quantitative presence of women within the formal political sphere in Mozambique. Such an analysis will be conducted by looking at three scales of factors⁸³ that have to a greater or lesser extent contributed to create conditions for a quantitative shift: the international, the national and the individual. Notwithstanding being presented separately, such factors intersect with each other on different stages to produce different experiences depending on the institutions and individuals analysed, and thus are merely indicative of a broad picture. More importantly, these do not imply that women were standing passively until international treaties and affirmative action measures rescued them from political lethargy. In general terms, women were agents and interfered with the creation of opportunities and reciprocally those mechanisms produced effects over their lives (see e.g., Geisler, 2004: 14; Weldon, 2002b).

⁸² Refer to the information provided by the Mozambique Radio, *Radio Moçambique* and the Mozambique News Agency, *Agência de Informação de Moçambique*, as of January 2014 (in Portuguese). Available at: [www.rm.co.mz/index.php/home-2/item/9554-nyusi-nomeia-novo-governo-saiba-quem-e-quem.html]. (Last accessed: May 2015).

⁸³ By presenting these factors, I do not wish to disregard the social and historical contexts nor the efforts of women's rights activists already presented here in this dissertation. Instead, they must be perceived as constituting practical factors that actively contributed to the increasing the quantity of women in politics.

To begin with and as previously noted, the multiple international mechanisms that Mozambique is bound to, clearly express the necessity of increasing women's presence in political institutions. Such instruments are the reflection of an international setting that started during the 1970s and was marked by the first UN World Conference on Women in 1975 – the Mexico City Conference – and the declaration of the UN Decade for Women, between 1976 and 1985. Such a setting not only favoured the creation of multiple international mechanisms regarding the rights of women – such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1979, the DEVAW in 1993, as well as the organisation of regular UN World Conferences on Women – but also provided an international standard reference in terms of defining the human rights of women. In regional terms, the SADC helped contextualizing the universal rights of women within the Southern African region.⁸⁴

Influenced by its democratization process, Mozambique chose to bound to such international mechanisms, which have in turn influenced the standards of women's human rights within the national context (see Osório, 2004a: 148), including the right of women to fully participate in the political realm. The 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BDPA) and the SADC's Protocol on Gender and Development will constitute the illustrative cases here. Looking at the BDPA, the instrument urged governments around the world to establish "specific targets and implementing measures to substantially increase the number of women with a view to achieving equal representation of women and men (...) in all governmental and public administration positions" (UN, 1995). It simultaneously urged political parties to "remove all barriers that directly or indirectly discriminate against the participation of women" as well as to "consider incorporating gender issues in their political agenda, taking measures to ensure that women can participate in the leadership of political parties on an equal basis with men" (UN, 1995). Sharing the concern regarding gender equality within politics, the SADC's Protocol on Gender and Development includes two articles specifically addressing representation and participation of women in that sphere – articles 12 and 13 – and an article dedicated to affirmative action measures, article 5. The latter asserts that member states must enforce such type of measures "with particular reference to women in order to eliminate all barriers which prevent them from fully participating meaningfully in all spheres of life and create a conducive environment for such participation" (SADC, 2008), which is directly applied to the political realm. While article 13 and article 12: 2 relate to qualitative measures regarding the subject, article 12: 1 – backed by article 5 – has a clear quantitative component. In fact, regarding the representation of women in politics, article 12: 1

⁸⁴ For a list of the international and regional mechanisms related to women's rights Mozambique has bind to refer to table 5.1 on the following chapter.

states that its members “shall endeavour that, by 2015, at least fifty percent of decision-making positions in the public and private sectors are held by women including the use of affirmative action measures as provided for in Article 5” (SADC, 2008).

The CEDAW, the BDPA as well as the SADC’s Protocol on Gender and Development show a concern with the quantity of women participating and represented in politics, indicating a global recognition of the fact that women have been systematically excluded from that realm. Numbers matter in the sense that they quantitatively reflect both the principles of participation as well as representation in relation to gender equality, and the abovementioned international instruments clearly favour the adoption of national mechanisms designed to promote gender parity within decision making bodies. While focusing on the amount of individuals participating in formal politics the concern for parity focuses on the aspect of inclusion, i.e. that a considerable part of the population is not discriminated on the basis of their biological sex, but aspects of representation can be identified within such concern. In fact, one of the questions regarding gender and politics lies on the ability of men to “(...) legitimately stand in for women when what is at issue is the representation of women *per se* (...)” (Phillips, 1995: 6). Hence, parity within decision making bodies is related to the ability of women to politically represent and be represented. The estimated population in Mozambique for 2013 was 24.366 million, a total composed of 12.614 million women and 11.752 million men (INE, 2012). Hence, it is fair to say that more than half of the population, i.e. women, should be equally participating and represented at the formal political level, a fact that illustrates the importance of a “politics of presence” and of a “descriptive representation”. Failing to attain so goes against the equality principle assumed by the core legal texts and mechanisms that constitute the pillars of the Mozambican regime.

Considering the formal political discourse at the national level, the mechanisms internally adopted by the Mozambican government, and the number of women within the national parliament one may assume that the country is on the path of quantitatively achieving such goal. Within the literature regarding women and politics in Mozambique, there are two major practical factors that have been indicated as highly contributing for the considerable number of women occupying political seats within the national context, especially when one looks at the level of the AR. The first factor is the existence of a quota system for women voluntarily adopted by Frelimo created in 1992, and applied to the first multi-party elections in 1994 (Abreu, 2004a; 2004b; Sheldon, 2002: 209). Although there is no constitutional provision regarding quotas for women, from those elections onwards Frelimo established a party quota for women which has been increasing up to 35% in 2004 (Osório, 2010). The quotas had an impact

regarding the presence of women in political institutions as during the 1994 elections “Frelimo nominated women for 37 percent of the potential legislative seats, in comparison with Renamo’s 9 percent” (Sheldon, 2002: 209). Regarding Renamo, the party failed to immediately apply a quota system (see Osório, 2010). In this sense, the differences in the percentages of elected women for both parties reflect the impact of Frelimo’s quota system being implemented since 1994 in the AR. Overall, the first multi-party elections in Mozambique resulted in a percentage of 25.2 of women occupying parliamentary seats, both from Frelimo as well as Renamo (Osório, 2010: 136). Since then the presence of women holding seats as MPs have been increasing and in effect, the percentage of women in the AR has reached the 30% benchmark. This means that the country is “in line with international norms, such as the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995), the September 2000 Millennium Summit, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women” (Nuvunga, 2005: 48).

The second factor is related to the nature of the electoral system, based on “proportional representation”. Within this system there is no direct relation between the voter and the elected MP, so there is no personalization of the elected (Brito, 2010: 25). Although this system is criticized by the lack of personalization – meaning that voters choose pre-determined party lists, not candidates – on the other hand, this characteristic may be perceived as a useful tool in the prevention of discrimination towards women candidates (see Bauer, 2008; Nuvunga 2005). Consequently, women candidates are chosen by the party – in numbers that depend on the internal organisation and will of the party itself – and not directly by the voters. This fact alone illustrates the weight of parties in determining ones chance within formal political structures and should be kept in mind, for instance, when one is analysing the behaviour of politicians.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, both factors – quotas for women and the nature of the electoral system – have been generally indicated as favouring women’s descriptive representation within different regional and cultural contexts (see e.g., Fallon, 2008; Htun and Jones, 2002; Lovenduski and Norris, 1993; Lowe-Morna, 2003) and those factors have proved to directly and indirectly favour women’s integration within formal political institutions in the context of Mozambique.

At the individual level, to a greater or lesser extent, the increase of women’s descriptive representation can result in alterations to the political and social patriarchal norm. In fact, it can provoke an alteration to the habitus of an institution, a phenomenon that will eventually spill over to the rest of the society. Additionally, as argued by Anne Phillips, the presence of women in politics provide a role model for

⁸⁵ This observation will be further explored later in this chapter.

other women, it legitimizes the political system, and revitalizes democracy (Phillips, 1998b; see also Charles, 2008). In Mozambique too that seems to be the case. In our interview, Nhielete Mondlane, the president of the GMP and MP for Frelimo, referred to Mozambican former Prime Minister, Luísa Diogo, as a source of inspiration and a role model (April 2012). When asked specifically about the importance of the numbers of women in the Mozambican parliament, Benilde Nhalivilo, the executive director of the organisation Mozambican Community Radio Forum, *Fórum da Rádio Comunitária Moçambicana* (FORCOM) and member of the Fórum Mulher, also affirmed her belief on their presence there

I believe it is important. In order to be able to make a difference they need to be there. Many may not be conscious about it, but the fact that they are there can be in itself a way for them to become conscious about it. Furthermore there is the role model aspect for young women. They too can be there! (March 2012).

Anticipating my next questions regarding the ability of women in politics to make their presence felt as women Benilde Nhalivilo added that

[t]here is the need to invest in the quality of their participation. I believe that it is not easy to be a head or a leader in a country with a fragile democracy because the structure is so patriarchal. They must act as women, but they also have to submit itself to that patriarchal scheme (March 2012).

In fact, as showed earlier in this dissertation, a considerable part of the feminist literature regarding the participation of women in politics also notes that, despite its importance, the presence of women must be analysed beyond numbers and should be translated into further social outcomes. In reality, women's roles within politics continue to be limited by several obstacles deriving from cultural assumptions regarding gender roles.

Firstly, by a vertical obstacle, a "glass ceiling" created within the structures of government as well as within the parties that prevents women from going "up" to a certain level. According to the barometer of the Southern Africa Gender Protocol Alliance (SAGPA) on the SADC Gender Protocol, "women do not take part on the higher positions of decision making" and the structures of the parties are still dominated by men (2012: 20). In the case of Mozambique, despite the Frelimo's adoption of a quota for women in politics, such a measure does not apply for high-ranking posts (Abreu, 2004b). In fact, regarding the 2015-2020 legislature only five out of a total of twenty three Ministers are women.⁸⁶ As noted by Conceição Osório,

⁸⁶ According to the list of members of the Cabinet Council provided by the Mozambican government, available online at: www.portaldogoverno.gov.mz/por/Governo/Conselho-de-Ministros. This list includes the prime-minister.

(...) the quantitative increase in the number of women in the civil service and in the political parties has in itself been used as a force for change, without questioning the structures, hierarchies, and value systems that surround and determine the status of women in institutions (2004a: 146).

Secondly, there is a horizontal obstacle that we may visualize as a pair of “glass handcuffs”, limiting women’s role within political institutions. In fact, even when women make it to formal politics and to higher positions within it, the question lies in their ability to shape the agenda in favour of women’s human rights. During our interview, Nhielete Mondlane stressed: “[y]es, we do have women in high ranking political positions, but look at (Margaret) Thatcher did she make any difference regarding women’s rights? That is why we cannot be happy only because we have female heads of parliamentary wings” (April 2012).

Thus, regarding the “optimism” surrounding the numbers of women within the Mozambican AR one should make three references. The first one is that women compose the majority of the Mozambican population – as indicated before, more than half of the population – hence, the number of women MPs does not represent the reality of the country’s demography. As argued before, in general terms the existent patriarchal structure limits women’s access to multiple resources from an early age, and that is also true regarding the sphere of politics. While multiple factors combine and create different experiences, opportunities and obstacles, women’s decision to participate in politics is not free of gendered biases. In Mozambique, as Conceição Osório puts it

[b]eing the sphere of politics a space that is profoundly estranged from women’s socialization forms and from the construction of the feminine identity, the individual will of women wanting to participate in decision making processes is perceived as a social deviation. That is the way in which the few women who decide to fight for power are represented by the social imagination, as ‘men’ or as ‘bad women’ (2004a: 157).

The second reference goes to the fact that such a percentage mainly reflects the quota system hence it is not a guarantee of representing the overall political will. In fact, during our interview Nhielete Mondlane notes that in regard to women’s participation in politics in Mozambique

When we talk to heads of some neighbouring countries they say women do not have a place in politics that their place is in the community and that is where they should be. In Mozambique that speech is not so evident. But still we have debates and I as a woman feel that my male colleagues are afraid... they are not comfortable with the [idea of women constituting] 50 percent. And they do not even notice our number at the AR, they do not notice that we [women] are already 40 percent! They feel uncomfortable and they do not even notice it (April 2012).

Finally, the third point is that the inclusion of considerable numbers of women at the AR does not mean *per se* that the institution has become “gender neutral” and that there has been an alteration of legislative outcomes regarding the advancement of women’s rights. A report by AfriMap and the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa regarding democracy and political participation in Mozambique stresses the fact that within the general political context of Mozambique, the increasing presence of women does not seem to correspond to increasing gender equality within the overall society (AfriMap and OSISA, 2009). Issues that are highly gendered, disturbing the power distribution at the level of the family or clan, are maintained intact and their inclusion at the formal political agenda remains difficult.⁸⁷

Having in mind the ways in which gender interacts with politics, and how issues and subjects are prioritized or ignored accordingly to such interactions, it comes as natural that women would create “other” spaces in which to work on issues that affect them as women on a discriminatory basis. Especially if the formal structures designed to deal with women’s rights and gender inequality – including NWMs – fall short to properly address such issues. When asked about the role of formal mechanisms in addressing gender issues, an advisor to the MMAS, confirms that their role generally falls short. “Here in Mozambique we have the Plans for the Advancement of Women. The problem resides in their implementation, because we lack monitoring and evaluation mechanisms”. When asked about the role of the ministries she advances that “[t]he Mozambican ministries have a focus on the dimension ‘gender’. Nonetheless, their intervention is little incisive, they lack financial and human resources (December, 2010).

Nonetheless, women have been creating spaces of their own, and from where gendered hierarchies can be tackled. The next sub-section will look at such spaces as spaces of informal politics.

4.4 Women Organising as Women: the Informal Sphere of Politics

Aili Mari Tripp et al. note that the generality of women’s movements within the African continent is rooted in “(...) multiple historic traditions of resistance” (2009: 25). According to the authors, those traditions are constituted by the women’s strategies existing prior to colonization, the experiences drawn from the liberation struggles and the “(...) responses to the postcolonial party/state-directed women’s organisations in the era of single parties and military rule” (Tripp et al., 2009: 25). This is also the case in Mozambique. It is grounded on such general experiences, and fuelled by favourable political structures and by new resources that women’s organisations dedicated to work on “women’s issues” come to form a general women’s movement in the democratic

⁸⁷ This argument will be dealt with in chapters 6 and 7.

Mozambique. As exposed earlier in chapter 2, by extending the notion of politics one is able to acknowledge other actors rather than the ones operating at the formal sphere of politics. It is based on such an extended definition of politics that I analyse women's mobilisation in civil society as operating in the informal sphere of politics. This subsection deals with women organising in civil society creating "other" spaces where they can act to a greater or lesser extent independently of party politics while comparing to the formal sphere of politics, and thus in principle are able to address issues that otherwise may be considered as secondary or overlooked. The example of domestic violence is a case in point and as such, this section suggests the necessity of women's movements intervening as agents of informal politics regarding the issue.

Isabel Casimiro refers to the traditional practices of *xitique*⁸⁸ – which is a rotating credit form which provides an informal financial support net – and *mukhosi wa mina*⁸⁹ – which is a bond of emotional support practiced by female friends – as examples of women's organising forms (2004: 166). Although the *xitique* can be practiced by both women and men, the fact is that especially in the South of the country these groups are majorly organised by women (Dava, Low and Matusse 1998). I was unaware of what a *xitique* was until a young, middle class woman I met in Mozambique mentioned she had scheduled for later that day her *xitique* meeting. Her explanation of how it works in financial terms was accompanied by a description that revealed the social importance the practice has for the women organising around it. According to her, these meetings were an opportunity to be amongst other women from the same age group, to talk about issues that they were interested in, to share food that all prepared and to have a good time together. This was according to her, a common characteristic to other *xitiques* she knows of (December, 2010). But if such gatherings have no political essence – that is they do not intend to make political claims on behalf of the improvement of the overall condition of Mozambican women, nor do they try to challenge structural norms – they seem important in various ways. They aim at supporting the members of such groups and improving their living conditions by responding to their immediate specific needs in multiple ways. Both practices – the *mukhosi wa mina* and the *xitique* – seem to be built as supportive networks that go beyond their initial objective as they are able to informally provide social assistance. Since they involve deep mutual trust between the participants, they constitute ways of strengthening the bonds between them and provide exclusive spaces in which women share their experiences and find the support of other women. That type of organisation,

⁸⁸ The *xitique* is a savings and credit scheme in which members organize and save a predetermined amount of money which is then rotationally distributed in its totality to each member usually once a month.

⁸⁹ The *mukhosi wa mina* is a form of support between two friends that persists into adulthood and includes emotional and familiar support.

based on difference, illustrates the general notion of group identity the same assumptions that make women organise in civil society in a “politicised” way.

The already mentioned “Buzi strike”, organised during the colonial period provides such an example of women organising, this time specifically for establishing specific rights for the women workers in cotton fields. In 1947, 7,000 women successfully organised a strike aiming at the cotton companies, claiming for the rights of pregnant women and those women who had under four year old children not to work on the cotton fields (Sheldon, 2002). This event seems more impressive if one considers the repressive characteristics of the colonial state regarding associational life (see Iglésias, 2009).

As noted in chapter 3, with the struggle for independence, equality between women and men became part of the revolutionary process, and of the newly independent Mozambique.

Many of the women who took part in the independence movement identified the struggle for national independence as a way to defend their interests as women. This represented a transformation of their political role and status. For the first time, they could operate as citizens (Casimiro et al., 2005: 109).

This perception was not limited to the women who actively participated in the struggle having such a role also functioned as an example to the generality of Mozambican women. In fact, some interviewees have mentioned that type of participation as personally inspiring as well as crucial in opening new spaces for the generality of women. Nonetheless, as previously noted, the fact that the newly independent Mozambican state was constituted on a single party system – in which the women’s league OMM was created – meant that the participation of women as *women* was somehow confined to the general will of the party (Disney, 2006; Osório, 2007).

With the democratisation of the country came the constitutionally granted right to every citizen to be able to associate. Such a turn was pointed out by several interviewees as an important mark for civil society organisations to flourish, as some but not all were able to benefit from funding coming from donors. In general terms,

[f]or women’s organisations, the 1990s saw a shift in donor strategies from a sole emphasis on funding activities related to economic development, education, and health and welfare concerns to an added interest in advocacy for women’s rights, as well as promoting women’s political leadership and political participation (Tripp et al., 2009: 74).

This fact is applicable to the context of Mozambique where, as previously mentioned, despite regime changes the axis “gender” was socially maintained as discriminatory to women. Hence, efforts for further improving women’s overall status were perceived as

necessary, not only by donors but also by women themselves. The government's approach to the western liberal model has not only facilitated the formation of civil society organisations in general, including those majorly composed of women working for women's rights, but also the presence of international actors who are able to provide funding destined to address women's human rights and gender equality.⁹⁰

All together these factors meant that women organising in civil society could come together as women, in a "politicised" manner independently of being affiliated to any party. It was under this structural setting that the first women civil society organisations emerged in the late 1980s and especially since 1990, including the first dedicated to women's human rights – the *Muleide* – founded in 1991 (see Casimiro, 2004). It was also in the beginning of the 1990s under the flag of a multiparty political system that the OMM temporarily cut its affiliation with Frelimo, only to re-establish it in 1996 "(...) as its leaders were unable and unwilling to exist as an autonomous entity" (Tripp et al., 2009: 54).

In general, women were now able to seek alternatives outside the formal sphere of politics. As Alcinda Abreu puts it, "[r]ight from the beginning women start to organize themselves in several NGOs to struggle for their rights, after the New Constitution in 1990, regardless of whether or not they belonged to political parties because women understood that democracy was not only the right to vote" (2004a: 4). There were multiple structural opportunities that women could take advantage off. For the organisation Fórum Mulher the year 1994 was of extreme importance as

[i]t signalled the beginning of a new era when one could advocate publicly and more visibly for the equality of rights and opportunities for women and men. The first multiparty elections held in 1994, the participation at the Conference in Dakar and the preparation efforts for Beijing accelerated an approach based on rights. To women's organisations of civil society, the discussion and prioritisation of issues crucial for women, the definition of strategies, the ability to lobbying and to advocate became visible (Nhalivilo, 2008: 28).

The UN conferences on women were recurrently pointed out by several women I interviewed as not only inspiring in terms of acknowledging a set of women's rights as human rights, but also as an opportunity not to be missed by the generality of women's organisations. In fact such conferences may be perceived as providing a globally granted legitimacy for women organising and making claims regarding the human rights of women. Although rarely mentioned by the generality of my interviewees, the regional context should also be taken into account. It is within this context that not only examples of women organising emerged, serving as inspiration for women organising

⁹⁰ This will be further discussed in chapter 5.

to follow, and also that networks for women's cooperation were created. For instance a reference in terms of research on "women's interests" in Mozambique, the WLSA-Mozambique⁹¹ was originally a branch of a wider organisation operating at the regional context. Another example is the umbrella organisation Fórum Mulher, which as described earlier in chapter 1, involves multiple actors⁹² working to promote women's rights and gender equality. This organisation – born from the UNICEF and UNDP sponsored initiative, the Mozambican Women's Forum – networks with regional organisations⁹³ (Tripp et al., 2009: 91). Above all, as the director of a grassroots NGO working with victims of domestic violence noted during our meeting,

[w]omen realized that their rights were limited, and they were mainly on paper, and in speeches. Some things changed, but many more remained as usual. Women looked at other countries and examples where women were demanding for rights. So it was natural that, since it was already possible for the civil society to organise, women would organise around their rights ("Maria", December, 2010).

That was the case with the issue of domestic violence, against which several women organisations of civil society decided to gather efforts and fight. As mentioned earlier in this dissertation, it is impossible to refer to the Mozambican women's movement as a homogeneous entity, a fact that must also be acknowledged while considering women's mobilisation against domestic violence. Such a mobilisation involves multiple organisations, composed of multiple individuals, each bringing to the struggle their own identities and standpoints. In terms of nationality, all the heads of the organisations earlier identified as critical actors are Mozambican, albeit the fact that some are descendants from Portuguese settlers and Indian immigrants. Despite the fact that the majority of individuals participating are black from different ethnicities, also mixed race individuals, white, and elements of the Indian community are involved in such a struggle and in the overall mobilisation for women's rights and gender equality. This is also a fact regarding the heads of the major organisations involved. In general, the majority of the elements involved in this struggle are women, but also a few men chose to fight this struggle for women's human rights. The age of the participants in the struggle against domestic violence varies enormously, including very young adults and elderly individuals. As for the leaders of the major organisations involved, their age ranges from mid-30s to 50s. This means that not only in terms of race and ethnicity, but

⁹¹ Referred in this dissertation as WLSA. The regional women's rights NGO was established in Malawi, and had national offices in Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

⁹² Such actors are not only national and international NGOs but also, state institutions, party women's leagues, international organisations, religious groups, cooperatives and peasants associations (Tripp et al., 2009: 90). The fact that such an organisation serves as an umbrella for such a variety of actors will be mentioned again in chapter 7 as part of an analysis regarding the autonomy of the women movement against domestic violence.

⁹³ Those are according to Aili Mari Tripp, Isabel Casimiro, Joy Kwesiga and Alice Mungwa, the "African Women Development and Communication Network (FEMNET); Forum of African Women Educationalist (FAWE); Nairobi Gender Network (GETNET), Cape Town; UNIFEM, Harare; Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF), Harare; and the Zimbabwe Women's Resource Center and Network (ZWRNCN), Harare" (2009: 91).

also in terms of age there is an overall balanced descriptive representation of Mozambican women.

Nevertheless, there are two main aspects that characterise the critical actors earlier identified and which may suggest a “distance” between such actors and the overall Mozambican women that they seek to represent. Firstly and as previously mentioned, the majority of such actors are urban organisations of women, headed by highly educated women, to a higher or lesser degree sponsored by several international actors and which have a well-built network of influence. In that sense, such actors may be considered elite organisations as opposed to smaller, local, and rural organisations with less skill capital and social capital. During one of the interviews with an activist it was mentioned that in several other processes there was an occasional eagerness to assume the main role – both from the part of organisations and individuals – as such an attention would eventually correspond to securing more funding from sponsors. This observation meant to note that during the process of the struggle against domestic violence that type of situation did not occur as roles were well defined from the beginning. Nonetheless, the comment is worth noting as illustrating the power dynamics involved within the overall women’s movement. It is a fact that the ability to attract attention and funding majorly resides in the main organisations.

Secondly, the urban characteristic of such actors contrasts with the rural contexts in which the majority of the Mozambican population lives. Concepts of urbanity and rurality became linked to ideas of agency, knowledge production, and culture. In fact, during several interviews conducted to both MPs as well as activists for women’s rights such concepts were mentioned. A few times, expressions regarding women’s rurality were employed as to suggest a limited amount of agency and formal knowledge. This fact was especially noticeable when a few interviewees – both activists and MPs – referred to a non-identified group of women MPs who were firmly opposing the law against domestic violence against women and instead defending the preservation of cultural practices noting that most were from rural areas. Hence, a sense of gender awareness and the ability to reflect on differences between men and women as inequality was related to formally educated women and women from urban areas.

It is a fact that the struggle against domestic violence has been headed by such critical actors, but within such organisations, there are individuals of different classes and with different levels of education. The fact that the organisation Fórum Mulher is an umbrella organisation means that “non-elite” organisations are active parts on this struggle against domestic violence, albeit the fact that they may have a weaker voice. Despite such intersecting categories – e.g., race, ethnicity, class, and urbanity/rurality –

these organisations and individuals were able to rely on their common ground and, as it will be demonstrated on the following chapters, they were able to mobilise across difference.

By seizing favourable political structures women in civil society organised around the issue of domestic violence, combining resources and designing strategies to be able to frame the practice as a gendered based type of violence and to push for a legal mechanism that would criminalise it. While doing so, women's mobilisation acting as a group generated a socio-political process that challenged established categorisations of gender and contributed to reconfigure politics, namely by representing the overall Mozambican women. Informed by a structural approach, and based upon empirical contributions the next three chapters will analyse that process, measured in terms of such mobilisation's ability to articulate the issue of domestic violence, pushing for its inclusion on the socio-political agendas, and finally by shaping the legislative outcome regarding the LADVAW.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter demonstrates how, as a process, gender has been favouring a patriarchal set within the formal political realm in Mozambique. It is argued that within the Mozambican context, gender constructions based on patriarchal values are mirrored in the formal political sphere, one that in this specific context has been constructed and perceived as a "masculine world". Hence, in general terms one may easily assume that socially gender constructions of both men and women affect their participation and their roles in politics. Additionally, one may also assume that politics – i.e. its mechanisms and structures – is able to affect the existent gender hierarchy, contributing to its perpetuation or, contrarily, to its elimination.

But this chapter also demonstrates that women have been able to create spaces where they can exercise political agency as women. Gender difference in Mozambique, has been serving to discriminate women but simultaneously, it has been serving as a congregator factor. In fact, instead of being ignored, *difference* is socially and politically acknowledged by women and has been serving as a denominator for group organising for improving such groups' conditions. As mentioned earlier, the fact that women were generally perceived as holding "other" types of power, have favoured the creation of spaces where women were able to meet and organize as women and where power could be amplified. Although not all examples provided here may fit into the a frame of contestation for rights, they are useful in the sense they provide evidence that women in Mozambique have been seeking spaces where they are able to meet on the basis of their gender "difference". Once more it is argued that the political structures provided some opportunities for this type of organisation to exist and

flourish, but also that women's agency was fundamental to extend their own opportunities. This agency must be perceived as a source of political power, one that it is able to challenge the existent social and political norms, and to affect gender as a category as well as a process. By looking at Mozambican women's concerted mobilisation against domestic violence the following chapters – chapters 5, 6 and 7 – will empirically demonstrate how such an action was possible.

Chapter 5 Articulating Domestic Violence

5.1 Introduction

The UN Women (2012) compiled data on violence against women for Mozambique indicated that as of 2004, 40% of the female population had experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence at some point of their lives. Notwithstanding the existence of several national and international mechanisms designed to promote women's rights and equality – including the ones specifically framing gendered based violence against women – such numbers remained officially undervalued and improperly addressed. The existence of NWMs, the increasing number of women MPs and the creation of the GMP – as organisms designed to promote the status of women – are also conditions that in principle could be sufficient to alter that situation. Nonetheless that was not the case. On the other hand, several women's organisations of civil society working on the issue of domestic violence concerted efforts to struggle against it. Such concerted efforts are framed as a collective mobilisation, part of the broad Mozambican women's movement. This chapter analyses the ability of the Mozambican women's movement to articulate an issue that had been kept improperly addressed, both socially as well as politically, mainly due to its gendered nature. It aims at answering the following question: *was the women's movement able to articulate gender issues within the Mozambican society, namely in regard to domestic violence?*

I empirically demonstrate that the role of such a collective action was a necessary condition for the issue of domestic violence to be articulated as a systemic issue, and secondly, to be articulated as a gendered issue. Key aspects regarding the exercise of representation will be confirmed, namely the ability of the women's movement in building a group perspective, and the ability of identifying a constituency (see Weldon, 2011). Several aspects that have contributed for this articulation to be possible will be analysed. A supportive women's rights framework, both at the national as well as at the international level, the availability of international funding for its cause, and the existence of feminist praxes amongst some organisations within the women's movement are perceived as favourable. Simultaneously, the same factors can cause tensions that may undermine the role of the women's movement to effectively articulate the issue as a systemic and gendered one.

The theoretical implications of such findings are related to the ability of the women's movement to contest socio-political norms, to reconceptualise gender issues, and to advance women's rights. It is argued that beyond constituting accountability mechanisms in terms of women's rights, such mobilisation against domestic violence

became embedded in a socio-political process in which they were able to effectively represent women's interests.

5.2 Taking the Initiative of Addressing Domestic Violence as a Systemic Issue

As it has been demonstrated earlier in chapter 3, throughout different historical and political contexts domestic violence in Mozambique has been socially and politically overlooked as a major issue. If the independence of the country and the adoption of a socialist regime have allowed for a change in the official discourses regarding the equality between women and men, stressing the “emancipation of women” as a necessary condition for it to be achieved, issues that relate to gender hierarchies within the core of the society remained intact. The same has been identified with the transition to a democratic regime, during which “gender” was incorporated as a keyword in multiple development programmes implemented in the country as well as in multiple political mechanisms, but gender as a relational category embedded in patriarchal power structures suffered little alteration. While working around issues regarding women's rights, women organising as women identified the practice of domestic violence as a systemic issue that affected mainly women as victims, and which happened across multiple social axes. Simultaneously, such a women organising identified the necessity of addressing such practice as an issue, one related to gender, and to articulate it as such. This sub-section is dedicated to analysing the ability of the women's movement to building a group perspective as well as identifying a women's constituency. Such facts draw on the theoretical discussions on the identification of shared interests as well as on the identification of a group “women” as a social location.

5.2.1 Building a Group Perspective

Several aspects are worth having in mind while debating women's ability of building a group perspective while mobilising against domestic violence. As previously noted, the critical actors behind this struggle are urban based ones, a fact that when considering the conceptualisations of urbanity and rurality mentioned earlier may signal a detachment from the majority of the Mozambican population. The capital city is the space where the main women's organisations of civil society involved in the struggle against domestic violence are based. This is understandable as the capital is the space where the main governmental institutions, international organisations, and NGOs are also concentrated. Having this in mind the fact that the main actions of the women's movement are identified as happening within the geographical context of the capital city should be perceived as a strategic choice. It is also a fact that many of the

women's organisations within the movement may be perceived as having gone through processes of "professionalization", a fact that has been indicated in the general literature on women's organisations and movements as a sensitive aspect (see Alvarez, 1999; Britton and Price, 2014; Cornwall and Goetz, 2005). This sensitivity derives from the fear that a detachment between such organisations and women from the grassroots will render the claims of universal representation of women's rights as invalid, or even to the fear of further exacerbating the discrimination of marginalised groups of women by not attending to possible specific needs. In a similar mode, the individuals leading those "professionalized" organisations are often women with privileged backgrounds when comparing to the majority of the population in Mozambique. But this fact should not be understood as a mechanism of domination over the organisations and the individuals at the lower down class ladder.

Regarding the mobilisation against domestic violence, the claim of speaking on behalf of the overall Mozambican women – independently of social categories – was favoured by the fact that violence against women can be framed as a question of universal human rights, and domestic violence can be included in such a conceptualisation (see e.g., Htun and Weldon, 2012). In that sense, women's mobilisation against domestic violence in Mozambique has framed the issue as a violation of women's human rights, and as an issue that affects women independently of for instance class, race, political and religious believes. In that sense, claims for universal representation are favoured.

Nonetheless, regarding the framing of the gendered nature of the issue of domestic violence and the LADVAW, during several interviews conducted it was noted how a consensus between the multiple elements of civil society involved in the process was not a straightforward task. In fact, the major organisations involved framed the issue of domestic violence as a gender based one, resulting from a patriarchal social setting in which women are persistently discriminated on the basis of their gender. Consequently, the argument was that a law against domestic violence would have to stress that specific gendered aspect. Such a fact produced a certain amount of friction amongst the elements involved in the struggle against domestic violence.⁹⁴ Eventually, a draft of the law against domestic violence which would be delivered to the parliament by organisations of civil society, specifically stressed the gendered aspect of such a type of violence. On the one hand, this may signal the power imbalances existing between the actors involved in the struggle against domestic violence. As mentioned earlier, the organisations which hold the majority of skill capital and social capital are eventually the ones who are able to secure more funding, as they are also the ones which will have the biggest share of decision making power. But on the other hand, the

⁹⁴ For a general analysis on differences and conflicts amongst activists refer to the work of Laurel Weldon (2006b).

terms “complementarity” – between the elements involved – and “majority” – while making decisions – were used by the interviewees, signalling the efforts of the critical actors involved in reaching consensus rather than efforts for imposing ideas without further discussion.

Notably, these “privileged” characteristics can work in advantage for the women’s movement, in terms of the accomplishment of their goals, albeit an on-going process to ensure that the concerns of professional women do not dominate. Such a professionalization may be seen as guaranteeing that the organisations in question have financial resources and the necessary technical skills to effectively operate. This can work in both directions, firstly, as a way of attracting more financial resources. One of the aspects that has been characterising ODA in the contemporary Mozambique is the perceptions of donors regarding the transparency of the democratic governance. According to Carrie Manning and Monica Malbrough, such perceptions are leading donors to “(...) view subnational institutions as more conducive vehicles for democracy and development assistance” (2012: 4) and hence, to “(...) provide budget support for local governance, civil society, capacity building, and service delivery as a means of supporting decentralized democracy and good governance” (2012: 4). Secondly, as a way of attracting more political attention as it signals the ability of the collective mobilisation in regard to the issue in question to persist throughout time, until all the claims are listened, negotiated, and attended to. Additionally, the professionalization and the “elite” nature of the organisations more consistently involved with the struggle against domestic violence may also be seen as further increasing the bargaining power of the organisations – and consequently the whole movement – while negotiating with governmental bodies and building a case for women’s rights (see Meintjes, 2003). Hence, considering the mobilisation against domestic violence, the influence of several professionalized and elite members was, as it will be demonstrated, extremely relevant to the overall process.

But importantly, a professionalization or the identification of elites as heading the concerted action against domestic violence does not have to correspond to a detachment from the grassroots, or the exclusion of multiple standpoints. In the case of the struggle against domestic violence the case was built both from the top-down as well as from the bottom-up. In effect, multiple participants were involved, and multiple opinions were debated and considered. Additionally, the issue was articulated as grounded in real cases of domestic violence happening throughout the country. Such a fact proved to be essential for the women’s movement to build a group perspective around a perceived “collective identity” (see Melucci, 1995).

As Yolanda Mulhuini, the executive director of the organisation Group for the Development of the Woman and the Girl, *Grupo para o Desenvolvimento da Mulher e*

Rapariga (GDMR) noted, “[t]alking about domestic violence twenty years ago was taboo. It was not even designated as domestic violence but rather as an education method” (September 2014). As noted before, despite the existence of favourable national and international normative frameworks the issue of domestic violence remain unarticulated as a systemic and gendered issue. Such a fact constituted a conundrum that the women’s movement identified as interwoven with the constructions of gender as a hierarchy.

During our interview, the president of the GMP, Nhielete Brooke Mondlane touched upon the difficulties – especially from the point of view of formal politics – in socially and politically dealing with topics that are gender related (April 2012). Although stressing the fact that especially when compared with neighbour countries, Mozambique has made important achievements regarding the overall women’s status quo – highlighting the national liberation struggle effort regarding women’s emancipation – and that “the ones leading the country are aware that women must have a place” the president of the GMP eventually adds “[w]ith many limitations of course” (April 2012). Such statements seem to be in line with the idea that although the formal political discourse regarding women’s rights and gender equality has been altered in a progressive way, the opportunity to further grant women’s rights is greater if those rights are not perceived as challenging the existent gender constructions and the consequent hierarchy around it. Furthermore, such constructions seem harder to be identified and denounced within the formal political sphere as such space is permeable to the social constructions of gender dictating what counts as political and what is prioritized or rather what is ignored.

It is within this setting that the ability of the women’s movement to identify and frame the practice of domestic violence as a systemic issue gains an extreme importance not only in terms of the advancement of women’s rights but also in terms of questioning the existent gendered status quo. Remarkably, the majority of my interviewees – including activists as well as MPs – have identified women’s mobilisation as the main catalyst of the struggle against domestic violence, as well as the main articulators of the issue. More than accountability mechanism such women’s mobilisation is generally recognised as essential for the issue for domestic violence to be articulated and addressed. It is suggested then, that the argument pointing to the generality of women’s movements as a necessary condition for articulating the issue of violence against women (Weldon, 2002b: 195) is applicable to the Mozambican context regarding the issue of domestic violence.

When asked about the possibility of the women’s mobilisation reinforcing the official structures dealing with gender equality, Graça Júlio, who coordinates the Fórum Mulher’s Programme on Violence against Women, clarifies that

[i]t is not a matter of reinforcing it is a matter of having a fundamental role. If we look at the history of the struggle for equality [in Mozambique] we see that such a struggle and the changes occurring are driven by the civil society. The law [the LADVAW] was a result of the work of civil society (March 2012).

In fact, it is possible to identify the involvement of women's organising around the issue of domestic violence since the early 1990s, coinciding with the period in which the existence of NGOs in Mozambique was officially made possible. As mentioned before, Isabel Casimiro confirmed this fact while mentioning the early concerted work of the organisation Muleide and the organisation WLSA – which have been constant actors of the struggle against domestic violence – regarding the issue of domestic violence, and which served as a basis for research on the topic (March 2012). Such an involvement was also accompanied by the umbrella organisation Fórum Mulher which as mentioned in the previous chapter included the topic on its first bulletin.

Because the general social and political underperformance regarding the practice of domestic violence affected the ways in which the issue of domestic violence could be articulated, women's organisations of civil society involved with the issue developed specific strategies to overcome such limitations. As affirmed by several activists involved in the struggle against domestic violence, articulating the issue as a systemic and gendered one was essential to effectively address the problem in practical terms, but also to alter social norms that discriminate women on the basis of their gender. Nonetheless, because of its cultural conceptualisation as a legitimate practice the issue of domestic violence remained unspoken and improperly addressed. Gathering data was essential to formally prove its widespread occurrence and to reframing it as a systemic issue. The following sub-section analyses the impacts that data – especially the lack of it – had regarding the ability of the women's movement⁹⁵ to articulate the issue of domestic violence.

5.2.2 The Importance of Data and the Lack of It

Several researchers and activists interviewed referred to the importance of data, including statistical data, in terms of it being important to identifying, analysing and articulating the roots, the actors involved, and the pervasiveness of the issue of domestic violence. Given the social and political resistances in addressing the roots of domestic violence one of the aspects often mentioned by the referred interviewees was that in order to make a case around it, it was necessary to support every claim with numbers. In that sense such quantified information was fundamental for making a claim

⁹⁵ Due to the fact that roles were strategically defined in terms of organisations' expertise, in some occasions I refer to women's organisations and not to the women's movement so that one has a clear understanding of such a strategy.

based on its widespread occurrence, one mainly exercised against women. Nonetheless, official data regarding the practice remained scant. Besides constituting quantifying evidence regarding the issue of domestic violence, official statistical data is also an important indicative of how the issue of violence against women is officially perceived. Hence, this sub-section turns to the process of gathering data on the issue of domestic violence.

The official statistics regarding the issue of domestic violence were, as indicated earlier in chapter 3, extremely limited. My field work was conducted after the approval of the LADVAW – meaning that the practice had already been considered a public crime – but still it was hard to have access to official statistics regarding the practice of domestic violence. During one of our meetings, Terezinha da Silva, the executive director and national coordinator of the organisation WLSA confirmed that official data regarding the issue of domestic violence was indeed scarce.

We lack national statistics regarding domestic violence. I asked the UNFPA [United Nations Population Fund, formerly United Nations Fund for Population Activities], which is financing statistics on health. A few years ago the UNFPA decided to include the issue of domestic violence, so the WLSA discussed that with the ministry [the Mint] and it was included. The MMAS also did some work on this but it cannot be considered national statistics (April 2012).

When directly asked about the limited amount of official data regarding domestic violence, a researcher of the INE suggested the lack of resources as the cause (December 2010). This scarcity of data regarding domestic violence suggests several aspects which seem to have concurred to each other in a cyclical way. Firstly, how issues tend to be officially “politicised” or not, hence, how they tend to be officially prioritised or in the specific case of domestic violence undervalued.⁹⁶ Such a fact should be seen in the light of what was discussed earlier in chapters 3 and 4 in terms of how gender contributes to create social hierarchies and in turn, how a hierarchy based on gender and politics intersect to create interests and priorities. Often activists and a few MPs interviewed added that such a limitation of resources is a result of a generalised political neglecting of issues that are perceived as private and as challenging the core of gender relations. Such a fact may explain why neither the existence of an official discourse nor the existence of an official framework that recognizes the necessity of specifically implementing and reinforcing women’s human rights was sufficient to solve the lack of statistics.

Secondly, assuming quantitative data as an indicative of social trends, its limited existence or the lack of easy access to it leads to the perpetuation of the invisibility of

⁹⁶ Such a fact will be further dealt with in chapter 7, in regard to the legislative process of the LADVAW.

an issue through a sort of “strategic silence”⁹⁷ (Crenshaw, 1991). Such strategic silences reflect the social and political perspectives regarding certain issues, and here they should be understood as a posture that is in line with the ways in which power relations in Mozambique have been constructed, exercised and perpetuated. Hence, such a silence was able to camouflage not only real cases of violence but also how the issue is gendered. As a matter of fact, while searching for such statistics at the INE I was generally suggested by the staff to refer to the bureau desks for women and children – the GAMCs – as sources of data. However, in terms of quantitative data these bureau desks are only indicative of the cases that actually make it to police stations, as many more remain unreported. The same can be said regarding the registration of the cases. Such numbers do not always mirror the reality in the sense that the claims that eventually reach such bureau desks are dependent on the interpretations of the officers in charge while a report is filled. For that reason, although indicative, the data available from such bureaus should be carefully interpreted as well as complemented with other sources of data. As Graça Júlio of the Fórum Mulher noted,

[i]n many cases in which women leave their homes the story is told as ‘women abandoning their families’. Many women do leave their homes and families because they are running away from an abusing partner. But in many cases when the complaint is filled the abusing partner charges the woman of having abandoning him and the family, so the perpetrator and the victim end up switching places. Thus, even the ways in which charges are filled and interpreted can be done in the wrong way, and some of such numbers will be registered. That is why we work with the officers at such bureau desks in order to provide them information on the issue (March 2012).

This statement reinforces the idea that the role of women’s organisations is determinant in terms of how the issue of domestic violence is quantified, articulated and ultimately understood.

Thirdly, the production of knowledge is to a greater or lesser extent affected by the limited official statistical data regarding the issue. If, for the sake of my research, official statistical data intended to serve as an illustration of a social practice, for other researchers having access to it may be fundamental. The testimonies of several activists during our interviews indicated how the absence of numbers had an impact both in terms of limiting the general social awareness regarding the practice of

⁹⁷ Kimberle Crenshaw refers to the ways in which political priorities served to impede the release of statistics regarding the prevalence of domestic violence within the minority communities in Los Angeles, fearing that such an issue would be deemed as a minorities’ issue. Such a fact, according to the author, while wishing to avoid reinforcing stereotypes also contributed to erasing women of colour through what she perceived as being strategic silences of antiracism and feminism (1991: 1253).

domestic violence as well as the ability of one wishing to make a case regarding such an issue. As confirmed by Terezinha da Silva of the organisation WLSA,

[w]e made a coalition with organisations that were working on issues regarding domestic violence, with the Fórum [the organisation Fórum Mulher] coordinating it. With organisations related to the area of justice, but also some working on the grassroots. Our work was fundamental in terms of numbers, because we had to fundament everything with numbers. We [WLSA] begun by conducting research, which resulted in several books. We focused on real stories, testimonies of victims of domestic violence, to show women, through numbers, that they can also overcome it (April 2012).

In that sense, as it is going to be further analysed here, the initiative and the ability of several women's organisations to gather data regarding domestic violence may be perceived not only as necessary condition for the articulation of the issue – confirming its prevalence and typifying it in terms of actors – but also for challenging the social and political norms that have been rendering it invisible as a systemic issue.

In fact, until the present time, besides data from major international organisations such as the UN, the work of several women's organisations of civil society constitutes the major source of compiled data regarding the practice of domestic violence. Importantly, the fact that are women's organisations of civil society conducting such a work has to a greater or lesser extent contributed for the data available to be sensitive to the existence of a gendered interpretation of numbers and stories.⁹⁸ Not only have organisations of civil society – for instance WLSA and Muleide – compiled the data available from the bureau desks as they also have provided counselling on how the reports should be filled. Additionally, extensive research was conducted throughout the country, hearing the stories of the victims of such practices. As confirmed by Isabel Casimiro, a prominent scholar, researcher and activist, during one of our meetings,

[t]he organisation WLSA conducts research on domestic violence since 1990, in an organised way. The Muleide also does it. And such a research was conducted in several provinces so it is able to provide an overall image of what is happening in the country (March 2012).

As noted by the executive director of the GDMR, Yolanda Mulhuini, several women's organisations were able to study the issue of domestic violence as well as to gather evidence regarding it by “contacting with its victims, during fieldwork, by holding seminars to discuss the issue and by obtaining feedback regarding the topic” (September 2014). As a result of conducting fieldwork throughout the country, and by

⁹⁸ This argument will be further developed in the next sub-section.

having personal access to the cases that reach the bureau desks at the police stations, organisations such as WLSA have been publishing extensively on the issue of domestic violence.

Finally, the first statement of Terezinha da Silva also indicates a certain degree of overture from the government to address the issue. Notably, it also suggests that the government grants a degree of legitimacy to the claims of the women's movement.

Overall, the effort of gathering and generating data regarding the issue of domestic violence was essential for the women's movement. It has allowed for the issue to be identified and articulated as a women's right issue. It was also essential as it provided concrete evidence to back the women movement's claims regarding both the prevalence of the practice and the fact that it was mainly exercised by men against women. Such efforts challenged the official undervaluation of the practice translated in the scarce production of official statistics as well as on the inexistence of a specific legal framework regarding the issue. Additionally, it broke strategic silences and contributed for producing knowledge regarding the practice, conditions that were necessary for the issue to be reconceptualised and latter discussed as a public issue. But if such findings provided indications on social trends regarding the practice of domestic violence, rearticulating its nature was of outmost importance for exposing its roots. The following sub-section will look at how the issue was articulated by the broader women's movement as a gendered one.

5.3 Gendering Domestic Violence and Building a Constituency

As noted earlier, looking at gender as both a category and as a process (Beckwith, 2005b) allows us to analyse how the political has concurred for the existence of a hierarchy of citizens, even when equality is formally guaranteed. In general social terms, such fact dictates to what extent who has access to multiple ways of exercising power, who is able to make decisions, and whose interests and necessities are prioritized. But looking at politics as occurring within multiple spaces, through cultural practices and discourses, allows a search for political actors "outside" the formal political sphere. Hence, by assuming that the cultural basis in which gender has been constructed are mutable it is proposed here that both the ways and the actors behind the articulation of domestic violence may have an impact in challenging such constructions and altering the gendered status quo. Considering the above then not only *who* articulates gender issues but also *how* such issues are articulated matters (see Cope, 2004).

5.3.1 Who Articulates Issues Matter

More than two decades after the transition to democracy and the Beijing Conference, Mozambican women continue to be the major force behind civil society's organisations working to increase women's rights and gender equality, while the men who do so are considered a rarity. During my research trips to Mozambique I met people from different spectrums of the society – e.g., academics, researchers, activists, politicians and students – who were interested in or dedicated to promoting women's overall status within the society. The majority of them incorporated women's rights or gender related concerns into their work. Besides sharing an interest in such themes another common characteristic was that they were in its vast majority women. If it is true that regarding the general topic of gender and political participation/representation the focus of my research is on women, I met many of these individuals in casual circumstances in which from the perspective of my research their gender was not relevant. In reality, the interest of the general civil society regarding women's rights and gender issues in general appears to be gendered⁹⁹, not in terms of being of the interest to all women, but in terms of being uninteresting to many men. If such a fact can be problematized in terms of a lack of a universal engagement with women's rights, or in terms of how interests are socially constructed, it can also be looked at in terms of how this "separation" provides a unique space for women to act as women. In fact, it grants a space where the construction of claims can be entirely made through women's perspectives.

Multiple interviewees noted that within the Mozambican society gendered based privileges are naturally attributed, and for those who hold them they are hard to give up. Hence, it is not generally expected to see men fully engaged with women's rights issues, especially those rights that contradict the gender status quo within the family. As a Frelimo's MP and member of the OMM blatantly resumes, the invisibility and naturalisation of the practice of domestic violence in Mozambique, as well as the lack of a generalised willingness to address it, is one of such issues.

It is a question of culture! Men have never felt the need; they never felt it [gender based violence] in their skin. 'That is a domestic problem, so solve it within your home'. There has always been that submission, women considered as inferior beings. Until we get out of that situation... it is very complicated (Zélia Langa, April 2012).

Even in the cases in which men chose to advocate for gender equality and the rights of women, they have to be ready to fight a battle that is often perceived as not being their own. As confided by an activist who chose to remain anonymous,

⁹⁹ Refer to Jude Howell (2007) for instance, for a discussion on the theoretical imperative of bringing gender to an analysis on civil society.

[a]s a man who favours gender equality and actively participates in that sense I face two situations, on the one hand I am perceived as a role model showing that it is O.K. for men to advocate for equality. On the other hand, other men perceive me as a traitor, or even 'less of a man'. I have lost many friends, but nevertheless made others. I have lost the respect from many people, but gain the respect from many others. But the fact is that gender equality is related to both women and men... This struggle for gender equality is not an easy one ("Carlos", December 2010).

There is a television educational show, targeting mainly men by inviting them to "reflect about the way in which society educates men and the result of such a socialization"¹⁰⁰, and which by several means – e.g., by phone or through internet social network – people can participate. During my interview with Gilberto Macuácuá – the mentor and presenter of the above mentioned television show, the founder of the initiative Men to Men, *Homem que é Homem*, and the coordinator of the Gender based Violence Programme for the HOPEM – he reckoned that

[i]n the beginning the majority of people participating in this show were women. Currently, women are still the majority but I have seen an increasing participation of men. It is small, and these topics are seen as women's issues, but things are slowly changing (February 2014).

Similarly to what happens within the formal political structures, regarding the activism of civil society, several issues are more than others categorized on the basis of gender and thus if related to "women's interests" less universalized (Howell, 2007). From the conversations I had with random people in Mozambique I could infer that there is still uneasiness for the generality of men to engage with issues coined as women's issues. Furthermore, as "Carlos" noted, a man's "legitimacy" for speaking on behalf of women is often questioned by both men as well as women (December 2010). The men who choose to mobilise for women's rights and gender equality are an exception to the rule and face increased social barriers because of being men, adding to what can be a vicious cycle that separates struggles for equality by gender. Nonetheless, far from arguing that men's engagement with the struggle for gender equality is unnecessary, I do intend to explore the ways in which women's involvement with the issue of domestic violence have worked for the overall advancement of women's status quo, one that resulted in "symbolic victories".

In effect, being women the main agents behind the articulation of domestic violence as a gender issue may be seen as representing a symbolic challenge (see Melucci, 1989) to the ways in which both the issue and "the political" have been conceptualised. Women's organisations were not only making a claim against domestic

¹⁰⁰ Part of the programme's official description as it is presented on the channel website.

violence and for further women's rights to be gained. Working together, such organisations assumed the position of agents, challenging social norms by articulating a gender issue, redefining it as a harmful practice – instead of one deemed as “natural” – and a violation of a universal set of women's human rights. Similarly, women as the main victims of domestic violence were also able to challenge norms by voicing what has been silenced and materialising what has been made invisible. As examples, amongst other publications regarding domestic violence and as a result of extensive research on such an issue throughout the country, the organisation WLSA has published two books¹⁰¹ in which real cases of domestic violence are exposed. In these publications the stories are told through the victims' own words, using narratives. Another example comes from the work done by the organisation N'Weti, which has produced several short-movies to illustrate with real stories several articles of the LADVAW. According to the founder and executive director of the organisation, Denise Namburete,

[t]he directors travelled throughout the entire country, searching for real stories of domestic violence. From six hundred stories we selected some and produced several TV reports with women victims of domestic violence, ten in total, recorded in several provinces. We heard some bizarre stories regarding domestic violence. We should have had some sort of psychological support provided to the directors because some stories were so strong that they were emotionally affected (November 2014).

Besides providing valuable data such publications and short-movies must be perceived as providing spaces for women – victims, witnesses, survivors of domestic violence as well as activists against domestic violence – to express their voices, challenging dominant cultural and political discourses as well as conceptualisations regarding the issue of domestic violence. It is proposed that by doing so women's organisations of civil society were able to generate new epistemologies regarding domestic violence through the combination of embodied knowledge (see Haraway, 1988), shifting its conceptualisation as something natural to a regulatory practice, from something invisible to an issue that affects women on a discriminative basis. Hence, as Diane Bell noted while referring to the importance of her feminist ethnographic work and the production of women's epistemologies, “[w]oman's knowledge I take to be grounded in her experience, practice, feeling, thinking and being. By privileging woman as knower, man is ethnographically decentred, and this is a profound political act” (Diane Bell, 1993: 30). Regarding the issue of domestic violence, women's organisations of civil society have privileged women as knowers by identifying them as

¹⁰¹ Refer to the bibliography for Arthur and Mejia (2006; 2007).

the main targets of such type of violence and by giving them voice as such. But as the main researchers and articulators of such an issue, women's organisations became themselves knowers. Having such a fact in consideration, the involvement of women's organisations as the main agents behind the articulation of the issue of domestic violence augments their importance in terms of their symbolic social and political impact on the overall women's status. In order to translate such a symbolic impact into a practical one, the manner through which women articulate the issue of domestic violence is relevant.

5.3.2 How Issues are Articulated Matter

The contact women's organisations had with the multiple cases of domestic violence occurring throughout the country informed their decision of gathering and compiling data, but also of hearing and sharing the stories of the victims of domestic violence. As noted by several researchers and activists, by doing so, not only the practice would become perceived as a systemic issue but its gendered nature would also be revealed. In fact, as previously referred, several of such publications include real stories of women who had suffered that type of violence, giving them a voice and simultaneously giving domestic violence a face. I propose that one looks at such an interaction of women's organisations of civil society and women victims of domestic violence as essential for reconceptualising the practice which had been culturally labelled as an "education method" into the "issue" and eventually the "crime" of domestic violence. By articulating the practice as a performance of power that discriminated women on the basis of their gender, the women's movement was able to produce a new type of discourse that challenged such a practice (see Young, 1997) as well as influencing the social and political perceptions regarding it.

Several interviewees mentioned the general ways in which the practice of domestic violence was often interpreted by the overall social sphere. As a result one is able to identify trends, being the first one the interpretation of domestic violence not as an issue but as a cultural, natural and even positive practice; the second one being the identification of domestic violence only as those extreme cases that make it to the news while considering an occasional punishment or prolonged forms of psychological violence as not falling into such a category; and the third identifying the practice of domestic violence as a private and personal matter, refusing to discuss it as an issue (see Arthur, 2004). As a result of such general perceptions, which have in common the fact that they fail to identify forms of violence that occur within the family as harmful, the practice had been ignored as an issue even in the cases in which it was happening, as several activists noted, to oneself. As a delegate of the organisation AMMCJ who preferred to remain anonymous noted

[t]he phenomenon of domestic violence is not new to our society. As a result of the inequality existing between men and women such phenomenon is accepted and thus justifiable. Within the family as an institution prevails the idea that it is natural for the man to be violent and that it is the woman's duty to avoid upsetting him (October 2014).

Having such facts in consideration, the way the practice of domestic violence is articulated matters in the sense that it affects the way in which the practice is perceived and, consequently, maintained or fought. As it has been demonstrated throughout this dissertation, the practice of domestic violence was reconceptualised as a gender based one, reflecting the unequal power relations within the family and the unequal power relations that regulate the broader social sphere. Such an achievement reflects the fact that the struggle against domestic violence is as much as a sociocultural struggle as it is a political one. Mostly, such a type of debate serves as indicator of how the social constructions of gender are either being politically challenged or reaffirmed, and by whom. Similarly, it serves as an indicator regarding who are the actors behind a substantive representation of women's interests (see Celis et al., 2008). I propose that three main factors were decisive to the success of women's organisations to being able to articulate the practice of domestic violence as a gendered and harmful practice, and to ultimately being able to achieve a law that criminalised the practice as a gender issue.

Firstly, the fact that the organisations of civil society acted in a concerted way – gathering efforts, combining expertise and defining responsibilities – building a strong case and scaling voices from individual to group. Such a fact explains the creation of the coalition TCV¹⁰², as well as the creation of a “Movement for the Approval of the Law against Domestic Violence” (MALVD).¹⁰³ While women's organisations of civil society worked in a concerted way along the struggle, such gatherings coincided more or less with periods in which the action of such organisations needed to be amplified in terms of resources and visibility. Such coalitions were well organised and tasks were divided according to each organisation's expertise. As explained by Denise Namburete of N'Weti,

[w]hat happened was that within the movement created for the approval of the law there were different organisations, each with its own abilities and responsibilities. We had for instance WLSA which brought us all the information we needed in terms of research, data, etc. The Fórum Mulher was responsible for the coordination while N'Weti did media advocacy and administrative work. The Muleide and the LDH [League for Human Rights] were in charge of providing counselling. We all had different expertise and abilities, different strategies and programmes, we acted in

¹⁰² The coalition TCV will be further discussed in chapter 6.

¹⁰³ The constitution of the MALVD will be further dealt with in chapter 7.

different areas but we all shared the same goal, that of ending domestic violence. To sum up, we realised that the complementarity between the organisations reinforced the cause as well as the *modus operandi*. As such we were one of the most well succeed campaigns of civil society (November 2014).

Similarly, each organisation had its own conceptual framework regarding the practice of domestic violence. Nonetheless, it was agreed between the elements involved in the struggle against domestic violence to adopt a common approach to it. As reflected in the affirmation of the researcher and project coordinator of WLSA, Maria José Arthur,

[w]e all [referring to women in the involved civil society organisations] wanted to fight against domestic violence, which was our agreed common goal. Nonetheless we had different points of view regarding the roots of domestic violence and consequently, different perceptions regarding the ways to end it. It was complicated but it was a necessary process and we were eventually able to reach the consensus that we had to consider domestic violence as a manifestation of inequality, of a power unbalance between men and women and consider domestic violence as part of gender based violence (October 2014).

The consensus reached between women's organisations made possible for the issue of domestic violence to be conceptualised as gender-based violence, and was fundamental to shaping the contents of the proposal of the law in a fashion that the formal sphere of politics would hardly do,¹⁰⁴ specifically as a type of violence resulting from gender imbalances and mainly perpetrated against women.

Such a point leads us to the second decisive factor, the identification of women as a constituency (see Weldon, 2011: 13). The goal of women's organisations was not limited to push for a legal instrument to criminalize the practice of domestic violence. If the creation of such instrument was of extreme importance, exposing the gendered reasons behind the practice of domestic violence against women constituted a focal point to the women's movement. According to multiple researchers and activists interviewed, being the practice of domestic violence one that is transversal to multiple social axes such as race, class, and age, it has a common denominator in the fact that it has been mainly perpetrated by men against women. Therefore focusing on the social axis "gender" and on "women" as the main victims was according to the general assumption of the overall women's organisations the key to effectively address such issue. As Maria José Arthur also pointed out, "[t]he issue of domestic violence must be tackled by more than words and texts. Above all one must recognize it as a practice deriving from a system that subordinates women" (October 2014).

¹⁰⁴ This argument will be built in chapter 7.

Such a fact is reflected by the arguments regarding the legitimacy of the proposal of the law against domestic violence drafted by a technical group¹⁰⁵ of women's organisations of civil society. While referring to that proposal during our interviews, elements of organisations mentioned that research on the practice of domestic violence was done throughout the country, hence women from the entire country were heard and able to voice their opinions. In fact, as it will be further discussed on chapter 7, as a result of such research women's organisations of civil society were firm in including references to gender in the draft of the law against domestic violence presented to be discussed at the parliament, as well as firm in maintaining the title of the law as "Law about the Domestic Violence Practiced Against the Woman", *Lei Sobre a Violência Doméstica Praticada Contra a Mulher*. An academic and activist for women's rights, during an interview, referred to the GMP as lacking a "feminine agenda", referring in contrast to the women's organisations of civil society as the ones initiating the struggle against domestic violence. By articulating the issue of domestic violence as part of a constituency demand, thus, by creating a "feminine agenda" the issue became amplified. Hence, rather than being solely articulated in terms of being a demand from a group of women's organisations of civil society the issue became articulated as a demand from *all* Mozambican women.

This heads us to the last factor, which further amplified the articulation of the issue to a universal claim. Domestic violence was articulated within a universal framework of gender based violence as a violation of women's human rights. Generally speaking, the existence of formal mechanisms and institutional structures seeking to guarantee and promote gender equality represent "symbolic gains" to the status of women within a society (Inglehart and Norris, 2003: 8). In fact, through the adoption of such formal normative mechanisms a state officially commits to such goals both at the international as well as at the national level, becoming formally – politically and/or legally – obliged to comply with the agreed principles at both levels (Banda, 2006). The United Nations Conferences on Women – especially the ones held in Nairobi 1985 and in Beijing 1995 – are indicated throughout the literature as important marks in the struggle for women's human rights throughout the world and particularly within the African context (Steady, 2006: 3). Specifically regarding such a geographic context, "[t]he merging of the development and human rights agenda in new rights-based approaches gave rise to a new normative consensus among governments and provided the conceptual basis for policies to advance women's status" (Tripp et al., 2009: 3). Likewise the struggle for women's rights in Mozambique was fuelled. Since Mozambique has bound to multiple international mechanisms related to women's

¹⁰⁵ Such a group was headed by the umbrella organisation Fórum Mulher and included the participation of other organisations of civil society such as the AMMCJ, the Muleide and the WLSA as well as technical elements of other organisations, lawyers, and social scientists.

human rights and specifically regarding violence against women as a violation to those rights, it created a national setting in which the articulation of the issue of domestic violence as a violation of rights does not only conform to the national legal framework but also is legitimised by a universal framework of human rights. In fact, as mentioned in chapter 4, the Beijing conference and the later adopted BDPA were recurrently pointed out by activists interviewed as a turning point for organisations of civil society mobilising around the issue of domestic violence.

In this sense, the women's movement was able to take advantage of several "symbolic gains" and articulate the issue of domestic violence within a broader human rights' framework, further increasing the scale of such an articulation. Nevertheless, such a universal framework is often perceived as part of a "foreign" framework, thus pointed out as inadequate for the Mozambican context. The next sub-section will deal with the multiple tensions that an international "presence" in Mozambique may represent, and how it relates to the articulation of the issue of domestic violence as an issue affecting the Mozambican society.

5.4 The Importance and Challenges of International Frameworks and Actors

The adoption of an international framework regarding women's human rights has favoured the articulation of the issue of domestic violence as a harmful practice that discriminates women on the basis of their gender, and consequently, the creation of a universal agenda regarding it. But in general terms, if the presence and support of multiple international organisations in Africa has favoured the creation of new agendas, including a women's human rights one, it has simultaneously been criticised and referred in the literature as representing a "second colonization" of the continent (Abdul-Raheem, 2000 cited in Tripp et al., 2009: 76). In Mozambique there is a visible tension between preserving culture and adopting rights, as well as between accepting international support while maintain a sense of national independency. There is also an inflated discourse regarding specific women's rights and the activism around it as a foreign imposition. In that sense, the articulation of domestic violence as a gender issue was highly criticised and opposed by multiple spheres of the society, not limited to but including part of the media, community leaders, and politicians. This is a tension that the generality of women's organisations involved in the struggle against domestic violence in Mozambique had to manage in order to be able to articulate the issue of domestic violence on its own terms.

5.4.1 A Supporting Women's Human Rights Framework

By recognising the issue of violence against women as a widespread phenomenon, one that not only violates women's human rights but also constitutes a public health and safety hazard capable of undermining the development and stability of societies, several international mechanisms stress the urgency of states to recognise it and address it. The world conferences held during the 1990 decade – such as the one in Rio de Janeiro held in 1992, the World Conference on Human Rights held in 1993 in Vienna, the International Conference on Population and Development held in 1994 in Cairo, and the Fourth World Conference on Women held in 1995 in Beijing – were key events that signalled such a global recognition (García-Moreno et al., 2005: 11). These events are mutually reinforced by several international mechanisms, such as the CEDAW, the DEVAW – both adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979 and 1993 respectively – and the BDPA – a product of the Beijing Conference of 1995 – which despite not having binding legal authority, constitute key stones in defining a global women's rights framework. Within the same line, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights recommended the elaboration of a Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights – materialized in 2003 and turned effective in 2005 – which also offers a solid framework in which the issue of domestic violence can be integrated.

Within the sub-regional context of Southern Africa, the recognition that inequality based on gender discrimination constitutes an enormous barrier to the region's stability and development, has lead the member states of the SADC to select mainstreaming gender as a *sine qua non* condition for the above mentioned goals. As such, member states have become legally bound to several mechanisms that constituted a regional institutional framework whose goal has been to improve women's status within the society and to enforce gender equality. The 1997 Declaration on Gender and Development and its 1998 Addendum on the Prevention and Eradication of Violence against Women and Children derive from such will to “promote closer regional cooperation and collective action as a means of fostering gender equality” (SADC, 1997). By reckoning that gender based violence is a widespread phenomenon within the region, the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development agreed in 2008 aims at eradicating gender based violence by setting six targets to be accomplished by 2015. The prevailing ideas imbedded in those targets are related to the creation or reformulation of legislation capable of dealing with gender based violence and the creation of institutional mechanisms destined to reduce the cases of such type of violence by half.

From the early period of its democratization process, Mozambique has formally committed to several international mechanisms related to gender equality, such as the

DEVAW in 1994, the BDPA in 1995, and the CEDAW in 1997. Regionally, in 1997, Mozambique ratified the SADC Heads of State Declaration on Gender and Development; in 1998 the SADC addendum on the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Children; in 2004 the Africa Union Solemn Declaration of Gender in Africa; in 2005 the Optional Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa; and in 2008, the Optional Protocol to CEDAW, and the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development (see table 5.1).

Table 5.1. Major International Mechanisms Specifically Dealing with Women's Rights Ratified by Mozambique

Year of Ratification	International Mechanism
1994	Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVAW)
1995	Beijing Declaration and Beijing Platform for Action (BDPA)
1997	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
1997	SADC Heads of State Declaration on Gender and Development
1998	SADC Addendum to the Gender and Development Declaration on the Prevention and Eradication of Violence Against Women and Children
2004	Solemn Declaration of Gender in Africa (African Union)
2005	The Optional Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (<i>Maputo Protocol</i>)
2008	Optional Protocol to CEDAW
2008	SADC Protocol on Gender and Development

Sources: N'weti, 2006 and UN Mozambique, 2013¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ See appendix G for N'Weti, 2006. The N'Weti report is available at: [www.iese.ac.mz/lib/PPI/IESE-PPI/pastas/governacao/justica/artigos_cientificos_imprensa/violencia_domestica.pdf]. The UN's article is available at [mz.one.un.org/eng/News-and-Events/News-Features/The-uphill-task-to-eliminate-violence-against-women-in-Mozambique-and-Southern-Africa]. Last accessed: May 2015.

The literature on democratic transitions notes that it is not rare that the adoption of certain instruments by states is related to complying with what is expected of democratic states – a sort of “bandwagon” effect meaning that it is possible that sometimes states join treaties as part of a trend (Brown Weiss, 2004) – rather than an actual willing to enforce its contents. A similar process has been noted in the literature regarding gender and processes of democratisation, where the promotion of women’s rights and gender equality by states is often linked to efforts of political legitimation (see e.g. Mama, 2013; Tripp, 2013). Regarding the case of Mozambique, and despite the reluctance to tackle certain gender issues, there is a degree of official willingness to increasing women’s rights. As several activists and researchers recognised during our interviews, such instruments do reflect a certain degree of political will. Nevertheless, such a will is also reckoned to be often limited by cultural assumptions regarding gender. As noted by Terezinha da Silva, from WLSA,

Mozambique has ratified the majority of the international instruments and has to a certain extent internalised such instruments. Such instruments are important to our struggle for rights, and gender equality. But this is a patriarchal society, men and women have traditional roles. (...) And many times under the name of tradition and culture, laws are not equally applied (April 2012).

Independently of the degree to which each of the above reasons has influenced the country to join those mechanisms, the fact is that by doing so, the Mozambican state has formally accepted the principles they embed, including those dedicated to framing gendered based violence, in which the issue of domestic violence is included. Although these instruments do not possess the ability to legally bind its signatory members, they offer a framework regarding the issue of violence against women that Mozambique has politically committed to. Hence, regarding the issue of domestic violence in specific, the importance of such mechanisms and their ratification by the state was mentioned by researchers and activists during our interviews. In reality, such instruments were referred to in a way that legitimised the articulation of a gender based type of violence as an issue, but also in a way that legitimised the claim for the criminalisation of the issue. Nevertheless, such international mechanisms are often perceived as a foreign imposition, a fact that ignites a debate between a human rights approach and a cultural relativist one. The following sub-section deals with some of the tensions generated by such a debate, while tackling some issues existing within organisations of civil society.

5.4.2 Funding, Agendas and the Problem with Feminism

As explained earlier in this dissertation, the Mozambican women's movement is composed by heterogeneous actors, which despite sharing a major commitment to advancing women's rights do not necessarily share the same characteristics or perspectives regarding every topic. Such a fact was made clearer when tackling topics such as "funding", "agendas" and "feminisms" during the interviews.

Clearly, the support of international actors regarding the overall efforts against domestic violence was extremely valuable. For instance, while making a comparison between the national involvement and the international involvement in terms of providing funding for addressing women's rights issues, the activist Gilberto Macuácuá confirmed that fairly frequently, organisations of civil society considerably depend on external donations as the level of internal donations is low. Regarding the issue of domestic violence, the activist confirms that civil society organisations were much financed by international donors (February 2014). In fact, the amount of national funding allocated to the issue of domestic violence has been indicated as very limited not only by activists, who multiple times pointed out that the government referred to them in order to disseminate the LADVAW, but also by an MP and member of the OMM as follows.

We still face difficulties in order to disseminate the family law as well as the law against domestic violence. It is difficult to have access to certain areas of the country. We also need to work accordingly with the culture of each place, in order not to clash with it. It demands a great effort but we are willing to do it. But it is true that we do not have funding for it all. That is, to translate it, to make adaptations, to clarify it (Anonymous, April 2012).

Hence, organisations have to rely on external actors, and in order to secure funding, they have to provide evidence of their own efficiency, reliability, and negotiating skills to both existing and future possible donors. Simultaneously, they also have to engage on a debate concerning their own agenda setting.

Regarding the specific struggle against domestic violence, the involvement of international funding was clear in terms of, for instance, sponsoring campaign materials used during the struggle against domestic violence. As examples, during one of our meetings, Terezinha da Silva of WLSA mentioned that the campaigning against domestic violence had the support of international funding from organisations such as Oxfam Belgium and Oxfam USA, shedding light on the topic (April 2012). International support to the same organisation was also identifiable during the campaigning efforts for the approval of the LADVAW, a fact confirmed by a report of the MASC¹⁰⁷,

¹⁰⁷ The report is authored by Vibe Johnsen (2010) for the MASC.

regarding its support to WLSA's advocacy and lobbying roles (see Johnsen, 2010). The MASC project is officially financed by the British International Development Department, by the Irish Cooperation (Irish Aids) as well as by the American Agency for International Development (USAID). Similarly, in a summary report of an external evaluation of the programme against domestic violence of the organisation N'Weti, it is acknowledged the support of the embassy of the Netherlands to such a programme (see appendix G, N'Weti, 2013).

Notwithstanding these references¹⁰⁸ to the existence of international support and funding granted to women's organisations in the literature and in reports, during the interviews such sponsorship was not a point voluntarily initiated by the majority of the activists.¹⁰⁹ Regarding the general context of NGOs in Mozambique, Stefano Belluci noted that those were highly dependent on external financial support, considering that such type of funding

(...) creates a sort of dependency of local organisations vis-à-vis external donors. In this situation, planning is very likely to be regulated from outside forces given that these donations are not always guaranteed in advance and in sufficient amounts. This incertitude makes it more difficult for NGOs to implement their policies and they are often forced to function on a project by project basis (2002: 19).

Despite referring the general NGO context and not specifically women's organisations, the latter are part of the broader universe of NGOs in Mozambique. Hence, some of the organisations working on women's rights – especially smaller ones, with fewer donors – may go through such types of processes. So avoiding mentioning the impact of international funding during the interviews could have been perhaps, a way to avoid the general assumption that donors may dictate calendars, or strategies, and even impose their own agendas on the organisations they fund. In effect, that was one of the critiques women's mobilisation against domestic violence had to face during the process, as many opposing arguments coined the struggle against domestic violence as a foreign trend.

In fact, despite acknowledging the importance of external funding, elements of the civil society were also keen in suggesting the ability of the major women's organisations, to maintaining an independent agenda vis-à-vis their donors. When asked about funding and the process of the law against domestic violence, the response of Maria José Arthur from WLSA, illustrates the above observation. "We did not have any support from the state for this law. We had plans as organisation and as

¹⁰⁸ These references should be considered as providing examples rather than an extensive list of the sponsors involved in the struggle against domestic violence.

¹⁰⁹ Nevertheless, when directly asked about such sponsorship, interviewees were open to broadly discuss the issue, reckoning the fundamental impact that the general external support had regarding the struggle against domestic violence in Mozambique.

coalition. The involved organisations took steps. We were able to get financing through our international cooperation partners” (October 2014). Such an independent agenda is fundamental while contradicting the general arguments that certain women’s rights issues and the activism around it are foreign impositions. As suggested by Denise Namburete, the executive director of N’Weti,

[t]he government is aware of the fact that in a certain way, donors try to use the civil society, but on the other hand we civil society have the chance to set our agenda. What happens is that since we look at the same development context we end up by reaching similar priorities what results in convergent agendas. But it is clear that they have a second agenda, one made far away from Mozambique, but more and more what we civil society try to do is to influence donors to sponsor our agenda (November 2014).

Maria José Arthur further elaborates on such an ability to influence donors to sponsor women’s organisations of civil society and to maintain an independent agenda while stressing the fact that

[i]n relation to international cooperation, the older organisations, with work conducted with the state, we are able to negotiate [with donors]. We have a plan and then we seek funding for that specific plan. Of course we only get the funding if they agree. As for the smaller organisations, they may be more easily influenced. But overall from the cooperation side there is an effort to avoid imposing agendas (October 2014).

Thus, if the international support is valued by women’s organisations in the sense that it provides funding to work on issues that otherwise would remain under-researched or improperly addressed, it is also important for women’s organisations to stress their autonomy in terms of their decision-making and agenda setting abilities. It was by balancing these two factors that the general women’s organisations were able to articulate the issue of domestic violence in terms of its gendered nature as well as an issue that is embedded in the general Mozambican cultural practices, rather than being a “foreign” issue and a trend imposed by donors. As previously mentioned, the debate around domestic versus foreign has served as an argument against advancing specific women’s rights. Thus, the way in which such demands are articulated and issues are conceptualised may be more or less prone to be termed as foreign and thus, to generate more or less acceptance or controversy from the general society. Such a fact is even applicable to women’s rights activists.

Interestingly, there is uneasiness for some elements of the women’s organisations or the organisations themselves to engage with women’s rights issues as *feminists*. In fact, if some organisations openly identify with feminism, such as Muleide, whose director Rafa Machava described as a “(...) a feminist civil society organisation”

(April 2012) others avoid the term. For some women interviewed – including several activists – working for women’s rights was one thing, but being identified as *feminist* is another. As noted by authors such as Amrita Basu referring to multiple national contexts,

[i]t is more surprising that women who championed women’s rights and empowerment reject feminism. (...) One reason that many women are uncomfortable with the concept of feminism has to do with the widespread belief that its inspiration, origins, and relevance are bourgeois or Western” (1995: 6-7).

This seems to be the case in Mozambique. During several interviews with researchers and activists I had the chance to specifically ask about their own identification as feminists. Such a query revealed the uneasy relationship that even women who are working with women’s rights and gender equality have with the term “feminist”. I have been told that coining someone as a feminist was something typical from the “developed world”, a “foreign import” (December 2010; April 2012). The identification with feminism is problematized by the activist Benilde Nhalivilo as

[r]eally hard. Being a feminist in a highly patriarchal society is actually a handicap. I have personally lost friends [male and female] and you also risk losing elements of your family so it is a hard choice, and not everybody is willing to make such choice. I used to get upset with that situation but not anymore. People usually say ‘you do not like men, you are not loved, etc.’ Even within the Fórum [the organisation Fórum Mulher] not all women identify themselves as feminists. Despite the fact that we all benefit from the work of feminists they are not ready to be identified as such (March 2012).

In terms of the generality of the African context this fact is explained by Aili Mari Tripp et al., as something reflecting the fear of compromising the project of national development as feminisms were seen as part of a “Western ideology of individual women fighting against men” (2009: 14). As for the specific context of Mozambique, the authors note how such reluctance towards the term “feminism” derives from Frelimo’s avoidance of using the term, something spilled over to the women’s league of the party, the OMM. For them, “Frelimo’s criticism of feminism has resulted in most women activists today avoiding use the term. Instead, they use ‘gender’ as an analytical tool, a descriptor of organisations, and as a substitute for the term ‘feminism’” (Tripp et al., 2009: 15). Hence, despite being possible to identify a feminist agenda within the women’s movement the issue of domestic violence was not articulated as a “feminist” claim.

This is illustrative of how gender issues are passible of being labelled as foreign simply by being coined with the term “feminism”, similarly to what happens when they

are perceived as a product of an international donor's agenda, or as a product of a universal framework of human rights. It is also illustrative of how complex the articulation of an issue such as domestic violence is in terms of making it able to overcome opposing arguments related to the debate "domestic" versus "foreigner". Nonetheless, despite such tensions the women's movement was able to reach consensus and collectively articulate the issue of domestic violence. Such collective articulation was fundamental for the issue of domestic violence to be acknowledged as a systemic one, and majorly affecting women.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter analysed the role of the women's movement as an articulator of the issue of domestic violence as one of the proposed three ways of measuring its effectiveness in representing women's rights. Challenging the general social and political inertia regarding domestic violence the women's movement was able to empirically prove the systemic nature of the practice. In order to do so it relied on the research that several organisations involved in the women's movement conducted throughout the country. Such facts were fundamental for the women's movement to be able to construct a group perspective. Such a group perspective allowed for a harmonised claim-making strategy, one that challenged social gender norms as well as the ways in which the political reflects and is reflected in such norms. By being able to collectively articulate a new set of values¹¹⁰ the women's movement broke the strategic silences around the practice, making it social and political relevant.

An extended notion of the political allows us to look at the women's movement as an avenue for women's representation. By identifying and building a constituency, the women's movement articulated the issue as part of the generality of Mozambican women's interests. The production of embodied knowledge and the mobilisation of women as women are seen as constituting political acts. In fact, as articulated by a women's movement, one which has strategically build common interests and identities, such claims become a reflection of the broad constituency women.

This chapter continued to consider several structural factors as important for the articulation of the issue of domestic violence in the terms of the women's movement. As a strategy for amplifying the articulation of the issue, the women's movement created coalitions in moments that proved to be crucial for the overall struggle against domestic violence. Such a strategy increased the visibility of the messages passed by the women's movement, but has simultaneously served to engage other actors in such struggles, including governmental institutions. Articulating the issue as part of a

¹¹⁰ Sidney Tarrow refers to a similar expression while mentioning forms of contentious actions, as "collective affirmation of new values" (1998: 5).

violation to women's rights was made possible by the national equality framework, and by the commitments the government has made to several international mechanisms regarding women's rights and gender equality. Additionally, the women's movement has been favoured by the availability of international funding and support to their cause.

Such a process though, is not free of tension. Balancing between making a grounded articulation regarding domestic violence in Mozambique and framing it within an international framework has challenged the women's movement in different ways. Such is visible in the definition of agendas as well as in the usage of what is perceived as a "foreign" term, "feminist". Feminist perspectives were important for the articulation of the issue and for its identification as a gender related practice. Nonetheless, such a term is avoided due to its connotation with a foreign way of perceiving the society.

All in all, the women's movement proved to manage such tensions. As discussed throughout the chapter it was able to successfully build a group perspective and articulate the issue as representing a constituency. New spaces for women were conquered in the process, and the women's movement was able to gain legitimacy to embark on a process of claim-making pushing for the issue of domestic violence to be included on the political agenda. The following chapter deals with such a process.

Chapter 6 Domestic Violence: from an Invisible Issue into a Political Process

6.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to answer the following question: *in what ways was the women's movement able to place the issue of domestic violence on the political agenda?* While addressing this question it focuses on the importance of space, both in terms of representing barriers as well as opportunities towards that goal. In terms of barriers, for the issue of domestic violence to become part of the Mozambican political agenda it had to become visible, it had to be discussable, and it had to be defined as illegitimate. As it has been discussed in chapters 3 and 4, the processes of the remaking of the Mozambican state as well as the processes of "remaking" gender have contributed to maintaining certain discriminatory issues invisible and unaddressed, especially those related to familial aspects, which are considered "private". The chapter begins by dealing with the efforts of the women's movement in diffusing a group perspective by persistently bringing the issue of domestic violence to the public attention. It analyses those efforts in terms of the women's mobilisation being able to break space boundaries by challenging the constructed public/private binary. Following, it relates space with opportunities. It presents the scales of opportunities and engagements that allowed for the women's movement to build its own space and to be able to make social and political claims, framing it in terms of a normative logic, and acting on behalf of a constituency.

Favoured by those opportunities the women's movement was able to produce a governmental response which was materialised by a set of mechanisms regarding women's rights and domestic violence. This response to the efforts of the women's movement materially proves the effectiveness of the latter's efforts in placing the issue on the political agenda, hence, in engaging formal political space with its own agenda. The rest of the chapter analyses such an engagement in relation to the existence of spaces of encounter and of the mobility between formal and informal political spaces. Finally, by acknowledging the abovementioned, it empirically rebalances the importance of the concept of "autonomy" as one of the *sine qua non* conditions for women's movements to advance their agenda (see Geisler, 2004: 143).

6.2 Domestic Violence as a Public and Political Issue

The general social perception regarding the issue of domestic violence has a particular relation with the space in which it occurs (see Meth, 2003). Connecting the practice to the "domestic" and "familial" as "private" in opposition to the "public" has rendered it invisible in many circumstances. In practice, regarding the Mozambican

context, this corresponded to the issue being politically overlooked and socially legitimised. As often women's movements claims are related to "private" hence "non-politicised" issues – hence, posing challenges to an imagined public/private divide – they are contributing to redefining boundaries and paving the way for issues such as domestic violence, to become discussable, both socially and politically. Those claims are also challenging power relations, and challenges to power relations may be perceived as able to spill over in terms of spaces (see Bonnin, 2000). Thus, the articulation of certain issues as public affairs is important not only in the sense that it draws public attention to such issues, but also because such an attention may produce an alteration of social values. In turn, such a fact may alter political priorities (see Rochon and Mazmanian, 1993).

One may look at such a symbolic merging of the binary "private/public" as positing challenges to what constitutes "political" in terms of actors, subject and also in terms of space (see England, 2003; Routledge, 1996). The formal sphere of politics is challenged as the hegemonic space where issues are made priorities and where politics happen (see Hirschmann, 1991). But one must also look at such a symbolic merging from a gender lens. By using public spaces for articulating private and gendered issues, women are amplifying the sound and visibility of their contentious efforts and extending their political space (Cope, 2004).

It is within this frame that this section analyses the efforts of the Mozambican women's movement in bringing the issue of domestic violence to the public attention.

6.2.1 Challenging an Imagined private/public Divide

During my fieldwork I was confronted with multiple testimonies of how the practice of domestic violence was widely disseminated and accepted as natural in Mozambique. Several research projects conducted by women's civil society organisations provide further evidence to the accounts I heard regarding the ways in which women and girls are targets of violent practices so widely accepted to the point that perpetrators as well as victims themselves, fail to recognize them as violence. But one case in specific illustrates how deeply entrenched and naturalized the practice is. Several people with whom I spoke to regarding the topic of domestic violence referred to this case that happened in 2006. A man had severely beaten his wife a fact that, according to a statement of a colleague of his, was completely private hence, should not be related to his public life. The particularity of this case is that the man in question was a member of the Parliament.¹¹¹ What these accounts intended to transmit was that

¹¹¹ While trying to find further facts related to this case I could only find a reference at the website of the women organisation WLSA. Cristina Monteiro (2006), the author of a small *op ed.* containing that information criticizes the fact that apart from being broadcasted on the morning news and three days later on a weekly newspaper, the *Zambeze*, this fact was never again publicly addressed nor mentioned. Available online at: [www.wlsa.org.mz/quando-os-

domestic violence, its practice and acceptance as a private matter, was generalised. This case also presents an example of how cultural assumptions regarding what is private and what is public, serve to silence practices that by happening at the “private sphere” separate them from any public or political scrutiny.

According to several activists, in order for the issue of domestic violence to be effectively addressed it had to become illegitimated and criminalised. Often two expressions were used during the interviews with activists involved in the struggle against domestic violence to refer to the intertwined steps taken towards such goals: those were “shaping mentalities” and “breaking the silence”. To those activists, the major steps towards such goals were, and continue to be, taken by women’s organisations. As noted by Rafa Machava – the director of the organisation Muleide –

[t]here is still a lot of work to do regarding the mentality of politicians, people in general, and even women. We are the ones who have to work for a change. We women’s organisations here in the city and our representations at the provinces, we work to make a forum for change (April 2012).

While taking those steps, various strategies were used. Such strategies were also mentioned during the interviews. In fact, besides publicly denouncing the issue, there was a focus on sensitizing the general public opinion and capacitating key agents regarding the issue of domestic violence. The activist Benilde Nhalivilo explains how such efforts of women’s organisations did more than just attracting public attention.

Regarding the case of domestic violence we decided to gather several associations who share the same cause and the next step was to target the press, in terms of aiming at capacitating the media to identify with our cause, or at least to not to distort our cause. We capacitated and sensitized the media, and then we proceeded to push for the integration of the topic of domestic violence at the public agenda. What we wanted was the issue of domestic violence to be talked about. Then, since the TCV was multidisciplinary, we divided into groups according to the specialization of each organisation. Some worked on drafting the project of the law, others conducted research, some others worked directly with the victims, others gave interviews, etc. In order to achieve something we worked really hard. Those were great conquests that we must not ignore (March 2012).

Such capacity building efforts were also mentioned by other activists regarding ministerial staff, police agents working at the GAMCs, and community leaders. For instance, Terezinha da Silva, from WLSA mentioned the sessions provided by the organisation to medical and juridical staff, organized “in order to influence them to

politicos-legitimam-a-violencia-domestica/]. (Last accessed: May 2015). See also appendix G for WLSA/Cristina Monteiro, 2006.

become more sensitive to gender issues, such as domestic violence, and to know how to act when confronted with those cases” (December 2010).

Women’s mobilisation in civil society challenged cultural norms regarding the construction of the private/public binary which has generally worked to define what is likely to be contested and addressed and what is to remain silenced and acceptable. By drawing public attention to a “private” affair, the public space was conquered as a space for contestation for further women’s rights, breaking the boundaries of the binary. An issue that has deemed as “private” has been spilled over to the “public” sphere, linking the individual scale to the national one. In fact, the mobilisation of women was able to gather support for the cause, a fact that has not only further extended their constituency – something proved as extremely valuable regarding the process of lobbying for the LADVAW as it will be discussed in the following chapter – but also extending to the general public the reconceptualisation of domestic violence as an unacceptable practice.

The television campaigns, the radio programmes, the books and small booklets published as result of the research conducted by women’s organisations throughout the country contributed to exposing the issue, but specifically served to shape the social perception regarding it. As mentioned by the activist “Maria”, the above have contributed “for victims to identify domestic violence, to see that it was legitimate to seek for help and advice, and now especially after the approval of a law, to denounce it” (December, 2010). In fact, one of the major causes referred by activists for women not to denounce their aggressors was related to social pressure. As confirmed by one of the interviewees, a women’s rights activist who chose to remain anonymous, denouncing cases of domestic violence has been generally perceived as unacceptable because “you were denouncing your husband, the father of your children, exposing the entire family to public attention and humiliation” (“Ana”, March 2012). Nonetheless, she added that the situation has changed in terms of people openly talking about the issue and even to feel that they should mobilise against it. I met “Bárbara” at a street market, she is a vendor. When telling “Bárbara” that my research included the approval of the law against domestic violence she voluntarily demonstrated being aware of the efforts of women in bringing the issue of domestic violence to the public attention, stressing the fact that currently, people talk about it. Despite the fact that for “Bárbara” I was a stranger and a foreigner, she was keen to talk about it, affirming that she found domestic violence unacceptable, and that she had actually helped a friend denouncing her husband (March 2012).

In fact, the feelings of “shame” that have been referred during my conversations with women as affecting victims of domestic violence – for instance, feeling ashamed of denouncing for the family’s reputation sake, or feeling ashamed for not being a “good”

wife – are being “relocating” to the ones who practice it and/or accept it.¹¹² The alteration of perceptions in regard to the issue of domestic violence is still dependent on multiple individual factors, such as for instance, the acceptance or resistance one has to cultural changes or one’s access to information which in turn is dependent on many other factors, for example, one’s geographic location or literacy level. Nevertheless, the argument that social perceptions regarding the issue of domestic violence as something “private” and “legitimate” have been generally altered majorly results from empirical evidence gathered in the course of multiple interviews and conversations during which such a fact was verbalised.

Further evidence is provided by the UN compiled data for the year 2011, for Mozambique, regarding the percentage of women who think it is justifiable for husbands/partners to beat their wives/partners. Despite the fact that a certain percentage of women still perceives domestic violence as justifiable, when compared with the data for 2003 regarding the same topic¹¹³, those numbers have decrease in a significant way (see table 6.1).

Table 6.1. Percentage of Mozambican Women Agreeing with Causes for Justifying Domestic Violence from their Husband/Partner – Comparing the years 2003 and 2011

Causes Agreed	2003	2011
Burning the Food	23.7	6.4
Arguing with him	33.2	12.3
Going out without his permission	36.8	8.6
Neglecting the Children	38.1	7.5
Refusing to have sex with him	34.4	5.8

Source: United Nations, 2015¹¹⁴.

¹¹² This “relocation” of shame also revealed to be important during the process of voting for the approval of the law at the level of the parliament, a fact that will be mentioned in the next chapter.

¹¹³ See also chapter 3, for a discussion regarding the data referring to 2003. Refer to table 3.3 for the percentages (without decimal values) which were sourced from the *UN World’s Women Report 2010*.

¹¹⁴ Data sourced from the report *The World’s Women 2015: Trends and Statistics* which includes the percentages for 2003 and 2011 with decimal values.

With the approval of the LADVAW, the practice of domestic violence is now considered a public crime. In legal terms, the categorisation of a crime as “public” means that any individual or institution, and not only the victim, may denounce the occurrence of the practice, and that once the charges are pressed they cannot be withdrawn (Chambal, 2013). In social terms, this means that what is happening in “private”, is also a public matter. That fact has been confirmed by Maria José Arthur.

That is noticeable, after so many years talking about it [domestic violence]. Before domestic violence was natural, it was not a topic, today it is on the news. Even those who do not agree with the interpretation we [women’s organisations of civil society] give to it, they do not dare to publicly admit it. Even if it is a matter of keeping up with the appearances no one dares to deny it as a crime (October 2014).

Even if several activists referred that they still face barriers regarding the struggle against domestic violence, women’s organisations were able to raise general awareness regarding the issue of domestic violence. As Graça Júlio of the Fórum Mulher mentioned,

[n]owadays a lot of people want to work on that topic [violence against women and domestic violence], and that was a result of the visibility of our actions. We were visible during the crucial moments of the struggle against domestic violence. We tried to be present wherever we could, to discuss the issue, to influence opinions, and to advance our cause (March 2012).

On the whole, a transformative effect – including “breaking the silence” and “shaping mentalities” – was possible. The women’s movement was crucial in bringing the issue of domestic violence to be publicly recognised and openly contested. At least in principle the practice has been reconceptualised as illegitimate and resistance to it is being legitimated. The mobilisation was also successful in taking the issue to be politically addressed. Besides the creation of mechanisms that would deal with the consequences of domestic violence – e.g., providing medical support for the victims – the goal was to achieve a law that would directly regulate the issue as a public crime. The above mentioned have contributed for the issue to become visible, and by serving as ways of influencing the public opinion it has also contributed for the discussion on the issue to be spilled over to the formal political realm. But other factors seem to have contributed for favouring the inclusion of domestic violence in the political agenda. The next sub-section turns to them.

6.2.2 Scales of Opportunities and Engagement

Several events were pointed out by women activists while recalling the steps of what became a concerted struggle against domestic violence. From such empirical contributions one is able to identify different scales of opportunities and engagement (see Staeheli, 1994) that interwove to favour the ability of a women's mobilisation in bringing the issue of domestic violence to the public light and to the political agenda. Such scales involved individuals who publicly complained about domestic violence but at the same time reflected the existence of a constituency; it involved the space created by several organisations who concerted their actions towards mobilising against the issue; and involved the existence of favourable normative settings and discourses at the national, regional and international levels. This observation proves that despite constituting a *sine qua non* condition for the issue of domestic violence to reach the public agenda such a mobilisation and the results achieved, would not be the same or even possible without the presence of several structural opportunities (see Tarrow, 1998).

At the same time that the organisation is able to organise outside of the constraints of party politics, as an umbrella organisation the Fórum Mulher gathers multiple actors from different spheres of the society such as "NGOs, state institutions, religious groups, unions, international organisations, international NGOs, party women's leagues, cooperatives, and peasants associations" (Tripp et al., 2009: 90). Thus, the fact that the organisation Fórum Mulher demonstrated an early concern with the issue of domestic violence may be seen as an advantage. In effect, the organisation opened the debate around domestic violence as a public matter. For instance, an article regarding domestic violence was included on the first issue of the Fórum Mulher's bulletin, published in 1993. This was the first of many, as articles regarding such a topic were recurrently included in several issues of the same bulletin. Quoting the words of the compiled memories of the Fórum Mulher, such a publication constituted

a space for debates regarding topics related to women's interests which also served as spaces for exchanging experiences amongst the members. Through the bulletin, women's organisations gained a space where they could transmit their opinions, using their own voices, something that they would hardly be able to have in other information organs or publications (Nhalivilo, 2008: 17).

But the organisation itself also constituted an opportunity to disseminating a women's rights agenda through its multiple members, who as mentioned before, included governmental institutions. Thus, the early and persistent inclusion of the issue of domestic violence on the organisation's publication might be seen as signalling the

beginning of a sort of socialisation for acting against domestic violence, one which amongst other aspects, aimed at integrating the issue at the public and political agendas.

Those changes at the national level accompanied the international context, which was experiencing a shift towards the further recognition of women's rights as human rights. Such a shift is regarded as provoking replicas at multiple national contexts, a fact also true regarding Mozambique. In fact, the Beijing Conference was constantly indicated by multiple interviewees as constituting the turning point for the Mozambican women's activism organising around the issue of domestic violence to officially address the issue as a public and political matter. According to the memoirs of the Fórum Mulher,

[t]he National Preparatory Conference to Beijing was held in 1994 (...). Such a process launched the Fórum Mulher at the national level, at the Southern Africa regional level, and even at the international level. Several preparatory meetings with the members of the Fórum [Fórum Mulher] as well as with members of other organisations of the provinces where the major topics affecting women had been discussed were held. During those meetings, one of the major discussions held concerned the issue of domestic violence which at that time was a topic rarely debated in public (Nhalivilo, 2008: 29).

But not only multiple women's civil society organisations were aware of the necessity of turning the issue of domestic violence a public and a political one. The contacts activists had with victims of domestic violence, while working on the issue *in situ*, proved that the issue affected women independently of other social axes, favouring the creation of a common cause for all women to mobilise for. Simultaneously, some Mozambican women in contact with those organisations were eager to publicly denounce that type of violence. Such a fact denoted that there was indeed a constituency to be built around the issue. As recalled by Terezinha da Silva of the WLSA,

[i]n 1994 when we were preparing to go to Beijing we invited women from several provinces for a preparation meeting. A delegation composed of more or less sixty people was going, including organisations from civil society, people from the government and Graça Machel, who was at that time the Minister of Education. We knew what we were going to talk about, but regarding violence, here in Mozambique we did not talk about it so openly. Anyway, we invited women from the provinces and during a meeting a woman from the country side stood up and said 'we should talk about violence, of what is happening in our homes. It is enough of being battered, we should stop it!' So when we got there [to the Beijing conference] and saw that more than half of the panels constituted by people from around the world were about domestic violence we realized

that it was time to open the game, seize the opportunity and unfold the problem (April 2012).

From that period on, seizing the structural opportunities and both inspired by the UN international instruments pushing for the inclusion of such a topic on the agenda, and by the accounts of women victims of domestic violence in Mozambique – who broke the normative silence to denounce their individual cases – several organisations dedicated to advance women’s rights and gender equality joined efforts in a more “established” way than before, to start influencing the public and the formal political agendas so that the issue would be considered a priority.

Notwithstanding “equality” being a constitutional right, courts in Mozambique continued to use legal documents dating from the colonial era, namely the Penal Code of 1886 (Reisman and Lalá, 2012: 13) which incorporated discrepancies regarding the actual principles of gender equality adopted by the Mozambican state. It was part of the government’s plan to reform the Mozambican legislation, one inadequate for an independent country as well as to a democratic regime. Such a fact generated opportunities for women’s organisations of civil society working on women’s rights, to push for legal changes towards the elimination of the inequalities between women and men that were still present in the Mozambican legal system. As the researcher and activist Maria José Arthur noted,

[t]he Beijing Conference was very important. Since the Mozambican government signed the Platform, the consensus document, we were able to start lobbying the MINT. We talked about the necessity of conducting a legal revision, not regarding domestic violence specifically, but regarding the family law and the penal code. The UTREL [*Unidade Técnica de Reforma Legal* – Technical Unity of the Legal Reform] was created, which was under the MINT, to discuss the proposals of the *Conselho de Ministros* [Cabinet Council] and take it to the Parliament. We then created the TCV, a coalition which gathered NGOs and governmental institutions. As a result of the TCV we begun to act upon the issue of domestic violence, and from then on, we begun to feel the need for a specific instrument to deal with that type of violence (October 2014).

In 2000, as part of the World March of Women, multiple organisations of civil society – under the umbrella of Fórum Mulher – marched in several provinces of Mozambique under the title “2000 Good Reasons to March: Equality on Family Law and Qualification of Domestic Violence as a Crime”. The Women’s March, held in Maputo, culminated with a letter being delivered to the then president of the Republic, Joaquim Chissano, demanding for the legal framing and criminalization of the practice of domestic violence against women.

Strongly influenced by those events, the necessity for addressing the practice of domestic violence became part of the government’s agenda. Simultaneously, the

organisations of the civil society involved in the struggle against domestic violence assumed the commitment of drafting a law against domestic violence. All of the above constituted multiple opportunities for women's organisations to increase their collective mobilisation efforts against domestic violence. But arguing that these opportunities have favoured such a mobilisation should not be seen as denying the agency of women's organisations in identifying the opportunities and taking the best advantage of them. For instance, as indicated by several interviewees, the act of contesting in public spaces was known to being able to produce specific outcomes, as the government "tries to avoid public tension".¹¹⁵ The necessity of preserving political legitimacy and social legitimacy has a general impact on the political agenda. Consequently, women's mobilisation contentious acts strategically targeted specific outcomes. Similarly, several women organisations involved in the struggle against domestic violence have had positive experiences of engagement of the state with their causes. Thus, engaging the state with the struggle was also part of the strategy to influence its agenda. The following section deals with those efforts.

6.3 Engaging the State with Domestic Violence

The binding of the Mozambican state to several international instruments of women's rights illustrated a certain degree of official overture to deal with the general issue of gender based violence. Additionally, several ministries were dealing with the issue of violence against women, for instance the Ministry of Health, the MISAU – which has dedicated areas to that specific issue – and the Ministry of the Interior, the MINT – which became responsible for the GAMCs, created in 1999 to provide assistance to victims of domestic violence at police stations and involving combined efforts from official structures, organisations of civil society and NGOs. Nonetheless, despite an apparent inclusion of the issue at the political agenda, the official response to those matters was as many activists indicated during our meetings, more related to paying assistance to the victims rather than dealing with the causes behind the practice, or than preventing it by criminalizing it. As it has been noted earlier, this suggests that certain issues tend to be neglected under the argument of the preservation of cultural constructions.¹¹⁶ Hence, the extent to which the issue of domestic violence has been included at the political agenda may be seen as dictated by cultural constraints. Additionally, the extent to which the issue has been *de facto* part of the agenda may be indicative of the extent to which it will be effectively addressed by the formal political sphere. In that sense, women's organisations of civil society can have a fundamental role in breaking such a cycle, in terms of both

¹¹⁵ Anonymous, OMM Secretary, March 2012.

¹¹⁶ Such a fact will be dealt with in the following chapter.

influencing the agenda for the issue to be included as a political priority, as well as in checking the extent to which the issue is *de facto* being addressed. In reality, women's mobilisation channelled resources to further increase the presence of the issue of domestic violence at the political agenda, both in "quantitative" terms as well as qualitatively.

6.3.1 Checking and Balancing the Agenda

Empirical evidence suggests that women's mobilisation against domestic violence produced multiple alterations to the ways in which the issue became part of the political agenda. Firstly, it influenced the creation of mechanisms designed to frame and address the issue of domestic violence. Besides the approval of the LADVAW and the creation of the GAMCs, the adoption of the first National Action Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women¹¹⁷, and the adoption of the Integrated Multisector Mechanism Service for the Victims of Gender based Violence¹¹⁸ were generally referred during the interviews conducted, as the main achievements in terms of national mechanisms regarding women's human rights in general, and specifically in terms of the prevention and elimination of gendered based violence (see also Loforte, 2015). Despite not being referred as the only cause behind the existence of such mechanisms – the obligation to conform to international appointments for instance, was also pointed out – the efforts of the women's movement acting against domestic violence were perceived as influential for the creation of these mechanisms. Secondly, the movement's efforts were also channelled to guarantee that the mechanisms created reflected a *de facto* engagement of the state with the issue of domestic violence by measuring their effective implementation. Finally, empirical evidence also indicates a continuum of engagement of women's organisations in maintaining the issue of domestic violence on the public and political agendas, even after the approval of the LADVAW. As the director of the Fórum Mulher, Graça Samo put it regarding the issue, "[w]e needed and we still need to change mentalities" (December 2010).

The National Plan refers to multiple forms of violence – physical, sexual and psychological – as well as to the cultural imbalances that root the issue of violence against women and "defines a set of actions and strategic measures that must be conducted by all sectors and actors relevant in this process (...) in a short term aiming at reducing the phenomenon and at the long term at eliminating it" (Republic of

¹¹⁷ The *Plano Nacional de Acção para Prevenção e Combate à Violência contra a Mulher*, hereby referred to as the National Plan. The first National Plan was to be implemented for the period of 2008-2012.

¹¹⁸ The *Mecanismo Multisectorial de Atendimento Integrado à Mulher Vítima de Violência*, adopted in 2012, hereby referred to as the Multisector Mechanism.

Mozambique, 2008: 3). While setting its specific goals¹¹⁹ its text also makes clear that the involvement of other actors is fundamental not only for such goals to be accomplished, but also for the National Plan itself to exist. It is specified that the National Plan was “(...) a result of the combined efforts of multiple governmental institutions and civil society (...)” (Republic of Mozambique, 2008: 4). This recognition suggests that there was a common will to address the issue of violence against women, but tells us very little on who in regard to such a National Plan, contributed to defining domestic violence as a political priority. Proof was given during the interviews with activists and researchers. The director of the GDMR, Yolanda Mulhuini points the existence of the National Plan as “resulting from a movement and the advocacy campaigns that the organisations of civil society have been developing” (September 2014). Similarly, when directly asked about the existence of the National Plan as a government’s initiative Maria José Arthur of WLSA confirmed that,

[i]t was a governmental initiative, but as a response to the mobilisation we [organisations of civil society] were doing. We were so many organisations involved. Even if each organisation had done only a little, together our work was impressive and it eventually influenced the government to put the issue of domestic violence on its agenda. It was one of the consequences of the pressure we were making in order for the law against domestic violence was approved (October 2014).

As for the Multisector Mechanism, its text makes a direct reference to the influence of the international framework created by the Beijing conference as well as to the influence of several NGOs, and the civil society in the identification of the issue of domestic violence as a political priority. Its text states that,

[i]n Mozambique, the recognition of domestic violence as a public issue may be seen as a result of the CEDAW and the post-Beijing policies in which the Government has assumed several obligations while signing the Platform, and to the efforts of several NGOs. Especially the National Plans for the Advancement of the Woman (2002-2006), (2007-2009) and (2010-2014), and the National Plan for the Prevention and Eradication of Violence against Women (2008-2012) (Republic of Mozambique, 2012: 8).

Additionally, the text acknowledges the initiative of the civil society in proposing a draft of the law against domestic violence to the parliament (see Republic of Mozambique, 2012: 8).

Secondly, there is a concern from women’s organisations of civil society to qualitatively influence the political agenda. In fact, despite recognising the importance

¹¹⁹ Namely to expand and improve the medical, juridical and psychological services to the victims of domestic violence; to reinforce the institutional capacities of providing education and information to the general public regarding violence against women; and to establish concerted intervention mechanisms against violence against women.

of the abovementioned mechanisms, several interviewees perceived them as insufficient for effectively addressing the issue of domestic violence in terms of tackling its roots and deterring possible cases. Alongside with campaigning efforts to gather general social support for the cause, the lobbying work demanded for an active engagement of the state with the issue of domestic violence, one that went beyond a mere “welfare” one. Such a fact demanded alterations not only in terms of the quantity of mechanisms produced, but also in terms of their quality. For instance, the GAMCs, perceived as a result of both the Beijing ratification as well as of the role of the women’s organisations of civil society¹²⁰ (Osório, 2004b), were specifically designed to receive the complaints of domestic violence cases at police stations. These bureau desks provide a place where in principle women can present their complaints free of any moral or social judgement. Nonetheless, several activists suggested that the lack of resources coupled with cultural assumptions that minimized the impact of domestic violence made the bureau desks operate under circumstances that undermined their primary role.¹²¹ As the activist “Maria” noted referring to some cases happening at the GAMCs, “[o]ften, women’s complaints are not taken seriously and are sometimes diminished. The same old arguments based on cultural expectations are used as an excuse” (December 2010). Identifying such a fact has led women’s organisations of civil society to working with the staff at the police stations, as mentioned earlier in this chapter. Simultaneously, the women’s movement demanded for the creation of a legal mechanism to criminalise the practice of domestic violence.

Additionally, the generality of mechanisms related to the issue of violence against women or domestic violence in specific were often pointed out during interviews with members of civil society organisations and, although more timidly by a few women MPs, as limited by lack of financing or lack of a political and social commitment to really challenge gender norms. Graça Júlio of the Fórum Mulher identified those limitations in general terms and regarding the issue of violence against women.

We do have some mechanisms; they are favourable but not sufficient. We still need to create further mechanisms so that we are able to achieve gender equality. I am referring to the cultural practices which

¹²⁰ Graça Júlio of the Fórum Mulher mentioned such bureau desks as both driven by, as well as influenced by women’s organisations of civil society. Graça Júlio stresses the latter’s role in providing sensitising seminars to the staff of the bureau desks (March 2012).

¹²¹ Conceição Osório (2004c) also refers to such limitations pointing out firstly, the lack of a female presence within the police forces, which is very important in the sense these bureau desks are located inside police stations and many women reportedly felt that the male officers overlooked the issue of domestic violence; secondly, the lack of resources necessary to immediately protect the victim – e.g. a vehicle to transport the victim to a hospital, and the fact that the GAMCs had a limited functioning schedule; thirdly, the socially embedded image of women as subordinated underestimate the type of violence they are subjected to at home, so these women are advised to accept it and endure it; fourthly, the lack of articulation between the institutions that are involved in the process, despite multiple organisations and governmental bodies being involved. Lastly, the author points the fact that the GAMCs lacked autonomy and, as it has been mentioned above, without a law that criminalized domestic violence they lacked the necessary legal means to effectively deal with the process.

perpetuate gender based violence, and that are very strong in Mozambique. We do have legislation now, but if we look at the official programmes and policies... they are limited and they need to be reinforced (March 2012).

Interestingly, this statement dates from 2012, meaning that the LADVAW was already an approved mechanism. I asked Graça Júlio if she felt that the mobilisation against domestic violence could be resumed now that the existence of the LADVAW was a reality. According to her, “[t]he approval of the law was not an end, but a beginning. By not being properly applied the law itself is a worthless effort, so we continue to try to influence the society in general and the official organisms that apply the law” (March 2012).

This leads us to the third point, which is maintaining the issue on the agenda. In fact, such a commitment from women’s organisations of civil society is clearly visible. As of 2012, when I last visited Mozambique, posters with messages against domestic violence were visible on the streets of Maputo. These were responsibility of women’s organisations of civil society who continued tackling the social roots of the practice and providing information on the existing law. Women’s organisations of civil society continue to organise debates and seminars regarding the issue, proving that there is a continuum in pushing for a qualitative inclusion of the issue on the public and political agendas. There are still television campaigns disseminating the practice and the law, television and radio programmes in which people can participate and pose questions regarding it. In one of our meetings Terezinha da Silva told me with admiration that she had listened to a radio programme recorded at a small village outside Maputo where women were complaining about being beaten. She stressed that “[t]his happened at a small village of the country side!” (April 2012). Another noticeable aspect is that the issue is talked about on public education sites such as universities and being received by students with interest. As Isabel Casimiro noted during one of our interviews,

I invited the founder of an association for women victims of domestic violence to one of my lectures at the university. You know, I invite the masses also, not only ‘doutores’.¹²² She talked about domestic violence and her own situation, how she decided it had to stop, ended her marriage and founded the association. My students loved the lecture, and they really liked her (March 2012).

Overall the efforts of women’s organisations to influencing the political agenda regarding the issue of domestic violence – which included influencing the creation of mechanisms to address the issue; checking their effectiveness; and confirming the permanency of the issue on the agenda – has also resulted in indirect gains for the

¹²² A term used in the Portuguese language meaning “doctor” to refer to people who have a university degree or someone who occupy a higher professional status.

overall women's movement in Mozambique. The role of women's organisation of civil society as the main catalyst for the issue to become public and politically addressed is acknowledged both by the general society as well as by governmental elements. Such a commitment may explain the social and official perceptions concerning the political role of the women's organisations of civil society regarding the issue of domestic violence. I often visited a craft market in Maputo and I began to talk to a group of women to whom I ordered some articles to take home as souvenirs. They thought my work was important because the act of the "man beating the woman" had always happened but women kept silent. Initially, I had abstained myself to referring to women's organisations of civil society as the main focus of my research. But they specifically referred to the work that "women" have been doing – referring to the marches and the posters in specific – as important because as one said, now her daughters know about domestic violence and that it is punished by law (April 2012). On another occasion, I met "Berta", who worked at a café shop where I often had lunch. I had arrived to Maputo for my exploratory visit and was eager to talk about the topic of my research. One day she showed me something she had at home, "something useful to my work" and that was a small booklet with the text of the law that was published by the Fórum Mulher¹²³ (December 2010). Maria José Arthur described the campaigns made by women's organisations with enthusiasm, characterising them as intense (October 2014). Such campaigns were not only successful in bringing the issue to the public and political agendas, but taking the above facts in consideration, they also resulted in a general perception that the issue was made public and a law was made a reality because of women's mobilisation around the issue of domestic violence.

The interviews with activists and MPs made clear that the engagement of women's organisations of civil society persists as the main engine keeping the issue of domestic violence at the public and political agendas. The activist Gilberto Macuácuá noted that

[t]hrough the MMAS the government has created a communication strategy for disclosing the law, but such a strategy had not yet been made public. The WLSA is doing it, our show 'Homem que é Homem' [a Man that is a Man] is also doing it. The civil society is still the main stage where the issue and the law are talked about, without a shadow of a doubt. Until today, the civil society is the more committed and the main contributor regarding the issue [domestic violence] (February, 2014).

During our interviews, it was common for women MPs to refer to their role in publicising the LADVAW, in promoting dialogue with judges and local authorities but there were some cases in which the role of women's organisations of civil society was

¹²³ Refer to appendix G, Fórum Mulher, 2010, to find more information regarding the content of the booklet.

directly mentioned. In a few cases, besides recognising the essential role of the organisations in question regarding the overall struggle against domestic violence, some MPs suggested that they actually relied on their efforts to overcome some barriers regarding spreading the word about the issue and the LADVAW, or even to provide assistance to the victims of such a practice. At a certain point of our interview, an MP from the Frelimo party, while referring the importance but also the limitations of the LADVAW, noted that NGOs – in general terms – ought to open shelters for women victims of domestic violence (“Anonymous a)”, April 2012). If for this MP the main reason behind this delegation of responsibility on the organisations of civil society is a consequence of the limited funding available, for several activists interviewed, the reason is more related to a limited political commitment as the law has been mainly publicised by women’s organisations.

The following statement of Graça Júlio contributes to understanding how the role of women’s organisations of civil society vary between being complemented by the official efforts – not complementary of those efforts – and very often being the only alternative for the law to be known. Either way, it indicates the efforts of women’s organisations of civil society as the main disseminators of the LADVAW.

Our little brochures help. They are the first step (putting it this way) for the law to be disseminated. When there is no access to the law in some places we distribute our brochures. We even have several district attorneys that come to us asking for resources, by their own initiative. There are also people who try to publicise the law, for instance, there is this attorney at a district court. She works with us, she is really proactive. The attorney’s office took the initiative to include in its plan the debate and disclosure of the LADVAW, as well as women’s rights issues (March 2012).

These facts confirm the importance of women organising in civil society in continuously spreading the word on the issue of domestic violence. Notably, they also confirm the movement’s importance as representative of a constituency, and the acknowledgment of the formal political sphere regarding the role of the organisations involved as legitimate actors.

In fact through campaigning efforts, women’s organisations were able to attract the attention of civil society, of the media, of official structures as well as of the international community. Those efforts contributed for the practice of domestic violence to be acknowledged as a public issue, one which ought to be officially acknowledged. It also contributed to the adoption of several mechanisms to address it, and ultimately to the approval of the LADVAW. Such direct conquests meant that women’s collective mobilisation resulted in the politicisation of the issue of domestic violence, and the

recognition of the organisations involved as legitimate actors in the struggle for women's human rights.

6.3.2 Building Common Grounds

The entire process of politicising the issue of domestic violence was marked by moments of contestation, but also by moments of collaboration between formal political actors and the women's movement.¹²⁴ If on the one hand, mobilisation included organising marches, delivering petitions and making demands, on the other hand such organisations seek to engage formal political actors with the cause. Based on empirical evidence I propose that one looks at the latter strategy as favouring the creation of spaces of encounter, from where a "tradition of cooperation" emerged. Such an engagement proved to influence the integration of the issue of domestic violence in the public and political agendas, but it also served to legitimise the role of the women's organisations mobilising against domestic violence.

An important factor that seems to have highly influenced such an agenda was the organisation of the coalition TCV in 1996. The campaign with the name "Nothing Justifies Violence", *Nada Justifica a Violência* was able to draw the attention of the media, but also to engage state institutions with the cause. In fact, although initiated by organisations of the civil society, the TCV also seek the inclusion of multiple actors. Such a fact was mentioned by several activists as extremely positive in terms of engaging several official organs with the issue of domestic violence. A report by the Fórum Mulher and SARDC WIDSAA corroborates this point while stating that,

[t]he coalition of TCV represented a positive experience between civil society and state institutions, namely the Ministry of Interior [MINT], Ministry for Coordination of Women and Social Affairs [the predecessor of the MMAS] and the Ministry of Health [MISAU]. Each of these organisations included actions to fight and restrict violence against women, specifically domestic violence, in their sectorial plans (2006: 46).

In fact, by including state institutions, the TCV has initiated a tradition of cooperation between women's organisations of civil society and formal political actors regarding the specific process against domestic violence. During the interview with Maria José Arthur, while talking about the ability of women's organisations of civil society in maintaining an independent agenda regarding its donors, the researcher and activist made a distinction between "older organisations, with work conducted with the state" and "smaller organisations" in terms of their negotiating capability (October 2014). The distinction suggests that cooperation with the formal sphere of politics is not

¹²⁴ Authors such as Marco Giugni and Florence Passy (1998) for instance, also point the relations between "modern movements" and the state as marked by both conflict and cooperative moments.

uncommon, but it also suggests that antiquity and cooperation are legitimising factors. In fact, regarding the struggle against domestic violence, the “work with the state” was conducted in various forms. As noted before, several interviewees mentioned the *acções de formação e capacitação*, meaning training seminars conducted by several civil society organisations to institutional staff. An example was provided by an advisor to the MMAS who noted that “[t]he organisation Fórum Mulher – with the support of the UNFPA – has a partnership with the Ministry for Women and Social Affairs [MMAS] regarding formative seminars” (December 2010). These seminars allowed women’s organisations of civil society to capacitate the staff to work on gender related issues, to alert consciousness regarding women’s rights, and to a certain extent, to campaign and lobby for their cause. It was also referred during multiple interviews with activists that regarding the issue of domestic violence, cooperation between women’s organisations of civil society and the MINT became regular. As a result of such a tradition of collaboration with the MINT, women’s organisations pushed for the further inclusion of the issue at the ministry’s agenda, obtaining practical results in terms of improving the services provided to the victims of domestic violence at the GAMC (see Fórum Mulher, 2008).

Additionally, when asked about the existence of cooperation between the government and women’s organisations of civil society regarding the LADVAW, the executive director of the GDMR, Yolanda Mulhuini, confirmed its existence.

You do not approve a law in the blink of an eye. We have come a long way since the beginning of the process against domestic violence. The lack of consensus was predictable. Especially if we consider that such a lack of consensus also existed amongst organisations working on the field of women’s human rights. Nonetheless, that same process favoured the creation of a space which served as a ground for achieving understanding. Such a fact in turn, has facilitated the elaboration of the preliminary draft which was submitted to the *Assembleia da República*” (September 2014).

Those spaces of encounter favoured the establishment – or in some cases, the reinforcement – of personal networks as well as the political socialisation of elements within those institutions. In fact, the ability to work through the official structures seemed more dependent on the identification of key individuals within those structures with the cause against domestic violence rather than on the structures *per se*. For instance, during a few interviews with activists I heard comparisons between the former head of the MMAS and the one heading the ministry at the time¹²⁵ in terms of influencing the degree of the MMAS’s availability to work with women’s organisations of civil society. Regarding the specific issue of domestic violence, the following statement

¹²⁵ Referring to the ministers in charge in 2010 and prior to that period.

of Maria José Arthur suggests the importance of building alliances with key individuals, rather than solely relying on an official structure as a whole.

The organisation of the group *Todos Contra a Violência* [TCV] initiated a tradition of collaboration and cooperation with the MINT, through the Bureau Desks for Women and Children. These bureau desks had been created in 1999 as a result of the Beijing Platform agreement as a place to receive victims of violence. But one thing we must notice, the MINT is a 'heavy' institution (...). Therefore, the cooperation existing between us – women organisations of civil society and the MINT – was more of a relation with certain individuals rather than with the Ministry itself (October 2014).

By also being involved in providing assistance to cases of domestic violence as a member of the OMM – which was also part of the TCV – Zélia Langa, who is also a Frelimo's MP, recalls the actions of the TCV throughout our meeting. Such a fact denotes her identification with the programme and her engagement in the struggle against domestic violence.

The TCV included many organisations. There, we began to study a way to make the law. We conducted fieldwork and collected data. First we worked at the field level, working with concrete cases. From there we conducted studies and showed them to the society (April 2012).

This simultaneity of positions may be seen as representing a privileged bridge between the government and the women's organisations of civil society involved in the struggle. Having this in consideration, one must look at the importance that networking and personal relations may have in terms of women organising in civil society in advancing women's rights and gender equality. The spheres of formal and informal politics may not be as rigid as one may assume, allowing women to "travel" between those spheres, deepening their lobbying strategies, and further extending the political spaces available to them. It is precisely with those aspects that the next point will deal with.

6.3.3 Existing Flows

Being aware of the general reluctance in contradicting certain gendered cultural practices in Mozambique – a fact that is spread to the decisional arena –, the efforts conducted by the women's movement in counteracting that tendency, and the latter's success in advancing women's human rights, one may assume that those organisations' complete autonomy from the formal sphere of politics would be the major characteristic contributing to such an outcome. In fact, influenced by the literature that perceives the civil society's autonomy from state as proportional to the

success of the latter¹²⁶ it came as an intriguing fact finding early in my research, that the lines that would supposedly limit the boundaries of the state and the boundaries of civil society working on women's rights and gender issues in Mozambique were less rigid than I expected. While analysing that fact regarding the process against domestic violence such an assumption was confirmed. Those lines were flexible, especially at the level of individuals. In general terms, one may say that the women's movement was able to maintain a substantial degree of autonomy regarding formal political institutions. Simultaneously, linkages and flows between elements of the women's movement and the sphere of formal politics could be observed in general, and could be observed during the struggle against domestic violence. Not only were several women's organisations in civil society able to form alliances with formal political institutions – such as exemplified by the organisation of the TCV – but there are multiple cases of simultaneous and, or intermittent participation of individuals in both formal and informal spheres. Those cases may be seen as providing evidence that not only autonomy must not be considered the *sine qua non* condition to effectively challenge the state, but also that women's political participation is happening both inside as well as outside the formal sphere of politics. While using the case of the struggle against domestic violence this sub-section deals with these facts. Additionally it provides further evidence regarding the ability of women in reconfiguring politics in Mozambique.

In individual terms, regarding the issue of women's rights and gender equality my mind set was prepared to find two distinct spheres: women in formal politics, and women organising in civil society. I was expecting to find cases of opposition and cases of collaboration between women in formal politics and women organising in civil society. I was also expecting examples pointing to the fact that both spheres would obviously share similar goals regarding the advancement of women's status within the society. Eventually, while thinking of bridges between both spheres I also found the possibility of a flow, one that contributes to rebalance the focus on autonomy by looking at the flexibility of boundaries and the importance of networks regarding the relationship between women civil society organisations in Mozambique and the formal decisional arena. While crossing data on the individuals that I considered to be fundamental to contact during my research trips to Mozambique I encountered situations in which several individuals had been engaged with both formal and informal spheres of politics (see also Disney, 2003).

The interviews I was able to conduct further confirmed that reality, that is, several examples of women that have occupied multiple spaces, intermittently or simultaneously. For instance, Isabel Casimiro is a prominent feminist activist, scholar

¹²⁶ Aili Mari Tripp's (2000) work on women and politics in Uganda is an example. See also Aili Mari Tripp, Isabel Casimiro, Joy Kwesiga and Alice Mungwa (2009) for a broader regional context, including the case of Mozambique.

and researcher on women's rights whom, from 1990 to 1995, has also served as an MP for the Frelimo party. One of my interviews to an MP from the Frelimo party, Zélia Langa, revealed an active member of the OMM – an organisation that is also a member of the organisation Fórum Mulher – and a member of the group TCV, hence, a case which one can consider as falling within the concept of “double-militancy” (Davies, 1983: 878). As recalled by the MP,

[w]e started to work with the women. I am a member of the OMM, and I was a secretary for the city of Maputo. It was from there [the OMM] that we formed the group ‘All against Violence’ [Todos contra a Violência – TCV] and it was from that group that we lobbied against violence. We worked with women from the grassroots, the OMM worked with women from there [indicating a remote place], the women from the *povo*.¹²⁷ First, women did not even know that they were suffering from violence, so we started to inform them about it (Zélia Langa, April 2012).

It was clear during this interview that the MP although being an element of the formal sphere of politics – and she was initially contacted for an interview under such a category – also identified herself as a member of the TCV, a role that she stressed as follows.

If for our government the family is the cellule of our society, the family has to be prosperous so that our country is also prosperous. Many people would say ‘such a problem [domestic violence] should be solved at home’. No! Our advocacy work stressed the argument that domestic violence is indeed a crime! If some cases of domestic violence actually result in murders how can that type of violence not be considered a crime?! (Zélia Langa, April 2012).

When asked about the specific lobbying work regarding the LADVAW her answer clearly denotes a lack of separation between the “woman MP” and the “woman activist”. “Since we all [OMM and TCV members] belong to the Fórum Mulher our lobbying was done through it to the GMP, and we have done a hard work” (Zélia Langa, April 2012).

This type of interview was not an isolated case. In fact there were other MPs – who were being interviewed as such – who told me about their affiliation with women organisations and whose actions as MPs and as activists for women's rights are somehow intertwined. As the MP for Frelimo Nhielete Mondlane indicated,

[a]t the time of the discussion of the law I was at the Fórum Mulher and I am well aware of the resistances found regarding the law against domestic violence. What I think is that, at the level of the *Assembleia da República*, there was a will to embrace the proposal of the law, but there

¹²⁷ Italicized here. Portuguese word used to referring to the populace or to people from the grassroots.

were also reservations from the part of several MPs, especially men, who argued that the law should include men as well and not only women. So we had to convince the plenary that the law should be specifically directed to women as they are the main victims. It demanded a considerable amount of lobbying work (April 2012).

Several women MPs were obviously aware of the importance for my work of listening to their experiences as MPs, nonetheless, influenced by the topic of my research, they started their interviews stressing their participation in the Fórum Mulher as an organisation of the civil society, or stressing their engagement with actions against domestic violence conducted under the wing of the OMM. For instance, the OMM was part of the MALVD meaning that, in principle, it integrated efforts for the law to be approved. Consequently some of the questions I had prepared for them as MPs, gave place to questions I had prepared for elements of the civil society. The answers revealed concerns as well as strategies used to lobbying for advancing an agenda against domestic violence and ultimately for pushing for the approval of the law against that type of violence, that were similar to the ones indicated by members of organisations of the civil society.

In the light of these events, the focus I initially attributed to the concept of autonomy was being empirically questioned. Members of formal political institutions occupied social and political spaces that are commonly occupied by elements of civil society's organisations. As mentioned earlier, the opposite case – that is, members of the civil society occupying places within formal political institutions – was also identified. While these facts do not necessarily mean that in general, Mozambican women's organisations of civil society lack decisional autonomy from the state, it also does not mean that they are completely isolated from other actors and from the formal sphere of politics, rather the opposite. Concerning the specific case of the collective action against domestic violence, despite the existence of occasional lack of understanding between, for instance women MPs and the women's movement, there was as seen above, occasional cooperation. Such a cooperation goes beyond "associational linkages", generally characterized as situations in which "independent women's organizations, with their own goals and institutional autonomy, choose to form alliances with other political organizations with which they are in agreement on a range of issues" (Molyneux, 1998: 228) to include individual linkages.

As abovementioned, if in the specific case of the struggle against domestic violence several women's organisations of civil society have opted for forming alliances with other actors, those alliances' effectiveness was sometimes dependent on individuals rather than on the organisations *per se*. As confided by Terezinha da Silva while we were talking about the role of a specific ministry on the process of the LADVAW, "[t]he [ministry in question] was supportive, yes, and then [the name of a

person that has been involved in the struggle for women's rights] was working there so she was able to make a certain degree of internal pressure" (April 2012).¹²⁸

By using individual networking and the ability to enter multiple political spaces, women working on the issue of domestic violence were able to further lobby for their agenda by balancing a fundamental degree of autonomy with a certain degree of cooperation. Those individual flows not only constituted opportunities for the overall women's movement to advance a common agenda regarding the issue of domestic violence, but also to conquer further political space available to women in general. On the other hand, women in formal politics who collaborate with or identify with the work of organisations of civil society may also profit from those flows, as they may create common or hybrid spaces that will be less affected by the gendered constructions that are usually pointed as constraining their representative role in formal politics.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter analysed the role of the women's movement as an agenda setter regarding its ability to place the issue of domestic violence at the centre of the political agenda. This ability constitutes another way of measuring the movement's effectiveness in representing women's rights. By challenging the public/private divide in multiple ways, the women's movement not only expanded the spaces available to itself, but also to women in general. This was achieved by drawing public attention to an issue that had been deemed as "private", hence, invisible. Contentious efforts were conducted using public spaces. Producing television shows, publishing newspaper articles, distributing pamphlets, spreading posters, and marching on the streets were all part of a strategy for getting attention. The use of public spaces has at least two meanings. Firstly, it produced a political effect. As noted earlier the government showed signs of avoiding that type of public pressure, and responded – even if partially – to the claims of the women's movement. This chapter demonstrated that the efforts of the women's movement had a quantitative and qualitative impact while placing the issue of domestic violence in the political agenda. Several mechanisms were adopted and the criminalisation of the issue was also included at the political agenda. Besides being made public, its social meaning shifted from a legitimate practice to a violation of women's human rights. Secondly, the use of public spaces had a symbolic meaning as these were used to show women's agency in disseminating a cause on behalf of a women's constituency. A general alteration of social values was achieved and feelings of "shame" were relocated from the victim to the perpetrator. In principle, discussing the practice, as denouncing the practice, became legitimated.

¹²⁸ For ethical reasons the identification of the ministry and the name of the person are not disclosed.

The women's movement also sought common spaces where a governmental engagement with the issue became possible. Empirical proof is provided for example, by the collaboration between several women's organisations of civil society working with the police staff at the GAMCs, a fact made possible through the MINT. Additionally, it was demonstrated that existing flows between "formal" and "informal" spaces proved to favour the inclusion of the issue at the political agenda. Such a fact adds to the theoretical problematisation of the concept of autonomy as a *sine qua non* condition for women's movements to advance their agendas.

Concluding, the movement has gained legitimacy, both as a social actor as well as a political one. Aiming at immediate measures, but also at long-term institutional alterations, the movement embarked on a set of social and political processes that were able to challenge the legitimacy of the practice of domestic violence as well as of the silences that it generated. The following chapter deals with the efforts of the women's movement in translating those gains into a legal norm.

Chapter 7 Producing and Shaping a Legislative Mechanism against Domestic Violence

7.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses the following question: *was the women's movement able to shape legislative outcomes regarding the issue of domestic violence against women?* As stressed earlier in chapter 4, the political should not be seen as producing universal concepts and neutral categories, instead, the political – its practices, institutions, and actors – should be seen as gendered. Hence, in general terms, one may easily assume that gendered expectations regarding both men and women affect their participation and their roles in politics. Additionally, one may also assume that the political – i.e. its mechanisms and structures – is able to affect the existent gender hierarchy, contributing to its perpetuation or, contrarily, to its elimination. The Mozambican legislative process regarding a mechanism against domestic violence against women provides an empirical example of the above. Due to the official reluctance regarding the criminalisation of the practice, several organisations of the civil society, headed by the Fórum Mulher, gathered to draft a law against domestic violence. Such an event is the result of a long term process of struggle against domestic violence – one which women's activism in civil society pioneered and continued – and constitutes a ground breaking event as it was the first time that the Mozambican civil society has engaged in a process as quasi-legislators.

The chapter empirically demonstrates how, throughout such a complex process, the women's movement was able to gain social and political legitimisation to draft the law, and to ultimately pressure the parliament to approve the law 29/2009. Although other factors can be identified as having had a positive influence regarding this outcome, women's activism has been identified as the *sine qua non* condition for the law to exist. While in practice this means an addition to the overall women's human rights mechanisms in force in Mozambique, in theory such findings suggest that women's movements may constitute informal avenues for the substantive representation of women.

7.2 The Civil Society and the Making of a Law against Domestic Violence

If the Beijing Conference marked a turning point regarding the issue of domestic violence in Mozambique, so did the World March of Women held in 2000 in Maputo. The march was indicated by several interviewees as a mark for women organisations of civil society to organise as a multidisciplinary group also involving governmental bodies – such as the MMCAS –, and to initiate plans for drafting a proposal of a law

regarding the issue of domestic violence. In 2004, an editorial of the bulletin published by the WLSA, the *Outras Vozes*, reflects the urgency felt by the movement to fully focus on the advancement of a law against domestic violence. As expressed in the publication,

[e]ach initiative taken regarding the topic of violence against women faces a serious loophole, which is the inexistence of a legal frame that allows any intervention to become more effective. At the legal level we think that this is the priority and this is the moment to design programmes for action done in partnership, gathering organisations and NGOs with competences in several areas (WLSA, 2004: 1).

It was in fact in 2004 that the first draft of the LADVAW was produced. Several women's organisations of civil society identifying the opportunities mentioned earlier in this dissertation, gathered resources as a group and served as quasi-legislators within this process. This was a ground-breaking event in Mozambique as it was the first time that the civil society had actually drafted a law. This sub-section deals with that ground breaking access to the legislative process. Several organisations identified the necessity of legally framing the practice, and slightly "theoretically co-opted"¹²⁹ the parliamentary ability to legislate. I suggest that those organisations were able to strategically substantiate their initiative of drafting the LADVAW in two main ways: normatively and contextually.

7.2.1 Substantiating Informal Political Actors

One of the ground breaking aspects of the LADVAW is that its drafting was an initiative of multiple women's organisations of civil society, headed by the Fórum Mulher. Such an initiative targeted two main goals: the one of criminalising the practice in legal terms, and the one of tackling the gendered roots underpinning that type of violence. Due to such an innovative aspect and to the sensitive nature of the topic of domestic violence, as a whole the women's movement strategically substantiated its drafting efforts in two main ways, namely, normatively and contextually. By doing so, the women's movement was able to first, gain normative legitimacy to draft the law; and secondly, to prove that the contents of the draft reflected the national social context, hence that its claims were contextually grounded and that the movement was representing a constituency. Overall, such a legitimisation allowed several organisations to become essential actors in the movement that influenced the development of the LADVAW.

¹²⁹Jo Freeman (1979) exemplifies this in terms of the general ability of social movements to mobilise resources external to them, and of using them to their benefit.

The struggle for the approval of the new family law – another legal process which included many advances in terms of women’s rights and gender equality – involved the overall women’s movement as well. During such a process, several women’s organisations, and the women’s movement as a whole, were able to gather multiple resources – for instance expertise and funding – to build a network and gather public support, and to gain a certain degree of social legitimacy to speak on the behalf of a constituency. All of these would later be useful in regard to the process against domestic violence. But in order to counteract the opposing arguments regarding the issue of domestic violence mentioned before in this dissertation, as well as to justify the intent of women’s organisations to draft a law against such an issue, further legitimacy needed to be gained.

Such legitimacy involved obtaining normative substantiation in order to be able to draft a law, thus, to participate in the process as “informal legislators”. While legitimising the role of the women’s organisations of civil society involved in the process of drafting the law, Maria José Arthur summarised the initiative, identifying the actors involved, as well as the reasons for the mobilisation.

When we created the first coalition gathering NGOs and governmental institutions, the TCV, we identified the need for a specific instrument against domestic violence. One cannot affirm that there was a legal void regarding it, because we had the penal code and it could be applied to domestic violence cases, but this was a specific violence that could not be dealt with as any other type of violence. In that sense we identified lacunae and started the process. Now honestly, the government never “bought” this idea as such, that it was important to have a law against domestic violence. So, using the prerogatives that the constitution provides us, we made the decision to propose and elaborate the law (October 2014).

When asked about the commitment of the legislators and the commitment of civil society organisations regarding the drafting of a law against domestic violence, Terezinha da Silva of WLSA stressed the role of the latter, simultaneously indicating that women’s organisations of civil society had the right to do it.

If we [women’s organisations of civil society] were more committed to drafting the law than the legislators? Well, we were the legislators! This was the first time the civil society presented a proposal of a law to the parliament, which is our right (April 2012).

As explained by a Mozambican lawyer during our meeting, in technical terms the civil society does not hold the power to legislate, a faculty technically termed as *iniciativa de lei* (“Martins”, December 2010). Nonetheless, the organisations of civil

society involved in the process sought alternative avenues for legitimising their initiative. As a lawyer and activist of the organisation AMMCJ, who preferred to remain anonymous, pointed out, such an avenue was found at the constitutional text in effect, with the conjugation of the articles 78 and 79 (October 2014). In fact, the Mozambican Constitution acknowledges in its article 78: 1, that “the social organisations, as forms of associations with affinities self-interests, fulfil an important role in the promotion of democracy and in the participation of citizens in the public life”; and in 78: 2, that such organisations “(...) contribute to the fulfilment of rights and freedoms of the citizens, as well as to the elevation of the individual and collective consciousness of the compliance of civic duties”. Additionally, the article 79 of the Constitution states that “all the citizens have the right to present petitions, complaints and claims to the competent authority in order to demand the reestablishment of their violated rights or in defence of the general interest” (Republic of Mozambique, 2004).

Even if not directly granting civil society the power to legislative, these constitutional principles were interpreted by several women’s organisations of civil society as legitimising their initiative to draft a law. This fact explains why, during several interviews with elements involved in the process, I was told that the organisations of civil society had the right to draft and propose that law. Importantly, such a legitimisation may also be seen as being granted by the GMP, while volunteering to deliver it to the parliament, and by the commissions while analysing it before the draft finally made to plenary session. Adding to this, despite the alterations to its contents, it was the draft of the law presented by the women’s organisations of civil society that was approved at the parliament as the LADVAW.

The process of drafting the law was described by multiple activists as a consultative one, involving the contributions of several actors gathered throughout the country. Such a fact takes us to the second way of substantiating the initiative of drafting a law. In fact, a point commonly made during the interviews with activists and researchers was that of the importance of contextualising the necessity for the law as well as its contents. As already noted in chapter 5 referring to the articulation of the issue of domestic violence, the arguments regarding the applicability of a universal women’s human rights framework to the Mozambican context are often opposed by arguments regarding cultural relativism. As observed by several activists and researchers during our interviews, one of the arguments used against the demands of the women’s organisations of civil society involved in the drafting process – not only by parliamentarians but also by the media – was that of regarding the discussion and existence of a law against domestic violence as part of a trend, and a foreign imposition to the national agenda. In reality, as noted by Graça Júlio of the Fórum Mulher, the draft of the law was inspired by legal experiences of other countries.

When we had the project nearly concluded we looked at several experiences from other countries, such as the Brazilian law of Maria da Penha [¹³⁰], the case of South Africa, and the Namibian one. The cases are different but we looked at the processes and adapt them to the context of Mozambique. We also had the privilege of having the advice of Alda Facio, advisor of the General Secretary for Violence against Women, who came to assist us with the elaboration of the draft. She did not alter many aspects because the essential was already there, and other aspects suggested were not incorporated because they were not adequate to our context (March 2012).

But as the activist also noted, the content of the draft was mainly informed by several consultative processes, hence, including contributions from multiple actors and in that way reflecting the Mozambican context.

[w]e wanted to hear the opinions throughout the country and take such contributions to the draft so we organised meetings at the provinces of the northern, centre, and southern regions of the country. Then the group gathered and the contributions were incorporated. Meanwhile debates around the draft were being held at various levels, in the communities, in universities, in the media, with people from multiple spheres of the society, peasants, judges, health and education professionals, men and women (Graça Júlio, March 2012).

Those consultation efforts provided one of the main arguments used by women's organisations of civil society to legitimise the existence of a law criminalising domestic violence in Mozambique. In fact, as a result of the meetings above mentioned, the draft of the law was further adapted before being submitted to the Parliament. As mentioned by Graça Júlio,

[t]here was also the need to give the project back to the ones who helped us elaborating it before delivering it to the parliament. So the 'national meeting of adoption' in 2006 was exactly that, giving the people involved in the project the chance to look at the draft and to approve it. That included more than one hundred individuals from all the provinces. It included elements from the society, official magistrates from the Public Ministry, assistants, MPs, community leaders, etc. It was a good meeting, we had several contributions, we did some alterations and we were able to include such contributions in the draft (March 2012).

Notably, such a consultative process *per se* constitutes proof that the women's organisations of civil society involved in the struggle against domestic violence were legitimate actors regarding the drafting process, and hence that their claims for a law were also legitimate. In fact, during one of our interviews Isabel Casimiro pointed out

¹³⁰ The federal law 11340/06, a law against domestic violence against women named after a victim of domestic violence.

some of the actors who participated in those consultations, while also stressing the invalidity of the “foreign” argument used by those against the existence of such a law.

This law was produced by a group and discussed throughout the country. We explained this to the MPs who criticized us. We prepared and held meetings from north to south, with representatives from the MINT, the State’s attorney’s office, government as well as NGOs. There were always two meetings one with the government representatives and other with local NGOs, and this was done on every province (March 2012).

The meetings brought together elements from civil society as well as formal political actors. Such a fact indicated to the women’s movement that despite the obstacles there was a certain degree of flexibility from official sources to discuss the legally framing of the issue of domestic violence. In fact, even if the participation of several formal political actors at such meetings does not necessarily mean an agreement with the existence of a law against domestic violence, at least it denotes a degree of legitimisation of the claims made by women’s organisations. Additionally, it serves as evidence that the drafting process attempted to be contextualised. Finally, the process terminated with a further proof of that legitimisation. As noted by Terezinha da Silva, in 2006 the proposal of the law was unanimously approved by representatives of civil society organisations from all over the country and submitted to the parliament (December 2010).

Combined, the above substantiating strategies serve to prove the legitimate role of the women’s organisations of civil society in producing a law against domestic violence. Nonetheless, each strategy may be seen as producing a summative effect which increases the ability of the women’s movement to influence the overall legislative process. The following sub-section deals with such an ability of transforming a claim into a legal instrument.

7.2.2 From Claim Making to Influencing the Approval of the Law

The general reactions to the creation of a law against domestic violence against women were not supportive, and as indicated by several activists, the public pressure against the discussion and the approval of such a law was intense. Such reactions were mirrored within the Parliament. Arguments against the proposal of the law were mainly based on the domestic/foreign debate already exposed, and on the argument concerning its unconstitutional core, a fact that will be further dealt with in the following sub-section. As a result of such a controversy, the draft of the law suffered several amputations and its discussion at the plenary session was repeatedly postponed. Women’s organisations of civil society collectively adapted their response by intensifying their mobilisation, increasing campaigning and lobbying efforts, intensifying

their networks with both domestic and international actors, and gaining further support for the approval, including from elements from within formal political spaces. The existence of allies and favourable political opportunities played an important role regarding the approval of the LADVAW, and notably the role of women's organisations is generally acknowledged as fundamental to such an ending. Seen as "critical actors" (Childs and Krook, 2009) in terms of representing women's interests this sub-section focuses on the strategies used by the women's mobilisation while pushing for the approval of a legal mechanism that enforces women's rights. Hence, the process in itself and not only the result is understood as an act of exercising representation.

Favouring an approach to substantive representation that goes beyond the importance of a critical mass, Sarah Childs and Mona Lena Krook turn to the importance of "critical actors" (2009). The authors identify such actors as "(...) those who act individually or collectively to bring about women-friendly policy change" (2009: 126-127). By avoiding the "when" – in terms of the existence of a critical mass – and focusing on "how" substantive representation of women occurs, such an approach is stressing representation as a process, recognising "(...) a more fluid and evolving conception of what it might mean to 'act for women'" (2009: 126). The approach avoids focusing on women as *a priori* expected to act for women, and instead focuses on what "specific authors do" (2009: 126). But if one focuses solely on formal political spaces, it is not escaping *a priori* expectations, hence, failing to recognise fluid processes of substantive representation as well as critical actors. Hence, despite the fact that such an approach only mentions the formal political space, I interpret it as applicable to the context of the Mozambican women's mobilisation in civil society regarding the approval of the LADVAW.

During our interviews, all the activists described such a process as a highly contested one, both socially as well as politically. According to those accounts, while the media and the public opinion were debating the issue – divided between a majority who opposed to the existence of such a law and a minority of voices favouring it – the parliament showed no signs of initiating the debate at the plenary session. In order for the law to become part of the Mozambican legal system it had to be approved at the *especialidade* and at the *generalidade*¹³¹, processes that involve the commissions corresponding to the issue in terms of expertise¹³², as well as the plenary. Hence, without going through such processes the law proposal had no chance of being approved. As indicated by Graça Júlio, under the risk of the draft of the law being forgotten, the engagement of women's organisations was necessary.

¹³¹ These processes mean that the passage of the draft is subjected to specific and general discussions, assessments, and voting for its approval or failure.

¹³² As mentioned earlier in this dissertation, these were the 1st Commission, the Commission of the Constitutional Affairs, Human Rights and Legality, and the 3rd Commission, the Commission of Social Affairs, Gender, and Environment.

The discussion of the law was in the plenary agenda for several sessions and for several sessions its discussion was cancelled. So we continued with the lobbying efforts, with manifests and the march demanding for the law to be approved (March 2012).

According to several activists such goals demanded for both social pressure and formal political will to be increased. These facts explain the incremented campaigning and lobbying efforts conducted after the draft being submitted to the parliament. To this contributed the organisation of the MALVD¹³³ in 2007. Part of an adaptive strategy, the formation of such a group allowed for the resources of the organisations involved to be optimised and specifically directed towards the approval of the law. Examples of those efforts are several journal articles published by the organisations AMMCJ, Fórum Mulher, Muleide and WLSA at the newspaper *Savana*¹³⁴, and the radio programmes and documentary movies organised by N'Weti. The MALVD also seized the opportunity presented by the "16 Days of Activism against Gender based Violence Campaign"¹³⁵ held in November 2007 to resubmit the draft of the law to the parliament¹³⁶, attaching a manifest demanding for the law to be discussed and approved.

Empirical evidence points to several effects as directly related to such a mobilisation. The first one was an increasing in the visibility of the debate. As described by Maria José Arthur,

[o]ur campaigns were intense. We started to go out on the streets, we marched, we stopped the cars that were driving by and handed pamphlets, we flooded the biggest supermarkets with leaflets. We made the issue of domestic violence and the law against it so visible that it became hard to ignore (October 2014).

To a certain extent, such an increase in the visibility of the debate was able to influence the general social perception regarding the issue of domestic violence, an alteration that has persisted beyond the process in question. As already mentioned in this dissertation, an activist noted how as a consequence of the struggle against

¹³³ The group gathered several organisations working on the issue of domestic violence, for instance Associação para o Desenvolvimento Comunitário (ADEC), Associação de Mulheres na Comunicação Social (AMCS), AMMCJ, Associação de Mulheres Desfavorecidas da Indústria Açucareira (AMUDEIA), Associação da Mulher para a Democracia (ASSOMUDE), Associação de Viúvas e Mães Solteiras (AVIMAS), Associação das Vítimas de Violência Doméstica (AVVD), Fórum das Organizações não Governamentais de Cabo Delgado (FOCADE), FORCOM, Fórum Mulher, Stand Up Woman and Follow your Way, *Levanta-te Mulher e Siga teu Caminho* (LEMUSICA), Woman Head of Family, *Mulher Chefe de Família* (MUCHEFA), MULEIDE, Network of Women's Associations of Zambezia, *Núcleo das Associações Femininas da Zambézia* (NAFEZA), Gender Core of Nampula, *Núcleo do Género de Nampula* (NUGENA), N'Weti Communication for Health, *N'Weti Comunicação para a Saúde* (N'Weti), OMM, Oxfam GB and WLSA.

¹³⁴ For instance, in December 2007 an article entitled "What a Law against Domestic Violence must Ensure" ("O que é que uma Lei contra a Violência Doméstica deve Garantir") was published at the newspaper *Savana*, and signed by the MALVD and the organisations composing it. Available online at: [www.wlsa.org.mz/artigo/de-que-vale-ter-um-grande-numero-de-mulheres-no-parlamento/]. (Last accessed: May 2015).

¹³⁵ The "16 days campaign" is an international campaign coordinated by the Centre for Women's Global Leadership at Rutgers University aiming at drawing attention to all forms of violence against women.

¹³⁶ Such a resubmission must be understood in the light of a symbolical act, as the contents remained unaltered.

domestic violence, there was an increasing in the public's interest in working with gender issues and women's rights. Besides this, during several conversations with women in Maputo they often referred to the women's marches as a turning point for women's rights. These results were a path for reaching another direct result, which was to influence the formal political decision regarding the approval of the law. As noted by Denise Namburete of N'Weti during our interview,

[w]e were making so much pressure with our campaigns: with the media, with TV spots, radio commercials, marches. We were loud throughout the country! (November 2014).

Such an increased visibility had not only a socio-cultural effect but also a political one¹³⁷, a fact confirmed during some of the interviews stressing a correlation between the pressure exercised by the mobilisation and the parliament's decision to discuss and approve the law.

Nevertheless, one must not ignore other factors as contributing to influencing such an outcome. When asked about the specific influence of the civil society mobilisation on the parliament's decision to approve the law, Denise Namburete added that she believed "[t]hey were influenced from different angles, but such an influence was enhanced by the organisations of civil society" (November 2014). Indeed, having in mind the fact that the draft of the law stood at the parliament for several years, being its contents highly scrutinised at the commissions and its discussion at the plenary sessions multiply postponed, the approval of the LADVAW at the last day of the annual session and by unanimity may seem unexpected.¹³⁸ I was able to share my curiosity regarding this aspect with a panel of speakers – which included researchers and activists – at a public debate on gender based violence held in Maputo in 2012.¹³⁹ The answer to my question regarding what determined this swift approval was not straightforward but it was suggested that donors' pressure was important. I had the opportunity to confirming this answer with Maria José Arthur during our interview, who while being asked about the donors' pressure replied,

[t]here was pressure at the local level. There was also pressure from the CEDAW. We presented the first shadow report in 2007 and the recommendations of the committee were very much explicit. Mozambique had assumed several commitments and to not approve the law meant that... well, that could happen, to ignoring such commitments, but one can say that in this case that fact contributed. Then the marches, our flyers, the visibility... Plus, the pressure of the international partners

¹³⁷ This discussion will be revisited in the last section of this chapter from the point of view of the parliament as a political institution.

¹³⁸ Promulgated in September 2009, the law 29/2009 was actually approved on the 2nd of July, 2009, the last day of the legislature.

¹³⁹ This debate was organised by the organisation WLSA in collaboration with other organisations of civil society on the 28th of March 2012, in Maputo.

that are here in Mozambique, the international pressure like the example given by the CEDAW, and also the proximity of the elections (October, 2014).

The fact that multiple factors were identified as favouring the approval of the LADVAW does not diminish the role the collective mobilisation had in the process. The activist Graça Júlio also noted that the proximity of the elections was an important factor, but suggests the enhancing effect the women's mobilisation had regarding that aspect. Her statement points to two factors that corroborate such an assumption. The first one suggests the MPs' identification of women's organisations of civil society as able to mobilise a constituency, and the second one suggests the acknowledgment of the impact such organisations are able to have in the socio-political panorama.

We continuously lobbied and marched demanding for the law to be approved. We stressed the fact that if the law failed to be discussed and approved then they [political parties] would lose women's votes, and women are the majority of the population in Mozambique. Then, as a consequence of what we did, of the debates in the media, of international pressure, at the last minute the MPs called us to negotiate. But to us there were things that were not open to negotiation. This law does not belong to this group it was discussed by many people, with people from the entire country. There was no longer time for further auscultation. Then, the discussion of the law was scheduled, and at the very last parliamentary session, at the last minute it was finally approved (Graça Júlio, March 2012).

As for the general perceptions regarding the role of women's organisations within the process, as mentioned before in this dissertation, they tended to identify the mobilisation as the cause for the existence of the LADVAW. While posing such a question to women MPs during our meetings, women's organisations of civil society were to a more or lesser degree, indicated as the motor behind the approval of the LADVAW. For example, as clearly pointed by the Frelimo's MP Nhielete Mondlane,

[w]hen the civil society mobilised, under the umbrella of the Fórum Mulher, when they marched and pressured for the approval of the law... that was the point of no return. Politicians had to do something at the level of the parliament (April 2012).

While there seems to have been an interaction of a favourable political process – e.g., the elections – with the involvement of multiple actors favouring the approval of the LADVAW – e.g., international donors –, the role of the women's organisations of civil society involved in this overall struggle is generally perceived as the *sine qua non* condition for the existence of the law. As empirically demonstrated, such organisations persisted in a struggle that was initially broadly unwanted, were able to unblock the process for the discussion of the LADVAW, and were ultimately able to influence the

final political outcome in terms of the legislative process. Such facts confirm the importance of considering the process through which representation occurs as well as the role of actors outside formal political spaces as “critical actors”.

7.3 The Tensions between Equality and Difference

On the one hand the constitutional principle of equality was used by the women’s movement to justify a law against domestic violence that specifically protected women from the practice, recognising them as the main victims. On the other hand, that same constitutional principle was used by those counteracting such claims by deeming them unconstitutional. To a more or lesser extent, it was expected by the overall women’s movement that once the draft of the law against domestic violence would reach the parliament that such an argument would be counteracted by the women caucus. It was expected that such a caucus would favour a “feminine agenda” and act in its defence, counteracting the resistances to it at the level of the parliament by pushing for its discussion and approval. This section deals with the tensions created between “equality” and “difference”, and with how those as concepts, generate expectations, arguments, and allegiances.

7.3.1 Gendering the Law and the Constitutional Arguments

The proposal of a law against domestic violence was submitted to the Parliament in 2006, through the hands of the GMP. From this period onwards, until its approval in 2009, the discussion of the bill was constantly cancelled and several alterations were made to the text as it was when it entered the AR. Such facts illustrate the general resistance against such a law and must be analysed in the light of what has been theoretically and empirically discussed earlier on chapters 3 and 4 regarding gender, culture and how those intersect with politics. In fact, to regulate the practice of domestic violence corresponds to regulating a type of violence that is gendered, reflecting power relations that are established at the general social level, but also specifically at the core of the family. The agreement between the organisations of civil society involved was that omitting such characteristics in the text of the law would jeopardise not only the legal effect of such an instrument, but especially its socio-cultural effect. Thus, gendering the law was of outmost importance for the women’s movement against domestic violence. The next sub-section deals precisely with the process of gendering the proposal and the tensions generated by such a fact. It suggests that more than constituting a legal innovation, the LADVAW was perceived as posing challenges to the political and social norms in force, hence, resulting in resilient opposition to its discussion and approval.

Anticipating the sociocultural barriers to the intention of creating a legal framework regarding domestic violence against women, the women's organisations involved in the drafting process included in the draft's preamble several arguments favouring the inclusion of the term "women" in the law, as well as the allusion to gender. Additionally, such an argument was grounded by several references to multiple international norms Mozambique has bound to, as well as references to the constitutional rights of "physical and moral integrity"¹⁴⁰, to equality, to liberty, and to safety.¹⁴¹ It included the idea that such principles, although formally guaranteed to both women and men, were less enjoyed by the former due to the persisting discrimination of women. Under such a perspective, and keeping in mind the evidence showing women as the main targets, the practice of a gendered based violence was expected to be seen as violating women's rights, both according to the international framework of human rights as well as with the national constitutional framework of citizen's rights. Thus, as suggested in the preamble of the draft, and also as argued by the president of the Fórum Mulher, Graça Samo, the law ought to be regarded as "functioning as an affirmative action" (December 2010).

Notwithstanding being grounded in such arguments, such a fact was not sufficient for maintaining the initial draft unaltered once it reached the parliament. As Isabel Casimiro noted during one of our interviews, the text of the draft was perceived as discriminatory towards men.

MPs pointed to the fact that men too could be victims of violence, as well as children. We replied that children already had laws especially dedicated to them, and we argued that this was a specific kind of violence. We included that in the justification we submitted [the preamble of the draft] but they [at the parliament] removed it. The violence that women suffer is specific, and it happens due to the fact that they are women (March 2012).

In fact, the official justification for the parliamentary reluctance in discussing and approving the draft was related to the constitutional principle of equality. While visiting the AR I had the chance to meet elements from the commissions involved in studying and approving the draft of the law at the speciality. Prior to such visits I was already aware of the stir that the draft of the LADVAW had caused at the level of the parliament, causing its discussion at the plenary sessions to be consecutively delayed. None of the elements verbalised an opposition to the existence of a law against domestic violence. Rather, it was generally stressed that the commissions were not in favour of the draft in the sense that it was discriminatory towards men and unconstitutional. As it was focused on women as the victims, the draft was going

¹⁴⁰ Paragraph 1 of the article 40 of the Constitution of the Republic of Mozambique (Republic of Mozambique, 2004).

¹⁴¹ As included at the article 35 of the Fundamental Law.

against the article 36¹⁴² of the Mozambican Constitution in effect which, as previously mentioned, guarantees the principle of universal equality. Therefore, that had been the major flaw of the draft and the cause for the law not being immediately discussed at the plenary session nor approved with celerity. I was able to have a meeting with one of the elements of the 1st commission, who took some time to explain the technical aspects behind such an argument, contrasting them with the arguments presented by the organisations of civil society involved in this process. The latter's arguments were, according to the person in question, unconstitutional (Anonymous, April 2012).

Based on that fact, there were specific points presented in the draft that were subjected to alterations leading to the delay of its discussion at the parliament. By comparing the text of draft of the law¹⁴³ and the final version of the law, it is visible that a reference to "unequal power relations" as constituting the basis for the practice of domestic violence was eliminated. The preamble was also eliminated – in its entirety – and so were multiple articles referring to the direct responsibility of the state in dealing to the cases of domestic violence. Additionally, as mentioned before in Chapter 3, two articles were added. Those were the article 36, regarding gender equality, stating that the dispositions of the law are "also applicable to men, in equal circumstances and with the necessary adaptations"; and the article 37, regarding the protection of the family, stating that "the law must always have in consideration the safeguard of the family" (AR, 2009). Such an addition was perceived by the elements of the organisations of civil society involved as misrepresenting and altering the essence of the law.

Firstly, in regard to the article 36 of the LADVAW, it is argued that its extension to include men is misrepresenting the meaning of the law, which intended to have a positive discrimination principle. In fact, the article 36 of the Mozambican Constitution in force refers to the principle of gender equality "men and women are equal before the law in all domains of the political, economic, social and cultural life" (Republic of Mozambique, 2004). Nonetheless, as argued by several activists, when one part of the population has been identified – including at the official level – as being discriminated on the basis of their gender, this Constitutional principle is not being respected. Thus, blocking the discussion and approval of a law that specifically refers to that unequal treatment seems to blur the intention of the law to serve as an affirmative action. Furthermore, several activists mentioned that the Parliament had already approved laws designed to protect vulnerable groups, for instance the law 6/2008 regarding human trafficking especially protecting women and children. Additionally, as it has been described before, measures of positive discrimination regarding women can be seen

¹⁴² Article referring to the Principle of Gender Equality, stating that "men and women are equal before the law in all the domains of the political, economic, social and cultural life".

¹⁴³ As it was submitted to the GMP. For further reference on the text of the draft of the law see appendix G.

for instance in the form of political quotas for women. According to several activists, arguing that men are also victims of domestic violence and creating a special article for that matter blurs the essence of the LADVAW and concurs to maintaining invisible the gender *status quo* that defines the practice of that type of violence. Additionally, in the text of the National Plan it is noted that women constitute the majority of individuals affected by domestic violence, though it is stated that the National Plan is also applicable to “all of those that are affected by this evil [violence] (men, children, young people, disabled people, etc.)” (Republic of Mozambique, 2008). Following this pattern of inclusion and in order to be faithful to the Constitutional principles of equality, it may be argued that the article 36 of the LADVAW should also include “children, young people, disabled people, elderly people, etc.”, instead of only “men”.

Secondly, during the interviews several activists have also shown some concern in respect to the article 37 of the LADVAW, regarding the protection of the family. According to them, this article concurs to limiting the applicability of the law to the personal interpretation of the one applying it. The article refers to “Protection of the Family” and states that “the application of the present law must always take in consideration the protection of the family” (AR, 2009). The word “protection” coupled with questions such as “from what” and “from whom”, opens the article to a multitude of interpretations that once again, may easily disfigure the initial objective of the law. Keeping in mind the gender constructions favouring a patriarchal structure in which – as described in chapter 3 – men are still the head of the family, it makes sense to perceive such an article as capable of inverting the intents of the law. Based on this article, one may interpret the occurrence of some cases of domestic violence as necessary to “correct” women’s behaviour and to maintain the harmony of the family.

For those favouring the law and the contents proposed by the draft, such alterations mainly resulted from the willingness to preserve cultural values that are directly related to gendered assumptions of power. Such a “debate” was summarised by a lawyer and activist member of the AMMCJ as follows,

[t]he adoption of one or another conceptualisation of domestic violence had direct effects on the contents of the proposal. At that time it was argued that domestic violence against women was a way of controlling women, something resulting from the male domination system. But there was a general reluctance in acknowledging such structural character of the practice of domestic violence, as well as a general willing to minimise its importance and to ignoring the serious consequences it had on the lives of women. There was also a general reluctance in acknowledging that women were in fact the main victims of such type of violence, even when numbers pointed out such fact. Others questioned the legitimacy of a proposal that was clearly referring to women, confronting the

arguments for ‘special temporary measures’ with the accusation of unconstitutionality (October 2014).

As previously referred, during my meetings with activists involved in the drafting process, it became clear that there was an intention to make the LADVAW more than a legal instrument, as it also aimed at providing a sociocultural message. That fact is visible in the remarks of Graça Júlio remark regarding some alterations done to the law at the level of the parliament. “They are the *legislators* [emphasised], so let them make alterations, but without removing the spirit of the law. What we wanted was a law that would defend the victims of domestic violence, and women are the main victims” (March 2012).

Despite such drawbacks to the intentions of the women’s movement, the immediate goals referred earlier – of increasing the general social awareness regarding this type of gendered based violence, and of increasing the official commitment to challenging the gender power relations that lie beneath this type of practice through the text of the law – should not be perceived as unachieved. If drafting the law in a fashion that stressed the unequal power balances that define gender relations in Mozambique proved to constitute the main barrier for its discussion at the plenary session, it also proved to guarantee a very intense debate involving not only the women’s movement and the formal political bodies but also the media and the society in general. Even if for some the LADVAW has been emptied of its essence, the terms “gender” and “domestic violence” were being discussed and, as indicated in chapter 5, finally part of the general vocabulary of Mozambicans, opening multiple possibilities for the issue to be further dealt with. Furthermore the campaigning and lobbying efforts conducted by the overall women’s movement was able to push for the approval of the law. Notably, it was also able to maintain the word “women” in the title of the law and in the articles, suggesting that this is a gendered type of violence that targets women. While this fact will be further mentioned in this chapter, it is important to refer it here in the sense that it may be seen as increasing the official commitment to challenging the gender power relations that lie beneath that type of practice.

7.3.2 A Women’s Space within the Parliament

The GMP was created¹⁴⁴ as a caucus for all women MPs, independently of their party’s allegiance, aiming at “improving the role of women MPs, promoting gender equity, promoting the cooperation with similar organisations as well as to framing the activities of the parliamentary woman (...)” (Republic of Mozambique, 2005). As an institution the GMP constitutes a case that falls within three dimensions: firstly, it falls

¹⁴⁴ Resolution number 33/2005 of 19th of December of 2005. Published in the *Boletim da República* n.050, I Série, 2º Suplemento de 19 de Dezembro de 2005, pages 432-(5) to 432-(6). See appendix G for further information.

under the category of a NWM; secondly, it does so within the institution which holds the power to legislate; and thirdly, it represents a formal political space. As such, in regard to the draft of the law against domestic violence, looking to the GMP constitutes an opportunity to understand how formal political positive discrimination spaces and gender may intersect, creating between its members a sense of grouping around a “feminine cause” or on the other hand, generating tensions. According to multiple interviewees – both MPs and activists – the creation of the GMP was received with general enthusiasm by both women in the parliament as well as by women’s organisations of civil society, who perceived it as a forum for women to advance women’s rights and to promote the overall women’s status quo. In principle, as a space for women, the GMP may be perceived as constituting a “point of access” (see Alvarez, 1990) which facilitated the entrance of the draft into the parliament and served as a space for dialogue between MPs and women’s organisations of civil society. Nonetheless, besides providing such opportunities such a space also presented cases of tension which impeded the GMP of fully acting in favour of the draft of the law. Empirical evidence suggests three main factors which contributed to such a tension, namely the allegiance to party politics above an allegiance to gender, the “gendered” ways individuals enter the parliament, and the influence culture has on individual perceptions regarding women’s rights and gender issues. Such facts indicate how, despite providing a space where in principle “difference” should be constructed towards equality (see Iris Marion Young, 1990), such a space also reflects the dominant socio-cultural context in which it exists (see Nagar, 2004).

Regarding the role of the GMP in substantively pushing for mechanisms regarding the advancement of women’s rights, even if in its essence such a caucus may be debated, in practical terms its existence is clearly defined by gender and its competences are – although not explicitly in the official text¹⁴⁵ – associated to representing women. In fact, the competences of the GMP are directly related to the promotion of gender equality and equity, and to the promotion of women’s rights, including amongst others¹⁴⁶ “to create a space for debating women specific issues” (article 4: a); “to promote society’s awareness regarding women’s rights” (article 4: c); “to develop a spirit of solidarity and cooperation between parliamentary women and other women integrated on the multiple activities regarding the country’s development” (article 4: d); “to incentive and encourage the effective and responsible action of women in the struggle for gender equality and equity towards taking posts at the political, economic, social and cultural decision making level” (article 4: e); “to promote

¹⁴⁵ See Republic of Mozambique (2005). Refer to article 4 regarding the competences of the GMP.

¹⁴⁶ See also Republic of Mozambique (2007) for the deliberation 1/2007 “Approving the Regulations of the Cabinet for the Parliamentary Woman”.

actions with the goal of making sure that the law proposals and projects to be approved by the *Assembleia da República* incorporate gender issues” (article 4: m); and finally, “(...) to establish a connection between parliamentary women and women in general” (article 4: n).

As mentioned before, its creation was perceived as positive by academics and activists working on women’s rights issues. In fact, its creation encompassed an “(...) integration in regional and international congeners networks with a bigger experience of parliamentary work, generating important opportunities for learning and helping defining strategies within the *Assembleia da República* and within the civil society” (Osório, 2010: 102). Furthermore, as a caucus for women MPs it has also “(...) caught the attention of the public opinion to the necessity of promoting legislative initiatives defending the human rights’ of women” (Osório, 2010: 112). Therefore, one may assume that as a caucus for women MPs, the GMP is expected not only by voters but also at the institutional level – even if in different degrees – to represent the generality of Mozambican women.

The creation of the GMP constituted an unquestionable achievement for the overall status of Mozambican women, one which may possibly challenge the gender constraints women MPs face while exercising political agency. Firstly, it is a caucus that brings women from different parties together, which considering Mozambique’s recent history constitutes a very important step. Spending days at the national parliament collecting data, I was able to observe the general uneasy interaction between staff from different parties. As previously mentioned, I was kindly helped by the staff of one of the main parties in finding my way around the Parliament. Even my interest in talking to members of the main opposing party was naturally received. Nonetheless, while asking a member of a party to contact a specific MP from the main opposing party I was politely told that I should go to the party wing myself and knock on the door as that was, after all, “off limits” to the person in question. This clearly indicates how ideological space is materialised within the parliament, and how such a fact creates borders that concur to impede dialogue. Comparatively, the GMP’s staff proved to be much more flexible regarding “partisan’s borders”. It happened more than once that an MP from one party recommended me to meet with a specific MP from the other party, in one case even asking her secretary to put me in direct contact with the person in question. Secondly, this interaction of women MPs at the GMP seems to have contributed, to a certain extent, to creating a sense of group identity. In fact it was curious to observe how several women MPs used the term “we” and “together” when describing the role of the GMP on the process of the law against domestic violence. Notably, this included the work of women MPs from both parties. During our interview, the former Minister for Women and Social Action (MMAS) and currently MP for

Frelimo¹⁴⁷, Virgília dos Santos Matabele, uses the expression “women’s team work” [“um jogo das mulheres”] to describe how the proposal of the law that had been submitted by women’s organisations to the GMP was eventually approved by the parliament (April 2012). Similarly, an MP for Frelimo explains how, “we at the cabinet [GMP] work together for all Mozambican women, independently of ideology” (“Anonymous b”) April 2012). Such an argument is replicated by a Renamo’s MP, Rosa Julai, who talked about the GMP with enthusiasm and hope. According to her, in practice the caucus not only allows women MPs to work together on issues related to women’s rights, independently of their party affiliation but also to work with civil society organisations as it has happened with the law against domestic violence (April 2012).

Regarding such a process, in 2006 elements of the GMP actively joined the “National Meeting for Approval”¹⁴⁸, managed by multiple women’s organisations of the civil society. During such a meeting the GMP showed a certain commitment in advancing such a legal mechanism. According to Graça Júlio of Fórum Mulher,

[After the meeting] our next step was to find a way to get the draft to the parliament. There were two options, the direct one, would it be approved by one of the parliamentary wings, or the indirect one, through the *Conselho de Ministros* [Cabinet Council]. We have policies, the constitutional principle of equality, but how do we encourage those in practice? When it comes to discuss women’s rights there is a general considerable overture, but there is also considerable resistance. So we realised that if we submitted the draft to the *Conselho de Ministros* it would probably still be there, piled up. At that meeting the elements of the GMP that were present showed some interest in being them, the GMP, to submit the draft to the parliament. And so it was, and it was great for us! There was no risk that the draft would not reach the *Assembleia*. Finally the law was submitted in 2006 (March 2012).

Nonetheless, as mentioned before, from that period onwards the draft of the law generated internal debates at the level of the AR being its discussion multiply delayed. Notwithstanding the initial positive steps, women MPs’ opinions diverged regarding the contents of the draft of the LADVAW, and despite the existence of the GMP, a concerted action favouring a women’s agenda was not possible.

In 2008, the activist and researcher Maria José Arthur wrote an article where she exposed a general antagonism from women MPs regarding the law against domestic violence. In such an article, the author describes the events occurring at the occasion of a meeting organised by the Fórum Mulher in November of 2007 that brought together members of the GMP and a technical team composed of “jurists,

¹⁴⁷ Virgília dos Santos Matabele headed the MMAS from 2000 to 2009. Currently, as of 2012, Virgília dos Santos Matabele is an MP for Frelimo.

¹⁴⁸ According to Graça Júlio of the Fórum Mulher, the meeting gathered not only organisations of civil society and elements from the GMP, but also community leaders, magistrates, MPs, and other individuals from all the provinces (April 2012).

judges and social scientists from several NGOs, and members of Fórum Mulher” (2008: 9). The goal was for the technical team to present the contents of the project of the law, as well as to prepare the women MPs for the debates regarding the law which were going to be held at the Parliament. According to the author,

[t]he way that the meeting went on revealed the impossibility to rely on women MPs for the defence of a feminine agenda, in consonance with the Constitution of the Republic as well as with the international legal instruments ratified. The reference that guided the majority of the attending MPs is the ‘Mozambican culture’ (...) (Arthur, 2008: 9).

While discussing the draft of the LADVAW during our interview Maria José Arthur reaffirmed that constrained support from the GMP and the lack of a solid gender allegiance from women at the level of formal politics by noting that the presence of women in the Parliament did not translate in a “feminine agenda” nor in a “feminine vote” (October 2014).

From the interviews conducted to both activists and MPs, one is able to confirm the existence of women MPs who had strong reservations regarding the law, as well as the existence of those who clearly favoured the discussion and the approval of the LADVAW as a women’s right’s mechanism. Nonetheless, evidence suggests that the latter’s presence was not sufficient to generate an immediate and voluntary “feminine” concerted action through the GMP. As several activists indicated, such a support was to a certain extent achieved later, and as a result of the lobbying efforts exercised by women’s organisations of civil society to several MPs.¹⁴⁹

Such interviews also suggested several constraints that concurred to creating such tensions. The first constraint is related to the prioritisation of party politics over the prioritisations of gender issues, which in the case of some women MPs derives from an immediate identification with their respective party and not with the women’s caucus. The general weight that party politics has over MPs may be enough to define their political behaviour, independently of their individual preferences. If such a fact is seen through a gender lens, and having in mind what has been discussed earlier in chapters 3 and 4, regarding the existent gender hierarchy and the intersection of the category gender with politics, it becomes clear that party discipline is also influenced by gender.¹⁵⁰ This in fact, becomes another constraint to the ideal performance of the GMP in terms of a “feminine agenda”. Despite the fact that the GMP is in principle a caucus where women can discuss and advance a women’s agenda independently of their party affiliation – as often pointed by several MPs during the interviews – such a

¹⁴⁹ This will be discussed with in more detail in the following sub-sections.

¹⁵⁰ Such a fact will be further analysed in the following sub-section.

fact does not mean that the GMP is totally free from the influence of party politics and the ways gender intersects with it. As Denise Namburete of N'Weti remarked,

[i]n general terms, the group of parliamentary women does not have much expression within the Assembleia. The loyalty of the MP goes to the party, and no matter how much prepared and informed the MP may be regarding a certain issue, if the party is not favourable to the approval of a law regarding an issue the MP will act in accordance to the party's agenda (November 2014).

In general terms, that remark seems to be especially valid to issues that are specifically related to women's rights. Each party has its own agenda and the demand to act in accordance to party politics is present to women as it is also present to men MPs.¹⁵¹ What seems to differ in terms of gender is that the impact of party politics on individuals reflects the patriarchal structures under which it is constructed. That fact produces hierarchies, firstly, regarding the expected political behaviour of MPs in which the desired form of participation is modelled by the male MP. Such a fact was identified by the activist Benilde Nhalivilo, who felt sympathetic to women politicians in terms of the resistances they have to endure while operating in the formal sphere.

I believe it is not easy to be a [woman] leader in a country with a fragile democracy because it is still very patriarchal. Women in politics have to impose themselves as women... but sometimes they have no choice but to conform to such a patriarchal scheme (March 2012).

Secondly, it produces a hierarchy regarding the definition of the political agenda¹⁵², one that tends to be directed at maintaining the existent social status quo (see Osório, 2010: 103; Osório and Macuácuá, 2015). These facts may, in different degrees, constrain the behaviour of women MPs, who in order to blend in may resist to cooperating with what is perceived as a "feminine agenda", thus, missing creating a cohesive women's group.

Additionally, one must have in mind that party allegiance may be reinforced by the mechanisms through which individuals are brought into formal political institutions, for instance by individual competence, familial ties, or affirmative action measures (see Osório, 2007). As mentioned in chapter 4, regarding the context of the Parliament, the integration of women MPs was favoured by the existence of quotas as an affirmative action measure as well as by the electoral system, based on "proportional representation". If on the one hand, that has had a positive impact regarding the numbers of women present at the level of the Parliament, on the other hand women

¹⁵¹ It is acknowledged here that the same logic constrains men MPs. It was pointed during my conversations with MPs, that a few men were not resistance to the law, but by being constrained by multiple reasons they did not act in favour of it.

¹⁵² The same principle is applied to the production of norms, a fact further dealt with in the following sub-section.

MPs' constraining by the party may become exacerbated by the same mechanisms that helped them getting in. That is one of the dilemmas behind the quota system aiming at increasing the quantity of women participating in politics. In fact, as acknowledged by several interviewees, the participation of women in formal politics has increased in terms of quantity, but such a fact does not necessarily guarantees that the quality of women's political participation in terms of their ability to substantive represent women is *de facto* improving. As noted by several interviewees, although already possible, women's agency in formal politics persists to be constrained by several factors. During the interviews with activists, it has been noted that often the presence of women MPs is related to their personal networking, or to an "add to the number" strategy, instead of being related to their political background. If in some cases, these women lack a proper political preparation, there are also cases in which their education level does not correspond to the level of the decisions they have to make. These are situations which contribute to limit women's political strength and overall role as politicians. Hence, many women MPs become "constrained" and "limited" in terms of their political performance, including in advancing a feminine agenda.

Finally, several activists as well as MPs often mentioned a limited understanding of gender issues as a product of cultural constraints to which both men as well as women are subjected to, even when certain practices are discriminatory over them. As previously discussed in chapter 3, the practice of domestic violence is the perfect example of a discriminatory practice that by being widely exercised over women, discursively constructed as natural and desired – often perceived as a corrective method to preserve the institution of the family – and by being kept silenced, hence, not challenged, has become embedded in individuals perceptions as a socially appropriate behaviour, even to women. Isabel Casimiro directly indicated cultural aspects as the main reason why women MPs felt resistant to the project of the law.

The cultural aspect... the man can beat the woman, and the woman cannot say a word. Even at the meeting we had with women MPs a few years ago they asked 'why this law? It is cultural'. Women MPs! MPs! Women! We wanted to consult them and they asked us 'why the law, it is our culture, it is alright. It is similar to what we do with children when they miss behave'. We made these arguments public in the bulletin *Outras Vozes* and they [women MP] were furious. But we needed to do so in order to reveal that group of women that were supposed to defend women and failed to do so. So under the argument of culture they did not want to discuss what happened within the family. Also because, let us face it, there are cases of domestic violence happening with MPs' families (March 2012).

Although multiple other factors intersect to create MP's experience unique, the three factors exposed were the main factors identified by the interviewees as blocking

the ability of women MPs to act according to what has been made the core principles of the GMP. These facts may be perceived as evidence of the aforementioned argument regarding how general formal political spaces, being permeable to the existent hierarchical constructions of gender, are able to maintain a structure and functioning pattern that limits women's presence to be felt in terms of their gender, and hence, to act as a group. To frame it in another way, the case of the LADVAW suggests that the quantitative presence of women at the Mozambican parliament has generally been "absorbed" and made neutral without being transformed into substantive representation. These evidences suggest that the AR as an institutional space, is still much embedded in a patriarchal understanding of politics, and indicates that the continuous lobbying efforts of the women's organisations were fundamental in terms of the approval of the LADVAW. The following sub-sections will be further dealing with such an aspect.

7.4 Contradicting a Gender Inequality Gear

Identifying political spaces as permeable to gender as well as reproducing and reinforcing correspondent hierarchies, helps us to understand how legislative processes may be affected by the space in which they occur. As mentioned before in this dissertation, evidence has been presented in the literature to suggest that generally, policies referring to women's rights and challenging gender relations are the most controversial ones (Brush, 2003; Weldon and Htun, 2013). In terms of the general African context, alterations to customary practices and laws have been identified as the most contested ones. As noted by Aili Mari Tripp, Isabel Casimiro, Joy Kwesiga and Alice Mungwa "[l]egislation pertaining to equality and addressing discrimination has been relatively uncontroversial in Africa when it comes to institutions tied to the state and market" (2009: 111). On the other hand, the authors point that legislation regarding familial institutions – that is family and clan institutions – encounters more resistance, thus becoming more difficult to pass (Weldon and Htun, 2013; Tripp *et al*, 2009: 115). This has been the case in Mozambique. A feminist perspective using different points of focus on the political sheds light on the situation of this specific legislative process. The first point is related to the nature of interest formation, hence shedding light on why a law against domestic violence as contradicting hegemonic interests, was controversial. The second emphasises patterns of gender inequality in terms of uneven distributions of power, hence providing clues to understanding how women's ability to exercise substantive representation is influenced by the space in which it occurs. The third emphasises politics as an ongoing process involving multiple spaces, actors, and identities. This sheds light on the ability of women's mobilisation in civil society to

organise as women, and to produce results capable of altering an existent socio-political gender inequality gear.

Whereas the state has been favourable to implementing women's rights related to areas such as education or health and to ratifying international mechanisms related to women's human rights, a general resistance has been demonstrated regarding issues related to the familial institutions. The cases of the new family law (see Disney, 2005) and of the LADVAW constitute important evidence of the difficulty in passing legislation that affects familial institutions and the gendered structures in which such institutions are built upon. As it has been demonstrated throughout this thesis, general Mozambican cultural practices relegate women to a submissive position within the family. As confirmed by a delegate of the organisation AMMCJ, quoted earlier in chapter 5, the practice of domestic violence is entrenched in society as a natural and normal practice, formatting the role of women and men within the familial (October 2014). This means that in terms of a normative hierarchy such a resistance to the LADVAW is raising the value of customary practices over universal human rights (see Da Silva, 2003).

The majority of women MPs interviewed explicitly acknowledged that the practice of domestic violence affects women in its most part, although they might disagree on what constitutes domestic violence, the nature of its causes, or on how it should be addressed. Some carefully stressed that men too can be victims of domestic violence, justifying the validity of their respective party's concerns over the principle of equality. Nonetheless, this fact was never assumed to be in equal terms with women as victims. Even if some women MPs did not verbalize it in this manner, they all made clear that gender was playing a part regarding this process. Their identity as women was often referred in regard to their role regarding the process of the LADVAW. As an MP for Renamo noted, "[w]omen's associations brought the draft of the law to the *Assembleia da República*, and then inside it, here [the AR], women played as women, and the law was approved" (April 2012). Additionally, several women MPs indicated, some more blatantly than others, the main resistance to the approval of the law within the AR as coming from their male colleagues. Zélia Langa, a Frelimo's MP, observed that the law against domestic violence was hugely scrutinized within the parliament, "mainly because men did not accept it" (April 2012). Despite of apparently contradicting the accounts of several activists regarding a lack of a feminine agenda, the aforementioned accounts suggest what has been discussed in terms of the constraints women MPs feel as women, especially when they are in favour of passing a contested pro-women law.

As argued before, socio-cultural constructions of gender – its roles and hierarchies – are as valid in the broad social sphere as within formal political spaces.

Such formal spaces operate within such a framework, scrutinising the production of norms in accordance, further consolidating it. In simplistic pictorial terms, this situation is an inequality gear in which gendered norms and a corresponding hierarchy are constructed on the social realm, maintained on the formal political realm, confirmed in emanated norms or legislative results, which in turn are ultimately reinforced within the social realm. Each keeps the other functioning (see figure 7.1 on the following page). Such a gear defines how gendered social statuses of both women and men are perceived as different and hierarchized accordingly. Also, it helps to understand how issues that are gendered may be ignored or prioritized within the formal political sphere, how gender influences the existence or absence of legislation, and how such existence or absence of legislation affects the status of citizens and gender roles within the society and vice-versa. Adding to what has been discussed in the previous subsection, by acknowledging the above one is better equipped to understand the qualitative impact that women are able to exert within the Mozambican parliament, as a gendered space, and to which extent they are limited by that same space. Nonetheless, such an inequality gear can be counteracted and substituted by a gender equality gear. Hence, it is argued here that gender equality can also be promoted following that same logic¹⁵³ (see figure 7.2 on the following page).

¹⁵³ Such a type of dynamic is not limited to legislative processes. For instance, Sonia E. Alvarez (1990) problematizes it in relation to bureaucratic processes. The author stresses the interaction of women within the bureaucracy with feminists outside of it as able to counteracting such type of dynamic.

Figure 7.1 Gender Inequality Gear

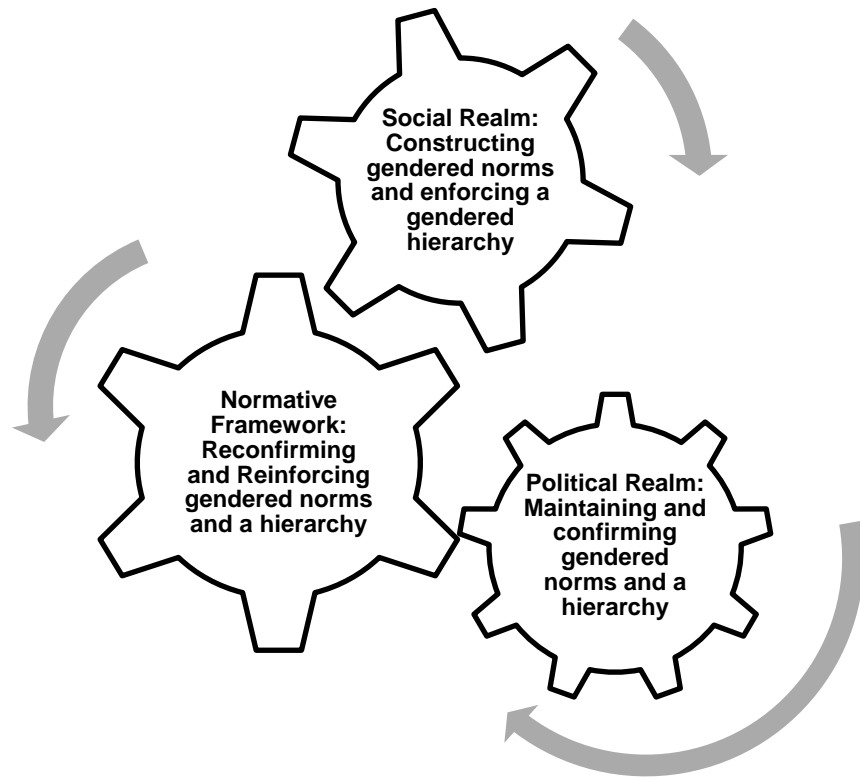
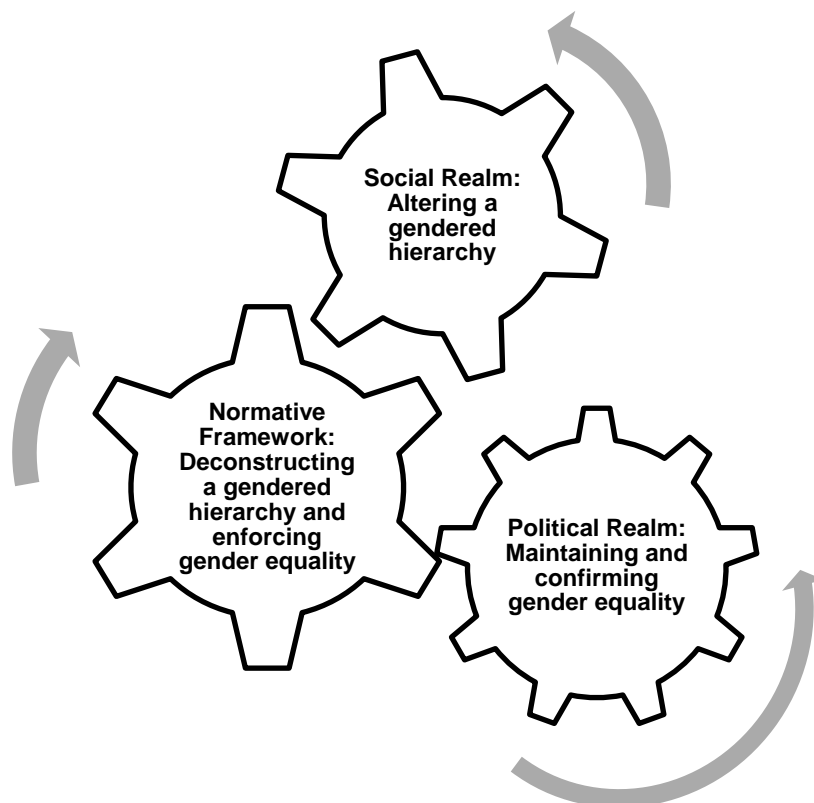


Figure 7.2 Gender Equality Gear



As empirical evidence suggests, the existence of the GMP was not sufficient to counteract such an inequality gear. Nevertheless, one is able to identify intersections of spaces and actors during the legislative process of the LADVAW. In fact, the existence of the GMP served as a channel for the women's movement to reach and influence the parliament, namely through the direct contact of several women's organisations of civil society with members of the cabinet. Graça Júlio noted how efforts from civil society organisations especially targeted the GMP.

After we delivered the law our efforts were directed towards the GMP. They are all women, but not all are... they also represent their parties' agendas. Additionally, many reach the parliament through lists, and culture also has an influence on them. So we knew we had to work closely with them, explaining the pertinence of the law, what the approval of such law means, etc. We had good moments and bad moments, but it was with them we had to work. We also worked with the two commissions involved. The law was scheduled to be discussed several times, but several times such discussions were cancelled. So we continued lobbying, manifesting, marching, all demanding for the law to be approved (March 2012).

In effect, such directed lobbying efforts were mentioned during my interview with Denise Namburete of N'Weti as having an impact on the MPs' behaviour.

We organised informative files and distributed them to the MPs, and that was a great decision. Several organisations with a strong background on gender issues were also able to engage directly with women MPs through training sessions. As a result, when the discussion of the law was scheduled we were able to count on them as a supporting group and on some men MPs too (November 2014).

In fact, although constrained by the existent social structures and cultural factors, the campaigning and lobbying work of the women's movement proved to produce multiple results. Firstly, the law was in fact approved, and despite the polemic around it, the title of the law remained as it was proposed by the women's organisations of civil society involved: "Law about the Domestic Violence Practiced Against the Woman", *Lei Sobre a Violência Doméstica Praticada Contra a Mulher*. As mentioned by Isabel Casimiro,

[w]e did not want the article including men nor did we want the article regarding the safeguard of the family because their inclusion opened the possibility of individual interpretations to the law. Sure there are women that also beat men, but they are a minority compared with the opposite situation. We wanted a law that protected women from domestic violence because the penal code does not protect them! So the final result was this, and what it was possible was this... After so many alterations to the

project of the law the agreement we were able to make was that the title ought to be maintained (March 2012).

Having in consideration the arguments regarding its possible unconstitutionality and all the polemic and resistance regarding the project of the law, not only the approval of a law against domestic violence against women, but also the maintenance of such title is notable.

Secondly, during nearly all the interviews conducted to MPs, although stressing the importance of their own work as *women* under the GMP, the MPs recognized the work done by women civil society organisations regarding the law as the major force behind the existence of such a law. As the president of the GMP noted, “[t]he civil society had a fundamental role regarding the issue of domestic violence. Fundamental!” (April 2012). When asking several activists and researchers working on the project of the law and the struggle for its approval they identified the work of women civil society organisations as the main determinant factor for the existence of the LADVAW. As Benilde Nhalivilo argued, “[w]e [women civil society organisations] struggled during several years. Because of such struggles, and all the compromises made by the government they were forced to approve the law” (March 2012).

Thirdly, the issue of domestic violence became a public crime, and adding to the process discussed earlier in chapter 5, its social meaning was further reconceptualised with the approval of the LADVAW. As Terezinha da Silva of WLSA put it

[i]t may not be addressed as it should in terms of its gendered nature, but the issue of domestic violence is finally public, and its practice considered a public crime. Now people are talking about it, now people know that there is a problem and that such problem exists due to inequalities! (April 2012).

When asked about the position of women MPs regarding the LADVAW, the president of the GMP Nhielete Mondlane confirmed that “amongst women there were some that disagreed with the law, a very small number, but by the time of the voting they were embarrassed to vote against it, so they did not” (April 2012). My visits to the parliament allowed me to share the intent of my work with men MPs and in any situation those men – similarly to what had happened in my meetings with women MPs – showed antagonistic opinions towards the LADVAW. In fact they generally and voluntarily indicated that it had been a controversial issue because of the unconstitutional aspect mentioned earlier. This does not correspond to say that these specific MPs did not pose barriers to the discussion of the draft, but it may indicate that at least formally, the issue is framed – both by women as well as men MPs – as condemnable.

All in all, the overall process for the approval of the LADVAW has to a greater or lesser extent contributed for a general socio-cultural disapproval of domestic violence,

even if only in principle. Empirical evidence suggests that the GMP was not a sufficient condition for the LADVAW to be advanced at the parliament. Its initial effort of bringing the draft to the parliament was not followed by the development of a “feminine” performance. But despite the fact that resistances to the law against domestic violence were also found at the level of the GMP, the interactions between the caucus and women’s organisations of civil society together – including the interaction between key individuals within such spaces – generated opportunities for the law against domestic violence to be approved. As a result, one may advance that the lobbying efforts of the overall women’s movement were determinant in contradicting a gender inequality gear within the parliament by challenging its patriarchal hierarchy and eventually influencing the approval of the LADVAW.

7.5 Conclusion

By analysing the specific case of the discussion and approval of the “law against domestic violence against women” this chapter suggests that formal politics in Mozambique – its practices, institutions and actors – far from being gender neutral, tend to maintain a patriarchal structure that affects women’s political role. Additionally, that fact has repercussions on the production of the normative framework ultimately affecting women’s overall status quo. Thus, assuming that the presence of women at the parliament, or that the existence of a women caucus within such institution is sufficient to produce an increasingly gender aware agenda or to the advancement of more women’s rights should be carefully analysed.

Far from arguing that women’s role within formal politics is null, this chapter aimed at stressing the struggles that women within this sphere have to endure and the barriers that they have to overcome. Women’s entrance within the formal sphere of politics in Mozambique should be analysed as recent, especially when compared with the intersecting gendered discrimination they are subjected to, and it should be acknowledged that progresses have been achieved. Having this in mind, it is suggested that we look at other paths of political action through which women can contradict a “gendered inequality gear”. The case of the law against domestic violence against women constitutes an opportunity to do so. Recognising a legal *lacuna* regarding that practice, multiple organisations of civil society took the ground breaking initiative of drafting a law and influencing the voting behaviour of MPs. As a result of this process, the practice of domestic violence was reconceptualised as illegitimate as well as a public crime.

The implementation of such a legal framework is not expected to be automatic nor positively linear across time and the diverse socio-geographical spaces in Mozambique, but its existence did have an impact regarding perceptions around that

type of violence. In fact the LADVAW must not be seen only as a deterrent instrument. If on the one hand it aims at decreasing the incentives for domestic violence by punishing its practice, on the other hand it is also a socio-cultural instrument that served to shape mentalities. The collective action of women's organisations challenged gender-based hierarchies and ultimately contributed to promote structural social transformations in favour of gender equality. By acting as shapers of both legislative and, consequently, of social outcomes, women's organisations functioned as substantive representatives of Mozambican women.

Chapter 8 Concluding Remarks

8.1 Introduction

This chapter presents my concluding remarks. Firstly it starts by reviewing my findings, namely by pinpointing the main dynamics that characterised the struggle against domestic violence. It looks at the scales and the actors involved in order to summarize the relevance of the women's movements in the development of the law against domestic violence against women. It revisits the empirical findings of the previous chapters, and interprets them in terms of the effectiveness of the women's movement in shaping the social and the political regarding the production of gender categories and norms. It perceives such findings as evidence of the ability of such a movement to go from a contentious actor to an effective agent of change. Hence, it confirms the role of Mozambican women's movement as informal representatives of women's rights and interests. The second section addresses the implications of my findings in regard to the contemporary Mozambican women's movement and domestic violence. The third section examines the theoretical implications of my analysis in regard to women's movements, namely in respect to their ability to constitute avenues for women's substantive representation. Supported by the empirical findings it stresses the cooperation with formal political actors as an effective engaging strategy and rebalances the universal importance of autonomy as one of the *sine qua non* conditions for women's social movements to be able to achieve their goals. Finally, this chapter opens further avenues for enquire in relation to women's mobilisation in Mozambique in particular and the political role of women's movements in general.

8.2 Review: From a Claim-Making Actor to an Agent of Change

In order to answer to my main research question I have addressed three sub-questions, which were inspired by a tripartite framework for qualitatively measuring the overall effectiveness of the women's movement in the struggle against domestic violence. I have analysed the role of the women's movement as an articulator of the issue of domestic violence, as an agenda setter regarding its ability to place the issue of domestic violence at the centre of the political agenda, and its ability to directly affect formal political outcomes in the case of the development of the law against domestic violence against women.

At times, interpreting a given behaviour as belonging to one or other role was not a straightforward task. The roles of articulating the issue of domestic violence, of placing it in the political agenda, and of shaping legislative outcomes are often overlapping processes and interdependent in various degrees. Such a "division" was an analytical tactic that must not be interpreted as reflecting a rigid and linear process

against domestic violence. As demonstrated throughout the last three chapters, women mobilising against domestic violence were able to fulfil all the above mentioned roles. The broad women's movement was essential in identifying the practice of domestic violence as a systemic issue and to articulate it as a gender based type of violence, one mainly affecting women throughout the country. Such identifications contributed for a constituency to be built. I have presented evidence that the women's movement was able to diffuse a group perspective and place the issue of domestic violence on the political agenda. Lastly, enough evidence was also provided regarding the ability of the women's movement to shape the legislative process regarding domestic violence, not only by initiating the process itself but also by influencing its outcomes.

Nonetheless, the consequences of the actions of the women's movement went beyond the dimensions directly addressed in this dissertation's sub-research questions. All of the above had consequences for the general society and for what constitutes the "political". Above all, the three roles demanded that both social and political norms to be challenged. As demonstrated in chapter 3, throughout different historical periods, gendered norms – in terms of the hierarchy it produces – have been maintained. To be understood as an issue, to be made a public affair, and to be politically addressed the women's movement challenged the social norms that rendered the practice of domestic violence invisible and legitimate. As such, a struggle for meaning (see Tarrow, 1998: 26; see also Della Porta, 1999) was pursued during the entire process. From the moment domestic violence was articulated as a systemic and gendered issue, to the struggle for placing it at the political agenda as such, to the moment the contents of the law were discussed and approved, such a struggle was pursued. "Domestic violence" became part of the general social, political, and legal vocabulary and it was done in a way that it was related to "gender". The word "gender" as a keyword is commonly related to "women" hence, it often has an empty meaning in terms of exposing the power relations that the word itself translates. As articulated by the women's movement, domestic violence became associated with ideas of power and imbalances giving it a "new" meaning. In turn, the meaning of "gender" became illustrated with an example, one that has been reconceptualised as illegitimate and constituting a public crime. In general terms, the practice became discussable, contestable, and criminalized.

The entire process also demanded a struggle for space. Speaking and acting as *women* has *per se* a symbolic meaning (see Meier and Lombardo, 2010) that challenges cultural assumptions about the spaces women should supposedly occupy or not, and what roles they should and should not perform. Both "public" spaces and formal political spaces were challenged in terms of the above. Articulating the issue of domestic violence as systemic and gendered for the first time, promoting public

debates regarding the issue, and marching on the streets for the LADVAW to be approved, were all matters of challenging and conquering space. The delivery of a draft of a law from the hands of women's organisations of civil society to the parliament and the consequent approval of the LADVAW can be interpreted as women extending the political spaces available to them. This is applicable for the women's movement itself, but as demonstrated throughout the chapters, this is also applicable to the generality of women. The creation of the GAMCs as "public" spaces where victims of the practice can press charges regarding domestic violence is one example. Public debates organised throughout the country to discuss the issue of domestic violence is another example. All in all, spaces became available for women to opt to discuss, denounce, and contest the practice of domestic violence.

Finally, the whole process reflected a challenge imposed to the prevailing gender hierarchy. Building a constituency and diffusing a group perspective around gender, has challenged the idea that women's emancipation and the constitutional principle of equality could go without encompassing profound structural changes. This is understood as necessary, both in terms of social as well as political changes. Throughout different periods, the allocation of decisional making power has been made according to such a gender hierarchy, and so has the ability to define what counts as political and which interests matter. Hence, both actors and norms reflect and are reflected in such a hierarchy. Notably, women were able to organise and make demands on an issue that was neither a social nor a political priority. The draft of the law was delivered to the parliament through a caucus for women, the GMP. The interviews to activists suggested that the act of demanding something from formal political institutions was conceived by such institutions as defying their decision-making power. Even if this dissertation does not specifically measure the permanent changes at the level of the parliament, or the degree to which the law has been implemented on the whole, it safely advances that a gendered gear was contradicted and that such a fact has brought alterations to the general perceptions regarding women's social and political agency.

All the above has produced social and political outcomes that have made me conclude that, in regard to the struggle against domestic violence, the overall women's movement was able to serve as an avenue for the political representation of women. Given the lack of an appropriate response to domestic violence by formal institutions, the women's mobilisation against domestic violence acted as catalysts for the struggle against the practice to be initiated, and as critical actors for the practice to be finally addressed, reconceptualised as illegitimate, and legally framed as a public crime.

8.3 Contextual Remarks

My findings suggest that the contemporary women's movement in Mozambique will continue to play a relevant role in the general advance of women's rights and gender equality, and in specific regarding the struggle against domestic violence. Though formal political structures are increasingly involved in the promotion of gender equality, the case of the law against domestic violence demonstrates the relevancy of women's mobilisation in civil society. In fact, the recent events regarding the revision of the penal code and the inclusion of the crime of domestic violence in its text, has been pointed by organisations such as WLSA as a drawback regarding women's rights (see appendix G for documents related to this matter). This fact indicates that the mobilisation against domestic violence in Mozambique has not ceased with the approval of the law in 2009.

The Mozambican women's mobilisation against domestic violence gains new contours when framed in the broader context of the national women's movement. By seeing such a mobilisation from a women's movement perspective, one is able to better grasp all the nuances that characterise the process against domestic violence and understand its overall effectiveness. Both the literature and empirical evidence regarding women's mobilisation in Mozambique, suggested the existence of several organisations engaging in several struggles for increasing women's rights and decreasing gender inequality. Reminding the case of the new family law is especially relevant here, as a case in which several women's organisations collectively mobilised to influence the contents of the law in a fashion more favourable to women's rights. A gap in the timeline of the struggle against domestic violence can be identified, one which was explained during the interviews, as a strategic management of resources. Several women's organisations behind the struggle against domestic violence – for instance the Fórum Mulher, WLSA, Muleide, and the AMMCJ – were also engaged in struggling for the approval of the family law, and since the latter had been initiated before the one on domestic violence, they collectively and temporarily “slowed down” their mobilisation in the latter process. This suggests that there is a “tradition” of collective mobilisation amongst multiple women's organisations of civil society.

Such a permanent collective engagement has in turn generated a cumulative experience, one which should be understood as a resource for the women's movement. Such an experience both legitimises its claims and its role, and ultimately contributes to its ability to achieve intended results. Such an experience is also valuable when it comes to accumulate intellectual capital, as well as social and political ones. Regarding the first, women's organisations of civil society have developed multiple areas of expertise, which combined contributed to producing original data regarding the issue of domestic violence, as well as to producing “embodied

knowledges” which in turn contributed to form a group perspective. As for the latter, the major women’s organisations of civil society – such as for instance the WLSA, the Muleide and the Fórum Mulher – have been able to build strong ties with several national and international NGOs, universities departments – such as the CEA – as well as with formal political institutions – such as the MINT – and especially with key influential individuals within such institutions. Additionally, by considering the broad women’s movement and not only the collective mobilisation against domestic violence in isolation, one is able to understand the existence of “hybrid spaces”, flows of individuals between multiple organisations of civil society, and cases of double militancy, not only represented by the OMM itself, but also for instance by cases of members of organisations of civil society that also had been engaged with formal politics. Such spaces facilitated an interaction between civil society and formal political institutions that favoured the overall outcomes of the struggle against domestic violence.

My findings suggest that within such a movement, one is able to identify critical actors in several women’s organisations of civil society, who in turn, were able to exercise a strong leadership regarding the struggle against domestic violence and be expected to be the ones continuing to lead women’s mobilisation against gender inequality. In spite of the fact that, as suggested above, a comprehensive analysis on women’s mobilisation reveals the importance of considering such a mobilisation in a broad frame of a social movement, it is also relevant to stress the importance of a strong leadership within it. The overall struggle against domestic violence was driven by a constant group of women’s organisations of civil society acting collectively. As pointed in the introduction of this thesis, the activist and researcher Maria José Arthur of the organisation WLSA, identified several organisations as having a more notorious role in the process against domestic violence (October 2014). The organisations pointed were the Fórum Mulher, the WLSA, the Muleide, and the AMMCJ. This suggests a pattern of involvement of such organisations as leading the struggle against domestic violence, but also having in consideration the broad frame of the movement for the overall women’s rights in Mozambique. The existence of critical actors was also suggested during multiple interviews conducted to activists, who indicated the process against domestic violence as a thoroughly organised effort, in which roles were well defined and competencies were distributed amongst the elements involved according to their expertise. As Denise Namburete of N’Weti pointed out, eagerness for protagonist roles was neutralised by such a scheme (November 2014). Such a fact allowed for consensus to be reached even when opinions diverged.

My findings also suggest that the effectiveness of women’s mobilisation profited from favourable structures at different scales and the involvement of other actors, such

as for instance international organisations. It is possible to question if the overall result of women's mobilisation against domestic violence would have been possible had certain conditions been absent. Nonetheless, it is unquestionable that the overall women's mobilisation was able to seize the opportunities presented and strategically used them to achieve favourable results. During the specific struggle against domestic violence, several structural factors may be pointed as favouring such an outcome. To begin with, a favourable set of constitutional norms and a degree of official openness from the government to commit to women's rights. Firstly, the constitutional principle of equality, which has posed barriers for women's demands for a law specifically against women, but has also served for women to have legitimacy for demanding for equality and justifying the use of affirmative actions. Secondly, the constitutional right of freedom to associate that has allowed for the generality of organisations of civil society to flourish. In fact, the legitimacy of the very own existence of established women's organisations of civil society was made possible by such a principle. Without such a principle, collective action would still have been possible but the overall process would have different contours and to predict what types of results would have been achieved is mere speculation. The government indicates openness towards the integration of women's rights in its normative and legal framework, despite the fact that such integration is dependent of multiple interests, including preserving the gender status quo in which women are still generally relegated to secondary roles.

Another condition refers to the existence of a universal women's human rights framework, and its incorporation at the national normative framework. Such a set of norms were brought by the multiple mechanisms Mozambique has bound to, such as the CEDAW and the SADC. This fact has favoured the construction of women's claims regarding the issue of domestic violence as gender-based violence and as a matter of women's human rights. It has also legitimised women's demands for the government to honour its agreements by taking action.

Moreover, one can identify the existence of an international agenda for women's rights that favours the inclusion of the issue of domestic violence in national political agendas. The Beijing conference was a recurrent topic during the interviews conducted with activists, who stressed it as a turning point for the overall women's organisations claims and specifically regarding the claims around the issue of domestic violence. The more resourceful women's organisations of civil society are able to participate in such types of international meetings, exchanging ideas and strategies, and bringing new scales to their actions. Some organisations are also part of regional networks which bring together congeners organisations, being thus, able to experience similar experiences.

International pressure was also a relevant factor during this process. Despite the fact that such a pressure is not easily measured and more often than the contrary not easy to trace, it was pointed during several meetings with activists as extremely influential during the process for the approval of the LADVAW. This indicates at least two aspects: firstly, as mentioned above, the Mozambican government is open to further expand the rights granted to women; secondly, it also indicates that the agenda of women's mobilising against domestic violence is similar to the ones of those international actors involved.

The existence of the GMP can also be pointed as having an effect on the outcome of the approval of the law in 2009. Despite the fact that a lack of a true engagement with a feminine agenda was recurrently pointed during my interviews and meetings with women activists – not specifying individuals but rather referring to the general context of the GMP – the draft of the law reached the parliament through the GMP. As it was also noted during such interviews, if the GMP had not been receptive to receiving the draft the whole process would have been more difficult.

Finally, the proximity of the date of general elections constituted a strategic moment in which pressure for the approval of the LADVAW was able to have a determinant effect. Since the women's movement was able to mobilise popular support, it had the potential to influence the voting behaviour of Mozambicans. Such a fact leads us to further reflect on the ability of the women's movement to be recognised as a representative of women, but also on the elite nature of several organisations of civil society as increasing the ability of the overall mobilisation to exercise political influence.

All in all, Mozambican women's organisations are likely to remain essential actors in the pursuit of gender equality in the country. Notwithstanding that relevance, the role of those organisations is to a more or lesser degree influenced by the behaviour of other actors, nature of norms, and electoral dynamics.

8.4 Theoretical Implications

The main theoretical puzzle presented in this dissertation is related to the ability of women's movements to serve as avenues for the representation of women. This involved suggesting further spaces as political and further actors as holding political agency. Such an analysis was conducted from a "spatialised" approach in terms of examining how gender and politics intersect and how spaces may constrain or on the other hand promote women's social and political agency. In terms of formal political spaces, the role that women's movements may have in breaking patterns of gender inequality, including in transforming the production of norms was emphasised.

While doing so I have revisited the concept of autonomy, one which is often presented in the literature regarding social movements in general and women's movements in particular as a decisive factor for the effectiveness of such movements to produce their intended results. Regarding the actors involved in the struggle against domestic I found several cases of individual linkages to multiple organisations, cases of "double-militancy", and the existence of individual flows between formal and informal political spaces. There are spaces common to formal political actors and elements of women's organisations of civil society, a fact that has been demonstrated to have to a certain degree facilitated the women's movement intended results. Women's organisations of civil society have been able to maintain decisional autonomy from the state and that fact – and its importance – is neither empirically nor theoretically contested. But simultaneously such organisations are not completely isolated from the formal sphere of politics. "Associational linkages" (Molyneux, 1998) were a fact – such as the organisation of the TCV – but the reality went beyond such linkages to include hybrid spaces. Such spaces were used in ways which proved to positively influence the struggle against domestic violence.

The theoretical implications of such findings are related to the rebalance of the concept of autonomy as one of the *sine qua non* conditions for women's movements to succeed in their quests. Balancing autonomy from the government with such flows may also result in positive outcomes for women's movements. Additionally, in theory such flows may also produce effects within formal political spaces as they serve as vehicles for feminist agendas to develop within such spaces. Hence, my analysis stresses the idea that the women's movement against domestic violence was not always in conflict with the formal political sphere. Such a fact adds to the argument that formal and informal political spaces must not be seen as binaries, since those spaces are not necessarily exclusionary or in permanent opposition.

8.5 Further Avenues of Enquire

Given the specific goal and limitations of this dissertation, I propose five further avenues of enquiry regarding this case study. The first one refers to the intersection of politics and specific social axes other than gender. Although trying to be sensitive to the intersection of social axes with the ability of women to exercise political agency, I was not able to conduct an in depth analysis on the ways concepts of urbanity and rurality may multiply interfere with such an agency. As noted in this dissertation, during several interviews conducted to both MPs as well as activists for women's rights, such concepts were mentioned as linked to individual degrees of agency, knowledge production, and culture. Formal knowledge and agency are perceived as desirable traits and often linked to concepts of urbanity, while a strong sense of cultural

preservation is perceived as retrograde and often linked to concepts of rurality. In the sense that such concepts are often presented in opposition they have the potential for generating multiple hierarchies, ultimately favouring those women who are urban in detriment of those women who come from rural settings.

The second avenue of enquiry refers to the role of men in the struggle against gender inequality. This dissertation explores the political presence of women in terms of formal and informal spheres in order to understand the possible substantive changes such women are achieving in regard to women's rights and gender equality. Despite analysing it from a gender sensitive lens, the focus was on women's agency in civil society, hence, somehow overlooking men's roles. Although a few men were able to participate in this study, further enquiry is necessary in respect to the participation of men in civil society and men MPs in the specific case of domestic violence and in the promotion of gender equality in general.

The third type of enquiry refers to the implementation of the law against domestic violence. Empirical evidence shows that the mobilisation against domestic violence has not ceased with the approval of the law. Focusing on the efforts to implement the law and to further enforce its social message would contribute to strengthen the argument that the women's movement is permanently engaged with the issue and thus continuously serving as a representative of women. In this sense it is relevant to measure the possible social and political impact of such a mobilisation in the implementation of the law across multiple contexts throughout the country, including local informal and formal provincial political organs.

The fourth type of enquiry is related to the impact of international donors on the promotion of gender inequality. The allocation of funding is essential for the overall struggle for women's rights and donors tend to allocate funds under the umbrella of conditionality. In this context it is of interest to explore not only the role of donors in the specific process against domestic violence, but also how in general these actors interact with national women's organisations in the promotion of gender equality.

Finally, the fifth type of enquiry is related to the political tensions that have been escalating between the two major parties – Frelimo and Renamo – leading to multiple confrontations which since 2012 have been reawakening the spectre of war. Such cleavages between Frelimo and Renamo constitute a test to the GMP as a caucus for women of all parties. It would be relevant for an analysis on gender and politics to examine the dynamics that such increasing tensions generate in terms of a gender allegiance within the GMP, the maintenance of hybrid spaces, and the promotion of women's rights and gender equality.

8.6 Conclusion

On the whole, the women's mobilisation against domestic violence in Mozambique was able to serve as an avenue for the representation of women. The movement was essential for the issue to be articulated as a systemic and gender based one. Its efforts were able to influence the political agenda as well as to influence alterations to the general socio-cultural legitimisation of the issue of domestic violence. It is possible to directly link such a mobilisation to the *responsiveness* (see Weldon, 2002b) by the Mozambican state. Such a fact is visible through the production of several mechanisms to address the issue of domestic violence, as well as the changes in the legal framework. The existence of a strong and well organised women's movement in Mozambique, one capable of balancing decisional autonomy with cooperation, and of maintaining a well-defined agenda, was determinant for the issue of domestic violence to become a public issue and a public crime. Evidence indicates that other factors and actors favoured such results, including the funding and normative influence by international actors, as well as the favourable national normative setting. Hence, it is reckoned that under different settings the outcomes could have been different. Consequently, one can suggest that similar cultural, social, economic and political conditions in other contexts may lead to similar results, though the complexity of the process makes it difficult to pinpoint all relevant causal variables and consequently a deep qualitative analysis is required to fully grasp the dynamics of each context. Hence, what it is suggested is that the analytical framework used in this analysis may be generically useful to examine women's mobilisation in cases similar to this, acting as a general standpoint upon which a more thorough contextual analysis is produced.

Appendix A. Map of Mozambique



Map No. 3706 Rev. 6 UNITED NATIONS
May 2016

Department of Field Support
Geospatial Information Section (formerly Cartographic Section)

Mozambique, Map No. 3706 Rev. 6, May 2016, UNITED NATIONS.

Appendix B. Timeline of Key Events

Date	Event
c.a. 1885	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although the Portuguese presence in Mozambique can be felt since the late 15th century and beginning of the 16th century, the effective colonization of Mozambique is pushed by the Berlin Conference and the creation of the <i>Companhias</i> in the late 19th century.
1964	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The national liberation struggle against the colonial power breaks out.
1967	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FRELIMO creates a “Feminine Deployment”, the <i>Destacamento Feminino</i>.
1973	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of the women’s league of Frelimo, the <i>Organização da Mulher Moçambicana</i> – OMM.
1974	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lusaka Agreements. Portugal agrees to transfer full power to Frelimo.
1975	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proclamation of the independence of the Republic of Mozambique with Samora Machel as the President of the country. Frelimo assumes the leadership of the country and declares to be a Marxist-Leninist party.
c.a. 1976	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civil War between the government of Frelimo and the rebel forces of Renamo breaks out.
1986	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Death of the President Samora Machel. Joaquim Chissano assumes the national presidency.
1989	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of the organisation WLSA.
1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frelimo approves a liberal-democratic Constitution.
1991	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of the organisation Muleide.
1992	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signature of the General Peace Agreement in Rome, ending the civil war in Mozambique.
1994	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First multi-party elections are held in Mozambique. Frelimo wins the elections and Joaquim Chissano is re-elected as the president of the country. Creation of the umbrella organisation Fórum Mulher.
1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created the organisation AMMCJ.
1996	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adoption of the national Programme of Action to Fight Gender based Violence.
1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisation of the Campaign All against Violence – TCV.
1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Elections. Frelimo wins the elections. Creation of the Bureau Desks for the Woman and the Child at multiple police stations – GAMCs.
2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> World March of Women. Creation of the Ministry of Women and Coordination of Social Affairs – MMCAS.

2000-2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women Organisations of Civil Society decide to work on a law against domestic violence against women. • Women organisations of civil society create a multidisciplinary group to work both on the law against domestic violence against women and on the family law.
2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Elections. Frelimo wins the elections and Armando Guebuza becomes the President. • Luísa Diogo becomes prime-minister and the first women to reach that position in the history of Mozambique. • Approval of the new family law. • Creation of the National Council for the Advancement of Women.
2004-2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation of regional seminars on the three regions of the country with representations of organisations of civil society, state institutions, community and religious leaders.
2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of the <i>Grupo da Mulher Parlamentar</i> – GMP – a caucus for all parliamentary women.
2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National meeting of the organisations of civil society to vote for the approval of the draft of the law against domestic violence. • Draft of the law against domestic violence presented by organisations of civil society to the <i>Grupo da Mulher Parlamentar</i>. • Approved the Gender Policy and the strategy for its implementation.
2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation of the Movement for the Approval of the Law against Domestic Violence. • March against gender based violence. As a symbolic gesture, a group of organisations of civil society delivers the bill against domestic violence against women to members of the parliament.
2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The national plan to prevent and fight domestic violence is approved by the council of ministers.
2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of the law 29/2009 the law against domestic violence against women. • General Elections. Frelimo wins and Armando Guebuza is re-elected.
2012-2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing tensions between Frelimo and Renamo leads to a series of confrontations.
2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parliamentary approval of the revision of the law of the National Commission for Elections, proposed by Renamo. • General Elections. Frelimo wins and Filipe Nyusi is elected as the President. • Revision of the Penal Code.

Appendix C. Table of Interviews

Name	Affiliation	Position	Date	Sex	Local/Type of Interview
"Ana"	Anonymous NGO	Activist	March 2012	F	Maputo
"Anonymous"	MMAS	Advisor	December 2010	F	Maputo
"Anonymous"	1st Parliamentary Commission	Member	April 2012	M	Maputo/ Informal Interview
"Anonymous"	3 rd Parliamentary Commission	Member	March 2012	F	Maputo/ Informal Interview
"Anonymous"	Frelimo Parliamentary Wing	Assistant	March and April 2012	M	Maputo/ Informal Interview
"Anonymous"	GMP	Secretary	April 2012	F	Maputo/ Informal Interview
"Anonymous"	MMAS	Public Officer	December 2010	F	Maputo/ Informal Interview
"Anonymous"	MISAU	Public Officer	December 2010	M	Maputo/ Informal Interview
"Anonymous"	AMMCJ	Provincial Delegate and Lawyer	October 2014	F	Skype Interview
"Anonymous" a)	Frelimo Party	MP	April 2012	F	Maputo
"Anonymous" b)	Frelimo Party	MP	April 2012	F	Maputo
"Anonymous"	INE	Researcher	December 2010	M	Maputo/ Informal Interview
"Anonymous"	Renamo Party	MP	April 2012	F	Maputo
"Anonymous"	OMM	Secretary	March 2012	F	Maputo
A. Martins	N.A.	Lawyer	December 2010	M	Maputo/ Informal Interview

"Bárbara"	N.A.	Market Vendor	March 2012	F	Maputo/ Informal Interview
"Berta"	N.A.	Waitress	December 2010	F	Maputo/ Informal Interview
Benilde Nhalivilo	Forcom; Fórum Mulher	Executive Director; member	March 2012	F	Maputo
"Carlos"	Anonymous	Activist	December 2010	M	Maputo
Denise Namburete	N'Weti	Founder and Executive Director	November 2014	F	Skype Interview
Gilberto Macuácuca	Homem que é Homem; HOPEM	Television show Presenter; Coordinator of the Programme "Gender Based Violence"	Fevereiro 2014	M	Skype Interview
Graça Júlio	Fórum Mulher	Coordinator of the Programme "Violence against Women"	March 2012	F	Maputo
Graça Samo	Fórum Mulher	Director	December 2 010	F	Maputo
"Guida"	UEM	Graduate student	December 2010	F	Maputo/ Informal Interview
Inês Raimundo	CAP-UEM	Scholar; Head of the Department	December 2010; September 2014	F	Maputo; Lisbon
Isabel Casimiro	CEA; UEM; Cruzeiro do Sul; Fórum Mulher	Scholar; Researcher; Activist.	December 2010 and March 2012	F	Maputo
Jantone	UEM/CAP	Student	December 2010	M	Maputo/ Informal Interview

Lília	N.A.	Street Vendor	December 2010	F	Maputo/ Informal Interview
Mamana	Local Project	Farmer	December 2010	F	Matola/ Informal Interview
“Maria”	Anonymous	Director	December 2010 and March 2012	F	Maputo
Maria José Arthur	WLSA	Project Coordinator, Researcher; Activist	March 2012 and October 2014	F	Maputo; Skype Interview
Nhielete Brooke Mondlane	GMP; Frelimo	President; MP	April 2012	F	Maputo
Noémia	N.A.	School teacher	December 2010	F	Maputo/ Informal Interview
Paulina	N.A.	Street Vendor	December 2010	F	Maputo/ Informal Interview
Rafa Machava	Muleide	President	April 2012	F	Maputo
Rosa Julai	Renamo	MP	April 2012	F	Maputo
Terezinha da Silva	WLSA	Executive Director and National Coordinator	December 2010 and April 2012	F	Maputo
Virgília dos Santos Matabele	MMAS; Frelimo	Former Minister (2000-2009); MP	April 2012	F	Maputo
Yolanda Mulhuini	GDMR	Executive Director	September 2014	F	Skype Interview
Zélia Langa	Frelimo and OMM	MP; Secretary OMM Maputo	April 2012	F	Maputo

Appendix D. Information for Participants

Original Version – Portuguese

INFORMAÇÃO PARA PARTICIPANTES

(Ser-lhe-á entregue uma cópia)



O meu nome é Diana Magalhães e sou doutoranda no Departamento de Geografia do King's College London, em Inglaterra. Encontro-me a fazer pesquisa sobre o papel das Associações de Mulheres na luta contra a desigualdade de Género em Moçambique, nomeadamente sobre o seu papel no desenho, promoção e aprovação da lei da violência doméstica contra a mulher.

Gostaria de o(a) convidar para participar neste projecto de doutoramento. Deverá fazê-lo somente se desejar e a não participação não o prejudicará de alguma forma. Antes de decidir participar neste projecto é importante que entenda os objectivos do mesmo e o que a sua participação significa. Por favor leia cuidadosamente a informação que se segue e discuta-a comigo ou outros se assim o desejar. Caso tenha alguma dúvida ou se necessitar de mais alguma informação terei todo o gosto em esclarecer.

- Cabe-lhe somente a si decidir se deseja participar neste projecto. Ao decidir participar neste projecto de investigação deve guardar esta folha informativa.
- Ser-lhe-á pedido que assine uma declaração em que afirma ser de sua livre vontade participar neste projecto. Sem essa declaração a sua participação não será possível. Se não puder assinar ser-lhe-á pedida a sua confirmação verbal, que será gravada.
- Ser-lhe-á feita uma entrevista sobre a sua opinião/experiência acerca de assuntos relacionados com género em Moçambique, e mais especificamente com o avanço dos direitos da mulher, a discriminação baseada no género e a aprovação da Lei contra a Violência Doméstica.
- Se dentro deste temas preferir não falar acerca de algo em particular, não lhe serão feitas perguntas acerca do(s) mesmo(s). Adicionalmente, pode a qualquer momento da entrevista escolher não responder a determinadas questões ou ainda cessar a sua participação sem que para isso necessite de apresentar qualquer motivo.
- Poderá retirar quaisquer dados/informação que já tenha disponibilizado desde que o faça até à altura que combinaremos.
- As entrevistas serão gravadas apenas se o permitir e somente a investigadora terá acesso às mesmas. As informações que providenciará serão usadas apenas no âmbito deste projecto e serão publicadas na forma de tese. Se assim o desejar, ser-lhe-á enviada uma cópia da sua participação ou da tese.
- Note que a confidencialidade e o anonimato serão mantidos e não será possível identificá-lo(a) em nenhuma destas publicações, a menos que decida ser identificado(a). Por defeito, os dados providenciados por si serão mantidos anónimos, e o seu consentimento assinado ou verbal não será relacionável com os dados providenciados por si durante a entrevista. A excepção aplica-se caso deseje/concorde com ser identificado(a). Sendo esse o caso será identificado(a) pelo seu nome/cargo oficial.

Se tem dúvidas ou se sentir que este estudo/projecto de investigação o(a) prejudicou de alguma forma pode contactar o King's College London para mais informações ou conselhos, usando os contactos abaixo: [Contactos]. Obrigada por participar.

My name is Diana Magalhães and I am a PhD candidate at the Department of Geography at King's College London, UK. I am conducting research on the work of women's organisations regarding gender inequality in Mozambique, namely on their role in drafting and approving the law against domestic violence.

I would like to invite you to participate on this project. If you do not wish to participate do feel free to refuse. Before you agree to participate it is important that you understand what this research is about and what your participation in it encompasses. Please read the following information and if you have questions feel free to discuss them with me.

- It is your choice to participate in this project. If you accept it please retain a copy of this form.
- You will be asked to sign a form stating that it was your own choice to participate. If you cannot sign your oral consent will be recorded.
- During this interview you will be asked about your opinion/experiences regarding gender related issues in Mozambique, more specifically, regarding the advancements regarding women's rights, gender based discrimination, and the approval of the law against domestic violence.
- If there is a specific topic that you do not feel comfortable to comment please do let me know so that we do not include it in our conversation. Additionally, you can choose to end this conversation at any point without having to justify your choice.
- You will be able to withdraw your participation if you wish to do so. The limit is imposed by the date of the submission of this thesis.
- Our conversation will be recorded only if you agree with it. Only the researcher will have access to such recordings. The information you will provide will only be used for the purpose of this thesis. Such information will be included in my final report/thesis. If you wish a copy of the report/thesis will be sent to you.
- Please mind that confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained and it will be impossible for you to be identified, unless you agree otherwise. The exception applies to cases that decide to be identified. If you wish to do so you will be identified by your name/position occupied.

If you have any question or if you feel this study/project has caused you any harm please feel free to contact King's College London for more information using the contacts below:

[Contacts]

Thank you for participating.

Appendix E. Consent Form

Original Form – Portuguese

Por favor complete este formulário após ter lido e/ou ouvido a informação contida na folha informativa respeitante a este estudo de investigação. Este formulário destina-se a ser apresentado ao Comité de Ética do King's College London, e visa protegê-lo a si e certificar-se que a pesquisa foi realizada cumprindo essa necessidade.



Título do Estudo: “Desigualdade de Género, Associações de Mulheres e Política em Moçambique: o Caso da Violência Doméstica”

Comité de Ética de Pesquisa do King's College Ref: _____

Obrigada por considerar participar neste estudo de investigação. A pessoa que está a organizar este estudo deve explicar-lhe o projecto antes de decidir participar no mesmo. Caso tenha alguma dúvida referente à Folha Informativa ou a qualquer outra explicação que lhe tenha sido dada até então, esclareça por favor com a investigadora. Ser-lhe-á entregue uma cópia deste Formulário de Consentimento, que deverá guardar para futura referência sua. Por favor assinale com uma cruz se concordar:

- Estou ciente que me cabe a mim decidir retirar a minha contribuição e participação neste estudo/projecto de pesquisa e posso fazê-lo a qualquer altura aquando a entrevista/questionário, sem ter que apresentar nenhum motivo para tal. Posso fazê-lo também após a entrevista/questionário ser realizada(o), desde que comunique tal decisão à investigadora e que o faça até [data específica]
- Dou o meu consentimento para o processamento dos meus dados para o propósito que me foi referido. Compreendo que tal informação será tratada de acordo com os termos do Acto de Protecção de Dados 1998 (Reino Unido).
- Aceito que a entrevista seja gravada.
- Desejo ser identificado(a) pelo meu nome ou cargo oficial/Não desejo ser identificado(a) (riscar o que não interessa)

Declaração do(a) Participante:

Eu, _____

Confirmo que o projecto de investigação acima citado me foi descrito e explicado satisfatoriamente, e que concordo em participar no mesmo. Li e/ou ouvi ambos os formulários (Folha Informativa e Formulário de Consentimento para Participantes em Estudos de Investigação) e compreendo o que o projecto de investigação envolve.

Assinatura

Data

Declaração da Investigadora:

Eu, Diana Magalhães confirmo ter detalhadamente explicado ao(a) participante a natureza e requerimentos do proposto projecto de investigação.

Assinatura

Data

Translated Form – English

Please fill in this form only after reading/listening the information sheet regarding this research study. This form is part of the requirements of the King's College London Ethical Committee and aims at protecting your privacy and any confidential information you provide.



Thesis Title: "Gender Inequality, Women's Organisations and Politics in Mozambique: the Case of Domestic Violence"

Ethical Research Committee Ref.: _____

Thank you for participating in this study. The research project will be explained to you by the researcher. If you have any questions regarding the Information or regarding this consent form please feel free to ask.

You will retain a copy of this consent form. Please keep it .

Please tick if you agree.

- I am aware that my participation in this study is my own decision. I can withdraw at any moment without further justification. This is applicable even after the interview was conducted. In that case I should warn the researcher about my decision until the [specific date]
- I allow that my data is used for the purposes of this research. I understand that my data will be processed according to the Data Protection Act of 1998 (UK)
- I accept that this interview will be recorded.
- I wish to be identified by my name, post /I do not wish to be identified by my name/post (signal your choice)

Participant's Declaration:

I, [name] _____

Confirm that the research project above referred was described to me in detail, and that I agree to participate in it. I have read/listened both forms (Information Sheet/Consent Form) and understand what this research encompasses.

Signature

Date

Researcher Declaration

I, Diana Magalhães confirm having explained the goals and the nature of this research to the participant

Signature

Date

Appendix F. General Topic Guide for Interviews

Translation to English of the original version in Portuguese

Introduction

This study focuses on the role of the women's movement in Mozambique in respect to the advancement of women's rights and gender equality, namely in regard to the issue of domestic violence against women and to the approval of the law against domestic violence. Concerning such topics I am very much interested on: a) your personal experience as a participant in such processes; b) the involvement of your organisation/institution with such processes; c) the antagonisms and the synergies existing between women from organisations of civil society and women MPs; d) the receptivity of the government and of the society in general regarding such struggle.

Topic: Legal Framework

- Regarding the national legal framework how was the issue of domestic violence addressed prior to the adoption of the law against domestic violence in 2009?
- The legal process regarding the issue of domestic violence was scrutinised by several ministries as well as commissions before reaching a parliamentary session. Is this a regular procedure, or was the draft of the law against domestic violence an exception?

Topic: Civil Society

- From your own point of view, what are the main aspects that characterise the relations between State/Civil Society/International Donors in Mozambique?
- How far are non-state actors able to exert any type of influence regarding political decision making processes in Mozambique?
- How far is the Mozambican civil society influenced by other actors?

Topic: Women's Mobilisation and Formal Politics

- Regarding women's political participation and women's access to formal political bodies, how have these been affected by the democratisation process?
- From your perspective, is it "easier" for a woman to express her own point of view through an organisation of civil society or by participating in the formal political sphere? Is that also applicable regarding topics related to women's rights?
- Did the existence of the GMP made any difference regarding the delivery of the draft of the law to the parliament?
- Did the GMP have any impact on the discussion and the approval of the law against domestic violence at the parliament?
- In your opinion, in terms of the overall process regarding the law, what difference did it make having women MPs and a caucus for parliamentary women?
- Broadly speaking, how would you characterise the relationship between women's organisations of civil society and the formal political sphere? Is it marked by contestation, cooperation, or both?
- Concerning the Mozambican context, is the category "gender" a relevant one in politics?
- How is the relation between women's organisations of civil society working on women's rights and gender equality and politicized women's organisations like the OMM?

Topic: The Women's Movement and the Law against Domestic Violence

- What led women's organisations of civil society to work on the issue of domestic violence? Was the issue identified by women's organisations of civil society, was it an appeal from local communities, or was it identified by the international community?
- Has the necessity of having a specific legal instrument regulating the issue of domestic violence mirrored the international community, the national reality, or both?
- Were there several organisations and individuals working against domestic violence in isolation or were their efforts combined?
- Can you pinpoint the main actors of the struggle against domestic violence?
- Regarding the struggle against domestic violence, was/is your organisation sponsored by external actors (e.g., state, other NGOs, international organisations, foreign donors)?
- How did the public opinion react to the idea of a law against domestic violence? And how was the draft of the law perceived by the formal political sphere?
- How was the process of lobbying for the law against domestic violence to be approved?
- Regarding the relationship between women's organisations of civil society and the political sphere what has changed with this mobilisation against domestic violence?
- There is a general concern that major NGOs, especially those concentrated in urban areas may be detached from the grassroots and in that sense, that they miss to represent the overall civil society (especially the rural population). Regarding the mobilisation against domestic violence, was that a concern? Were grassroots' organisations and non-urban populations consulted?

Topic: Organisation

- The organisation of the TCV gathered several organisations of civil society, international organisations and governmental bodies. How was the TCV managed in terms of decision making?
- Similarly the umbrella organisation Fórum Mulher gathers several women's organisations of civil society and the OMM, which is linked to the ruling party.
- Regarding issues that may create some friction between women's demands and the state – such as the new Family law and the law against domestic violence – how does the Forum contribute to conciliate divergent opinions?
- How is the relation between the OMM, as a women's organisation, and other women's organisations, namely civil society organisations?

Topic: Domestic Violence as an Issue

- Prior to the mobilisation against domestic violence, was the issue a topic in Mozambique? If so, how was it discussed: socially, politically or both?
- Several women's organisations of civil society gathered data regarding domestic violence. Was quantitative data already available prior to such research work (for instance, through the MINT or the MMAS)?
- How do you explain the limited data available regarding domestic violence?
- Regarding the pre-2009 reality, what was for you the main reason for the absence of a legal framework specifically regarding the issue of domestic violence?
- In 2008 the National Plan to prevent and fight domestic violence is approved by the council of ministers. Was this National Plan a consequence of the civil society mobilisation against domestic violence?
- How has the public opinion perceived the overall women's mobilisation against domestic violence?

Appendix G. Documents Consulted

Authors	Date	Title
African Union	2003	The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, the "Maputo Protocol".
		Outline
		Protocol guaranteeing the rights of women in Africa. Areas of concern include for instance, discrimination against women, the rights to life, integrity and security, elimination of harmful practices, and the right to participation in the political and decision-making process.
Assembleia da República	April 2006	Bill against Domestic Violence (Original in Portuguese: <i>Proposta de Lei contra a Violência Doméstica</i>).
		Outline
		Annotated copy of the draft of the law against domestic violence delivered by the Fórum Mulher to the GMP. It has handwritten annotations. An analysis to the content suggests that such notes were done after the document reached the GMP. It is not possible to identify the author of such annotations. Many parts are crossed out, including a) several articles: e.g., article 29 of the draft "Referral", making official authorities responsible for referring the victims of domestic violence to police stations or hospitals, depending on individual cases; b) as well as references to women as victims. The word "women" is substituted by "victims", without any reference to gender. There are also parts that were added: e.g., "consider counselling by religious authorities and/or communities".
Assembleia da República	17/07/2009	Record of the Plenary Session number 35, VI Legislature, X Ordinary Session (Original in Portuguese: <i>Registo da Sessão Plenária número 35, VI Legislatura, X Sessão Ordinária</i>).
		Outline
		Partial record of the referred plenary session (copies of pages 2 to 6). The debate on "the speciality" of the law against domestic violence was in the order of the day, together with other 4 matters (e.g., the organic law, in speciality, and the election of the member of the Superior Council of Mass Media, in its speciality and generality). The time for the discussion of each matter seems to be discussed and established for each. The president of the parliament, Eduardo Joaquim Mulémbwè, announces that since an avocation request regarding the discussion of the law against domestic violence had been made in the previous session the debate regarding it will be postponed to the following session. The words of MPs are not transcribed in the record, but the reply of the president signals a general acceptance of postponing the debate. The record ends with the intervention of the MP Luís Boavida (Renamo's Parliamentary Wing). The MP speaks out regarding the avocation request, signalling that such a request was made by the Renamo's wing. The MP affirms that: "Indeed, we made the avocation request, but this is a matter that we have dealt with the Commission a long time ago, and yesterday was just a formalisation of what the Commission was already aware of. Our colleagues at the Commission had already requested consultations, and the

	<p>consultations were made, they went back to the Commission, they said that the consultations had already been made and that the matter could be submitted, so we submitted it. But if this is done so that this House deliberates correctly, we do not have anything against it, in fact this is a matter of interest for all of us". This speech illustrates the complexity regarding the discussion and approval of the law against domestic violence.</p>	
Assembleia da República	20/07/2009	Record of the Plenary Session number 36, VI Legislature, X Ordinary Session (Original in Portuguese: <i>Registo da Sessão Plenária número 36, VI Legislatura, X Sessão Ordinária</i>).
	Outline	
	<p>Partial record of the referred plenary session (copy of page 2). Mentions the discussion of the law against domestic violence as a previous matter that was postponed so that the Commissions namely, the Social Affairs Commission and the Juridical Commission may work towards an agreement. The president of the national parliament Eduardo Joaquim Mulémbwè, notes that such a postponement aims at providing more time, so that the Commissions may work towards an agreement "having in mind on the one hand, the motivations and the ground for the avocation presented by the colleagues of the Renamo's Parliamentary Wing – Electoral Union, and that on the other hand, the assessment that the public has been making during the last few days regarding the importance and urgency of such a legal instrument". The copy of the record terminates here.</p>	
Assembleia da República	21/07/2009	Record of the Plenary Session number 37, VI Legislature, X Ordinary Session (Original in Portuguese: <i>Registo da Sessão Plenária número 37, VI Legislatura, X Sessão Ordinária</i>).
	Outline	
	<p>Partial record of the referred plenary session (copies of pages 1 to 4, 11 to 23, and 91 to 99). The summary describes the schedule and matters for that day, being the discussion of the law against domestic violence in "the speciality" to happen in the morning. The summary also informs that the president of the Commission of Social Affairs, Gender and Environment, Alexandre Meque Vicente, presented the report of the analysis "in speciality" regarding the bill against domestic violence against the woman and that the referred was approved by acclamation (page 2). In regard to the discussion of the bill (registered on pages 4, 11, and 21 to 23) the president of the parliament notes that the discussion is dependent on the report of the commission, and only after reading such a report will the parliament decide if an avocation request is to be made. It is clarified by the president that the avocation request would only refer to article 3 [Article 3, Scope: the present law aims at protecting the physical, moral, psychological, patrimonial and sexual life of the woman against any form of violence exercised by her spouse, ex-spouse, boyfriend, ex-boyfriend and members of her family]. There were no opinions against it, silence was made and verbally noted by the president of the parliament as a signal of a consensual agreement. The president of the 3rd Commission Alexandre Meque Vicente presents the report (in its speciality) resulting from the discussion of the bill against domestic violence in its generality. The president salutes everyone especially including "the big audience" [elements of women organisations of civil society were present]. "Based on the analysis by the Commission</p>	

	<p>of Constitutional Affairs, Human Rights and Legality, which was received positively by the majority, and the debate in the generality, the Commission of Social Affairs, Gender and Environment has analysed, debated and voted in the speciality the bill of domestic violence against women and several alterations were approved". The alterations to the text of the bill are read (pages 13 to 20). The results of the votes of the 3rd Commission were 13 votes in favour, 0 votes against it, and 0 abstentions. General applauses are registered. The president of the parliament intervenes to remind the session that an avocation request had been made, and enquires Renamo's Parliamentary Wing of their willingness to maintain such request. The president of the parliament receives feedback and notes that "I received information from the member of the Permanent Commission Thirty and also from the vice-president of Renamo's parliamentary wing that by looking at the work conducted after the question instilled by the wing that we now seem to be in harmony. I would like to stress that the question was that in the original version, the law was discriminatory and would be offending the Constitution. Having been made a technical alteration, applying it also to situations in which men [the words <i>homens varões</i> were used. In Portuguese the word <i>varões</i> may be defined as men, respectable men] are also included it seems that from our perspective that the suspicion of unconstitutionality no longer exists". The president of the parliament asks for the votes of the MPs, who voted unanimously in favour, standing up and applauding. The law was declared approved by acclamation. The session was adjourned. Being the last session of the legislature, an official speech was booked for the afternoon. The speech summarises the work of the national parliament during the 5 years of the legislature, stressing the increasing number of legislative processes, something that contributes to the development of national institutions and improvements towards the national progress and social well-being. The speech includes mentions to the civil society, noting that it has a share of responsibility regarding the legislative production of the parliament. "In effect, we register at this legislature a dynamic alliance between the <i>Assembleia da República</i> and the civil society as we witnessed a notorious emancipatory exercise, typical of a Democratic Constitutional State. Such a fact has happened with the participation of civil society in the law against abuses of minors and women, in the law of Cooperatives, in the law regarding HIV/AIDS, in the Labour Law, and in the recent debate of the law against domestic violence". The speech also includes a reference to the creation of the GMP, its importance in terms of fulfilling the international obligations of the state and the national progress of women, and the alliances created between the GMP and women organisations of civil society in relation to the struggle against HIV/AIDS.</p>	
<p>Cabinet of the Prime Minister. Signed by the Prime-Minister, Luísa Dias Diogo</p>	<p>24/06/2009</p>	<p>Impact of the Bill of the Law against Domestic Violence against Women on the National Budget (Original in Portuguese: <i>Impacto da Proposta de Lei contra a Violência Doméstica contra a Mulher no Orçamento Nacional</i>).</p>
	<p>Outline</p>	
	<p>The document affirms that after analysing the draft of the law, it is reckoned that the application of such a law will not have any impact on the national budget as it does not require any institutional alterations, nor the admission of new public officers.</p>	

Commission of Social Affairs, Gender, and Environment (3 rd Commission)	02/06/2009	Report on the auscultation regarding the Bill against Domestic Violence (Original in Portuguese: <i>Relatório sobre a a Auscultação da Proposta de Lei contra a Violência Doméstica contra a Mulher</i>).
	Outline	
	<p>The 3rd Commission reports the results of the public auditions regarding the bill against domestic violence, jointly conducted with the 1st Commission – of Constitutional Affairs, Human Rights and Legality – and the GMP in three regional areas of the country, North, Centre and South. Such public auditions were conducted to multiple sectors, such as Health, Education and Culture, Women and Social Action, Public Order, Justice, Civil Society in general, representatives of political parties and religious communities. It states the goals of the auscultations as “collecting subsidies and opinions of the civil society” around the issue of a law against domestic violence. It describes the questions conducted in the three regional areas: 1) Should the law protect women or include the elderly, children, individuals with disabilities and other vulnerable groups? 2) How should the law be applied and called? 3) Should the nature of the crime be particular, semi-public or public? 4) What type of sentence should it apply? The answers are presented divided by regions, but the conclusions are similar within the North, the Centre, and the South of the country. All in all, the auscultation results point to the majority of opinions favouring 1) the universality of the law, 2) a title without the word “women” 3) that it should be a public crime – Centre and South – and semi-public in the North. The report makes several recommendations (e.g., that the law would determine the creation of a Counselling Bureau which would “avoid hard sentences”; that a budget should be allocated to NGOs established in remote areas so that they could transmit the law to the population. Its final considerations states that “state institutions, religious institutions, political parties and organisations of civil society recommend that the law must be approved with celerity, within the procedures of the parliament.</p>	
Commission of Social Affairs, Gender, and Environment (3 rd Commission).	24/06/2009	Adoption of the Draft of the Law against Domestic Violence against Women (Original in Portuguese: <i>Adopção da Proposta de Lei contra a Violência Doméstica contra a Mulher</i>).
	Outline	
	<p>The document includes substantiating arguments for the approval of the law against Domestic Violence against Women. Those are: paragraph 1 of the article 40 of the Constitution, which refers to the universal right to physical and moral integrity; the ways in which domestic violence attempts against the individual right to life, security, freedom and dignity, as well as to the overall development of the society; it links the practice of domestic violence with power unbalances between men and women, acknowledging women as the main victims of such a type of violence; it refers to the international mechanisms ratified by Mozambique regarding women’s rights; and finally it reckons the inexistence of a legal instrument that directly penalizes domestic violence as a crime. Includes the signatures of the members of the 3rd commission approving the draft of law against domestic violence against women.</p>	

Commission of Social Affairs, Gender, and Environment (3 rd Commission)	26/06/2009	Bill against Domestic Violence, Result of the Analysis (Original in Portuguese: <i>Proposta de Lei contra a Violência Doméstica, Resultado da Análise</i>).
	Outline	
	Directed to the President of the National Parliament for consideration. The text of the draft of the law is preceded by several paragraphs that legitimate the existence of a law against domestic violence. Such a legitimization refers to the constitutional right to live a life free of cruelty and identifies domestic violence as an attack to such a right. It reckons that domestic violence strikes women as the main victims, independently of multiple social axes, and that such a type of violence is related to imbalances of power between women and men even within the family. The international mechanisms Mozambique has bound to are also stressed as justifying the need for the approval of a law against domestic violence.	
Commission of the Constitutional Affairs, Human Rights and Legality (1st Commission)	08/07/2009	Sending Contributions (Original in Portuguese: <i>Envio de Contribuições</i>).
	Outline	
	This document incorporates several contributions from the 3 rd Commission to the chapters III, IV and V of the law against Domestic Violence against Women. Attached are the signatures of the members of the Commission approving the contributions in question.	
Commission of Social Affairs, Gender, and Environment (3 rd Commission). Signed by the President Alexandre Meque Vicente	15/07/2009	Report of the analysis in the Speciality of the Draft of the Law against Domestic Violence against Women sent to the President of the Parliament (Original in Portuguese: <i>Relatório da Análise na Especialidade da Proposta de Lei contra a Violência Doméstica contra a Mulher enviada ao Presidente do Parlamento</i>).
	Outline	
	The report indicates the names of the elements of the 3 rd Commission who were present at the debate and voting of the draft of the law against domestic violence against women at the speciality after already being approved in the generality by the plenary session of the <i>Assembleia da República</i> . Several amendments were approved (e.g., it was voted that an article including the application of the law to men, in equal circumstances to the women was to be included in the final version of the law). The full text of the law against domestic violence against women is annexed.	
Commission of Social Affairs, Gender, and Environment (3 rd Commission) Signed by the President of the Commission Alexandre Meque Vicente	21/07/2009	Addendum to the report of the analysis in the Speciality of the Draft of the Law against Domestic Violence against Women (Original in Portuguese: <i>Adenda ao Relatório de Análise na Especialidade da Proposta de Lei contra a Violência Doméstica contra a Mulher</i>).
	Outline	
	Directed to the president of the parliament, the report indicates the names of the elements of the 3 rd Commission who were present at the debate and voting of the draft of the law against domestic violence at the speciality after already being approved in the generality by the plenary session of the <i>Assembleia da República</i> . It details the evaluation done by the overall commission to the articles of the law.	

Commission of Social Affairs, Gender, and Environment (3rd Commission)	No information regarding date.	The document has no title.
	Outline	
	The document appears to be part of the general discussion of the 3 rd Commission on the draft of the law. It presents alterations to the articles of the draft of the law against domestic violence as well as annotations regarding such alterations. For instance, regarding alterations, the draft presented an article 4, regarding the Obligations of the State. Below the number of article and the title is an annotation saying “eliminated”. Some other articles, such as article 6 (regarding the agents of the infraction), has an annotation saying “frozen”. Regarding the suggestions, for example regarding article 24, (as it was on the draft, considering domestic violence as a public crime), maintains the proposed text but adds that: “the article has to be interpreted following the view of the Ministry of Justice, where it is reckoned that in domestic violence there are relations of social and private character, indicating the right to one’s own privacy”. At the end, the document refers that several “articles were frozen for reflection” and some articles were “proposed to be eliminated”.	
Fédération Internationale des Ligues des Droites de l’Homme and LDH	2007	Report, International Fact-finding Mission, Women’s Rights in Mozambique: Duty to end Illegal Practices
	Outline	
	The report presents a brief description of the recent history of Mozambique. Following, it exposes women’s situation in the country and the harmful practices that they endure. It is divided by topics, including: Main Legislation Concerning Women, Reality and the Law: A Permanent Disconnect, Socio-Economic Obstacles to Improving Women’s Lives, Violence against Women, Women, and Institutions, and Public Life. It ends with a set of recommendations regarding the application of legislation, and in specific, the necessity for the adoption of a law against domestic violence.	
Fórum Mulher – Coordination for Women in Development	2006	Bill against Domestic Violence. (Original in Portuguese: <i>Proposta de Lei contra a Violência Doméstica</i>).
	Outline	
	Contains the complete text of the draft of the law against domestic violence against women. Includes the original preamble.	
Fórum Mulher – Coordination for Women in Development. Signed by Terezinha da Silva as President of the Boarding Direction	14/12/2006	The document has no title.
	Outline	
	Letter delivered by the Fórum Mulher to the GMP, requesting for the draft of the law as prepared by the civil society, to be adopted by the cabinet and presented by it to the parliament for its discussion and approval.	

Fórum Mulher – Coordination for Women in Development	12/03/2009	Comments of the Fórum Mulher to the comments made by the Commissions to the draft of the Law against Domestic Violence. (Original in Portuguese: <i>Comentários do Fórum Mulher aos Comentários feitos pelas Comissões à Proposta de lei Contra a Violência Doméstica</i>).
	Outline	
	Document directly responding to the critiques to the draft of the law against domestic violence, the Fórum Mulher stresses that the draft presented by the civil society was elaborated according to the core of the Mozambican Constitution as well as with the international and regional instruments regarding human rights that the state has ratified. It adds that the drafting process was a consultative one, as seminars were organised in the three regions of the country – North, Centre, and South – gathered “representatives from organisations of civil society, state institutions, from the administration and justice, and religious and community leaders”. It refers that such a process culminated with a national meeting conducted in Maputo, in 2006, where the draft was approved by unanimity. The Fórum Mulher argues that any alterations to the draft proposed by the civil society will not guarantee the fulfilment of women’s human rights or the effective implementation of the National Plan for the Prevention of Violence against Women, approved in 2008 by the Cabinet Council, the <i>Conselho de Ministros</i> . As a consequence, the organisation states that it would not cease to advocate for those rights to be fully granted.	
Fórum Mulher – Signed by Isabel Casimiro as President of the Boarding Direction	16/03/2009	Reply to your letter regarding the bill against domestic Violence, Reference 47/FM/09 (Original in Portuguese: <i>Resposta à sua Carta acerca da Proposta de Lei contra a Violência Doméstica</i>).
	Outline	
	Letter delivered by the Fórum Mulher to the Commission of Social Affairs, Gender, and Environment - with a C.C. sent to the GMP - in reply to a previous letter sent by the commission in question to the Fórum Mulher soliciting financial support from the organisation to conduct consultation seminars regarding the draft. The Fórum Mulher states the impossibility in terms of budget to support the seminars, stressing that those were already conducted by the organisation prior to the delivery of the draft to the parliament. The Fórum Mulher reiterates its availability to organise a meeting between the two technical groups working on the draft, namely the group responsible for the draft at the level of the organisation and the one working on the draft at the level of the National Parliament.	
Fórum Mulher – Signed by Graça Samo as President of the Boarding Direction.	04/06/2009	Arguments favouring the Elaboration of a Specific Law. Reference 155/FM/09. (Original in Portuguese: <i>Argumentos a Favor da Elaboração de uma Lei Específica</i>).
	Outline	
	Letter delivered to the president of the GMP describing the arguments favouring the law against domestic violence against women. It focuses on the necessity of looking at women as the main victims of such a type of violence, and adds that such a law will benefit all the Mozambican families. It refers the existence of other legal mechanisms in which a specific vulnerable group is targeted (e.g., the law 07/2008, referring to the rights of children). The arguments point several international instruments signed by the Mozambican government (e.g., the BDPA, the CEDAW).	

Fórum Mulher	2009	Law number 29/2009 about the Domestic Violence perpetrated against the Woman. (Original in Portuguese: Lei número 29/2009 sobre a Violência Doméstica Practicada contra a Mulher).
	Outline	
	Printed booklet containing the complete text of the law. Includes the preamble and a glossary.	
Fórum Mulher	2013	Formative Brochure for Activists Providing Services to Victims of Domestic Violence. (Original in Portuguese: <i>Brochura Formativa para Activistas que prestam Serviços de Atendimento e Aconselhamento às Vítimas de Violência Doméstica</i>).
	Outline	
	Document handed by the umbrella organisation Fórum Mulher to activists working with victims of domestic violence. It provides a definition of domestic violence, including its types (e.g., verbal, economical, and psychological), its causes and consequences. It establishes a set procedure that the activist should follow when dealing with victims of domestic violence (e.g., maintain confidentiality, avoid over questioning the victim, to provide counselling and to direct the victim to the hospital/shelter/legal counselling). It provides a list of women’s organisations to where the activist should refer the victim in case legal assistance/sponsorship is needed (e.g., LEMUSICA, AMMCJ, OMM). Finally, the text encourages the activist to follow up the cases.	
Minister of Justice, Maria Benvinda Levi	30/07/2009	Reference 151/SIC-GMJ/2009
	Outline	
	Document sent to the President of the 3 rd Commission, the Commission of Social Affairs, Gender and Environment with a proposal of texts for the articles regarding the sentences for those committing domestic violence.	
Ministry of Justice, Cabinet of the Minister of Justice	19/09/2008	Report and Proposal regarding the Bill against Domestic Violence. Reference 1317/SIC-GMJ/2008 (Original in Portuguese: <i>Relatório e Proposta acerca da Lei contra a Violência Doméstica</i>).
	Outline	
	Directed to the President of the National Parliament as a reply to the request of obtaining a technical report from the Ministry of Justice regarding the draft of the law against domestic violence. The report perceives the existence of a law against domestic violence encompassing repressive measures as pertinent. It acknowledges the harmony between such a law with the constitutional equality principles as well as with the international mechanisms ratified by the Mozambican state. It is argued that the title of the law should be “Law against Domestic Violence”, and not include the word “women”. The document refers the existence of legal incongruences, some regarding the Constitution as well as to the lack of technical rigour. It makes technical comments on each article presented at the draft, stating that it is extremely incipient. It concludes by recommending that the draft should be returned to its proposers as to be further developed and perfected.	

MINT, Department of the Woman and Child	August 2007	Final Report: External Evaluation of the Bureau Desks for the Woman and the Child Victims of Violence. (Original in Portuguese: <i>Relatório Final: Avaliação Externa dos Gabinetes de Atendimento à Mulher e Criança Vítimas de Violência</i>).
	Outline	
	The report presents the results of an evaluation conducted to the bureau desks in three regions of the country, the North, the Centre, and the South. Nonetheless, it does not specify which entity conducted the evaluation. It concludes that these bureau desks were relevant but not completely viable. It raises aspects of poor management and quality of the staff. It recommends the establishment of a pattern in terms of management as well as a regular effort to monitor its functioning. In terms of relevance, the report acknowledges that women and children are the great beneficiaries of such bureau desks, but it adds that at such an early stage of implementation a conclusion is precocious.	
MINT	2010	Record Form for Victims of Violence (Original in Portuguese: <i>Formulário de Registo para Vítimas de Violência</i>).
	Outline	
	Form handed in police stations for victims of violence to fill. It includes the identification of the victim or the person who is denouncing a case of violence, the type of case (e.g., rape, traffic, abuses, and defamation), the date and location of the event, the identification of the perpetrator, and the relation with the victim. The point 8 of this form has several options regarding where should the case/victim be headed to, including Court, Hospital, Child care Centre, and several organisations of civil society (e.g., OMM, AMMCJ, Muleide).	
MMAS	2005	Gender Policy and the Strategy for its Implementation (Original in Portuguese: <i>Política de Género e Estratégia para a sua Implementação</i>).
	Outline	
	In conformity with the Mozambican Constitution, the document defines the principles that must frame a common gender policy. Its text identifies key actors for its implementation, e.g., government and state institutions, NGOs, political, religious and communitarian leaders, educators, civil society organisations, researchers, international partners. It also sets several goals e.g., to desegregate all official data by sex, to increase the number of women in the decision making organs up to 40% until 2015, and sets that its implementation to be monitored by the Cabinet Council and by the National Council for the Advancement of Women (CNAM).	
MMAS, Signed by the Minister Virgília Matabele	20/11/2007	Bill of the Law against Domestic Violence. Reference 261/MMAS/GM/2007. (Original in Portuguese: <i>Proposta de Lei contra a Violência Doméstica</i>).
	Outline	
	Official letter sent to the President of the 3 rd Parliamentary Commission, of Social Affairs, Gender and Environment in response to a letter received regarding the bill against domestic violence. The Minister compliments both the Fórum Mulher for the work against domestic violence, as well as the 3 rd Commission for the work conducted regarding “social stability” in general. The Minister reckons the issue of domestic	

	<p>violence as affecting mostly women, violating the principle of equality consecrated by the Constitution, the international mechanisms regarding violence against women, and finally menacing the family as the base of the society. Despite this, the Minister reiterates the necessity of not directing this law to any specific group. Hence, despite recognising the “merit and opportunity” of the proposal, it is argued that the law should mention “all domestic violence exercised against any member of the family, whether it is a woman, a man or a child (...)”. The Minister adds that because it is evident that this type of violence strikes women the most – as a reflection of cultural practices – it should be considered as constituting aggravated circumstance the cases in which such a type of violence is perpetrated against women, children, individuals with disabilities, or the elderly as vulnerable groups. It is the Minister’s believe that by doing so, the state is fulfilling its commitment to “legally protect women” while complying with the constitutional principle of equality. The Minister ends by soliciting the President of the 3rd Commission to review this draft and to harmonise it with the mentioned constitutional principle.</p>	
MMAS and CNAM	No information regarding date.	PNAM [National Action Plan for the Advancement of the Woman , <i>Plano Nacional de Acção para o Avanço da Mulher</i>]
	Outline	
	<p>Refers to the PNAM for 2002-2006, indicating that efforts regarding education, health, agriculture and the creation of institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women were conducted, but recognizes that the limited human and financial resources impede further successes on the area of gender equality. It identifies seven key areas for the PNAM 2007-2009. One of the concern areas is violence against women, including domestic violence. It reckons that the involvement of other actors is crucial for the implementation of a gender quality agenda.</p>	
MMAS	April 2014	Report of Mozambique Beijing +20 regarding the Implementation of the Declaration and Platform for Action. (Original in Portuguese: <i>Relatório de Moçambique Beijing+20 sobre a Implementação da Declaração e Plataforma de Acção de Beijing</i>).
	Outline	
	<p>The report analyses the major achievements in relation to the goals set by the BDPA – divided in 12 areas (including violence against women) – and identifies the main obstacles towards the same goals. It stresses the approval of the law 29/2009, against domestic violence against women – as a result of the efforts of the government and women organisations of civil society – as one of the major conquests regarding gender equality. It recommends that statistics should It indicates the opportunities and challenges for the BDPA goals to advance. For instance, regarding statistics, it notes that although the INE already produces statistics disaggregated by gender, they lack a regular periodicity, especially regarding the data originated by other sectors.</p>	

Muleide	December 2012	Muleide Informe, Year I, Edition 0, “20 Years of Struggle for Women’s Human Rights”. (Original in Portuguese: <i>Muleide Informe, Ano 1, Edição 0, “20 Anos de Luta pelos Direitos Humanos da Mulher”</i>).
	Outline	
	Newsletter edition presenting the history and the work of the organisation Muleide. Refers to the involvement of the organisation in the process of the new Family Law, as well as in the process of the Law against Domestic Violence.	
N’Weti	2013	External Evaluation of the N’Weti Programme on Domestic Violence “Say No to Violence” – Summary of the Report. (Original in Portuguese: <i>Avaliação Externa do Programa da N’Weti sobre Violência Doméstica “Diz Não à Violência” – Sumário</i>).
	Outline	
	Compiled by the executive director Denise Namburete the summary report provides information regarding the implementation of the programme against domestic violence of the organisation as well as a description of the research methods used in the external evaluation. It is acknowledged the financial support provided by the Embassy of the Netherlands to this campaign. The summary provides statistical information regarding the exposure of the population to the campaign against domestic violence and identifies a causal relationship between the population exposed to such a campaign – e.g., listening to the radio shows or watching a movie produced by N’Weti – and individual efforts to terminate episodes of domestic violence. It also indicates that those individuals exposed to the campaign became aware of the existence of the law against domestic violence. It indicates that the exposure to the campaign was more visible in urban settings, coinciding with the main area of the implementation of the programme, and that more men than women have reportedly followed the radio shows produced by N’Weti. Similarly, it indicates that more men than women were aware of the slogan for the campaign against domestic violence: “Say no to violence”.	
N’Weti, signed by Katia Taela	2006	Literature Review on Domestic Violence against Women. (Original in Portuguese: <i>Revisão de Literatura sobre Violência Doméstica contra a Mulher</i>).
	Outline	
	The text characterises the mission of N’Weti in regard to its “edutainment” aspect and frames this document as part of its research towards the production of multimedia material against domestic violence. It situates the discussion of domestic violence within a universal setting of women’s human rights and theoretically frames it within a feminist perspective. It looks at the practice of domestic violence within the Mozambican context, and to the national and international mechanisms created and adopted by the government as well as by organisations of civil society to prevent and fight its occurrence. Additionally, it looks at efforts against domestic violence happening in neighbouring countries.	

Procurador Geral da República	2007	Annual Report from the Attorney General of the Republic to the Assembleia da República. (In Portuguese: <i>Informação Anual do Procurador-Geral da República à Assembleia da República</i>)
	Outline	
	The annual report presents a summary of the actions of such an organ (the head of the Public Ministry) regarding the public criminal action in the country. Amongst other topics – e.g. the administration of justice, corruption and the interinstitutional and international cooperation – the report includes information regarding the meetings between the organ and the public, in which the issue of domestic violence appears as one of the most mentioned ones.	
Republic of Mozambique	2001	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper 2001-2005. (Original in Portuguese: <i>Plano de Acção para a Redução da Pobreza 2001-2005</i>).
	Outline	
	The text identifies the main obstacles to an equitable economic growth in Mozambique. It then sets the main medium-term strategy to be followed towards the reduction of poverty in Mozambique, focusing on several fundamental areas for actions, namely Education, Health, Infrastructures, Agriculture and rural development, governance and justice, and finance.	
Republic of Mozambique	2004	Constitution of the Republic of Mozambique
	Outline	
	Constitutional text. Reaffirms the democratic rule of law introduced by the 1990 Constitution. It consecrates freedom of expression, partisan pluralism, and guarantees the fundamental rights and liberties of citizens.	
Republic of Mozambique, Boletim da República	25/08/2004	Bulletin of the Republic, Official Publication of the Republic of Mozambique: Series I – Number 34, Supplement
	Outline	
	Approves the reformation of the family law as well as the new family law, with the reference 10/2004. Includes the chapters of the law and its articles.	
Republic of Mozambique, Boletim da República	19/12/2005	Bulletin of the Republic, Official Publication of the Republic of Mozambique: Series I – Number 50, 2nd Supplement
	Outline	
	Official publication of the Resolution 33/2005, which creates the Caucus for Parliamentary Women, the GMP.	

Republic of Mozambique - National Council for the Advancement of the Woman	2007	Rules of Procedure for the National Council for the Advancement of the Woman (CNAM). (Original in Portuguese: <i>Regulamento Interno para o Conselho Nacional para o Avanço da Mulher</i>).
	Outline	
	Articles defining the competences of the CNAM and its rules of procedure. Confirms the definition of the CNAM, created in 2004, as “the consultative organ through which the MMAS conducts the inter-sectoral coordination the policies and programmes approved by the government regarding the areas of gender.	
Republic of Mozambique	2008	National Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women, 2008-2012. (Original in Portuguese: <i>Plano Nacional de Acção para Prevenção e Combate à Violência contra a Mulher, 2008-2012</i>).
	Outline	
	This plan is part of the official national policy for women’s emancipation and development and gender equality. Its text contextualises the practice of violence against women in Mozambique and defines a set of actions and strategic measures to be adopted by all sectors and actors relevant in the process towards the decreasing and ultimately the elimination of the practice of violence against women.	
Republic of Mozambique	July, 2008	Law Against Domestic Violence, Technical Input (Original in Portuguese: <i>Lei conta a Violência Doméstica: Parecer Técnico</i>)
	Outline	
	Amongst technical comments done article by article, this input stresses: the pertinence of a law against domestic violence based on the international mechanisms ratified by Mozambique regarding women’s rights; several juridical weaknesses that may undermine the applicability of the law; the negative impact of the inclusion of the term “against women” in the title of the law, preferring the short version “law against domestic violence”; and the clashes between the draft and several constitutional principles. It concludes with the recommendation that the text of the draft should be perfected by its proponents.	
Republic of Mozambique, Boletim da República	29/09/2009	Bulletin of the Republic, Official Publication of the Republic of Mozambique: Series I – Number 38, 2 nd Supplement
	Outline	
	Approves the law 29/2009. Official publication with the title “Law against Domestic Violence Practiced against the Woman”. Includes the chapters of the law, its articles, and an annex with the glossary.	

Republic of Mozambique	03/05/2011	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper 2011-2014. (Original in Portuguese: <i>Plano de Acção para a Redução da Pobreza 2011-2014</i>).
	Outline	
	The text identifies the main obstacles to an equitable economic growth in Mozambique. It then sets the main medium-term strategy to be followed towards the reduction of poverty in Mozambique, including increasing fisheries and agrarian productivity, the promotion of jobs, and increasing human and social development. Such a strategy requires for a stable and competitive macroeconomic setting, an effective and efficient management of the public finances, and finally, fair and transparent governance.	
Republic of Mozambique	2012	Integrated Multi-sector Mechanism for the Assistance of Women Victim of Domestic Violence. (Original in Portuguese: <i>Mecanismo Multisectorial de Atendimento Integrado à Mulher Vítima de Violência</i>).
	Outline	
	The document summarises the reasons for the creation of such a mechanism. It provides a brief account of the institutional mechanisms created to deal with the issue of domestic violence, and how those multiple mechanisms should coordinate their efforts, creating a protocol that should be followed by all the actors involved. The key goals of the mechanism are described (e.g., to improve the services provided to the victims, to develop the skills of those working with cases of domestic violence, to coordinate efforts with other services, to provide social assistance to the victims, to advocate against domestic violence). Additionally, it stresses the involvement of the MMAS, the MISAU, the MINT, the Ministry of Justice and organisations of civil society.	
Republic of Mozambique, Boletim da República	31/12/2014	Bulletin of the Republic, Official Publication of the Republic of Mozambique: Series I – Number 105, 14th Supplement.
	Outline	
	Official publication of the law 35/2014, approving the new Penal Code. Includes the articles of the Penal Code.	
SADC	2008	SADC Protocol on Gender and Development
	Outline	
	Includes the articles of the protocol. Copy signed by the representatives of each SADC member. Missing the signatures of the representatives of Mauritius and Botswana. A brief preamble links the protocol to the core of the SADC treaty and reaffirms the importance of member states to recall other international mechanisms they have committed to (e.g., the BDPA, the Africa Platform of Action).	
SADC	1997	SADC Declaration on Gender and Development
	Outline	
	Stresses gender equality as a fundamental human right as well as the necessity of regional cooperation regarding the broad area of gender. Perceives the mainstreaming of gender issues as key to a sustainable development of the SADC region. Endorses the decision of the Council in several aspects (e.g., establishment of a standing committee of ministers responsible for gender affairs in the region, and the establishment of a policy framework for mainstreaming gender in all SADC activities).	

SIDA, Department for Democracy and Social Development	January 2007	A Profile on Gender Relations Update, 2006: Towards Gender Equality in Mozambique
	Outline	
	A gender profile on Mozambique, overviewing the main issues affecting women and the institutional mechanisms and policies designed to counteract such issues. Amongst other aspects, it presents a brief summary and analysis on the Mozambican women's organisations of civil society, and on the importance of donors in relation to the topic of gender equality. It includes statistical data compiled from various sources.	
UNICEF	08/02/2010	Final Report: Evaluation of the Model Bureau Desks for the Woman and the Child. (Original in Portuguese: <i>Relatório Final: Avaliação dos Gabinetes Modelo de Atendimento à Mulher e Criança</i>).
	Outline	
	The report presents the results of an evaluation conducted to the model bureau desk which are sponsored by donors and the state. The report sets recommendations for the elements involved in the management of such bureau desks (e.g., the MINT, donors, UNICEF, the MISAU, the MMAS, the Ministry of Justice, other partners). The report presents a brief description of the bureau desks visited (e.g., bureau desks of Maputo – city of Maputo; bureau desk of Buzi – Sofala Province; bureau desk of Quelimane – Province of Zambezia). The data available in this report indicates that the number of complaints for domestic violence is growing, and for the period of 2006-2008 they are highest in Maputo City and the lowest in Cabo Delgado. It indicates that there are several organisations of civil society that are providing assistance to the victims (e.g., AMMCJ, LDH, WLSA, Muleide). These model bureau desks are indicated to have the same functioning method as the common bureau desks, differing only in terms of infrastructure (e.g., two separate rooms for adults and children, a bedroom, bathroom and kitchen for temporarily housing a victim).	
United Nations	1979	The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
	Outline	
	Text of the Convention. Defines what constitutes discrimination against women and a set of principles that should guide national governments to eliminate discrimination against women.	
United Nations	1993	Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVAW)
	Outline	
	Text of the Declaration. Provides a definition of violence against women	
United Nations	1995	Platform for Action of the United Nations' Fourth World Conference on Women.
	Outline	
	The text provides a framework for advancing women's right and sets critical areas of concern (e.g., Violence and Women, Human Rights of Women, Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women).	

United Nations Women	2012	Violence against Women Prevalence Data: Surveys by Country Compiled by UN Women
	Outline	
	The document consists on a table with data compiled by the UN Women on violence against women throughout the world. The data is presented for each country in terms of intimate partner violence and Intimate Partner and/or Non-partner Violence for both lifetime and past-year prevalence, and includes physical, sexual and physical and sexual violence, forced sexual initiation and abuse during pregnancy. The data presented is drawn from leading international surveys. The data specifically presented for Mozambique is drawn from International Violence against Women surveys and Demographic and Health surveys.	
WLSA	2005	Applicable Legislation to the Resolution of Events of Domestic Violence (Original in Portuguese: <i>Legislação Aplicável a Ocorrências de Violência Doméstica</i>).
	Outline	
	Booklet detailing the existent legal mechanisms (prior to the approval of the law 29/2009) that frame the issue of domestic violence in Mozambique. It includes both national and international mechanisms regarding such an issue. It mentions the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in order to frame domestic violence as a violation to human rights. It provides a definition of crime as it is set by the penal code, and identifies several types of violence which are included in such a legal text and which may happen within the family: Physical violence (e.g., physical coercion, and attempt of murder); psychological violence (e.g., false imprisonment); verbal violence (e.g., threatening); crimes against honour (e.g., defamation); economic violence (e.g., missing alimony); and sexual crimes (e.g., rape, procuring prostitution). It finally provides a glossary of legal terms related to the context.	
WLSA	2009	The Cycle of Violence. (Original in Portuguese: <i>O Ciclo da Violência</i>).
	Outline	
	Informative booklet explaining the patterns of domestic violence against women, perceived as a cycle. With text and illustrations.	
WLSA	19/11/2015	Brief: Domestic Violence, a Crime still perceived with Biases (Original in Portuguese: <i>Breves: Violência Doméstica, um Crime ainda sob Olhar Preconceituoso</i>)
	Outline	
	Opinion published by the organisation WLSA. Alerts for the perils of including the law of domestic violence on the newly revised Penal Code.	

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