

Women and Labour  
in  
Sub-Saharan African Economy, 1800-2000  
the case of Mozambique

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# Main questions

- How female participation in sub-Saharan African labour markets have changed over time?
- What were the dominant types of labour relations among sub-Saharan African women?
- How did they change over time and why?

# What do we need to know to do this?

- Who were the women working?
- What was their proportion in the total active population?
- What kind of work has been done by women?
- In which economic sectors have they worked?
- In what kind of labour relations did these women appear engaged?
- how these have changed over time?
- What were/are the factors or variables that can help us explain and understand changes in female participation in labour markets and their role in the economic transition of Africa?

# Why is this important?

- Gender Gap Index
  - Differences at country level
  - Difference at regional level
- Literature
  - Development theorists – focus mainly on post-independence period (with few exceptions)
  - Historians and Social Scientists – focus mainly on labour question during colonial rule
  - From late 1980s – more studies on female labour (mainly qualitative based, focusing on wage-earners – a minority of female workers; focusing on southern Africa)
  - Economic Historians – focus more on female labour participation in the Western world
  
  - In general, Female labour in Sub-Saharan Africa remains understudied
  - In particular female labour in the agricultural and services' sectors that fall out the formal labour market and wage-labour economy)
  
  - Lacking long-term perspective (on shifts and continuities), for the transition from pre-colonial, to colonial and post-colonial periods
  - Lacking comparisons between countries and regions
  - Lacking comparisons between sub-Saharan Africa and other world regions

# Future Aims

- Develop Research Project:  
**Women and Labour in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1800-2000**
  - 3 main case studies: Senegal, Malawi, Ethiopia?
  - Cross-regional comparison
- Collaboration with the African Group of the Global Collaboratory of Labour Relations (IISH)
  - Data on Angola, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Mozambique (with use for study of female labour)
- Cooperation with other research project on the economic history of sub-Saharan Africa
- Long-term comparisons between African Female Labour participation and other world regions

# How to do it? Quantitative Side

- Total Female Population
- Non-working and Working Female Population
- Female School Attendance (& differential to male)
- Female Participation per Economic Sector
- Female Engagement in different types of economic activities
- Female engagement in different types of Labour Relations
- Taxonomy of Labour Relations (Global Collaboratory on the History of Labour Relations)
- **For countries where Female participation in the formal wage labour market is representative:** Female wages in different types of economic activities (& differential to male wages)

# How to do it?: Qualitative Side

Access the impact of specific variables on Female Labour Participation including:

- Political Change
  - change in political regimes and policies/legislation regulating female rights and freedoms including school attendance, participation in labour markets, marriage, property rights, freedom of organization, and political participation
- Economic Change
  - Change in economic policies and/or economic situation
- Migration (both female and male)
  - Abroad
  - Internal
- Urbanization
- Family Systems
- Household Structures
- Predominant Religions
- Predominant Perceptions of Women's role in the society and economy

# Sources

- Census data
- Legislation concerning Women
- Information on main economic policies and outcomes
- Ethnographical information (19th and 20th centuries)
- Anthropological studies
- Micro-data on education, professional activities in different economic sectors (whenever available for the country and region under study)
- Interviews with female workers in different economic sectors



Case-study

# Mozambique



# Basic Chronology

- **1870s:** beginning of Portuguese Modern Colonial Rule in Mozambique
- **1890s-1940s:** substantial area of Mozambique leased-out by the Portuguese State to Concessionary Companies
- **1926-1974:** Colonial Rule by Portuguese Dictatorship
- **1964-1974:** Fight for Independence
- **1975:** Independence
- **1977- 1992:** Civil War (RENAMO / FRELIMO – Cold War)
- **1994:** First free elections
- **2013:** Resurgence of violence

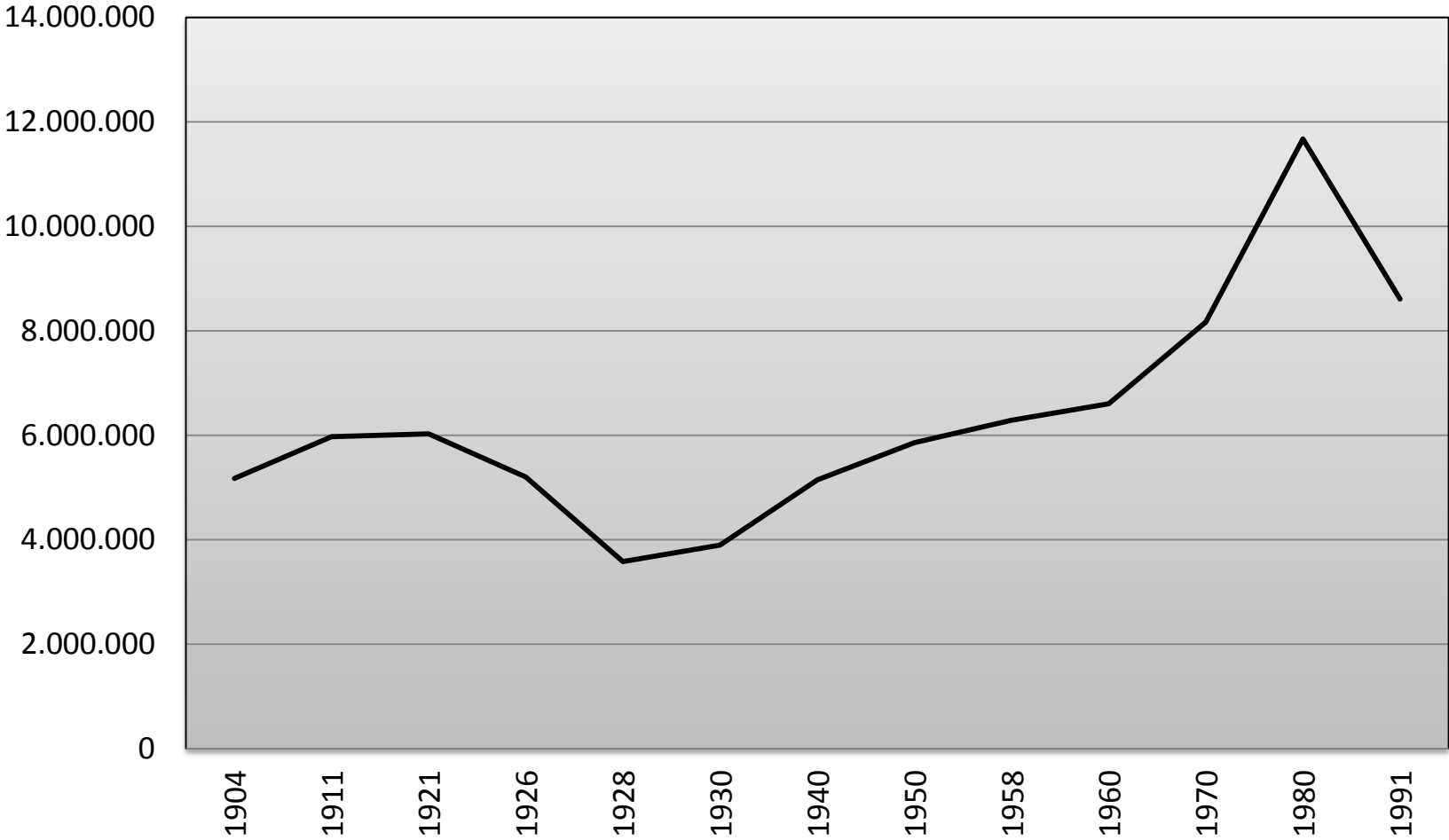
# Historiography

## Labour & Female Labour Mozambique

- Allen Isaacman and Barbara Isaacman
- Heidi Gengenbach
- Birdget O'Laughlin
- John Carlos Ova Sender
- Benigna Zimba
- Kathleen E. Sheldon
- Jeanne Marie Penvenne
- Valdemir D. Zamparoni
- Eric Allina
- Among others

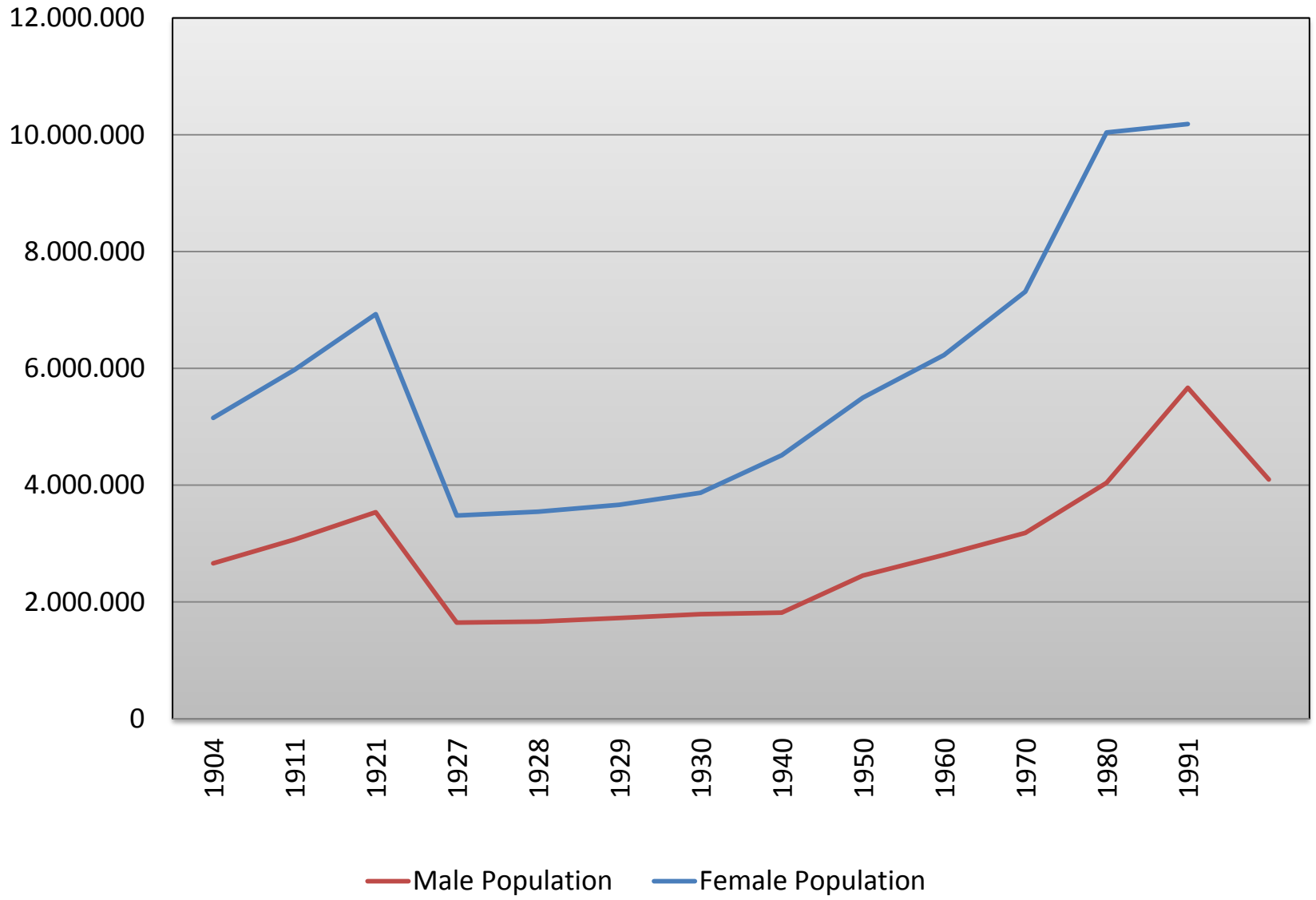
# Mozambique

## Total Population, 1900s-1990s



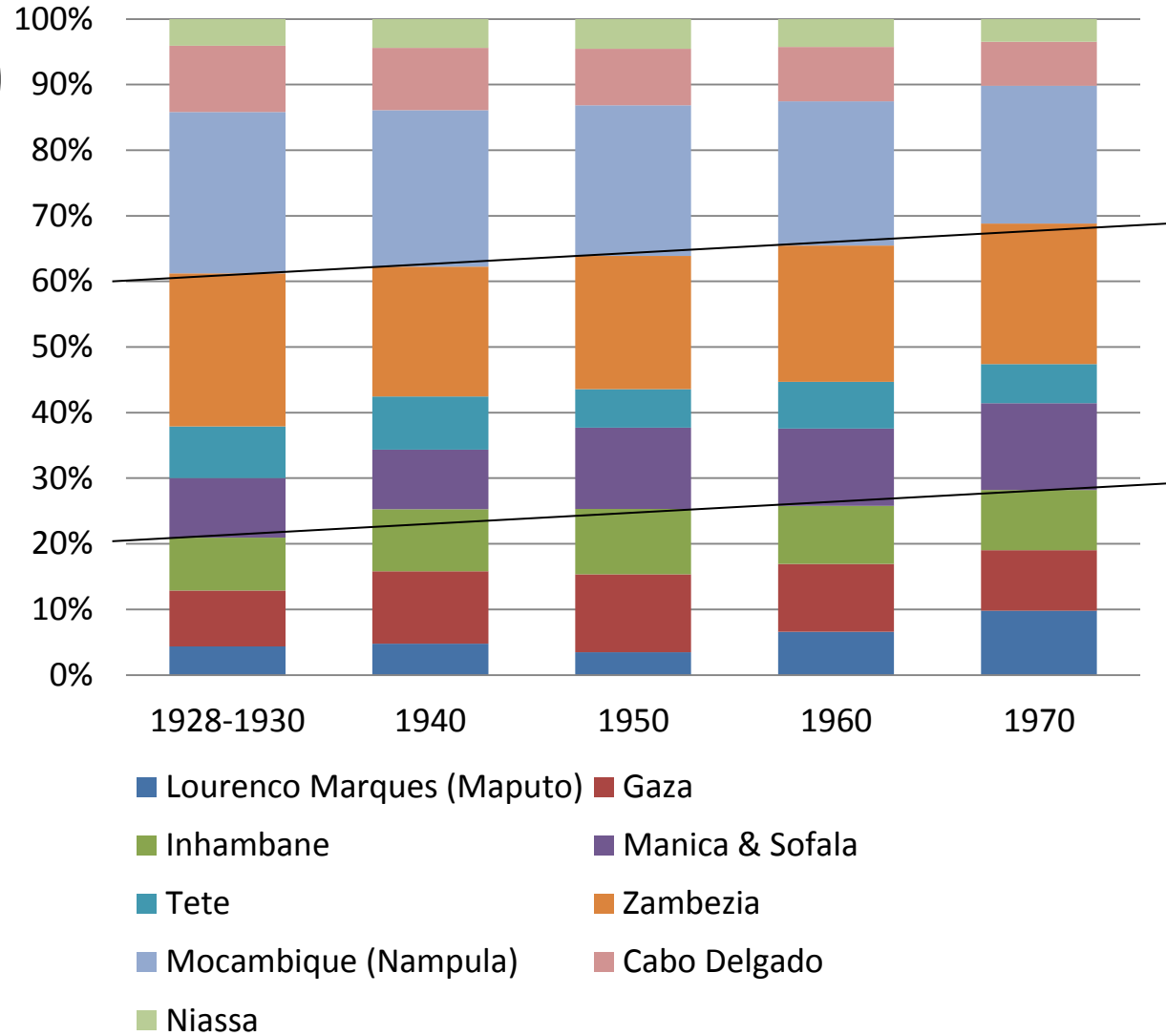
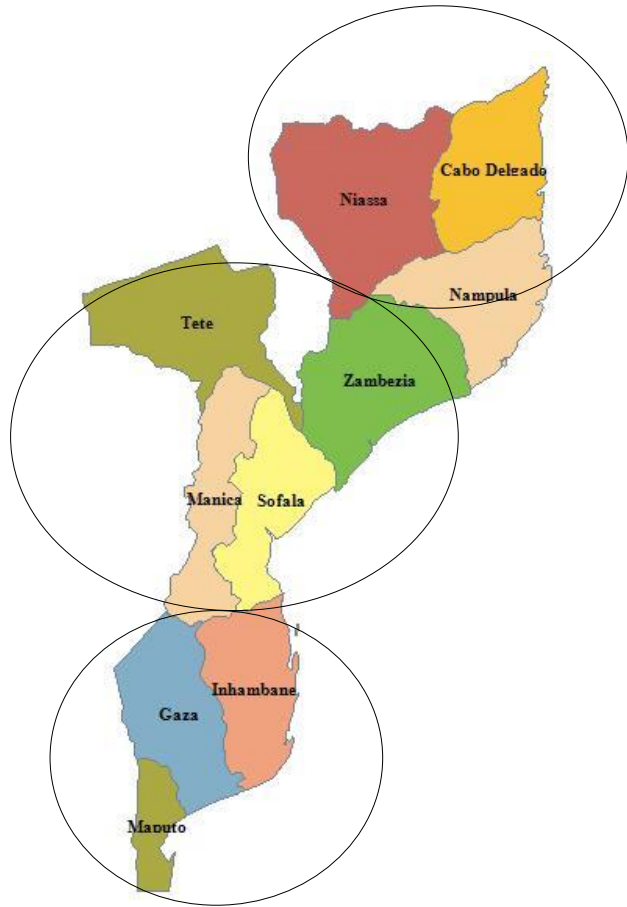
— Mozambique Total Population - Evolution - Censuses Data

### Mozambique - Population Sex Distribution, 1900s-1990s



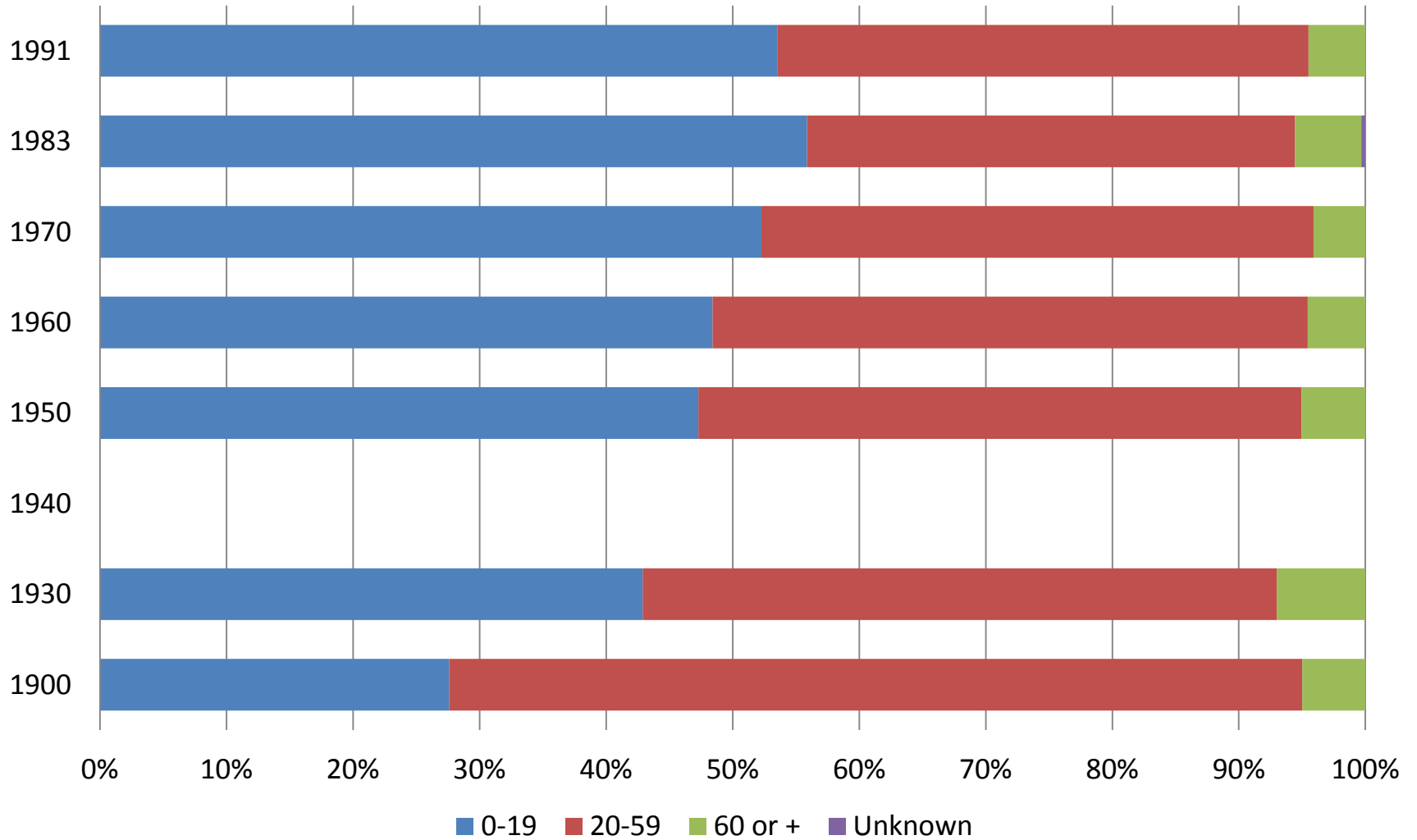
# Mozambique

## Total Population - Geographical Distribution, 1930s-1970s



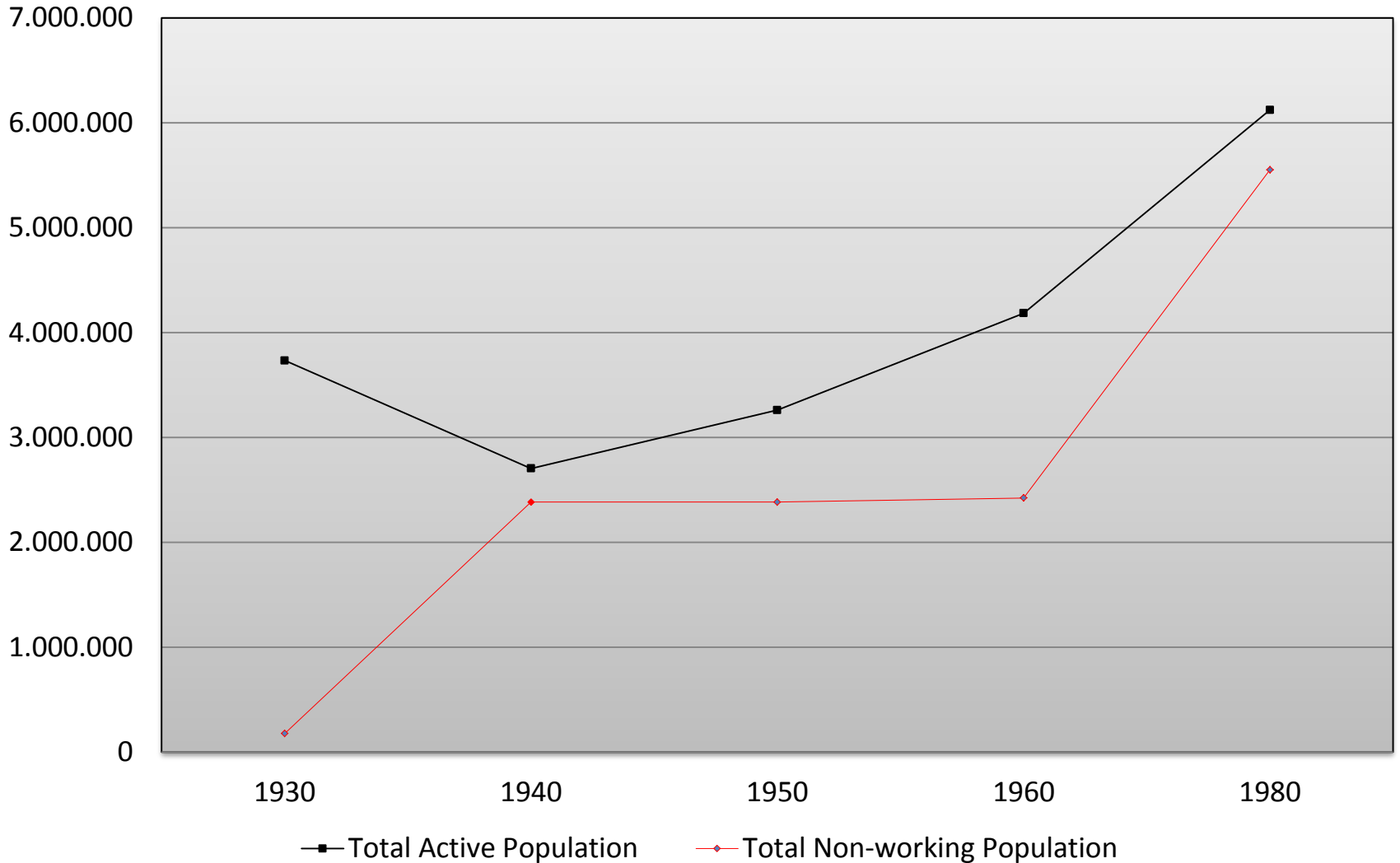
# Mozambique

## Total Population - Demographic Functional Groups, 1900s-1990s



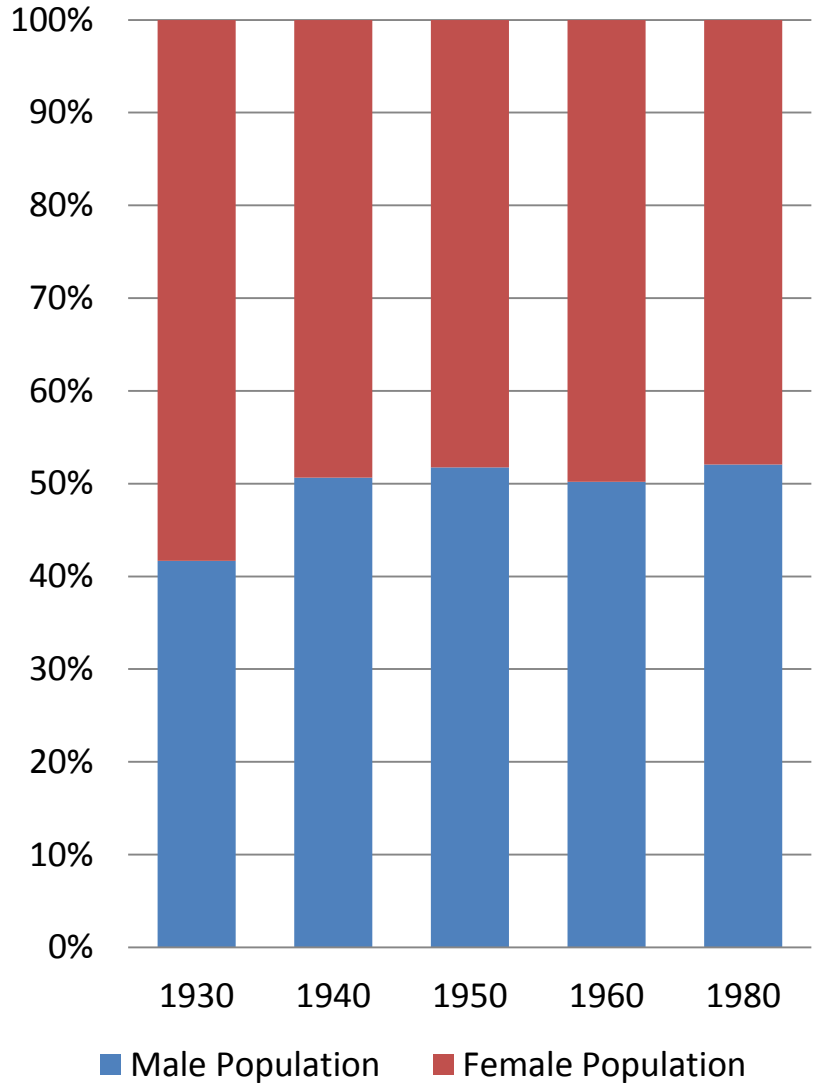
# Mozambique

## Working and Non-working Population, 1930s-1980s

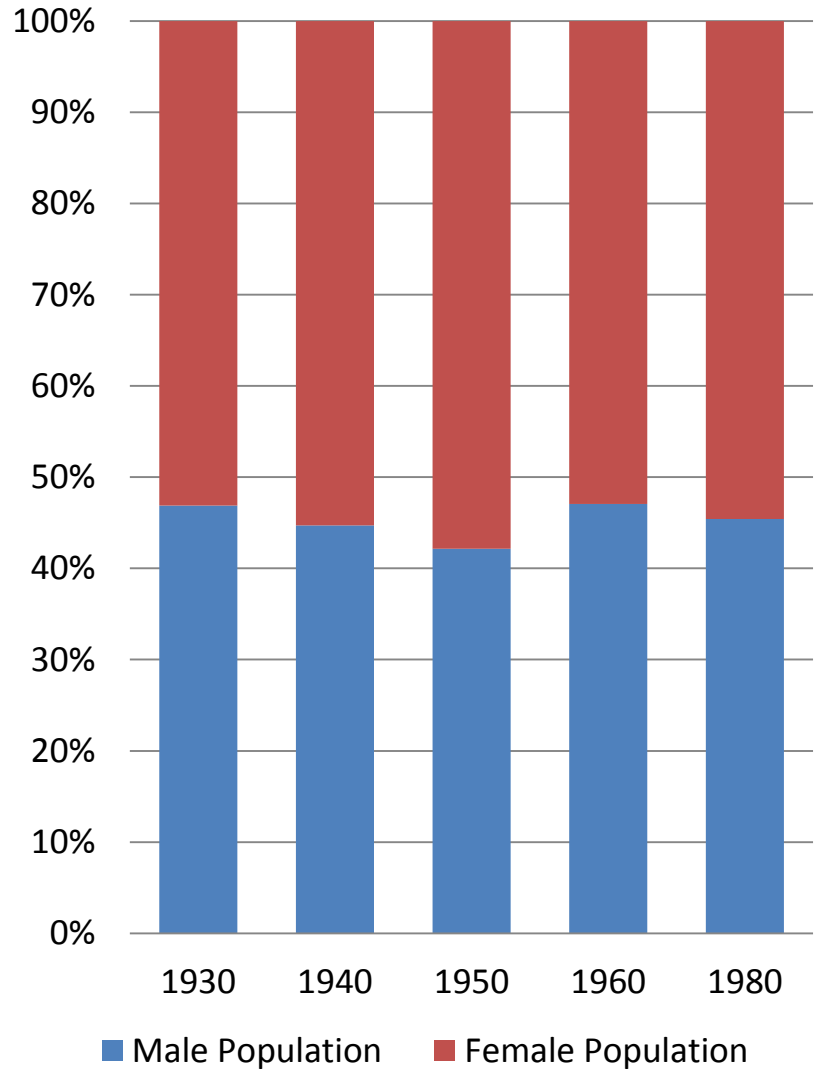




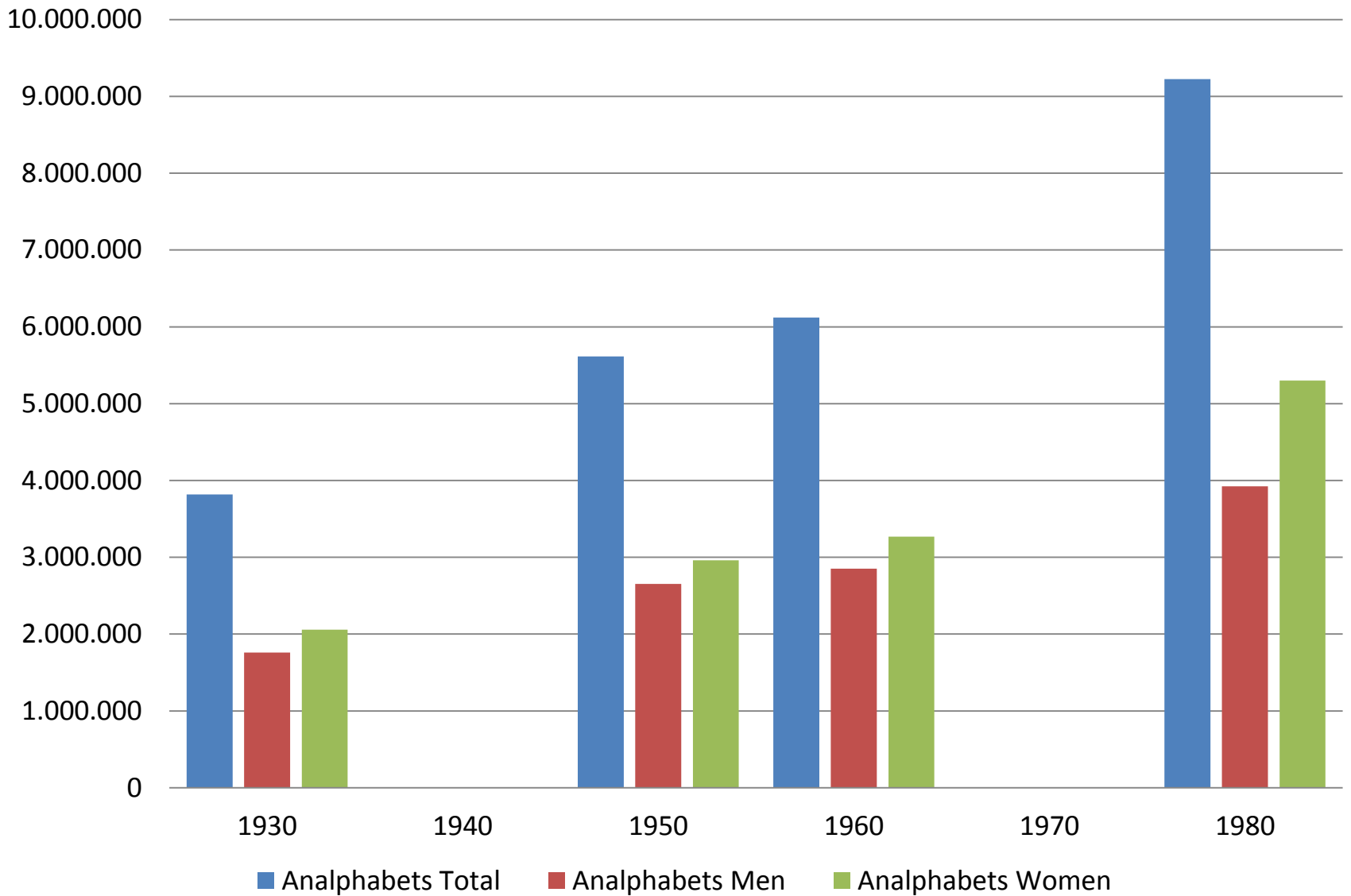
**Mozambique**  
**Non-working Population**  
**Sex Distribution, 1930s-1980s**



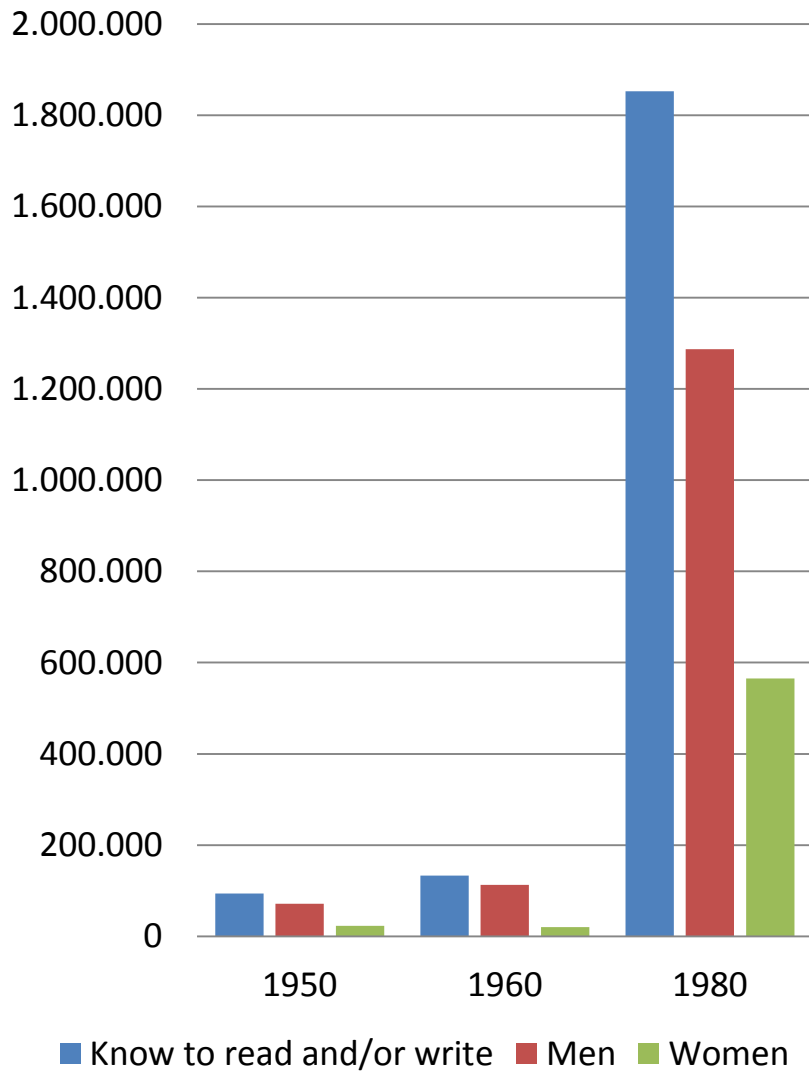
**Mozambique**  
**Economically Active Population**  
**Sex Distribution, 1930s-1980s**



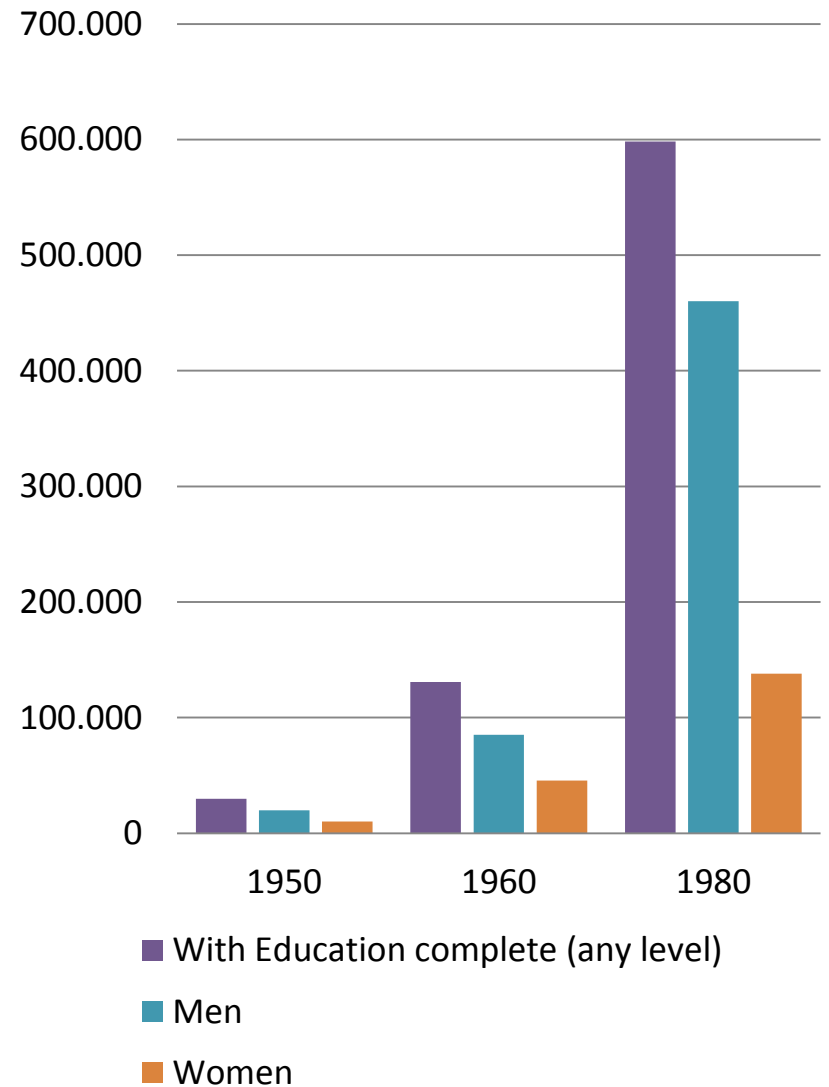
## Mozambique Analphabet Population , 1930s-1980s



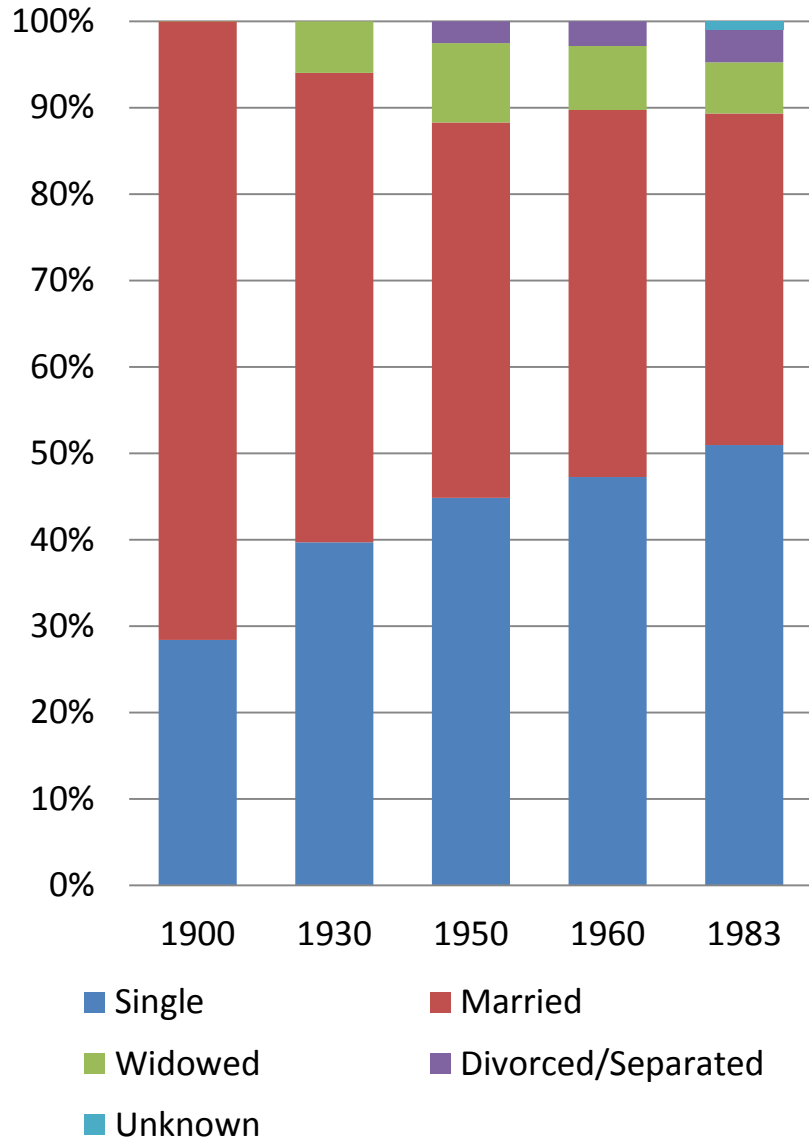
**Mozambique – Population  
knowing to read and write  
1950s-1980s**



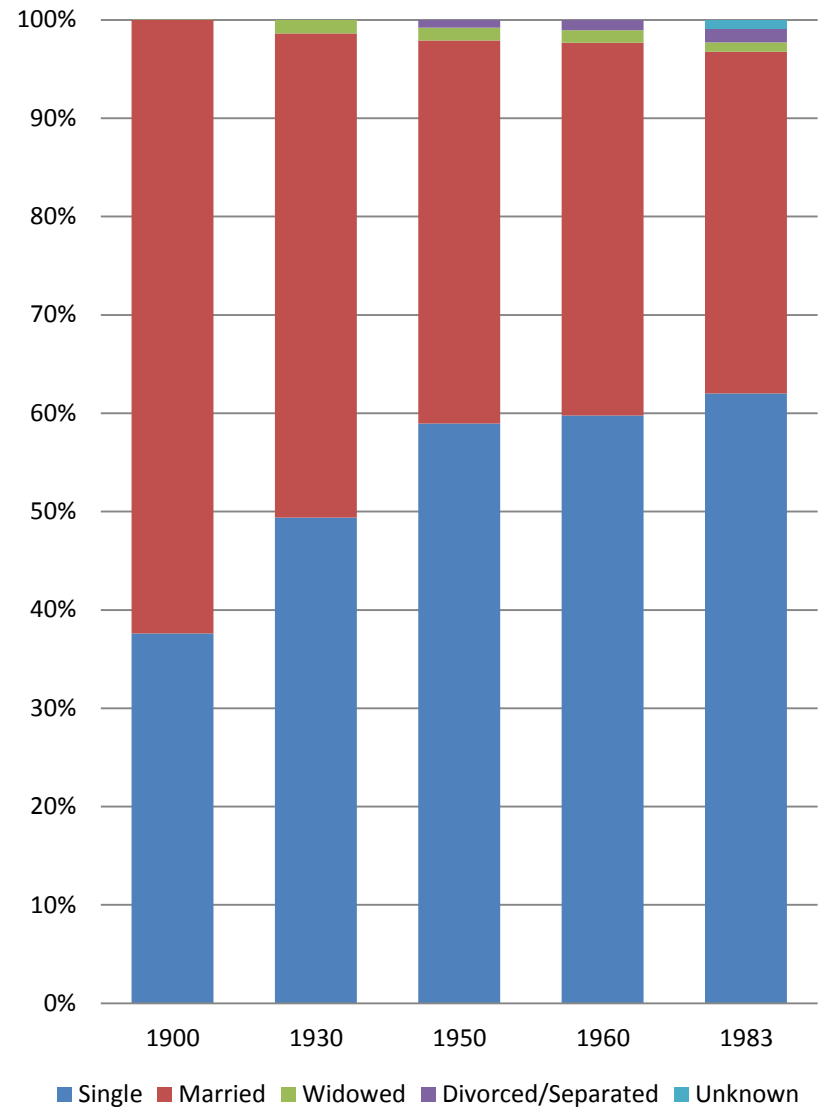
**Mozambique - Population  
Complete education (any level)  
1950s-1980s**



**Mozambique - Female Population**  
**Marital Status, 1900s-1980s**

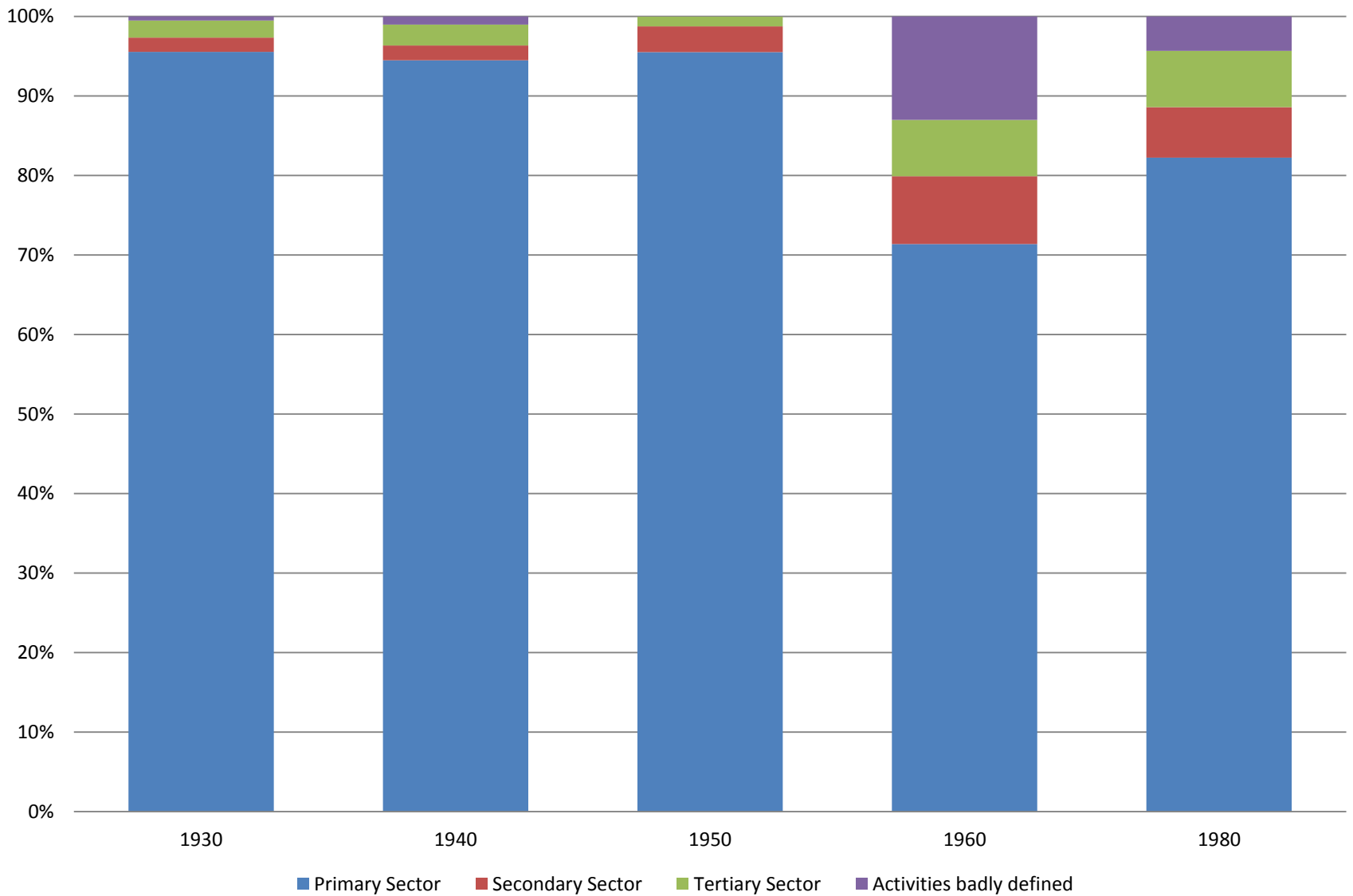


**Mozambique - Male Population**  
**Marital Status, 1900s-1980s**



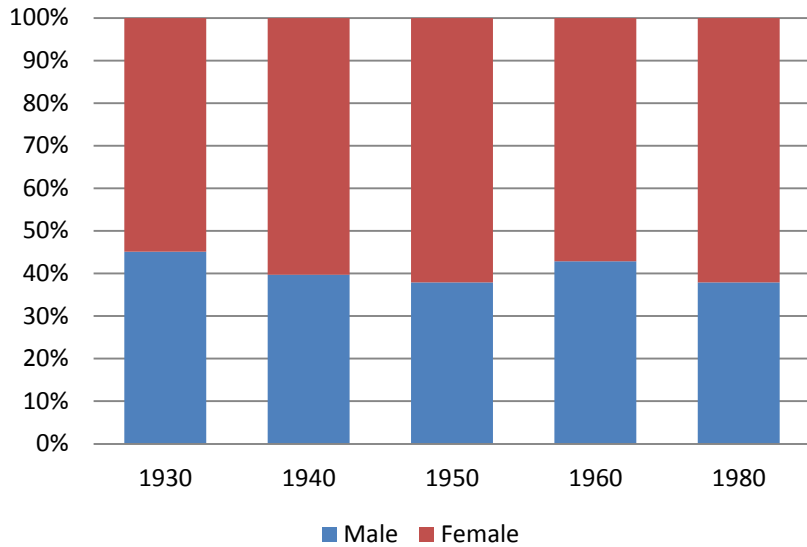
# Mozambique - Economically Active Population

## Economic Sectors Distribution, 1930s-1980s



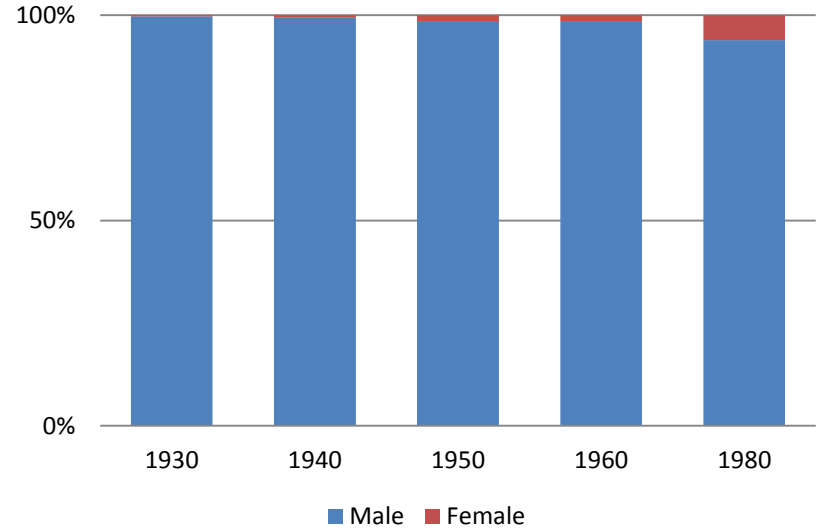
## Mozambique Primary Sector

### Sex Distribution , 1930s-1980s



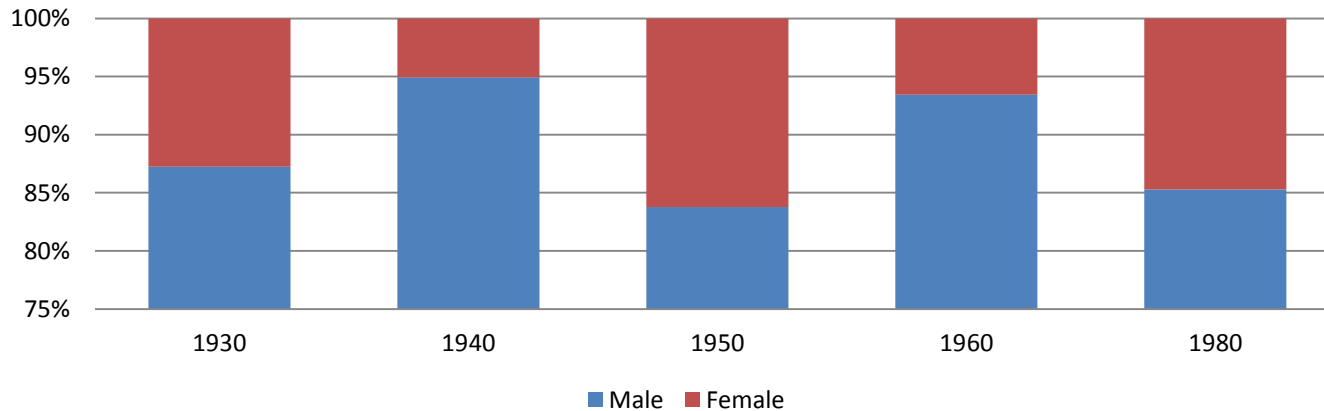
## Mozambique Secondary Sector

### Sex Distribution, 1930s-1980s

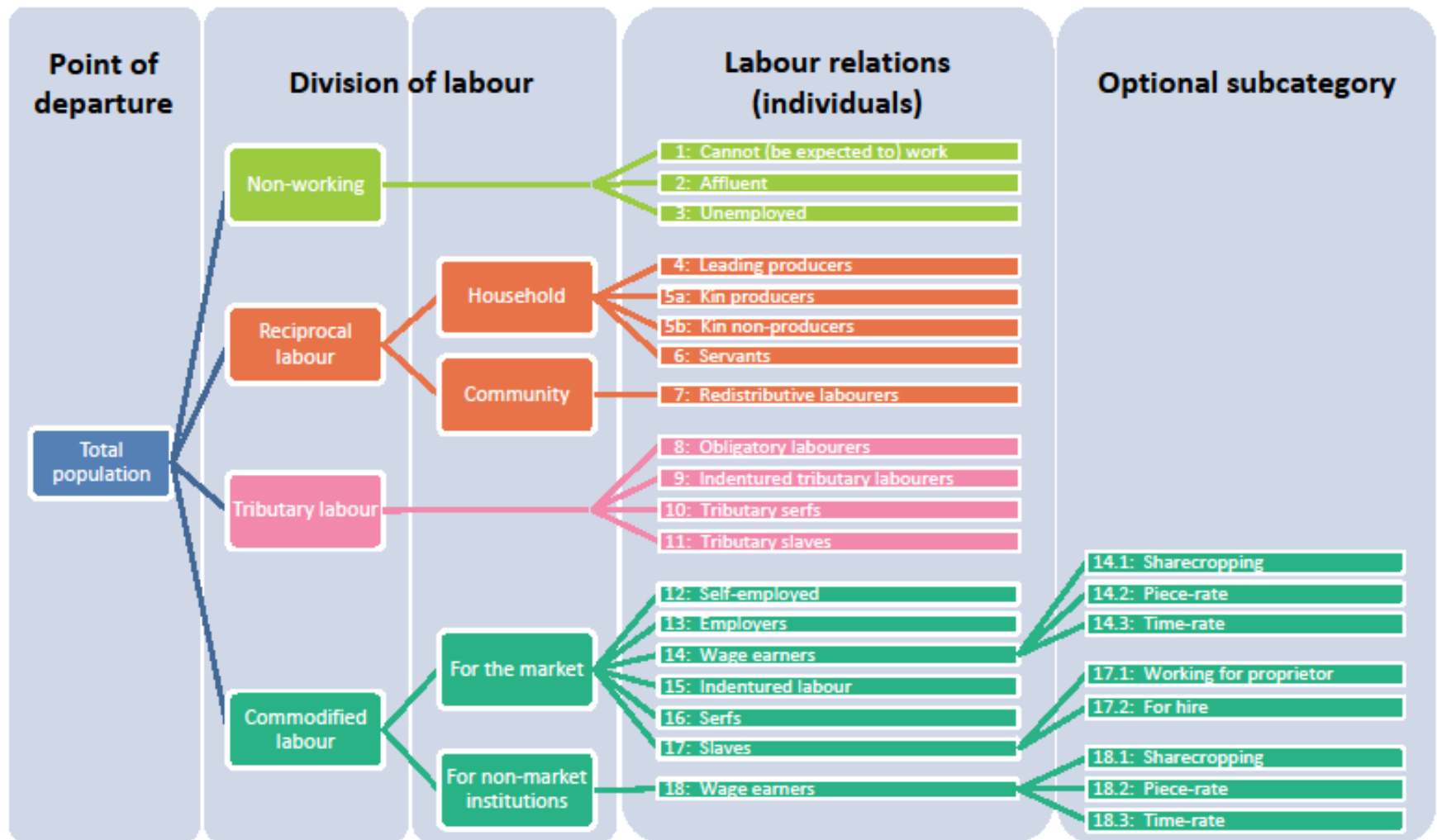


## Mozambique Tertiary Sector

### Sex Distribution, 1930s-1980s



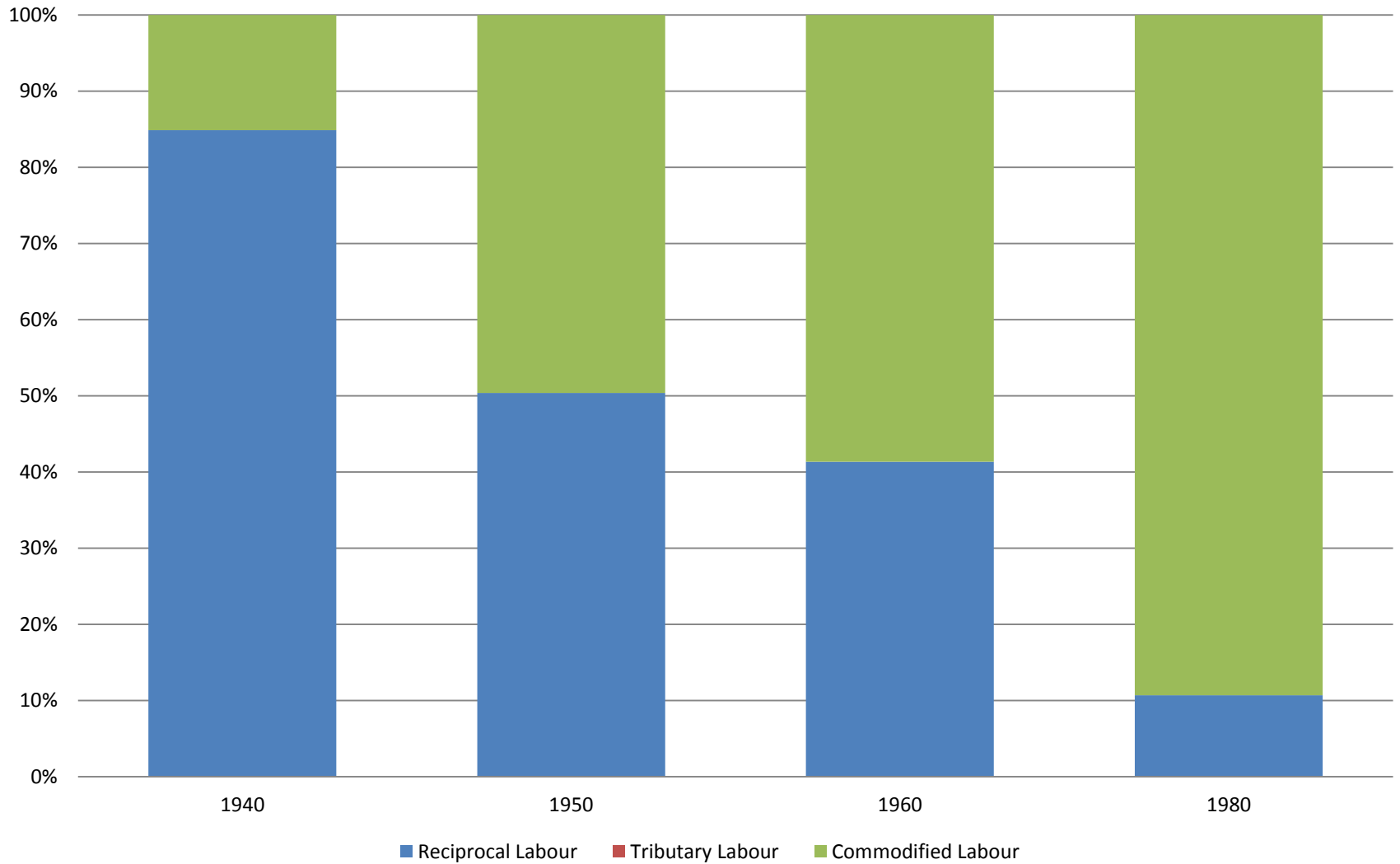
# Taxonomy of Labour Relations



# Mozambique

## Economically Active Population

### Labour Relations, 1940s-1980s

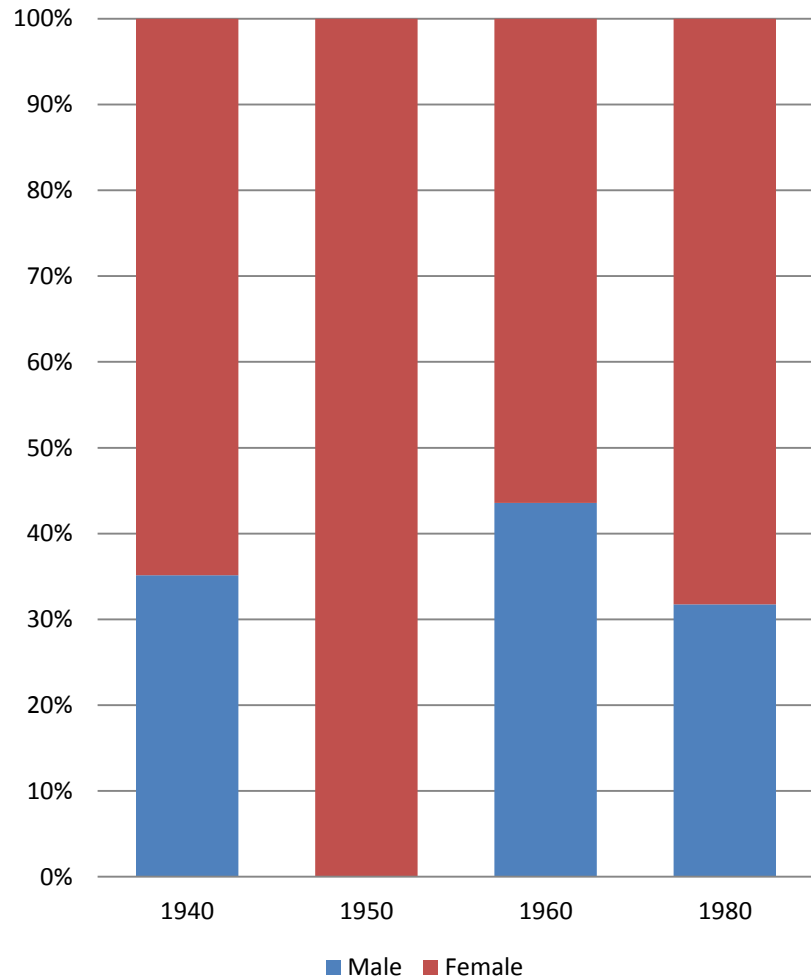




## Mozambique Active Population Labour Relation

**Reciprocal Labour**

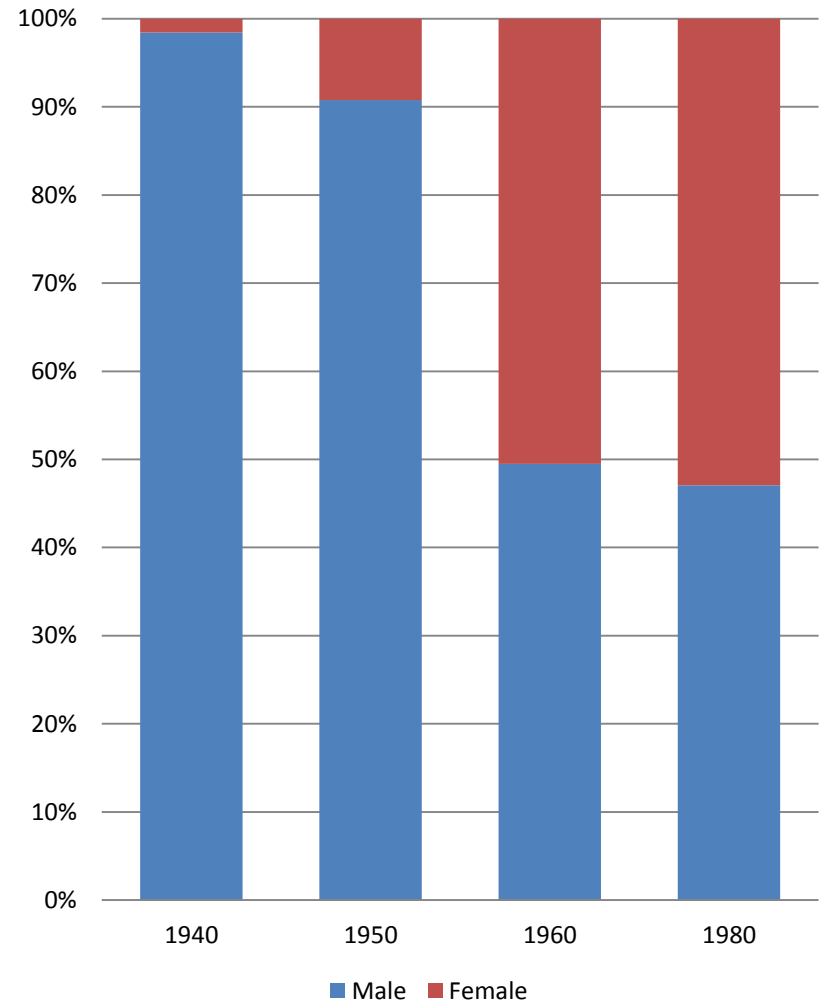
### Sex Distribution, 1940s-1980s



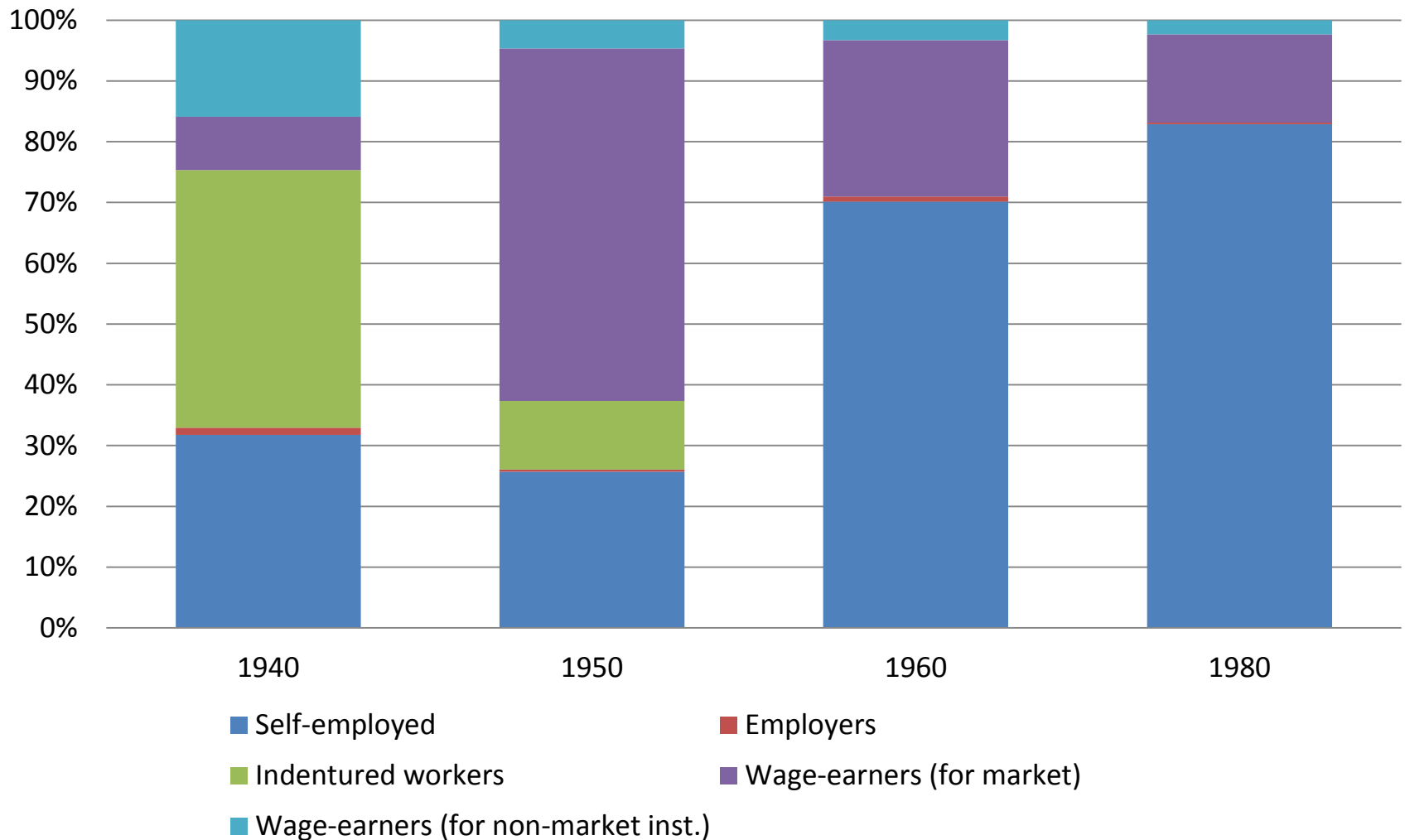
## Mozambique Active Population Labour Relation

**Commodified Labour**

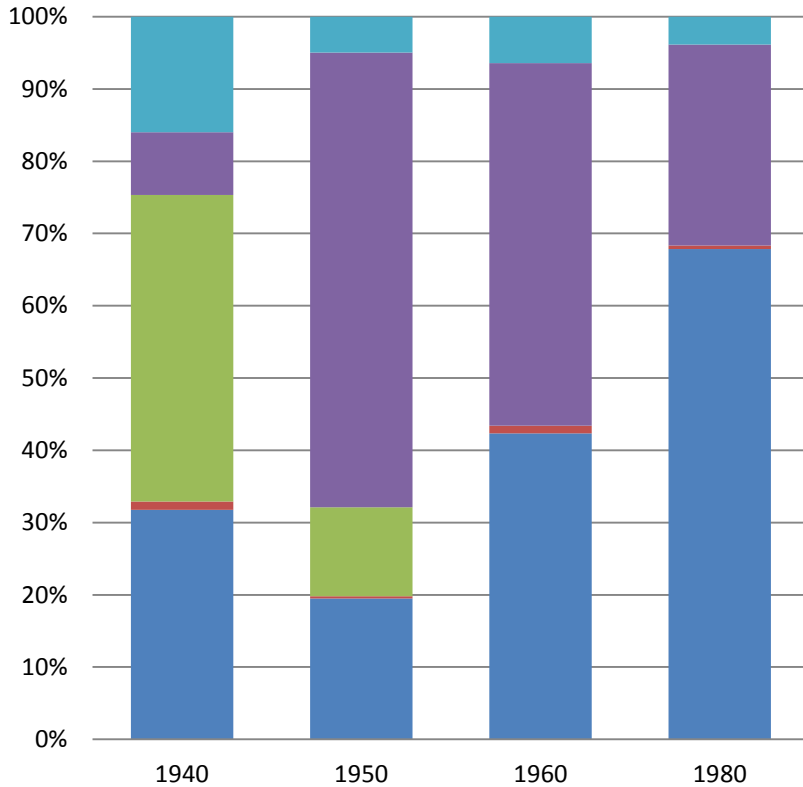
### Sex Distribution, 1940s-1980s



# Mozambique - Total Population Commodified Labour - sub-categories 1940s-1980s

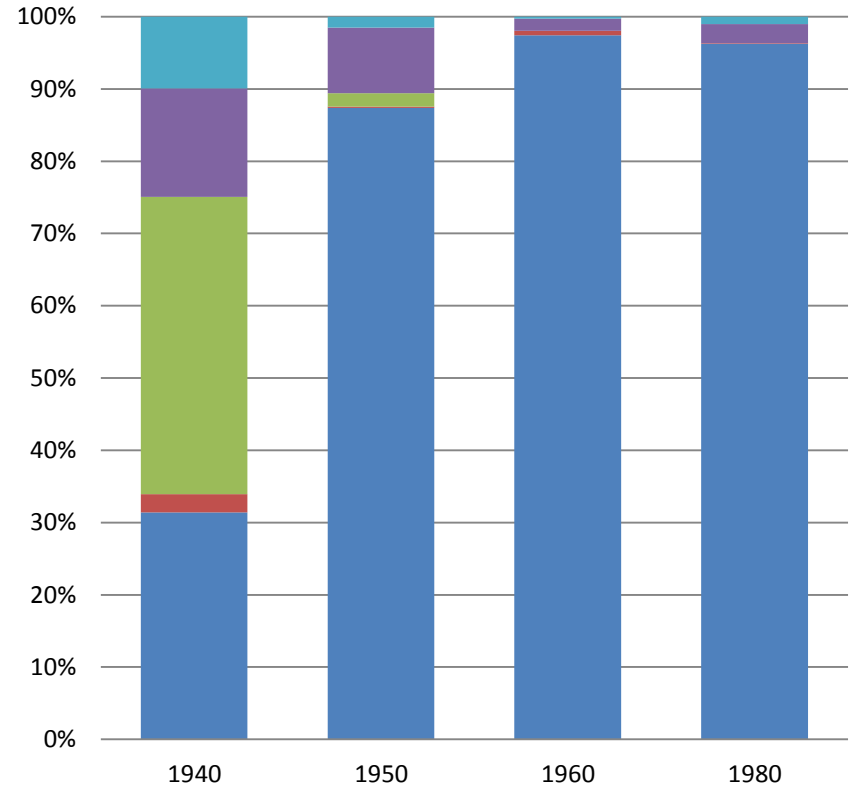


## Mozambique - Male Population Commodified Labour - sub- categories 1940s-1980s



- Wage-earners (for non-market inst.)
- Wage-earners (for market)
- Indentured workers
- Employers
- Self-employed

## Mozambique - Female Population Commodified Labour - sub- categories 1940s-1980s



- Wage-earners (for non-market inst.)
- Wage-earners (for market)
- Indentured workers
- Employers
- Self-employed

# Factors explaining these changes

- Political changes
- Economic changes
- Migration (abroad and internal)
- Urbanization
- Household Structures
- Family Systems (regional differences)
- Religion (expansion of Islam and Christianity (in its various forms))
- Perceptions about the role of women in society and economy
- Access to education