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State Recognition of Traditional Authority in Mozambique: Discussion Papers No. 28: The Nexus of Community Representation and State Assistance

By Lars Buur, Helene Maria Kyed

Nordic African Institute, Sweden, 2005. Pamphlet. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. How should the Mozambican traditional leaders double role as community representatives and state assistants be captured? This discussion paper addresses some fundamental questions pertaining to the 2002 official recognition of traditional leaders as community authorities. After a brief history of the changing role of, and faith in, traditional authorities as a basis for understanding the importance of their recent official recognition, the paper outlines the key objectives of the Decree 15/2000 that officially recognizes community authorities. Some of the key concepts underpinning the Decree are then critically assessed. It is argued that the double role that community authorities are expected to fulfill as both community-representatives and state-assistants is not equally balanced in the Decree: the scale tips heavily towards the state-assistance aspect. The reasons for this are explored in the context of a set of reified notions underpinning the Decree, such as its understanding of traditional rules and the concept of community. The paper concludes by pointing out some unintended consequences of these reified notions for kin-based forms of community authority and especially for the ideal of community participation.



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