

# Mozambique

## *Ethnicity in Mozambique*

### *Power relations*

The leading FRELIMO movement/party wanted to eradicate the political relevance of ethnicity and to unite the whole population under the same socialist ideology (see e.g. <sup>2150</sup>). Yet, ethnicity did not disappear as an important issue in the country's politics.

<sup>2150</sup> [Shenga, 2008]

Although the FRELIMO, which should become the leading movement in Mozambique from its independence up to present date, was founded and operated in its beginning in the 1960ies mainly in the North, its leadership was very quickly dominated by elites from the South (see e.g. <sup>2151</sup>). Especially during the liberation struggles, the northern leaders got substituted by southerners, leading to a Tsonga dominated movement at the moment of the country's independence. Southern ethnicities (except the Makonde-Yao) lost most of their influence (<sup>2152</sup>). The resulting FRELIMO was in charge of the government from 1975 up to now, a fact that has not been changed neither by the civil war from the 1970s to the 1990s nor by the democratic elections 1994, 1999, 2004 and 2009 (see e.g. <sup>2153</sup>, <sup>2154</sup>).

<sup>2151</sup> [Golaszinski, 2005]

<sup>2152</sup> [Shenga, 2008]

<sup>2153</sup> [Ruigrok, 2005]

<sup>2154</sup> [Shenga, 2008]

Yet, although dominated by the ethnic groups from the south, mainly the Tsonga, FRELIMO has never been ethnically exclusive. As already stated, the movement/party was founded by people from the north (namely the Makonde-Yao) which continued to have some influence within the movement after the taking-over of power by the Tsonga. Therefore, they can be coded as junior partners to the senior Tsonga. Opposition to FRELIMO came from the RENAMO. Contrary to the attempts of FRELIMO to eradicate ethnicity from national politics, RENAMO strongly played and plays the ethnic card, forging a "non-southerner" identity (see e.g. <sup>2155</sup>, 162). RENAMO's stronghold is mainly among the Shona-Ndau, living mainly in the center of the country. Due to FRELIMO political dominance and the resulting exclusion of the RENAMO from access to political power, the Shona-Ndau are coded as politically powerless. It can be seen that the political lines, therefore, are not only between ethnic groups but as well (or perhaps even more) between regions. Authors working on the recent elections (e.g. <sup>2156</sup>, <sup>2157</sup>, <sup>2158</sup>) show that voting patterns are becoming more and more regionally than ethnically shaped, as people whose ethnic background would tie them to a certain political party, nevertheless vote for a different party with which they share no ethnic identity. Yet, the ethnic lines are still more

<sup>2155</sup> [Manning, 2001]

<sup>2156</sup> [Shenga, 2008]

<sup>2157</sup> [Carbone, 2003]

<sup>2158</sup> [Golaszinski, 2005]

prominent.

The transition from a one-party system to multi-party democracy was certainly a rupture within the country's political history. Yet, in Mozambique, the introduction of democracy and elections did not change considerably ethnic groups' access to political power. FRELIMO and its mainly Tsonga leaders never excluded others due to their ethnic identity. Thus, just one single period is coded since 1975 without any changes of power status of the three relevant ethnic groups. The Tsonga remain senior partner with the Makonde-Yao as junior partner while the Shona-Ndau are coded as powerless throughout since they are represented mainly by the RENAMO opposition within a strongly centralized and binarized political system and therefore with little to no political power.

Group sizes are estimates based on information available from the Joshua Project and the Encyclopedia of nations (<http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/Africa/Mozambique-ETHNIC-GROUPS.html>; <http://joshuaproject.net/countries/MZ>).

*2010-2013:* The most recent coding period did not see any dramatic changes in Mozambican ethnic politics. FRELIMO still dominates the political arena and is often accused of favouring the south and, by implication, the Tsonga-Chopi group. As before, the northern Makonde-Yao group is represented within FRELIMO. The FRELIMO candidate for the upcoming presidential elections (scheduled for 15 October 2014) is a Makonde and could become the first non-southern leader of the country (<sup>2159</sup>, <sup>2160</sup>). After its clear defeat in the 2009 elections, the mainly Shona-Ndau movement RENAMO has not confined its activities to peaceful popular appeals. Instead, RENAMO leader Afonso Dhlakama has revoked the peace accord of 1992 and more than once threatened to wage a war against the FRELIMO dominated state (<sup>2161</sup>). In this sense, the FRELIMO-RENAMO cleavage and the divide between Tsonga-Chopi and Shona-Ndau is still politically relevant. On these grounds, the codings of the previous periods are simply extended (Tsonga-Chopi as senior partner, Makonde-Yao as Junior Partner, and Shona-Ndau as powerless).

<sup>2159</sup> [Bertelsmann Country Report, 2008-2010]

<sup>2160</sup> [Africa Report, 2014]

<sup>2161</sup> [Boisbouvier, 2013]

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## *Political status of ethnic groups in Mozambique*

*From 1975 until 2013*

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Tsonga-Chopi	0.287	SENIOR PARTNER
Shona-Ndau	0.098	POWERLESS
Makonde-Yao	0.067	JUNIOR PARTNER

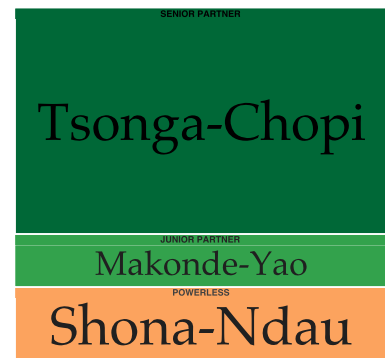


Figure 515: Political status of ethnic groups in Mozambique during 1975-2013.

## *Geographical coverage of ethnic groups in Mozambique*

*From 1975 until 2013*

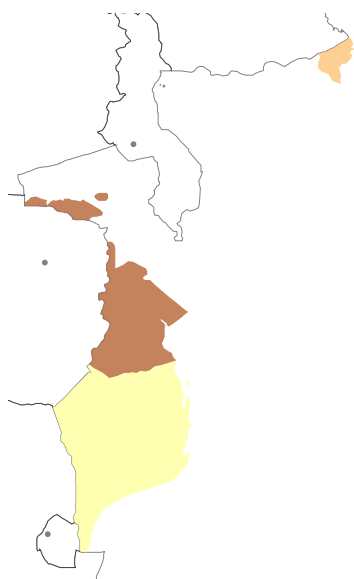


Figure 516: Map of ethnic groups in Mozambique during 1975-2013.

Group name	Area in km <sup>2</sup>	Type
<span style="color: brown;">■</span> Tsonga-Chopi	166 568	Regionally based
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Shona-Ndau	91 764	Regionally based
<span style="color: orange;">■</span> Makonde-Yao	10 645	Regionally based

Table 158: List of ethnic groups in Mozambique during 1975-2013.

## *Conflicts in Mozambique*

*Starting on 1964-11-19*

Side A	Side B	Group name	Start	Claim	Recruitment	Support
Government of Portugal	Frelimo		1964-11-19			

*Starting on 1977-12-31*

Side A	Side B	Group name	Start	Claim	Recruitment	Support
Government of Mozambique	Renamo	Shona-Ndau	1977-12-31	No	No	No