

# Reality Checks in Mozambique

– Building better understanding of the dynamics of poverty and well-being –

Year Five, 2015

## Sub-Report, District of Lago



ORGUT

in cooperation with:

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The 'Reality Checks in Mozambique' is implemented by ORGUT Consulting in association with COWI-Mozambique and the Chr. Michelsen Institute on behalf of the Embassy of Sweden in Maputo.

The Reality Checks are implemented 2011-2016 and each year field work is carried out in the Municipality of Cuamba, the District of Lago and the District of Majune in the Niassa Province. Each Reality Check focusses on a specific theme.

This is the 5<sup>th</sup> Sub-Report from the District of Lago, focussing on quantitative expressions of changes in poverty and well-being and the role of public institutions since the 1<sup>st</sup> Reality Check in 2011. An Annual Report is produced each year to summarise the findings and conclusions from the three sub-reports.

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*Cover photo: Inge Tvedten*

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## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>FDD</b>	District Development Fund
<b>IOF</b>	Survey of Household Income and Expenditures
<b>IPCCs</b>	Institutions for Community Participation and Consultations
<b>INAS</b>	National Institute for Social Issues
<b>Mt</b>	Meticals
<b>PESOD</b>	District Social and Economic development Plan
<b>SDAE</b>	District Directorate for Economic Activities

**MAP 1:** *Reality Checks In Mozambique/Niassa Study Sites*



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Poverty monitoring in Mozambique has primarily taken place within the framework of the implementation of Mozambique's Poverty Reduction Strategy PARP/A (GdM 2005; 2011) and the country's Five-Year Plan 2015-2019 (RdM 2015), and is informed by quantitative data derived from different types of national surveys and similar studies done by bilateral and multilateral aid organisations (see e.g. INE 2010, 2013; MPD 2010; World Bank 2007; UNICEF 2014).

However, by their quantitative nature such surveys do not capture all the dimensions of poverty that are relevant to the design of policies and programmes. While quantitative data yield valuable information about the mapping and profile of poverty over space and time, qualitative data are necessary in order to better understand the dynamics of poverty and the coping strategies of the poor (ORGUT 2011a; Addison et al. 2009).

### 1.1 The Reality Checks

Against this background, the Swedish Embassy in Maputo and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) have decided that there is a need to assess the impact of development and poverty reduction policies 'from below', and to regularly consult local populations in order to understand local processes and relationships.

A series of five "Reality Checks" has taken place in the period 2011-2015, focussing on the dynamics of poverty and well-being with a particular focus on good governance, agriculture and private sector/entrepreneurship that are key sectors in Swedish development cooperation with Mozambique. Each Reality Check is published in the form of one Main Report and three Sub-Reports from each of the three selected study-sites (see ORGUT 2011a for more details).

More concretely, the "Reality Checks in Mozambique" are expected to:

- i) Inform the public discussion among key development actors on poverty reduction, especially in the province of Niassa;
- ii) Contribute to a better understanding of qualitative poverty monitoring methods in Mozambique;
- iii) Provide Sweden with relevant qualitative data on developments and results from its engagement in Mozambique and support further implementation of its programme in Niassa.

The Reality Checks are expected to achieve these objectives by enhancing knowledge on:

- i) Poverty (non-tangible dimensions of poverty, such as vulnerability and powerlessness; poor people's own perceptions of poverty; causal processes underpinning poverty dynamics: coping/survival strategies adopted by women and men living in poverty);
- ii) Local power relations and relationships with state institutions (formal [i.e. political, administrative] institutions that enable or constrain people to carry out their strategies; informal [i.e. cultural, social, family or kin-based etc.] institutions that enable or constrain people to carry out their strategies), and;

- iii) Policies and services (access to, use of and demand for public services according to people living in poverty; quality of public services according to people living in poverty).

The series of studies was initiated by an Inception Report published in August 2011 (ORGUT 2011a). Through that exercise, it was decided that the Reality Checks should be based on fieldwork in three different Districts/Municipalities in the Province of Niassa that display variations in terms of geographical locations, access to public services and levels of poverty and well-being. The three areas selected were i); the Municipality of Cuamba; ii) the District of Lago and iii) the District of Majune (see Map 1).

The 1<sup>st</sup> Reality Check was carried out in 2011 in the form of three sub-reports (Orgut 2011 b,c,d) and an Annual Report (Orgut 2011 e), and represent a baseline upon which the subsequent Reality Checks have been built. Much of the background information given in the first set of reports is not repeated, and being familiar with the base-line studies will therefore ease readings of subsequent reports. The second set of reports was produced in 2012 with a thematic focus on governance (Orgut 2012a-d), a third in 2013 on agriculture and employment (Orgut 2013 a-d), and a fourth in 2014 on private sector/entrepreneurship (Orgut 2014 a-d).

This is the sub-report on Lago for the 5<sup>th</sup> Reality Check, to be complemented by similar sub-reports from Cuamba and Majune. The focus is on quantitative expressions of poverty and well-being, primarily based on results from the Reality Check Baseline Survey done in 2011 and the subsequent Reality Check Endline Survey done in 2015. Key lessons from all three reports will be compared and analysed in the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Report. The entire Reality Check series of studies, based on qualitative and quantitative data, will be summed up and analysed in a Final Report and an accompanying Reflection Report assessing methodology and process, lessons learnt and recommendations for possible future Reality Checks.

## 1.2 Methodologies

Methodologically, the studies are based on a combination of existing quantitative information derived from the National Institute of Statistics (INE) and District Authorities; a Questionnaire Survey in the three project sites (in 2011 and 2015); key informant interviews in the provincial capital Lichinga and the selected Districts/Municipality; a set of qualitative/participatory methodologies including immersion with households in different socio-economic situations; and participant observation in the local communities selected for fieldwork. The methodologies are described in detail in a separate report entitled “Reality Checks in Mozambique. Analytical Approach and Methodologies” (ORGUT 2011f), but a brief summary is in place.

**Quantitative data.** For the mapping of poverty and well-being in Niassa, the team relates actively to existing quantitative data. These include the 2007 National Census (INE 2009b); the 2008/09 and 2014/15 National Household Expenditure Surveys (INE 2010 and 2015); and other more sector-specific studies (see List of Literature). In addition to national data-sets, we use quantitative data from locally based surveys with particular attention to data produced by provincial-, district and municipal governments that form the basis for their development plans – including the Provincial Social and Economic Development Plan, the

District Social and Economic Development Plan (PESOD), and the Evaluation of the District Social and Economic Development Plan (Balanço do PESOD).

We have secured adequate quantitative data to map poverty and well-being and peoples' relations to public services in the three study sites by carrying out a Baseline Survey and an Endline Survey with a total of 360 households (120 in each site). The survey has been done twice with the same families as 'panel data', i.e. in the beginning (2011) and end (2015) of the project period. The surveys seek to combine i) classical socio-economic data on the composition of households, income and expenditure, levels of education, health and access to public services; ii) questions relating to people's *perceptions* of conditions in the household and their community and iii) the *social relationships* (with public institutions, aid projects, family, friends etc.) in which they are engaged. In this report, we give specific attention to data from the Baseline and Endline Survey on a broad set of socio-economic issues in order to trace developments in poverty and well-being and the quality and relevance of public institutions over the period of five years between the surveys.

**Qualitative data.** For the political/institutional dimensions of the Reality Checks, we mostly rely on i) semi-structured interviews with key development actors including provincial government, district/municipal government, Institutions for Community Participation and Consultation (IPCCs), traditional authorities and private sector representatives, and ii) case-studies of concrete programs and interventions particularly in the areas of governance, agriculture and entrepreneurship. We also complement the classical anthropological methodology of 'participant observation' with a set of concrete participatory methodologies that we apply in focus groups, and expanded case studies at household level (see Orgut 2011f). The groups are composed of men or women, young or old or a mixture of such groups, depending on the topic at hand.

The participatory methodologies used for the 5<sup>th</sup> Reality Check in Lago include *Community Mapping 2011-2015* (with the objective to map changes in institutions and individuals considered most important for the life of the community); *Force-Field Analysis 2011-2015* (with the objective to capture perceptions of what conditions may inhibit or accelerate the type of change and development favoured by the community); *Community Problem Matrix 2015* (identifying and ranking the most important problems that affect the community or larger groups of people in the community); and *Venn-diagram 2011-2015* (identifying accessibility to the most important resources [people and services] in the community).

The plan was also to carry out semi-structured interviews with public institutions in the Lago District capital of Metangula, in order to get the local government's view on developments the past five years. Except for an interview with the District Administration's Permanent Secretary, this unfortunately turned out to be difficult due to an imminent visit by the (recently elected) President of Mozambique which took all attention and time of the public employees. In the Meluluca Administrative Post, that is the focus of the Lago studies, constructive interviews were held with the Head of the Administrative Post as usual.

**Focus Households.** The wealth ranking exercise done in 2011 forms the basis for our identification of *Focus Households*. The communities in Lago distinguish between four levels of poverty or 'poor people' and three levels of well-being or 'better-off' people – each with their own dynamics and position in the communities (Orgut 2011 b). Altogether seven Focus

Households have been selected from these categories, and are visited and interviewed in depth every year with a focus on changes in their social relationships with the extended family, neighbours and friends, community organisations and state institutions as well as changes in their socio-economic position.

### 1.3 Socio-Economic Indicators

To end these brief introductory notes, we will present a set of key economic and social data, an overview of the budget and expenditures and key development policy statements as these appear in official publications from the Lago District Administration and the National Institute of Statistics. Table 1 and Table 2 are updated every year of the Reality Check, in order to give a sense of overall developments in the District. Table 3 will be updated in the Final Report, when data from the new National Household Survey will hopefully be available.

**Table 1: Socio-Economic Indicators – District of Lago**

Economic Indicator	2010	2012	2014
<b>Area under cultivation (Ha)</b>	23.828	33.392	37.993
<b>Agricultural production (1000 kgs)</b>	72.740	82.870	93.721
<b>Agricultural extensionists</b>	0	6	6
<b>Heads domestic animals</b>	9.760	14.292	19.018
<b>Production of meat (kgs)</b>	1.010	8.147	7.732
<b>No. of Small Scale Industries</b>	n.a	177	66
<b>No. of Commercial Establishments</b>	n.a	n.a	311
<b>Forestation (in Ha)</b>	6.050	n.a.	n.a.
<b>Number of tourists</b>	8.000	2.060	3.123
<b>Fish production (in 1000 kgs)</b>	4.780	6.974	10.742
<b>Energy (number of clients)</b>	1.156	2.163	n.a.
<b>Energy (clients cut off)</b>	497	194	n.a.
<b>INAS (Number of beneficiaries)</b>	682	1.388	1.867

Sources: GdN/DdL 2011, 2013, 2015

**Table 2: Budget and Expenditures – District of Lago**

Economic Indicator	2010	2012	2014
<b>Self-generated income (MTn)</b>	20.530	28.139	29.742
<b>Salaries/Services (000' MTn)</b>	3.129	3.229	10.065
<b>Infrastructure investments (000'MTn)</b>	n.a	7.709	8.874
<b>No of public employees on payroll</b>	684	829	1060
<b>No of trad.authorities on payroll</b>	227	233	303
<b>District Dev. Fund (No. of Projects)</b>	117	n.a.	123
<b>District Dev. Fund (000' Mt)</b>	7.666	8.897	9.164
<b>Distr. Dev. Fund (Reimbursed, Mt)</b>	207.860	n.a.	179.975
<b>Distr. Dev. Fund (No. of beneficiaries)</b>	585	n.a.	610

Sources: GdN/DdL 2011, 2013, 2015

**Table 3: Social Indicators – District of Lago (Percent)**

Social Indicators	2007	2015
Population (est. 2012)	83.099	n.a.
Proportion FHHs	35.1	n.a.
Primary School Attendance	65.01	n.a.
Solid Roof Housing	1.18	n.a.
Electricity at Home	4.38	n.a.
Cell-phone	0.97	n.a.
Bicycle Ownership	29.8	n.a.

Source: INE 2009

Below, we also quote what the District of Lago itself sees as the main challenges for development and poverty reduction for 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 as this appears in the relevant Social and Economic Development Plan (Box 1-5). As can be seen, the development objectives are largely the same, even though there are some changes in emphasis from year to year.

**Box 1: Development Objectives of the Government of the District of Lago 2011**

“The main focus of the Government of the District of Lago for 2011 is [to] give priority to economic growth that will be reflected in the well-being of the population, [and] this development will be key in order to minimize the inequality between the communities. The Government will [also] continue to implement the Public Sector Reform, with emphasis on the well-being of the population and change of attitude and behaviour of the public servants and consequently an improvement of the quality of the services offered to the inhabitants [all] in order to secure a public administration that is transparent, efficient and responsible”.

**Box 2: Development Objectives of the Government of the District of Lago 2012**

“The main focus of the Government of the District of Lago for 2012 is [to] give priority to economic growth that will be reflected in the well-being of the population, [and] this development will be key in order to minimize the inequality between the communities. The Government will [also] continue to implement the Public Sector Reform, with emphasis on the well-being of the population and change of attitude and behaviour of the public servants and consequently an improvement of the quality of the services offered to the inhabitants [all] in order to secure a public administration that is transparent, efficient and responsible through securing enhanced skills and more training; increases in revenue collection, and contribute to the state budget in the District”.

**Box 3. Development Objectives of the Government of the District of Lago 2013.**

“The main focus of the Government of the District of Lago for 2013 is [to] fulfil its promises to carry out the Strategic Plan for the District of Lago, the objectives of which focus on the reduction of poverty in the midst of the District population through the support of the District Development Fund – FDD (7 Million). In addition, the great wager of the Government of the District of Lago for 2013 is to create indicators of economic growth that reflect the well-being of the population and make rural development the main avenue for poverty reduction in the communities. In other words, the Government takes on the responsibility to continue the Public Sector Reform, increase income, contribute to the rational use of the State Budget for

the District and improve infrastructure”.

**Box 4.** *Development Objectives of the Government of the District of Lago 2014.*

“Enhance the quality of life and well-being in the population with 60 percent (sic!), through access to and utilisation of basic social services at all levels; and galvanise institutional mechanisms to promote good governance with the objective of securing socio-economic growth and cultural sustainability in the district.”

**Box 5.** *Development Objectives of the Government of the District of Lago 2015.*

“Enhance the quality of life and well-being in the population with 60 percent (sic!), through access to and utilisation of basic social services at all levels; and galvanise institutional mechanisms to promote good governance with the objective of securing socio-economic growth and cultural sustainability in the district.”

## 2. LAGO/MELULUCA 2015

### 2.1 The District of Lago

Leaving Niassa's provincial capital Lichinga for Lago/Metangula in early October 2015 – i.e. one year after our last visit – there are few palpable signs of change except for a growing number of houses and informal markets along the road. Many of the homesteads have long poles with *capulanas* tied to them, signalling that a child is going through rites of initiation and reminding us that Niassa is a province where tradition and religion are strong. In between there are also flags from the political parties Frelimo, Renamo and MDM, which has become increasingly common and may be seen as a sign of larger political space. We are also passing large forestry areas planted with eucalyptus, which have grown for every year we have passed them. Originally owned and run by the Swedish company Chikwete, the company's failure in 2014 and subsequent sale to the Norwegian company Green Resources is a sign that investing in Niassa is complicated. Chikwete is seen to have underestimated both the importance and complexity of relations with communities, and the costs of doing business in a province with a poor business environment and infrastructure.

Approaching Lago and Metangula, the most noticeable change is still the increasing number of new and improved houses made of concrete (*blocos*) with zinc roofs. A few new shops have opened including stores selling non-food products such as electricity utensils and fishing gear; two new tourist-installations/restaurants are in the process of being constructed in the town centre; and a large warehouse is being built next to the main informal market. Moving on, the main road from the town centre to the Vila is

being enlarged and tarmacked all the way to the residence of the District Administrator. The perhaps most significant change is the new (and first) bank in Lago/Metangula located in the Vila, which has made life easier for public and private sector employees who no longer have to go all the way to Lichinga to deposit or withdraw money. Among other changes is that the new boat "Tchambo" – being the pride of the District authorities and transporting people and goods to and from Malawi – has resorted to being on- and off-loaded in the sea as the new port installations from 2014 turned out to be of very poor quality. Also, some of the businesses that were the focus of attention during the 2014 Reality Check (ORGUT 2014a) have ceased to exist – one because the owner died and had nobody to take over and another because it did not manage to attract enough customers in the increasingly fierce competition in Metangula.

Approaching the District Authorities to make our presence known and carry out the usual interviews with heads of public sector offices, we were well received as usual but soon realised that we had come at an inconvenient time. The President of Mozambique was due to arrive two weeks after our appearance, and the entire public administration practically

**Illustration 1: Metangula**



Photo by: Inge Tvedten

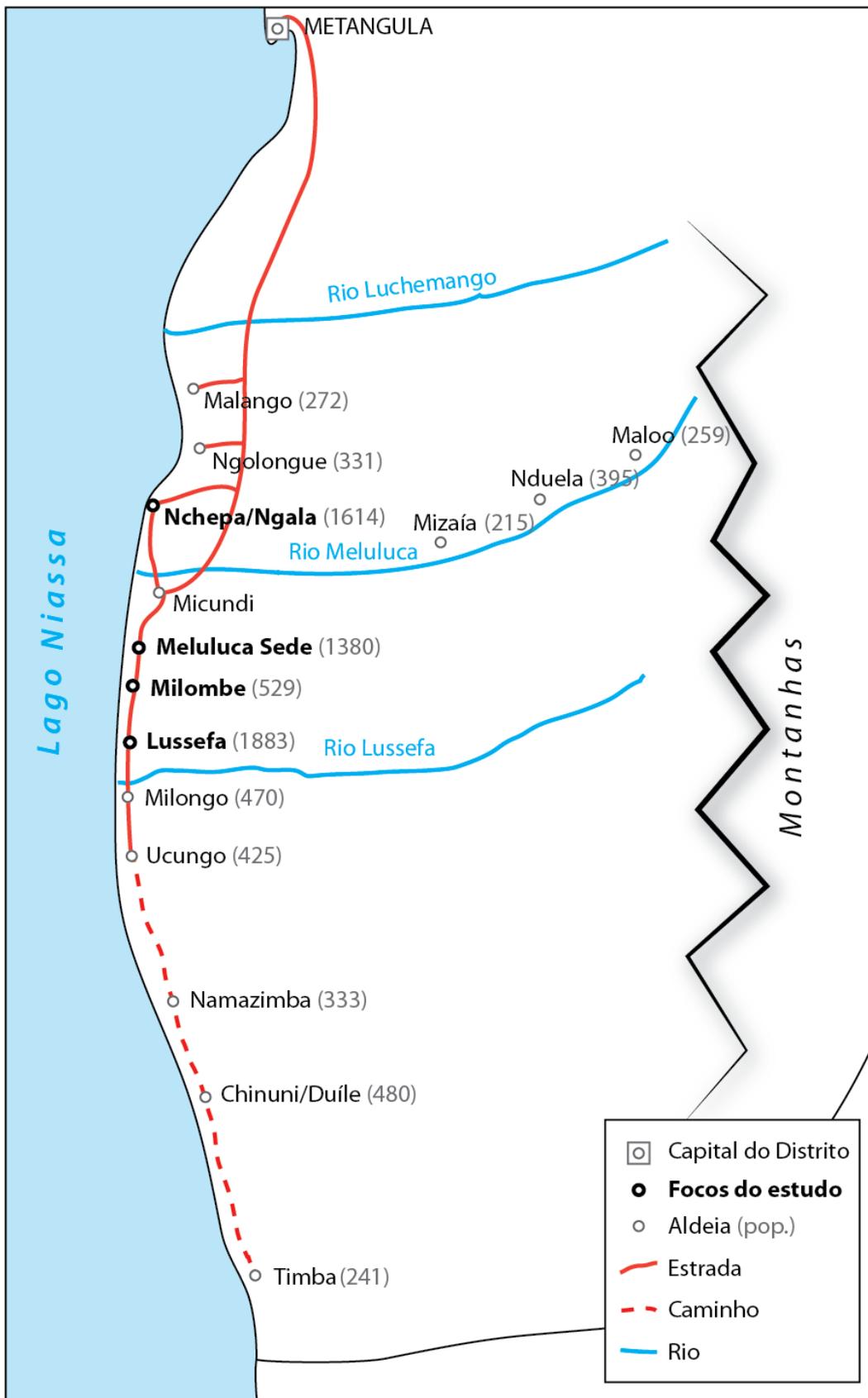
come to a standstill meaning that we only managed to have a few of the planned interviews. With the heads of the public offices unavailable, it is practically impossible to have interviews with other lower-level staff. Based on those conversations and relevant written material, the general trends in the District's development reported on in earlier Reality Checks still seem valid (see Table 1 and 2).

The number of public sector employees continues to rise, with many going for further training; there are smaller increases in agricultural, pastoral and fisheries production (even though it remains unclear how the very precise figures given are arrived at); the number of commercial establishments (primarily *barracas*) has increased while the number of small-scale industries is going down; the number of recognised traditional authorities has increased slightly while the number of recognised bairro secretaries has increased more (in both cases with very few being women); the number of reported crimes is still very low and the number of reported cases of domestic violence has decreased slightly; the number of primary schools (up to 7<sup>th</sup> Grade) has remained stable; and in health malaria remains the main problem leading to the largest number of deaths in the District – to mention some of the developments between 2013 and 2014 (GdN/Lago 2015).

However, the main 'talk on the town' during our stay in Metangula was the devastating rains in the early part of the 2014/2015 agricultural season which washed away crops and affected everybody – either directly by losing yields or indirectly by increasing prices for agricultural produce/food.

Map 2: Meluluca Administrative Post, District of Lago

### Mapa Meluluca



## 2.2 Developments in Meluluca

The road from Metangula to Meluluca is still bumpy and curved (see Map 2), but has seen clear improvements since last year with new bridges and aqueducts. In the village of Ngolongue off the main road, housing the tourist establishment Mbuna Bay Lodge with ten guesthouses, a restaurant and 24 local employees, the owner has started constructions for a small enterprise making dried mango for the international market ([www.globalfarmersmarket.org](http://www.globalfarmersmarket.org)). If successful,<sup>1</sup> this will further establish the resort as the largest private business in the area. The new village along the road, inhabited by people who decided to leave their village Maloo in the interior in 2013/14, has grown to 25 households and taken the name Gaza. The bridge over the Meluluca River, which last year saw a terrible accident with 16 people dying, has also been improved. Entering Meluluca itself, there is a clear increase in the number of houses as well as *barracas* and *bancas* – of which many now have light from solar panels. There is also a discernible increase in the number of fishing boats with motors, indicating that fisheries are going well. And, finally, two new large private houses painted in white with a high fence around them (of which one, according to local rumours, will be turned into the first lodging in the village) are the first of its type in Meluluca.

Looking more explicitly on facts and figures (P.A. Meluluca 2014, 2015), Meluluca continues to be a dynamic place with considerable changes. We have earlier attributed this to the building of the road between Meluluca and Metangula in 2008, which had particularly strong implications for the development of the fishing sector. The opening up to markets for fish (particular the sardine *uusipa*) in the District as well as in the Province centre gave a boost to the artisanal fisheries, which have grown from 8 motorised boats in 2006, to 35 in 2011 and to 93 in 2015. This has in turn implied an increase in the number of commercial outlet and a basis for an increasing circulation of money which is visible everywhere – even though as emphasised throughout the series of Reality Checks not everybody has been in a position to become part of this development.

We have also attributed the most recent changes (2013-2015) to the arrival of a very able Head of the Administrative Post (*Chefe do Posto*), underlining the importance of qualified staff at the outer end of the State apparatus where the State is in direct contact with the local populations. Largely based on initiatives from the *Chefe do Posto* and his active communication with the local Consultative Council (*Conselho Consultivo*), the past year has seen a number of government funded improvements in Meluluca including the rehabilitation of roads, construction of small bridges over rivers, water-points and upgrading of the health post and schools. There have also been local/community initiatives based on own labour such as improvements of lower-grade precarious schools in the smallest villages, and the construction of a *Praça dos Heróis* close to the new Administrative Post. The police (PRM) has also established itself in Meluluca the past year, with three officers.

Of the two health posts in Meluluca one has been rehabilitated with painting, new doors, new beds and new solar panel system.<sup>2</sup> According to the head nurse the most common diseases in the area are still malaria and diarrhoea, but as we shall return to below cholera made a mark on the community in the first part of 2015. The maternity ward has entered into

<sup>1</sup> The establishment seems to struggle with the District Authorities' interpretation of relevant laws and regulations, putting what seems to be unreasonable hindrances in the way for initiatives that may have wide-reaching positive effects on the area.

<sup>2</sup> The other, in Nkholongue, was originally built by the owner of the tourist installment in the village but the District/Government has taken over the responsibility and pays the nurse who works there.

cooperation with traditional midwives, and seen an increase in the number of accompanied births from 536 in the first nine months of 2014 to 813 in the first nine months of 2015. Finally, with regards to HIV-AIDS, it is now estimated that 2.1 percent of the adult population is infected from a situation of no recorded cases in 2013.

The Administrative Post has a total of 14 primary schools, of which two are complete (1-7<sup>th</sup> grade), and a total of 56 teachers of whom 14 are women. Of the 3.690 students (1791 girls) who were in school at the beginning of the 2014/2015 school year, 14 percent of the boys and 20 percent of the girls had dropped out by the end of the year (Pers.comm. Head of School District). The management of the school acknowledges that the quality of teaching particularly suffers from the use of Portuguese as the main language of instruction, which very few students speak when they start studying. Also schools have seen improvements both at the level of community/neighbourhood schools (1-3<sup>rd</sup> grade) and in the central village (1-7<sup>th</sup> grade), with the most visible difference being that desks and chairs have become more common in the classrooms.

**Illustration 2: Carpenters**



Photo by: Inge Tvedten

The most discernible signs of material improvements at the household/individual levels are the omnipresent construction/ improvement of houses, the growing number of commercial outlets (*barracas*), a village market with an increasing variety of goods, the surge in the number of private solar panels and the fact that mobile phones – which were not to be seen during our first visit in 2011 – is now apparently owned and used by everyone. At the same time people argue that crime has become more of a problem “because there are more things to steal”. The *Chefe do Posto* uses the expression ‘wave of crime’ (*onda de criminalidade*), even though this is not really reflected in his own statistics where 2014 saw six cases of bodily harm (*ofensas corporais*), one case robbery (*furto qualificado*), three cases of robberies against strangers (*robos contra desconhecidos*), two cases of drowning at sea (*afogamento*) and one case of shipwreck (*navrágio*) caused by hippopotamus within a population of approximately 18.000 people – indicating that many cases are dealt with by traditional authorities and extended families including cases of domestic violence that are frequently discussed in the community.

The District Development Fund (FDD), discussed at length in some of our earlier reports, continues to be by far the most important basis for economic activities/entrepreneurship in Meluluca. Despite its many flaws, including dubious processes of selection of beneficiaries, investments not in line with original business-plans and very low rate of back payments, there is little doubt that the Fund has been instrumental for the type of economic development that Meluluca has experienced. The total of 9.099.385 MT (or 207.000 USD using the current/November 2015 exchange rate) that has been paid out between 2007 and 2014 is a considerable injection of money into a community like Meluluca (Table 4). The 27

allocations for 2015 (out of a total of 58 original applications) gave particular emphasis to the remote Locality of Timba which received 12 of the allocations (see Map 2). 18 of the provisions were given to productive activities (agriculture and fisheries), with the remaining nine being given to commercial activities (mainly *barracas* and mills).

**Table 4:** Allocations through the District Development Fund 2007-2014 in Meluluca

Year	Funding (MT)	Repayment (MT)
2007	860.200	46.900
2008	1.148.210	294.765
2009	1,267.675	162.090
2010	1.328.400	86.776
2011	1.200.000	109.625
2012	1.610.600	80.531
2013	1.190.000	59.500
2014	1.268.300	56.050

Source: P.A. Meluluca (2015).

According to the head of the Meluluca Administrative Post, the main priorities for further development of Meluluca the coming year are i) a local branch of the secondary school in Metangula making it possible for more pupils to continue their studies or (a new proposal) a fishery school (*ensino profissional de pesca*); ii) construction of a road to the Locality of Timba in the south of the administrative post which currently cannot be reached by car; iii) an increase in the number of water posts (pumps and wells) with the current number in operation of ten being too low and forcing people to use the Lake; iv) supply of energy/electricity through Cahora Bassa/grid lines; v) rehabilitation of the bridges over the rivers Luchanga and Meluluca; and v) improved infrastructure (houses, secretariats) for public sector employees.

As we get to meet and talk to people, we discover that despite the progress reported above it has been a difficult year in Meluluca – demonstrating how vulnerable even ‘successful’ rural communities like Meluluca are. There was a tension in the community during our fieldwork we have not experienced previously. This turned out to be the result of a combination of natural/environmental conditions in the form of excessive rains; endemic disease in the form of a cholera outbreak; and a genuine fear that war will return to the area following uncertainties related to results from the national election in November 2014 and more recent news from southern/central Mozambique of strife between the government/Frelimo and Renamo.

The rain came hard and brutal in the early part of the 2014/2015 agricultural season, washing away crops particularly in fields close to rivers and destroying the first season harvest (*primeira epoca*) upon which the large majority of

**Illustration 3:** Lake Niassa



Photo by: Local resident

households depend for their subsistence. People have also finished their storages of food crops from last year, which was a below-average agricultural season. In this situation the price of flour has increased considerably, with people paying as much as 220 Mt for a 20 litre bucket (*lata*) of maize against a normal price of 150 Mt. The families owning low-lying fields using the flood-water have a second chance (*segunda epoca*) to grow crops, but as shown in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reality Check (ORGUT 2013a) they are a minority of the households. In such a situation fisheries become even more important, however this is also fluctuating, and only directly affect a limited number of people. Many people used the word '*fome*' (hunger) to describe the situation in September/October 2015.

As emphasised in earlier reports, the health situation and the quality of the local health-post is a constant source of concern for the population in Meluluca. People have argued that the hospital is unclean, that there is a lack of medicines and that the health personnel do not take their situation seriously (resulting for example in a large degree of absenteeism). They also claim that the hospital is still not sufficiently equipped to deal with serious health risks such as the cholera epidemic that broke out in January 2015.<sup>3</sup> From 630 consultations in January, the number rose to 1242 in February and 1013 in March before going back to normal with 794 consultations in April 2015. The hospital was not able to effectively treat more than a small part of the people who did have the disease, and 19 – mainly children – died. People fear new outbreaks, and are not really sure what to do to avoid that cholera strikes again.

Finally the national elections in the end of 2014 have stirred uncertainty and suspicion in Meluluca, because people claim they were not properly informed about election results neither at the national, provincial, district and community level. Combined with news about fighting between the government/Frelimo and Renamo in the central parts of the country, this has led to anxieties and talk about a possible new

**Illustration 4: Preparing for Official Visit**



Photo by: Inge Tvedten

war (Meluluca was very much affected by the internal war until 1992, see Orgut 2011b). Meluluca is seen to be a stronghold for Renamo, and the opposition has become increasingly open about their presence. One implication of the 'politisation' of the Meluluca communities seems to be unwillingness to separate development interventions by the government, from politics. In the case of the village of Nchepa (see Map 2) – which is an opposition stronghold – this has led to the local leaders refusing to accept government involvements with the argument that it has hidden motives.

<sup>3</sup> According to the head nurse, the risk of cholera in Meluluca is highest in periods of the year when the lake is stagnant and people continue to use it for bathing as well as for drinking.

The political tension was highlighted at the celebration of the Day of Peace (*Dia de Paz*) in Meluluca during our fieldwork. With the announcement of the presence of the Lago District Administrator, the Permanent Secretary and other dignitaries from the central District Administration, the *Chefe do Posto* made great efforts in organising an event that would gather many people and that could be used to present Meluluca concerns to the government authorities. On the day of the event, however, very few people from the community turned up with the exception of those who were ordered to do so – including traditional authorities and bairro secretaries, a cultural dance group from the Lussefa community, and nearly 200 school children (from 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> Grade). The stay-away was largely interpreted as a message to the ruling party. As it turned out, the well-orchestrated (and at times beautiful) event included speeches by the government/state representatives, prayers by the local *Chehe* and cultural performances – but also speeches by the local representatives of Frelimo and Renamo – and some more people turned up as the event went along.<sup>4</sup>

## 2.3 Socio-Economic Conditions

Ending our brief accounts of the socio-economic situation in Lago/Meluluca in 2014/2015 – and before moving on to the quantitative expressions of changes in poverty and well-being and social relations with public and community-based institutions – we will briefly recap people’s own perceptions of the current state of affairs/main challenges compared to the situation in 2011 as these were expressed in the Venn Diagram and Matrix of Problems exercises (see Chapter 1 and Orgut 2011f).

**Venn Diagram.** The Venn Diagram exercise was done with a group of men (5) and women (6), who were asked to i) list the most important institutions (organisations and individuals) in the community, ii) allocate to each of them three (most important), two (medium importance) or one (least important) stars, and iii) place each of them (in the form of round pieces of paper with the name of the institutions in three sizes related to importance) on a flipchart based on the ease with which they can be reached. The same exercise was done in 2011, making it possible to record possible changes in the importance attached to each institution between 2011 and 2015. The results of the exercise are visualised in Table 5.

**Table 5: Venn Diagram**

Institution	Summary of Discussion	(*) 2015	(*) 2011
<b>Traditional leaders (Rainhas/régulos)</b>	Know everything that is going on in the community; has power to make decisions; receives visitors	***	***
<b>Head Administrative Post</b>	Intermediary between the community and the government; responsible for the public institutions	***	***
<b>Political Parties</b>	“A country without [a political] opposition is a country without importance” – but the group was divided on this issue	***	**
<b>Bairro Secretary</b>	Supports the rainha, takes part in debates about community issues and is the link between the rainha and the government	**	**
<b>Religious leaders (Chehes)</b>	Coordinates religious issues, teaches spiritual life to the community, and leads burial ceremonies	**	**

<sup>4</sup> MDM was not represented, apparently because they ‘have no local representative’.

<b>'Equipa Vida' (Water/Sanitation)</b>	Does the important job of teaching people how to use water, and hygiene	**	-
<b>Grave diggers / (coveiros)</b>	Takes the difficult job of burying the dead in the community graveyards	**	-
<b>Traditional leaders (Ndunas)</b>	The pillars ( <i>pilares</i> ) or support of the <i>rainha</i> in the different parts of her area of responsibility	*	-
<b>Rotating Savings Groups</b>	Helps with local loans and schools for children (i.e. extra funds collected by the groups)	*	-
<b>Community Board of Fisheries</b>	Contributes to a sustainable fishery and bans the use of mosquito nets	*	-
<b>Football teams for children</b>	Brings happiness to the children in the community	*	-
<b>OMM</b>	The party's women group, mainly helps out in organising events ( <i>festejos</i> ) such as 7 of April.	*	-

The most significant change since 2011 is arguably that political parties are seen to have become more important, at par with the highest levels of community-based traditional leaders (*rainha*). Concerning the head of the Administrative Post, people have come to realise that he is important for 'bringing development' to the community. With regards to the importance attached to political parties, the members of the focal group argued that 'the country and the community needs an opposition to be democratic', but it also reflects the extent to which communities like Meluluca are becoming 'politicised'. OMM on its part is seen to have been reduced to organising 'social events'. The importance (albeit limited to one star) of 'interest groups' related to fisheries as the main source of income, savings groups for small scale investments and football for children also say something about the intricacy of the institutional landscape even in small villages like Meluluca.

In assessing the accessibility of these institutions/individuals by the community, the most easy to reach were seen to be the traditional leaders (*rainhas* and *ndunas* in the current case), and the religious leaders (*chehes*). Their common denominator is that they have a long history, are located inside the communities, and can easily be contacted. Still accessible are heads of political parties, the bairro secretaries, and representatives for the different interest groups (water, savings, fisheries, football), but somewhat less so because the leaders of the institutions usually pursue other activities that often make them more difficult to reach. The representatives of groups of grave diggers (who also often prepare ceremonies) are less accessible, apparently because they 'drag their feet' in order to get the remuneration they say they deserve for that type of work. Least accessible by far is seen to be the Head of the Administrative Post, with the group arguing that they have to contact him indirectly through the Head of the Secretariat – and then often hear no more.

**Matrix of Community Problems.** In the "Matrix of Problems" exercise, four women and three men took part. They were first asked to list the most important problems in the community. Following that, each participant was given 15 grains of maize and asked to 'vote' by distributing their grains in accordance with i) the seriousness of the problem and ii) the number of people affected by the problem. On the initiative of the group itself, votes were cast individually without the other members of the group watching. While their argument was

that they did not want people to influence each other, it also says something about the seriousness with which the idea of ‘voting’ is taken and the political climate in the community.

**Illustration 5: Matrix of Community Problems**

PRINCIPAIS PROBLEMAS	SERIEDADE DO PROBLEMA	PESSOAS AFECTADAS
FALTA DE LUZ	35	40
FALTA DE POÇOS / FONTENÁRIA	28	28
NÃO HÁ + DE 7ª CLASSE	17	21
N.º DE ENFERMEIROS REDUZIDO	6	7
HOSPITAL PEQUENO	2	0
FALTA DE RESIDÊNCIA PARA O DIRECTOR DA ESCOLA (21º)	1	0
MAU ESTADO DA RIO MELULUCA	13	9

Additional notes on the right side of the paper: 7P, 3H, 4M, 03.10.15, MELULUCA.

Photo by: Nair Norhona

The problems listed and the votes for each problem appear from Illustration 5. In order of importance (seriousness/people affected), the problems are:

- i) *Lack of electricity/light (35/40)*. “Without electricity people cannot have sound systems and videos that bring joy into the house. With electricity people can be better informed about news from the world through television. With a freezer one can keep and sell fresh products like fish. Without light in the streets they become more dangerous. Both adults and children can study at night if there were energy. All development depends on energy”.
- ii) *Lack of water posts (28/28)*. “[It is a big problem that] people in the community drink water from open wells, and many become ill. People use the lake to bath as well as to drink – which is dangerous and make people sick particularly at the onset of the rainy season [when there is less movement of the water]. Cholera may come back.”
- iii) *Lack of schools above 7<sup>th</sup> grade (17/21)*. “Most families in Meluluca cannot afford to send their children to Metangula to study and pay for housing, food, uniforms and school materials. To finish 12<sup>th</sup> grade, these payments will last for five years. If we could only have a school up to 10<sup>th</sup> grade, many more children would finish secondary school”.
- iv) *The poor condition of the bridge over the Meluluca River (13/9)*. “The whole community depends on the road to Metangula for communication. The bridge is dangerous [16 people died last year], and people are afraid to pass it.”

- v) *Insufficient number of health personnel/nurses (6/7)*. “There is only one nurse who has to be available 24 hours, and often he is so tired that he doesn’t attend to the patients in a good way. Also the midwife works a lot, but as she is tired and young people do not trust [her] and prefer to go to traditional midwives.”
- vi) *A hospital that is too small for the needs of the community (2/0)*. “People are not attended to and often have to wait for a long time, with this being the only hospital from Melamba to Timba.”
- vii) *Inadequate housing for the Director of the primary school (1/0)*. “A school is pleased (*alegre*) when the director and teachers have houses with dignity (*tem uma habitação condigna*)”.

### 3. QUANTITATIVE EXPRESSIONS OF CHANGES 2011-2015

Perhaps the most remarkable quantitative expression of developments in Meluluca since the initiation of the Reality Checks in 2011 is the sharp population increase. Data given to us by local authorities in 2011 (taken from the 2007 Census) implied a total population of 8.527, which had increased to 17.715 people living in 3.543 households in 2015 (Map 2, Table 6).<sup>5</sup> The figures represent an annual population growth of as much as 11.1 percent, and as seen from the table the increase has taken place in practically all of the villages making up Meluluca. At the same time, there is a surplus of women in all villages, with Milambe standing out having 194 men and 451 women.

We have argued throughout this series of Reality Checks that Meluluca has gone through very positive developments in socio-economic terms (albeit not affecting all strands of the population), and what the figures seem to show is that people in areas like Niassa/Lago exhibit a large degree of mobility and seek out communities where opportunities are seen to be best. This usually implies urban areas, but also rural areas seen to be particularly important for employment and income such as Meluluca.

**Table 6:** *Population Increase Meluluca 2007 (2011) to 2015.*

Vila/Village	2007	2015		
		Men	Women	Total
<b>Meluluca</b>	1380	1025	1208	2233
<b>Milambe</b>	529	194	451	645
<b>Mucundi</b>	420	682	691	1373
<b>Chilowa</b>	1183	148	156	304
<b>Milombe 2</b>		83	77	160
<b>Malanglana</b>		188	211	399
<b>Lussefa</b>		316	474	790
<b>Luuno</b>		187	163	187
<b>Milongo</b>	470	351	362	713
<b>Timba</b>	241	800	1000	1800
<b>Chinuni</b>	480	700	900	1600
<b>Luila</b>		250	350	600
<b>Namazimba</b>	333	250	300	550
<b>Mayango</b>	280	220	180	400
<b>Ngolongue</b>	331	260	288	548
<b>Maloo</b>	259	250	350	600
<b>Nchepa</b>	1614	420	550	970
<b>Ngala</b>		500	600	1100
<b>Duela</b>	395	497	498	995
<b>Ucungo</b>	425	815	770	1585
<b>Total</b>	8.527	8.165	9.550	17.715

Sources: INE 2009b; P.A. Meluluca 2015.

<sup>5</sup> The last count of the population in Meluluca was done as part of an exercise to plan for new waterpoints. A new national population census will only be carried out in 2017.

Below, we present key quantitative socio-economic data on developments between the Baseline Survey in 2011 and the Endline Survey in 2015.<sup>6</sup> The survey in Lago covers a total of 120 households (i.e. one third of the total sample for the Reality Check studies that also include Cuamba and Majune). The sample has been selected using systematic random sampling (Orgut 2011f), and carried out in four of Meluluca's eight villages. Revisiting the selected households after five years, we managed to interview 88.3 percent of those interviewed in 2011. Of the 14 households we did not encounter, 9 had moved to another village and 5 had been dissolved. These households were substituted by the nearest neighbouring household.

In order to illustrate the quantitative analysis, we will make references to the seven Focus Households that were selected in 2011 on the basis of a Wealth Ranking exercise (Orgut 2011a). We will start the analysis with a brief recapitulation of the situation of these households in 2011, and refer to their development in the period 2011 to 2015 as we go along. For more details about changes in their situation, we refer to the Reality Check reports from 2014.

**Table 7: Emic Categorisation of Levels of Poverty and Well-Being**

The Poor	
<b>Osowedwa</b>	People who do not have money, and no clothes. They are not in a position to marry because they do not have the necessary material means and no one wants to marry them.
<b>Chilekwa</b>	Men and women who are lazy ( <i>preguiçosos</i> ), and who do not contribute anything to the community.
<b>Masikini</b>	Men and women with physical or mental deficiencies.
<b>Okalamba</b>	Older men and women who do not have support from their family because no one is close to help.
The Better-Off	
<b>Odjifunila</b>	People who manage well in their daily life, and who do not depend on others.
<b>Opata</b>	People who are in a position to give informal employment ( <i>biscatos</i> ) to other people in agriculture, fisheries and construction.
<b>Olemela</b>	People who have a car, who have companies, who pay fixed [monthly] salaries to their employees, who have a bank-account and who sell products coming from Malawi and Tanzania.

Source: 1<sup>st</sup> Reality Check Lago (ORGUT 2011c)

**Family 1 (Osowedwa I).** In 2011 the household lived in Milombe, in a small house with only one room. The couple had six children from 2 months to 16 years of age. They had two *machambas* in the rainfed area that barely produced enough for consumption. In addition, the husband made and repaired agricultural tools and doors – for which there were limited

<sup>6</sup>In a Final Report, to be published shortly after the 5<sup>th</sup> Reality Check, a full analysis of the dynamics of poverty and well being using qualitative as well as quantitative data will be given.

requests and which paid poorly. The children only went to school “sometimes”, with the exception of the oldest boy who received support to start 8<sup>th</sup> grade in Metangula. The husband claimed his family has always been poor, and he had no relatives left. The one person they relied on in times of crisis was the wife’s uncle, who lived close by.

**Family 2 (Osowedwa II).** In 2011 the household consisted of a single mother, one of her two children and the child of an older sister who lived permanently with her. Her oldest daughter was 15, had a child and had just moved in with a man in the neighbourhood. The house had four rooms and a fenced back-yard. However, it belonged to a younger brother who had just moved to Metangula, and Usuwedwa’s real dwelling was a small two-room shack in the yard. She had never gone to school, and her children stopped studying in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade ‘as there was no money’. She had a small *machamba*, but survived by selling small *bolinhos*, raising chickens and ducks, and renting out the small shack to seasonal fishermen.

**Family 3 (Chilekwa).** In 2011 the household lived in Lussefa, and consisted of an old widow as the household head; her daughter with three children; and her granddaughter of approximately 15 years who had a child of 3 months and a husband who was ‘out travelling’. The three women lived separately in small dwellings, but claimed they belonged to the same household as they ‘ate from the same pot’. They had a *machamba* but did not produce anything (‘we don’t have husbands who can help us’), and barely made a living from *ganho-ganho* – working in fields or helping out with small chores for neighbours against pay in cash or kind.

**Family 4 (Masikini).** In 2011, ‘Masikini’ lived alone with a heavily handicapped boy of around eight years of age. Their one-room dwelling was nearly falling apart. She had a total of five children, with the other four being married and living elsewhere in Meluluca. Her fortunes had changed in 2009, when her husband died and she lost her main source of support. She moved closer to her oldest brother’s oldest son – who she realised was the only one who could help her as her own children “are all poor”. Her main source of income was a few chickens, and she made mats (*esteiras*) when she could get hold of the material.

**Family 5 (Okalamba).** In 2011 the household consisted of an elder lady claiming to be a widow<sup>7</sup>, living in a one-room dwelling and having a small *machamba* as her main source of subsistence and income. Her field was far away, and as she was old she did not have the strength to work much. In addition to herself, she also had the *de facto* responsibility for several grandchildren. Her own four children were all poor and largely in the same situation as her. She sometimes received a little support from her oldest brother’s oldest son in Metangula.

**Family 6 (Odjifunila).** In 2011 the household head was 46 years old, lived in Nchepa/Ngala, and had two wives and a total of 15 children. With his first wife he lived in a compound with two dwellings and an additional one under construction. His second wife had a similar living arrangement. Odjifunila claimed he grew up under poor conditions, moving between Meluluca and Malawi. Returning to Meluluca he worked hard in his *machambas*, and ended up being able to start selling fish (and marrying a second wife). His business received a boost in 2008 when he received funding from the District Development Fund. In 2010 his first

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<sup>7</sup> We later learnt that she had just been left by her husband for a younger wife, but was too upset/embarrassed to say so.

wife also got involved in commercialisation of fish – again with a loan from the 7 million scheme. Odjifunila sends all his children to school, with the oldest attending university.

**Family 7 (Opata).** ‘Opata’ left for Malawi at long and regular intervals during the two wars. Returning in 1995, he started out producing tobacco which gave sufficient income to start other small businesses. One was to sell dried fish and the other *capulanas* - in both cases using his contacts in Malawi. The

business went well, and Opata eventually managed to invest in a *barraca*, larger boats and cattle. In 2011, he had a total of five boats, over 30 heads of cattle, and 15 goats. His economic success had also had social implications: He has expanded his family and had two wives and 14 children between 23 years and one month of age.

**Illustration 6: Passing Time**



Photo by: Inge Tvedten

### 3.1 Household Composition

The household is the basic social and economic unit in Lago/Meluluca. The size, composition and flexibility of households are important for their well-being and social mobility. 85 percent of the households in Meluluca are headed by men (89.2 percent in 2011), and 15.0 percent are headed by women (10.8 percent in 2011). Most of the conjugal unions (65.8 percent) are based on traditional or religious ceremonies, but the proportion ‘living together’ without any marriage arrangement is also relatively high at 18.3 percent. The reasons for the increase in female headed households between 2011 and 2015 are husbands who have died and separations/divorces. Only 5.8 percent of the households are headed by ‘single mothers’. Being a single mother is still socially stigmatised and difficult. Of the three female headed households among the Focus Families identified in 2011 (*Osowedwa II*, *Chilekwa* and *Masikini*), none had married by the end of 2015.

Looking at the size of households (Table 8), the core is a husband, a wife and their children – but 29,9 percent of the households also include other relatives such as grandchildren, nephews, nieces and stepchildren/orphans. Also, 23.4 percent of the households have members who do not usually live under the same roof but eat from the same pot – often children in school elsewhere. The average size of the households in Meluluca has increased from 5.5 to 6.9 between 2011 and 2015, ranging from one to 33 members. Much of this is due to an increase in the share of households with 11 members or more, while the proportion of small households with four members or less has decreased. In addition to natural growth, this reveals a flexibility in household composition either by losing/taking in new members or through marriage (39,6 percent of all married men had more than one wife in 2015, see below).

**Table 8: Number of Household Members 2011-2015 (Percent)**

HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS	2011			2015		
	MHH	FHH	TOTAL	MHH	FHH	TOTAL
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.8
2-4	38.3	53.8	40.0	24.5	38.9	26.7
5-6	28.0	38.5	29.2	26.5	22.2	25.8
7-10	30.8	7.7	28.3	40.2	33.3	39.2
11-15	2.8	0.0	2.5	4.9	5.6	5.0
16 +	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.9	0.0	2.5
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Reality Check Mozambique Surveys 2011-2015

This fission/fusion in household size and composition can be exemplified by the Focus Household *Osowedwa II* (see above). When meeting the household in 2011 it consisted of a poor single mother, two of her children and one niece. During the course of the subsequent five years, one daughter married, had a child and moved out and the niece went back to her mother – leaving the household head and her youngest daughter. By 2015, however, the daughter was divorced and moved back to her mother with her child and the niece decided to come back to her aunt again. For the household head this has implied more able hands – but also more mouths to feed. The well-off *Oyata* household, on the other hand, has grown from 17 to 33 members during the same period. From a situation with two wives and a total of 14 children, the household head now has four wives and 22 children. The wives and their children live in different parts of Lago/Meluluca, and the household head stays with each one with regular intervals in accordance with tradition and religion.

### 3.2 Socio-Cultural Characteristics, Education and Health

97.5 percent of the households in Meluluca are Muslim, at the same time as 89.2 percent practise ancestral cults – revealing the importance of tradition and religion in the communities. Both figures are about the same in 2011 and 2015. The local language Nyanja is spoken at home by 95.8 percent of the households, 68.1 percent of the household heads speak Portuguese – but only 21.8 percent of wives/female heads of households do so. Nyanja is so widely known in the province of Niassa, the District of Lago and neighbouring Malawi that the practical implications of not speaking Portuguese are not significant. The most important implication of not speaking Portuguese at home is probably related to the education of children, as the language of instruction is Portuguese.

The level of education among household heads is still relatively low with 15.0 percent having no education at all in 2015 (21.7 percent in 2011) and 53.3 percent having only five years or less of schooling (60 percent in 2011). In most cases this will imply functional illiteracy, meaning that people may be able to write their names and read simple statements but not read longer texts, make applications, read contracts etc. Among female headed households 61.1 percent have no education at all (down from 61.5 percent in 2011), while the remaining 38.9 percent have 5<sup>th</sup> grade or lower – meaning that no woman heading households have education beyond lower primary.

There are, on the other hand, positive trends between 2011 and 2015 in terms of the highest level of education reached in the households as a whole (Table 9). A decreasing proportion of households only have member with no education or up to 5<sup>th</sup> grade, and an increasing proportion have household members with secondary education. Female headed households

are also part of these positive developments, including household members in secondary education. The proportion of households who have children at school age not in school is stable between 2011 and 2015 at 31.3 percent. There are more boys (24.5 percent) than girls (16.2 percent) who are kept away. The most common reason given is that the 'children do not want to go to school' – but many of the children staying at home work either at home or in agriculture/fisheries.

**Table 9: Highest Level of Education in Household 2011-2015 (Percent)**

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	2011			2015		
	MHH	FHH	TOTAL	MHH	FHH	TOTAL
<b>None</b>	16.8	61.5	21.7	6.9	61.1	15.0
<b>Basic alphabetisation</b>	1.9	0.0	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Primary EP1 (1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>)</b>	62.6	38.5	60.0	55.9	38.9	53.3
<b>Primary EP2 (6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup>)</b>	12.1	0.0	10.8	12.7	0.0	10.8
<b>Secondary (8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>)</b>	5.6	0.0	5.0	15.7	0.0	13.3
<b>Secondary (11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>)</b>	0.9	0.0	0.8	7.8	0.0	6.7
<b>Basic vocational</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Medium vocational</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>University</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.8
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Reality Check Mozambique Surveys 2011-2015

With no secondary school in Meluluca, it requires a considerable investment from parents to send their children to Metangula or Lichinga. This means that assessments of the options for higher education still differ between poor and better-off households. Among the Focus Households, the head of *Odjifunila* has sent all his children to school, continuing to secondary and even university level when they have reached the age. The *Osowedwa 1* household also sees the value of education and made all effort 2011 to send their oldest son to secondary school in Metangula, but could not afford to keep him there. In 2015 they had largely lost faith in education as a way to get out of poverty and only one of their six children went to school.

The health situation continues to be precarious in Lago/Meluluca, with no significant changes between 2011 and 2015. While we have seen that the access to and quality of the Health Post in Meluluca has improved, household members still get sick with very frequent intervals (Table 10). The most common illnesses are malaria/fever, coughs and diarrhoea, with tooth aches increasing probably because of better access to sugar and sweets. 21 percent of the households have at least one member who has died before the age of five years. This partly reflects the limited work done on preventive health measures, including the health hazard of living in poverty and the limited use of mosquito nets to prevent malaria which is the biggest 'killer'.

Among the Focus Households, *Osowedwa II* and *Masikini* have members with deficiencies that severely affect their options for social mobility. In the former the household head has a physical handicap that makes it difficult to leave the dwelling for the *machamba* for example, and in the latter a handicapped child has made it very difficult for his mother to pursue any kind of income-generating activities. For households with means, such as *Odjifunila* and *Opata*, hospitals in Malawi have helped sick members become well – but only by using their extended social networks and after large investments in the form of money and time.

**Table 10: Households with Sick Members the Past Month by Illness 2011-2015 (Percent)**

ILLNESS	2011	2012
Malaria	73.3	75.0
Coughs	72.5	75.8
Diarrhoea	36.7	35.0
Accident	0.8	0.0
Toothache	5.0	18.3
Headache	0.0	0.0
Legache	0.8	0.0
Others	6.7	5.0

Source: Reality Check Mozambique Surveys 2011-2015

### 3.3 Income and Expenditures

49.2 percent of all household heads consider farming to be their main occupation, with no change between 2011 and 2015 (Table 11). Among female headed households this proportion is as high as 88.9 percent. The most common agricultural products are still cassava (produced by 99,2 percent of the households), maize (98.3 percent), sweet potato (79 percent) and rice (60.5 percent). There has been an increase in the share of male household heads who consider fisheries to be their main occupation, from 25.8 to 30.8 percent. Also, as many as 60 percent of the households practise fisheries – of which 94.4 percent sell all or part of their catch. This shows the importance of fisheries as a source of income as well as a ‘buffer’ at times of poor agricultural performance. No female heads of households has this option, due to a combination of cultural constraints and the initial investments necessary.

**Table 11: Occupation of Household Head 2011-2015 (Percent)**

OCCUPATION	2011			2015		
	MHH	FHH	TOTAL	MHH	FHH	TOTAL
Employment, public sector	0.9	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Employment, private sector	0.9	0.0	0.8	1.0	0.0	0.8
Farmer	43.9	92.3	49.2	42.2	88.9	49.2
Fisher	29.0	0.0	25.8	36.3	0.0	30.8
Self-employed with employees	6.5	0.0	5.8	3.9	0.0	3.3
Self-employed/no employees	16.8	0.0	15.0	14.7	5.6	13.3
Occasional employment	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.8
Pensioner	0.9	0.0	0.8	1.0	5.6	1.7
Unemployed	0.9	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Domestic worker	0.0	7.7	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Reality Check Mozambique Surveys 2011-2015

Looking at household incomes, there has been a slight increase in the proportion of households who sell part of their agricultural production – from 43 percent in 2011 to 49 percent in 2015. Otherwise the income from agriculture is relatively stable. 44.2 and 42.4 percent of those who did sell, sold products for less than 1000 Mt after the agricultural season in 2011 and 2015 respectively. 15.3 and 3.4 percent sold for more than 5000 Mt, with the low figure for 2015 being the result of the exceptionally poor agricultural conditions with excessive rains.

**Table 12: Monthly Income from Other Sources Than Agriculture 2011-2015 (Percent)**

INCOME	2011			2015		
	MHH	FHH	TOTAL	MHH	FHH	TOTAL
<b>Less than 50</b>	23.4	23.1	23.3	1.1	16.7	3.0
<b>50 – 500</b>	14.0	69.2	20.0	5.7	25.0	8.0
<b>501 – 1,000</b>	18.7	0.0	16.7	11.4	16.7	12.0
<b>1,001 – 1,500</b>	6.5	7.7	6.7	5.7	0.0	5.0
<b>1,501 – 2,000</b>	8.4	0.0	7.5	6.8	0.0	6.0
<b>2,001 – 5,000</b>	12.1	0.0	10.8	26.1	33.3	27.0
<b>5,001 – 10,000</b>	10.3	0.0	9.2	18.2	8.3	17.0
<b>10,001 – 15,000</b>	1.9	0.0	1.7	6.8	0.0	6.0
<b>15,001 – 20,000</b>	1.9	0.0	1.7	5.7	0.0	5.0
<b>20,001 or more</b>	2.8	0.0	2.5	12.5	0.0	11.0
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Reality Check Mozambique Surveys 2011-2015

The share of households with income from other sources than agriculture has increased from 72 percent in 2011 to 77.5 percent in 2015 – with 74.8 and 83.3 for male-headed and 46.2 and 38.9 for female-headed households respectively. These involve around 30 different income sources, including fisheries, artisanal activities, shops and marketing stalls, carpentry, bricklayer, tailoring, occasional labour and traditional medicine. The proportion of households earning 2.000 Mt or less per month from non-agricultural economic activities has decreased, and the proportion of households earning more than 20.000 Mt has increased (Table 12). Female-headed households still earn less than male-headed households, but there is an upward trend also for the former. In fisheries, owners (*patrões*) of boats earn up to 12.000 Mt per month, while a normal crew members usually earns around 3.000 Mt.

In addition, some households depend on external support from extended family, neighbours and friends. The number of households receiving such support has actually decreased from 30.0 percent to 16.7 percent between 2011 and 2015 with equivalent figures for female-headed households being 53.8 and 44.4 percent. At the same time, the proportion of households giving such support to others has increased from 33.3 percent in 2011 to 43.3 percent in 2015 (0 percent and 11.1 percent for female-headed households). This is yet another indication of improved socio-economic conditions in the Meluluca communities, but again female headed households are lagging behind in terms of economic exchanges.

*Osowedwa II* is an example of a household where poverty in itself has constrained income-earning options. When we first met her in 2011 the female head of household had a small *machamba*, made bread rolls and rented out a small dwelling in her back yard to fishermen during high season. Poor health forced her to abandon her field, the sale of bread rolls was so poor the past two years that she has not been able to buy the flour necessary to make them, and as her dwelling fell apart in 2013 she had to move into the small house in the back yard herself and lost rent. In 2015, she totally depended on handouts from her neighbours. *Odjifunila* on his part has been able to combine extensive agricultural production managed by his two wives and with the help of hired labour, with increasing activities in fish trade – making it possible for him both to invest in a fishing boat and in education for his children.

The overall increase in assets is yet another indication of a positive development in material/economic terms (Table 13). Perhaps the most indicative figure is the increase in ownership

of cell phones from 7.9 percent in 2011 to 61.7 in 2015. Buying and using a cell phone requires money, and a cell phone has become important for maintaining family-relations and for income – for example by keeping oneself informed about deaths and funerals of extended family members and changes in prices for fish at various markets. Other basic assets are relatively constant such as radios (51.7 percent), beds (82.5 percent) and chairs (60 percent) – whereas ‘luxury’ assets such as TVs (5 percent), DVD-players (6.7 percent), refrigerators (1.7 percent), sowing machines (2.5 percent) and motorbikes (8.3 percent) are still rare in Meluluca – partly because of the continued lack of electricity and the still limited distribution of solar panels.

**Table 13: Ownership of Assets 2011-2015(Percent)**

ASSET	2011			2015		
	MHH	FHH	TOTAL	MHH	FHH	TOTAL
<b>Radio</b>	74.8	7.7	67.5	56.9	22.2	51.7
<b>Television</b>	37.4	0.0	33.3	66.7	33.3	61.7
<b>Bed</b>	91.6	69.2	89.2	87.3	55.6	82.5
<b>Blanket</b>	95.3	100.0	95.8	100.0	77.8	96.7
<b>Bicycle</b>	36.4	23.1	35.0	32.4	5.6	28.3
<b>Motorcycle</b>	2.8	0.0	2.5	8.8	5.6	8.3
<b>Water pump</b>	2.8	0.0	2.5	2.0	0.0	1.7
<b>Plates and cups</b>	99.1	92.3	98.3	94.1	83.3	92.5
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.00	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Reality Check Mozambique Surveys 2011-2015

At the same time, the proportion of households that did not experience any month during which they could afford only one meal per day the year prior to the interview has increased from 70.0 to 74.2 percent, implying that hunger has become less widespread (Table 14). However, the proportion of households that experiences six such months or more has also increased from 0 to 9.2 percent, indicating – yet again – that not all households in Meluluca are part of the positive socio-economic development that has taken place. Female-headed households are over-represented in the latter category.

**Table 14: Number of Months Past Year with Only One Meal Per Day 2011-2015 (Percent)**

MONTHS	2011			2015		
	MHH	FHH	TOTAL	MHH	FHH	TOTAL
<b>0</b>	53.8	72.9	70.8	76.5	61.1	74.2
<b>1-2</b>	38.5	26.2	27.5	14.7	11.1	14.2
<b>3-5</b>	7.7	0.9	1.7	1.0	5.6	1.7
<b>6 or more</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.8	16.7	9.2
<b>Don't know</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.6	0.8
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Reality Check Mozambique Surveys 2011-2015

There has also been an increase in the proportion of households with expenditures of basic foodstuffs and commodities, and the sum spent, the day before the interview in 2011 and 2015 respectively (Table 15). On the other hand, more households only consumed porridge, rice and local vegetables without fish and meat (i.e. *caril*) the week before the interview in 2015 than in 2011, which may be explained by peoples' anticipation of harder times following the destruction of crops by excessive rains in early 2015 (Table 16).

**Table 15: Average Expenditure Day before Interviews on Basic Foodstuffs 2011-2015 (Mt)**

PRODUCT	2011		2015	
	No Exp. (%)	Exp. (Mt)	No Exp. (%)	Exp. (Mt)
<b>Food products</b>	45.8	166.86	12.5	65.52
<b>Cleaning products</b>	90.0	70.00	43.3	17.43
<b>Clothes</b>	100.0	0.0	96.7	226.25
<b>School material</b>	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
<b>Water</b>	98.3	33.33	90.8	27.45
<b>Electricity/solar power</b>	100.0	0.0	94.2	26.14
<b>Health consultations</b>	99.2	21.67	95.0	18.33
<b>Transport</b>	100.0	0.0	97.5	95.00
<b>Communication</b>	95.8	51.67	71.7	20.00
<b>Other expenses</b>	100.0	0.0	98.3	90.00
<b>Total</b>	n.a.	343.53	n.a.	586.131

Source: Reality Check Mozambique Surveys 2011-2015

**Table 16: Consumption of Selected Foodstuffs Week Prior to Interview 2011-2015 (Percent)**

FOODSTUFF	2011			2015		
	MHH	FHH	TOTAL	MHH	FHH	TOTAL
<b>Meat</b>	20.6	0.0	18.3	6.9	0.0	5.8
<b>Chicken</b>	31.8	23.1	30.8	2.9	0.0	2.5
<b>Fish</b>	100	92.3	99.2	91.2	77.8	89.2
<b>Eggs</b>	29.9	7.7	27.5	5.9	5.6	5.8

Source: Reality Check Mozambique Surveys 2011-2015

The implications of disparities in production/income/assets are dramatic for the individual households concerned. The *Osowedwa I* household consists of eight members, and is effectively trapped in chronic poverty. They have very little to begin with, never manage to produce and earn more than what they need for their daily consumption, and have hardly any assets. The two parents work hard on their two *machambas* – often staying away from their dwelling for days – but the fields are badly located and yield little. The husband spends practically all his free time doing artisanal work such as making doors and agricultural utensils, but people pay very little for local products of this type. The household members are also frequently sick, but cannot afford to go to the health centre and usually resort to *curandeiros*. Their poverty also sets its marks on the children. They have effectively given up going to school, with only one of the five children at school age attending. The oldest boy works as a poorly paid helper on a fishing boat, and was recently rudely reminded of his position: He presented himself to the parents of a girlfriend, but they refused their daughter to see him as ‘he came from a too poor family and depended on others [*ganho-ganho*] for a living’.

The *Opata* household finds itself on the other end of the scale among the Focus Families. The household head returned from Malawi in 1995, and invested in coffee production which has now grown to a manifold business with agriculture, fishing boats, cattle and various shops – the last of which sells electrical and other utensils in Metangula drawing in 20-30.000 Meticaïs per day. He has also accomplished his long-term goal of buying a truck (via internet from Japan) in order to enter the transport business. His success has been transformed into a large and viable family, with five wives, 22 children and six grandchildren. This has brought him prestige and influence in the community, and he deliberately uses his large family to organise and run his many businesses. The *Opata* household is also faced

with challenges in terms of health, education etc., but his large social network and wealth makes it possible for him to deal with them e.g. by going to Malawi or Lichinga.

### 3.4 Migration and Household Dynamics

Meluluca is a relatively isolated community, with the construction of a road having improved options for external contacts since 2008 (Map 2). Being in contact with the district capital Metangula and the provincial capital Lichinga is important for economic as well as for social reasons and key services such as higher education and hospitals are only available outside Meluluca.

The Endline Survey shows that while people travel extensively, they did so with higher frequency in 2011 than in 2015 – with 54.2 and 38.3 percent respectively having household members who leave Meluluca at least once a week (Table 17). One reason for the reduced frequency of travels is probably that more goods can be bought in Meluluca itself. Among those travelling, most people go to other places in the District of Lago (75.4 percent in 2011 and 82.4 percent in 2015), while trips to places in the Niassa province outside of Lago (mainly Lichinga) has gone down from 20.3 to 13.4 percent – also here most likely because more commodities can be bought locally in the district. People stating that Malawi is the most common destination has maintained itself at around three percent, which could be related to the increasing costs for travelling with the (new) boat frequenting both sides of the shores of Lake Niassa.

The importance of migration/travelling not only rests with the practicalities of visiting family, buying goods and going to public offices, but is also important for experiencing new contexts and getting new ideas. Talking with a group of people outside the house of *Osowedwa 2*, an elder man said that practically everybody in the neighbourhood are family and that it would be better if more people left so that they could “get experience and learn more, and not stay here in poverty”. “We are prisoners of tradition - *Somos preços de tradição*” he added. *Opata* on his part has based his success on travelling and getting new ideas. He stayed in Malawi for several years where he claimed he learnt agriculture and understood the value of having cattle (very rare in Lago/Meluluca), and he gets practically all goods he sells in his shops in Meluluca and Metangula from Malawi and Tanzania.

**Table 17: Frequency of Travels Outside Community (Percent)**

PERIOD	2011			2015		
	MHH	FHH	TOTAL	MHH	FHH	TOTAL
<b>At least once a week</b>	57.0	30.8	54.2	40.2	27.8	38.3
<b>Less than once a week/ more than once a month</b>	32.7	38.5	33.3	48.0	33.3	45.8
<b>Less than once a month/ more than once a year</b>	5.6	0.0	5.0	7.8	27.8	10.8
<b>Less than once a year</b>	3.7	23.1	5.8	3.9	5.6	4.2
<b>Never</b>	0.9	7.7	1.7	0.0	5.6	0.8
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: *Reality Check Mozambique Surveys 2011-2015*

Looking at household dynamics/intra-household relations, there are no indications of any profound changes between 2011 and 2015. Women and girls still largely maintain their traditional roles as caretakers of the house (cleaning, the house, sweeping the yard, cooking, fetching water and getting firewood), both when being part of a conjugal union and as heads

of households. And most agricultural tasks (clearing land, sowing, weeding, harvesting and chasing animals) are done by the married couple together or by the woman in the house (Table 18). Fishing is still the responsibility of men, even though women take part in fish processing and marketing. Our qualitative analyses also confirms that men tend to maintain their position as household heads by being first in line in terms of clothing, food, general expenditures etc. – but they are also still vested with the responsibility for household provisioning.

**Table 18: Intra-household Divisions of Labour and Responsibilities 2011-2015 (Percent)**

HOUSEHOLD MEMBER	Responsibility for Cleaning House		Responsibility for Weeding	
	2011	2015	2011	2015
Household Head	7.5	13.3	9.2	9.2
Spouse of HHH	76.7	60.0	1.7	11.7
HHH and Spouse	0.8	4.2	67.5	56.7
Girls/women	14.2	21.7	0.0	0.8
Boys/men	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
All children	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.0
Entire household	0.0	0.0	20.0	20.0
Other	0.0	0.0	1.7	1.6
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Reality Check Mozambique Surveys 2011-2015

Looking at the Focus Households, women heading households (*Osowedwa II*, *Chilekwa*, *Masikini*) do all relevant tasks in cooperation with children or grandchildren. There are examples in Meluluca of women who cooperate in associations, but among the poor Focus Households all work for others through *ganho-ganho* relationships. When households become unstable (such as with *Okalamba*) women often take on a more proactive role. In 2011 the female head of the household claimed to be a widow, when her husband had actually left her for a younger wife. When he came back in 2015 as the younger wife had left him, the woman set the terms and claimed she was the actual head of the household. In the better-off households (*Odjifunila* and *Opata*), both of which are polygamous household units, women actually have a relatively strong position; they are running their own *machambas* or small marketing stalls with the support of their husbands, but are relatively independent in terms of the way they use their resources within their sub-households.

### 3.5 Community Leadership and Public Services

One of the main objectives of the Reality Check series is to ascertain “local power relations and relations with state institutions that enable or constrain people from carrying out their strategies” (Swedish Embassy 2010). The Baseline and Endline survey confirm that traditional authorities – primarily but not only the *régulo* or *rainha* – are considered to be most important at an overall level albeit with a reduction from 41.6 to 33.4 percent (Table 19). This is followed by the *Chefes do Bairro*, who we have seen have taken over some of the roles of the traditional leaders and are elected/appointed by the State. The local State representative proper (*Chefe do Posto Administrativo*) has seen a small drop in importance from 11.2 to 8.3 percent. The importance attached to the police, from 0 to 22.1 percent reflects the fact that the police had established themselves in the community only one month prior to our fieldwork.

**Table 19: Leaders Considered Most Important in the Community 2011 and 2015 (Percent)\***

LEADER	2011	2015
District Administrator	2.6	0.3
Head Administrative Post	11.2	8.3
Traditional king/queen	41.6	33.4
Village leader	3.4	1.8
Neighborhood secretary	32.6	21.8
Head of block	3.4	1.5
Police	0.0	22.1
Chehe	4.5	5.8
Traditional healer	0.0	0.6
Other	0.7	4.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Reality Check Mozambique Surveys 2011-2015 \* People were asked to list the three most important leaders in their community.

There is little doubt about the importance still attached to the traditional leaders in Meluluca, which is also verified in the qualitative exercises referred to in Section 2.3. The two *rainhas* are old and have health problems, but still exercise their duties through close relatives or *secretários do bairro*. For example, one of the *rainhas* has intervened on behalf of *Osowedwa I* household and reminded better-off fishermen about their Muslim duty for supporting the poor on Fridays. The limited importance attached to the *Chefe do Posto* is more difficult to explain, and may reflect enhanced expectations for development interventions from the State. As shown in earlier Reality Checks, the impact of the new *Chefe* is actually considerable. For example, the *Odjifunila* and the *Opata* households have both received money through the District Development Funds for business development, and they both benefit from interventions to secure better infrastructure.

Concerning public/community institutions as such, most of them are more frequently used in 2015 than in 2011 (Table 20). Asked “Did you or any other member of your household use the following public service the last six months”, the health post and the primary school stand out as having the highest attendance rates with the former also seeing the highest increase in attendance. In both cases, the reasons seem to be a combination of enhanced quality/accessibility of the institutions and need for their services. Other institutions with increase in attendance/use are public transport stops (reflecting the strong increase in the number of mini-buses frequenting Meluluca) and secondary schools (despite only being available in the district capital Metangula). The increase in the use of the semi-formal market for marketing agricultural products reflects both the increase in the share of households selling agricultural produce (see above) and the improved quality of the market. The institution with the largest drop in attendance is the *madrassa* or Muslim schools. This does not reflect a decrease in the following of the Muslim faith which seems stronger than ever, but may reflect an increasing satisfaction with and use of public primary schools.

**Table 20: Households Having Used Public Services the Past Six Months (Percent)**

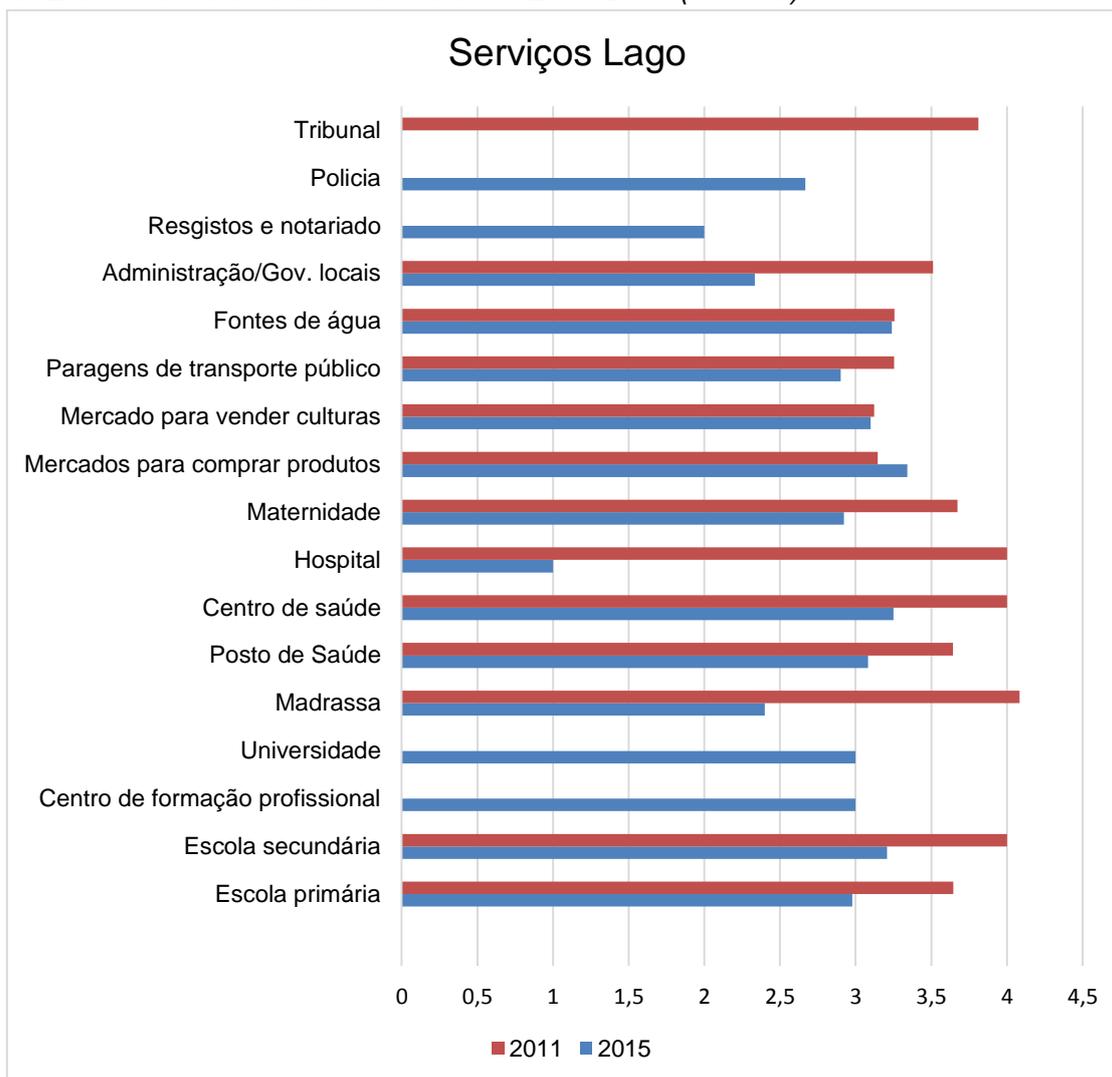
<b>PUBLIC SERVICE</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>
<b>Primary school</b>	66.7	75.8
<b>Secondary school</b>	5.0	24.2
<b>Vocational Training School</b>	0.0	1.7
<b>University</b>	0.0	1.7
<b>Madrassa</b>	29.2	4.2
<b>Health post</b>	46.7	81.7
<b>Health centre</b>	1.7	3.3
<b>Hospital</b>	0.8	1.7
<b>Maternity ward</b>	12.5	10.8
<b>Market - to buy products</b>	95.0	95.0
<b>Market - to sell products</b>	25.0	41.7
<b>Road stops for public transportation</b>	58.3	85.8
<b>Water sources</b>	67.5	65.8
<b>Administration / local government</b>	7.5	7.5
<b>Civil registry and Notary</b>	0.0	2.5
<b>Police</b>	0.0	2.5
<b>Court</b>	5.0	0.0

Source: *Reality Check Mozambique Surveys 2011-2015*

Finally when it comes to the perceived quality of the public institutions, there is a curious decrease in levels of satisfaction between 2011 and 2015 – which again may reflect that the interviewees have higher expectations once institutions are in place and function. People were asked “On a scale from 1 to 5 – where 1 is very bad and 5 is very good – how would you rate [...]”. (Table 21). Overall, relatively few express very negative attitudes (score 1-2), and most claim to be intermediately or relatively satisfied (score 3-4). However, it may also reflect the interview situation as such, where individual opinions are taken down on a sheet of paper in a way that not everyone understands the implications of. In any case, the public institution with the most positive evaluation in 2011 were Muslim schools (*madrassas*), secondary schools and hospitals (all of which implicate relatively few people) and in 2015 they were the (new) local market, water points and secondary schools. The institutions with the least positive evaluation in 2011 were the market (still very informal), water points (still primarily wells) and stops for public transportation (still practically non-existent), and in 2015 they were *madrassas* (as seen from the previous table they are also suddenly less used, which may also imply lower quality or accessibility), the hospital (this may be related to the fact that many of the cholera-victims discussed above died there), and the local government/ administrative post.

The Focus Households also differ in their access to state- and other institutions. Seen ‘from below’, access to public institutions is largely a question of knowledge, social relationships and money. This is perhaps most evident in access to the vital District Development Fund, where we have shown that the poorest households neither understand nor manage to relate to the application process – or pay bribes when that has been necessary. Both the better-off households (*Odjifunila/Opata*) have had access to such funds at least twice.

**Table 21:** Satisfaction with Public Services 2011-2015 (Percent)



Source: Reality Check Mozambique Surveys 2011-2015 \* Average score

Also other institutions with a lower threshold tend to effectively separate between the poor and the better-off, and men and women. Fees and other expenses have to be paid both at schools and health institutions, and we have seen how the poor households (*Osowedwa I and II, Chilekwa, Masikini, Okalamba*) all effectively depend on the local institutions while the better-off households send children away for higher education and sick household members to Malawi for treatment.

Some institutions, such as district and local government, the notary and the tribunal also require a cultural competence that many of the poorest households do not possess. This is not only a question of being able to understand, and sometimes read, Portuguese – but also of knowing how to approach and behave towards public staff in the district and provincial centres. Members of the poorest Focus Households are very rarely outside Meluluca, for some further inhibited by the costs of transportation. One of the better-off households (*Opata*) has split the household in a rural and urban unit and have access to government institutions in both Metangula and Lichinga.

The most ‘democratic’ institutions/services in terms of access are the markets and the wells. They are free of charge, relying only on people having something to sell and vicinity to the

water-point. These institutions/services are also primarily frequented by women (see Illustration). While women were hardly to be seen in public space in 2011, they are now very visible both as *comerciantes* of agricultural products and as customers in the markets. And women – with a few men – gather around the water-posts not only to fetch water but also to socialise.

This general picture of differentiated access to state- and other institutions for the poor and the better-off is partly counterbalanced by social relations of kinship. The extended family still plays a crucial role at times of vulnerability and external shocks. *Osowedwa II*, *Chilekwe* as well as *Okalamba* have all benefitted from support from relatives (usually a maternal uncle or oldest brother) to go to the hospital, send their children to school, file divorce or buy basic foodstuffs at times of particular hardship during the past five years. The clearest sign of destitution for *Osowedwa I* and *Masikini* is their social marginalisation from institutions as well as from relatives.

**Illustration 7: New Water Pump, Meluluca**



Photo by: Inge Tvedten

The best-off households, on their part, are often under considerable pressure from relatives to share part of their wealth and help them establish relations with relevant institutions. The head of the *Opata* household was in the process of moving to Metangula in late 2015 in order to get away from some of this pressure from family, neighbours and friends. At the same time, for the better-off not to relate to extended family, neighbours and friends at all may jeopardize their position in the community as well as their economic position.

### 3.6 Community Challenges

Even though Lago/Meluluca has experienced positive socio-economic developments in the period 2011 to 2015, it remains a poor community with a number of challenges. Many of these are related to public infrastructure. As seen from Table 22, the lack of electricity was highlighted both in the Baseline (2011) and Endline (2015) survey. This is not strictly speaking a 'basic need' in rural communities like Meluluca, but the lack of electricity has taken on the symbolic connotation that Meluluca has not yet been included in national 'modern' developments ("*Cahora Bassa é Nossa!*"). The second main problem – the lack of proper sanitation – reflects a very real problem with strong implications both in terms of health and perceptions of dignity. There are no major differences in the relative importance of problems between male and female headed households. The limited emphasis given to employment and income, which would have made it possible to remedy several of the other problems listed, is probably related to a notion that employment is 'beyond reach' in Meluluca (only one in the sample of 120 households has formal employment).

**Table 22: Main Problems in the Community 2011-2015 (Percent)**

COMMUNITY PROBLEM	2011			2015		
	MHH	FHH	TOTAL	MHH	FHH	TOTAL
Lack of employment	0.9	7.7	1.7	4.9	5.6	5.0
Theft/robberies	0.9	0.0	0.8	1.0	0.0	0.8
Land conflicts	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.9	5.6	4.2
Water conflicts	0.9	0.0	0.8	5.9	0.0	5.0
Lack of energy	49.5	30.8	47.5	31.4	22.2	30.0
Lack of health facilities	19.6	30.8	20.8	23.5	33.3	25.0
Lack of potable water	12.1	7.7	11.7	6.9	11.1	7.5
Roads	4.7	7.7	5.0	10.8	16.7	11.7
Other	11.2	15.4	11.7	11.8	5.6	10.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Reality Check Mozambique Surveys 2011-2015

### 3.7 Perceptions of Change

Questions of people's assessment of the direction of change in their families or communities over time are informative – but also problematic. 'Positive' and 'negative' change are relative concepts, and there is a tendency to focus on recent changes rather than relate to the situation – in the current case – five years earlier. Nevertheless, there is a general sense of positive or no change in household well-being in Meluluca as expressed in Table 23. Or put another way: Very few households think that their situation is worse in 2015 than in 2011. However, the data indicates that male-headed households see more positive developments than female-headed households, with 63.7 percent of the former thinking that things have improved while 66.7 percent of the latter believe there has not really been any change.

**Table 23: Changes in Household Well-Being Between 2011 and 2015**

DIRECTION OF CHANGE	2011			2015		
	MHH	FHH	TOTAL	MHH	FHH	TOTAL
Improved	59.8	7.7	54.2	63.7	27.8	58.3
Still the same	39.3	92.3	45.0	33.3	66.7	38.3
Got worse	0.9	0.0	0.8	2.9	5.6	3.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Reality Check Mozambique Surveys 2011-2015

In the 2015 Endline survey, a similar question was asked related to the community at large (Table 24). Again the assessment of developments the past five years is generally positive – also here slightly more so among male-headed than among female-headed households. We have shown throughout this series of Reality Checks that there is ample reason to be positive about developments in Meluluca – but also that this development has been followed by increasing inequalities with the poorest households not being able to 'hook on to' the developments taking place.

**Table 24: Changes in Community Well-Being Between 2011 and 2015**

DIRECTION OF CHANGE	2015		
	MHH	FHH	TOTAL
Improved	74.5	72.2	74.2
Still the same	23.5	27.8	24.2
Got worse	2.0	0.0	1.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Reality Check Mozambique Surveys 2011-2015

In terms of future expectations/wishes for improvements for the household, the importance attached to housing stand out in 2015 as it did in 2011 (Table 25). Housing is basically a household/individual responsibility, and as we have seen that there is a lot of construction going on in Lago/Meluluca. High expectations are also attached to employment, improved agricultural production, material assets (*bens materiais*) and health that all depend on a combination of government/donor interventions and private/household initiatives. Somewhat lower expectations are allotted to education, which – again – may relate to people losing the faith in education as a way out of poverty.

**Table 25: Preferred Area of Improvement in Household Coming Five Years**

PREFERRED AREA OF IMPROVEMENT	2011			2015		
	MHH	FHH	TOTAL	MHH	FHH	TOTAL
<b>Employment</b>	8.4	7.7	8.3	12.7	5.6	11.7
<b>Education</b>	3.7	0.0	3.3	7.8	16.7	9.2
<b>Health</b>	0.9	0.0	0.8	13.7	11.1	13.3
<b>Agricultural production</b>	3.7	0.0	3.3	15.7	11.1	15.0
<b>Housing</b>	43.0	61.5	45.0	32.4	33.3	32.5
<b>Material goods</b>	9.3	7.7	9.2	14.7	22.2	15.8
<b>Other</b>	30.8	23.1	30.0	2.9	0.0	2.5
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Reality Check Mozambique Surveys 2011-2015

When asked about future expectations and plans, the heads of the poor *Osowedwa*, *Chilekwa* and *Masikini* households always state that ‘they have no plans’ or that ‘God decides’. There is hence a ‘culture of poverty’ among the very poorest in the sense that people cannot see beyond what is needed to get buy the same or the next day. The only way to get out of poverty for them is through external social relations with extended family and public institutions – which the very poorest tend to lack. Better-off households such as *Odjifunila* and *Opata*, on the other hand, tend to have sufficient resources to plan and invest in the future for example in the form of extending their *machambas*, investing in *barracas* and send their children to school etc.

For the future of the community at large, the Focus Households tend to emphasise the importance of tangible issues such as roads, electricity, water, transport/communication, schools and education. However, the future for Meluluca will primarily depend on developments in the economic sectors. Agriculture will continue to be vital, but needs to be made more effective through improved technologies and irrigation. Fishery has developed quickly and is important, but needs to take the sustainability of the fish resources into consideration by limiting fishing entities and use deeper waters. And manufacturing/trade/ commerce must give stronger emphasis to employment creation and diversity for Meluluca to continue to improve.

**Illustration 8: Women at Market**



Photo by: Inge Tvedten

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

### 4.1 Changes in Poverty and Well-Being 2011-2015

- Our qualitative research has shown that there have been positive developments in the Meluluca communities in **economic/material terms** in the period 2011-2015 – which has been confirmed in the Baseline and Endline survey.
- This is visible in the area of infrastructure (roads, bridges, mobile phone networks, solar panels etc.), in the number and quality of housing, and in the increasing spatial circulation of people and goods.
- In primary production, fishery has become increasingly important for consumption as well as income with more and more effective production units. In agriculture, no major changes have been detectable and production is still done with very rudimentary methods and with limited exploitation of the potential inherent in irrigation.
- Trade and commerce has increased with the enhanced circulation of money and a much more varied spectre of goods – but the low local purchasing power is still preventing economy/enterprises of scale.
- Cell-phones and electricity/solar panels have also changed Meluluca, with the former opening up for new more extensive contacts and the latter being important both domestically (socialisation, studying) and in public space (socialisation, security) as well as a sign of ‘modernity’.
- Meluluca has also changed in terms of **political context and public service delivery**. The State has become more present and active through the District Development Fund, investments in infrastructure and an able local representative. There is more political openness – but also more conflicts – around political affiliations and party membership.
- Less progress has been discernible in basic social services (health and education) where enhanced access has not been accompanied by improved quality, and water remains a major problem with only a few sources of clean/potable water which has significant health repercussions.
- The change taking place the past five years have also come with new **socio-cultural challenges**. Traditional authorities and ‘tradition’ have less influence among the young; many young people shun agriculture and often have unrealistic ideas about alternative options for employment and income; and intoxicated young men and gatherings around football-matches at the only TV in the village are only two of several signs of the impact of ‘modernity’.
- At the levels of individual households, income and consumption has grown but so has socio-economic inequalities. There have been improved options for investments and capital accumulation, and some households have been in positions to exploit these opportunities primarily through diversification.
- The very poorest households on their part are captured in poverty with inadequate economic resources and social relations. Very few of the poorest households have managed to improve their situation.
- Female heads of households and single mothers are still stigmatised and tend to be among the poorest – even though there are examples of women who have created their own income base and are role models for others.

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