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COMMUNICATION AND POWER IN TEACHER TRAINING POLICIES (1992–2024) IN MOZAMBIQUE: A DECOLONIAL READING

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Abstract: This study critically analyzes teacher training policies in Mozambique from 1992 to 2024, based on a decolonial reading supported by three theoretical contributions: Epistemologies of the South (Castiano, 2011), postcolonial criticism (Sayed, 2016), and the sociology of teaching professions (Tardif, 2002; Nóvoa, 2009). The research adopted a mixed methodological approach, combining documentary analysis, bibliographic review, questionnaires administered to 120 teachers from different levels of education and regions of the country, and semi-structured interviews with key actors in the education system. The results identify five persistent challenges: fragmentation of training policies, tensions between quantitative targets and quality, dissociation between theory and practice, devaluation of continuing training, and dependence on external agendas. Half of the teachers consider their training to be only “partially adequate” due to the disconnect between the curriculum and the realities of schools. Postcolonial analysis shows that 68% of curricula maintain Eurocentric structures, and the sociology of professions points to weaknesses in promoting critical reflection among teachers. Given this scenario, a training model rooted in African pedagogies is proposed, linked to SDG 4 and based on three axes: (a) decolonized curricula that integrate local knowledge, (b) effective coordination between schools and training institutions, and (c) sustainable mechanisms for continuing education. The research contributes to debates on pedagogical decolonization in Lusophone Africa by highlighting the limiting effects of imported paradigms on professional autonomy and the contextual relevance of educational policies. Analysis of official documents also reveals that only 12% of programs address the challenges of rural education in Mozambique, reinforcing the need for structural reforms focused on epistemological justice and the strengthening of

culturally situated educational policies.

Keywords: Teacher training; Southern epistemologies; Postcolonialism; Professional development; Mozambique.

INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Over the last three decades, Mozambique has made significant efforts to restructure its education system in a context marked by profound political, social, and economic transformations following the signing of the General Peace Agreement in 1992. Teacher training has emerged as a strategic axis for building quality, inclusive, and human education that promotes human development. This centrality stems from the structuring role that teacher training plays in improving teaching and learning processes and in meeting national and international education goals.

Since the 1990s, the country has adopted various teacher training models—from emergency programs to more consistent curriculum reforms—in response to the expansion of basic schooling, the reduction of regional inequalities, and the shortage of qualified staff. However, these approaches reveal persistent tensions between quantity and quality, centralization and decentralization, and theory and pedagogical practice, as well as reflecting the predominant influence of international agendas, such as those promoted by UNESCO and the World Bank.

This research proposes a critical analysis of teacher training policies and models implemented in Mozambique between 1992 and 2024, based on a decolonial approach. It aims to understand how discourses, political decisions, and organizational structures have conditioned teacher professionalization processes, highlighting continuities, ruptures, and innovations.

The analysis is structured around five complementary theoretical axes:

- (1) Southern Epistemologies (Santos, 2018; Castiano, 2011), which problematize the colonality of knowledge and propose an ecology of knowledge;
- (2) Postcolonial theory (Sayed, 2016; Spivak, 1999), which denounces epistemic dependence and the institutional exclusion of local knowledge;
- (3) The sociology of teaching professions (Tardif, 2014; Nóvoa, 2017), which analyzes the professional *habitus* and situated practices of teachers;
- (4) The perspective of lifelong learning (UNESCO, 2021), with a focus on formative ecosystems and transformative learning;
- (5) A critical reinterpretation of human capital theory (Becker, 1993; Nhate, 2023), which questions the commodification of education and the unequal returns on training.

In addition, the public policy cycle approach (Ball & Bowe, 1992) is adopted, which conceives educational policy as a dynamic and contested process, structured by and disputes between arenas of formulation, interpretation, and practice. This perspective is particularly relevant for analyzing the effects of external pressures on the configuration of national teacher training policies, as well as their appropriation, reinterpretation, or resistance by local actors.

The theoretical framework is further enriched by African authors who advocate a critical and situated pedagogy, such as Sayed (South Africa), Almeida (Angola), Rose (Kenya), and Bamgbose (Nigeria). Their contributions allow us to reflect on alternatives anchored in social justice, the valorization of cultural identity, the sustainability of educational processes, and linguistic inclusion.

This theoretical basis guides a critical reading of the models adopted in Mozambique

and supports the proposal to build a training paradigm anchored in local realities, in line with the commitments of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Explanatory notes:

- **MINEDH:** Ministry of Education and Human Development.
- **IFPs:** Teacher Training Institutes.
- **PRODE/PIE:** Programs to support education reform (Education Development Program / Integrated Education Program).
- **ICTs:** Information and Communication Technologies.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF TEACHER TRAINING MODELS IN MOZAMBIQUE (1992–2024)

A critical analysis of teacher training models implemented in Mozambique over the last three decades reveals five structural areas of tension, resulting from methodological triangulation between documentary analysis, interviews, and a review of the specialized literature. These areas express the contradictions between training policies and school realities, as well as the limits of their capacity to promote profound professional and social change.

(1) Fragmentation and political discontinuity

The trajectory of teacher training in Mozambique has been marked by successive institutional disruptions, with emergency programs adopted in the 1990s often replaced by ambitious curriculum reforms without proper consolidation of previous experiences. This instability, as argued by Brito (2010) and Siteo (2012), reflects reactive responses to short-term crises—such as the massification of schooling and international targets—to the detriment of coherent, long-term strategic planning.

Period	Model/format	Main characteristics	Actors involved	Challenges observed
1992	Post-war emergency models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerated training (6-12 months) • Focus on rapid integration into the education system • Basic teaching content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MINEDH • Local training centers • International NGOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient qualifications • Unsupervised teaching practice • Low salaries
1999–2004	Basic Teacher Training Courses (CBFP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boarding school training (1–2 years) • Creation of the first IFPs • Introduction of pedagogical subjects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MINEDH • Teacher Training Institutes (IFPs) • International cooperation (Portugal, Cuba, Brazil) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory disconnected from school practice • Lack of pedagogical reflection • Limited teaching resources
2005–2010	Unified Model (1+1) – Start of curriculum reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 year of theory + 1 year of practical training • Competency-based management • First attempt at linking theory and practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MINEDH • IFPs • PRODE/PIE partners (World Bank, UNICEF) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Untrained tutors • Poor infrastructure in IFPs • Difficulty monitoring trainees
2011	Bachelor's degree courses	Higher education (3–4 years); strengthening teacher professionalization through universities	Public and private universities, MINEDH	Lack of coordination with the school network; low professional integration after training
2016	Continuing in-service training (FOFEN, CRESCER)	Modular programs for active teachers; technical and pedagogical support in schools	MINEDH, IFPs, District Directorates, international cooperation (UNICEF)	Inconsistent continuity; limited impact assessment
2020	Reform of the initial training model (3+1 model)	Three-year training at the IFP + one full school year of supervised internship	MINEDH, IFPs, teacher training universities, multilateral partners	Difficulties in pedagogical supervision; weak integration of ICTs and contextualized approach

Table 1: Historical evolution of teacher training models in Mozambique (1992–2024).

Source: Own elaboration based on official MINEDH documents and specialized literature

(2) Tension between quantity and quality

This tension manifests itself in accelerated initial training programs that have prioritized filling teacher shortages over pedagogical qualifications. Despite subsequent initiatives to redress the balance, such as the “1+1” and “3+1” models, structural gaps remain—particularly in terms of infrastructure and pedagogical supervision—which compromise the effectiveness of training and the development of meaningful teaching skills (Nhampossa, 2005).

(3) Disconnection between theory and practice

The disconnect between the theoretical content of training and the practical reality of schools is a persistent obstacle to teacher professionalization. Nóvoa (2009) and Tardif

(2002) warn of the risks of short, poorly supervised teaching placements, which, according to them, hinder the construction of reflective professional knowledge and promote technical and decontextualized approaches to teaching.

(4) Undervaluation of continuing education

In-service training remains weak and disconnected from effective career progression mechanisms and institutional recognition. Programs such as FOFEN and CRESCER, although relevant, lack systematicity and structural incentives. Without political support and concrete recognition, these initiatives become isolated and ineffective in the face of the real challenges of the teaching profession (Apple, 2003).

(5) Dependence on external agendas

International funding has been essential to enable various training initiatives; however, it tends to shift the focus to global goals and quantitative indicators, to the detriment of building contextualized and sustainable solutions. As Castel-Branco (2008) warns, this dependence conditions local ownership of policies and limits the autonomy of the State in consolidating its own teacher training system.

THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

The critical approaches mobilized in this study offer alternative ways to address the challenges identified above. Castiano (2011) argues that curricular decolonization is imperative to value local epistemologies and rebuild educational models that are more rooted in African sociocultural realities. The lifelong learning approach (UNESCO, 2021) proposes the construction of integrated and sustainable professional development ecosystems, linking initial, continuing, and institutional training.

The theory of human capital, critically reinterpreted, reinforces the need to align investment in training with decent working conditions and teacher retention policies in order to maximize the educational and social returns of training (Becker, 1993; Nhate, 2023).

In this context, the development of a sustainable teacher training model in Mozambique requires:

- (a) long-term policy coherence;
- (b) a balance between expansion and quality;
- (c) effective integration between theory and practice;
- (d) institutional and continuous valuing of in-service training; and
- (e) critical contextualization of external influences, with an emphasis on local autonomy and epistemological justice.

EPISTEMIC TENSION BETWEEN UNIVERSALIST AND CONTEXTUALIZED PERSPECTIVES

The analysis of teachers' knowledge highlights the persistence of an epistemic tension between universalist approaches and perspectives more rooted in local sociocultural contexts. The concept of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), formulated by Shulman (1987), is often adopted as the core structure of teacher professionalization. However, research conducted in African contexts (Bamgbose, 2000; De Almeida, 2015) has demonstrated the limits of this framework in multilingual, multicultural settings marked by colonial legacies.

Bamgbose argues that teacher training that disregards mother tongues and local cultural references ends up reproducing practices of pedagogical exclusion. Complementarily, De Almeida denounces the PCK as an instrument of coloniality, as it neglects African community knowledge and reinforces Westernized hegemonic epistemologies. This critique dialogues with Freirean pedagogy but goes beyond it by incorporating racial, linguistic, and epistemic dimensions (Sayed, 2016), proposing a more intersectional and decolonial approach to pedagogical knowledge.

The curriculum data analyzed (see section 4) reveal that a substantial part of teacher training programs in Mozambique still reproduce knowledge hierarchies that devalue local epistemologies, silencing oral knowledge, traditional educational practices, and popular experiences. This finding underpins one of the central questions of this research: **to what extent do the teacher training models implemented in Mozambique between 1992 and 2024 reproduce or challenge the structures of coloniality of knowledge?**

This question guides the critical analysis of training policies, seeking to identify concrete possibilities for overcoming uniformity and moving towards a situated, plural, epistemic, and culturally just pedagogy.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study adopts a mixed methodological approach, combining qualitative and quantitative procedures in order to critically analyze teacher training models in Mozambique between 1992 and 2024. The research was structured in three complementary stages: (i) documentary analysis of educational policies and institutional reports; (ii) application of questionnaires to a stratified sample of practicing teachers; and (iii) semi-structured interviews with key actors in the national education system.

The quantitative sample consisted of 120 teachers selected based on intentional criteria, considering geographical diversity (North, Center, and South), training modality (emergency, 1+1, 3+1), and context of practice (urban and rural). This composition allowed for preliminary comparisons between training generations and different regional realities. Although not probabilistic, the sample was designed to reflect the heterogeneity of the teaching staff and reinforce the analytical validity of the findings.

For the qualitative component, 18 semi-structured interviews were conducted with strategic informants, namely trainers, institutional managers, and experts in educational public policy. Participants were selected based on empirical relevance and institutional diversity. Thematic saturation was achieved in the 16th interview, with two additional interviews conducted for cross-validation.

The data collection instruments were validated in advance. The quantitative questionnaire was submitted for evaluation by experts in Mozambican education, achieving a Content Validity Index (CVI) of over 0.80 for all items, and tested in a pilot study with 10 teachers. The qualitative interview script was adapted to urban and rural contexts, with versions in national languages made available where necessary to ensure intelligibility and

informed participation by respondents.

The quantitative data analysis was based on descriptive statistics, focusing on relative frequencies and regional cross-tabulations. Qualitative data were treated by thematic analysis, using inductive-deductive coding and triangulation between documents, discourses, and empirical patterns. This methodological triangulation aimed to reinforce the internal validity and interpretative coherence of the results.

Some limitations of the research are acknowledged, such as the underrepresentation of remote provinces and possible memory biases in reports on previous periods. However, the breadth of the sample (120 questionnaires), the qualitative depth (18 interviews with saturation), and the critical analysis of 45 official documents constitute a robust empirical basis for examining the dynamics under study.

The research was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Pedagogical University of Maputo, ensuring informed consent and anonymity of participants. The combination of scale and depth, quantitative data and contextual narratives allows us to capture both structural regularities and critical singularities of the training models analyzed.

Finally, it was decided not to formulate any *a priori* hypotheses, in line with the exploratory-descriptive nature of the research. This methodological choice aims to preserve the analytical openness necessary for the emergence of innovative interpretations of historically situated phenomena, particularly relevant in post-colonial African contexts marked by epistemological transitions and tensions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

SAMPLE PROFILE

This study is based on a sample of 120 teachers working in Mozambique, selected in a

stratified manner according to three criteria: geographical region (North, Center, South), initial training modality (emergency, 1+1, and 3+1), and context of work (urban/rural). The sociodemographic characteristics of the sample reveal the following data:

- **Gender:** 58% male (n=70) and 42% female (n=50), reflecting the historically male composition of the Mozambican teaching profession.
- **Initial training modality:**
 - Emergency courses (1990–2005): 30% (n=36)
 - Training in Teacher Training Institutes (IFPs): 45% (n=54)
 - Teaching degrees (post-2010): 25% (n=30)
- **Length of teaching service:**
 - Up to 5 years: 16.7% (n=20)
 - Between 6 and 15 years: 56.7% (n=68)
 - More than 15 years: 26.6% (n=32)

The prevalence of teachers trained in emergency modalities and in IFPs (75%) confirms the historical priority given to the expansion of basic education in the post-war period, especially between 1992 and 2010, in line with international goals for access to education (MINEDH, 2003).

PERCEIVED QUALITY OF INITIAL TRAINING

The analysis of the questionnaires reveals different perceptions regarding the adequacy of initial training to meet the challenges of teaching practice:

- 13% (n=16) say that their training was totally adequate;
- 50% (n=60) partially agree, pointing to gaps in teaching methodologies and classroom management;
- 37% (n=44) disagree or totally disagree, highlighting shortcomings in the

link between theory and practice, as well as the lack of pedagogical contextualization.

These results support recurring criticism of the inadequacy of training curricula in relation to African school realities (Tiego, 2018; De Klerk, 2015). Among teachers placed in rural areas—48% of whom expressed dissatisfaction—the devaluation of local knowledge and the lack of preparation for multilingual contexts were emphasized, corroborating Bamgbose's (2000) arguments about the limitations of monolingual pedagogical models.

EMERGING THEMES FROM QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS

Theme 1: Emergency Logic in Training Policies

The legacy of accelerated training programs is evident in the participants' narratives:

"In the 1990s, we trained teachers in 18 months to fill vacancies, not to qualify them." (Interviewee 12, retired manager)

These programs, generally aligned with the guidelines of multilateral organizations such as the World Bank (Sayed & Ahmed, 2015), have prioritized quantitative coverage over training quality, especially in remote and hard-to-reach regions.

Theme 2: Theory versus Practice

In 78% of the interviews, a cross-cutting criticism emerged regarding the lack of meaningful practical experience:

"I did a 10-day internship without supervision. I arrived at the school without knowing how to deal with 60 students." (Interviewee 45, teacher, Nampula)

This disconnect between theory and practice runs counter to the guidelines of UNESCO (2019) and the Ministry of Education and Human Development (MINEDH, 2016), which recommend supervised internships integrated into the daily school routine.

Theme 3: Influence of external agendas

Document	Model	Year	Central Focus	Critical Observations
IFP Curriculum Plan	IFP (2 years)	2006	Integrated training	Excessive emphasis on theoretical components (72% of course load); reduced internship (4 weeks).
FTI (Fast Track) Project	EP1 (10 months)	2	Accelerated massification	Training of 12,000 teachers with a commitment to quality.
Strategic Education Plan	Global policy	2012	Professionalization and equity	Ambitious goals without a feasible financing plan.
3+1 model	Bachelor's degree	2015	Integration of theory and practice	Longer internships, but lack of adequate supervision in rural areas.

Table 1 – Critical Summary of Official Documents (1992–2024)

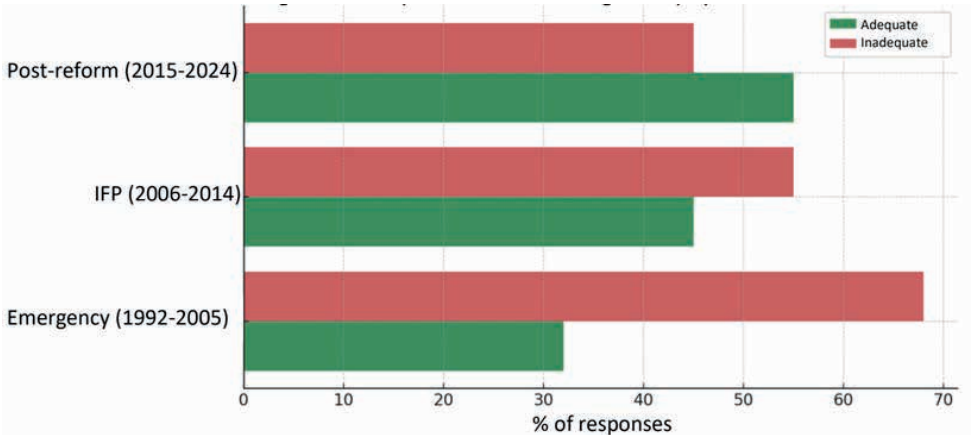


Figure 1: Perception of Initial Training Quality by Generation

Source: Data from a questionnaire administered to 120 teachers. The figure illustrates perceptions of the adequacy of initial training by training generation, highlighting progressive improvements but also criticism of practical supervision.

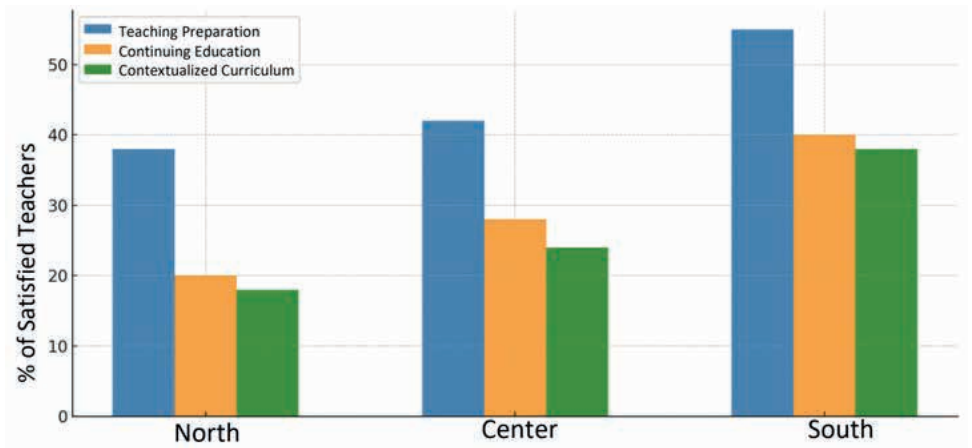


Figure 2. Satisfaction with Training by Region

Dependence on initiatives and projects funded by international partners is a recurring theme:

“Curriculum changes were guided by partners with short deadlines and no continuity.” (Interviewee 8, trainer, Maputo)

This perception reinforces the arguments of Castel-Branco (2008) and Samoff & Carrol (2003), who highlight the limits of international cooperation in contexts with low local ownership of educational policies.

DOCUMENTARY ANALYSIS OF EDUCATION POLICIES (1992–2024)

Twelve strategic documents were examined, including curriculum plans, national policies, and reform initiatives in the education sector. Table 1 presents a critical summary of the main findings.

Main patterns identified:

- 1. **Contradiction between discourse and practice:** Initiatives such as the FTI prioritized quantitative goals over training quality, resulting in professionals who were ill-prepared for the challenges of teaching.
- 2. **External dependence:** Approximately 70% of the documents analyzed were financed by international partners, which conditioned the local contextualization of policies (Samoff & Carrol, 2003).
- 3. **Curricular fragmentation:** The alternation between different training models (e.g., IFP 2006 vs. Model 3+1 of 2015) reveals discontinuity and a lack of appreciation for local epistemologies (Castiano, 2011).

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS BY GENERATION AND REGION

To complement the qualitative analysis, comparative graphs were prepared to summarize teachers’ perceptions of teacher training, stratified according to two criteria:

- 1. **Training generation:** Emergency (1992–2005), IFP (2006–2014), and Post-Reform (2015–2024).
- 2. **Geographical region:** North, Center, and South of the country.
 - Emergency (1992–2005): 68% consider it “inadequate”
 - IFP (2006–2014): 55% “inadequate”
 - Post-reform (2015–2024): 45% consider it “adequate,” with reservations

Figure 2. Satisfaction with training by region (triangulated data: questionnaires and interviews)

- **North:** 62% of respondents criticize the lack of context in the curriculum.
- **Center:** 58% point to the precariousness of training infrastructure.
- **South:** 55% report greater access to continuing training programs.

As illustrated in Figure 1, teachers trained under the emergency model (1992–2005) express greater dissatisfaction with the quality of initial training. Figure 2 complements this analysis, showing that the perception of curriculum contextualization is particularly low in the North and Center regions, which corroborates qualitative data denouncing training that is disconnected from local multilingual and sociocultural realities.

Generation / Region	North (% inadequate education)	Center (% inadequate education)	South (% inadequate education)
Emergency	75	7	6
IFP	5	50	40
Post-retirement	38	35	30

Table 2 – Cross-tabulation between Training Generation and Region

There has been a gradual improvement in the ratings given to the most recent generations of teacher training. However, significant regional disparities remain, with the highest incidence in the North, where material, pedagogical, and linguistic conditions continue to be challenging (Bamgbose, 2000).

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Two main limitations are identified:

- **Geographical representativeness:** certain provinces with difficult access are underrepresented in the sample.
- **Memory bias:** some testimonies relating to the 1990s may contain retrospective interpretations.

These limitations were mitigated through triangulation with documentary sources and thematic saturation achieved in the interviews, in accordance with the internal validity criteria defined by Yin (2017).

IMPLICATIONS FOR PUBLIC POLICY

The results obtained suggest the urgent need to:

- Strengthen supervised internships and placement in real teaching contexts (Chissano, 2022);
- Ensure continuity, consistency, and local ownership in training models;
- Ensure autonomous national funding, beyond international cooperation cycles;
- Integrating local knowledge and community languages into teacher training curricula (Castiano, 2011; Bamgbose, 2000).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study, based on a mixed methodological approach and decolonial theoretical frameworks, critically analyzed the evolution of teacher training models in Mozambique in the post-General Peace Agreement period (1992–2024). The triangulation of documentary data, surveys of 120 teachers, and semi-structured interviews with key actors revealed a training system characterized by structural contradictions, in which professionalization efforts coexist with persistent weaknesses in terms of the quality, contextualization, and

continuity of the policies implemented.

The analysis identified three main patterns. First, teacher training has historically been fragmented, with overlapping initiatives and weak coordination between different cycles and reforms. Second, there has been chronic discontinuity in education policies, which undermines the consolidation of institutional learning and good practices. Third, imported training models predominate and are insufficiently adapted to local sociocultural contexts, especially in the emergency phases of post-conflict reconstruction.

Qualitative data show that, despite some recent curriculum reforms, many training programs remain disconnected from the concrete realities of Mozambican schools, particularly in rural areas. The teachers surveyed pointed to gaps in their preparation for dealing with multilingual contexts, multigrade classes, school inclusion, and the use of digital technologies, revealing a clear disconnect between the knowledge promoted in initial training and the daily demands of teaching practice.

Given this scenario, four strategic axes are proposed for the reconfiguration of public teacher training policies in Mozambique:

1. **Critical and decolonized curriculum:** develop programs that integrate African epistemologies, local knowledge, and real school contexts, while maintaining international quality standards;
2. **Integration between initial and continuing training:** build a coordinated system of professional development for teachers, with regular, supervised, and localized in-service training;
3. **Institutional strengthening of IFPs:** modernize Teacher Training Institutes as centers of pedagogical excellence, investing in infrastructure, didactic innovation, and educational research;

4. Teacher participation and systemic evaluation: institutionalize participatory evaluation mechanisms and continuous monitoring, overcoming reductive quantitative approaches and focusing on real impacts on teaching practices and learning outcomes.

Overcoming the limitations identified requires abandoning isolated, short-term so-

lutions and instead committing to sustainable public policies, built in a participatory, intersectoral, and interinstitutional manner. The current convergence between national strategic frameworks and the Sustainable Development Goals is a historic opportunity to reposition teacher training as a cornerstone of quality education in Mozambique.

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