

## **An Analysis of the Effects of Civil War and Prospects for Development in Mozambique: The Case of Frelimo-Renamo in Chokwe District**

Paulo Osvaldo Dava, Percyslage Chigora, Tawanda W Chibanda,  
Ramphal Sillah

*(Research fellow in the department of History and Development Studies, Midlands State University, Zimbabwe.)*

*(Lecturer in the Department of History and Development Studies, Midlands State University, Zimbabwe.)*

*(Lecturer in the Department of Development Studies, Midlands State University Zimbabwe)*

*(Lecturer in the Department of Development Studies, Midlands State University Zimbabwe)*

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**ABSTRACT:** Mozambique got its independence in 1975 when the FRELIMO government removed the colonial power, Portugal, from colonial rule after an armed struggle. Peace did not last for long as RENAMO, a political movement which was created in 1977 by Rhodesia and supported by the South African government, waged a new resistance to counter FRELIMO government through the barrel of the gun. The war had far reaching implications in Mozambique, especially in areas where the battles were fought. At community level the war had negative consequences towards development. It is the purpose of this paper to analyse the impact of civil war in rural Mozambique's Chokwe District. The paper examined measures that were taken to encourage development after the war both by the government and the community. The findings of the research indicate that the civil war had negative impact on the Chokwe community and the government has made strides in improving the livelihood of the people in Chokwe District.

**KEYWORDS:** Civil War, Development, Chokwe District, Mozambique

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Mozambique got its independence in 1975 when the Frente de Libertacao de Mocambique (FRELIMO) government removed the colonial power, Portugal from colonial rule after an armed struggle, which was led by Samora Machel. Resistancia Nacional de Mocambique (RENAMO) led by André Matsangaissa was a political movement which was created by Rhodesia and later then by the South African government to destroy guerrilla fighters from Zimbabwe and South Africa. Thus, the new government was violently opposed from 1977 by the Rhodesian government and South Africa backed RENAMO. In general terms, a new resistance was founded to counter FRELIMO government and to disrupt logistical flow of weapons to Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army fighters in Mozambique boarder areas. The war had far reaching implications in Mozambique and her neighbors. The war was intense since RENAMO had the support of the South African government. The country was caught in between the Cold War in which RENAMO was supported by the Western governments whilst FRELIMO was supported by Soviet Union and other Communist states. There was heavy supply of arms to the two sides due to the power politics as a result of the Cold War. The war was intense in the 1980's with increase in political tension, economic recession and lack of social services. A lot of civilians lost their lives, the economy collapsed and the lives of Mozambicans were totally changed for the worst. Given this background, the researchers were encouraged to undertake the research in order to establish the effects that the civil war had on ordinary civilians of Mozambique who suffered most from this brutal war, especially in rural areas, which was the main theater of war.

### **II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO MOZAMBICAN CIVIL WAR**

Mozambique is a country in southern Africa and has a population of 19 million, according to the census carried out in 2004. Its total area is about 801 590 square kilometers and it has a shoreline which stretches from Rovuma down to Maputo (<http://www.iss.co.29/af/profiles/Mozambique/population.html>). It was colonized by Portugal in about 1500 by establishing a trading post at Sofala now known as Beira. This trading post had a thriving slave trade and barter trade with Africans Kingdoms such as the Monomotapa Empire of Zimbabwe. The country became the central point for Portuguese colonial interest in Southern Africa; most of their energy was driven by the need for a Portuguese province on the African continent for political and economic benefit. ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/history\\_of\\_Mozambique](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/history_of_Mozambique)). The president of the colony ruled directly from Portugal using governors of the colony.