

https://dspace.org/

Electoral integrity in mozambique: institutions, structures and international players

Da Silva, Delma Comissario

2022
https://hdl.handle.net/10539/36644

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

ELECTORAL INTEGRITY IN MOZAMBIQUE – INSTITUTIONS, STRUCTURES AND INTERNATIONAL PLAYERS

Delma Comissário da Silva

Student # 2167646

Supervisor

Dr. Halfdan Lynge

Wits School of Governance

A research report submitted to the Faculty of Management, University of the Witwatersrand, in 50% fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management (in the field of Public Policy).

October 2022

Abstract

As a necessary condition for democratisation, the quality of elections is assessed through the concept of electoral integrity. This is the extent to which countries meet globally shared standards and principles for democratic elections. The purpose of this research was to examine the underlying reasons for Mozambique's underperformance in the 2019 elections from an electoral integrity perspective. Theoretically, the research was informed by propositions for electoral performance that include structural, institutional, and international factors for achieving electoral integrity. Empirically, it was tested in the context of Mozambique to assess whether these factors effectively influenced the 2019 election outcome. The main research findings point to a multiplicity of structural and institutional constraints to electoral integrity that increased the risks of electoral malpractice despite massive electoral assistance to strengthen electoral integrity and, by extension, the democratic process.

Key words: Elections, electoral integrity, democratisation, electoral assistance

Declaration

I declare that this report is my own, unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Management (in the field of Public Policy) in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university.



Delma Comissário da Silva

12 October 2022

Dedication

To my daughter Kianga, with love.

Acknowledgements

First of all, I thank God for firmly keeping me in this purpose in the midst of so many upheavals. Without Him, these lines would not come into existence.

To my devoted supervisor, Dr. Halfdan Lynge, for all his diligence, support, and encouragement throughout this journey. His insightful feedback, advice, and academic guidance were instrumental, from the conception through the maturation of my research.

I extend my deep gratitude to Delton Muianga for the impetus to pursue my academic life and for his insights throughout the journey. My appreciation also goes to Professors David Matsinhe and Gilbert Khadiagala for supporting and inspiring my interest in the field of public policy from my first steps in that direction. To Dr. Oliver Maponga for believing in me and backing me up at a time when achieving this goal was just a dream. It was crucial to have their kind support at that initial stage.

To my family, especially my mother and daughter for their unconditional support and love, and for putting up with my absences while I devoted myself to this project. They have always been there for me.

Last but not least, I could not have completed this piece of work without the continued encouragement of my friends and professional colleagues who provided me with inspiring discussions and fun distractions to unwind from my research.

To all of you who provided great support and assistance along this path, thank you very much.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AU - African Union

CC - Constitutional Council

CIP – Centre for Public Integrity

CNE – National Elections Commission (*Comissão Eleitoral de Eleições*)

CSOs – Civil Society Organisations

EISA – Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa

EMBs – Electoral management bodies

EOM - Electoral Observer Mission

EU – European Union

EU EOM – European Union Electoral Observer Mission

FRELIMO - Liberation Front of Mozambique (*Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*)

GPA – General Peace Agreement

MDM - Democratic Movement of Mozambique (*Movimento Democrático de Moçambique*)

NGOs – Non-governmental Organisations

RENAMO - Mozambican National Resistance (*Resistência Nacional Moçambicana)*

SADC - Southern African Development Community

STAE – Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration (*Secretariado Técnico de Administração Eleitoral*)

UNDP - United Nations Development Programme

Table of Contents

1. Introduction of the Study 1

1.1. Background 1
1.2. Overview of Mozambique's 2019 General Elections 3
1.3. Research Problem 6
1.4. Aim of the Study 6
1.5. Research Framing 7
1.5.1. Research Questions 7
1.5.2. Rationale of the Study 7
1.5.3. Key Concepts 8
1.6. Chapter Structure 11

2. Literature Review 12

2.1. Historical and Political Context of Elections in Mozambique 12
2.1.1. The National Liberation Movement and Post-independence Context in Mozambique 12
2.1.2. Civil War opposing RENAMO and FRELIMO 15
2.1.3. From the Peace Agreement to the Establishment of Multiparty Politics in Mozambique 17
2.2. Legal Framework of Elections in Mozambique 22
2.2.1. Administrative Electoral System 28
2.2.2. Election Administration 29
2.2.3. Electoral Assistance in Mozambique 31
2.3. Theoretical Literature 35
2.3.1. The Third Wave of Democratisation in Emerging Democracies 36
2.3.2. Elections in Emerging Democracies 37
2.3.3. Electoral Integrity as a Measure of Democratic Elections 40
2.4. Theoretical Framework 44
2.4.1. The Structural Perspective 44
2.4.2. The International Perspective 45
2.4.3. The Institutional Perspective 45

3. Methodology 48

3.1. Sampling 49
3.2. Data Analysis Process 50
3.2.1. Limitations of the Study 52
3.2.2. Ethical Considerations 53

4. Analysis 55

4.1. Structural Factors Influencing Mozambique's 2019 Electoral Integrity 55
4.1.1. Political Tension between FRELIMO and RENAMO 56
4.1.2. The Extremist Violence in Cabo Delgado 58
4.1.3. The Impact of Cyclones Idai and Kenneth 59
4.1.4. The Socio-Economic Downturn 60
4.1.5. The Presource Curse 62
4.2. The International Determinants of the Integrity of the Mozambique's 2019 Electoral Process 64
4.3. The Influence of Institutional Factors on the 2019 Electoral Integrity in Mozambique 70
4.4. The Impact of the Electoral Regulatory Framework on Electoral Integrity 78
4.4.1 Summary of Mozambique's performance in complying with national, regional and international obligations for democratic elections 80

5. Overall Conclusions 85

6. References 89

1. Introduction of the Study

1.1. Background

Elections are broadly defined as a comprehensive process that encapsulates the regulatory framework, the electoral system, the pre-election environment, electoral management institutions, and other aspects of elections. Other aspects include media access, campaigning, funding rules and mechanisms of contest resolution contributing to competitive elections throughout the electoral cycle (Kelley, 2012a). Vast research links the spread of multiparty elections in sub-Saharan Africa to the wave of democratic transition that swept the continent in the 1990s (Adejumobi, 2000; Huntington, 1991; Lindberg, 2006). In democratic societies, elections are seen as an instrument for making governments accountable and ensuring that citizens' views and concerns are addressed in the governance process (Lindberg, 2004; Norris, 2015; van Ham, 2014). From this perspective, elections should offer citizens opportunities to take part in the political life of their countries and hold their political representatives accountable (Collier & Vicente, 2012; Mapulango, 2009). When conducted efficiently, elections strengthen civil society involvement, inform public debates, promote party competition, strengthen government response, and enable peaceful resolution of political disputes (Norris & Grömping, 2019). However, while some countries have made significant progress in implementing political reforms and democratic transition processes through elections, many others still face challenges in promoting free and fair elections and ensuring electoral integrity (Kühne, 2010; Lindberg, 2004; van Ham, 2014).

The reasons why elections fail to meet election integrity standards vary from one country to another (Norris, Frank and Martínez i Coma, 2014). The Perception of Electoral Integrity Index by Norris and Grömping (2019), using ranked scoring from 0 to 100 [lowest to highest] to assess the quality of elections worldwide, provides evidence that the Nordic countries had elections with the highest levels of integrity (over 80). Sub-Saharan Africa's results vary, with some satisfactory ratings alongside the lowest ratings worldwide (under 25). Failure to achieve electoral integrity generally involves corrupt practices in clientelist states, elections marred by outbreaks of violence and civil unrest, state repression of opposition forces, violation

of human rights, and weak state capacity in poorer and emerging developing societies (Kühne, 2010; Norris et al., 2014; van Ham, 2014).

This research has examined the elections in Mozambique. The study's overall guiding question is: Why do elections fail? The research investigated the critical factors that contributed to shortcomings of the 2019 general elections in Mozambique. The research analysed the dynamics of the Mozambican elections through an electoral integrity lens to determine what factors undermined election processes. The theoretical contribution of the research has been drawn from Norris' (2015) framework that explains countries' failure in achieving electoral integrity, as applied to the Mozambican context.

Electoral integrity is globally defined as a norm of the common international principles and standards for democratic elections applicable to all countries when conducting elections from the pre-election period, through the campaign until voting day and its results (Fortin-Rittberger, Harfst & Dingler, 2017; Norris, 2012; van Ham, 2014;). Informed by this perspective, van Ham (2014) describes electoral integrity as "credible", "acceptable", and "genuine" elections, or the rhetorical precept of "free, transparent, and fair" elections. In this sense, breaches of election integrity constitute electoral malpractice. The growing literature on electoral integrity has identified a set of critical factors essential to electoral integrity (James, Garnett, Loeber & van Ham, 2019, p. 296). These include structural factors, such as historical experiences with democratic elections and socio-economic features of societies; institutional factors relating to electoral systems and the existence of institutional checks and balances; and factors related to the range of actors involved in electoral manipulation and oversight.

Significant research on elections has pointed toward multiple problems (e.g., fraudulent voting, ballot filling, violence) that frequently occur in elections worldwide, whereby their quality does not comply with global standards (Hyde, 2011; Kelley, 2012b). In most developing countries and emerging democracies, this scenario is a tendency (Lindberg, 2006; Norris & Grömping, 2019), like in many African countries where the first wave of democratisation occurred in the late 1950s when countries engaged in struggles for national independence (Adejumobi, 2000; Lindberg, 2006). The actual transition to democratic systems only began in the early 1990s, preceded by civil wars in sub-Saharan countries like Mozambique, Angola, and Zimbabwe that gained independence in the 1970s and 1980s in the context of the

Cold War (Hanlon & Fox, 2006; Pitcher, 2020). In these contexts, elections are usually flanked by political and constitutional engineering processes to establish the required institutions and structures of democratic rule (Adejumobi, 2000; Kühne, 2010). This research examines Mozambique's journey towards electoral integrity to uncover the critical issues surrounding elections, specifically the contested 2019 elections.

1.2. Overview of Mozambique's 2019 General Elections

Mozambique held its sixth general election in 2019, marking 25 years of multiparty politics that began in 1994 after a long and bloody civil conflict. The elections being analysed offered an interesting empirical case to examine the country's pathway towards electoral integrity after more than two decades of conducting elections in a context of massive assistance to strengthen the electoral processes. In October 2019, Mozambican voters voted for one of four presidential candidates, representing FRELIMO (*Frente de Libertação de Moçambique),* RENAMO ***(****Resistência Nacional Moçambicana),* the MDM (*Movimento Democrático de Moçambique*), and AMUSI (*Acção do Movimento Unido para a Salvação Integral)*. Voters chose parties to represent them in the National Assembly and voted for legislative assemblies in all ten provinces of the country. The electoral contest was gripped by the usual three major parties (FRELIMO, RENAMO, and MDM) despite 26 political parties participating in the elections, most notably the newly registered political groups of the *Partido Optimista para o Desenvolvimento de Moçambique* and *Nova Democracia*. The ruling party, FRELIMO, won the presidency and the majority of seats in both the national legislature and provincial assemblies, beating its traditional long-time rival RENAMO (Pitcher, 2020).

This was the first time that the National Elections Commission (CNE) and Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration (STAE) organised three simultaneous elections in a single day. This created some logistical challenges. Moreover, this occurred within a context of a new electoral legal framework in which governors of each province were elected directly for the very first time, moving away from previous appointments by the president. In the race for his second and final term, the FRELIMO candidate Filipe Nyusi won about seventy-three percent of the vote cast in the 2019 polls. This represented an increase of 23 percent in comparison with the previous elections of 2014. FRELIMO also

triumphed in the elections to the national legislature with 184 of the 250 available seats. In turn, RENAMO, the main opposition party, garnered 60 seats, and the MDM, six seats. At the provincial assembly level, FRELIMO secured a large majority in the ten provincial assemblies with 628 seats, against 156 seats for RENAMO and ten for the MDM. These majorities granted FRELIMO the power to appoint all the provincial governors (Pitcher, 2020).

The 2019 polls cost around $196 million, which averaged $15 per registered voter (EU EOM, 2019). For these elections the government released $168 million, leaving a $28 million deficit. Initially, the election authorities filled this deficit with support from both national and international actors with whom they had previously collaborated and who had agreed to produce electoral materials prior to payment. During the election campaign, the president of the Republic publicly stated that a portion of the revenue from capital gains tax paid by gas companies would be used to settle the outstanding shortfall to pay for the election process. (EU EOM, 2019, p. 17).

Following a previous election period that was considered problematic, there was an expectation that the 2019 elections would test the recently passed election laws and the democratic process (Louw-Vaudran, 2019). Indeed, the elections were held under the auspices of a new legal framework, including a breakthrough in the decentralisation policy. All the minimal technical and financial conditions for holding elections were guaranteed. However, the results proved otherwise, with rampant electoral violence, abuses, and many other serious irregularities, including suspected cases of over and under registration of voters in favour of the ruling party (Hanlon, 2020; Pitcher, 2020). Hanlon (2020) supports this claim by stressing that contrary to expectations, very serious challenges have been raised around the 2019 elections.

Challenges to the conduct of a sound electoral process were clear early in the electoral cycle. The delay in the publication of the new electoral laws slowed the induction of poll workers, judicial officers, and party delegates in the procedures of the new law, as well as the making of materials. In terms of domestic and international election observers, these were the most “crowded” elections since 2004, totaling some 46,185 accredited observers (Centre for Public Integrity [CIP], 2019). Although FRELIMO was announced as the winner of these elections with a large majority, the results of the elections have not been accepted unanimously. Both

civil society organisations (CSOs) and opposition parties voiced severe concerns about several critical aspects of the electoral process. The 2019 post-election period was characterised by widespread contestation. For example, RENAMO's post-election statement highlighted the existence of inconsistencies in the voter register, instances of violence throughout the electoral campaign, and the blocking of observers on polling day (Louw-Vaudran, 2019). International election observer missions such as the African Union (2019) noted the existence of a challenging political and security environment. Its statement also urged the government of Mozambique to "take steps to instill confidence in the electoral process by ensuring transparency and accuracy in creating and maintaining the voters' register" (*op cit*, p.7). These findings were echoed by the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) (2019), which observed that the elections were held against a background of major security concerns and a general mistrust of the ability of the government, police and electoral bodies to ensure free and fair elections noted that the elections were held against a background of major security concerns and a general mistrust of the ability of the government, police and electoral bodies to ensure free and fair elections..

In turn, the European Union Electoral Observer Mission (EU EOM) refers to an election that took place in a politically polarised and challenging atmosphere where inter-party violence was predominant. Overall, the electoral process was characterised by heightened levels of distrust among the major competing parties, as well as a generalised lack of trust that the electoral bodies, CNE and STAE, and the judicial system were sufficiently neutral and free from political interference (EU EOM, 2019). The assassination of a leading national observer a week before the elections exacerbated a pre-existing climate of fear and self-censorship.

This situation has contributed to a decrease in citizens' trust in electoral processes and the institutions responsible for promoting and ensuring electoral integrity and safeguarding citizens' democratic rights. After more than two decades of conducting elections, evidence shows that the country is still facing challenges in managing electoral processes and to effectively achieve globally acknowledged electoral standards (Hanlon, 2020; Louw-Vaudran, 2019; Manning, 2019; Nuvunga, 2017; Pitcher, 2020; Rosário, 2020).

1.3. Research Problem

Since the establishment of the multiparty system, Mozambique has been conducting regular elections. Elections have taken place in an environment of increasing financial and technical support to strengthen the processes (CIP, 2019; Pitcher, 2020; Tollenaere, 2006). In 2019, the country held its sixth general election, with electoral expenditure doubling compared to the previous three elections (CIP, 2019). An analysis conducted in 2019 by CIP shows that the Mozambican government budgeted around $87.5 million to finance these elections, representing almost three times the value of the previous elections ($32 million). The analysis further revealed that the CNE had announced a budget of $196.7 million to cover the 2019 elections, representing an increase of 508% over previous election expenditure (CIP, 2019).

Regardless of the enabling conditions to enhance electoral integrity, including the increased investment in human, material, technical, and financial resources, the 2019 elections have not furthered the quality of democratic practices and have been widely contested, even considered regressive (Hanlon, 2020; Pitcher, 2020). Several domestic and international 2019 observer mission reports (e.g., African Union [AU], US Embassy, EU Delegation, The Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa, Peace Room *'Sala da Paz'*) pointed to an overly violent electoral process marked by severe irregularities throughout the electoral cycle. After more than two decades of conducting elections, evidence shows that Mozambique is failing to manage electoral processes and to effectively achieve globally acknowledged electoral standards (Hanlon, 2020; Louw-Vaudran, 2019; Manning, 2019; Nuvunga, 2017; Pitcher, 2020; Rosário, 2020;). This research has been critical to understand why elections continue to be contested and to determine which key factors account for this, disregarding all the invested resources. Its theoretical and policy contribution has been applied to the Mozambican context, based on existing perspectives of the underlying problems associated with electoral flaws.

1.4. Aim of the Study

The purpose of this research was to ascertain the critical factors that undermined the 2019 elections in Mozambique despite the significant financial and technical resources allocated to the electoral process. The research unpacks the

essential factors influencing the quality of Mozambican elections by exploring the key structures, actors, and institutional arrangements that govern the electoral system and their influence on election quality. While the research report provides an overview of the correlation between elections and democratic transition, it does not attempt to focus its analysis on broader issues related to democratic transitions. The research is about the quality of elections (i.e., electoral integrity).

1.5. Research Framing

1.5.1. Research Questions

The starting point of the research lies in one primary and three secondary research questions.

- What critical factors undermined the 2019 electoral process despite the significant financial and technical resources allocated?
    - What are the main structural factors that determine the quality of Mozambican elections?
    - How the key international stakeholders interests influence the electoral process in Mozambique?
    - What is the role of the institutional electoral systems and its frameworks to strengthen electoral integrity?

1.5.2. Rationale of the Study

Globally, the analysis of the contours, perfectibility, and complexities of the path to democracy through elections in developing countries has generated great interest (Adejumobi, 2000; James et al., 2019; Lindberg, 2006; Norris et al., 2014; van Ham, 2014). Research on the quality of elections has gained increasing prominence to clarify the blurred lines between regime types, in particular electoral autocracy and electoral democracy. Moreover, in providing the rationale behind the varying quality of elections and its impact on how governments function and the democratisation processes in general (van Ham, 2012).

In emerging democracies such as Mozambique, democratisation meant a new configuration of the relationship between state and society, creating a potential opportunity for greater citizens' participation in the political arena by exercising their voting rights. Despite the enthusiasm surrounding the democratic transition, some 25 years later, the analysis of multiparty democracy and holding regular

elections in Mozambique still needs to be explored from different perspectives to widen the field of reflection on the quality of elections and shed light on the critical elements surrounding them. Regarding this, Hanlon (2020) notes that the democratisation process (although motivated and initiated in Mozambique) is not peaceful and is marked by internal political resistance and differences and difficulties arising from other factors that condition its scope and success. Indeed, limited academic studies address questions regarding the role of structural, institutional, and international factors in Mozambique's elections and how these factors influence its path to electoral integrity. These and other distinct elements that characterise the Mozambican electoral context require further analysis.

In this context, the research topic and objectives were relevant and justifiable, as they aimed to contribute to the field of governance. This was done by analysing the critical factors underlying the challenges faced by Mozambique to achieve electoral integrity standards, despite all efforts to support and strengthen the country's electoral processes. The research reviewed the theoretical perspectives presented in the vast literature studying elections and electoral integrity. The aim was to provide a set of plausible propositions that were investigated through empirical analysis to determine the role that different factors play in the quality of elections in the Mozambican context.

1.5.3. Key Concepts

This section offers an outline of the main concepts and terms used in the vast literature as well as discussions on elections and electoral integrity. In addition, it aims to contextually demarcate the scope of this research.

Electoralism. With the "third wave" of democratisation in the aftermath of 1974, a growing number of citizens from Eastern Europe, Latin America, Asia, former Soviet republics, and sub-Saharan Africa had the opportunity – in many cases for the first time – to vote in multiparty elections (Huntington, 1991). The number of countries conducting periodic elections for executive and legislative positions has since increased substantially. Well over 85% of the states in the world currently choose their leaders by way of elections (van Ham, 2012). Elections have become the main rallying cry for democratisation and state-building efforts in almost all parts of the world. This assertion brings us to what election scholars have termed electoralism or what Manning (2008, p. 2) defines as a pledge to conduct elections

on a regular and periodic basis. While electoralism can result in electoral democracy over time, it can also mean the support of authoritarian regimes. This is because holding regular and periodic elections can provide the cover those regimes require to continue to operate with minimal risk to incumbents (Manning, 2008). The electoralist perspective assumes that elections will offer a basis for lasting democracy, or at the very least, that electoralism will sustain and serve as a foundation for state-building (Kumar,1998; Manning, 2008; Mazula,1995).

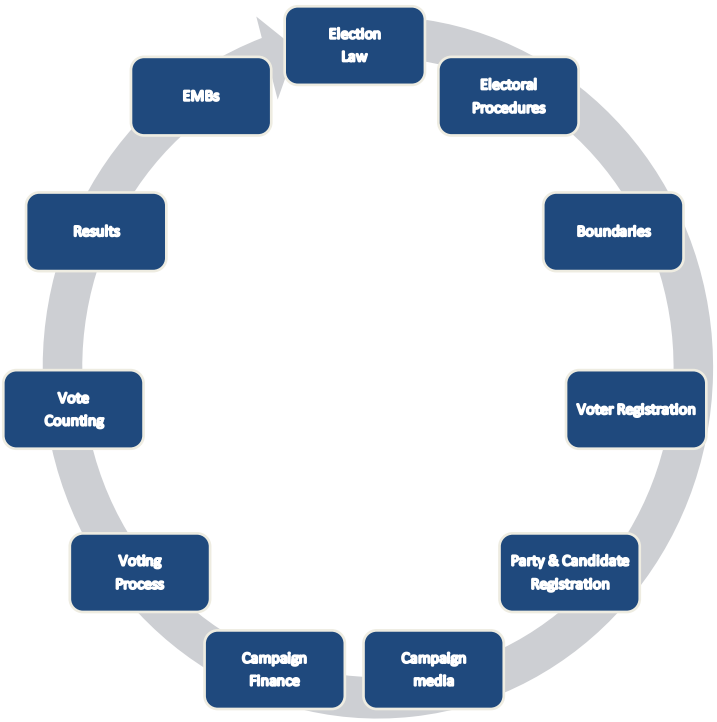
Democratisation. In line with the electoralist perspective, a new array of opportunities and possibilities for democratisation, democratic consolidation, and peace have arisen. This happened particularly at the end of the Cold War when interest in the concept of democratisation was reignited and was given a political, social, and cultural meaning (Lamb, 1997). Teshome (2008) and Ostheimer (2001) emphasise why a lot of attention is required when conceptualising the democratisation process. According to the latter author, democratisation can be broadly defined as a process of transition from undemocratic to democratic regimes. However, a distinction between electoral democracy and liberal democracy needs to be made. On the one hand, a transitional process from authoritarianism to the establishment of a democratically elected government through founding elections - electoral democracy -, and on the other, a process of transition to a well-established and institutionalised democracy - liberal democracy (Ostheimer, 2001). The literature covering the democratisation in Mozambique – in the sense of the consolidation of democracy – includes what Brito (1993, p. 24) defines as a movement towards the establishment of a system of liberal democracy: a system of political organisation of the state based on multiparty politics, free and periodic elections, and the separation of legislative, executive and judicial powers.

Electoral Integrity. The significance of electoral integrity in democratic electoral management is highlighted by scholars such as Fortin-Rittberger et al. (2017), Norris (2019), and van Ham (2014). Overall, the notion refers to the extent to which elections comply with global principles and standards established since the mid-twentieth century through the endorsement of world governments in a set of written, protocols, treaties, conventions, and guidelines (Carter Center, 2014; Norris, 2019; Tuccinardi, 2014). For this research the core notion of "electoral integrity" refers to contests that respect national democratic constitutional provisions and internationally and globally endorsed norms governing the proper conduct of

elections. In other words, it entails free, fair, and democratic elections to ensure electoral quality. The proposed concept is the foundation for understanding key issues affecting the freeness and fairness of elections in emerging democracies such as Mozambique.

It should be mentioned that although it is not the central object of the present research, the study acknowledges and discusses a tendency by some scholars to link elections and democracy in a causal relationship. The analysis of the research literature shows that the question whether elections by themselves promote democratic progress has reached a wide range of conclusions by scholars and practitioners, as discussed in depth in Chapter two of this research. Incidentally, Kelley (2012a) acknowledging this dispute, stresses that research on this issue is rather incipient and is plagued by empirical and conceptual challenges in distinguishing between electoral and democratic measures. In fact, the quality of elections – the object of this study – and the way in which it is measured brings with it elements intrinsically linked to democratic principles and practices, impacting the way the entire electoral cycle, as presented in Figure 1, is conceived and implemented.

Figure 1. ***Steps in the Electoral Cycle***



Source: Adapted from Norris (2019)

1.6. Chapter Structure

The research report is structured into five chapters. Chapter One explores the general arguments and background information regarding elections and electoral integrity, including the research problem, the purpose of the study, the delimitation of objectives, the justification, and the key concepts that the paper addresses. Chapter two comprises contextual literature that examines the Mozambican case, presenting a historical perspective, political background, and evolution of national elections to provide a broader understanding of the political dynamics that shape electoral processes. Further in this Chapter, the conceptual research framework explores existing theories and perspectives that explain the failure of elections to meet standards of electoral integrity. Chapter three introduces and describes the research methods applied for gathering, analysing, and interpreting data, including the study's limitations and the applied ethical considerations. Chapter four presents and reflects on the empirical research findings, revisiting the theoretical arguments empirically by analysing their impact on Mozambique's path to electoral integrity. The report concludes with Chapter five providing the overall research conclusions.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Historical and Political Context of Elections in Mozambique

This section explores Mozambican history, its political background, and the evolution of national elections to provide a broader understanding of the political dynamics surrounding the electoral processes. It explores the contours of these processes from colonial politics and the liberation movement that shaped Mozambique's political history up to the establishment of a multiparty democracy in 1992. Insight is provided into the socio-economic and political context, the administrative electoral system, and the legal and institutional arrangements surrounding the conduct of elections in Mozambique from an electoral integrity perspective. The last part of the chapter addresses the foundation and contours of electoral assistance in Mozambique from a historical perspective.

2.1.1. The National Liberation Movement and Post-independence Context in Mozambique

From the 1970s through the 1990s, national liberation movements in southern African countries, including Mozambique, rose to positions of meaningful party-political domination (Funada-Classen, 2013; Manning & Malbrough, 2009). Funada-Classen (2013) refers to the concept of national liberation movements as processes in which nationals rise up against colonial rule, enabling them to restore their meaning of self and autonomy, and entailing a shift from a situation of being deprived of their history to regaining it (2013, p. 23).

Through the principles of "solidarity" and "unity" that marked the Mozambican liberalisation movement, it was possible to advance the "nationalism" that was fundamental to the achievement of Mozambique's independence from colonial policy, which was entrenched in the principle of "divide and rule" (Funada-Classen, 2013). Indeed, mass mobilisation was important for the success of the liberal movement and to position FRELIMO in the political arena (Funada-Classen, 2013; Darch, 2018).

Mozambique became independent from colonial regime in 1975, after a ten-year armed liberation struggle (1964-1974) led by FRELIMO against Portugal (Darch, 2018; Manning & Malbrough, 2009). Founded in Dar es Salaam in 1962, FRELIMO was at the frontline of the liberation movement and gained strength from

the anti-colonial war waged against the Portuguese rule in the period 1964 to 1974 (Darch, 2018; Funada-Classen, 2013; Manning & Malbrough, 2009).

The liberation struggle ended in 1974, following negotiations between FRELIMO and the Portuguese colonial government via the Lusaka Accords, which conceded unconditional independence to Mozambique (Darch, 2018; Manning, 2002). According to Darch (2018), under this agreement, FRELIMO explicitly demanded to be recognised as the Mozambican people's sole legitimate representative. It was, therefore, the political organisation in the strongest possible position in the post-independence period. Because of its success in overthrowing Portuguese colonialism by winning the liberation struggle, FRELIMO benefitted from a huge wave of mass support and positioned itself as the sole political organisation (Darch, 2018; Manning, 2002; Manning & Malbrough, 2009). Consequently, this has meant that popular support did not need to be proven via elections, so the idea of conducting competitive elections was not even considered (Darch, 2018).

From a position of supremacy, FRELIMO was able to take up all the political space, discredit any other political groupings and manifestations of nationalism, and exert absolute power over the formation of the government and the setting of the country's political agenda (Darch, 2018, p. 11). In 1977, at its third Congress, FRELIMO declared itself a Marxist-Leninist vanguard party. Regarding this, Carbone (2003) argues that this ideological swing resulted in long-lasting consequences. The idea of a single leading party, with restricted membership, based on the primacy of the party over the state, as per the adopted ideology, meant eliminating all opposition political organisations through repressive actions (Carbone, 2003; Manning, 2002).

Moreover, once it assumed the government, FRELIMO implemented a number of socioeconomic and agricultural policies that were centrally planned and collectivist, with significant political consequences (Carbone, 2003; Darch, 2018). For example, many of the actions put in place contributed to widespread social disillusionment and deepened the sense of distance and potential for antagonism between FRELIMO and large segments of the population that were officially labelled as obstacles to development. These actions included compulsory resettlements, foreseen by the communal village programmes, and ideological attacks against traditional institutions (Carbone, 2003, p. 4). The antagonism had

geographical repercussions, becoming more prominent in the central and north-central provinces like Manica, Sofala, Tete, Zambézia and Nampula. These areas have gradually become a breeding ground for anti-FRELIMO feelings (Carbone, 2003; Funada-Classen, 2013).

In 1991, at its sixth congress, FRELIMO abandoned Marxism-Leninism, while retaining the claim to power stemming from having ousted colonial supremacy and bringing about independence (Carbone, 2003; Darch, 2018; Manning, 2002). However, as observed by Darch (2018, p. 12) FRELIMO supremacy was exerted in a context where its government had not yet fully and effectively seized command of the state machinery. As such, a set of campaigns focused on issues such as legality, politics, and organisation were at the forefront of early 1980s. These campaigns stemmed from FRELIMO's distrust of the public administration apparatus, a vestige of the Portuguese colonial regime (Darch, 2018). FRELIMO's politics were also endangered by hostile interests to the socialist project it had embraced and by supporting liberation struggles in South Africa and Rhodesia (Manning & Malbrough, 2009; Tollenaere, 2006).

Overall, the political dynamics in the post-independence period were marked by FRELIMO's hegemony as the liberation party and an unrelenting rise in central control (Darch, 2018; Funada-Classen, 2013). The party seized administrative control over state structures, combatted alternative forms of nationalism and opposition, viewing those supporters as enemies and saboteurs. Mid-1975 was a time when prevailing social, political, and property relations were under threat from the vast excluded majority (Darch, 2018; Funada-Classen, 2013). On this, and from a democratic perspective, Darch (2018, p. 12) argues that FRELIMO never intended to establish formal structures and institutions aimed at a broader and more conventional form of pluralism. Furthermore, Manning and Malbrough (2009) refer to Mozambique's post-independence context, characterised by human development indices near the bottom, social conflict, and regional socio-economic inequalities. In addition, the country experienced years of dire economic record, the effects of failed economic policies, and multiple pressing humanitarian issues that exacerbated the already appalling economic conditions (Manning & Malbrough, 2009, p. 80).

2.1.2. Civil War opposing RENAMO and FRELIMO

Large body of literature on liberation movements in southern African has labelled Mozambique a success story (Funada-Classen, 2013; Manning & Malbrough, 2009). However, scholars such as Funada-Classen (2013, p. 4) note that despite being acclaimed for defeating Portuguese colonial rule, the Mozambican liberation movement, quickly gave way to division and confrontation marked by an unrelenting conflict between the newly established FRELIMO government and the anti-government guerrilla forces led by RENAMO, an armed group founded in the 1970s. Soon after its independence, Mozambique experienced a violent armed conflict that lasted 16 years, ending after the signing of a General Peace Agreement (GPA) between the two opposing forces in 1992 (Carbone, 2003; Darch, 2018; Funada-Classen, 2013).

The origin and nature of the armed conflict that plagued Mozambique has given rise to heated academic debates. For Darch (2018), the conflict clearly presented the key characteristics of a civil war, as it opposed two organised groups, namely FRELIMO and RENAMO. Regarding the causes of the conflict, the literature refers to external and internal causes. The external causes involve the Cold War conflict at the global level, and, at the regional level, the interests of white minority regimes in Rhodesia and South Africa in destabilising Mozambique (FBIS, 1985, as cited in Darch, 2018; Tollenaere, 2006). Internal causes were driven by local dynamics associated to the overall nation and state building process in the context of a deeply divided society with ethnic and religious fractionalisation, colonial authoritarian heritage, and government policies in the post-independence period (Darch, 2018; Geffray, 1990; Tollenaere, 2006). In line with its Marxist-Leninist ideology during the post-independence period, the FRELIMO government induced a series of policies that spawned meaningful grievances among Mozambicans, predominantly in the rural areas with local peoples' dissatisfaction with these policies and attacks on their belief systems (Geffray, 1990). Such policies, included for example, the centralisation of agricultural production on state-owned farms, the enforcement of patrilineal rules, the establishment of "re-education" camps, and the authoritative delegitimisation of traditional and religious local authorities. These policies resulted in widespread dissatisfaction and occasional resistance (Tollenaere, 2006, p. 2).

It was in this context that RENAMO, a guerrilla movement backed by Rhodesian intelligence, and later by South Africa, gradually took advantage of the growing unpopularity of government policies and began to operate with some local support in the central part of the country, specifically in Manica and Sofala (Darch, 2018; Manning & Malbrough, 2009; Tollenaere, 2006). It is worth mentioning that RENAMO comprised Mozambican soldiers who had previously belonged to the Portuguese army, fugitives from re-education centres, and former FRELIMO cadres who dissented from the Marxist-Leninist ideology of the movement (Tollenaere,2006). The armed conflict was marred by acts of destruction of public infrastructure and extreme violence by RENAMO (Darch, 2018; Tollenaere, 2006). At the same time, it attempted to gain legitimacy by restoring traditional and religious authorities in the areas it controlled. Government forces were incapable of controlling the advance of the guerrillas, which rapidly expanded into Tete, Zambézia, parts of Nampula to the north, and Maputo province to the south (Tollenaere, 2006). Amidst an increasingly deteriorating economy, the government armed forces reinforced their oppressive machinery, becoming more aggressive and intolerant against civilians who cooperated or were suspected of cooperating with RENAMO (Darch, 2018; Tollenaere, 2006).

Following a bloody period between 1984 and 1986, the war came to a halt, while the country's socio-economic situation worsened (Tollenaere, 2006). A combination of factors impelled the warring parties, FRELIMO and RENAMO, to reach an agreement and lay the foundations for an end to the conflict (Carbone, 2003; Darch, 2018; Manning & Malbrough, 2009; Tollenaere, 2006). Under the mediation of the Catholic Church, the war officially ended in 1992 with the signing of a GPA in a negotiation process that Della Rocca (2012) considered long and intense, with much drama and mistrust on the part of key actors. The GPA between FRELIMO and RENAMO set out the key principles for cooperation between the two parties and the institutionalisation of multiparty democracy in Mozambique (Alden, 1995; Pitcher, 2020). Most of the GPA's essential provisions were delegated to the United Nations (UN), a body that was called to facilitate the demilitarisation process and the march towards democracy (Alden,1995) as Mozambique had no previous experience of multiparty democracy (Kumar, 1998; Manning & Malbrough, 2009).

2.1.3. From the Peace Agreement to the Establishment of Multiparty Politics in Mozambique

The Mozambican historical background of elections has significantly influenced the country's transition to democracy and has been strongly shaped by past conflict patterns (Carbone, 2003; Darch, 2018; Manning & Malbrough 2009). Mozambique emerged as a democratic country in 1992, after a16-year armed conflict and the GPA signed between the ruling party FRELIMO and RENAMO (Hanlon & Fox, 2006; Louw-Vaudran, 2019; Manning, 2019; Pitcher, 2020). This marked an essential step towards transitioning, at least formally, from a single-party to a multiparty system, as in 1992 Mozambique embarked on what would be considered a successful transition to peace (Carbone, 2003; Manning & Malbrough, 2009).

While analysing Mozambican elections, it is important to highlight that the country successfully held elections for the first time in 1994 as a corollary of the cessation of hostilities and armed conflict between the competing parties. Therefore, the first elections in Mozambique are also called post-conflict elections. According to Kumar (1998, p. 5), the aim of post-conflict elections is twofold: on the one hand, they are working to establish a legitimate and democratically elected government and on the other hand, they endeavour to entrench fragile peace arrangements into a durable peace within a democratic system. Elections after a conflict have their own specificities and characteristics. Kumar (1998, p. 1) states that these elections have the following characteristics: (i) are often held following the negotiation of peace agreements involving the parties to the conflict; (ii) the peace agreements confer a vital role to external actors (be they international organisations or groups of nations) often involving the deployment of military forces to countries emerging from conflict; (iii) external actors usually devote an important role to the administration and supervision, observation, financing and support of elections; (iv) these elections often occur amid incipient post-conflict reconstruction activities, reconstruction of essential social infrastructure, and generally harsh social and economic circumstances.

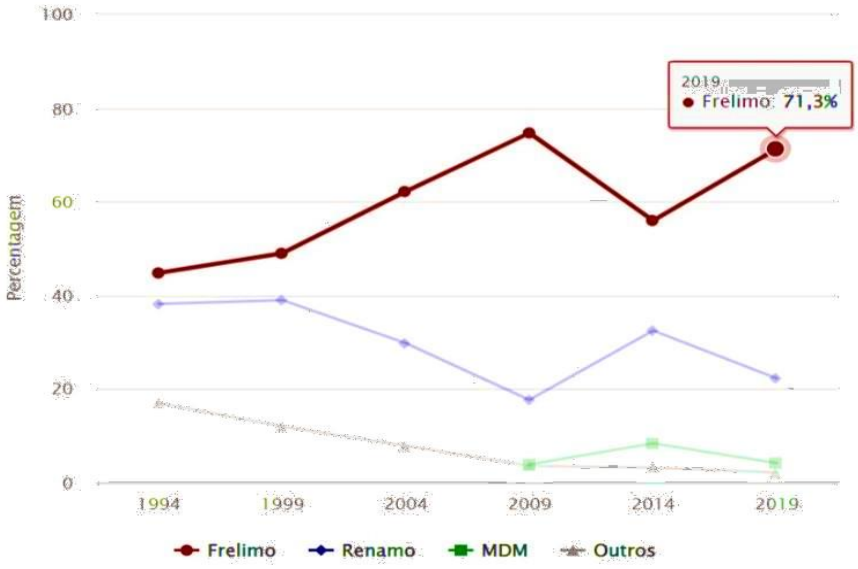
The post conflict elections held in 1994 marked the apogee of the GPA and the beginning of a new age in the history of Mozambique (Tollenaere, 2006). In formal electoral terms, the GPA offered an appropriate setting marked by the need to establish and consolidate peace (Hanlon, 2020; Mazula,1995). Consistent with this,

Elklit and Reynolds (2005, p. 149) highlight that, besides representing an essential step towards democratisation, post-conflict elections should also be assessed in terms of their contribution to bringing a conflict to an end. They specifically refer to the post-conflict elections in countries like Bosnia and Herzegovina, Angola, and Mozambique as good examples of this contribution.

However, despite the hailed success, Mozambique's elections took place in a challenging context characterised by a tense post-conflict political setting, a fragile financial and economic base, a high rate of illiteracy, intense population flow with a large number of refugees and displaced populations returning to their areas of origin, and a weak communication infrastructure in most parts of the country (Tollenaere, 2006, p. 6). By the time Mozambique embarked on the post-conflict democratisation process, nearly all the economic, political and social prerequisites of a democracy were lacking (Brito, 1993; Hanlon, 2020; Manning, 2002; Manning & Malbrough, 2009). This suggests that although democratisation in Mozambique advanced under challenging circumstances, it still provided a basis for peace consolidation, as elections presented themselves as a priority for achieving that goal (Manning & Malbrough, 2009; Mazula, 1995). This may explain why Louw-Vaudran (2019), in analysing elections in Mozambique, refers to a history of troubled elections since its first election.

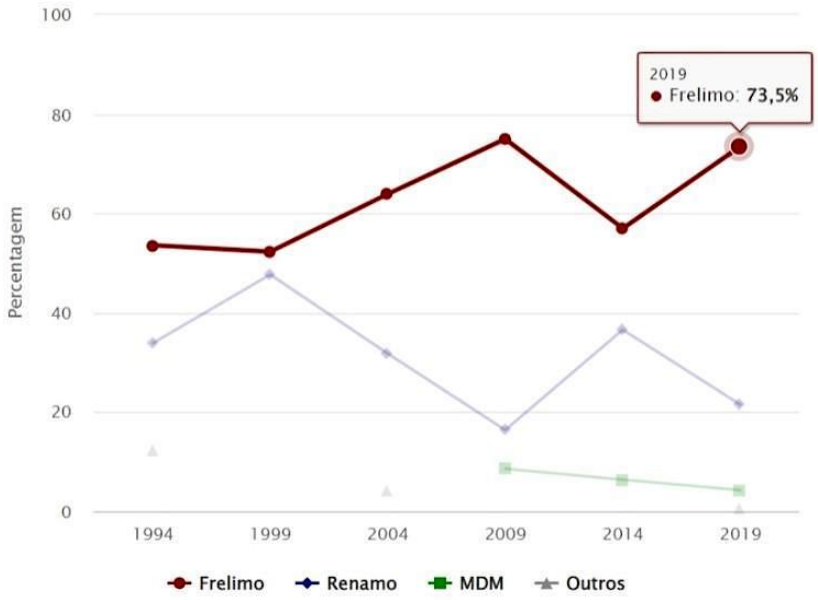
Mozambique's founding elections in 1994 were followed by five general elections every five years (e.g., 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014, and most recently in 2019). Mozambican elections are the subject of growing interest from national and international actors concerned with the freeness and fairness of the electoral processes. Mozambique has also held five sets of regular municipal elections since 1998, when they first took place. Overall, the elections were strongly dominated by political rivalry between FRELIMO and RENAMO, with the former winning the most cast votes in all of them (Darch, 2018; Hanlon, 2020; Louw-Vaudran, 2019). Charts 1 and 2 below present the outcomes of the legislative and presidential elections in Mozambique over time.

Chart 1. ***Legislative Election Results: Percentages by Party***



Source: Institute for Social and Economic Studies (*Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Económicos)*

Chart 2. ***Presidential Election Results: Percentage by Candidate***



Source: Institute for Social and Economic Studies (*Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Económicos)*

Charts 1 and 2 demonstrate how FRELIMO has consistently won every legislative and presidential election in Mozambique since the first elections of 1994,

with percentage margins well above RENAMO, its main opponent. Regarding this, Darch (2018, p. 8) observes that despite establishing a multiparty democracy under a operational parliamentary system, the two major parties FRELIMO and RENAMO, have remained largely trapped in their own pasts. This supports Kumar's (1998) argument that regardless of the contribution of peace agreements to the cessation of hostilities between competing parties, post-conflict societies are unlikely to experience peace, as many remain deeply fragmented and prone to violence. In Mozambique, this has resulted in elections often plagued by complaints of misconduct, violence, mistrust between the two main parties, allegations of vote-rigging and corruption, and a steady loss of credibility of electoral institutions (Hanlon, 2020; Louw-Vaudran, 2019; Tollenaere, 2006).

Hence, the integrity of the elections in Mozambique has been systematically and widely contested by different segments, especially RENAMO and other societal forces, including watchdog organisations such as CIP, and domestic and international observer missions that have claimed that the electoral processes have not been free, fair, and transparent (Hanlon & Fox, 2006; Louw-Vaudran, 2019; Manning, 2019; Nuvunga, 2017; Pitcher, 2020). Moreover, the main electoral management bodies (EMBs), CNE and STAE have been repeatedly criticised by international and domestic observers for their highly secretive nature (Hanlon & Fox, 2006). For example, in the 2004 elections, the Constitutional Council (CC) was especially vocal in criticising the CNE's failure to properly investigate and pursue reported breaches of the electoral law (CC, 2005).

Overall, the literature on the integrity of elections in Mozambique warns of serious irregularities and misconduct in the post-founding elections that compromised the quality of the electoral process. Hanlon (2020) refers to the 1999 elections as having registered cases of exclusion of ballot papers, using insecure election software, and manipulating electoral results. Mozambique held its fourth general election in October 2009. An election that Manning and Malbrough (2012) considered as quite possibly the most undemocratic multi-party elections ever held in the country. About these elections Manning and Malbrough (2012) for example refer to the effect of the electoral regulations approved for these elections. These prevented the majority of opposition parties from facing practical challenges, and on polling day cases of systematic and large-scale actions by election officials to manipulate election results in many key provinces took place. According to Manning

and Malbrough (2012), donors expressed disappointment and complained about the prevailing lack of transparency and the perplexing surrounding environment of the 2009 general elections. However, despite having identified significant problems at several polling stations, international election observers considered them generally free and fair (Manning & Malbrough, p. 6).

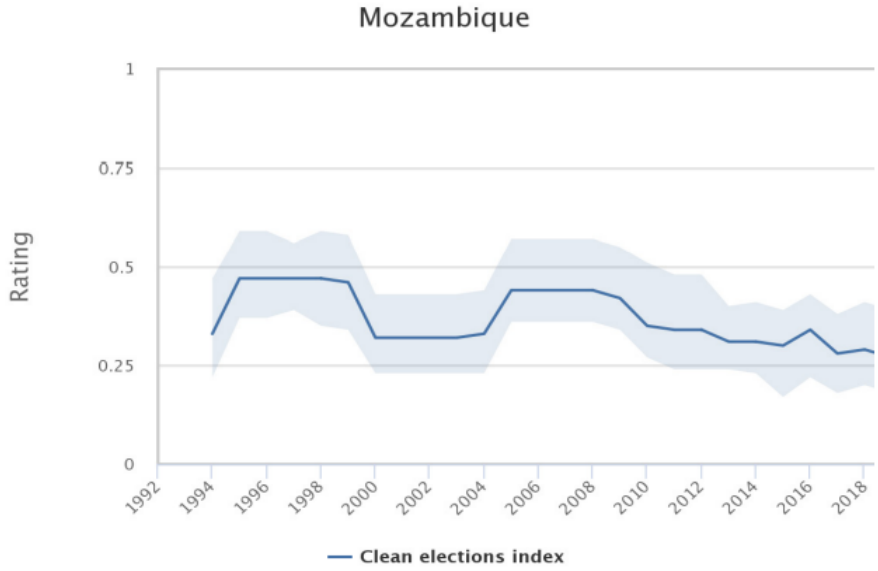
The 2019 EU EOM report refers to Mozambique as a country whose political system is characterised by an unclear relationship between the party in power and the state machinery, a high degree of centralisation of power, worsening corruption index and poor independence of the legislative, media and judicial systems (EU EOM, 2019). Furthermore, the EU EOM report mentions that Mozambique undertook meaningful shifts by embracing and partially putting in place democratic reforms, but it still has a long way to go before it can be considered a liberal democracy. This view is shared by election practitioners including Sitoe (2011), Rosário, Guambe and Salema (2020) and Hanlon (2020). Based on the vast literature on elections and democratisation in Mozambique, it becomes clear that the country qualifies as a state that essentially practices electoral democracy (Rosário, 2020).

Mozambique scores poorly on majority of democracy indicators. Since 1994, Mozambique has been classified as "partly free" in terms of political rights and civil liberties by Freedom House (Pitcher, 2020). According to the latest electoral democracy index from the Varieties of Democracy project, which measures critical aspects of democracy such as clean elections, the extent of suffrage, freedom of expression, and independent media, the score for Mozambique is halfway between non-democratic and fully democratic (Varieties of Democracy, 2020). Over the period 2009 to 2019, Mozambique's score declined from 0.49 to 0.41, signalling the deterioration of its fragile democratic institutions and rising autocracy. The country was classified as a "hybrid regime", between authoritarianism and a flawed democracy (Pitcher, 2020).

In analysing Mozambique's trajectory towards democracy, Hanlon (2020) argues that the will to end the civil war and establish a multiparty system in Mozambique overcame hidden challenges in the peace negotiations themselves and the enacted electoral legislation at the very beginning of the process. These problems have tainted all subsequent elections. Electoral integrity in Mozambique has deteriorated at every election, and elections have been recurrently unable to fulfil

their mandate. Chart 3 below on election cleanliness shows how Mozambique is decreasing its ranking on this indicator.

Chart 3. ***"Clean Elections" Index***



Source: Varieties of Democracy (2020)

2.2. Legal Framework of Elections in Mozambique

Overall, the legal framework in Mozambique offers an acceptable foundation for the holding of democratic elections. It comprises constitutional provisions, national laws, and procedures concerning the electoral processes. The regulations and decisions of the CNE complement the legal framework, as do the decisions (jurisprudence) of the CC (Brito, 1993). Furthermore, according to the EU EOM (2019), a sound legal framework conforming to international and regional principles is in place to ensure that Mozambique upholds its regional principles and international obligations.

a) International and Regional Commitments

Mozambique has adhered to the following leading international and regional legal instruments that govern democratic election principles: the International Covenant on Human Rights Civil and Political Affairs, the Convention on the Elimination of Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and its Optional Protocol, and the

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol (Carter Center, 2014). Regarding the last two conventions, Mozambique accepted the procedure for lodging a complaint against human rights violations, thus offering more effective safeguards regarding the respective fundamental rights. However, Mozambique has not yet acceded to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, an important instrument to ensure the realisation of people's economic and social rights. (Carter Center,2014).

At regional level, Mozambique is a member of the AU and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The country has legally bound obligations as set out in regional documents: the SADC Principles and Guidelines on Democratic Elections, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Establishment of an African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, and the SADC Protocol against Corruption (Carter Center, 2014). Table 1 presents the country's electoral governance commitments bound by the treaties it has ratified.

Table 1. ***Mozambique's Regional and International Election Obligations and Standards***

Authoring Entity	Document	Acceptance level	Date
AU	African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance	Signed	February 22, 1989
AU	African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights	Ratified/Joined	February 22, 1989
AU	African Charter on Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration	Ratified/Joined	February 06, 2013
AU	African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption	Ratified/Joined	August 02, 2006
AU	African Youth Charter	Ratified/Joined	July 29, 2008
AU	Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Older Persons	Signed	June 29, 2018
AU	Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa	Ratified/Joined	December 09, 2005

Authoring Entity	Document	Acceptance level	Date
SADC	Protocol on Culture, Information, and Sport	Ratified/Joined	January 07, 2006
SADC	SADC Protocol Against Corruption	Ratified/Joined	December 28, 2007
UN	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	Ratified/Joined	January 30, 2012
UN	Convention on the Rights of the Child	Ratified/Joined	April 26, 1994
UN	International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination	Ratified/Joined (with reservations)	April 18, 1983
UN	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families	Ratified/Joined	August 19, 2013
UN	United Nations Convention against Corruption	Ratified/Joined (with reservations)	April 09, 2008
UN	Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties	Ratified/Joined	May 08, 2001

Authoring Entity	Document	Acceptance level	Date
UN (CEDAW)	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women	Ratified/Joined	April 21, 1997
UN	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	Ratified/Joined	July 21, 1993

Source: Adapted from the Carter Center Election Obligations & Standards Database

Since 1995, Mozambique has also been part of the Commonwealth of Nations and a founding member of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (*Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa*) since its creation in 1996. Mozambique is also part of the Latin Union, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, and an observer in *La Francophonie* (Carter Center, 2014). Other electoral governance-related commitments made by the Government of Mozambique include the New Partnership Declaration for Africa's Development Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance and the AU Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa (EU EOM, 2019).

b) National Electoral Legislation

Since the first multiparty elections, different sets of laws have governed all the elections held in Mozambique between 1994 and 2019. This means that amendments were made to the legislation for almost every election, including on EMBs, voter registration, and voting (Tollenaere, 2006). Mozambique's current legal framework guiding presidential and legislative elections, including provincial elections for the assembly and provincial governors, includes a comprehensive legal regime comprising the Constitution and Law 2/2019 establishing the legal regime for the conduct of run-off elections. Negotiations between the leaders of FRELIMO and RENAMO resulted in the revision of the Constitution in 2018, with significant amendments focusing on decentralisation, a key long-standing demand of RENAMO. In the most recent elections held in October 2019, electoral legislation

was passed in May 2019. This legislation included arrangements geared towards accommodating the reforms brought about by the 2018 constitutional amendment relating to the decentralisation framework, particularly the new electoral system for provincial assemblies and the first ever election of provincial governors in the history of Mozambique. A total of 13 articles were modified, and 22 new provisions were introduced as 2018 Constitutional amendments. The central aspect was a structural shift in the governmental system at the provincial, district, and municipal levels. Article 135 of the Constitution provides that the president, national, provincial, district, and municipal assemblies are chosen by universal, direct, equal, and regular suffrage, as well as by individual and secret vote. Under the amendment whoever heads the list that wins the provincial, district and municipal assemblies will automatically become the provincial governor, district administrator and mayor, respectively.

For general elections, the revised laws include Law 2/2019 governing presidential and parliamentary elections, while Law 3/2019 governs elections to provincial assemblies and provincial governors. Other laws regarding the organisation of political decentralisation, as well as representative and executive powers, were also passed. In addition to the constitutional amendments, the electoral reform addressed some recommendations from previous EOMs, in particular the elimination of "previous impugnation" (*princípio de impugnação prévia*), to improve the quality of electoral dispute resolution (EU EOM, 2019). The previous laws on voter registration (Law 8/2014), on the National Electoral Commission (Law 9/2014), and political parties (Law 7/1991) remained in full force and effect.

However, the recent amendment on eliminating the principle of previous impugnation has generated some legal uncertainty. This principle states that any irregularity must be filed at the time and place in which it occurred, otherwise there is no recourse to a higher level. It should be noted that prior to amendment, this requirement was a serious obstacle for the parties to resolve their objections. In practice, despite the removal of the previous impugnation from the law, the procedures for lodging complaints remained largely unaltered. Other amendments to the legal provisions included the simplification of requirements for accrediting domestic observers, like no longer requiring their CVs, harmonisation of the criteria for disqualification of members of parliament and provincial assemblies with constitutional provisions, elimination of past criminal contentions as well as the

provision that barred candidates who had resigned from a previous term on the same body they intended to run for. The new laws also banned the use of mobile phones and cameras in polling booths (EU EOM, 2019).

2.2.1. Administrative Electoral System

The electoral system refers to the critical set of electoral rules governing how votes are cast and seats assigned (Blais & Massicotte, 2002). In other words, it is a leadership selection approach a given country adopts. It entails administrative, procedural, and institutional mechanisms guiding the electoral process. The rules and procedures governing the way votes are cast and seats assigned vary greatly from country to country (Blais & Massicotte, 2002; Reilly, 2003). Often, electoral systems are classified according to how they function proportionally to translate the electorate's votes into seats earned by the political parties. Typically, states use three different electoral systems: plurality, semi-proportional, and proportional representation (Reilly, 2003). Mozambique falls into the last category having held elections under proportional representation rules.

In Mozambique, the Constitution and electoral laws define procedures, rules, and regulations governing elections. Article 73 of the Constitution refers to a multiparty democratic system based on universal, direct, equal, secret, and periodic elections. The Constitution recognises the political rights of Mozambicans, including freedom of assembly, expression, the press, and political association (Constitution of Mozambique, 2004). According to Article 158 of the Constitution, Article 6 of Law 2/2019, and Article 8 of Law 3/2019, the date of elections for the president, national, and provincial assemblies must be fixed by a presidential decree based on a proposal by the CNE at least 18 months in advance.

All Mozambican citizens aged 18 and above are eligible to vote after registering and receiving a voter card for this purpose. The president, the parliamentarians, the members of the provincial assemblies, and provincial governors are to be elected for a mandate of five years. The presidential term is restricted to two successive mandates, but a third term is permitted five years after serving the last mandate (Article 146 of the Constitution). The president of the Republic is elected by an absolute majority (above 50 percent of the valid votes) in a single nationwide constituency. A minimum of 10,000 citizen voter signatures is required to a candidate to apply for presidency. If no candidate gets an absolute

majority, a second voting round involving the two candidates with the highest number of votes is held within 30 days after the CC has announced the results of the first round. In the run-off, only these two candidates participate. Mozambique has never held a presidential run-off in any of the six presidential elections since 1994.

For the election of parliamentarians, 250 seats are divided into 13 constituencies - made up of the 11 provinces (Maputo city included as it has a provincial statute with some specificities). At national level, a total of 248 members are elected, with the remaining two constituencies allocated outside the country electing two members: one for Mozambicans living in African countries and the other for Mozambicans living in other countries, mainly Portugal and Germany (EU EOM, 2019). Members of parliament are elected under a system of proportional representation, applying the d'Hondt formula for seats allocation, with no representation threshold. Also called " greatest divisors method ", the d'Hondt formula is a way of distributing seats in parliaments between federal states or in systems of proportional representation on party-lists. In systems of proportional representation, seats are assigned to parties roughly in proportion to the number of votes obtained. The two members of parliament that represent constituencies outside the country are elected by a simple majority (first-past-the-post).

For the provincial assembly elections, 85 percent of the seats are distributed proportionally among the districts in each province, while 15 percent of the seats are reserved for the provincial list where the head of the list must be elected. The provincial assemblies are elected using a system of proportional representation, and the governors' elections the head candidate of the list that gained the highest number of votes is the winner. Under the decentralisation framework, in the absence of appointed governors, the president of Mozambique has the prerogative to appoint a provincial secretary of state to serve as the government's representative in the provinces (EU EOM, 2019).

2.2.2. Election Administration

In many countries, independent EMBs have been respected as a central measure of institutional reform to successfully enhance electoral integrity, and as a result, independent EMBs are currently the predominant institutional model for election management in the world (Catt, Ellis, Maley, Wall, & Wolf, 2014; Elklit & Reynolds, 2002; James et al., 2019; Lopez-Pinter, 2000). In the Mozambican

context, the CNE, supported by the STAE, is in charge of the implementation of all electoral related activities. Political parties' appointees dominate both bodies, particularly the CNE (Hanlon & Fox, 2006; Tollenaere, 2006). There is also the CC, which validates and acts as the final court of appeal for election complaints (Hanlon & Fox, 2006; Tollenaere, 2006). Together they are the main EMBs.

The CNE is the specific entity overseeing voter registration and electoral processes. STAE has overall responsibility for the technical and administrative enforcement of voter registration and elections. The decisions of CNE can be subject to appeal to the CC, the supreme arbiter in electoral matters and responsible for the announcement of the election results. The CNE has 17 members, including ten representatives of the political parties sitting in parliament: five from FRELIMO, four from RENAMO, one from the MDM – a smaller party founded in 2009 – and seven members appointed by CSOs. The political parties integrating the EMBs are appointed based on the criterion of parliamentary representation. According to the CNE Law 6/2013, updated/revised and republished by Law 9/2014, the members of CNE are designated on a proportional basis of the political parties' representation in parliament.

The president of the CNE is elected by the members of the CNE, on the proposal of the members of civil society, and is invested by the President of the Republic. The two parliamentary political parties with the most votes appoint the two vice-presidents. Around election time, the CNE operates with temporary bodies at both provincial and district level. The ten Provincial Election Commissions (*Comissões Provinciais de Eleições)* and District Election Commissions (*Comissões Distritais de Eleições)* that act as *ad hoc* structures are set up to carry out electoral operations for the CNE at sub-national levels. The lower bodies are composed of a mixture of appointed members from political parties and civil society representatives, being three members from FRELIMO, two from RENAMO, one from the MDM, and nine representatives from CSOs.

Similarly, STAE is partly composed along party lines. The Director General is recruited by the CNE in an open competitive process, whereas the two Deputy Directors are appointed by the two majority parliamentary parties. In election seasons, the central and lower levels of STAE are reinforced with appointees from the party in power and the two opposition parties with seats in parliament in the same numbers. Notwithstanding initial success, the democratic credentials of

Mozambique have been marred by a notorious lack of transparency in electoral management and, more recently, by the growing monopoly of the ruling party at all levels (Manning & Malbrough, 2009).

2.2.3. Electoral Assistance in Mozambique

Aiming to build and enhance the correctness, efficiency and legitimacy of elections and in the hope of establishing lasting democratic practices in the emerging democracies over the past decades, the international community has supported the electoral process around the world through electoral assistance to election-related activities (James et al., 2019; Reilly, 2003; Tollenaere, 2006). The term "electoral assistance" applied to this research is adapted from Kumar (1998). It thus refers to the range of economic, technical, and political programmes funded and often implemented by the international community for government institutions, political parties, CSOs, and other organisations involved in election-related activities. Support for post-conflict elections has been provided by the international community in a variety of ways. This includes providing technical assistance for legal and constitutional reforms; advising on electoral systems, parliamentary frameworks, and other political structures; assisting in the setting up and operating of EMBs; supporting voter enrolment and educational efforts; providing sound financial, technical, and strategic advice to political parties; supporting civil society groups; and providing international monitoring groups and observers (Reilly, 2003, p. 13).

The role of international actors in Mozambique was crucial both in the war to peace transition and in the transition from a single party to a multi-party political system. Like in many states emerging from long-standing conflicts, the transition to a multiparty system in Mozambique, through democratic elections has been implemented with the support, supervision and backing of the international community (Kumar, 1998; Manning, 2002; Manning & Malbrough, 2009; Reilly, 2003). Mozambique's brief democratic history has been characterised by long-standing relationships with international actors. This included organisations such as the United Nations Operations in Mozambique, a peacekeeping mission and other international organisations that have supported the establishment of core democratic institutions and processes in Mozambique, soon after the end of the armed conflict and the signing of the peace agreement (Manning & Malbrough, 2009).

According to Manning and Malbrough (2009, p. 158), during the transition of Mozambique to peace, there was an intricate connection between external assistance to the peace process and patterns of aid conditionality that emphasised a stable and successful transition to multi-party democracy. Tollenaere (2006, p. 8) refers to several forms of electoral assistance from the international community in Mozambique since December 1992. Such assistance consisted of providing financial, technical, and in some cases, human resources to support electoral processes. Given Mozambique's lack of experience in managing electoral processes, the support mainly included funding for *ad hoc* electoral staff (i.e., registration teams and polling staff), equipment, transportation, capacity building, civic education, and technical assistance. In addition to core funding for electoral authorities to carry out activities, funding was available for the training of monitors representing the parties. Separate funds were also allocated for international observers. Tollenaere (2006) underlines the fact that at the time, support provided to emerging local organisations concerned with civic education and electoral monitoring initiatives was at relatively low levels.

According to Manning and Malbrough (2012, p. 3), Mozambique's first multiparty elections were to be the cornerstone of a successful peace process. The widely acknowledged success of those elections was mainly the result of the external electoral assistance provided. Such assistance was essentially coordinated by the Democracy Assistance Group, comprising a group of major bilateral and multilateral donors, the leading group to coordinate and monitor the first democratic multiparty elections in Mozambique (Manning & Malbrough, 2012; Turner, 1995). Examining the elections held between 1994 and 2004, Tollenaere (2006) pointed out that the cost of an election in Mozambique was estimated to be US$20 million. During that period, the country benefited from an investment of about $150 million to support the first five multiparty elections. Mozambican electoral processes have been increasingly costly, implying massive financial investment by the government, the international community, and civil society to improve the quality of elections (CIP, 2019b; Pitcher, 2020; Tollenaere, 2006). The most recent election of 2019 costed around $196 million (EU EOM, 2019).

Mozambique's electoral assistance after the introduction of a formal multi-party democracy has been shaped by a number of dynamics, both in terms of volume and type of assistance. Indeed, throughout the country's democratic trajectory, the

patterns of donor assistance to support democracy and governance, including electoral assistance, have gradually changed (Manning & Malbrough, 2012).

Initially donors have mainly supported democracy and governance at the central level through direct support to state actors. Over the years following Mozambique's transition to peace, the focus of donor assistance shifted substantially from government to civil society organisations, in particular to capacity development and service delivery as a way of supporting decentralised democracy, and ultimately good governance (Manning & Malbrough, 2012). Through different forms and mechanisms, international actors provided significant funding, capacity building and technical support for electoral processes, as well as comprehensive training for parliamentarians, engaged in civil society and political party strengthening activities, granted resources and training for the independent media, and assured technical support and funding to several political reforms. Manning and Malbrough (2012) point out that recurrent problems around elections have caused donors to start prioritising transparency and accountability as a transversal concern (Kumar, 1998; Manning & Malbrough, 2012).

Consequently, a growing role of CSOs in involving and assisting electoral processes through technical assistance, mainly through voter education and electoral observation, was notable. For example, organisations such as Christian Council *(Conselho Cristão)*, Center for Democracy and Development Studies (*Centro de Estudos de Democracia e Desenvolvimento*) and Electoral Observatory *(Observatório Eleitoral)* become active in election-related activities. Over the years, other CSOs joined the movement through individual initiatives and collaborative platforms for civic education and election observation. The number of international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and cooperation agencies with representation in Mozambique that implement and have supported projects related to improving electoral processes has also increased. These include the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the EU, USAID, EISA, Department for International Development (DFID), and Institute for Multiparty Democracy that have designed and implemented projects supporting electoral processes in Mozambique. Underlying these changing trends in the way international assistance was provided is the greater emphasis on institutional support and strengthening the capacities of Mozambican entities and organisations (Manning & Malbrough, 2012). There has also been a growing interest from the international community and

national actors to participate in Mozambique's elections, as evidenced by the increasing number of international and domestic missions deployed (Louw-Vaudran, 2019; Pitcher, 2020; Tollenaere, 2006).

Overall, there is broad recognition of the crucial role of international electoral assistance in supporting elections in emerging democracies, like Mozambique. As pointed out by Kumar (1998, p. 229), without international assistance, many post-conflict elections would simply not have materialised and those that did would lack credibility. However, the effectiveness of such assistance is questioned by some scholars, including Reilly (2003). They argue that, although fundamental, electoral assistance in emerging democracies did not achieve long-term results, as much as the democratisation process. Electoral assistance thus has its value by providing immediate gains – the holding of elections – without, however, a perspective of sustainability and an effective contribution to the maturation of democratisation processes. Moreover, in emerging developing societies, even with massive electoral assistance, elections are bound to be disastrous and have in successive cases failed to attain global standards of electoral quality (Kühne, 2010). For instance, in Mozambique, elections have often been discredited despite significant development aid investment in programmes aimed at strengthening electoral processes (Pitcher, 2020; Tollenaere, 2006).

Notwithstanding evidence of consecutive failures, few studies have focused on the root causes of poor electoral performance or the impact of massive financial support to elections in sub-Saharan Africa, especially in emerging democracies. The literature pertaining to electoral assistance in emerging democracies such as Mozambique flags several critical elements to be aware of that may impact on the achievements and sustainability of electoral assistance (Pitcher, 2020; Hanlon, 2020; James et al., 2019; Kühne, 2010; Kumar, 1998; Manning & Malbrough, 2012; Reilly, 2003). These elements include, but are not limited to, the tendency of the international community to apply pressure on countries to hold elections soon after signing peace agreements, making the timing often ill-fated. This has often been highly counterproductive and imbued with a blatant lack of state preparedness. Beyond the timing aspect, other critical elements undermining the impact and sustainability of international support include the choices and arrangements of constitutional and electoral systems by emerging democracies, which often lack appropriateness in a given political context with a long-term impact on the country’s

democratisation process. The literature also identifies some neglect of international assistance in building broad-based programmatic support for political parties in post-conflict contexts. This is fundamentally important for democratic consolidation as it avoids narrow, personalised, and sectarian party systems that often have been responsible for the eruption of new conflicts (Pitcher, 2020; Hanlon, 2020; James et al., 2019; Kühne, 2010; Kumar, 1998; Manning & Malbrough, 2012; Reilly, 2003). Mozambique's trajectory towards multiparty democracy somehow falls within the outlined features. The country held its first elections shortly after the end of an armed conflict and a peace negotiation process whose breaches continue to be reflected in its current political dynamics.

Issues related to the impact of electoral assistance were also raised by Ottaway (1998, as cited in Kelley, 2012a, p. 205) when studying Angola's flawed 1992 elections. Ottaway argued that even when fairly competently conducted, "electoral technical assistance may prove to be politically dangerous" as it may allow an electoral process for which the country is not prepared. It is of utmost importance that electoral assistance reflects the contextual situation of the recipient country.

One could argue that electoral assistance to emerging democracies like Mozambique could not be otherwise, since it was necessary to start from somewhere. However, close attention should be paid to the ultimate goal of the elections namely choosing legitimate representatives.

2.3. Theoretical Literature

The present research adopts a political economy of developing countries' transition to democracy through elections, based on insight into electoral dynamics and how these countries conduct electoral processes, including existing institutional incentives and arrangements, the main actors, electoral management practices, and adopted policies to achieve electoral integrity. This section aims to provide a review of the critical elements surrounding elections in the context of emerging democracies. It does so by dissecting the impact of the third wave of democratisation in emerging democracies, to further explore the role, place, and significance of elections in such societies. It analyses the context and conditions under which elections are held and discusses the causal link between elections and democratisation in the light of contemporary debates. Furthermore, it seeks to

discuss the major influential elements of electoral integrity in the context of emerging democracies.

2.3.1. The Third Wave of Democratisation in Emerging Democracies

The theory of democratisation, in particular the explanation of the "wave of democratisation" that swept the world, was widely discussed by Huntington (1991). He refers to "wave of democratisation" as a bunch of transitions from non-democratic to democratic regimes that occur within a specific time period and outnumber transitions in the opposite direction during that time period (Huntington, 1991, p. 15). Overall, the body of literature on democracy and elections refers to three waves of democratisation.

According to Huntington (1991), the "first wave" was from 1828 to 1926 and the "second wave" from 1943 to 1964. The "third wave" is specifically mentioned in the context of the new democracies that arose in the mid-1970s in Southern Europe, expanded to South America in the late 1970s and early 1980s. This "wave" reached Asia in the late 1980s and spread to Africa in the 1990s. A range of factors driving the democratisation process have been hinted at by a plethora of academic and political thinkers. For example, Barro (1999, as cited in Teshome, 2008) observed that income and education are critical factors in a democracy. Glaeser et al. (2004) and Lipset (1959, as cited in Teshome, 2008) underline the importance of education. In turn, Schumpeter (1947) and Lipset (1959, as cited in Teshome, 2008), refer to a flourishing independent civil society as necessary for a robust democracy. Whereas Przeworski, Alvarez, Cheibub and Limongi (1996, pp. 40–41) assert that democratic institutions will not sustain in the absence of favourable socioeconomic conditions.

The preceding discussion clearly highlights the important contribution of a wide variety of factors to the deepening of democracy. In an attempt to harmonise such factors, Linz and Stepan (1996) point out that democratisation is the corollary of a complex interplay of factors, all of which have a direct and indirect impact on the course of the transition and consolidation processes. This mix of factors, they argue, also considers structural, agency and international factors as a set of intertwined factors that condition the consolidation process. By consolidated democracy, they essentially mean a political regime wherein democracy as a complex set of institutions, rules and standardised incentives and disincentives has

emerged as the sole option (p. 15). This reflection is especially important in the context of the so-called emerging democracies, and where an effective democratic consolidation is still underway (Rosário et al., 2020; Sitoe, 2011).

In emerging democracies like that of Mozambique, beyond promoting democracy, contested elections have emerged as one of the most widely used means of trying to consolidate a fragile peace (Kumar, 1998; Mazula,1995; Reilly, 2003). In such contexts, elections have evolved into a critical political mechanism for choosing governments and thus a vital element of the democratisation process (Reilly, 2003, p. 9).

Notwithstanding, the relentless race to hold elections, many contests fail to be proven free and fair, as many pitfalls are experienced during the electoral cycle. These have been described as "rigged contests", "electoral malpractices", or more simply as cases of "electoral fraud" or as "undemocratic contests". A growing body of literature has attempted to understand these issues in a more systematic way using the concept of 'electoral integrity' (Norris, 2019, p. 11).

2.3.2. Elections in Emerging Democracies

Elections are amongst the most meaningful ways in which individuals can take part in the decisions affecting their own lives and hold their elected officials responsible for results (Lindberg, 2006). Worldwide the number of elections held has risen dramatically, with more than 2,600 national contests held over the period 1945 to 2006 (Hyde & Marinov, 2012). Elections can be an essential element and a traditional mechanism for citizens' participation in their country's political life through voting (Mapulango, 2009). It is also a practical way to facilitate transition and change of leadership, thus ensuring political authority and power legitimacy (Adejumobi, 2000; Collier & Vicente, 2012).

With the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, a wave of democratisation through the realisation of elections hit the world, targeting particularly countries emerging from conflicts and struggles of independence (van Ham, 2012). At that time, the impetus for democratisation was fuelled by an enthusiastic expectation that the transition to democratic rule would be rapid and smooth (Kühne, 2010). The expectation for rapid progress was associated with the claim that the established democracies would provide the necessary technical and financial assistance to the emerging ones (Kühne, 2010). Significant resources to improve electoral

management were invested by international organisations. For example, the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights spent approximately EUR 1,333M on projects related to development and consolidation of democracy between 2014 and 2020 (European Commission, 2017, p. 12), most of which spent in support of elections (James et al., 2019).

Democracy building processes through elections became a major issue in development aid and academic writing (James et al., 2019). A body of research literature linking the democratisation process to the spread of multiparty elections has emerged (Elklit & Reynolds, 2005; Kühne, 2010), and democratisation has inevitably become associated with holding elections. However, while some political scientists argue that elections can function as a democratising mechanism, others are sceptical of the role of elections, particularly in the context of emerging democracies. The latter have radically re-examined the traditional role that elections play, arguing that elections are consonant with authoritarianism and play a role in stabilising non-democratic forms of government (Kaya & Bernhard, 2013).

Dissecting the conventional theoretical correlation between elections and democratisation, scholars such as Kumar (1998), Elklit and Reynolds (2005), and Kühne (2010) suggest that it is not clear cut that the holding of elections contribute to the democratic legitimacy of competitive elections. Indeed, Kumar and Kühne pose that, elections represent an essential step towards democratisation, but are an insufficient condition in themselves. In fact, many emerging democracies are essentially electoralist, as they consist of a commitment to embark on multiparty systems through the realisation of regular elections (Manning, 2008, Rosário, 2020). The analysis of emerging democracies draws attention to the need to establish a clear distinction between a small number of countries that are progressively developing liberal democratic practices and a large majority that are not moving in that direction. Furthermore, it is also necessary to differentiate between countries where democratic forms are only serving to cover up unchanged authoritarian practices – i.e., pseudo-democracies – and electoral democracies that regardless of their fundamentally regular and competitive elections and the partial constitutionalising of politics, still fall far short of thoroughly liberal democratic practices (Teshome, 2008; Brito, 1993).

While acknowledging the role of the wave of democratic impetus to achieve a competitive and multiparty electoral process, Adejumobi (2000) argues that in

many developing countries, the structure and electoral process for managing elections and the precepts and procedures of elections remain mostly perverted. In turn, Kühne (2010, p. 2) refers to challenging elections in countries emerging from conflict in recent decades, including Ghana, Sudan, Zimbabwe, and Nigeria. However, he points out that there have been some successful post-conflict elections in countries such as Namibia, South Africa, Cambodia, and Mozambique. Teshome (2008) points out that most elections in the African region have not met internationally acknowledged standards for free and fair elections. Whilst Africa's track record on free and fair elections is mixed, most African countries have largely accepted elections as a necessary mechanism to determine their path to democracy.

As observed by James et al. (2019) and Kühne (2010), elections can significantly impact on a country's stabilisation and democratisation if well-administered. Generally, the conduct of elections is administered by EMBs, the individual or group of organisations or bodies charged with managing all or some of the necessary aspects for the conduct of elections throughout the whole cycle (Catt et al., 2014; Elklit & Reynolds, 2005). Among the most important tasks of the EMBs are determining voter and candidate eligibility, conducting polls, and counting and validating votes (Catt et al., 2014, p. 5). James et al. (2019, p. 299) refers to three main sets of activities associated with election management, namely, organisation, monitoring and certification of elections, as follows:

- Organise the actual election process, from the period before election, campaign, voters' registration, party and candidate registration, to actual voting on election day, to post-election vote count (Birch, 2011; Elklit & Reynolds, 2002).

- Monitor electoral behaviour during the entire electoral process (e.g., monitoring of campaigns of political parties/candidates and media in the run-up to elections, enforcement of voter and party eligibility regulations, campaign financing, campaign and media conduct, vote counting and counting procedures, among others).

- Certify the outcomes of election through the declaration of election results.

In an increasing number of countries, EMBs have been propounded as a vital institutional reform measure to enhance electoral integrity effectively and

successfully (Catt et al., 2014; Lopez-Pinter, 2000). However, the structure and organisation of these bodies are designed and implemented differently across the world (James et al., 2019).

Running an election involves a massive logistical structure that includes complex resource management (i.e., human and technological resources) (James et al., 2019). While on the one hand, many well-managed elections often use technology, resources, and personnel in innovative and efficient ways; on the other hand, there are still many concerns related to administrative problems, technological failures, incomplete voter registration and opportunities for fraud (Elklit & Reynolds, 2005; James et al., 2019; Norris, 2015). This variation in election quality is a feature of both emerging and established democracies (Birch, 2016; James et al., 2019; Norris et al., 2014 Norris, 2015;).

The vast literature on elections highlights a widespread concern about electoral flaws like low or decreasing voter turnout, public disaffection, party polarisation, and the failure of elections to ensure legitimate results in many countries (Adejumobi, 2000; Kühne, 2010; Norris, 2019; Norris et al., 2014; van Ham, 2014). Reflecting on the quality of elections, Norris (2015) claims that the very core concepts of "failed", or "unsuccessful" elections calls for a series of clear standards and consistent benchmarks to assess the quality of any contest. Moreover, in the context of emerging democracies, studies focusing on the search for the causes of poor electoral performance, including the impact of structural conditions, institutional choices, and international assistance in strengthening electoral processes towards electoral integrity, are scarce. Questions surrounding election quality remain unexplored. These questions include: when is an election considered successful or flawed, and more importantly, what factors determine its success or failure?

2.3.3. Electoral Integrity as a Measure of Democratic Elections

Issues of electoral integrity have prevailed in both transitional and well-established democracies. This has led to the expansion of research literature attempting to conceptualise and explain the sustaining factors of electoral integrity around the world (James et al., 2019). The significance of electoral integrity in democratic electoral management is highlighted by scholars such as Norris (2019), van Ham (2014) and Fortin-Rittberger et al. (2017). Overall, the notion refers to the extent to which contests comply with the global principles and standards established

since the mid-twentieth century through the endorsement of the world's governments in a set of written treaties, protocols, conventions, and guidelines (Carter Center, 2014; Norris, 2019; Tuccinardi, 2014).

Electoral integrity, as a conceptual framework, has been debated in the vast literature on elections and democracy (Fortin-Rittberger et al., 2017; Norris, 2012; Norris, 2015; van Ham, 2014). For example, Norris (2012) and van Ham (2014) suggest that, by definition, the concept of electoral integrity can be viewed positively or negatively. When positive, the concept refers to the presence of criteria that ensure democratic elections; when negative, it refers to the absence of those criteria or its violations, thus making elections less democratic or clearly undemocratic. Both positive and negative concepts identify norms that ought to be fulfilled for elections to have a high integrity, or inversely, norms that ought to be infringed upon for elections to have a low integrity (van Ham, 2014). In the framing of the Electoral Integrity Project, the trustworthiness of elections is measured against 11 key criteria: electoral laws; electoral procedures; boundaries; voter registration; party registration; campaign media; campaign finance; the polling process; vote counting; post-election issues; and electoral administration (Norris & Grömping, 2019).

Birch (2016) contributed to the debate by addressing the dichotomy of electoral integrity and electoral malpractice, stating that these two concepts are closely interrelated. The former refers to compliance with democratic norms of electoral conduct such as inclusivity, transparency, and impartiality while the latter refers to any meaningful deviation from these norms. Electoral integrity has been extensively discussed by Fortin-Rittberger et al. (2017), Norris (2015) and van Ham (2014) and as the opposite of electoral malpractice. Therefore, it is seen as a critical feature of successful elections. According to these scholars, electoral integrity is a critical pillar of democracy's quality. From this perspective, the conventional connection between elections and democratisation processes is emphasised.

In contrast, scholars such as Elklit and Reynolds (2005) and Kühne (2010) suggest that it is unclear that holding elections contributes to the democratic legitimacy of competitive elections. Indeed, as pointed out by Teshome (2008), holding elections is an important landmark, but not the key to democratic legitimacy. Many elections, especially in the African context of emerging democracies, have been unable to comply with internationally recognised norms for free and fair elections. According to Elklit and Reynolds (2005) and James et al. (2019), the

quality of elections has to do with the sense of confidence of political actors in the whole electoral process and their perception of its legitimacy.

Driven by the assumption that the quality of elections affects trust in the electoral process and democratic consolidation, the international community has invested heavily in improving elections worldwide (James et al., 2019; Tollenaere, 2006). Emerging democracies regularly receive international technical assistance to support programmes on elections (including EMBs and processes, election observation, and voter education) and, more broadly, democratic and civil society participation. However, the claim is disputed as there is no supporting evidence that the greater the investment for aid and technical assistance in a country, the better the quality of elections, (Norris, 2015, p. 4). While recognising the role of elections as the primary constitutional mechanism for obtaining legislative and executive positions, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance [International IDEA] (2006) argues that elections should be based on the democratic principles of universal suffrage and political equality, as reflected in international standards and agreements, in order to perform well and meet electoral integrity standards. Moreover, they have to be impartial, professional, and transparent in their preparation and administration throughout the electoral cycle namely the pre-electoral period, the campaign, on polling day and its aftermath.

Linz and Stepan (1996) posit that a thorough understanding of factors that determine electoral performance requires an equal understanding of the complex mix of factors that lead to a compelling and legitimate democracy; a cocktail that emphasises structural, agency and international factors and an interconnected set of factors that condition the consolidation process (e.g., civil society, political society, the rule of law, a functioning state bureaucracy and economic society). Reilly (2003) and Kühne (2010) suggest that several other electoral experts would agree that elections in emerging democracies and post-conflict countries are better conducted later rather than earlier to ensure that the conditions outlined by Linz and Stepan (1996) have been met. The arguments that support holding elections later rather than earlier are related to the need to create minimal conditions to ensure a sound electoral process. Kühne (2010) supports this view by arguing that it takes time for transitional democracies to build their institutions and capacities to organise democratic and legitimate elections. According to Garber and Kumar (1998, p. 41), tight timelines often impact negatively on the implementation of an effective civic

and voter education programme, limiting the potential democratising impact of elections. For example, intermediary organisations that sought to put in place voter education programmes in Angola, Ethiopia and Mozambique experienced extreme difficulty in printing literature, training trainers and reaching remote areas within the prescribed timeframe. Apart from the tricky timing issues and the appropriate choice of an electoral system that suits local characteristics, establishing an independent system and a functional Electoral Commission and Electoral Complaints System are critical factors for a successful election outcome (Kühne, 2010).

Addressing elections in Africa's emerging democracies, Adejumobi (2000) has resorted to the term "election ecology" to designate the underlying criteria that bring about meaningful elections. These are the existing constitutive and regulatory mechanisms and precepts necessary to promote a fair and free electoral contest, and ultimately, the socio-economic and political environment under which elections occur. By constitutive, regulatory mechanisms and electoral precepts, Jinadu (1995) as cited in Adejumobi, 2000, p. 62) refer to electoral structures and processes. Electoral structures include the establishment of a competent, relatively independent and non-partisan electoral organ to manage elections, the presence of an unbiased judiciary to interpreting electoral laws and ruling on electoral issues, a reliable media, and a non-partisan police force. In turn, electoral processes involve the body of rules, procedures and activities regarding the holding of elections, such as electoral laws, the organisation of political parties, the voter registration, the candidate nomination for elective public office, the voting, the counting of votes and the announcement of election results. In other words, the establishment of the rules of the game (Mackenzie, 1958, as cited in Adejumobi 2000, p. 62). The enabling and conducive environment for meaningful elections, are what could be referred to as pre-electoral factors, encompassing issues of socio-economic and political nature. These entail, among others, the provision of relative economic well-being and social welfare for the population.

From the preceding considerations, it is clear that the need for a set of preconditions or minimum conditions to ensure meaningful electoral performance is widely recognised (Adejumobi, 2000; James et al., 2019; International IDEA, 2000; Kühne, 2010). At the same time, these and other scholars refer to contextual factors that also influence the quality of electoral processes (Linz & Stepan, 1996; Norris, 2015). Thus, it can be inferred that there is no single formula that determines the

quality of elections in a given country, particularly in the context of emerging democracies that have their own characteristics and specificities.

2.4. Theoretical Framework

After examining the contextual literature of Mozambique's trajectory to multiparty politics from a historical perspective, this section outlines the relevant theoretical framework appropriate to the study, such as the concept of electoral integrity. It explores the existing theoretical frameworks that explain why elections fail to meet the standards of electoral integrity as presented and discussed in the vast literature on democratisation and electoral integrity (James et al., 2019; Norris, 2015; van Ham, 2014). The study draws specifically on the theoretical framework of Norris (2015) that provides explanations for general democratisation processes and adapts them to understand why elections may fail to meet integrity standards. Three different perspectives on electoral flaws are discussed: the structural perspective, the international perspective, and the institutional perspective.

2.4.1. The Structural Perspective

The structural perspective suggests that some problems affecting elections can be explained by the harsh socio-economic conditions and constraints under which they occur. These include poverty, inequality, and corruption; poor and illiterate societies with dispersed rural populations; and a lack of access to modern communications (Birch, 2016; Norris, 2015). In addition, it refers to the legacy of violence and instability in states emerging from conflicts with a heritage of authoritarian rule and little or no experience with democratic practices. Another structural factor influencing the conduct of elections is the so-called "natural resource curse" that can increase the risks of electoral malpractice, as ruling elites in these rentier states control assets that can be used to garner support and maintain their grip on power, mainly through patronage, clientelism, and corruption (Norris, 2015). Less frequently, colonial legacies are referred to as a cause of electoral failure because states may have inherited anti-democratic practices from former powers. Essentially, the structural perspective looks at how much the election's performance is informed by existing socio-political conditions and stock of democracy in each country (Birch, 2016; Norris, 2015).

2.4.2. The International Perspective

The international perspective refers to the international community's efforts to uphold global norms via election monitoring, diplomatic pressure, technical assistance and development aid, and the role of external multilateral organisations and donor agencies in shaping electoral integrity patterns worldwide. This perspective problematises whether international aid creates conditions that restrict or offer opportunities to strengthen electoral institutions (Norris, 2015). It considers the global geopolitics and foreign actors' policy in advancing their interests through resource provision, knowledge transfer, building technical capacity among electoral bodies, and the deployment of observation missions. Much less is known about the impact of technical assistance and international aid allocated to programmes designed to enhance electoral processes. It is suggested that foreign policy interests often override more assertive pressure on governments to adopt democratic reforms and strengthen electoral integrity (Fisher, 2013, as cited in Norris, 2015).

Overall, in most post-conflict elections, external actors have committed themselves to play an essential role in the administration, supervision, observation, funding, and support of elections (Kumar, 1998, p. 5). Mozambique was no exception to this trend. In the post-conflict period, during, and after the peace agreement signing between the opposing forces, the country has benefited from massive investment by international actors aimed at supporting electoral processes. As noted by Kumar (1998), the international community provided a wide range of services in support of post-conflict elections, its efficient transformation, communication, and other essential logistical facilities. In addition to purely logistical support, Kumar (1998, p. 9) observes that supporting the country to develop a legal and institutional electoral infrastructure is arguably the most critical role that the international community plays in post-conflict elections.

2.4.3. The Institutional Perspective

This perspective explores the proposition that the most effective interventions in strengthening competitions are in the form of existing domestic constitutional, legal, and regulatory precepts (Norris, 2015). Here, the emphasis is placed on the institutional arrangements and to what extent they constrain the electoral processes to conform with set standards and norms; that is, electoral governance institutions, including the overarching constitutional framework in any

regime and the more specific regulatory agencies that establish electoral governance in each state. The institutional perspective looks at political interference and manipulation in the electoral administration, prevailing electoral and party systems, and lack of trust between political parties (van Ham, 2014). Essentially, it focuses on how elections are shaped by the administrative agencies responsible for implementing electoral laws and procedures. This perspective attempts to understand electoral governance institutions' role and constitutional checks and balances to curb power abuse and manipulation of the electoral rules and processes by any single actor, especially the ruling party (Norris, 2015, p. 4).

The key assumptions of the institutional perspective are also discussed by Elklit and Reynolds (2005). They observed that the implementation of institutional choices was directly related to the management and administration of elections, including the legal framework. It could contribute substantially to understanding electoral management's impact on the quality and legitimacy of electoral processes, and subsequently on the democratic consolidation in new and emerging democracies such as Mozambique. Table 2 summarises the theoretical perspectives into specific factors explaining election flaws.

Table 2. ***Theoretical Explanation for Elections Flaws***

Theoretical explanation	**Determinant factors**
Structural perspective	- Deep-rooted poverty, inequality, and corruption. - Heritage of violence and instability. - Divided societies with deep ethnic fractionalisation. - The natural resources curse heightens the risks of electoral malpractice. - Colonial authoritarian legacies.
International perspective	- The international political economy of elections. - Foreign policy interests. - Global geopolitics and actors' particular interests. - Multilateral organisations and donor community observer activities and technical assistance.

Institutional perspective	- Political interference and manipulation in the electoral administration. - Prevailing electoral and party system and distrust between political parties. - The electoral governance and the role of electoral administrative agencies. - The absence of robust, impartial, and effective oversight agencies.

Source: Adapted from Norris (2015)

In the case of an emerging democracy like Mozambique, despite increased electoral assistance to improve elections, the key factors contributing to recurrent electoral shortcomings are yet to be critically investigated. Thus, the theoretical perspectives presented in the vast literature studying democratisation and elections provide a set of plausible propositions that have been empirically analysed to determine the factors' influence on the quality of Mozambican elections. The study also analysed historical and cultural aspects that have informed the electoral system of the country.

This chapter sought to provide insight into the political and electoral dynamics of Mozambique from the liberalisation movement that led the country to independence from colonial rule in 1975, the violent sixteen-year armed conflict that ravaged the country, to the first electoral experience in 1994. Contextual and theoretical aspects surrounding elections and electoral integrity in Mozambique were thoroughly analysed to inform Mozambique's trajectory. Specifically, how contextual elements such as post-independence politics, socioeconomic and ideological factors, and the armed conflict have shaped the country's electoral architecture and behaviour since the inauguration of multiparty politics. At the theoretical level, relevant literature on democratisation and elections in emerging democracies, including the meaning of electoral integrity in such contexts, was explored in line with the theoretical framework that drives this research and is subsequently empirically tested.

3. Methodology

Within the complexity of the concept of electoral integrity, this research analysed the 2019 Mozambican elections by identifying the key elements influencing its quality. The research was largely qualitative to provide more detailed information about why the 2019 elections in Mozambique were compromised and to uncover the main causes. Qualitative research is concerned with understanding the social, cultural, institutional, and political processes and contexts that shape behaviour patterns (Wagner et al., 2012). It attempts to contextualise the meaning of behaviours and ways of doing things in specific settings (Kielmann et al., 2011). A post-positivist approach that focused on structural, international, and institutional factors was applied to reveal critical aspects of the 2019 Mozambique elections. The post-positivist stance knowledge is understood as conjectural, and can only be known probabilistically and in an incomplete way (Wagner et al., 2012). Post-positivists believe that there are laws and theories that govern the world and they can be identified and tested using scientific methods. Post-positivist approach to qualitative research allows researchers to predict results, test a theory or find a strength of relationships between variables or a cause-effect relationship. In the present research, the approach has been applied to reveal key aspects of the 2019 Mozambique elections by asking people with in-depth knowledge while testing the theoretical framework about why the elections were compromised. The research sought to gather evidence to support or reject the applied theoretical framework through a deductive reasoning. The research design was informed by a case study approach to qualitative research to test Norris's framework on the reasons why elections are flawed.

The case study approach was applied to address the research objectives and questions bringing an overview of the 2019 electoral process to answer the "how" such process occurred and the "why" the elections failed, uncovering the leading causes behind this. The primary sources of data collection for the study were interviews, which enabled the gathering of contextual information related to the elements associated with the theory under study. Semi-structured interviews were administered to key participants allowing them to probe, further explore and corroborate data that emerged from other data sources gathered through secondary sources. Secondary sources included the bulk of the literature on elections and electoral integrity i.e., books, academic articles, desk review of memos, election

observation reports, EMB reports, financial statements, media articles and websites unveiling shared or private knowledge about elections.

In summary, semi-structured interviews served to capture participants' perceptions and opinions about electoral processes and obtain background information and institutional perspectives. Interviews were designed to be open-ended and flexibly structured to allow respondents to discuss their views on the elections using their language. For this purpose, an interview guide consisting of issues and questions that were designed in accordance with the theoretical and conceptual perspective and the objectives of this study was developed and applied. Semi-structured interviews were proven to be an ideal method of data collection for sensitive topics such as this one. All interviews were given by consent, however, only some were electronically recorded with the permission of the respondents.

3.1. Sampling

The research applied purposive sampling to target knowledgeable people with experience on the topic under study Applied research to purposive sampling (Kielmann, Cataldo & Seeley, 2011). Participants' selection for this research was determined by their position, role, and involvement in the Mozambique electoral process, and their accessibility. The research sample consisted of 16 people, sampled purposively to represent key actors with expert knowledge of central themes related to the research. These included representatives from CSOs and NGOs who had been actively involved in election observation and civic education in 2019. These were representatives from CIP, Peace Room (*Sala da Paz*), Centre for Capacity and Learning of Civil Society, the Institute for Multiparty Democracy, and EISA, along with senior officials from embassies and cooperation agencies that support election-related activities. Renowned election experts also shared their opinions and perceptions regarding the integrity of Mozambique's elections. Senior officials from CNE and STAE were interviewed, and relevant documents from these bodies were analysed. Partisan affiliation has also been considered, and the political parties sitting in parliament, namely FRELIMO, RENAMO, and MDM, were represented in the sample. A breakdown of the interviews is provided below in Table 3.

Table 3. ***List of sampled interviewees by sampled group***

Interview group	*Number of Interviewees*	*Observations*
Political Parties	3	One for each political party represented in the parliament
Elections Management Bodies	2	
CSOs/NGOs	5	
Embassies and Cooperation agencies	2	
Experts in elections	4	

3.2. Data Analysis Process

The application of qualitative research entails the systematic collection, organising, describing, and interpreting of textual, verbal, or visual data (Hammarberg, Kirkman, & de Lacey, 2016). Primary and secondary collected data were analysed using analytical and deductive reasoning to determine patterns, relationships, or trends. Interview data were transcribed and coded through a systematic coding procedure that used the theoretical framework factors, namely structural, international, and institutional as per the literature review. Each factor was then systematically reviewed to test its explanatory power. To increase confidence in the findings, to the extent possible, the research sought to triangulate information from different sources, corroborating the data from the participant interviews with key documents, including normative documents, pertaining to elections in Mozambique.

Table 3 illustrates how the theoretical framework was converted into actual research questions.

Table 3. ***Theoretical framework translation into research questions***

Theoretical framework	**Research questions**
Structural perspective	▪ Do you consider the socio-economic and political environment influences on the conduct of electoral processes? ▪ Could you please give examples of some of these factors that influenced the 2019 elections? ▪ How do you assess the influence of these factors on the 2019 elections? ▪ Were there any contextual changes that contributed to the success or failure of elections?
International perspective	▪ Who are/were important national and international actors (individuals and organisations/institutions) that advanced the quality of elections in Mozambique? ▪ In your opinion, what was the role of these different actors (i.e., Government, EMBs, CSOs, international community) in ensuring a 2019 smooth electoral process? Are there new stakeholders with particular influence who are interested in this area? ▪ How do you measure the weight these actors have in influencing the electoral processes? ▪ Are the stakeholders who drive change in this area still prioritising it/still able to influence decision-makers/others who need to take action? ▪ In your opinion, what has been the contribution of development aid in the assistance to the electoral processes? ▪ Do you think that international aid offered opportunities to strengthen the 2019 electoral process? Please support your answer. ▪ Were there external global or regional initiatives or situations that enabled progress in election quality? If so, what were they?

Theoretical framework	Research questions
Institutional perspective	▪ What is your opinion about electoral administration in Mozambique? ▪ Could you please refer to the most important successes and/or missed opportunities (if any) of the electoral regulatory and institutional arrangements? ▪ Reflecting over the time, what were the major strategies and events that advanced the quality of elections and helped achieve results concerning democracy? ▪ What is your opinion about the role of the checks and balance mechanisms and oversight bodies in ensuring the quality of elections? ▪ Did this function properly in the 2019 elections? Was there any sort of interference and manipulation in the electoral administration?

Source: Researcher

This research rigorously applied scientific research methods to analyse all data collected. It was supported by the careful selection and use of reliable literature on the topic under study. All data collected was thoroughly coded and analysed to ensure consistency, insight, and usefulness of the research instrument to allow the greatest possible objectivity.

3.2.1. Limitations of the Study

The scope and depth of the research has been somewhat constrained by the availability of key informants for adequate data gathering, given the country's current tense political context characterised by an elevated level of censorship on issues considered sensitive, such as integrity of elections. For the specific case of the 2019 elections, there was more caution from the participants, as these elections have been the subject of much criticism from society. Technological challenges also posed a limitation in interacting more comprehensively with certain respondents, particularly in the context of COVID-19 restrictions in which face-to-face interaction had to be avoided. Given the politically sensitive nature of the study and in conducting the interviews the researcher allowed confidentiality in line with the university's ethical conduct to ensure that respondents could speak openly and

frankly. In addition, words were carefully chosen by framing the questions in a positive or neutral tone. Indirect questioning was also used to mitigate bias, as people are more likely to answer truthfully when the question does not directly apply to them. This was particularly applied in the interviews with representatives from the EMBs and political party members.

3.2.2. Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were ensured throughout the research process. A letter was distributed to the research participants informing them about the study and its objectives, as well as the identity of the researcher and a description of how the data collected from the interviews would be used. Studying electoral integrity in Mozambique may present risks for both the researcher and the respondent since it is a sensitive topic in a volatile context. To protect all parties involved in the research, the following ethical criteria were applied:

- *Informed consent* in which participants were required to give written informed consent. The study's purpose was made clear, including the length of the interview and how the data collected would be stored and used. Respondents' participation was voluntary, and both the respondent and the researcher signed a form as proof of consent. In addition to signing the consent forms, interviewees were asked to give their permission to record the interviews. The forms were distributed by email and many interviewees signed them, although some did not allow the interviews to be recorded.
- *Confidentiality* was applied throughout the data collection. It was up to the researcher to decide what information was pertinent to the research and how it would be presented. In addition, the researcher explained how the data would be used (e.g., quotations from transcripts), and how the identity of the informants would be protected through anonymisation or pseudonymisation techniques, when necessary.
- The *"Do not harm"* approach was employed throughout the data collection process to mitigate the risk of harming respondents. To this end, the researcher sought to be as transparent as possible when sharing information about the research and what it involved, allowing respondents to ask questions. However, it is worth mentioning that this was done in a balanced

way, not giving out information that would compromise the data collection and the research outcomes. Contact details have been shared with respondents to allow for further interaction if needed.

Overall, the interviews were generally conducted in compliance with the ethical procedures that were strictly followed throughout the research to ensure a smooth and purposeful research process.

4. Analysis

In this chapter, Mozambique's 2019 electoral process is empirically analysed to determine which factors have had an influence on the quality of these elections. The discussion and analysis of the results in this chapter are oriented by the operationalisation of the theoretical explanation for election flaws presented in Table 1 of Chapter 2. To this end, Norris' theoretical framework has been re-examined to provide empirical findings that will be presented considering structural, international and institutional factors accounting for electoral outcomes from the perspective of electoral integrity. The study also sought to analyse historical and political aspects that informed the country's prevailing electoral system.

4.1. Structural Factors Influencing Mozambique's 2019 Electoral Integrity

When analysing the elections in Mozambique and its path towards democratic consolidation, one cannot ignore the extent to which structural factors have deeply marked its trajectory. As indicated in this research, the Mozambican state emerged from a longstanding history of armed civil conflict, preceded by a struggle for freedom from the authoritarian Portuguese colonial regime (Darch, 2018). In the post-independence period, Mozambique's socio-economic and political context was severely marked by a devastating sixteen-year armed conflict (1976–1992), leaving behind an unprecedented political and economic crisis that is still deeply rooted. Both conflicts yielded a society that was regionally and ethnically fragmented, with no previous experience of democratic practices. This context speaks to the structural perspective associated with deficiencies and distortions of the economy, political and social structures in the post-conflict period that preceded the inauguration of multiparty elections in Mozambique.

Nevertheless, data collected throughout the research confirmed the enthusiasm around the GPA of 1992 and the subsequent transition to a multiparty system. According to key research informants, these events were and continue to be acclaimed internally and by the international community as a significant step towards the consolidation of democracy in Mozambique. As one of the interviewees mentioned:

> … There was great expectation that with the end of the civil war and with all the huge support that the country received to make the transition operational, the socio-economic, and mainly the political conditions of the country, would improve. (Interview with an Election's expert, personal communication, October 12, 2021.)

However, elections in Mozambique have historically been conducted in harsh structural conditions, rendering decent electoral processes virtually unviable. Ever since the founding elections of the multiparty system that followed the long-lasting civil war, elections in Mozambique have been marred by tough social, political, and economic conditions that have contributed significantly to the overall election outcomes. These included, among others, high rates of poverty, extreme social inequalities, lack of technological infrastructure, voters' illiteracy, and a generalised lack of information.

Information sources interviewed, convey that those contextual factors have greatly impacted on how electoral processes have been conducted, from various perspectives.

When filtered through Norris' (2015) propositions on the structural conditions in Mozambique and their influence on improving electoral integrity, the analysis of the research data, indicates that the following aspects of the context determined the way the electoral process was conducted and its performance affected: political and military crisis, extremist violence, adverse weather conditions, financial scandals and, consequently, the degradation of the country's economic and social base. These critical factors are further developed in the following subsections.

4.1.1. Political Tension between FRELIMO and RENAMO

At the political level, except for the founding elections in 1994, all subsequent elections were marked by an increasing climate of distrust and mutual accusations between the former belligerent parties FRELIMO and RENAMO. Similar to previous elections, in the period leading up to the 2019 elections, the government had been committed to ensuring social coexistence to contain social and political conflicts. These included political negotiations between FRELIMO and RENAMO around the cessation of hostilities and the disarmament of the former RENAMO military that was an area of disagreement between the parties. In this regard, it should be mentioned that, for example, in August 2019, two months before the elections, a new agreement was signed to cease hostilities between government

army and the armed wing of RENAMO. This agreement was the culmination of six years of localised military attacks by RENAMO guerrillas since 2013 when RENAMO unilaterally terminated the GPA. Cases of military attacks against vehicles, buses and trains, and the destruction of state infrastructure were concentrated in the country's central region (Manica and Sofala provinces).

The negotiation involved elites from both parties and was based on the premise that there would be more room for decentralisation, thereby providing an opportunity for RENAMO to win some constituencies in exchange for a disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration process of the RENAMO military. In this regard, a key informant mentioned that:

> ... The elections have always been marked by a climate of uncertainty and threats of a return to war, which makes Mozambican elections not very democratic. Every election eve, we live in a climate of fear of a return to war and this makes the much-acclaimed peace fragile. (Interview with a representative from a CSO, personal communication, October 11, 2021.)

The aforementioned context has been threatening the country's political stability, making its democratic consolidation project politically, socially, and economically unviable. On this, one of the participants pointed out that:

> Every time there are elections in Mozambique, the country goes backwards politically, socially, and economically because of the climate of instability that prevails at election time. (Interview with a representative from a CSO, personal communication, October 11, 2021.)

The perception of the fragility of peace in Mozambique is widespread among the interviewees, except for FRELIMO who claim that peace is undergoing clear consolidation. One of the four electoral experts interviewed went further by stating that:

> … Peace in Mozambique will always be at risk due to poorly resolved issues between FRELIMO and RENAMO during the GPA negotiations. In fact, this process suffered a lot of external interference and pressure, making it impossible for the parties to go deeper into their negotiating points. (Interview with an election's expert, personal communication, October 12, 2021.)

The right to assemble guaranteed by the Constitution, which is also in line with international commitments, was repeatedly violated with campaign activities by

opposition political parties being restricted in many ways. This included blocked road access or occupation by incumbent party supporters of sites previously announced for other parties' activities. RENAMO was particularly affected by these restrictions. Moreover, despite the legal immunity of candidates during the electoral period, according to the opposition parties consulted throughout the research, there were cases of detention of candidates who were later freed in the provinces of Gaza and Inhambane.

> … The 2019 election campaign was extremely violent and marked by unprecedented political intolerance. On several occasions, even with advance information about the places targeted for our campaign, we had to withdraw, cancel or reschedule our activities because FRELIMO occupied our spaces, and the police blocked access roads preventing our caravans from moving forward. (Interview with RENAMO member of Parliament, personal communication, October 25, 2021.)

From an electoral integrity perspective, such a scenario undermines the environment around elections, if we consider, for example, the fact that EMBs are composed of FRELIMO and RENAMO representatives with the task of ensuring democratic elections as per the Law 9/2014. Conversely, discussions and decisions taken in these bodies may result in grievances and violations of the law as repeatedly reported in the media. In addition, the climate of political tension and instability that has commonly characterised the electoral processes in Mozambique has severely limited the freeness and fairness that is expected of these processes from an electoral integrity perspective. Among other aspects, this is because it limits the possibility of citizens to freely participate and express their political choices and hold the key actors accountable in accordance with constitutional precepts.

4.1.2. The Extremist Violence in Cabo Delgado

Since 2017, Mozambique has been in the midst of an outbreak of extremist violence in the northern province of Cabo Delgado. Extremist violence has escalated into insurgency against national and state government offices, the military, and Defence and Security Forces **(***Forças de Defesa e Segurança),* as well as state agents. Insurgents have successfully established bases in parts of Cabo Delgado, gaining control over significant areas of the province, and defying state military forces in the region. The violence and situation of insecurity in the province has

reached such a point that people have fled their homes. It is estimated that more than 3,300 people have been killed and hundreds of thousands driven to resettle in search of safe havens within the province or areas nearby. In 2019, the crisis in Cabo Delgado triggered more than 700,000 displacements (CIP, 2021). Displacements have also occurred in the provinces of Manica and Sofala due to military clashes between RENAMO and FRELIMO forces.

From an electoral perspective, the level of displacement that occurred in 2019 because of cyclones and armed conflicts in the central region, along with extremist violence in Cabo Delgado, significantly impacted on the ability of electoral bodies to perform their role in ensuring that all voters were registered. Ultimately it impacted on the voters' ability to exercise their voting rights. As noted above, many people had to move from their areas and, in the process, lost their possessions, including their proof of identity for registration purposes:

> … Many people lost their documents, and the possibility of being registered was reduced, as it is mandatory by law that they present proof of identification. (Interview with a STAE official, personal communication, October 20, 2021.)

According to EISA (2019) seven polling stations in Cabo Delgado were not open on voting day as a result of escalating extremist violence. Furthermore, in the context of armed conflict, there was a need to support the security forces through a greater concentration of resources to provide war logistics in Cabo Delgado. All of which may have affected the course of the elections, if we consider for example that they were held in a situation of shortage, as indicated elsewhere in this report. This possibility was confirmed by a senior Canadian Embassy officer in the following terms:

> … The situation in Cabo Delgado has taken on alarming proportions and this has meant giving more attention to defending the sovereignty of the state. This certainly implied the allocation of all possible resources to ensure that the situation was brought under control. Clearly, it was challenging for the country at a time when it was holding wider and more costly elections with the newly approved decentralisation package. (Interview with a representative from the Embassy of Canada, personal communication, October 13, 2021.)

4.1.3. The Impact of Cyclones Idai and Kenneth

Another striking critical factor in the 2019 electoral context is that the country was still dealing with the damaging effects of two cyclones that had hit the

country earlier in the year. Cyclones Idai and Kenneth were the most devastating ever in sub-Saharan Africa, having affected over 2.1 million people, businesses, and core infrastructure with damage and losses amounting to $3 billion on local populations (Government of Mozambique, 2019). These cyclones resulted in severe economic and social impacts in six provinces of Mozambique: Sofala, Manica, Zambézia, Tete, Nampula, and Cabo Delgado. Apart from the significant social and economic impact, these events had an impact on the registration process. According to a senior CNE officer, the cyclones also made it difficult for the CNE to conclude the voter registration process. For example:

> … It took some time before registration could begin in the regions affected by Cyclone Idai, and in Cabo Delgado, voter registration was interrupted. Initially, the CNE had targeted to register around 14 million voters, which would mean 3 million more than in the previous national elections, but this was not possible due to the challenging situation. (Interview with CNE officer, personal communication, October 20, 2021.)

4.1.4. The Socio-Economic Downturn

An economic slowdown has affected the country since 2015, when a financial scandal dubbed "hidden debts" of around $2.2 billion was revealed. This is considered the most damning financial and corruption scandal Mozambique has ever experienced and involves the political elite, including a prominent ex-finance minister who was imprisoned in December 2018 in South Africa. As a result, there was an immediate withdrawal of state budget support by the government's programmatic support partners, including the International Monetary Fund, which dramatically affected the national economy. This situation, combined with other critical events that hampered the country (cyclones, armed conflicts), led the country to achieve a fragile growth rate of 2 percent in 2019 (WB, 2019). As a result, between 2016 to 2019, about two million people were driven into absolute poverty due to the economic downturn, as revealed in a study published by the CIP and the Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI) in 2021.

The financial and corruption scandal had a knock-on effect. This included, among other harmful effects, a fiscal crisis that made it impossible for the government to pay its bills; a huge depreciation of the currency; foreign debt became unpayable; a sharp slowdown of the economy; a fall in real GDP per capita; skyrocketing unemployment; rising poverty rates, and the loss of credibility of the

government and its institutions, nationally and internationally. Beyond the social and economic consequences, the CIP and CMI (2021) study also highlights the effect of hidden debts in reducing democratic activity and promoting authoritarianism in Mozambique. Indeed, the data collected in the research confirmed this trend, and as repeatedly highlighted in the research interviews, the brutal murder by members of the national police of a prominent activist and election observer after leading a meeting of the *Sala da Paz* is evidence of this. This finding runs through the answers of both election experts and civil society representatives by the following quotes:

> … These elections had the particularity of taking place at a time when people were outraged by the social and economic condition of the country and in the face of total impunity for those who contracted the hidden debts. So, it was a process marked by the despair and uncertainty of the voting citizens about what to expect in the post-election period, but also of the government of the day that fine-tuned its repressive power to contain, with excessive violence, any attack on its governance. And this resulted in the incidents that marred the process, most notably the murder of a well-known social activist. (Interview with CSO representative, personal communication, October 11, 2021.)

Another interviewed source said:

> … Though it happened in previous elections, this time there was an excessive and explicit use of state assets for electoral purposes by the ruling party, FRELIMO, in a clear demonstration of an authoritarian state. (Interview with an election expert, personal communication, October 12, 2021.)

In terms of electoral integrity, the escalation of hidden debts and corruption scandals and this being actively voiced by CSOs, and opposition political parties resulted in political intolerance and cases of electoral violence that were a blot on the electoral process, particularly in the election campaign period. This also exacerbated mistrust in the capacity of state institutions to manage in the public interest and raised suspicions about the cleanness and accountability of the electoral process.

This was voiced by a research source in the following terms:

> … It is difficult to trust and let public institutions manage elections, in a context in which the state itself was able to covertly contract debts that led the country to the bottom of the pile, and with the suspicion that some of this money was given to the ruling party, FRELIMO, to

> finance its electoral campaign. (Interview with CSO representative, personal communication, October 11, 2021.)

4.1.5. The Presource Curse

Mozambique witnessed the discovery of enormous extractive resources, including gas deposits offshore in the Ruvuma Basin in Cabo Delgado. At the time, there were highly anticipated expectations of the wealth that such resources would generate. As such, the country made itself eligible to be part of the group of countries where such a discovery resulted in the well-known resource curse, i.e. a situation where natural resources, instead of yielding the expected wealth and welfare, lead to economic imbalances and crises, and stimulate corruption, bad governance, autocracy, political instability and military conflicts (Ross, 2015). However, as Mozambique is not yet at the extraction stage, a concept that anticipates such a situation is called a "presource curse". That is, a situation issue related to the resource curse begin to be experienced prior to the beginning of resource extraction. Such problems include institutional leakage, corruption, conflict, dependency on exports, economic inequalities, clientelism (CIP & CMI, 2021).

Frynas and Buur (2020) point out that Mozambique has been experiencing the presource curse from the moment the resources were discovered, resulting from expectations driven by many international and national actors that Mozambique was poised to receive massive revenues from the resources. The country applied the so-called anticipatory economy, one example of this practice being the borrowing that culminated in the hidden debts (CIP & CMI, 2021). Concerning this, an election expert participating in the research pointed out that:

> … With the international race for Mozambique through renowned gas extraction companies, the government was not too concerned with complying with international dictates of good governance and democracy. This was because it believed that with the control of the resources, it became an important player that the international community would not want to neglect (...) and this was reflected in the way the 2019 elections were conducted. With an utter disrespect for the rule of law and democratic principles. (Interview with election expert, personal communication, October 12, 2021.)

Striking structural conditions of the 2019 elections in Mozambique also included technological shortcomings that challenged the electoral process. This was confirmed by a RENAMO representative in the CNE. In fact, the disagreement

between FRELIMO and RENAMO about the voter registration equipment to be purchased was raised by RENAMO members of CNE and STAE through a press conference, contrary to the law that states that members of CNE should not appear in public to take a political stance on the electoral process.

> … The STAE directorate decided unilaterally to buy 3,000 new mobile equipment that were not compatible with the power supply kits, contrary to the recommendation of RENAMO's STAE technicians and CNE members that stated the mobile equipment, and the power supplies should be provided by the same entity to allow for their full functioning. (Interview with RENAMO member in CNE, personal communication, October 20, 2021.)

According to news reports released at the time of the census and confirmed by one of the participants from a CSO.

> … This situation resulted in equipment breakdown associated with power problems which compromised the achievement of the voter registration targets in provinces such as Nampula, Zambezia, and Sofala (Interview with CSO representative, personal communication, October 13, 2021.)

Regarding the 2019 election process, a FRELIMO member party put forward the following views:

> … Structural and even institutional challenges are common in democracies that are under consolidation like Mozambique. The most important thing is to recognise that we learn in every election we organise; we learn from our mistakes so there is an effort to improve in the subsequent ones. The 2019 elections were proof that there is still much to be done and that civil society, political parties and EMBs are relevant actors in achieving the electoral process we are aiming for. (Interview with FRELIMO member, personal communication, November 5, 2021.)

In analysing the structural conditions and other factors like technological challenges, illiteracy, and lack of access that surrounded the 2019 elections, we come to a preliminary conclusion that these factors have compromised the electoral process. It has impacted on the country's path to achieving electoral integrity, and by extension, ensuring democratic processes. It is generally true that these conditions were almost always present in some form during Mozambican elections, and it is inconclusive that these conditions were the most determining of the setbacks in the

2019 elections. It should be highlighted that in this case, the context was slightly different for the following reasons:

(i) These were the first general elections held after discovering hidden debts and its accompanying financial scandal. International support was suspended for the government's programme.

(ii) The country was experiencing a social and economic crisis unprecedented since the inauguration of multiparty democracy, with many indicators pointing to a deterioration of the socio-economic situation.

(iii) The trust and credibility of the government and its institutions were severely shaken, both nationally and internationally.

(iv) These general elections were preceded by legal reforms that entailed a one-off revision of the Constitution to ensure that they could take place; and, for the first time, the EMBs held three elections on the same day, with the direct election of provincial governors as part of the recently approved decentralisation package.

The structural perspective, as argued by Norris (2015), refers to the existence of critical threats in conducting electoral contests that comply with international standards of electoral integrity amidst such challenging conditions as was evidenced in Mozambique. It was seen in the shady politics with endemic corruption and violence, and poorly institutionalised political parties, amongst populations that have experienced violent conflict for decades. In the Mozambican context socio-economic and political conditions have almost always been harsh and not very conducive to democracy.

4.2. The International Determinants of the Integrity of the Mozambique's 2019 Electoral Process

International assistance to general democratisation processes, particularly concerning that of holding elections, has been an essential feature in developing countries. Moreover, as noted earlier in this report, the international community has performed a meaningful role in supporting the shift to multiparty political systems in countries emerging from conflict, including Mozambique. Like in many developing countries in the sub-Saharan Africa, three principal areas in Mozambique were targeted by the international assistance: the setting up of autonomous electoral commissions, the organisation of administrative bodies to address logistical matters;

and the reinforcement CSOs to carry out voter education and election monitoring (Tollenaere, 2006). As a result, international players' assistance to Mozambique is widely recognised and hailed as having been vital for the country to embark on a multiparty democracy. Data collected throughout the research revealed that this support has been primarily material and technical through the development of legal and institutional electoral infrastructure since the founding elections of 1994. Furthermore, the volume of foreign assistance, assuming different formats over time, has increased since then, targeting not only state authorities, but also political parties and local NGOs engaged in election activities.

However, while the country's electoral processes have sought to assume an international dimension to conform to international standards of conducting democratic elections, the country has systematically failed to achieve electoral integrity for several reasons. External pressure to hold elections in a context of unpreparedness and inexperience with democratic practices has been cited as one of those reasons by the research participants, including an electoral expert who explained the matter in the following words:

> … There was a lot of pressure and some haste to move quickly towards multiparty politics. I think there were good intentions, but we must remember that the country had no experience at all. After the colonial experience, which left deep marks in the society, a long and devastating civil war followed, which further divided the Mozambicans and diluted the whole idea of state and nation building (...) and we did not have enough time to learn the basics, the reason why we are still learning till today. (Interview with election expert, personal communication, October 19, 2021.)

In addition, Mozambique embarked on an electoral system for which it did not have sufficiently mature institutions to guarantee its effectiveness, as argued by the vast body of literature on democratisation in sub-Saharan Africa. This perception is shared by both electoral experts and some political parties participating in the research. Incidentally, one research participant used the term "exported democracy" to describe his view on the influence of international actors on elections. According to this source:

> … Mozambique is still not experiencing genuine democracy. What we call democracy is still far from the true meaning of democracy as defined and applied. We have an exported

> democracy, and for that reason, an imperfect one, which needs to be customised to fit into the context. (Interview with election expert, personal communication, October 19, 2021.)

For the 2019 elections, the international community, through its representatives and agencies in the country, provided the traditional electoral assistance to the government of Mozambique to enable the elections to take place. Regarding this, a member of the ruling party interviewed for this research refers to the international assistance in the following terms:

> … International assistance to democratic consolidation has been, and continues to be, relevant to the country. International partners were early partners when we started to take the first steps towards multiparty democracy, and we have learned a lot from them. Today we are more mature, and we continue to count on them, but mostly as assistants in the electoral processes. And, we have good success stories that show how we have evolved since 1994, to where we are today. In 2019, the country has been able to organise and manage three elections and despite some bumps, overall, we did well. (Interview with FRELIMO member, personal communication, November 5, 2021.)

In addition, a large volume of resources from international organisations, including embassies, were directed to civil society groups and organisations that were very active in monitoring the electoral process.

Indeed, the 2019 elections in Mozambique saw a strong CSO movement engaged in numerous ways to assist the electoral process throughout its cycle. Initiatives such as those of CIP, *Votar Moçambique*, *Sala da Paz*, Joint, EISA and many others were noticeable. This was important to advance the integrity of the elections by allowing more people to participate in the elections with access to relevant information on the process. Many of these initiatives attempted, with relative success, to have national coverage through branches at provincial and district level. An organisation receiving funds to operationalise these initiatives said:

> … International support was important in allowing us to organise ourselves in time to participate in the full electoral cycle and support our partners in lower levels, that is municipal, district, and administrative posts. We were ready to monitor and expose electoral malpractices and even propose improvements where necessary. (Interview with Representative from an electoral observation platform, personal communication, October 19, 2021.)

Indeed, there was unusual CSO movement that promoted a range of election-related activities, including civic education, organising debates between political parties, mobilising for voter participation, and training observers. This resulted in a well-organised civil society, although in some cases there were overlapping activities, and even initiatives aimed at the same issues and people. There were thus many resources from international sources funding electoral activities. The evidence, therefore, suggests that despite the active role CSOs played in the 2019 elections, findings and proposals from these groups were hardly accepted by the EMBs. For example, when the voter's registration incident in Gaza was raised, the CIP offered to audit the process, and the CNE rejected the proposal.

The research also showed that there is a certain distrust on the part of public institutions towards CSOs. Behind this mistrust are some pronouncements made by members and sympathisers of the ruling FRELIMO party that some CSOs, especially those most critical of the government, are serving an external agenda, i.e., the agenda of the international actors that finance them. Moreover, the manner in which electoral assistance is currently being conducted has provided greater opportunities for CSOs to access such funds compared to public institutions, EMBs included. In this regard, a CNE source stated:

> … Presently CSOs are better prepared than EMBs and have much more resources than EMBs, but it is important not to confuse things and take roles from each other, because EMBs are the ones legally responsible for managing elections [...] obviously, there is room for collaboration and exchange of experiences, but each should do their own work. (Interview with CNE official, October 20, 2021.)

Nevertheless, from the perspective of the electoral management institutions, international assistance was always valued and necessary to advise the electoral process. As in previous elections, in 2019, STAE counted on the usual technical support from agencies such as the EU and UNDP.

Although an important role is attributed to the interventions of international actors in Mozambique's elections for the 2019 contests, generally it was difficult to empirically demonstrate whether these actors contributed to shaping patterns of electoral integrity in the country. In fact, some have mentioned that the international community has lost the influence it had over the political and electoral processes in

Mozambique since the programmatic support partners froze funding because of the hidden debts, referring to it in the following terms:

> … The relationship with the international community in the 2019 elections was somehow different from previous years. If, on the one hand, the international cooperation partners cut funding from the state budget, there was and continues to be interest from them in the extractive resources that Mozambique holds, which puts them in a position of a certain powerlessness and less and less influence over the political processes. (Interview with election expert, personal communication, October 12, 2021.)

In turn, international intervention on elections is perceived by some key interviewees as being sporadic. As one of the representatives from a political party said:

> … Voting is just a phase within the electoral cycle, and we have seen with some surprise large [EOMs] that arrive in the country two days prior to voting day. There are important elements of the cycle such as registration, campaigning, party registration, funding and the role of the media that should be explored and scrutinised, and unfortunately the international community is not here at that time. Anyway, it was good to see how deep and critical the EU EOM was regarding the 2019 election, but even so, the process was considered acceptable and once again we are left with recommendations like so many others. (Interview with RENAMO member of parliament, personal communication, October 25, 2021.)

Many research participants mentioned that this also applies to civil society actors who are active during the electoral period and silent between elections. Consultations with international partners operating in Mozambique pointed out that:

> … Twenty-five years of multiparty democracy and six elections later, Mozambique does not need such direct election support as at the beginning of the process, but some advice and recommendations as in the case of reports from international observation missions. (Interview with Senior Officer from the Embassy of Canada, personal communication, October 19, 2021.)

Interviewed information sources also pointed to a direct influence that has been greater in the past but is currently diminishing. However, the international community remains interested in monitoring and supporting electoral processes in Mozambique.

The international community has deployed several EOMs to observe the 2019 elections all over the country. These included missions deployed by the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (*Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa)*, AU, EISA, Commonwealth, *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie*, SADC, SADC Electoral Commissions Forum, EU and the USA. Each of the missions released EOM reports, presenting their findings and recommendations regarding the elections in Mozambique. Overall, EOM reports from international missions were quite critical of the conduct of the 2019 electoral process. They highlighted important aspects that marked the elections, emphasising the disparities in voter registration in Gaza, the assassination of the observer and leader of the *Sala da Paz*, incidents of electoral violence, and discrepancies in the legal framework. A common observation in the international observation mission reports was the climate of widespread mistrust and tension that plagued the electoral process.

As during previous elections, several recommendations to overcome the challenges encountered were issued and delivered to the relevant entities. In this regard, the research data shows that, in general, few recommendations are followed up and EOMs mostly issue the same recommendations. This calls for changes in the way international electoral assistance is practised, in the sense of not focusing only on election day or a short period of the campaign. Instead, as suggested by Norris (2019), every single election should be regarded as a cyclic process with a lengthy chain of sequential stages.

Thus, it became a challenge to assess the actual contribution of international electoral assistance efforts to the quality of the 2019 elections in Mozambique. This is because to be assertive, such an analysis requires the identification of the best domestic conditions for the delivery of such assistance. The research found that the main domestic factors influencing the behaviour of elections and whether international electoral assistance is successful are both the context and political system in place and its dynamics, research topics to be further analysed.

International support for democratic consolidation and holding credible elections has marked Mozambique's trajectory since it embarked on multiparty politics. As such, this support is mentioned with acclaim among state and non-state actors dealing with elections and democracy. Nevertheless, the data collected

throughout the research revealed a slight reduction in the traditional support that international actors devote to electoral processes, that is, direct support at operational level. Moreover, preliminary research findings point to growing support from international actors mediated by CSOs that have increasingly specialised and engaged in electoral activities, as evidenced in the 2019 elections.

4.3. The Influence of Institutional Factors on the 2019 Electoral Integrity in Mozambique

The theoretical framework that has guided this study also stresses the vital role of the institutions in ensuring the freeness and fairness of elections. Thus, the quality of elections is also measured by the performance of institutions responsible for administering elections which need to function well and under democratic principles. This includes balanced control mechanisms arising from national legislation and the role of courts and vertical channels of accountability through independent media and CSOs (Norris, 2015). However, it is worth mentioning that electoral governance arrangements vary substantially across the world (International IDEA, 2006). In the context of Mozambique, the institutional arrangement of electoral management was largely influenced by the specificities of the country's democratisation process, which combined the need for pacification through the termination of the civil war that ravaged the country, and the advancement of multiparty democracy (Macuane, 2020). This has resulted in a democratisation structure and process, specifically the actions and behaviour of the relevant political actors, having a considerable influence on institutional performance and the democratic process.

In this respect, evidence gathered throughout the research pointed to several institutional shortcomings in conducting a smooth electoral process by the CNE and other institutions with responsibility in the administration of the electoral processes. Early in the electoral cycle, the delay in publishing the newly passed electoral legal framework postponed the required poll workers, judicial officers, and party delegates on the relevant legislation and procedures, as well as the production of dissemination materials. It should be noted that the new set of laws was approved between April and May of the election year. As remarked by a party member,

> … Once again, as in previous elections, there was not enough time for the main actors of the electoral process to learn and take ownership of the new legal framework. This included the

> EMBs themselves, political parties, observer organisations and voters in general. This was serious and had disastrous consequences in the way different actors of the process interpreted the legal provisions, making the electoral process lengthy, especially voting. In several polling stations, voting had to be interrupted to resolve differences in the interpretation of the new law. (Interview with MDM member of Parliament, personal communication, November 3, 2021.)

By examining the institutional arrangements for the administration of electoral processes in Mozambique, the research found that the institutional structure is largely influenced by party-political interests, which undermines the performance of the governing bodies of the electoral process.

Indeed, the partisan criteria ruling the composition of CNE and STAE have been constantly criticised by research participants, including those of the political parties represented in these bodies as referred in the following lines:

> … The composition of the CNE is problematic and increasingly pulls towards retaining its members according to the rule of parliamentary representation. As it is, this arrangement allows the party in power to perpetuate itself because its representatives will always manipulate the results in favour of those who put them there. As such, the CNE members are more interested in defending the agendas of the political parties they represent than in contributing to the integrity of electoral processes. (Interview with RENAMO member of Parliament, personal communication, October 25, 2021)

Moreover, the institutional arrangement extends to the sub-national representations of these bodies. That is, provincial, district and city electoral commissions composition and structure are also established on a partisan basis. From an electoral integrity perspective, this practice leaves room for potential conflicts of interest and manipulation at the expense of democratic principles. About this a member of MDM, pointed that:

> … Despite the many criticisms and proposals made by various societal groups, including academia, there is no interest in changing the configuration of the EMBs. For example, one proposal that has been put forward repeatedly is the establishment of independent EMBs, without ties to political parties. (Interview with MDM member of parliament, personal communication, November 3, 2021)

In addition, despite the visible and public rivalry between FRELIMO and RENAMO, some key interviewees pointed to some sort of alliance between these two actors as evidenced in the following quote:

> … The composition of CNE resulted from institutional arrangements meant to favour the two main players, FRELIMO and RENAMO, and thus maintain their places in the political and electoral chessboard. The situation would probably be different if they were not worried about maintaining themselves in those bodies and profiting from it. (Interview with election expert, personal communication, October 19, 2021.)

Another interviewee referred to this "alliance" in the following terms:

> … Although we are holding elections; it is very difficult to speak of a *de facto* multiparty system in a situation where everything revolves around two political parties (FRELIMO and RENAMO). MDM had some popularity at the beginning, but it was quickly drowned out. In addition, the candidature of candidates from emerging parties has been hindered by excessive procedural formalities, putting the very same candidates on the electoral stage. (Interview with CSO representative, personal communication, October 13, 2021.)

As mentioned earlier in this document, in addition to the political parties with parliamentary seats, the CNE includes representatives of civil society, whose performance is questioned for allegedly failing to exercise their representative role and hardly articulating with the groups they represent. One of the interviewees noted that:

> … There is a lot of promiscuity in the selection of civil society members to sit on EMBs. These members are co-opted as they are previously approved by the political parties with parliamentary seats, and most of the organisations whose applications have been accepted are emerging organisations without much expression in the public arena. (Interview with election expert, personal communication October 15, 2021.)

Overall, the performance of the electoral management institutions was tainted by several critical issues reported throughout the electoral cycle. These were mostly associated with district gerrymandering, ineffective campaign financing, use of state assets, inaccuracies in the voter registration, and restriction of observers.

A particularly serious event that happened at the voter registration phase, which later drew public attention, was over registration in Gaza province. This event

was triggered when data from the population census conducted by the National Institute of Statistics contradicted the STAE data on the number of potential voters in that portion of the country. According to STAE, 1,160,000 voters have been registered in Gaza, meaning an increase of 330,000 voters on the National Institute of Statistics population census that indicated a total of 830,000 adults in the province. Regardless of the widespread discontent across civil society and political parties, this discrepancy in the data of the two institutions remained unresolved by the time the elections took place.

It is worth mentioning that Gaza province is the main stronghold of the ruling party FRELIMO, who benefited from this discrepancy as regards the number of seats obtained in the National Assembly. Indeed, the over-registration granted Gaza province 22 representatives in the National Assembly, increasing eight seats to the 14 won in the previous elections. While the number of FRELIMO seats increased in Gaza, provinces with larger constituencies and considered to have notable influence for the opposition saw their representation in the National Assembly reduced. In Zambezia, from 45 to 41 seats, and in Nampula, from 47 to 45.

> … By reducing the possibility of more parliamentary seats for provinces with larger constituencies, the meaning of democratic elections based on the will of the people has been undermined. This means that the aspirations and desires of some Mozambicans have been neglected for the benefit of others, and this situation will prevail for the next three to five years. (Interview with election expert, personal communication, October 15, 2021)

On this topic, another participant from civil society added that:

> … This discrepancy in voter registration in the ruling party's most vocal bastion undermined the integrity of the elections early in the electoral cycle, with a ripple effect in subsequent phases marked by a climate of widespread distrust and potential for social unrest and violence. (CSO representative, personal communication, October 18, 2021.)

Despite shortcomings in voter registration in 2019, voter registration data was disaggregated by gender in line with good practices in democratic electoral processes. This meant an important step towards gender equality, a trend that could have a greater impact if it continued through all phases of the electoral cycle.

The management of electoral finances was also a critical issue in the 2019 elections. As per legally defined criteria, it is the responsibility of the CNE to decide

on the amounts to be granted to each political party and presidential candidates. STAE in turn, holds the responsibility for the administration of campaign finances.

Political party sources consulted throughout the research referred to delays in the release of campaign funds. According to these:

> … The funds were only made available a day before the official start of the campaign period, which implied an equal delay in distributing funds to the party structures across the country. This highly affected the political parties schedule, particularly the smaller one, ourselves included, since the viability of our campaign depended entirely on state resources. (Interview with RENAMO member, personal communication, October 25, 2021.)

By acting in this way, STAE contravened Article 33(2) of Law 3/2019, which states that funds from the state budget to finance the campaigns of competing parties must be made available to the parties at least 21 days prior to the launch of the election campaign. In addition, it diminished the traditional opportunity that elections should offer for the exercise of fair competition, as the lack of levelling of the playing field was noticeable in the election campaign, with smaller parties starting their campaign later than anticipated due to lack of resources.

Cases of the use of state resources for campaign purposes, including vehicles and other assets for the benefit of the ruling party FRELIMO, were reported by political parties. In this regard, declarations from the representatives of the two opposition parties in parliament converged as stated below by one of them:

> … We have flagged and denounced blatant cases of use of state property for election campaign purposes, having even presented photographs as evidence and no action was taken by the competent organs. And this has been recurrent, to such an extent that at times we prefer not to manifest ourselves as this practice is being normalised over the time. (Interview with RENAMO member of parliament, personal communication, October 25, 2021.)

According to Law 2/2019, public resources for electoral campaigning by parties and candidates are not allowed and the violation of these provisions is punishable by imprisonment. As far as this research has been able to ascertain, no case relating to use of state property has been judicially followed during the 2019 election ballot. Within the Mozambican electoral landscape under analysis, issues related to access to electoral justice were also explored to understand how administrative electoral systems and legal provisions as well the role of judicial

institutions of electoral governance shaped the electoral process from an electoral integrity perspective.

Findings from the research revealed that although overall, the electoral legislation is considered acceptable, some confusing elements of its interpretation and application prevailed. This is aggravated because these laws set timeframes for complaints and appeals, which key stakeholders consider tight. Members of the opposition parties referred to challenges in accessing electoral justice because of the complex legal framework:

> … The excessive formalism of the laws greatly hinders access to justice in the case of electoral disputes (…) the courts of appeal and even the Constitutional Council often hide behind formalities, and serious complaints are generally not considered because of minimal procedural issues that could be overcome. (Interview with RENAMO member of parliament, personal communication, October 25, 2021.)

For example, the principle of the previous impugnation, removed from the legislation due to the challenges it posed in past elections, was widely mentioned by the research participants as still being an area of dispute. This is because, despite its removal, there is still a virtual requirement for the parties to communicate at the place and time where the irregularity occurred in order to appeal the decision at a higher level. In practice, the mechanism for electoral disputes remains the same as before and has confused the interpretation of this legal provision.

> … The recurrent practice of enacting and/or revising electoral laws each time elections are held in the country greatly compromises election integrity, especially since this usually happens in the same year that elections are planned to take place. As a result, there is insufficient time for stakeholders to take ownership and, naturally, there may be discrepancies that could be remedied if there was more time. (Interview with Senior Officer of the Embassy of Norway, personal communication, November 2, 2021.)

The CC that was responsible as the final court of appeal for electoral complaints has been repeatedly criticised by research participants, including CSOs and political parties. According to a member of RENAMO:

> … The CC has not played its role efficiently and has often bypassed access to electoral justice by not addressing critical electoral contests. For example, as RENAMO we have submitted the submission of two main appeals to the CC, one concerning the voter

> registration in Gaza and another related to four FRELIMO candidates for provincial governors who intended to run as governors in provinces where they were not residents, and virtually unable to vote in such spots. We were concerned about the legitimacy of both the voter registration and the candidatures, but the CC was unable to provide an impartial decision. (Interview with RENAMO member of Parliament, personal communication, October 25, 2021.)

As far as the present research has been able to ascertain, the CC rejected RENAMO's complaint, having concluded it does not deprive the law of the right of such candidates to run in provinces where they are not residents, especially since the law does not explicitly state residence as a requirement. Regarding the voter registration in Gaza the complaint remained unsolved. Still on the role of the CC, a party member said:

> … Despite being a kind of electoral court, according to the Constitution, the CC does not have the power to judge and condemn and although it is a relevant body, it makes little impression when it comes to electoral matters (…) the CC only issues recommendations without legal force. (Interview with MDM member of Parliament, personal communication, November 3, 2021.)

Under the new electoral laws, accreditation procedures for domestic observers have been simplified, a fact that has been acclaimed by the local observation organisations. However, surprisingly, electoral observation in 2019 was under severe contest. Many challenges associated with observation were reported by both political parties and CSOs. Notwithstanding a considerable representation of domestic and international observers, which according to official data from STAE amounted to 46,185,00 observers, research data indicates that some 3,000 domestic observers were deprived of their role due to a lack of accreditation by STAE.

A source from a CSO, referred to

> …a suspicion of fictitious observer organisations that were accredited only to increase observers' numbers and favour the ruling party. (CSO representative, personal communication, October 11, 2021.)

This suspicion was mentioned by at least four out of 16 interviewees – mostly from civil society – and although the research found no evidence that this had occurred, it

is quite possible that this fact has contributed to exacerbate the already entrenched climate of distrust towards EMBs throughout society.

In other research findings related to institutional performance, some 17 delegates from the emerging party *Nova Democracia* were detained while attempting to undertake their work, and denied provisional release, with some being denied the right to observe proceedings at several polling stations. Although it was not possible to confirm with the party, this case was widely reported in the media, especially the social media, as a serious electoral violation. Associated with this, the performance of the police, an organ that is central to ensuring the security and integrity of the elections, was the target of much criticism. In the words of the expert interviewed:

> … Police action throughout the electoral process has been violent and intimidating to opposition parties and supporters. This has led to arbitrary and violent arrests, jeopardising the integrity of the elections. Let us remember that a prominent activist from *Sala da Paz* was murdered by members of the police. (Interview with election expert, personal communication October 19, 2021.)

Also, cases of ballot box stuffing and manipulation were reported mainly in district polling stations. One case that received media attention was the detainment of the chairperson of a polling station in the district of Mutarara in Tete province for allegedly manipulate the voting process in favour of FRELIMO. On this issue, the RENAMO member interviewed for this research said the following:

> … Cases of manipulation and ballot stuffing occur whenever there are elections, especially at district level where the ruling party has its manipulation machines well-tuned and CSOs have relatively less influence. We are used to it, and as I said before, sometimes we don't have motivation to follow the cases, because nothing happens to the lawbreakers. (Interview with RENAMO member of parliament, personal communication, October 25, 2021.)

Tabulating election results was reported to have been marked by a lack of consistency and harmonisation regarding the inclusion of key electoral actors. While some tabulation centres allowed access for observers and party delegates, others restricted it, significantly compromising the transparency and integrity of the process.

A CNE source referred to the 2019 tabulation process in the following lines:

> … We are aware that there were faults in some tabulation centres regarding access by some key actors. In some cases, it stemmed from lack of knowledge of the legal provisions and in others because such actors violated the rules that guide the tabulation process such as causing disturbances to the process. But this was not a generalised situation. (Interview with STAE officer, personal communication, October 15, 2021.)

4.4. The Impact of the Electoral Regulatory Framework on Electoral Integrity

A screening of the regulatory framework for the 2019 elections revealed some inconsistencies impacting on the electoral process integrity. These included the lack of a comprehensive legal framework that fully aligns Mozambique's international commitments to democratic elections. Thus, it would avoid political influence and allow for consolidation into a single, consistent piece of legislation governing all key elements of the electoral process, as recommended by several election observation missions, the EU included. In general, there is a widespread perception among academics, election observers and practitioners that the electoral reform has not addressed all the shortfalls of the Mozambican electoral process identified and recommended by previous EOMs. Failure to follow those recommendation, has resulted in discrepancies between the new amendments and other legislation. An example is that political parties were to receive electronic copies of the electoral roll paper with a serial number and the public reading of this number during the counting forty-five days before the elections. However, the electoral roll can be amended up to thirty days before the elections. Consequently, parties would obtain copies of voter lists that can still be amended by the CNE. There are also disparities regarding persons unqualified to be observers, with Law 3/2019 dictating more disqualifications than Law 2/2019. Regarding the place of appealing the results of provincial elections, Article 110 of Law 2/2019 refers to the CNE and Article 132 of Law 3/2019 refers to the CC. Moreover, the CC's recurring call to codify electoral legislation to prevent inconsistencies among different laws has been consistently ignored by legislators and, one more time, the legislation governing the 2019 general elections has left out critical electoral contests (EU EOM, 2019).

Other examples of discrepancies include the identification of the ballot paper with a serial number and the public reading of this number during the counting

phase, which can compromise respect for the secrecy of the vote; the legal limitation that a ballot paper is only valid when it is marked with an X or the voter's fingerprint, which can lead to the invalidation of votes whose choice is clear despite having been marked differently.

Furthermore, the overlap in time between the periods given to the CC to solve appeals regarding the provincial election results and the 15 days in which CNE must announce the national results is not yet harmonised. Because of the overlap, in past elections, CNE announced the centralised results before the appeals had been decided. Moreover, the timeframes are considered too short to allow courts to rule on appeals - 48 hours for district level courts and five days for the CC (EU EOM, 2019; Rosário et al., 2020;). While acknowledging the steps taken to improve the legal framework and overall governance of the electoral process to ensure they conform with regional and international standards for democratic elections, the report of the AU observer mission (2019) was critical, flagging that instead of pondering a more strategic approach, the legal reforms undertaken have largely hindsight and *ad hoc*, designed to respond to specific interests of the two main competing forces that had emerged in previous elections. Like the perception of some interviewed sources, the EU EOM report underlines that such reforms were mainly negotiated by a few political elites of FRELIMO and RENAMO with little contribution from the grassroots and other interested forces in society. For example, changes to the legal framework for the recent 2019 elections were made less than half a year before election day, putting additional pressure on EMBs, particularly on political party representatives in these bodies.

Despite some deficiencies, the legal and administrative framework governing elections in Mozambique is considered reasonable and conducive to democratic elections. The same can hardly be said about the performance of the electoral management institutions, which have been the target of much criticism. The role of the CNE, STAE, and the CC in ensuring free and fair elections in 2019 has been widely questioned by key actors in the political arena and civil society. This perception is mainly associated with the ties these agencies have with political parties through their composition, as repeatedly stated throughout the study.

The main takeaway emerging from this section is that many Mozambicans recognise the efforts and advances made to produce legislation more consistent with global norms for democratic elections, including the setting up of institutions for that

purpose. However, public confidence in these institutions, particularly the CNE, has declined over time, largely due to people's dissatisfaction with their performance in ensuring fair and clean elections. In some cases, people have begun to question the procedures governing the composition and representation of the electoral bodies. The case of the Gaza census and the way in which the CNE and other electoral institutions reacted to serious electoral incidents led to the exacerbation of a long-standing situation of mistrust.

As a result, the responsibility for most of the challenging issues encountered throughout the 2019 electoral cycle was somewhat attributed to the electoral management bodies in terms of their capacity to effectively fulfil their role. This drew the attention of various stakeholders in the electoral and democratic process, including the international community, as evidenced by the findings and recommendations in the country reports of the various international EOMs deployed to Mozambique.

4.4.1 Summary of Mozambique's performance in complying with national, regional and international obligations for democratic elections

The analysis of the data provided by the primary and secondary data accessed throughout the research indicates that, in general, the principles and norms guiding the conduct of democratic elections were not met in the 2019 elections. While the preceding section comprehensively unpacked and discussed the contours of the non-compliance with the principles of electoral integrity, the following section highlights specific events as to how this occurred in the context of Mozambique.

Table 4 summarises how Mozambique failed to comply with a set of binding guidelines for fair and transparent electoral processes, including the domestic ones.

Table 4. ***Mozambique compliance with national, regional and/or international commitments or principles for democratic elections***

Electoral Integrity Criteria	**Research findings**	**National, Regional and/or International commitment or principles**
Electoral laws	Late publication of the new electoral laws. New electoral laws were approved in late May 2019, while elections were scheduled to take place in October same year. Contradictions and inconsistencies between the different dispositions of the Law, e.g., the previous impugnation principle.	**Respect the principle of legal certainty and predictability** ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, Art 2(1) "No substantial modification shall be made to the electoral laws in the last six (6) months before the elections, except with the consent of a majority of Political actors."
Electoral procedures	In some polling stations independent observers as well party agents from political parties such as RENAMO and *Nova Democracia* were not granted access to the counting process Throughout the electoral campaign the opposition political parties were restricted in their right to free assembly and circulation and were often forced to cancel their meetings due to various impediments	**Genuine elections that reflect the free expression of the will of voters** ICCPR, United Nations Human Rights Commission, General Comment No. 25, p. 20: "The security of ballot boxes must be guaranteed, and votes should be counted in the presence of the candidates or their agents. There should be independent scrutiny of the voting and counting process and access to judicial review or other equivalent process so that electors have confidence in the security of the ballot and the counting of the votes." **Right and opportunity to participate in public affairs** SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections 5.1.7 "Ensure timely accreditation of observers in accordance with national laws as appropriate". SADC PF Norms and Standards for Elections in the SADC Region, part 2 (4) (iii): "The role of the civil society, mainly in election monitoring and civic education, should be recognised by Governments." Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to freedom of assembly and of association, A/68/299 para. 42: "Civil society organisations have also an important role to play in the context of elections. The role of civil society in contributing to and sustaining a robust democracy cannot be underestimated. In

Electoral Integrity Criteria	Research findings	National, Regional and/or International commitment or principles
		different capacities, organisations undertake various activities to advocate for the concerns and interests of their beneficiaries, to contribute to ensuring the integrity of the electoral process, to further contribute to the achievement, protection and strengthening of democratic goals and standards, and to keeping authorities accountable to the electorate." **Violation of the freedom to hold an election assembly** Art 210 of Law 2/2019 and Art 182 of Law 3/2019: "Whoever prevents the holding, or the continuation of an assembly, rally, procession or parade of electoral propaganda shall be punished with imprisonment of up to six months and a fine of three to six minimum national wages." The right to freedom of assembly and equal treatment SADC PF Norms and Standards for Elections in the SADC Region, part 3 (5): "The Electoral Commission and all stakeholders in the electoral process should therefore be required by law and be empowered to ensure (...): unimpeded freedom of campaign throughout the country; (...) all Government Security Forces should act impartially and professionally; Presidential candidates must be provided with free and adequate security during the election process; equal and free access to the state owned media; (...) and reasonable safeguards at political meetings, rallies, polling stations and party premises".
Voter registration	Discrepancies between data released on the population census by the National Institute of Statistics and the STAE data regarding the number of potential voters in Gaza province. This resulted in an over-registration that granted Gaza province additional representatives in the national parliament to the detriment of larger constituencies such as Nampula and Zambezia, undermining the fairness of the process.	ICCPR, United Nations Human Rights Commission, General Comment No. 25, p. 21: "... The drawing of electoral boundaries and the method of allocating votes should not distort the distribution of voters or discriminate against any group and should not exclude or restrict unreasonably the right of citizens to choose their representatives freely."

Electoral Integrity Criteria	Research findings	National, Regional and/or International commitment or principles
Campaign finance	Delays in allocating funds for political parties, which resulted in them starting with campaigning activities later than planned	**Rule of law/Prevention of corruption/Fairness in the election campaign** SADC PF Norms and Standards for Elections in the SADC Region, part 2 (3): "In the interest of creating conditions for a level playing field for all political parties and promoting the integrity of the electoral process, parties should not use public funds in the electoral process. The electoral law should prohibit the Government to aid or to abet any party gaining unfair advantage." Art 33(2) of Law 3/2019, states that funds from the state budget to finance the campaigns of competing parties must be made available to the parties at least 21 days prior to the launch of the election campaign.
Polling process		**Transparency and access to information** ICCPR, United Nations Human Rights Commission, General Comment 34, p. 18 and art 19(2) of the ICCPR: "the right of access to information held by public bodies"
Vote counting	Cases of people caught with ballot papers outside polling stations were reported by domestic and international observers. The EU EOM (2019) refers to specific cases of people with up to 30 ballot papers each in several polling stations across the country. In several polling stations, presiding officers restricted access to party agents and party-appointed poll workers from RENAMO and MDM, often with the support of the police force. In many of these cases the police used violence and brutality to evict workers from opposition party polling stations (EU OEM, 2019).	CCPR, United Nations Human Rights Commission, General Comment 25 p.20: "... The security of ballot boxes must be guaranteed and votes should be counted in the presence of the candidates or their agents. There should be independent scrutiny of the voting and counting process and access to judicial review or other equivalent process so that electors have confidence in the security of the ballot and the counting of the votes." SADC PF Norms and Standards for Elections in the SADC Region, part 3 (5): "... all Government Security Forces should act impartially and professionally..." African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, Article 4: "State Parties shall commit themselves to promote democracy, the principle of the rule of law and human rights."

Electoral administration	Widespread public distrust in the impartiality of public institutions, in particular the police, was exacerbated by the involvement of elements of the national police in the assassination of a senior election observer under the impassiveness of the relevant institutions.	**Respect for the principle of the rule of law/ security of the person** African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, Art 4: "State Parties shall commit themselves to promote democracy, the principle of the rule of law and human rights." SADC PF Norms and Standards for Elections in the SADC Region, part 3 (5): "... all Government Security Forces should act impartially and professionally..." ICCPR, United Nations Human Rights Commission, General Comment 25, p. 19: "... Voters should be able to form opinions independently, free of violence or threat of violence, compulsion, inducement or manipulative interference of any kind."
	EMBs 'reliance on public funding undermined the smaller parties' ability to carry out campaign activities nationally due to a shortage of funds. Campaign resources were only released 24 days after the statutory deadline for the beginning of electoral campaigns.	**Election administration independence** SADC PF Norms and Standards for Elections in the SADC Region, part 2 (5) (iii): "To further enhance the independence and impartiality of the Electoral Commission it should have its own budget directly voted for by Parliament and not get its allocation from a Ministry or a Government Department."

Source: Adapted from EU EOM Mozambique, 2019

5. Overall Conclusions

Elections have been seen as an essential measure of a country's path to democracy, but in recent times concern about the quality of elections has been growing through the concept of electoral integrity. That measure is the extent to which elections conform to global, international, and national democratic constitutional provisions governing the proper conduct of elections. Insofar as it is well established that elections are a necessary condition of democracy, the bulk of the literature on democracy and elections agrees that they are not sufficient *per se*. This is especially true for societies whose democratic practices are still being developed, such as Mozambique.

In 1994, Mozambique emerged as a democratic country after its first multiparty elections. This was followed by a long period of violent armed conflict, and a colonial legacy inherited from the Portuguese regime. The country has held six general elections since then. The last elections, held in 2019, took place in an environment highly critical of the quality of the elections, as evidenced by several documents, including reports from national and international observer missions. Overall, the main features of the electoral history of Mozambique are marked by ongoing distrust amongst the two major parties, shortcomings in automated parts of the process, a continuously shifting legal framework, and a steady deterioration of credibility in the electoral institutions.

The present research aimed to understand the underlying reasons for the country's performance in the 2019 general elections from an electoral integrity perspective. Theoretically, the research was supported by propositions and explanations for electoral failure in developing countries such as Mozambique by the scholar Norris (2015), who proposes three explanations to achieve electoral integrity in such countries namely structural, international, and institutional explanations.

The three theoretical arguments for the electoral flaws, on which the present research is based, were outlined in Chapter Two and further developed in Chapter Four. These propositions were empirically tested in the context of Mozambique to assess whether they effectively exerted influence on the outcome of the 2019 contest in terms of electoral integrity.

In Chapter Four, the research case study provided a snapshot of the structural, institutional, and international electoral endeavours that influenced the 2019 general

elections conduct in Mozambique. The main findings of the research point to a mix of the three factors, with a greater focus on structural and institutional conditions that, in combination, contributed to the poor performance of these elections.

Although quite visible and impactful in the Mozambican context, it was not possible to collect systematic evidence for an in-depth analysis of the impact of structural conditions on the quality of elections. One proven fact was that a multitude of socio-economic, historical, and political conditions increase the risks of electoral malpractice as they affect levels of economic development, trade dependency, corruption, social imbalance, and instability. These factors can be considered "structural" restrictions to the integrity of elections, as it is difficult to reverse many of them in the short to medium term, if at all. Moreover, as Norris (2015) pointed out, countries have no way of reinventing their histories or easily avoiding conflicts and refugees from cyclical natural disasters and conflicts. However, there are expectations that the governments accelerate economic growth and human development as a way to consolidate democracy.

Despite the significant incidence of structural factors, the literature on elections in Mozambique and evidence gathered throughout the research pointed to a more significant influence of institutional arrangements on the quality of elections. This is because the electoral governance system and the constitutional checks and balance mechanisms are at the core of ensuring free and fair elections. Furthermore, electoral administration is seen as a tool to measure the integrity of the electoral process and a determinant of the electoral outcome. Along with this, the highly partisan composition and structure of the Mozambican election management institutions (CNE and STAE) have opened the field to heighten the disparities between political parties, as only three of the 26 parties participating in the elections have representation at the institutional level.

Overall, most challenges experienced throughout the electoral process are perceived to be somehow associated with the performance of the institutions responsible for managing the elections. Moreover, in a context of democratic shrinkage and autocratic tendencies that have characterised Mozambique's political system in recent years, it seems that electoral institutions reflect the state's shortcomings. At the political level, despite the growing hegemony of the ruling party, FRELIMO, the research showed a political scenario marked by an apparent

bipolarity between the two main political parties that manifests itself in election periods due to the spectre of civil war that recurrently hovers on election eve.

Notwithstanding the existence of a third political force, the MDM, evidence showed that all political dynamics revolve around FRELIMO and RENAMO parties. This is felt at the decision-making level on electoral aspects, such as the composition of EMBs and other important election-related issues where these two parties have privileged decision-making power. Regarding this, it is worth mentioning that the 2019 elections were conditioned by a cessation of hostilities agreement between FRELIMO and RENAMO, which culminated among other consensus items, with the approval of a new legal framework for decentralisation. This scenario severely limits the meaning of political pluralism since political forces do not function on a level playing field, the one key principle of electoral integrity related to the fairness of the elections. Moreover, it was noted that between one election and another, the ruling party has gained strength and has shown signs of moving towards an authoritarian model of governance. This could potentially further compromise the integrity of electoral processes, and in the last instance of democratic consolidation.

While acknowledging their relevance, the research found no conclusive evidence that international factors significantly influenced the 2019 electoral process, at least regarding electoral integrity. Nevertheless, it is important to note that beyond financial contribution, international actors continued to be mostly observers rather than directly influencing the processes and gave more prominence to civil society actors in the electoral process by funding various election-related initiatives. Thus, the influence of electoral assistance efforts on the achievement of electoral integrity was not readily observable, as such influence may depend on other domestic conditions for the provision of such assistance. Therefore, to be effective and affect the quality of elections, such assistance would have to be combined with other factors, such as the political environment in which elections are held. For instance, the 2019 elections were conducted in a tense political context in which the government of Mozambique's relationship with the international community, in this case, its programmatic support partners, was strained due to the hidden debts that resulted in the freezing of support.

While the research acknowledges the overall relevance of international standards for the smooth holding of elections, it is worth mentioning how the abstract principles that often characterise such standards are then interpreted and

domesticated into national laws and administrative provisions that can be cumbersome. How the wording of such principles is interpreted varies between countries and cultures so that what one society may consider appropriate may be seen as a violation of fundamental rights in another. To give a few examples, this may include cultural practices related to banning access to the polls based on how voters are dressed, gendered power relations in exerting the right to vote, whether voting should be voluntary or compulsory, or even whether proof of voter identity should be required before casting a vote.

The empirical work carried out in the present research concluded that despite political, international, and institutional efforts to ensure a democratic consolidation process where elections are conducted fairly and transparently, much still needs to be done to achieve this goal. Moreover, as mentioned before, the influence of structural factors in this process cannot be neglected as it significantly marked and continues to mark Mozambique's path towards a consolidated democracy.

Finally, although the research did not seek to analyse broader issues of democratic transition in Mozambique, the lessons from the research enabled the investigation of the extent to which the quality of elections is related to general levels of democratisation. As such, the research highlights the incidence of a strong correlation between elections and democracy, as elections are at the core of accountability and representation mechanisms in liberal democracies. Furthermore, since Mozambique is not a pure liberal democracy, the integrity of electoral processes is still questionable, judging by the poor level of compliance with national and international instruments, standards and principles for democratic elections.

6. References

Adejumobi, S. (2000). Elections in Africa: A fading shadow of democracy? *International Political Science Review/Revue Internationale de Science Politique*, *21*(1), 59–73. https://doi.org/10.1177/0192512100211004

AU EOM. (2020). (rep.). *Republic of Mozambique: - General Elections*. AU EOM. Retrieved from https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38697-doc-report_of_the_african_union_election_observation_mission_to_the_15_november_2019_general_elections_in_the_republic_of_mozambique.pdf

Alden, C. (1995). The UN and the Resolution of Conflict in Mozambique. *The Journal of Modern African Studies, 33*(1), 103–128. doi:10.1017/S0022278X00020875

Birch, S. (2011). Electoral Malpractice. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Birch, S. (2016). (rep.). *The electoral tango: The evolution of electoral integrity in competitive authoritarian regimes* (Ser. MWP 2016/02, pp. 1–25). San Domenico di Fiesole: European University Institute.

Blais, A., & Massicotte, L. (2002). Electoral systems. In L. LeDuc, R. G. Niemi, & P. Norris (Eds). *Comparing democracies,* 2nd ed. (40–69). London: Sage

Brito, L. (1993). Estado e Democracia Multipartidária em Moçambique. In Brito, L. & Weimer, B. (Eds). *Multipartidarismo e Perspectivas Pós-Guerra*. Maputo: UEM/ Friedrich Ebert Foundation

Carbone, G. (2003). Emerging pluralist politics in Mozambique: The FRELIMO - RENAMO party system. Development Research Centre, LSE. Working Papers Series No. 1. London.

Carter Center. (2014). Elections obligations and standards database. Atlanta, GA: The Carter Center. http://www.cartercenter.org/des-search/des/Introduction.aspx

Catt, H., Ellis, A., Maley, M., Wall, A., & Wolf, P. (2014). Electoral Management Design: Revised Edition. Stockholm: International IDEA

Centro de Integridade Pública [CIP]. (2019a, June 11). *Felisberto Naife é acusado de ser o responsável pela manipulação do recenseamento eleitoral, com o apoio da Académica, da família Sidat (ligada à FRELIMO)*. Carta de Moçambique. Retrieved October 15, 2021, from https://cartamz.com/index.php/politica/item/2137-felisberto-naife-e-acusado-

de-ser-o-responsavel-pela-manipulacao-do-recenseamento-eleitoral-com-o-apoio-da-academica-da-familia-sidat-ligada-a-frelimo?fb_comment_id=2364891920200451_2365474090142234

Centro de Integridade Pública [CIP]. (2019b). Orçamento para eleições de 2019 é excessivo: contas da CNE devem ser auditadas e seus pareceres tornados públicos. *Um olhar sobre a despesa pública.* Newsletter 02/2019.

Centro de Integridade Pública [CIP]. (2021). Management of those displaced by the war in Cabo Delgado: The Government has failed in supporting the victims of the conflicts. Maputo, Mozambique

Centro de Integridade Pública [CIP] & Chr. Michelsen Institute (2021). Costs and consequences of the hidden debt scandal of Mozambique. Maputo, Mozambique/Bergen, Norway.

Collier, P., & Vicente, P. C. (2012). Violence, bribery, and fraud: The political economy of elections in sub-Saharan Africa. *Public Choice*, 153 (1-2), 117–147. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11127-011-9777-z

Conselho Constitucional [CC]. (2005). Deliberação nº 5/CC/05 de 19 de Janeiro, Conselho Constitucional, Maputo

Constitution of Mozambique. (2004). Republic of Mozambique, Maputo

Darch, C. (2018) A success story gone wrong? The Mozambican conflict and the peace process in historical perspective. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Mozambique. https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/fes-pscc/14344.pdf

Della Rocca, R. (2012). *A paz: como Moçambique saiu da Guerra*. Maputo: CIEDIMA

Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa [EISA]. (2019). (rep). Election observer mission to the 2019 presidential, legislative and provincial elections in Mozambique 17 October 2019. Preliminary statement. Retrieved from https://www.eisa.org/pdf/moz2019eom4.pdf

Elklit, J., & Reynolds, A. (2002). The impact of election administration on the legitimacy of emerging democracies: A new comparative politics research agenda. *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, 40:2, 86–119, DOI: 10.1080/713999584

Elklit, J., & Reynolds, A. (2005). A framework for the systematic study of election quality. *Democratisation, 12*(2), 147–162. https://doi.org/10.1080/13510340500069204

EU EOM. (2019). (rep.). *Republic of Mozambique: Final Report- General and Provincial Assembly Elections*. EU EOM. Retrieved from https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2025029/eueom_moz2019_final_report_en.pdf

European Commission (2017). (rep). *Evaluation of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights*. Final Report – Volume 1- Main Report.

Fortin-Rittberger, J., Harfst, P., & Dingler, S. C. (2017). The costs of electoral fraud: Establishing the link between electoral integrity, winning an election, and satisfaction with democracy. *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties*, *27*(3), 350–368. https://doi.org/10.1080/17457289.2017.1310111

Frynas, J. G., & Buur, L. (2020). The presource curse in Africa: Economic and political effects of anticipating natural resource revenues. The Extractive Industries and Society, *7*(4), 1257–1270. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.exis.2020.05.014

Funada-Classen, S. (2013). *The origins of war in Mozambique: A history of unity and division*. South Africa: African Minds.

Garber, L., & Kumar, K. (1998). What have we learned about post conflict elections? *New England Journal of Public Policy*: Vol. 14. Available at: http://scholarworks.umb.edu/nejpp/vol14/iss1/3

Geffray, C. (1990). La cause des armes au Mozambique: anthropologie d'une guerre civile. Paris: Karthala

Green, A. (2018). Democracy and institutions in postcolonial Africa. *Journal of Institutional Economics*, *14*(2), 207–231. doi:10.1017/S1744137416000278

Government of Mozambique. (2019). Ciclones Tropicais Idai e Kenneth Moçambique: Relatório da situação nacional. Maputo.

Hammarberg, K., Kirkman, M., & de Lacey, S. (2016). Qualitative research methods: When to use them and how to judge them. *Human Reproduction*, *31*(3), 498–501. https://doi.org/10.1093/humrep/dev334

Hanlon, J. (2020). (rep.). *Integridade eleitoral em Moçambique: Uma perspectiva política e histórica* (Ser. Democracia Multipartidária em Moçambique, pp. 151–169). Maputo: EISA Mozambique.

Hanlon, J., & Fox, S. (2006). (Working paper). *Identifying fraud in democratic elections: A case study of the 2004 presidential election in Mozambique* (Ser.

Crisis State Working Papers Series No. 2, pp. 1–32). Maputo: Crisis States Research Centre.

Hyde, S. (2011). *The pseudo-democrat's dilemma: Why election monitoring became an international norm*. Cornell University Press.

Hyde, S., & Marinov, N. (2012). Which elections can be lost? *Political Analysis*, *20*(2), 191–210. doi:10.1093/pan/mpr040

Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Económicos. (2020). *Legislativas: Votos por partido*. Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Económicos. Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Económicos. Retrieved from https://www.iese.ac.mz/cartografia-eleitoral/#/.

International IDEA. (2006). Electoral management Design: the international IDEA Handbook. Sweden: International IDEA

James, T. S., Garnett, H. A., Loeber, L., & van Ham, C. (2019). Electoral management and the organisational determinants of electoral integrity: Introduction. *International Political Science Review*, *40*(3), 295–312. https://doi.org/10.1177/0192512119828206

Kaya, R., & Bernhard, M. (2013). Are elections mechanisms of authoritarian stability or democratisation? Evidence from Postcommunist Eurasia. *Perspectives on Politics*, *11*(3), 734–752. https://doi.org/10.1017/s1537592713002119

Kelley, J. G. (2012a). *International influences on elections in new multiparty states*. Annual Reviews of Political Sciences. 203–216. doi: 10.1146/annurev-polisci-030810-110805

Kelley, J. G. (2012b). *Monitoring democracy: When international election observation works, and why it often fails*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Kielmann, K., Cataldo, F., & Seeley, J. (2011). *Introduction to Qualitative Research Methodology*. Department for International Development and Evidence for Action. Retrieved from http://www.dfid.gov.uk/R4D/Output/188391/Default.aspx

Kühne, W. (2010). *The role of elections in emerging democracies and post-conflict countries: Key issues, lessons learned and dilemmas*. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung - International Policy Analysis. http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/07416.pdf.

Kumar, K. (1998). (Ed.). *Post conflict elections, democratisation, and international assistance*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner publishers.

Lamb, G. (1997). *Demilitarisation and Peacebuilding in Southern Africa: A survey of the literature*. CCR Briefing Papers, 1997

Lindberg, S. I. (2004). The democratic qualities of competitive elections: Participation, competition and legitimacy in Africa. *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, *42*(1), 61–105. https://doi.org/10.1080/14662040408565569

Lindberg, S. I. (2006). Democracy and Elections in Africa. *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, *42*(1), 61–105. https://doi.org/10.1080/14662040408565569

Linz, J. J., & Stepan, A. (1996). Toward consolidated democracies. *Journal of Democracy*, *7*(2), 14–33. https://www.journalofdemocracy.org/articles/toward-consolidated-democracies

Lopez-Pinter, R. (2000). Electoral Management Bodies as Institutions of Governance. Washington D.C.: United Nations Development Programme.

Louw-Vaudran, L. (2019). (rep). *Fair elections key to stability in Mozambique*. Maputo: Institute for Security Studies [ISS].

Macuane, J. (2020). Estrutura e agência das instituições de soberania e democratização em Moçambique, 1999-2020. *Democracia Multipartidária* em Moçambique, pp. 55–79. Maputo: EISA Mozambique.

Manning, C. L. (2002). The politics of peace in Mozambique: post-conflict democratisation, 1992-2000. Greenwood Publishing Group.

Manning, C. L. (2008). The Making of Democrats: Elections and Party Development in Post-war Bosnia, El Salvador, and Mozambique. Springer, ISBN 0230611168978023061116160

Manning, C. (2019, October 29). *Will Mozambique's peace deal survive contested elections?* World Politics Review. Retrieved from https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/28301/will-mozambique-s-peace-deal-survive-contested-elections

Manning, C., & Malbrough, M. (2009). Learning the Right Lessons from Mozambique's Transition to Peace. Taiwan Journal of Democracy, Volume 5, No.1: 77–91

Manning, C., & Malbrough, M. (2012). The changing dynamics of foreign aid and democracy in Mozambique, WIDER Working Paper, No. 2012/18, ISBN

978-92-9230-418-2, The United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER), Helsinki

Mapulango, C. (2009). *Moçambique democracia e participação política*. Academia.edu. Retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/40167072/Mo%C3%A7ambique_Democracia_e_Participa%C3%A7%C3%A3o_Pol%C3%ADtica_Um_relat%C3%B3rio_publicado_pelo_AfriMAP_e_pela_Open_Society_Initiative_for_Southern_Africa_Open_SOciety_inStitute_netwOrk.

Mazula, B. (1995) *Moçambique: eleições, democracia e desenvolvimento*. Maputo: Inter-Africa Group.

Norris, P. (2012) *Are There Global Norms and Universal Standards of Electoral Integrity and Malpractice? Comparing Public and Expert Perceptions* (HKS Working Paper No. RWP12-010). Retrieved from https://ssrn.com/abstract=2087611 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2087611

Norris, P. (2015). *Why elections fail*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Kindle Edition.

Norris, P. (2019). Rusty guillotines: Electoral accountability and government corruption. In Bo Rothstein, Marcia Grimes, Monika Bauhr & Andreas Bågenholm (Eds). *The Oxford Handbook of Good Governance.* Oxford: Oxford University Press. https://www.pippanorris.com/new-research-papers

Norris, P., Frank, R. W., & Martínez I Coma, F. (2014). Measuring electoral integrity around the world: A new dataset. *PS: Political Science & Politics, 47*(04), 789–798. https://doi.org/10.1017/s1049096514001061

Norris, P., & Grömping, M. (2019). (tech.). *Electoral integrity worldwide* (Ser. Perceptions of Electoral Integrity (PEI), pp. 1–37). Ontario: Electoral Integrity Project.

Nuvunga, A. (2017). Mozambique's 2014 elections: A repeat of misconduct, political tension and FRELIMO dominance. *Journal of African Elections, 16*(2), 71–94. https://doi.org/10.20940/jae/2017/v16i2a4

Ostheimer, A. E. (2001). Mozambique: The permanent entrenchment of democratic minimalism? *African Security Review*, *10*(1), 24–36. https://doi.org/10.1080/10246029.2001.9628097

Pitcher, M. A. (2020). Mozambique elections 2019: Pernicious polarisation, democratic decline, and rising authoritarianism. *African Affairs*, *119*(476), 468–486. https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adaa012

Przeworski, A., Alvarez, M., Cheibub J., & Limongi, F. (1996). What Makes Democracies Endure? *Journal of Democracy*, 7(1), 39–55.

Reilly, B. (2003). (Working paper). *International Electoral Assistance: A review of donor's activities and lessons learned* (Ser. Working Paper 17). The Hague: Clingendael Institute.

Rosário, D. (2020). Órgãos de administração eleitoral em Moçambique: Entre a (im)parcialidade, (in)dependência e a procura de transparência nas eleições competitivas em tempos de regimes híbridos: 1994-2019. Democracia Multipartidária em Moçambique. pp. 131–150. EISA Mozambique.

Rosário, D., Guambe, E., & Salema, E. (2020). (Orgs). Democracia Multipartidária em Moçambique. EISA Mozambique.

Ross, M. L. (2015). What have we learned about the resource curse? *Annual Review of Political Science, 18*(1), 239–259. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-052213-040359

Sitoe, E. (2011). *Post- colonial political transformation in Angola and Mozambique: dynamics of the process of democratisation taking place from 1984 to 1994*. Saarbrucken: Lambert Academic Publishing.

Teshome, B. W. (2008). Democracy and elections in Africa: Critical analysis. *International Journal of Human Sciences* [Online]. 5:2. Available: http://www.insanbilimleri.com

Tollenaere, M. (2006). (Working paper). *Democracy assistance to post-conflict Mozambique: Intentions and outcomes* (Ser. Working Paper 37). The Hague: Clingendael Institute.

Tuccinardi, D. (2014). (Ed.). *International Obligations for Elections: Guidelines for Legal Frameworks.* Stockholm: International IDEA.

Turner, M. (1995). The international community and the Mozambican elections. In Mazula, B. (Ed). Mozambique: Elections, Democracy and Development. Maputo. pp.621-648.

van Ham, C. (2012). Beyond electoralism? Electoral fraud in third wave regimes, 1974-2009. European University Institute (EUI), Department of Political and Social Sciences. http://hdl.handle.net/1814/22694

van Ham, C. (2014). Getting elections right? Measuring electoral integrity. *Democratisation*, *22*(4), 714–737. https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2013.877447

Varieties of Democracy. V-Dem. (2020). *Clean Elections Index.* Varieties of DemocracyV-Dem. Retrieved from https://www.v-dem.net/