Chapter 4.

Systems

4.1   Needs assessment

The World Bank and the government rapidly conducted overall the damage and needs assessment after the floods in order to move the agenda swiftly away from emergency relief and to prepare for a donor conference. It seems important that there was government ownership of the assessment report that went to the donor conference.

Several ministries and agencies at the national and local levels undertook more detailed assessments for program planning purposes. It is not possible to generalize about these assessments, but there is a sense that beneficiary participation in assessment and program design was not generally given a high priority (Cosgrave 2001) (see section 4.4).

4.2   Coordination and implementation of recovery

Mozambique's national disaster management bodies are defined in the 1999 national policy on disaster management (see section 3.1) and are outlined in box 4.1 below.

Box 4.1: Mozambique's national disaster management bodies

Coordinating Council for Disaster Management (CCGC) - the government body chaired by the Prime Minister responsible for policy decisions relating to disasters. It comprises the Ministers of key areas including Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Public Works and Housing, Transport and Communications, Health, Agriculture, and Rural Development.

National Institute for Disaster Management (INGC) - responsible for disaster management and the coordination of prevention activities, relief to disaster victims, and the rehabilitation of affected infrastructure. The INGC is an institute under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and has provincial offices throughout Mozambique.

Disaster Management Technical Council (CTGC) - chaired by the INGC director, the Council comprises the Ministerial members of the CCGC plus representatives from bodies such as the Mozambique Red Cross, UN agencies, NGOs, etc. It is responsible for coordinating sector and ministry early warning systems, defining national alert and early warning systems, and proposing declarations of emergencies to the CCGC.

Sources: GoM 1999; UNRC 2001b.

In practice, as mentioned in section 3.1, the INGC's role in recovery is limited, and recovery responses were generally managed and coordinated by the line ministries with the oversight of the CCGC.

Much of the post-flood recovery work was undertaken within the framework of existing development programs. On a practical level, as the community survey found, this meant that reconstruction could be facilitated using standard ministry drawings and specifications for schools, health posts/centers, and hospitals. This was not the case for the construction of houses (see section 6.4).

The rate of implementation of reconstruction was a cause of concern to the government. It attributed donor requirements to delays in implementing recovery programs for such things as tendering, drawing up project documents, and developing budget mechanisms (GoM 2001d). It certainly seems that some donors have yet to institute systems that could facilitate the quick implementation of recovery programs. The gap in procedures between rapid relief response and lengthy development program procedures continues. The speed of recovery implementation has also been related to capacity and bureaucracy within the government (SIDA 2000b).

The government's 2000 reconstruction appeal document talks about a central coordinating body to support the recovery of the private sector (GoM 2000f). However there is no evidence that this body has been active.

Donor coordination, both between donors themselves and with the government, was already well established before the disasters struck (see section 2.2). Existing coordination structures have continued to handle discussion of the recovery phase.

Some observers noted that recovery operations slowed as bureaucratic procedures were reinstated after the relief phase. Some NGOs experienced increasing problems and long delays in clearance with customs. This issue is linked to a wider need for clearer systems, policy, and legislation for the regulation of NGOs, including clarifying importation procedures (MRC 2002a).

A number of agencies used a reprogramming or reallocation approach to hasten their response. The World Bank reprogrammed some of its existing loans as a faster and more flexible way to meet Mozambique's short- and medium-term recovery needs, rather than designing and implementing a new multi-sectoral flood rehabilitation project (WB 2000d). As a result, nine of the fifteen operations, including roads, agriculture, health, and education had elements restructured to provide reconstruction funds totaling over US$30 million (World Bank 2002).

A notable example of good practice was the World Bank roads program that already had a disaster contingency fund built into the original budget, thereby short-circuiting reprogramming procedures.

A broader issue about reallocations and reprogramming is that the impacts and funds involved tend to disappear off the monitoring and evaluation radar screen. It seems important that these mechanisms are monitored so that, for example, possible negative impacts on existing projects can be assessed and lessons for improvement learned.

4.3   Coordination and implementation at the district level

The community survey in three of the flood-affected areas found that coordination between the local authorities and external agencies was seen by all key informants as one of the positive aspects of the post-emergency period. Agencies felt they were able to reach more affected people, reduce duplication, and increase accountability. An example of good practice in Marracuene and Manhica was the preparation of standard beneficiary lists in collaboration with the external agencies, the communities, and the local authorities. Time was taken to ensure the accuracy of the lists was based on a consensus. The lists were regularly updated and used by all agencies and the government for the resettlement of the population.

However the survey also found that although district authorities were able to maintain a certain level of coordination of post flood interventions through committees and regular meetings with external agencies, the balance of power remained with the agencies. The success of the coordination work depended very much on the philosophies of the external agencies and their commitment to coordination measures, rather than the organizational ability of the local government. Agencies were often reluctant to be fully transparent about their resource allocations and plans, and individual agency agendas could tend to dominate. In

Vilanculos however, it has been possible for the district coordination mechanism to be institutionalized, which in late 2002 aided drought relief activities in the province.

4.4 Community participation and communication

The community survey found that beneficiaries were often poorly informed about recovery plans and activities, a situation that was tolerated as people had low expectations and very little awareness of their possible rights to information. Communities were never informed about the amount of money offered to them and were rarely informed about what they could expect to receive. People were grateful for what they did receive, but were not sure whether they had received all aid that was available. People were often called to meetings to be counted and put on lists, but were not told the purpose of the exercise. Nobody was aware of the full reconstruction picture in the communities visited. This lack of information led to a sense of powerlessness and dependency.

NGOs do not generally reveal their budgets to the local government; the local government does not share financial information with the NGOs; the central government does not reveal the amounts sent to the local government; nobody informs the recipients about possible goods and funds that may be available. The weight of power over information rests squarely with the "giver" and not the "receiver."

The community survey also found that community participation in recovery remained rudimentary and generally consisted of providing labor, participating in committees, and complying with a set of rules decided by external agents. In the words of one of the beneficiaries in Chokwe, "we were asked to stand in queues to leave our names, we didn't know what we were queuing for, just left our names and waited."