

PRELIM 3

**Mozambique: MELTA
(Mozambique English
Language Teachers
Association
with
Celtic English Academy**

August 2024

Project background

Partnership overview		
Partners	ETA partner	Mozambique English Language Teachers
	UKI partner	Association (MELTA)
User Profile	Context overview	Celtic English Academy (CEA)
	Learner age group(s)	Mozambican schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large class sizes, ranging from 50 – 100 learners. • Minimal access to resources and technology • Many classrooms restricted to a chalkboard in terms of facilities
	Curriculum overview	Around 14-15
Teacher support resource package	Resource format and organisation	The Grade 7 curriculum covers a wide range of topics including: greetings, health and the environment.
	Resource content	Downloadable lesson plans and supplementary resources
	Resource sustainability	Supplements to the Mozambican Grade 7 English language teaching syllabus. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 64 lesson plans • 9 units aligned with the Mozambican national syllabus • 2 cross cultural lessons plus video demonstrations
Dissemination	Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online focus group meeting for initial feedback • Resource pack presentation to MELTA and its stakeholders in online meeting • After approval from the Ministry of Education, MELTA to present the resource pack to heads of English at face-to-face launch event • Webinars for teachers from rural districts led by MELTA representatives and members of the focus group
	Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus group feedback meetings: starting September 2023 • Online presentation of resource pack: January 2024 • Face-to-face launch event: May 2024 • Webinars: May 2024
	Number of teachers reached	Estimated figure: 60 (based on participants sharing resources with a minimum of two other teachers)

Description of the partners

MELTA is a not-for-profit organisation created in 2019 with around 300 members. The Association covers the 11 provinces and districts of the country including remote areas through MELTA Provincial Representatives (REPs) and Provincial English Advisers (PEAs).

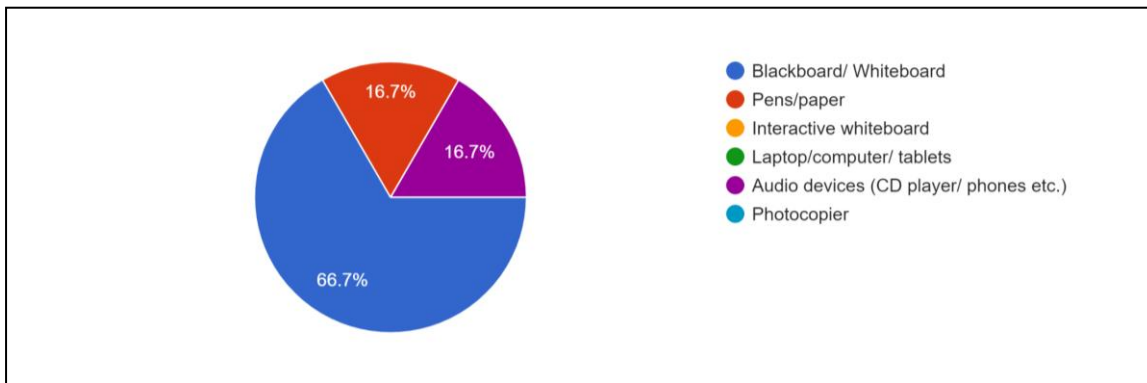
CEA was first established as Celtic School in 2009. It is the largest English academy in Wales and teaches English to adults and juniors from over 50 different countries throughout the year.

Key features of the context

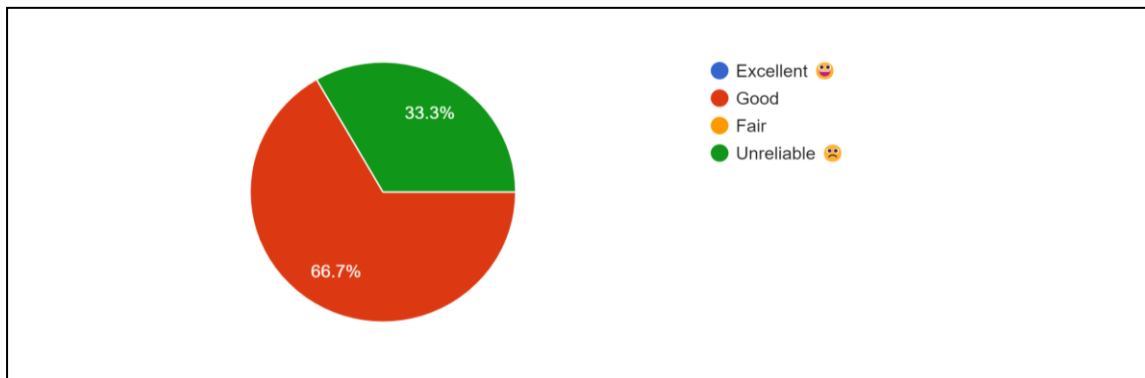
CEA was asked by MELTA to produce lesson materials for Grade 7 teachers. The curriculum has recently been updated and there is no assigned coursebook. In addition, some Grade 7 teachers have moved from a primary to a secondary teaching context. We conducted needs analysis through a Google poll sent out via WhatsApp to focus group members chosen by MELTA. The findings of the needs analysis were shared with MELTA.

Needs Analysis Findings:

- Mozambican schools have large class sizes, ranging from 50-100 learners with sporadic attendance.
- teachers have minimal access to resources and technology:



- teachers have internet access though it can be unreliable:



-
- teachers have limited time to prepare lessons and limited resources: ‘The biggest challenge I face when teaching English is the lack of books, textbooks and other teaching materials such as grammar and dictionaries to help students acquire new vocabularies.’
 - teachers’ have a wide range of experience and varied English levels.
 - learners have little to no previous knowledge of English.
 - much of the language is learnt by rote and learners lack confidence to move past language as isolated lexical units: ‘How to make a lesson meaningful and understandable for them as they are beginners.’

Outline of the teacher support resource package and rationale

The resource package consists of:

- beginner (A1) lesson plans organised into topical units in parallel with the Mozambican national syllabus requiring little to no preparation with no reliance on printed materials, computers, or audio/visual devices
- lessons aimed towards introducing a more communicative approach to language learning to encourage semi-autonomous language production rather than rote learning
- the use of English in greetings and plenaries as a form of spaced repetition to:
 - familiarise learners to the language
 - increase retention
 - aid those students that attend sporadically.
- activities and group tasks for large classes to foster learners’ engagement and confidence
- adaptations for teachers unable to print supplementary materials
- short videos to model some of the communicative production activities.

Project findings

Working in partnership

Working in partnership was a rewarding experience for both MELTA and CEA. Jose Dinis, President of MELTA, described this relationship:

*‘When we had a challenge, both of us tried to find a way of overcoming these challenges’,
‘although we are far away from each other we worked as a team.’*

Some challenges were logistical, such as the unreliable internet in Mozambique and the cost of going online for the ETA teachers. The latter was initially underestimated so no teachers attended the first focus group meeting. Once MELTA was able to provide the focus group members with internet data, participation in the project increased.

Connectivity issues persisted in Zoom meetings. These challenges were to some extent overcome by providing participants with recordings of the meeting and minutes with clear action points. Towards the end of the project CEA offered certificates to the ETA to acknowledge their participation in the project.

Another challenge was the different working practices with different expectations for example, with meeting deadlines. Monthly meetings with MELTA, throughout the project, helped manage the expectations of the partnership to some extent by revisiting timelines and outcomes regularly.

Learning points

- The cost of data for the participants should be considered early in the project and funding made a priority.
- Recordings and minutes of meetings is an effective way to make participation more accessible to those who cannot attend due to issues with connection or clashes with other responsibilities.
- A widely used messaging app such as WhatsApp, which uses minimal data, is an accessible means of communication.
- Regular meetings with clear action points help manage the expectations of both partners.
- Offering to provide the ETA with participation certificates early in the project could be an effective way to incentivise participation.
- Offering project management support for the ETA could help manage expectations and lead to SMARTer outcomes.

Designing the teacher support resources

Two teachers at CEA designed the resources. A focus group of teachers in Mozambique were consulted throughout the process through polls, a WhatsApp group and trial lessons, to ensure that the materials were culturally and practically appropriate. CEA also consulted various literature about teaching in Africa, teaching large classes, and teaching in low-preparation classes, including *Teaching English in Africa* (Anderson: 2015). Assumptions about Mozambique, such as Portuguese being universally spoken, were found to be false demonstrating the importance of communication with the ETA. The focus group was a vital resource of more detailed feedback from teachers but there was limited negative or critical feedback.

Learning points

- UKIs should make use of the participating partner teachers as experts in their context.
- Considerations need to be made when making resources in relation to disparities within the country such as differing teaching times, facilities, languages, and class sizes.
- Strategies to elicit all kinds of feedback should be considered to ensure that the resources created are suitable and sustainable.

Disseminating the teacher support resources

The resource package needed to be accessible across the different regions of Mozambique without incurring excessive additional costs or workload for the ETA. A website with links to the lessons was the most viable and cost-effective option as it could be accessed and downloaded anywhere with internet access and shared through WhatsApp - a familiar digital platform. A website also has a low environmental impact and is potentially sustainable.

MELTA's dissemination plan:

Dissemination event	Teachers directly benefiting	Teachers indirectly benefiting
Focus Group February	30: Teachers from different provinces	500: The members of the focus group attend and/or lead online launching session and face to face launching session.
Online Launch March	4: MELTA members	100: MELTA lead a face-to-face launch with 100 Heads of English
Face to face Launch May	100: Heads of English subject groups from different provinces	500: The Heads of English return to their school with a resource pack to share with the teachers of their department (approx. five teachers per English department).
Webinars May	400: Teachers from rural districts with access to the internet	800: Teachers from rural districts share the resource pack with other teachers (approx. two teachers).

Learning point

- Both partners should consider the environmental impact of resource distribution.

Monitoring and Evaluation resource use

Feedback on the use of the resources was collected through Google forms, WhatsApp polls, questions on WhatsApp, and Zoom meetings.

Formal resources feedback process

- Two trial lessons were presented to the Focus Group on Zoom in September 2023 with feedback during the meeting and later through WhatsApp and Google Forms.
- The two trial lessons were revised and resubmitted to the Focus Group which shaped future resource design.
- The lesson trial process was then repeated in October.
- The final lesson pack was presented to MELTA and the Focus Group in January 2024 and to the governing body and other MELTA stakeholders in February 2024.
- A feedback form was given to all the participants.
- Visitor traffic to the website was monitored.
- A Focus Group member was interviewed for qualitative data on their participation in the project.
- MELTA completed a questionnaire about their participation in the project.
- A feedback form given to the workshop participants by MELTA.

We created a WhatsApp group and made use of voice notes, more informal questioning, and WhatsApp polls. Representatives from MELTA joined the WhatsApp group which motivated participation. We contacted those teachers who had been most forthcoming in the Zoom meetings individually. These teachers provided some valuable qualitative feedback.

Revisions

- Timing - the lesson timings were too ambitious for such large class sizes and some lessons were adapted into a series of lessons.
- Cultural references - some syllabus topics did not relate to all areas of Mozambique. For example, a lesson on 'going fishing' inappropriate for some areas of Mozambique was changed at the suggestion of the focus group to 'going to the beach'.
- Language – vocabulary activities relying on the similarities between Portuguese and English excluded the vast variety of languages spoken in the region and needed adapting.

Learning Points

- Fostering rapport with focus group teachers is vital in gaining meaningful feedback.
- UKIs should find out where exactly in the syllabus their partners are so the trial lessons can fit into their timetable.
- When contacted privately and directly, teachers provide additional and useful insights.
- Feedback forms should be short and simple to consider time and data limitations of teachers.
- Having a focus group from a diverse range of contexts across the country ensures that the resources can be adapted for all.
- A WhatsApp group allows UKIs to ask questions that may have been overlooked when creating Google Forms.
- The expected number of responses we had hoped for would be limited, as teachers have full schedules.
- Reminders and deadlines are imperative, although with a degree of flexibility.

Project outcomes

Engagement

20 teachers were involved in the project. Of these teachers:

- 6 completed the needs analysis questionnaire.
- 14 attended the first feedback session.
- 16 attended the second feedback session.
- 19 attended the third feedback session.
- 20 teachers completed WhatsApp polls.
- 16 teachers completed the final lesson pack questionnaire.

Volume and quality of output

- 66 lesson plans created with optional supplementary resources, including flashcards and worksheets.
- 4 demonstration videos.
- 420 views of the website.
- 70% of respondents graded the final lesson pack as 'very useful' and 30% as 'useful'.
- 100% of respondents said the lesson packs were culturally appropriate.

-
- 90% of the respondents thought that the lessons were very clear and easy to understand.
 - 85% of the respondents thought that the timing was correct.

Dissemination and use of outputs

The dissemination process started in January 2024 with the presentation of the resource pack to the focus group teachers and MELTA in an online meeting. Visits to the resource pack website have remained steady since then with 52 visitors and 420 views. Because MELTA are still in the process of obtaining the approval of the Ministry of Education, the face to face launching session has been postponed.

- UKIs and ETA should set flexible goals because of possible delays in the dissemination process

Sustainability

MELTA have involved the Ministry of Education in the dissemination process. The Deputy National Director for Secondary Education observed that

'this is for Grade 7, but it also gives us a challenge to produce something similar for Grade 8 and 9'.

Adoption of the resource packs by the government will ensure that dissemination is national and long-term sustainability is more likely.

Reflections on the project

CEA

The CEA project team have developed soft skills such as:

- project management
- communication
- IT skills
- managing expectations
- goal and KPI setting
- time management.

This project has allowed the CEA team to better understand the challenges faced by many English language teachers worldwide who lack facilities such as reliable internet, access to online resources, access to physical resources in and outside the classroom. The creativity and passion of the Mozambican teachers and the MELTA team has been a reminder that the heart of teaching is making connections with students and sharing values and dreams for the future.

MELTA

There were several aspects of the project that MELTA found valuable.

- Learning about resource development:
'we found that working together with CEA gave us a unique opportunity to learn how a resource pack for teachers in Mozambique could be designed... relevant to our needs and context.'
- Learning about project management:

'We also learned that sharing duties and responsibilities is very important. CEA brought to our MELTA extra knowledge, experience and skills that will help us in case we are engaged in a similar project in future.'

Some of the challenges of the project for MELTA were:

- Time management and meeting deadlines:
'Availability of time... we think that due to other responsibilities in our Association sometimes we were not fully able to respond to CAE's request in time.'
- Understanding the output of the project:
'I think if CEA had shared a sample of similar work done, that would have given us a clear view of the outcomes of the project right at the start. However, as the design of the teacher pack progressed, we started to have a clear idea.'

End-users

Comments from the target users on the final lesson pack included:

Mozambique:

'So far, the materials are very useful for me, the lesson plans are also simple so that any teacher can work with them without problems.'

'Actually, lesson plans were so useful and profitable to students.'

'Lesson plans were fantastic for both students and I.'

Tomas Caranga, a focus group participant, said that the materials:

'gave me some positive way of handling the lessons.' Timing was a weakness:

'I had to continue the activity in the next lesson because of time.'

Participating in the project has been a valuable experience because he has learned that:

'it's good to share experience, knowledge with other people who are doing the same profession in different areas.'