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# CROSS-SECTORAL YOUTH ASSESSMENT

## MOZAMBIQUE M&E MECHANISM AND SERVICES

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# CROSS-SECTORAL YOUTH ASSESSMENT

## Mozambique M&E Mechanism and Services

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Mozambique Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism and Services (MMEMS)

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Alcinda Honwana and Carlos Shenga

## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABYM	Adolescent Boys and Young Men
AfDB	African Development Bank
AGYW	Adolescent Girls and Young Women
CATI	Computer-Assisted Telephone Interview
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CIADAJ	Intersectoral Committee Supporting the Development of Adolescents and Youth
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
DREAMS	Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-Free, Mentored and Safe
CEFM	Child Early Forced Marriage
FAIJ	Fundo de Apoio a Iniciativas Juvenis (Fund for Supporting Youth Initiatives)
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (German Development Agency)
GRM	Government of Republic of Mozambique
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IYF	International Youth Foundation
KII	Key Informant Interview
LGBTQI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex
MMEMS	Mozambique Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism and Services
MSI	Management Systems International
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
ODS	Online Donor Survey
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
OYS	Online Youth Survey
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
PYD	Positive Youth Development
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WLSA	Women and Law in Southern Africa Research and Education Trust
YALI	Young African Leaders Initiative

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

USAID/Mozambique commissioned the Mozambique Cross-Sectoral Youth Assessment to inform its forthcoming country development cooperation strategy (CDCS) 2020–2024 and provide programmatic recommendations for its technical offices. The assessment also aimed to offer development practitioners working in Mozambique information about the current situation of Mozambican youth and the challenges of their journey from adolescence to adulthood.

The youth assessment's main objectives were to (1) understand the assets, needs, challenges, and opportunities of Mozambican youth and identify opportunities where youth can contribute to development and peace in Mozambique; (2) identify context-relevant models and approaches for implementation of evidence-based and gender-sensitive programming for youth between the ages of 10 and 29 by assessing other relevant donor youth programs; and (3) assess and identify lessons learned from USAID/Mozambique's past and current youth programming that can inform the design of future youth programs to better support youths' needs and aspirations.

This nationwide study was conducted between November 2019 and March 2020 using qualitative and quantitative research methods. The qualitative work took place in six provinces (Cabo Delgado, Maputo City, Maputo Province, Nampula, Sofala, and Zambézia) and comprised 150 in-depth focus group discussions (FGDs) involving 1,105 young males and females aged 18 to 29 years; 100 key informant interviews (KIs) with young leaders, community leaders, and public and private official and community-based organization (CBO) officials; and 24 life histories with young people. KIs also took place with senior officials from the government, USAID technical offices, donors, and the private sector in Maputo City. To increase geographical coverage, this study's quantitative method reached 514 young people through computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) in all provinces, with an online youth survey involving another 50 young people.

In total, the study reached 1,669 young people aged 18 to 29. To reflect the country's current demographics, the samples were random, representative, and stratified by province according to the rural-urban divide. To provide age and gender equity in the study responses, surveys alternated between male and female youth as well as younger (aged 18 to 23) and older (aged 24 to 29) youth. The experiences of adolescents (aged 10 to 17) were gathered through discussions with older youth (aged 18 to 29).

The study's key findings focused on the following areas:

**EMPLOYMENT AND LIVELIHOODS:** An overwhelming majority of young people raised the need for decent jobs as their major concern. They face the following barriers to accessing employment: unavailability of jobs, corruption and bribery for accessing the few existing job opportunities, disconnections between the education system and the labor market, low quality of education, and lack of work experience. The absence of entrepreneurial training and the lack of financial support to initiate projects constituted major constraints to livelihoods. Thus, most young people try to survive in the informal economy, mainly through occasional and sometimes precarious livelihoods.

**EDUCATION:** The need for quality education was the second-largest problem confronting the young people who participated in this study. Youth stressed issues of affordability and access to secondary and higher education, quality of teachers and training (including curricula), poor infrastructure, and

demoralizing corruption. A major concern was the sexual exploitation and abuse of students, especially of girls and young women by male teachers who act with impunity.

**HEALTH:** Young informants pointed to poor health care services in both rural and urban areas. Conditions are poor in health care facilities, and access to treatments and medicine is often hindered by bribes and corruption. Young women and men asserted that efforts to access family planning are hindered by deficient information about side effects of contraceptives, especially implantable methods, and lack of continuity in access to pills. Additionally, according to our field data, misinformation leads some girls and young women to assume that contraceptive alternatives to condoms will protect them not only from pregnancy but also from sexually transmitted infections. This highlights the need for strengthening counseling and messaging about family planning and sexually transmitted diseases for young people.

**AGRICULTURE AND BUSINESS:** Many young participants, especially in rural areas, called for support in developing modern agriculture. Many young people desire to move beyond traditional subsistence agriculture, which they perceive to be outdated and retrograde. They desire to engage in mechanized agriculture using modern tools, machinery, and methods. Many are interested in jobs in the food production value chain, as well as in green jobs and environmentally friendly enterprises. Although urban youth were dismissive of jobs in agriculture, rural youth demanded more entrepreneurial skills and technical training in agriculture and rural extension business.

**POLITICAL AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT:** The study confirmed low political engagement by young Mozambicans in the social, political, and civic life of the country. Young people expressed feelings of marginalization and significant mistrust of politicians and the older generation. This mistrust stems from perceived false promises, corruption, and nepotistic practices. Young people believe that politicians today do not have the people's interests at heart. They prefer to stay away from political parties but often are drawn into party politics during electoral periods as they are enticed by gifts and promises from politicians. Although youth voting statistics are low, most participants (about 91 percent) reported casting a vote in recent elections. This attests to their recognition of the importance of elections and their sense of responsibility to vote, even if they do not really do so. Youth civic engagement is seen in high participation in religious groups (about 95 percent) and in sports groups, especially football.

**THE DIGITAL DIVIDE:** The study results show that access to information and communication technology (ICT) among young people is relatively low, with only a minority having substantial and regular access to smartphones, computers, the internet, and social media. Although about 60 percent of young people interviewed possess a cellphone and can access the internet intermittently using mainly Facebook and WhatsApp, internet usage is predominantly for fun rather than work. Youth pointed to the cost of smartphones and access to Wi-Fi as major barriers in urban settings, whereas those in rural areas cited access to electricity as an obstacle.

**EXTREMIST VIOLENCE:** Participants in only a few FGDs mentioned the extremist violence in Cabo Delgado. However, the desk review highlighted the problem as a major concern for the Mozambican government as well as for many scholars who have been studying the issue. In this study, the discussion of extremist violence came about in the context of youths' challenges with unemployment. Some young people saw the lack of jobs as creating vulnerabilities to recruitment into extremist groups.

**YOUTH PROGRAMS:** Evaluation of youth programs revealed the absence of an intentional and proven youth-focused approach in activities that target youth as a primary beneficiary group. This is true for

many programs implemented by government, donors, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs), and other development partners. Moreover, programs generally lack a holistic approach that goes beyond the specific interest of each donor or agency. A holistic approach would require central coordination from the government to ensure greater synergies in the actions of development partners. Many programs also focus on one age segment and do not accompany youth as they transition from adolescence to adulthood.

**CONCLUSIONS:** Youth constitute most of the population and are today better educated than previous generations. Many have reached higher levels of education, often being the first in their family to attain middle or higher education. However, many still lack the skills needed to be competitive on the local and international job market. Quality education, health care, and decent employment opportunities are either unavailable or unattainable, and many youths feel marginalized from mainstream society as they try to survive through odd jobs and precarious livelihoods in the informal economy. Thus, it is crucial to develop interventions to address youth challenges in a holistic way, improving initiatives that already exist, finding innovative ways to enhance youth-led activities and enterprises that offer potential for growth, and engaging youth when designing programs that will impact their lives. Applying the positive youth development model to programs will also help achieve better outcomes for youth participants.

Understanding youth life trajectories is key to designing more effective youth program interventions. Young people feel excluded from the conversations and programs aimed at supporting them. They want a seat at the table. As many programs do not focus on young people, a major challenge for the authorities and development practitioners is how best to integrate youth in existing efforts. How can the development community promote an environment conducive to positive youth development?

As youth are the largest demographic group in Mozambique, development practitioners should put youth challenges and aspirations at the forefront of any new strategy, program, or initiative and examine how to better engage youth for more robust programmatic outcomes. More intentionally youth-focused programs need to be developed that include the direct involvement of youth leaders. It is important to engage youth beyond the so-called “elite youth” who usually gravitate to development practitioners and are often seen as representatives of the larger youth population. Engage those who may be less visible at the regional or national level but who stand out in their local communities to be partners, contribute to project design and implementation, and become relatable role models for their peers through inspiration and mobilization.

For Mozambique to create sustainable development and well-being for all, this large youth population must be at the center of all economic, social, and political development. Serious investments in younger generations are paramount. Supporting youth will support Mozambique’s sustainable future.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

*Create technical capacity for youth programming.* This entails hiring and training youth advisors and sector specialists with specific youth expertise. These positions can provide insights and guidance to sector offices on designing and implementing youth-focused interventions and lead research and analysis to fill information gaps. This recommendation applies not only to USAID/Mozambique but also to other donors, the government, and the private sector.

*Increase research to fill information gaps.* USAID/Mozambique, donors, government, and the private sector should develop greater awareness of the current barriers and challenges to youths' well-being through reliable research and analysis on the condition of youth. There is a significant lack of information about mental health among Mozambican youth, and although there is significant research on the challenges facing young girls, the same is not true for young men and boys. More information is also critical to ensuring programs are tailored to the needs of diverse youth groups, including rural/urban, male/female, in-school/out-of-school, and the unemployed, to mention just a few.

*Actively engage youth when designing, implementing, and evaluating programs.* USAID, the Mozambican government, development practitioners, civil society, and the private sector must do a better job of consulting with and engaging young people from different social and economic backgrounds when designing programs that target youth. Development actors should learn from youth challenges but also build on the experiences of youth who have succeeded in adversity and empower them to be relatable role models for those who continue to face challenges.

*Employ a multisectoral approach to youth-focused programs and involve multiple partners.* USAID/Mozambique should, where possible, move away from a siloed approach to youth programming, addressing youth needs only in relation to a single sector such as health. A multisectoral approach should be applied to youth programming through an integrated and holistic strategy that covers youth needs in education, health, the labor market, agriculture technology, and so forth. Such an approach should consider, for example, the health needs of youth involved in an education program or the livelihood needs of youth participating in a health program. Such initiatives should also involve multiple partners in government, donors, the private sector, NGOs, and CBOs to reach a wider group of youth and achieve better programmatic outcomes.

*Accompany youth as they transition to adulthood.* Many youth programs focus on only one segment of youth (mainly young adolescents) and either drop them or lump them together with older adults once the youth reach 18 or leave primary school. Holistic youth programs should apply a positive youth development approach and accompany youth as they transition from adolescence to adulthood, supporting them as they enter the workforce, start families, and so forth. For many youth, young adult years are critical to defining their future, and focused support can make a tremendous difference in their life trajectory.

*Support what young people are already doing.* USAID/Mozambique should make efforts to discover successful or promising youth initiatives and provide further support. This recommendation applies to both economic and civic activity, including youth-led initiatives related to biodiversity conservation or other types of community mobilization.

Analysis of feedback from youth interviewed as part of the assessment identified specific challenges that keep young people from achieving their life goals. Based on this analysis, this assessment provides the following sector-specific recommendations for USAID:

- *Employment and livelihoods:* USAID/Mozambique and other stakeholders should
  - Strengthen youth capacities to enter the job market with adequate training in entrepreneurial and business skills; financial literacy; and soft skills for résumé writing, job searching, and productive internet use.

- Establish partnerships with the private sector to provide internship opportunities to equip youth with job experience.
- Provide financial support and promote youth entrepreneurial activities.
- Enforce policies that reduce corruption and nepotism in employment.
- *Education:* USAID/Mozambique and other stakeholders should
  - Expand technical and vocational education and training.
  - Enforce ethical standards for teachers and apply consequences for predatory behavior, especially sexual abuse and exploitation of students.
  - Engage parents and other community leaders in school councils to promote cooperation and curb corruption and predatory behaviors.
  - Provide career guidance in secondary schools, vocational centers, and higher education institutions to facilitate access to labor markets and a smoother transition to the world of work.
  - Improve schools' physical infrastructure and promote a positive learning environment.
  - Support families with school subsidies for children and young people to reduce child marriage and child labor.
- *Health:* USAID/Mozambique and other stakeholders should
  - Provide training to health professionals to address youth-specific family planning needs and concerns.
  - Include soft skills training for health professionals that directly deliver patient services.
  - Support interventions to improve access and fair treatment at health facilities.
  - Support the establishment of community health information centers to increase young people's health awareness.
  - Include direct outreach to young people by young people when designing, implementing, and evaluating health interventions.
  - Investigate further the mental health needs of youth and the impact anxiety, depression, and stress have on substance abuse and non-positive behaviors. Consider investments in local solutions (such as Zimbabwe's Friendship Bench)<sup>1</sup> to the lack of safe spaces for youth seeking mental health support.
- *Agriculture and business:* USAID/Mozambique and other stakeholders should
  - Apply the USAID Positive Youth Development model to agriculture projects and make a purposeful effort to engage youth in agriculture activities.
  - Support government vocational training programs related to agriculture and entrepreneurship to expand programmatic reach and to promote jobs across the agri-business value chain.
  - Increase financing for young entrepreneurs and consider partnering with other donors or government to expand and provide technical assistance to initiatives.

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<sup>1</sup> The Friendship Bench Open House is a safe, supportive, and normalizing environment for adolescents, adults, and seniors seeking mental health support. It focuses on people who are suffering from common mental health disorders, such as anxiety and depression; known locally as *kufungisisa* (thinking too much). <https://www.friendshipbenchzimbabwe.org/>

- *Civic engagement:* USAID/Mozambique and other stakeholders should
  - Promote youth political participation through civil society, civic associations, and community groups, not only directly with political parties.
  - Support initiatives that promote democratic culture and values outside the usual political environment centered around elections—for example, through school councils, community groups, and youth parliaments.
  - Invest in finding and supporting youth civic engagement by supporting their interests and social movements (environmental and climate justice, women’s rights, etc.), with a focus on youth-led solutions to local challenges.
  - Promote initiatives that bridge the old-young divide and ease generational tensions (such as inclusive community discussions with a diverse stakeholder group).
  
- *The digital divide:* USAID/Mozambique and other stakeholders should
  - Support initiatives to expand internet access throughout the country, particularly for schools, health facilities, and other points of public service delivery. The Bluetown cloud-based information provision is a model that can be considered for further dissemination.
  - Support initiatives to improve electricity access and mobile telephone coverage in rural areas.
  - Incorporate digital skills development training into initiatives that support girls’ clubs or other safe spaces for youth activities to help young people learn productive and positive internet usage.
  - Connect young people to one another, using technology, to promote exchanges (for example, use Zoom or Google Meet to connect Dreams ambassadors in Maputo to those in Sofala for information exchange and peer support).

# INTRODUCTION

## BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

USAID/Mozambique commissioned the Mozambique Cross-Sectoral Youth Assessment to inform the upcoming country development cooperation strategy (CDCS) for 2020–2024 and to provide programmatic recommendations for USAID/Mozambique’s specific technical offices. This assessment also aimed to offer development practitioners working in Mozambique information about the current situation of Mozambican youth and the challenges of their journey from adolescence to adulthood.

This study’s specific objectives were as follows:

1. To understand the assets, needs, challenges, and opportunities of Mozambican youth and identify opportunities where youth can contribute to the development and peace of Mozambique
2. To identify context-relevant models/approaches for implementation of evidence-based, gender-sensitive programming for youth between the ages of 10 and 29 by assessing other relevant donor youth programs
3. To assess and identify lessons learned from USAID/Mozambique’s youth programming to inform the design and implementation of future youth programs for better youth outcomes

The majority (approximately 55 percent) of the USAID/Mozambique \$290 million annual budget is earmarked for HIV/AIDS programming, with the remainder targeting quality basic education, inclusive economic growth, protection of biodiversity, climate resilience, a strengthened civil society and media, and an improved capacity to respond to immediate health needs. Within all programmatic areas, USAID is prioritizing youth outcomes, particularly in health, economic growth, and education. Geographically, USAID programming focuses mostly on the center and north of the country, where most of the population resides, the poverty rates are highest, access to services is lowest, and the HIV/AIDS epidemic is most acute. USAID/Mozambique’s health, economic growth, education, and democracy and governance portfolios strive to enhance youths’ significant role in development activities. Given the growing proportion of youth in the population, Mozambique urgently needs to better integrate this group into USAID activities, policies, and plans.

### What Is Different about This Assessment?

Over the past 10 years, several entities have commissioned youth assessments and studies, particularly as it relates to employment and entrepreneurship. The assessment team used the insights from these studies to inform this assessment’s methodology, approach, and conclusions. The assessment engaged youth directly, using peer focus group discussions (FGDs) to bring forward the unaltered voice of young people from every demographic and geographic area in Mozambique and their perceptions, feelings, challenges, and solutions.

## WHY FOCUS ON YOUTH?

The world has never been so young, with an estimated 3.6 billion people younger than 30 in 2020.<sup>2</sup> Most of them live in the Global South, with more than 70 percent of Sub-Saharan Africa's population younger than 30. The median age of Africans today is 21.7 years. As the youth population in Africa grows rapidly, the economic opportunities available are not growing nearly as quickly. By 2025, more than 260 million Africans could lack an economic stake in society (African Development Bank 2018).

Mozambique has a population of 28 million, and 68 percent of them are younger than 25 (Population Census 2017). Like many young people across Africa, young Mozambicans constitute a disenfranchised majority. Whatever their class, gender, and cultural and religious backgrounds, many youths cannot afford to become independent and partake in the privileges and responsibilities of adult life. These facts constituted the core of the data collected during this study, as more than 80 percent of the young participants—males and females from both rural and urban areas—attested to their socioeconomic difficulties and marginalization from labor markets.

### Who Constitute Youth?

The United Nations defines youth as between ages 14 to 25, whereas the African Union defines it as between ages 15 to 35. The Government of the Republic of Mozambique (GRM) also defines youth as between ages 15 to 35. USAID, however, works with a much broader definition, focusing on ages 10 to 29, while recognizing the differences in the various segments of the youth population.<sup>3</sup> These diverse chronological definitions may cause some discrepancies in analysis, especially in comparing the specific engagement and services various youth will require.

Moreover, in rural settings, local populations often offer a more sociocultural definition of youth, imbued with social rights and responsibilities even if sometimes connected to chronological age. The ability to be independent and contribute to the family and community is valued as a maker of social adulthood. Younger girls who marry and become mothers are hurled into an adult status. Conversely, people in their late 30s with no job who cannot care for themselves and support others are still considered youths. For the purposes of this report, the assessment team used the USAID definition of youth—ages 10 to 29—but also considered feedback from key informants within the cultural context where research was conducted.

It is already widely established that age categories are not natural or neutral; they are defined based on social, political, and cultural norms that delineate a standardized life course trajectory for individuals living in each society. For example, social expectations exist about the ages at which people should enter school and transition from school to work, then from work to retirement. However, for the life journey to be effective, society has to offer the means, systems, and opportunities that allow citizens to smoothly move through the various life stages. This is precisely the problem facing Mozambique: collectively, government, civil society, and the private sector have not provided the large youth

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<sup>2</sup> Madson et al., 2010, "The Effects of Age Structures on Development" Policy Brief. Available at: [https://pai.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/SOTC\\_PIB.pdf](https://pai.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/SOTC_PIB.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Early Adolescence, ages 10–14 | Adolescence, ages 15–19 | Emerging Adulthood, ages 20–24 | Transition to Adulthood, ages 25–29

population with the education, opportunities, and social support necessary for a successful transition into adulthood.

### **Mozambican Youth and “Waithood”**

“Waithood,” a portmanteau meaning “waiting for adulthood,” is a concept that scholars use to capture the specific circumstances of young people stuck between childhood and adulthood. During this study, it became clear that the majority of young Mozambicans struggle to make a transition into adulthood and achieve their aspirations. Youth, civil society organization (CSO) leaders, and private sector representatives highlighted deficiencies in the education system in adequately preparing youth to access decent employment or perform at a high standard. That youth struggle to obtain sustainable livelihoods causes additional problems when youth cannot afford the costs of *lobolo* (bride wealth) and other marriage rituals or provide for their offspring. Young Mozambicans are indeed living in *waithood* (Honwana 2013).

This study’s findings indicate that youth experiences of waithood are shaped by gender, class, location, education level, and access to resources. Young men face the pressures of getting a steady job, finding a home, and covering the costs of marriage and family building. Although young women are becoming better educated and are engaged in productive labor alongside household chores, marriage and motherhood are still the most important markers of adulthood, especially in rural settings. Urban, middle-class youth are often better placed to secure jobs and have an easier trajectory toward adulthood.

### **The Socioeconomic Impact on Youth**

The Mozambican economy is fragile, with an annual gross domestic product (GDP) rate below 3 percent— not high enough to address the serious challenges confronting the country. Cyclones Idai and Kenneth aggravated the situation in 2019, devastating parts of the country and muting growth prospects (World Bank 2019). Poverty—although reduced from about 53 percent in 2003 to 46 percent in 2015—is still high, with nearly 80 percent of the poor living in rural areas and lacking basic public services. The annual per capita income in 2017 was \$458; only 22 percent of families have access to electricity and only 5 percent receive piped water inside their homes. The country registered 20 percent unemployment in 2015, with youth unemployment at 30 percent (Africa Development Bank 2019). Moreover, Mozambique is grappling with weak youth engagement in politics and public affairs; in the 2014 elections, the youth vote did not exceed 54 percent.<sup>4</sup> The much-anticipated bonanza from the production of natural gas in the northern region will take time to materialize, and the resulting employment opportunities in the oil and gas field will not be transformational. Given this bleak socioeconomic and political picture and the Mozambican economy’s inability to produce enough jobs for annual new job entrants, the current predicament of young Mozambicans is not surprising.

### **Youth Bulge vs. Demographic Dividend**

Having a large youth population presents both challenges and opportunities in Mozambique. Two conceptual models to understand current youth demographics are the “youth bulge” and the

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<sup>4</sup> Data from the 2019 elections are not available yet.

“demographic dividend.”<sup>5</sup> The former postulates that large youth populations elevate the risks for conflict and violence as marginalized and disaffected youth become vulnerable to engagement in illegal activity, violence, and radical groups. The latter paints a more positive picture by stating that large youth populations constitute an asset for developing nations if they can transform this sizeable group into an active and productive labor force able to sustain the nonworking population (those younger than 15 and older than 65). The African Union’s Agenda 2063, of which Mozambique is a signatory, is grounded on the investment in youth to harness the demographic dividend.<sup>6</sup>

Young people are not just the future of society; they are also the engine that makes society move forward. They are at the forefront of innovation and new technologies, but they are also the ones who led the riots of 2008 and 2010 in Maputo<sup>7</sup> and are prominent in the ongoing insurgency in Cabo Delgado.<sup>8</sup> If Mozambique is going to create sustainable development and well-being for all, this large youth population must be at the center of any economic, social, and political development. Significant investments in the younger generations will be paramount. Socioeconomic and development interventions in areas such as education, health, agriculture, labor markets, and the environment need to involve young people as both actors and subjects, beneficiaries and constructive collaborators. This is also true for interventions in governance, democratization, human rights, and political engagement. USAID/Mozambique, working with the national authorities and other development partners, should develop holistic youth programming and consider transitioning from a focus on just one segment of youth to accompanying youth as they transition to adulthood. USAID and its partners should adapt and apply the Positive Youth Development model, a USAID principle that supports “engaging youth along with their families, communities, and/or governments so that youth are empowered to reach their full potential” to all projects that target any segment of the youth demographic. In this way, USAID will work for youth, with youth, and ultimately for Mozambique’s sustainable development.

This report contains six chapters. Following this introduction on the reasoning behind a focus on youth, the report presents in Chapter 1 the methodological considerations that guided the study, as well as the specific research methods for data gathering and analysis. Chapter 2 delves into issues of youth agency and self-perspective in a rapidly changing world. It discusses how young people understand themselves and their lives in the contemporary world—both as Mozambicans and as global citizens. This chapter also considers whether the social, political, economic, and cultural environments have been conducive to

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<sup>5</sup> On the youth bulge, see Lionel Beehner, “The Effects of ‘Youth Bulge’ on Civil Conflicts” (Council on Foreign Relations, 2007) or P. Hendrixson, “The Youth Bulge: Defining the Next Generation of Young Men as a Threat to the Future” (Hampshire, 2003). On the demographic dividend, see D.E. Bloom, D. Canning, and J. Sevilla, “The Demographic Dividend. A New Perspective on the Economic Consequences of Population Change” Santa Monica CA: Rand Corporation, 2003) or Africa Union, “Roadmap on Harnessing the Demographic Dividend” (Africa Union, 2017).

<sup>6</sup> The Africa Union in 2013 established its Agenda 2063 as a pan-African vision for a more integrated, prosperous, and peaceful Africa. The agenda constitutes a strategic framework for the political and socioeconomic transformation of the continent over the next 50 years. African Union “Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want” (Africa Union, 2013). Available at: [https://au.int/sites/default/files/pages/3657-file-agenda2063\\_popular\\_version\\_en.pdf](https://au.int/sites/default/files/pages/3657-file-agenda2063_popular_version_en.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> Further information on the uprisings is in the following articles: Michael Sambo, “The Youth Dimension of the Social Protests in Maputo – Mozambique (2008 and 2010): Politics of Representation and Youth’s Interpretation of the Protests” (Institute of Social Studies, 2015); Björn Enge Bertelsen, “Effervescence and Ephemerality: Popular Urban Uprisings in Mozambique,” *Ethnos* 81 (2016):1.

<sup>8</sup> For more on the Cabo Delgado insurgency, see Gregory Pirio, Robert Pittelli, and Yussuf Adam, “The Many Drivers Enabling Violent Extremism in Northern Mozambique” (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 20219). Available at: <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/the-many-drivers-enabling-violent-extremism-in-northern-mozambique/>

youths' positive development. Chapter 3 presents the data collected from FGDs and the telephone and online surveys, probing young people's needs and challenges and the subsequent barriers they face to achieving these. Chapter 4 uses data collected from senior officials to draw lessons learned from youth programming. It analyzes the levels of, and factors accounting for, youth programming; donors that are most advanced in youth programming; and change in USAID/Mozambique youth programming. Chapter 5 brings together the various threads and connects the dots by portraying girls and boys as a corollary of their everyday life experiences, tribulations, and aspirations. The chapter ends with a path forward by suggesting the inclusion of young people as changemakers and drivers of their own lives. Finally, Chapter 6 focuses on recommendations for action for USAID/Mozambique, as well as for other development partners and the government. Throughout, the report brings the voices of young women and men to the forefront of the narrative through direct quotes and through data collected in quantitative surveys.

# CHAPTER I. METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

## I.1 GLOBAL STANDARDS AND LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

This study grounds itself in the Mozambican reality while adhering to global standards of design, data collection, analysis, and reporting. The team comprised two lead consultants, both Mozambican nationals: Alcinda Honwana and Carlos Shenga.<sup>9</sup> COWI, a consulting agency based in Maputo, managed the data collection process. The Mozambican study team has intimate knowledge of the country and its social, cultural, and linguistic dynamics. All data collectors are natives of the provinces in which they worked. They are fluent in at least one local language spoken in the provinces and have lived there most of their lives. At various levels of the research process, this team of Mozambican nationals permitted the infusion of endogenous insights and perspectives into the design, implementation, and data analysis while simultaneously positioning the study within broader regional and international trends.

## I.2 YOUTH-CENTERED PERSPECTIVES

The study took a youth-centered approach by making sure that youth perspectives informed the design, the production of toolkits, and the data collection processes. This occurred through discussions with young people from various networks. The data collectors, coming from the six provinces, were all younger than 30. This selection was intended to ensure a youth-on-youth research approach that allowed for greater empathy and openness between researchers and respondents. The young researchers often connected with and understood their interlocutors' predicament; some even shared similar experiences. By deliberately creating a youth-centered environment and actively engaging youth as constructive collaborators and contributors in its various stages, the study arguably was able to develop better understandings of these young people's experiences, perceptions, aspirations, and challenges in present-day Mozambique. A youth-centered approach is fundamental to promote youths' positive development and empower them to reach their full potential.

## I.3 GENDER-BASED APPROACHES

Gender equality and inclusion have been at the forefront of this study. In addition to a gender-balanced team leading the study, the team's approach ensured that men, women, girls, and boys were well and equally represented throughout the data collection process. The FGDs were equally distributed among young women and young men. The same was done for the interviews and the computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) and online surveys, which were administered evenly to men and women. During data analysis, the team was careful to bring out gender-specific factors and critically examine gender disparities. For example, both sexes recognized drinking and smoking as a predominantly male behavior, and both young men and young women repeatedly mentioned sexual harassment and abuse of girls by male teachers as a serious problem for young women.

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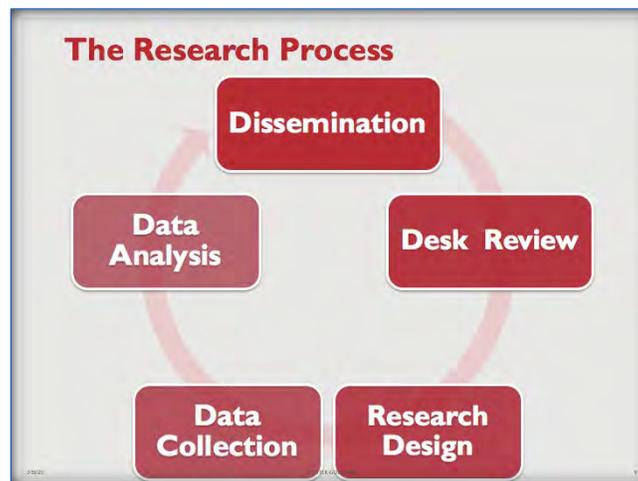
<sup>9</sup> Both are experts on youth studies. Their various publications include the 2013 book on how youth transition to adulthood in four African countries, including Mozambique, by Alcinda Honwana, *The Time of Youth: Work, Social Change, and Politics in Africa* (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2013). Also, Carlos Shenga and Lorraine Howe authored the report "Youth's Concerns and their Expectations for Socio-Economic Development in Mozambique: Findings from Focus Group Discussions" for the National Democratic Institute in March 2016.

The study's gender-based approach was critical to understanding the ways the country's current situation impacts young women and young men. Young women, especially from rural areas, generally experience greater social and economic discrimination than their male counterparts do. This approach was fundamental to ensuring diversity and equity in the study. All individuals received equal opportunities to voice their views in individual interviews, FGDs, and the CATI and online surveys.

#### I.4 THE RESEARCH PROCESS

The cross-sectoral youth assessment was conducted from November 2019 to March 2020. It involved qualitative and quantitative evidence-based research with methods that ranged from interviews and FGDs to CATI and online surveys. The assessment included four main phases (Figure 1). The **desk review phase** focused on the collection of all relevant documentation, mainly grey literature produced by international, regional, and national government and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). This work was undertaken by Jessica Ngo of Management Systems International (MSI) between October and December 2019. The **research design phase** focused on the production of key conceptual documents, the research instruments, and the identification and training of data collectors. This occurred during November 2019. The **data collection phase** included the deployment of teams to the provinces to conduct FGDs and semi-structured and unstructured interviews during a period of about two and a half months from December 2019 to mid-February 2020. This phase also included the launch of CATI and online surveys to youth, NGOs, and donors. The **data analysis phase** focused on the breakdown and examination of the data collected and its triangulation between data sources and methods. This phase of work spanned from mid-February through March 2020. The **dissemination phase** constitutes the end of the process, in which the team shares findings within USAID and across partners. It includes PowerPoint presentations to MMEMS; USAID/Mozambique technical office meeting discussions; and dissemination meetings and workshops with USAID/Mozambique and key stakeholders from donors, government, CSOs, and the private sector.

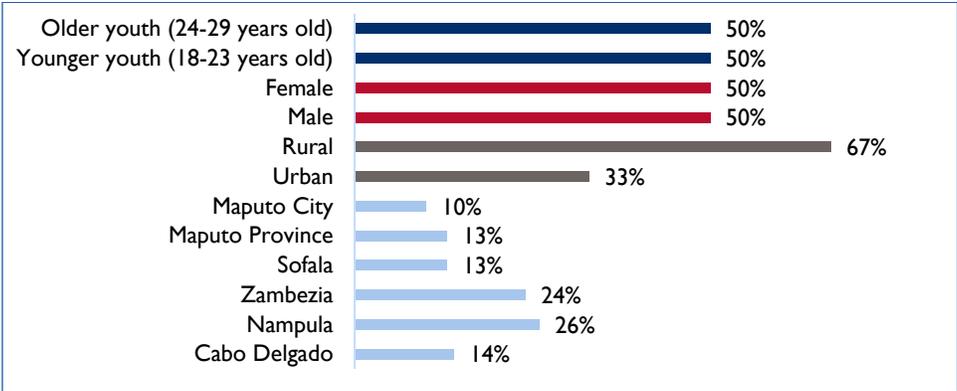
FIGURE I. VARIOUS RESEARCH PHASES AND THEIR SEQUENCE



### I.5 DATA AND METHODS

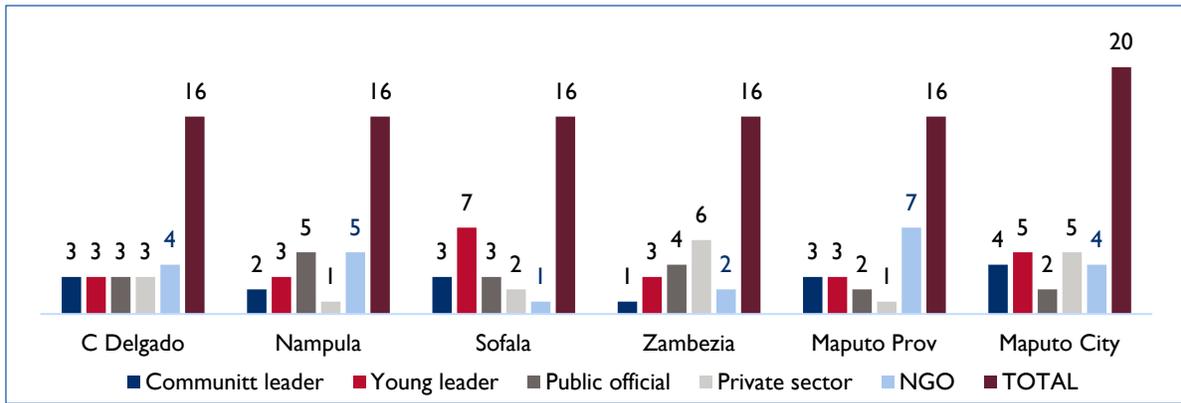
The youth assessment collected data using qualitative and quantitative methods. It was initially designed to be qualitative with in-depth FGDs, key informant interviews (KIIs), and life histories in six provinces (Cabo Delgado, Maputo, Nampula, Sofala, and Zambézia), including Maputo City, covering two-thirds of the country’s population. With a sample of 150 FGDs, its allocation was a proportional representation of the country, as reflected by the most recent population census from 2017. To allow an equal chance of youth of all genders and ages to be included in the assessment, researchers alternated between male and female groups and younger and older youth groups (Figure 2). Randomly selected group discussions took place at the district level. FGDs reached 1,105 young people aged 18 to 29 years old, who, in addition to questions about themselves, also talked about young people aged 10 to 17 years old (see Annex A).

**FIGURE 2. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS BY DEMOGRAPHIC**



KIIs and life histories were conducted in the same locations as the FGDs. The sample of 100 KIIs was distributed equally across provinces, with 16 KIIs occurring in each province. The remaining 20 KIIs took place in Maputo City. In each of the five provinces, plus Maputo City, interview subjects included young leaders, community leaders, public and private sector officials, and CSO officials (Figure 3). In addition, in Maputo City, KIIs were conducted with senior officials from the government, USAID technical offices, donors, and the private sector. The sample of life histories was 24, distributed equally with four from each province, half rural and half urban. The remaining four life histories came from Maputo City. Every other life history was with a female participant. Life history participants were selected from FGD participants.

**FIGURE 3. KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS BY PROVINCE AND KEY OFFICIALS**



To increase coverage, the youth assessment relied on quantitative CATI with a sample of 514 youths nationwide. Since participation depended on participants having access to a phone, sample representation was tentative (Figure 4). Besides this, the assessment reached 50 youths through a quantitative online youth survey (see Annex A). In total, 1,669 young people aged 18 to 29 throughout the country participated in the assessment.

**FIGURE 4. COMPUTER-ASSISTED TELEPHONE INTERVIEWING, BY DEMOGRAPHIC**

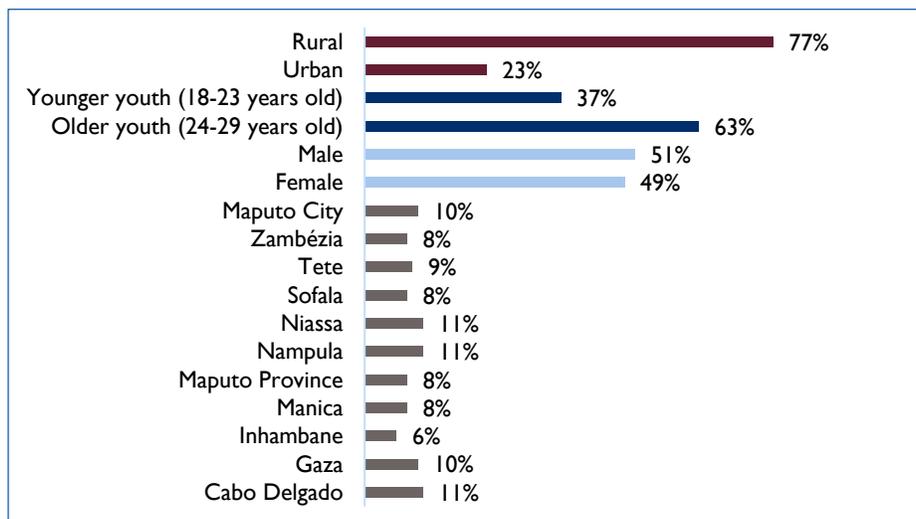
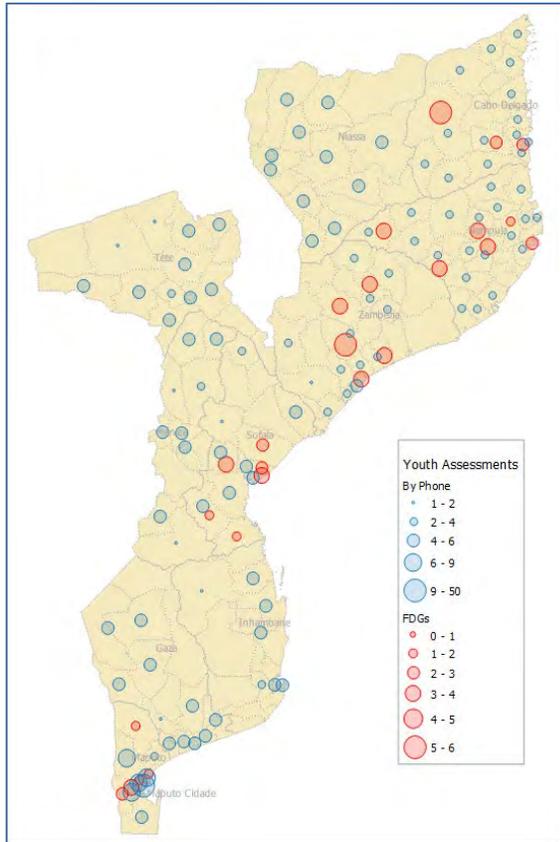


Figure 5 illustrates the national spread of data collection for this assessment at the district level.

**FIGURE 5. YOUTH ASSESSMENT DATA COLLECTION BY DISTRICT**



Finally, the assessment collected data on 51 youth programs (past and present) conducted in Mozambique, of which 12 were from USAID, 17 were from other donors, and 21 were from CSOs. The USAID youth programs were assessed through USAID technical office KIIs, whereas donor and CSO program assessments came through online surveys (Annex B).

## CHAPTER 2. YOUTH AGENCY IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD

Young Mozambicans represent tremendous potential for the country. The concept of “agency” involves their capacity to think and act independently, as well as make choices that shape their experiences and life trajectories. Although the vast majority of participants in this study were preoccupied about what the government needs to do for them, some did offer reflections about their role and position in society and the kinds of contributions they could be and are making to the country’s development.

Today’s young Mozambicans are better educated than their parents. Many have reached higher levels of education, often being the first to attain middle school or higher education in their family. Paradoxically, although they are generally better positioned to acquire decent employment, the vast majority remain unemployed. According to the African Development Bank (AfDB), youth unemployment rates in Mozambique were at 30 percent in 2019. Many youths are underemployed, meaning they work less than full time (40 hours a week) or perform jobs that are inadequate for their qualifications, and thus earn less than they should. However, specific data for youth underemployment in Mozambique are unavailable. Despite these high unemployment rates, young people who had access to education appear to be in a stronger economic position, using their *agency* to survive in the informal economy while still searching for better and more stable job opportunities. Non-educated youth remain more vulnerable and subsist through volatile, risky, and extremely precarious livelihoods or hustling strategies. Indeed, according to the International Labour Organization, the lack of postsecondary education in low- and middle-income economies leaves most young men and women stuck in vulnerable and informal employment.<sup>10</sup> But how do young Mozambicans engaged in this study see themselves and their lives today?

### 2.1 YOUTH SELF-PERSPECTIVE

During the study, most young participants in FGDs, interviews, and surveys said they aspire to receive a good education. Education ranked second after employment as one of youths’ most pressing needs. Although most young participants understood that strong education will help them succeed, some are growing disappointed with education as a means for upward mobility and better futures. A young man from Boane in Maputo said, “School is not motivating, and there are no incentives to work hard at school. One finishes school with good grades but still cannot get a job.” Another young man from Machanga in Sofala concurred. “We all study and work hard at school in order to progress in our lives, but the problem is that after our education we have no jobs... Many of us become domestic workers and survive doing odd jobs.”

Indeed, various studies have shown that for some youth, education has lost its incentive as they observe some of their non-educated peers make money and enjoy a “good life” through illegal activity such as drug dealing, swindling, and belonging to criminal gangs. For some, especially young men, making money

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<sup>10</sup> See “Lack of Education Leaves Millions of Youth without Decent Work in Developing Countries.” Available at: <https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/2014/12/lack-higher-education-leaves-millions-youth-decent-work-developing-countries/>

constitutes success (as money can be used to sustain a family), and even individuals doing so through illegal activity can be seen as role models.<sup>11</sup>

Data from FGDs and the CATI and online survey show that stable employment heavily influences young people's sense of accomplishment, pride, and dignity. Most young men and women in this study—about 75 percent—yearn to be respected and well regarded by their peers, families, and community. A young woman from Ile in Zambézia stated in an FGD that shame or humiliation affects many of her peers who are unable to care for themselves and must rely on family. They are also shunned by neighbors and other community members. In her words, “[Unemployed] youth feel shame and humiliation as they lose respect and standing in the family and community.”

About 50 percent of the young people who participated in this study understand that as citizens, they have rights but also obligations and social responsibilities. Although many do not yet actively participate in social and political processes, some clearly indicated a desire to contribute.

I am part of various associations; I think youth need to participate. I have been engaged in the Geração Biz, in our football association Right to Play, and in the association for tourist guides here in the island. I also volunteered to teach school children from first to fifth grade, for free, while studying in high school myself. I always volunteer to contribute. (Young man from Inhaca, FGD)

Some areas where youth would like to engage, or already have, are the following:

- Protection of the environment (mentioned by 48 percent of participants in CATI surveys, by 16 percent in the online survey, and in 27 FGDs).
- Contributions to Mozambique's development were part of all discussions; young people, despite their grievances, want to see their nation flourish. More specifically, 10 percent of phone survey respondents indicated wanting to contribute and work toward their country's development.
- Just 5 percent of respondents declared a willingness to join the army and fight for peace and stability in Mozambique.
- Some attested to wanting to be positive examples, demonstrating how to behave properly and to be good citizens, especially as many FGDs referred to young people's drinking, smoking, and engagement in violence and criminal activities.

Although some participants emphasized a need to contribute more actively to society, they were critical of the government for failing to provide them with the most basic socioeconomic and political rights—affordable good education, decent jobs, and a peaceful environment in which to live. Participants in 105 FGDs highlighted poor sanitation or litter/rubbish in their communities as a significant environmental challenge. On climate change, participants in 56 FGDs referred to flooding, droughts, intense heat, erosion, spoiled crops, and damaged houses. In Sofala and Cabo Delgado, the impact of Cyclones Idai and Kenneth came up as youth concerns about climate change. Young people in FGDs in rural settings saw deforestation, especially related to charcoal production, as a big issue. The government's inability to fulfill their rights to good health care was discussed in about 85 FGDs in relation to the spread of

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<sup>11</sup> See Alcinda Honwana, *The Time of Youth: Work, Politics, and Social Change in Africa* (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2013) and Marc Sommers, *Stuck: Rwandan Youth and the Struggles of Adulthood* (Georgia University Press, 2012).

diseases such as malaria and cholera. Also, participants in about 30 FGDs complained of poor infrastructure—bad roads, decaying buildings, and insufficient urban planning.

## 2.2 YOUTH PERSPECTIVES ABOUT THE WORLD

Today's youth are undoubtedly more connected to the world than previous generations were. Globalization, open markets, and the development of new information and communication technologies (ICT) (the internet and social media as well as television, radio, and cellphones) broke geographic barriers, speeding up communications, people's mobility, and the circulation of goods and services. Mozambique currently has an estimated 5.43 million internet users and 2.50 million active social media users (Hootsuite 2018), the majority of whom are young people. This study's data indicate that more than 60 percent of young Mozambicans have access to a cellphone, and this is their main source of information, particularly through Facebook and WhatsApp.

Young Mozambicans feel excluded from what they perceive to be the good and prosperous life they see on television, film, and the internet. They wish to afford and partake in the global consumer economy and want to own smartphones, computers and tablets, designer clothes, and other modern goods shown on music videos and television programs. Anthropologist Julie Archambault's 2009 study in Inhambane Province showed that at the time, owning a cellphone equated to being modern and "cool." She explains:

The mobile phone comes at a time when intimate relationships, household formation, and gender hierarchies are being redefined, alongside changing consumption patterns. The phone is seen by many [young people] as...constitutive of broader socioeconomic reconfigurations.<sup>12</sup>

Young people's feelings of powerlessness and deprivation are exacerbated by the ability, boosted by internet and social media, to constantly compare their lives with those of the fortunate and privileged. This study has shown that through Facebook and WhatsApp, the two main social media sources for young Mozambicans, they can visualize and connect themselves to global trends and cultures. In this way, these new technologies of information and communication raise their aspirations and expectations, but young Mozambicans are simultaneously constrained by the limited prospects and opportunities they face at home.

Many young women and young men in Mozambique, and elsewhere in Africa, see themselves condemned to the "waiting room" of modernity. For many, this contradiction has become intolerable. Thus, young Africans have engaged in unprecedented illegal migratory movements across the Mediterranean Sea toward Europe. Many have lost their lives on the journey, but more continue to make the crossing, desperate to reach greener pastures.

Despite the media attention on African migration to Europe, studies have demonstrated that the largest migratory movements in Africa—about 80 percent—happen within the continent, from rural to urban centers within countries and migration across nations (Mayke Kaag et al. 2019; UNECA 2018).<sup>13</sup> In

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<sup>12</sup> Julie Archambault, "Being Cool or Being Good: Researching Mobile Phones in Mozambique," *Anthropology Matters Journal* Vol 11, no. 2 (2009): 1.

<sup>13</sup> For example, the South African 2011 census reported that more than 75 percent of migrants in the country came from the African continent, with 68 percent from Southern African countries and only 7.3 percent from elsewhere in Africa (see

Mozambique, youth migration occurs predominantly toward South Africa. African migrants from South African Development Community countries make up 68 percent of foreign migrants in South Africa, with Mozambicans being the second-largest migrant community after Zimbabweans. During xenophobic violence in 2008 and 2012 in South Africa against immigrants, many Mozambicans were maimed, killed, and deported.<sup>14</sup> This migratory trend, which started in the 18th century with a structured labor agreement to provide manpower to the South African mines of Kimberly and Witwatersrand, continues today in an irregular and unstructured fashion with no job guarantees.

**FIGURE 6. MOZAMBICANS PROTEST XENOPHOBIC ATTACKS OUTSIDE THE SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY IN MAPUTO**



PHOTO: EUROPEAN PRESSPHOTO AGENCY (EPA)

### 2.3 ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Reflecting on their socioeconomic and political environment, the young interlocutors in this study did not paint an auspicious picture. In most FGDs, contributions highlighted deficiencies in the provision of basic systems, mechanisms, and infrastructure for young people to develop and thrive. They blame the government for not enacting the necessary support systems to improve conditions for youth.

Although most young people suffer from not having an enabling environment for growth, some encouraging experiences—though sporadic and inconsistent—emerged from this study. These are essentially project interventions undertaken by a variety of stakeholders from government, donors, and

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<https://africacheck.org/factsheets/geography-migration/>). For more information on Africa’s internal migration, see Mayke Kang, Gerard Baltissen, Griet Steel, and Anouk Lodder, “Migration, Youth, and Land in West Africa: Making the Connections Work for Inclusive Development,” *Land* 60, no. 8 (2019); United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, “African Migration: No Crisis, but Regional Integration Needed” (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2018). At <https://www.uneca.org/stories/african-migration-no-crisis-regional-integration-needed>

<sup>14</sup> For more on the xenophobic attacks against Mozambican migrants in South Africa, see Miriam Moagi, “Mozambican Immigrants to South Africa: Their Xenophobia and Discrimination Experiences,” *Journal of Psychology in Africa* 28, no. 3 (2018); Sarah Meny-Gibert and Sintha Chiumia, “Where Do South Africa’s International Migrants Come From?” (2016). Available at: <https://africacheck.org/factsheets/geography-migration/>

development partners to deal with specific issues that are often not connected to an overall strategy to tackle young people’s problems holistically.

## **Government, Donor, and Civil Society Initiatives**

For example, on the government side, the then-Ministry for Youth and Sports (now the Secretariat of State for Youth and Labor) established the Youth National Policy and the Youth Action Plan, with interventions based on the government quinquennial plan and drawn from the annual sectoral plans. Within this framework, the ministry established the Fundo de Apoio a Iniciativas Juvenis (FAIJ),<sup>15</sup> or Fund for Supporting Youth Initiatives, at a national scale, starting at the district level. The FAIJ offers grants to young people who excel in diverse areas, from innovative ideas in ICT to other entrepreneurial activities. A key informant noted that the FAIJ is not well known and needs greater dissemination among youth groups across the country. But the informant also pointed out that the program experienced shortages of funding in 2019, which poses major challenges in guaranteeing its reliability and effectiveness. Other initiatives for positive youth development include some undertaken by other government ministries and development partners, such as the “Rapariga Biz”<sup>16</sup> and the “Geração Biz”<sup>17</sup> programs, or even DREAMS<sup>18</sup> and JOBA,<sup>19</sup> which focus on groups of young people in specific areas. However, although these programs may offer support to some youth groups, they fall short in their geographic reach and scale. The problems youth face are immense and resources are too limited, leaving many youths untouched by government, donor, or civil society initiatives. Chapter 4 will discuss some of these specific programs in detail.

## **Cultural Norms**

At the community level, traditional, cultural, or religious beliefs and practices may affect young people’s development. Traditional initiation rituals constitute important factors for youth development among some ethnic groups. It is difficult to ascertain the extent to which these rituals contribute positively or negatively to the overall development of young women and men from rural areas. Some social scientists argue that initiation rituals, which are predominant in the country’s northern provinces, have deleterious consequences for girls, as they can harm bodily integrity, stimulate promiscuous sexual behaviors, and promote early marriage (WLSA<sup>20</sup> 2013). Others, however, argue that initiation rites should not be

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<sup>15</sup> Information about FAIJ is available here: <https://www.portaldogoverno.gov.mz/por/Imprensa/Balcao-Unico/Accao-Social/Fundo-de-Apoio-as-Iniciativas-Juvenis-FAIJ>

<sup>16</sup> The Rapariga Biz is a joint program of the United Nations development group in Mozambique (involving the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], UNICEF, United Nations Population Fund [UNFPA] and UN Women) to ensure the sexual and reproductive health and rights of girls and young women aged 10 to 24 in two provinces of Mozambique.

<sup>17</sup> Geração Biz is one of Pathfinder’s Mozambique flagship adolescent and youth programs that promoted reproductive and sexual health and HIV and AIDS prevention among adolescents. It was funded by UNFPA, the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA).

<sup>18</sup> DREAMS is a USAID partnership to reduce HIV rates among adolescent girls and young women.

<sup>19</sup> JOBA (Empowering Youth and Women with Skills for Employment) is a UK Department for International Development (DFID) program.

<sup>20</sup> Women and Law in Southern Africa Research and Education Trust (WLSA) is a regional NGO that researches women’s human rights in seven Southern African countries (Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe). See Conceição and Ernesto Macuacua Osório, “Os Ritos de Iniciação no Contexto Atual” (“Initiation Rites in the Current Context.”) Maputo: WLSA, Mozambique, 2013).

looked at simplistically, as some of the practices may equip girls and young women with sexual education and provide them with opportunities to be cognizant of, and assert, their feminine identities (Arnfred 2011).<sup>21</sup> The same is true for boys' initiation rituals, which address specific notions of masculinity and what it means to be a man in traditional cultural terms. Apart from undergoing circumcision, boys undergo a training process to be entrusted with family and community responsibilities (Gasparini 2015; Rathebe 2018).<sup>22</sup> The challenge is, therefore, to work closely with local communities to identify and support practices that impact positively on youth development.

The practice of child early and forced marriage (CEFM) has a negative impact on youth development, as it impedes girls' ability to achieve their goals. Child marriage denies girls' agency, limits their educational opportunities, increases the likelihood of early pregnancy, and increases the likelihood that their children will have poor nutrition and health outcomes. CEFM constitutes a major hindrance to girls' access to education and ability to make decisions about their future. Mozambique has one of the highest CEFM rates in the world, affecting almost half of girls; about 48 percent of women aged 20 to 24 were first married or in a union before age 18 and 14 percent before age 15 (UNICEF 2011). Although Mozambique has made significant progress in curbing CEFM, such as passing a law banning CEFM in August 2019,<sup>23</sup> the practice is still alive as girls and their families may agree to such marriages to improve livelihoods. However, previous studies show that most child brides come from poor families, and once married these girls are more likely to continue living in poverty (UNICEF 2011).

## Education

Young women who escape CEFM and continue to secondary school are often exposed to sexual harassment and abuse by male teachers. This issue was widely mentioned in FGDs by young women as well as by their male counterparts. The school does not constitute a safe space for young women to learn and flourish because their academic performance and their emotional and psychological health are disturbed by sexual harassment and abuse from their teachers.

A young woman in an FGD in Ile, Zambézia, made this point:

Teachers harass girls, their students; they want to sleep with them...If the girl says no, the teacher will retaliate, and she is not [going] to pass that class. So, because the girls don't want to fail at school, they end up accepting the teacher's advances. They do so out of fear...they do not want to suffer their retaliation and fail at school. This is a serious problem for us.

Another young woman in the same FGD illustrated the problem with the following example:

I know the case of a girl, my next-door neighbor. The director of her class wanted her and repeatedly asked her for sex, and she kept saying no. She is very intelligent and a very good student, but in the end of the year she got negative grades and was not admitted for the final exams. Fortunately, she had the courage to challenge the decision with the school and was then allowed to sit for the exams.

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<sup>21</sup> Signe Arnfred, "Sexuality and Gender Politics in Mozambique: Rethinking Gender in Africa" (Boydell & Brewer, 2015).

<sup>22</sup> Timi Gasparini, "Macua Rites of Passage: The Initiation Rites of Young People" (2015). Available at:

<http://en.ileatofabene.it/il-territorio/macua-rites-of-passage-the-initiation-rites-of-young-people/>. Phoka Rathebe, "The Role of Environmental Health in the Basotho Male Initiation Schools: Neglected or Restricted?" *BMC Public Health* 18 (2018): 994.

<sup>23</sup> See the August 2019 Law on CEFM at the following link: [http://www.wlsa.org.mz/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Lei\\_Prevencao\\_Combate\\_Unioes\\_Prematuras.pdf](http://www.wlsa.org.mz/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Lei_Prevencao_Combate_Unioes_Prematuras.pdf)

Young men may also suffer from retaliation from teachers to whom they do not offer gifts, as a young FGD participant in Inhaca Island, Maputo Province, pointed out:

Teachers find you drinking in a *barraca* [a shack that sells alcohol] and ask you to pay him a beer (*paga lá pá*). If you don't, you know you will fail his class; but we don't have the money.... Girls are harassed for sex by teachers, but they have their bodies....Your intelligence doesn't matter anymore.

Although in most cases participants have identified families as their first port of call for material and emotional support, the family environment or relationships with family members are not always positive. For example, many girls avoid telling their families of the sexual abuse they suffer in school for fear of being taken out of school or even blamed for the assault or harassment. Also, young people's inability to generate and contribute income heavily impacts family dynamics. Parents become unhappy that their children are not productive and cannot be independent or offer support to the family. A large portion of FGDs referred to young men resorting to drinking, smoking, and drug use. An FGD participant from Ile District, Zambézia Province, said, "With no employment, young people occupy their time drinking, smoking, stealing, and *vagabundiar* (wandering around and up to no good)."

This is a reality not just in Zambézia; in Maputo, the situation is similar. An FGD participant in Bogue, Maputo, said, "Lack of occupation is a big problem; young people have many vices because they are not busy with work and some don't even go to school....Some drink to forget about their problems." Likewise, a young woman in an FGD in Nampula City said, "Some even learn to drink while in school; there is a *barraca* near the school and they go there to drink."

These testimonies show that many young Mozambicans today do not benefit from an environment that allows them to grow and develop in a positive fashion, and they are often put in vulnerable positions by adults entrusted with their well-being. In addition to vital investments in education, health, and labor markets, the testimonies of many youth point to the need to work with families, educators, and community leaders to create a positive and nurturing environment for Mozambican youth. Although the issue of mental health was not mentioned explicitly, many youth testimonies referred to drugs and alcohol as a means of escaping problems, hinting at the need for positive methods for dealing with stress, anxiety, depression, and so forth. Although traditional customs are often seen as hindrances to youths' positive development in a modern world, some practices can be transformed into supportive strategies for young men and women. Finally, the strain on families and communities is visible as they struggle to support their offspring. Food and school subsidies for children and young people may be an option for supporting families, and more robust involvement of families and communities in school governance may help address predatory behavior.

## CHAPTER 3. CURRENT CHALLENGES FACING YOUTH

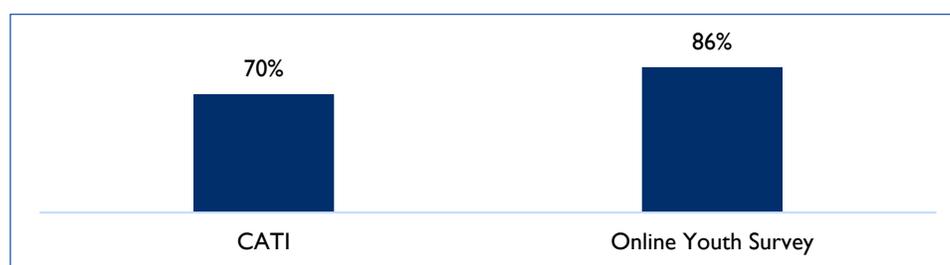
Chapter 3 summarizes the experiences, perceptions, and outlook of the young Mozambicans captured during the FGDs and KIIs conducted throughout this assessment. In this chapter, youths explain their situation, challenges, and aspirations in their own words. Combined with other assessments, studies and analysis, this information provides insight into the youth experience and helps form a more nuanced approach to recommendations for future programming.

### 3.1 EMPLOYMENT AND LIVELIHOODS

The World Bank Jobs Diagnostic (2018) states that close to a half-million new job entrants enter the labor market each year, a trend that will likely continue over the next decade.<sup>24</sup> The same report points to inequitable economic growth; the inability of the economy to expand job opportunities forces much of the working age population into informal jobs. With high youth unemployment rates, young people's chances to enter the labor market remain very slim.

The youth assessment's findings reinforce these observations. An overwhelming majority of the youth participants in the study reported the need for more job opportunities. Unemployment and lack of job opportunities were raised as a priority in 146 of the 150 FGDs, by 86 percent of youth respondents to the online survey, and by 70 percent of those who answered the telephone survey (Figure 7). Many youths lack the motivation to continue endless and unfruitful job searches, and many more lack essential hard, soft, and work readiness skills to meet labor market demands. Those with skills often face barriers associated with corruption, prejudice, and favoritism when trying to access employment.

FIGURE 7. THE NEED FOR JOBS



Young Mozambicans face significant barriers in accessing jobs and developing sustainable livelihoods through self-employment. In 111 FGDs, participants emphasized the following employment barriers: bribes to secure employment opportunities, limited information about job offers, and lack of work experience. These barriers appear to affect predominantly young males.<sup>25</sup> On the other hand, 42 FGDs revealed barriers to self-employment that included lack of entrepreneurial knowledge and business

<sup>24</sup> Jobs Diagnostic Mozambique, International Bank of Development and Reconstruction / The World Bank, Ulrich Lachler and Ian Walker (2018), 13.

<sup>25</sup> This study was conscious about its representativeness to be multistratified by gender, residential location, province, and age cohort. Where the findings reveal no demographic differences, the report is silent. Only significant differences between demographic groups are reported. In other words, the report specifies differences only where they exist. For the most part (possibly apart from gender), the experience of youth tends to be relatively uniform.

skills,<sup>26</sup> lack of financial support to initiate their own projects, and weak market systems. Young people noted the current high interest rates and banks' reluctance to provide loans without collateral, which many young people do not have. A key informant from the government stressed that because of the financial crisis, the FAIJ remains very limited and unable to respond to their needs. Respondents asserted that young people could not afford to purchase goods and then resell in local markets. This appeared to be more evident among rural young people.

Another barrier for self-employment is the lack of training in entrepreneurial skills and financial management. Although this finding comes from a survey of only 50 individuals, it points to an important specific training need. About 20 percent of young people who responded to the online youth survey said that if they had received training in financial management, they would be able to better manage their businesses and succeed in creating their own jobs. The need for training in entrepreneurial knowledge and financial skills was also raised in the FGDs, with 29 FGDs referring to the lack of technical vocational education and training (TVET) as a key barrier for self-employment in various sectors.

As a result of these employment barriers, some unemployed young Mozambicans end up developing precarious livelihoods in the informal sector. They sell goods on the streets or market stalls, find *biscatos* in small family workshops, become swindlers, and are exposed to petty crime and drugs (mainly adolescent boys and young men). Young women often sell vegetables and food in market stalls or become domestic workers, and some engage in sex work. About 44 FGDs discussed crime, with topics including lack of safety, stealing and robberies, and sexual harassment; 95 FGDs mentioned laziness, drinking, and drug use as pitfalls for young people.

### 3.2 EDUCATION

The United Nations Budget Brief<sup>27</sup> documents that the Government of Republic of Mozambique (GRM) increased state investments in education. Increased spending has significantly increased primary school enrollment rates. However, only 52 percent of students completed primary education in 2018 due to harsh socioeconomic conditions and a shortage of qualified teachers.

Most youth (55 percent) who were interviewed through the CATI survey stated that to be better integrated in society, they needed formal education, especially secondary and tertiary. Both male and female youth from almost all provinces reported a need for quality education and highlighted the obstacles they face. FGD data in Figure 8 indicate barriers to education according to participating youth. About 102 FGDs mentioned barriers such as poverty and unavailability of schools near home. Among specific barriers, the lack of financial support ranked first (104 FGDs), followed by corruption and bribing (91 FGDs), then lack of schools (63 FGDs), poor quality of teaching (58 FGDs), poor learning conditions (50 FGDs), sexual harassment (45 FGDs), premature marriage or pregnancy (27 FGDs), and safety and lack of street lighting (9 FGDs).

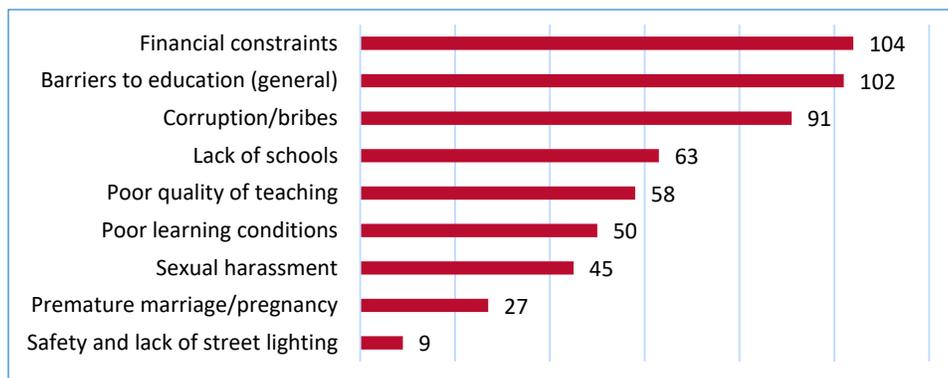
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<sup>26</sup> Lack of skills for self-employment was also mentioned in the telephone survey. About 19 percent told telephone interviewers that they did not know how to create self-employment, as they did not have appropriate skills.

<sup>27</sup> UNICEF, Mozambique, Budget Brief, Education Sector, 2018

<https://www.unicef.org/mozambique/sites/unicef.org.mozambique/files/2019-04/2018-Budget-Brief-Education.pdf>

**FIGURE 8. GENERAL AND SPECIFIC BARRIERS TO EDUCATION (FGDs)**



Note: Barriers to education in general are indicated by poverty and absence of schools near home.

Financial constraints appeared as barriers to both secondary and tertiary education, with no demographic variations. For secondary education, besides school uniforms, youth must pay tuition fees and school materials. In tertiary education, university tuition fees and materials accrue costs in a context where government scholarships are limited. Aside from this, students must pay for transportation to get to secondary school or university due to the distances involved.

Corruption in schools is seen in teachers asking students for money and sexual favors in exchange for good grades and success with exams.<sup>28</sup> This affects both boys and girls, although girls are generally asked to perform sexual favors. As Figure 8 shows, participants in 45 FGDs reported sexual harassment in secondary schools as a serious and widespread problem. Although girls are victims of sexual harassment, some male groups perceived girls to be taking advantage of the situation to be lazy and not attending class; they did not study because they knew their good grades were guaranteed. A male participant in an FGD made the following statement: “They [the girls] only appear on the first and last days of classes but pass exams.” Predatory behavior by the older generation toward young people also constitutes a barrier to education. As will be discussed later, this behavior also occurs in health care settings when girls try to access contraceptives.

Older (aged 24 to 29), rural, and female youths mentioned more shortages of secondary and tertiary education facilities in their communities, resulting in them having to walk long distances to reach schools. They may have to take *chapas* (private transportation) to school, but sometimes they do not have money to pay for it or it is not available. Younger (aged 18 to 23), rural, and male youths tended to observe that the quality of teaching is weak; they also reported the absence of practical teaching sessions.

Several focus groups discussed the problems related to poor quality of school buildings, classrooms, desks and chairs, materials, libraries, laboratories, and computer laboratories. All groups, with no significant variations across demographics, widely viewed their schools as being in a bad condition.

Financial constraints were mentioned in 104 FGDs as a top barrier to access secondary and tertiary education. In the context of living in poverty, the lack of financial support leads destitute parents to

<sup>28</sup> No demographic variations emerged on corruption in secondary education. Corruption in secondary education is reported equally among male and female and rural and urban dwellers and young and older youths.

prompt girls to enter marriage and consequently premature pregnancies. Both male and female groups from rural central (Sofala and Zambézia) and northern (Nampula and Cabo Delgado) provinces expressed difficulties in affording tuition fees, school uniforms, and materials in secondary education. These constraints often drive parents to take their adolescent girls out of school to help in household chores, and many girls are pushed into early marriage.

Girls suffer more [with respect to education] because of early pregnancy. A girl is sometimes 14 or 15 years old and her parents want to force her to marry because they lack conditions [to send her to school], and then she will end up with an early pregnancy. (Female group, 24 to 29 years old, rural, Nhamatanda, Sofala)

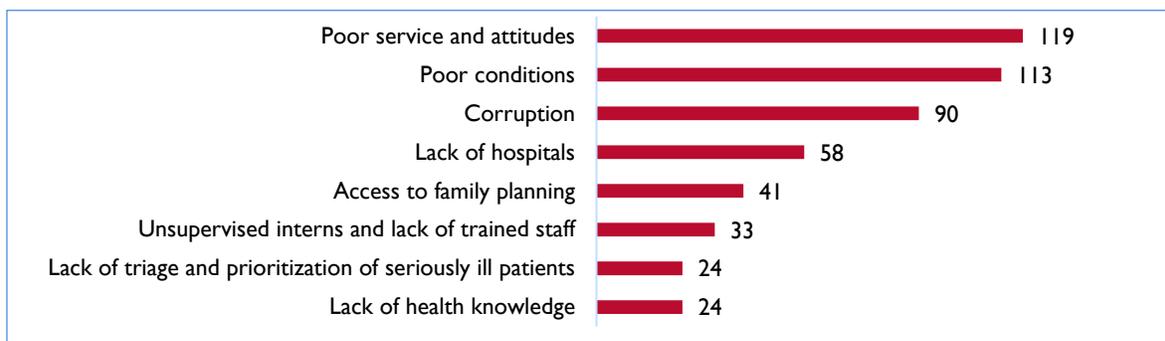
A final barrier is personal safety and the lack of street lighting. A significant number (nine) of FGDs reported, equally across all demographic groups, that students easily drop off school when they do not feel safe traveling from home to school and vice-versa, especially for night school. Participants mentioned assaults and theft. They viewed street lighting as a measure of safety against the threat of gangsters.

### 3.3 HEALTH

The desk review revealed that “health statistics in Mozambique are generally poor, as evident by its ranking on the Human Development Index, with least progress in better family planning and decreasing HIV among young people aged 15 to 25 years old” (USAID 2020). It indicates the weak capacity of the country’s health system and cultural beliefs as factors that affect poor health. This study confirms these as factors of underlying poor health, but it also reveals additional explanations.

The main barriers to health, ranked according to the number of reports in FGDs, are poor health service and attitudes (119), poor health conditions (113), corruption (90), lack of hospitals (58), insufficient access to family planning (41), unsupervised interns and lack of trained staff (33), lack of triage and prioritization of seriously ill patients, and lack of health knowledge (24 each) (Figure 9).

**FIGURE 9. HEALTH CONSTRAINTS (FGDs)**



Poor health service and attitudes include being serviced by health professionals while they are using their phones, no direct consultation with the patient, bad attitudes, rude staff, disclosing patient medical conditions to others, and discrimination. Female groups reported these issues more widely than male

groups did.<sup>29</sup> On the other hand, male groups had more reports of poor health conditions, including lack of medicines, ambulances, and materials; dirty facilities; and a lack of disability-accessible facilities.

Corruption in the health sector in general is manifested by health professionals demanding bribes from patients to access free public services. The study found no demographic differences on corruption in the health sector; all groups viewed it at the same level. Nonetheless, in family planning, corruption is manifested by health professionals asking for money from adolescent girls and young women to have contraceptive implants removed or to get birth control pills. This behavior reduces their ability to continue engaging in family planning.

Often girls get implants that later must be removed and when they go to a health center, they are asked by health professionals to pay a fee although it was supposed to be free. Yet when needing to have contraceptive tablets, sometimes they are also asked to pay. (Female group, 24 to 29 years old, urban, Pemba, Cabo Delgado)

Access to family planning is not easy. In addition to bribery for removal of implants and access to birth control pills, adolescent girls and young women face rude staff, lack of advice, and discrimination. The lack of advice or consultation extends to a lack of adequate information about the side effects of contraceptive medication, which some participants in FGDs said can make girls opt not to use it.

Contraceptive tablets can make you feel ill, change your body or put on weight, but health professionals do not often provide that information. As young girls do not know [this] and their body changes, they end up dropping family planning. (Female group, 18 to 23 years old, urban, District 5, Maputo City)

A third explanation, from a KII, was that the notion of family planning being ineffective is cultural:

Regardless of government efforts implementing family planning, there is a culture in our society, when a couple does not have a desired child (that is, a son) they keep on trying and only stop procreating when the desired child is born. Consequently, they end up having many children.

Another key family planning finding that emerged is girls' apparent misunderstanding of the role of contraceptives—that is, thinking that because the contraceptive prevents pregnancy, it will also protect them from contracting sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). For this reason, many girls opt against condoms or other barrier protection during sex. This finding came not from female groups, but from males: “Girls taking contraceptives become more sexually active and risk getting sexually transmitted diseases because they think they are immune” (male group, 18 to 23 years old, urban, Quelimane, Zambézia).

Although this finding reflects a male view, it may also indicate poor provision of health information. In fact, as shown in Figure 9, 24 percent of FGDs mentioned that the Mozambican population lacks health knowledge to prevent and treat common diseases and to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Large disparities exist between young women and young men in health, education, and living standards. Girls and young women suffer from gender-based violence and experience poorer health. For example, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS is high among young women, who are three times more likely than young men to be HIV positive. There are 39,000 new HIV infections among young women aged 15 to 24,

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<sup>29</sup> There are no urban/rural or age variations in the responses on poor health service and attitudes.

compared with 20,000 among young men.<sup>30</sup> “These health disparities are exacerbated by the imbalance in decision-making power within the household that isolates women from health services [and] disempowers them from taking charge of their own health” (Gender Assessment for CDCS 2019). Young men, meanwhile, feel marginalized and disaffected, tending to engage in risky behaviors such as drinking, smoking, drug use, and petty crime.

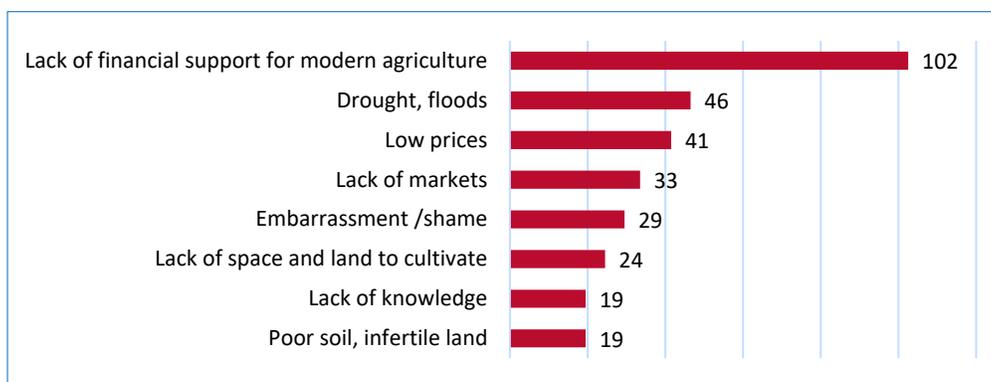
Youth also reported overcrowded health facilities, the need to walk long distances to access the nearest health center, and long waiting times. All groups reported each of these issues except for long distances, which mainly rural groups reported.

### 3.4 AGRICULTURE AND BUSINESS

The desk review indicated that agriculture in Mozambique is mainly an older-generation activity, with “the average farmer age being 60 years” in Africa (USAID 2020, 13), and that youth interest is lacking. Although young people seem uninterested in agriculture, the youth assessment found that they would engage in it if financial resources were available to modernize agriculture. With no demographic differences, the first obstacle to agriculture is a lack of financial and technical support for modern, mechanized agriculture with tools, machinery, seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and advice, which an overwhelming majority reported (102 FGDs) (Figure 10).

The second barrier to agriculture is floods and droughts and dependence on rainfall (46 FGDs), which tended to be more of a view of female rural groups. The third barrier, low prices and lack of guaranteed buyers and cheap imports (41 FGDs), tended to be of much more concern to male rural youths. Lack of markets, storage facilities, road conditions and access, and the high cost of transport constitute the fourth barrier to agriculture, mentioned in 33 FGDs.

**FIGURE 10. AGRICULTURE BARRIERS (FGDs)**



The fifth barrier cited was embarrassment or shame (29 FGDs) about being a farmer, as mainly urban youth reported. They viewed agriculture as awkward and were dismissive of it. “Agriculture is

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.unaids.org/en/regionscountries/countries/mozambique>

something that old people would do. [If you do it, it is like] you are doing your grandparent’s job” (female group, 24 to 29 years old, urban, Matola, Maputo Province).

On the other hand, rural youth from central (Sofala and Zambézia) and northern (Nampula and Zambézia) provinces saw value in agriculture but said:

Subsistence agriculture with a short handle [hand tool] is no longer practical. You need to have mechanized agriculture and farmers should group or organize themselves in agricultural associations to better receive guidance [from supporting institutions]. (Male group, 24 to 29 years old, rural, Machanga, Sofala)

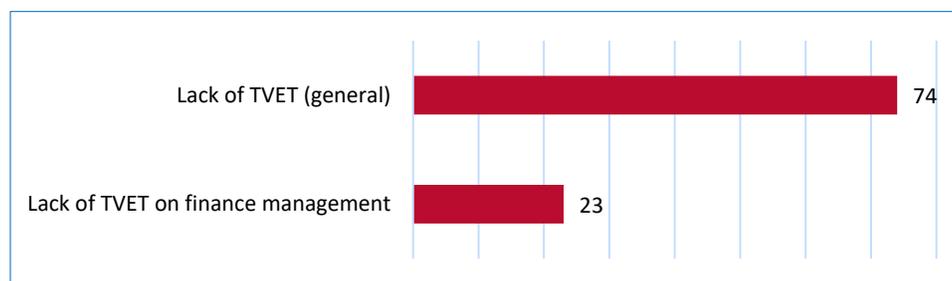
Besides mechanized agriculture, these groups discussed the potential of growing highly profitable crops, such as sesame, which came up repeatedly as a good value crop.

The sixth barrier cited is lack of space and land to cultivate (24 FGDs). These groups stated that land to cultivate does not exist anymore; most or all land is already taken. Key informants observed that it is not common for young people in Mozambique to own land; if they do, it is normally communally owned by their extended family, including all siblings, cousins, nephews, and nieces. In the telephone survey, 12 percent of youths said they would be better integrated into society if land was provided to them.

Another barrier in agriculture is lack of knowledge, practical skills, and training in schools, together with poor soil or infertile land, both reported by 19 FGDs. The former aligns with a lack of extension service advice referred to under the first barrier, and the latter with the sixth barrier, lack of space and land to cultivate.

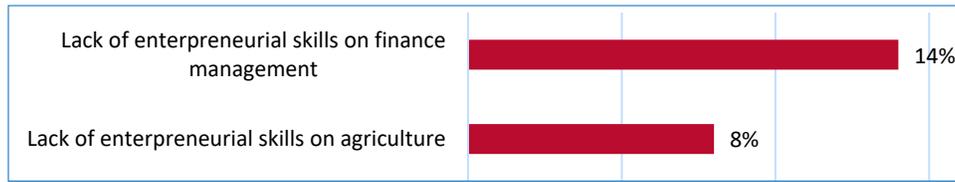
The lack of TVET and entrepreneurial skills was mentioned across sectors in various surveys as a barrier to initiate business; 23 FGDs observed the lack of professional or vocational training on finance management, in particular, as a barrier to start a business, and 74 FGDs said the same for TVET in general (Figure 11).

**FIGURE 11. BUSINESS BARRIERS (FGDs)**



With respect to entrepreneurial skills, 8 percent of youth mentioned in phone interviews the lack of entrepreneurial skills in agriculture and 14 percent said the same in relation to financial management skills (Figure 12).

**FIGURE 12. BUSINESS BARRIERS (CATI)**

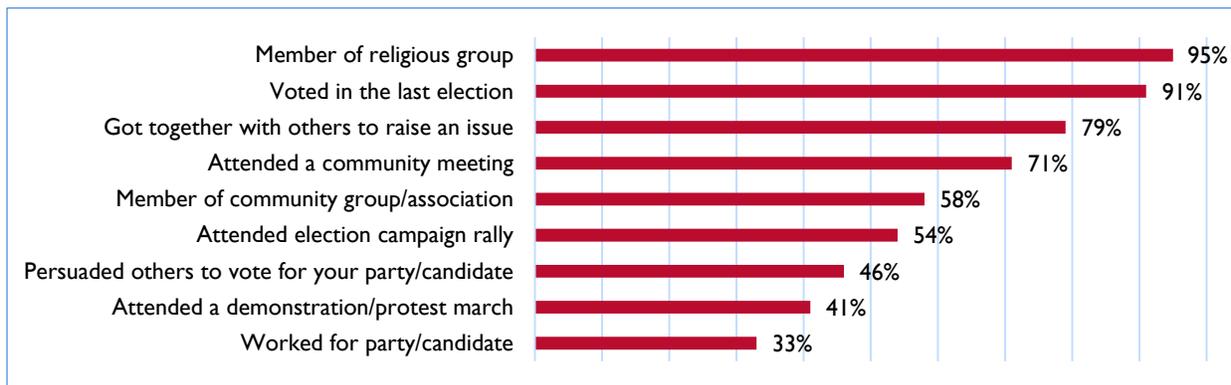


### 3.5 POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

The desk review points to low levels of political participation due to youth apathy, driven by frustrations and lack of inclusiveness and trust in the political process (USAID 2020). The youth assessment validates those conclusions.

Respondents in only 56 FGDs reported participating in public affairs and politics, with older rural youth participating more than older urban youth. When triangulated with other data, this finding on political participation remains low. Of phone survey respondents, 33 percent worked for a party or candidate during the last election campaign, 41 percent attended a demonstration or protest march, and 46 percent tried to persuade others to vote for their party or candidate during the last election campaign (Figure 13). Attendance at election campaign rallies during the last election (54 percent) and affiliation in a community group or association (58 percent) are above midlevel but are still low for democratic consolidation.<sup>31</sup> In all forms of political participation, younger (18 to 23 years) and female youths tend to participate less. One explanation for female lower participation may be cultural as women tend to be confined to domestic and reproductive roles whereas males participate more in the wider public sphere.<sup>32</sup>

**FIGURE 13. VARIETIES OF PARTICIPATION (CATI)**



<sup>31</sup> Democratic consolidation occurs when all political actors come to regard democracy as “the only game in town” (Linz and Stepan 1996). Without public support no political regime can survive, maintain, or consolidate (Diamond 1997). Public “support for democracy may serve as the bedrock of democratic stability and an important ingredient for the functioning of a healthy democracy” (Gunther, Montero, and Phule [2004]). Political participation is highly associated with democratic consolidation (Bratton, Mattes, and Gyimah-Boadi 2005).

<sup>32</sup> Gender Assessment for CDCS, 2019.

Only attendance in community meetings (71 percent) and getting together with others to raise an issue (79 percent) appeared to be high. But compared with older generations (35 and up) from 2002 to 2015, youth political participation in all forms remained low (Shenga and Howe 2017).

Although an overwhelming majority (91 percent) reported casting a vote in the October 2019 general election, this finding cannot be taken for granted; the desk review reported that 2019 voter turnout was only 54 percent. People tend to overreport voter turnout in Mozambique as they are afraid or feel intimidated to say to strangers they did not vote (Mattes and Shenga 2013).

Youths pointed to five reasons for low participation in public affairs and politics. The first is that they “are tired of false promises. People don’t see the value of participating [because] all politicians are liars” (male group, 18 to 23 years old, rural, Mecufi, Cabo Delgado). The second is that older generations mistrust youth: “If you go to this forum and try to air your views, [older generations] look at you and then say: “You are a young person” and after, no one cares anymore about you” (female group, 24 to 29 years old, urban, Matola, Maputo Province).

Yet abuses by the older generation of asking boys for money and girls for sexual favors to pass exams and demanding that girls pay for the removal of implants or access to birth control pills may also be a reason for low youth participation. Nowhere in the assessment did evidence emerge about older generations helping youth.

When students complain at school, the principal either dismisses the case or, if they insist, they back up the teacher. When it is about sexual harassment, [due to cultural reasons] male caregivers do not get involved in resolving these issues of their daughters. (Key informant)

The third obstacle is electoral violence, about which a Cabo Delgado female group participant said, “When you participate in an election campaign rally, other people [throw] stones against you and even try to beat you up. If you try to put posters in markets, walls or posts, they forbid you and chase you like a dog” (female group, 24 to 29 years old, urban, Pemba, Cabo Delgado).

The fourth reason cited was vote-buying: “If a gift is given, we will participate. If someone promise us a T-shirt, *capulana* fabric, or food, we will participate” (female group, 24 to 29 years old, rural, Matitune, Maputo Province).

The last explanation is fear and intimidation, which focus groups reported widely but with more nuance among Maputo City and Maputo and Gaza province groups. Across most groups, fear of being seems as an opposition supporter played a role in not participating in elections: “If you are seen wearing or even receiving an opposition T-shirt, you are marked” (male group, 18 to 23 years old, rural, Magude, Maputo Province).

Respondents said they also end up being disengaged from actively seeking public roles, and few youths participate in politics. Although Mozambican youth tend to not participate in politics, they do participate in other, nonpolitical causes. About 95 percent of those surveyed are members of religious groups (Figure 14) and 66 FGDs reported participating in sports and entertainment groups. These spaces—especially sports and entertainment—could be a good entry point to work with to engage youth and implement youth-focused programs.

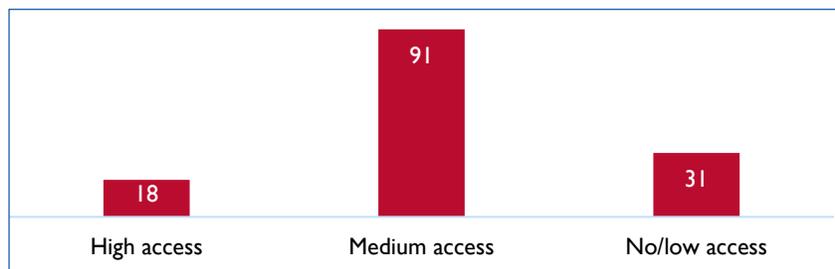
### 3.6 THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

There are 5.36 million internet users and 2.50 million active social media users in Mozambique (Hootsuite 2020). This suggests that about 17 percent and 8.1 percent of the Mozambican population, respectively, are users of the internet and social media (compared with 62 percent of the population in South Africa and 25 percent of the population in Tanzania).<sup>33</sup>

Similarly, youth participants in this assessment reported low access to ICT. Figure 13 shows that only 18 FGDs reported high access to ICT in general. This includes having simultaneous access to a computer and smartphone with internet and social media, radio, and television, among other things.

A rating of medium access to ICT came from 91 FGDs. But this involves having access to one or two of the above; it could be that the access is through a family member, friend, colleague, or neighbor. No or low access to ICT (reported by 31 FGDs) means access to only one of the above or no access at all.

FIGURE 14. ACCESS TO ICT (FGDs)



Reports of access to Facebook (125 FGDs), followed by WhatsApp (112 FGDs), are the most used social media applications (Figure 16): “With a basic smartphone, you can use Facebook, as cellular phone operators have a free mode that you can use without needing to buy data” (male group, 18 to 23 years old, urban, Nampula City, Nampula).

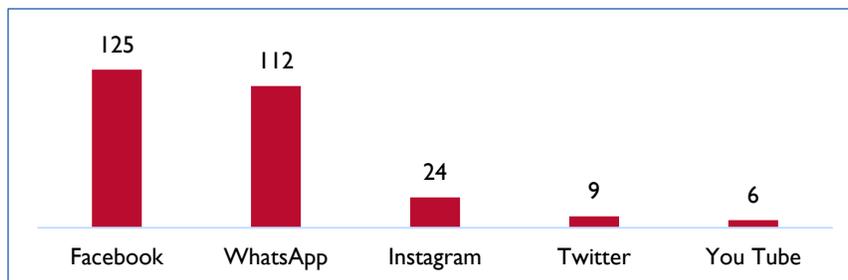
WhatsApp requires a slightly more advanced smartphone and does not have a free mode; users also need to know the phone number of people they want to engage with, unlike with Facebook. Usage of social media appears to be more for fun, distraction, and entertainment with friends and family than for productive purposes such as sharing job opportunity information or promoting their business. As a result, young people end up missing opportunities to find jobs that internet access might provide. Some KIIs and FGDs revealed that youth may not know how to type properly, and this affects their internet searches. When people use Facebook and WhatsApp, they use informal/slang writing. “Most young people do not write properly. This does not help them to search for things” (female group, 18 to 23 years old, rural, Nhamatanda, Sofala).

Several groups said they wanted to have ICT skills. “We do not know how to search or where to go when looking for jobs” (female group, 24 to 29 years old, rural, Matituine, Maputo Province). They also mentioned that schools do not have computer labs to help them. Those who receive computer literacy at schools reported that it is much more theoretical than practical.

<sup>33</sup> Kepios, Hootsuite, Digital 2020 Mozambique report <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2020-mozambique>

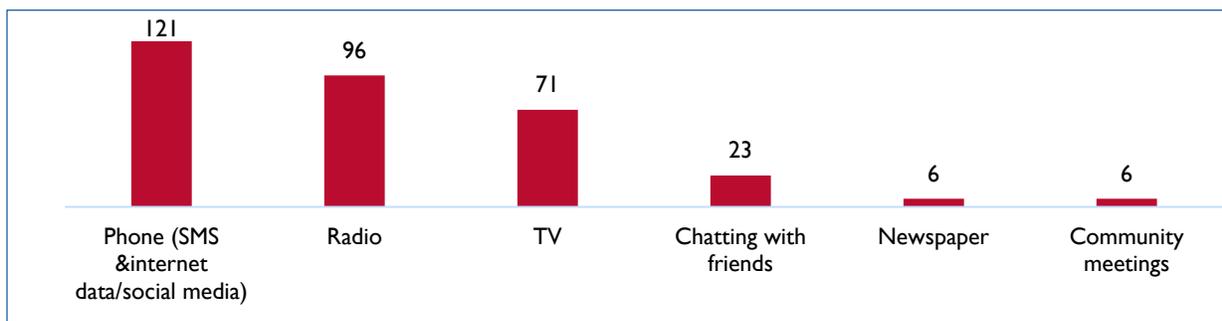
Although some urban groups mentioned having access to free Wi-Fi, mainly in places such as Maputo City Botanical Garden and Xai-Xai Municipal Square, most mentioned the need for free internet, as they do not have money to buy data.

**FIGURE 15. SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE (FGDs)**



When seeking sources for news, the majority (121 FGDs) said that they access them from their smartphones through text message, internet, or social media. Radio, the main source of news for Mozambicans in general, comes second (96 FGDs). However, the level of accessing news through community meetings is insignificant (six FGDs) (Figure 16). This suggests that the high level (71 percent) of youth attendance at community meetings noted in Figure 13 is likely the result of overreporting.

**FIGURE 16. SOURCES OF NEWS OR INFORMATION (FGDs)**



Among barriers to ICT, youth mentioned the high cost of data, smartphones, and computers (39 FGDs); lack of signal or network coverage for telephone, television, or radio (28 FGDs); lack of computer labs at schools or internet cafés in communities and computer skills (25 FGDs); fake news on social media; phones causing distractions at home and school (16 FGDs); and lack of electricity to charge and power electronic devices (11 FGDs).

Urban youths tend to face the barrier of the high cost of data, smartphones, and computers, and female rural youths are more likely to lack signal or network coverage. More urban male youths reported a lack of computer labs, internet cafés, and computer skills to access ICT.

### 3.7 COUNTERING VIOLENCE AND THE IMPACT OF EXTREMISM

The issue of violent extremism in the northern province of Cabo Delgado is worrisome to both government authorities and development partners in Mozambique. Despite having a research team in Cabo Delgado, this assessment did not undertake data collection in the areas most affected by the

conflict, around Mocímboa da Praia, as the security and safety of the researchers could not be guaranteed. Young participants in this assessment from other parts of the province were cautious about expressing their opinions on the insurgency, most likely for fear of retaliation. Available information identifies the Cabo Delgado insurgents as undereducated and marginalized youth, lacking jobs and sustainable livelihoods. In this study, however, the few references about the insurgency were connected to lack of jobs. In one of the FGDs in Cabo Delgado, a young woman said:

Young people have no jobs and no support. Some end up being enticed and recruited by the insurgents who promise jobs. [But] after being taken to remote job locations, they are given machetes to kill people in communities. You cannot refuse because they know your family. They threaten you that if you refuse [killing people], they are going to kill your family. (Female group, 24 to 29 years old, urban, Pemba, Cabo Delgado)

Various scholars and practitioners have examined this insurgency. Many emphasize youth marginalization, joblessness, and lack of decent prospects as sources of vulnerability to recruitment to violent extremism (Habibe et al. 2019; Pirio et al. 2019).<sup>34</sup> Analysts understand this as a multilayered phenomenon; it touches on issues of economic, social, cultural, and religious marginalization, which leads to generational tensions and disintegration of the social fabric due to societal pressures (Kleinfeld 2020).<sup>35</sup> This suggests that violent extremist insurgency in Cabo Delgado is a multidimensional youth challenge and that practitioners should tackle it with appropriate approaches to youth programming.

Political violence in Sofala and Manica also did not receive considerable attention during the FGDs or in the surveys. In Sofala, for instance, young people in FGDs did not feel comfortable speaking when asked directly, suggesting fear. Similarly, due to security reasons, the Sofala team avoided the conflict areas. More research is necessary to clearly understand effective ways of countering violent extremism in Mozambique and how donors can be involved.

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<sup>34</sup> Gregory Pirio, Robert Pittelli, and Yussuf Adam, “The Many Drivers Enabling Violent Extremism in Northern Mozambique” (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2019). Also, Saide Habibe, Salvador Forquilha, and João Pereira, “Islamic Radicalization in Northern Mozambique: The Case of Mocímboa da Praia,” *Cadernos IESE* no. 17E (2019).

<sup>35</sup> Philip Kleinfeld, “Who’s Behind the Violence in Mozambique’s Cabo Delgado?” (The New Humanitarian, 2020). Available at: <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2020/02/12/Mozambique-Cabo-Delgado-militancy-Islamic-State-Al-Shabab>

## CHAPTER 4. LESSONS LEARNED FROM YOUTH PROGRAMMING

Before gleaning lessons learned from youth programs, it is necessary to define what youth programs are. The desk review specifies youth programs as those that target youth as a key beneficiary. Of donors' programs, it points out that “most strategies prioritize key sectors that impact youth, including education, health and employment,” and of USAID programs, it indicates that “only 21 percent [of strategies] specify youth as a key target beneficiary” (USAID 2020, 43–44).

Following from USAID's Youth in Development Policy, this assessment considers a youth programs as an “intentional, ongoing process of assisting youth in their transition from childhood into adulthood” (USAID 2012, 11). An important goal is to strengthen young people's capacity to enter the labor market (International Youth Foundation 2017). With this specification, of the 10 donor strategies included in the desk review, 6 (AfDB, DFID, GIZ, SIDA, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and the World Bank) are youth focused. That is, they assist young people in the transition into adulthood by providing them career guidance and a variety of skills.

At the GRM level, holistic youth programming is a more recent phenomenon. The Intersectoral Committee Supporting the Development of Adolescents and Youth (CIADAJ), coordinated by what was then the Ministry of Youth and Sports, designs a youth strategy and action plan based on data provided by eight ministries that focus on youth.<sup>36</sup> The importance of the committee was such that the Mozambican Prime Minister chaired the committee<sup>37</sup> and presided over the adoption of the Youth Action Plan (YAP) by the Council of Ministers in 2018. The YAP includes interventions from annual sectoral plans as well as from the government quinquennial plan.<sup>38</sup> In addition, the GRM supports youth initiatives for innovative entrepreneurial projects (through the FAIJ); however, due to the financial crisis, only limited funds are available.

### 4.1 YOUTH PROGRAMS

Figure 17 distinguishes between youth programs that simply focus on youth from those that are youth focused. It reveals that few youth programs operating in Mozambique are youth focused: only 4 out of 12 USAID/Mozambique youth programs evaluated in this study had “an intentional ongoing process of assisting youth in their transition into adulthood” offering them a “passport to success”—that is, skills, career guidance, and opportunities. Of youth programs by other donors, only 7 out of 17 reviewed were youth focused. And only 4 of 21 NGO youth programs evaluated could be considered youth focused. Six from other nonstate actors (four from the International Youth Foundation, BioFund, and Total Mozambique LNG) and one from the government (FAIJ) were also youth focused.

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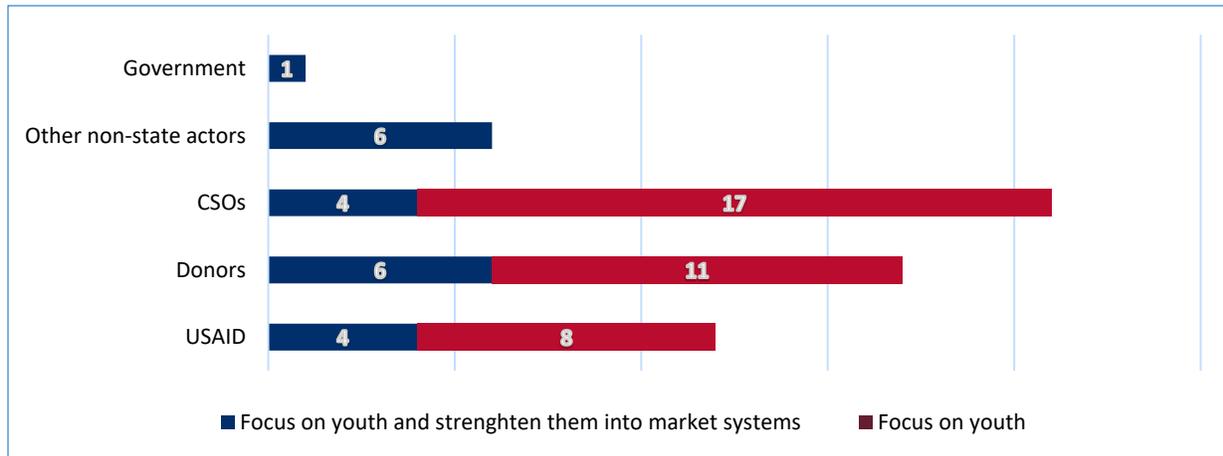
<sup>36</sup> Ministry of Youth and Sports; Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Security; Ministry of Science and Technology, Higher Education and Technical Training; Ministry of Education and Human Development; Ministry of Gender and Social Affairs; Ministry of Industry and Commerce; Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security; and Ministry of Public Work and Housing.

<sup>37</sup> Initially, the youth minister chaired the committee, but found difficulties convening other ministers because all were at the same level.

<sup>38</sup> Final approval occurred after parliamentary review.

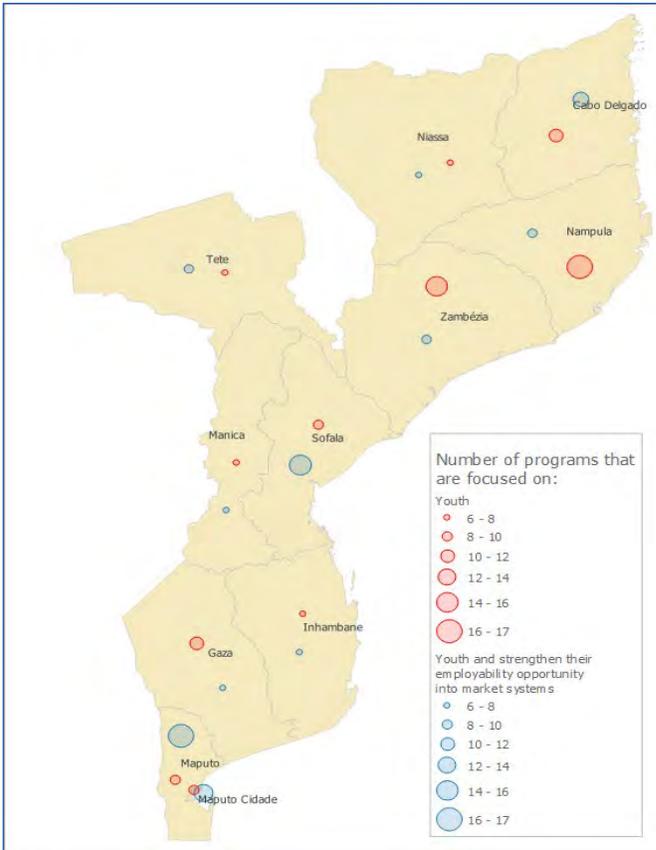
All other youth programs target youth as a by-product and were not designed to specifically support youth. For example, a “prosecutors training program” is presented as a youth program because many trainees happened to be younger than 35.

**FIGURE 17. YOUTH PROGRAMS BY INSTITUTION**



Each province has at least one youth-focused program that strengthens youth capacity to enter the labor market. Maputo Province, Sofala, Maputo City, and Cabo Delgado tend to have more of these youth programs than other provinces do (Figure 18).<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> For more details, see Annex B.



**FIGURE 18. EXISTING YOUTH PROGRAMS, BY PROVINCE**

Almost all youth programs work toward gender equality by supporting adolescent girls and young women. Few respond to the specific needs of boys and young men; examples include the DREAMS (USAID) and JOBA (DFID) youth programs, which include young males in addition to young females. Numerous explanations exist for the low level of youth programs and their tendency to focus on gender-sensitive issues.

The first is associated with the concepts of youth and gender themselves. Youth entails a transitional aspect of human behavior; after a certain number of years, a committed young person upgrades to adulthood and likely stops promoting a youth agenda. But gender

tends to be a static concept; a committed adolescent girl or young woman will likely continue to pursue a gender or women’s and girls’ program throughout adulthood. Second, Mozambique women’s and feminist activism are strong, and organizations such as Women Forum and WILSA have done a lot to advance the gender equality agenda. Additionally, the international community (and especially the United Nations) is very engaged in supporting gender equality. All this enhances the capacity for gender programming. At USAID/Mozambique, for example, there are gender advisors and focal points in all offices; by contrast, there is only one youth advisor and a part-time youth focal point for the entire organization. This suggests that when needing inputs for designing programs, USAID/Mozambique’s technical offices will receive more support for gender than for youth programming. Although this was evident at USAID, it is likely also the case for other donors, including CSOs. Within the government, CIADAJ started to play a significant role only recently when the prime minister began chairing it in 2018.

Among donors, DFID (with its JOBA project aimed at empowering youth and women with skills for employment) is the most advanced in youth programming. Besides tackling the need for youth employment, its youth program is centrally coordinated, integrating gender and multiple sectors and partners. JOBA supports the development of skills for employment for young girls and boys in agriculture and business, construction, transport and logistics, forestry and industry, and manufacturing. It partners with private vocational and technical education and training providers that offer services to employers as well as to young people.

Besides DFID, there are other experiences of youth programming with an integrated approach. Total Mozambique LNG has a social investment project in Cabo Delgado involving multiple partners and

sectors: education, health, socioeconomic development, and road safety. In socioeconomic development, its implementing partner, TechnoServe, supports small and medium-size enterprises along the value chain of producing vegetables, chicken, and eggs by providing soft skills, work readiness skills, and business plans through entrepreneurship training. With respect to health, Total works with Pathfinder, which sensitizes sex workers to prevent HIV infections, among other issues. In nutrition, Total partners with the CDC. On the problem of road safety, Total partners with Azul Consultores to teach young people at school about road safety in Palma, where the district does not have a single driving school; the district is characterized by construction lorries and ordinary people who, when they get their first big paychecks, want to buy a motorbike. In education, between 2014 and 2015, Total signed a memorandum of understanding with USAID to keep Cabo Delgado girls at school for longer by preventing early marriage and pregnancy and to provide them with access to education and basic girls' care at school. Total's department of social investment coordinates all of this.

Some programs involve multiple youth demographics. In its youth programming, the International Youth Foundation (IYF) includes in-school youth, through Escolhas ("Choices"), and unemployed and out-of-school youth, through Dzima, with funds from Mozambique Aluminum (Mozal). Total Mozambique LNG includes geographical youth—that is, youth from coastal districts of Cabo Delgado.<sup>40</sup> DFID includes urban girls (MUVA), and a CSO includes disabled youth (disability: education, employment, and ICT-AID).

## 4.2 USAID YOUTH PROGRAMMING

Initially, USAID youth programs were only youth targeted (youth by-product), not youth focused. The change occurred in the early 2010s with the observation that the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) expanded from just HIV prevention, care, and treatment to looking at people living with HIV more holistically. Having funds, between 2012 and 2015 in Maputo and Boane, USAID/Mozambique partnered with IYF to strengthen the employability and livelihoods opportunities of orphans and vulnerable children into market systems by providing them with TVET and soft skills.

This change affected other USAID youth programs, such as DREAMS (determined, resilient, empowered, AIDS-free, mentored, and safe).<sup>41</sup> Besides being aimed at reducing new HIV infections among adolescent girls and young women (AGYW), DREAMS—implemented in Maputo Province—included a social component to ensure AGYW access identification cards and psychological assistance, saving through a rotation scheme in groups, education, and small business entrepreneurship. DREAMS was partly influenced by the "World Education" principle to ensure that AGYW have better access and integration into wider society by receiving diverse skills training. Its coverage is wider and goes beyond adolescent girls and young women to include adolescent boys and young men (ABYM). As it includes AGYW, it also ends up including their partners, who are invited for family planning and HIV prevention to reduce new infections. However, to integrate multiple government sectors, "its design at USAID/Mozambique should not ignore [consulting] the sector that deals with youth [the former Ministry of Youth and Sports] besides the Ministry of Health," a key informant stressed.

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<sup>40</sup> The CSO youth program of value chain and youth development also targeted Cabo Delgado youth.

<sup>41</sup> The target of DREAMS is to achieve a significant reduction in new HIV infections among AGYW. It supports HIV testing and counseling, the provision of education subsidies, the care for survivors of gender-based violence and school-based HIV, and prevention programs.

The most recent USAID youth-focused program is in partnership with Total Mozambique LNG in Cabo Delgado, signed in February 2020. Although it focuses on health, it is expected to accommodate multiple sectors and implementing partners, equipping youth there with skills to enter the labor market. Another USAID program that prepares young people to enter the labor market is the one implemented by Media Lab—that is, media strengthening program, 2012–2019. Although this project was not designed as a holistic youth activity, the project’s components are implemented in a way that provides mentoring, soft skills, practical job training, and support with internships and job placement. Active in Zambézia, Nampula, Niassa, Cabo Delgado, and Sofala provinces, Media Lab prepared young people undertaking media studies at universities with additional trainings and practice to enter the media job market.

A USAID/Mozambique experience of using an integrated approach can be seen in the Gorongosa project. The Gorongosa Project (USAID-Carr Foundation), implemented by a single partner (Gorongosa National Park) integrates multiple sectors—health, education, biodiversity conservation, and food security—and puts together funds under USAID’s AEB technical office, which coordinates USAID’s inputs. A key informant pointed to the success of this type of intervention, which requires substantial trust of multiple sector professionals to coordinate and multiple field visits to monitor implementation. Although it is not a youth program, its integrated approach is recommended for USAID/Mozambique to address youth concerns holistically.

## CHAPTER 5. CONNECTING THE DOTS: YOUTH PORTRAITS AND FUTURE PATHS

The data collected during this study confirm our impressions about the situation of youth in Mozambique. The need for decent employment and stable livelihoods continues to be the major preoccupation that youth—both young men and young women—present. Accessing secure employment becomes paramount, as it affects all other spheres of their lives: being independent; renting, buying, or building a home; marrying and having a family; being able to take care of their offspring and other relatives; and being a conscientious citizen by paying taxes. Without a job or any form of stable livelihood, young people cannot plan or envisage a decent future.

Although their major challenge is having a job, this need does not exist in a vacuum. Good and stable employment can be attainable only by those who have education—the second major concern for young people in this study. Apart from issues of education access, affordability, and quality, young people emphasized the disconnections between education systems and the national labor markets. Many finish school and struggle to get jobs, ending up in the informal sector and performing sporadic and precarious odd jobs. Some even drift into borderline criminal activities to make ends meet. Young people who would like to continue their studies into medium and higher education face serious barriers to access. Such educational institutions are available predominantly in big cities and most students must move away from home to attend them. Additionally, their families cannot afford the fees and living expenses necessary for their children to live in urban areas. Only limited government scholarships are available, and connections with influential people are vital to receive them.

However, the crude reality is that even those who finish higher education levels struggle to get decent jobs. Many youth with a secondary and tertiary education are underemployed or doing jobs below their level of training, consequently earning less than they expected, which takes a toll on their self-esteem. Graduates usually fend for themselves in the informal economy, completely marginalized from mainstream socioeconomic activities. Unfortunately, in the last decade, the socioeconomic situation has not improved. On the contrary, it suffered serious setbacks from 2015 with “the hidden debts” recession and in 2019 with Cyclones Idai and Kenneth, which devastated the central and northern regions of the country. The government lacks the capacity to provide quality social services and opportunities for its large young populations.

How, specifically, does this crisis affect the life trajectories for both young women and young men? What are the consequences of limited youth investment for the future of this generation and society?

### 5.1 A PORTRAYAL OF VULNERABLE<sup>42</sup> GIRLS' TRAJECTORIES

Participants in this study illustrated a common life trajectory for girls and young women that is consistent across the country. Sexual abuse constitutes a major hindrance to girls' and young women's positive development. In their life course, one of the first obstacles girls face is the inability to attend school for various reasons, as well as CEFM, as they are forced to marry older men at a young age.

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<sup>42</sup> Definition of Vulnerable: Vulnerability is the degree to which a population, individual or organization is unable to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from the impacts of disasters. Environmental health in emergencies and disasters: a practical guide.” (WHO, 2002)

Although the 2019 decree banning CEFM helped reduce the problem considerably, some families continue to push girls into early marriage to deal with the burdens of childcare.

Girls who escape CEFM and enter the pipeline toward education face another barrier: vulnerability to sexual harassment and abuse by some male teachers. Most girls end up submitting to the teachers for fear of failing school. “If you say no, you have no chance at school,” said a female respondent from Sofala. This is a widespread practice that seriously damages the emotional and physical development of girls and affects their outlook on life. They feel lost and abused by those who are supposed to protect, care for, and guide them. The girls’ vulnerability to undesirable early pregnancy increases and they bear the offspring of their male teachers. Another implication is that sexual favors are often exchanged for good grades, even if the student’s performance is subpar. Even those who observe and are not personally targeted will understand the power dynamics. With deficient education, their capacity to attain decent jobs diminishes.

This leads to the third hurdle in their life trajectory. Young women who decide to continue their education or to leave their family homes to find opportunities in more urban areas often have little or no money. Some are reported to survive through prostitution and relationships with “sugar daddies” who pay their school fees and provide fashionable goods (beautiful clothing, shoes, hair extensions, beauty products, etc.).<sup>43</sup> Indeed, girls and young women often operate in environments in which sexual abuse is the price they pay to advance or meet basic needs. This situation creates a vicious cycle of sexual abuse for girls and young women, starting at an early age and perpetuated through their life trajectories. In many ways, society is failing these girls and young women, making them vulnerable at every stage of their transition to adulthood. It is imperative that serious mechanisms are put in place to stop this cycle of abuse.

## 5.2 A PORTRAYAL OF VULNERABLE BOYS’ TRAJECTORIES

Boys and young men encounter significant barriers in their journey to adulthood when they enter secondary school. They often must pay for bribes that teachers demand. To support themselves, many perform small informal odd jobs (*biscatos*). This is more difficult for rural youth, as cash flow to pay for *biscatos* is lesser in rural areas. In instances where rural areas have no secondary school, boys must walk long distances to reach school—one of the reasons, alongside the low quality of teachers and education, that many drop out. Some succumb to boredom and engage in risky behaviors, whereas some might find themselves eking out a living in the informal economy. Once grown, these young men cannot access decent jobs, as most are unskilled with incomplete secondary education. Many get trapped in a cycle of alcoholism and drug addiction and engage in petty crime, violent gangs, trafficking networks, and radical extremist groups.<sup>44</sup> Many boys are also abused at a young age; unfortunately, there is very little information or research on sexual abuse and exploitation of young men and boys.

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<sup>43</sup> See Alcinda Honwana, “O Tempo da Juventude: Emprego, Política e Mudanças Sociais” (Maputo: Kapicua, 2013).

<sup>44</sup> See Gregory Pirio, Robert Pittelli, and Yussuf Adam, “The Many Drivers Enabling Violent Extremism in Northern Mozambique” (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2019). Available at: <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/the-many-drivers-enabling-violent-extremism-in-northern-mozambique/>

Ultimately, some young men may grow to tolerate or even perpetuate corruption and abusive behaviors. They might become unskilled manual workers or hustlers operating in the interstices of legal and illegal activities.

### **5.3 SOCIETAL AND GENERATIONAL TENSIONS**

Generational and societal tensions have arisen with the rapid changes in the world in the last few decades—from the advent of globalization and the free market economy to developments in ICT—that simultaneously brought the world closer together and created greater distances (especially in inequalities and equities). This generation is growing up in a world completely different from that of their parents and is developing a different outlook on life. Their aspirations are broadened; high-speed internet and social media enable them to be more attuned with the rest of the world. Young people reportedly spend most of their time navigating social media sites. In this study, Facebook and WhatsApp ranked as the top sites for urban and rural youth.

The tensions between generations are therefore exacerbated as parents have greater difficulty providing for their children's needs and young people often feel misunderstood and not supported by their families and society (government institutions and communities). Young people aspire to the “good life” they see paraded on television screens and in social media; they do not want to be like their elders, work the same jobs, or live in the same places. For example, this study shows that rural youth want to work in agriculture but reject subsistence agriculture as being outdated. “That is what our parents and the old people did. We have studied and we want to do things in a new way, a more productive way; we want mechanization and modern agriculture, but we need support” (young man, Muecate District, Nampula).

Young people want more because they have been exposed to new ideas and, consequently, have learned and know more. The frustration arises from their families', communities', and government's inability to provide for their needs and aspirations.

### **5.4 YOUTH AS DRIVERS OF CHANGE**

This study showed that an overwhelming majority of Mozambique's youth experience significant needs and challenges. They are often passive, and they expect either the government or donors, CSOs, and the private sector to assist them. It also showed that although many projects have supported youth, they are not making a significant difference; the problems are gigantic, and resources are limited. Curbing this situation will require an active and strong engagement of young people themselves as drivers in efforts to improve their lives. Government, development partners, donors, CSOs, and the private sector need to develop programs in which young people are not just beneficiaries but committed actors and partners.

To achieve this, it is vital to understand why certain youth manage to survive and thrive in conditions of adversity and others do not. The young people who succeed should inspire their peers, as they can be relatable role models. A substantial number of studies have shown that humans learn through modeling

others (Kahn and Spote 2008)<sup>45</sup> and youth development results from the accumulation of many experiences and relationships. Through these experiences they decide what socially acceptable behavior is and what is not and learn strategies for achieving their goals. Research studies have long shown a correlation between positive role models and higher levels of civic engagement in young people. Positive role models are also linked to self-efficacy and the ability to believe in oneself and succeed (Price-Mitchel 2010).<sup>46</sup> The role of peer role models thus becomes very important. USAID/Mozambique youth programs would strongly benefit from directly involving these young leaders from various areas in program design, conceptualization, and implementation. Their insights and perspectives would ensure a more youth-focused approach and their engagement would stimulate and encourage their peers to participate. But who are these young leaders?

Based on the results of this study, two categories of young leaders that can be relatable youth role models were established. The first is that of young leaders in the private sector. It includes successful young entrepreneurs who master capacities and abilities to implement their own ideas, developing projects that create self-employment and possibly employment for both youth and adults. Some are totally self-made, with minimal or no support, accomplishing great things despite their humble beginnings. The study shows that most of these successful young entrepreneurs are open and curious about what is going on in the country and abroad in terms of the economy, innovation, and ICT, as well as social and political life. They actively try to improve their daily lives by finding solutions to local needs and challenges. A young female entrepreneur from Cabo Delgado shared her story:

I traveled to two neighboring countries, and I was happy to see that, differently from young Mozambicans, the youth in Malawi and Tanzania are not passively waiting for someone to provide them with jobs. While they are facing challenges with unemployment like us, they make savings and, in a few years, they can invest whatever they have saved to start a small business.

Entrepreneurs are visionary. They can identify gaps in the market to initiate a business when most are unable; in doing so, they get far. Examples of this are as follows:

I saw that no one was selling samosas in the neighborhood. I borrowed some flour and started making them. Later, I submitted a project to the municipality to set up a samosa *barraca* with a friend. It got approved and now we have a small business that employs both of us. (Female key informant, Maganja da Costa, Zambézia)

I saw the value in local fabrics (*capulanas*) and had a vision that these should give more value to our own fabrics than to Western-style clothing, so I decided to create my own fashion design with local fabrics and found that *capulana* fashions appeal to both males and females. Fashion is forward-looking—you are

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<sup>45</sup> J.E. Kahne and S.E. Spote, “Developing Citizens: The Impact of Civic Learning Opportunities on Students’ Commitment to Civic Participation,” *American Educational Research Journal* (2008); Also A. Bandura, “Social Cognitive Theory: An Agentic Perspective,” *Annual Review of Psychology* (2001), 5.

<sup>46</sup> Price-Mitchell, Marylin. 2010. “Civic Learning at the Edge: Transformative Stories of Highly Engaged Youth.” Doctoral Dissertation, Fielding Graduate University, Santa Barbara, CA.

always looking for the new and next trend, so are constantly evolving. (Female key informant, entrepreneur, Beira, Sofala)

As a smart young entrepreneur, I use Facebook and WhatsApp to promote and sell my products (e.g., clothes, jewelry) with prices and pictures for free. (Young male from an urban FGD in Beira, Sofala)

The use of social media platforms to promote small business also came up in a discussion with a group of young women in Matola.

I sell clothes, and for me, the internet is very helpful to promote my business. I take pictures of the articles I am selling, post them on Facebook and WhatsApp, and people call me back to inquire and buy the pieces. (Young woman, FGD in Matola, Maputo Province)

Young leaders in the economic field could play an active role in youth programs aimed to strengthen economic autonomy and entrepreneurship vision, skills, and achievements. Their involvement as mobilizers, motivators, and role models for their peers will greatly enhance the performance of USAID/Mozambique and its development partners' programs in this area.

The second category of role models concerns young people involved in civic and associative life. They lead others in establishing associations, civil society groups, NGOs, and recreational activities. These young leaders have the drive to conceive, design, fundraise, and mobilize others to engage. They consistently fight to overcome obstacles as they are fully committed to, and believe in, the ideals guiding their actions. This category involves those at the forefront of political protest and transformations—those who inspire and support their peers to become self-confident, strong, healthy, productive, and secure human beings.

Using these young committed activists as youth programming role models in civic engagement, USAID/Mozambique and other partners can develop a strategy that includes the establishment of youth-friendly spaces for engagement, involving forums to reflect and discuss issues that matter to them. These discussions would be animated by young leaders and be linked to specific topics or programs. These youth-friendly spaces for engagement would foster youths' development of greater awareness about themselves and their situation, role, and contributions to society beyond the immediacy of self. This would allow young voices to be heard and stronger collective action to be undertaken on matters of concern to them toward a safer and just society. It would also allow youth to learn key leadership, organizational, and soft skills that are not taught in school but necessary for being a successful employee or entrepreneur.

Despite all the challenges they face, young Mozambicans are not sitting in a corner waiting for their situation to change of its own accord. They wake up every day focused on making ends meet through hustling and other survival strategies. As they say, they are trying to *desenrascar a vida* (eke out a living). Thus, a key strategy is to support some of the activities that young people already engage in and transform their precarious survival strategies into more sustainable livelihoods. For example, for young people who operate taxi motorcycles, it would be beneficial to train them to be good drivers; provide them with loans to purchase sturdy motorcycles, helmets, and other protective gear for themselves and their passengers; train some of them to be good motorcycle repairers and provide funding to establish repair shops; and support industry regulation, encouraging syndication and protections against accidents and the like. This kind of support and improvement could extend to myriad ongoing activities being developed by young people, often perceived as side-hustles but that could become sustainable livelihoods. Young people need to have a stake and clear responsibilities in the direction of the change

and the activity's long-term sustainability. This is vital to addressing current challenges and engaging youth simultaneously as beneficiaries, drivers, and agents in the transformation of their own lives.

## CHAPTER 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

### RECOMMENDATIONS

*Create technical capacity for youth programming.* This entails hiring and training youth advisors and sector specialists with specific youth expertise. These positions can provide insights and guidance to sector offices on designing and implementing youth-focused interventions and lead research and analysis to fill information gaps. This recommendation applies not only to USAID/Mozambique but also to other donors, the government, and the private sector.

*Increase research to fill information gaps.* USAID/Mozambique, donors, government, and the private sector should develop greater awareness of the current barriers and challenges to youths' well-being through reliable research and analysis on the condition of youth. There is a significant lack of information about mental health among Mozambican youth, and although there is significant research on the challenges facing young girls, the same is not true for young men and boys. More information is also critical to ensuring programs are tailored to the needs of diverse youth groups, including rural/urban, male/female, in-school/out-of-school, and the unemployed, to mention just a few.

*Actively engage youth when designing, implementing, and evaluating programs.* USAID, the Mozambican government, development practitioners, civil society, and the private sector must do a better job of consulting with and engaging young people from different social and economic backgrounds when designing programs that target youth. Development actors should learn from youth challenges but also build on the experiences of youth who have succeeded in adversity and empower them to be relatable role models for those who continue to face challenges.

*Employ a multisectoral approach to youth-focused programs and involve multiple partners.* USAID/Mozambique should, where possible, move away from a siloed approach to youth programming, addressing youth needs only in relation to a single sector such as health. A multisectoral approach should be applied to youth programming through an integrated and holistic strategy that covers youth needs in education, health, the labor market, agriculture technology, and so forth. Such an approach should consider, for example, the health needs of youth involved in an education program or the livelihood needs of youth participating in a health program. Such initiatives should also involve multiple partners in government, donors, the private sector, NGOs, and CBOs to reach a wider group of youth and achieve better programmatic outcomes.

*Accompany youth as they transition to adulthood.* Many youth programs focus on only one segment of youth (mainly young adolescents) and either drop them or lump them together with older adults once the youth reach 18 or leave primary school. Holistic youth programs should apply a Positive Youth Development approach and accompany youth as they transition from adolescence to adulthood, supporting them as they enter the workforce, start families, and so forth. For many youth, young adult years are critical to defining their future, and focused support can make a tremendous difference in their life trajectory.

*Support what young people are already doing.* USAID/Mozambique should make efforts to discover successful or promising youth initiatives and provide further support. This recommendation applies to

both economic and civic activity, including youth-led initiatives related to biodiversity conservation or other types of community mobilization.

Analysis of feedback from youth interviewed as part of the assessment identified specific challenges that keep young people from achieving their life goals. Based on this analysis, this assessment provides the following sector-specific recommendations for USAID:

- *Employment and livelihoods:* USAID/Mozambique and other stakeholders should
  - Strengthen youth capacities to enter the job market with adequate training in entrepreneurial and business skills; financial literacy; and soft skills for résumé writing, job searching, and productive internet use.
  - Establish partnerships with the private sector to provide internship opportunities to equip youth with job experience.
  - Provide financial support and promote youth entrepreneurial activities.
  - Enforce policies that reduce corruption and nepotism in employment.
  
- *Education:* USAID/Mozambique and other stakeholders should
  - Expand TVET.
  - Enforce ethical standards for teachers and apply consequences for predatory behavior, especially sexual abuse and exploitation of students.
  - Engage parents and other community leaders in school councils to promote cooperation and curb corruption and predatory behaviors.
  - Provide career guidance in secondary schools, vocational centers, and higher education institutions to facilitate access to labor markets and a smoother transition to the world of work.
  - Improve schools' physical infrastructure and promote a positive learning environment.
  - Support families with school subsidies for children and young people to reduce child marriage and child labor.
  
- *Health:* USAID/Mozambique and other stakeholders should
  - Provide training to health professionals to address youth-specific family planning needs and concerns.
  - Include soft skills training for health professionals that directly deliver patient services.
  - Support interventions to improve access and fair treatment at health facilities.
  - Support the establishment of community health information centers to increase young people's health awareness.
  - Include direct outreach to young people by young people when designing, implementing, and evaluating health intervention effectiveness.
  - Investigate further the mental health needs of youth and the impact anxiety, depression, and stress have on substance abuse and non-positive behaviors. Consider investments in local solutions (such as Zimbabwe's Friendship Bench)<sup>47</sup> to the lack of safe spaces for youth seeking mental health support.

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<sup>47</sup> The Friendship Bench Open House is a safe, supportive and normalizing environment for adolescents, adults and seniors seeking mental health support. We focus on people who are suffering from common mental health disorders, such as anxiety and depression; known locally as kufungisisa (thinking too much). <https://www.friendshipbenchzimbabwe.org/>

- *Agriculture and business:* USAID/Mozambique and other stakeholders should
  - Apply the USAID Positive Youth Development model to agriculture projects and make a purposeful effort to engage youth in agriculture activities.
  - Support government vocational training programs related to agriculture and entrepreneurship to expand programmatic reach and to promote jobs across the agri-business value chain.
  - Increase financing available for young entrepreneurs and consider partnering with other donors or government to expand and provide technical assistance to initiatives.
  
- *Civic engagement:* USAID/Mozambique and other stakeholders should
  - Promote youth political participation through civil society, civic associations, and community groups, not only directly with political parties.
  - Support initiatives that promote democratic culture and values outside the usual political environment centered around elections—for example, through school councils, community groups, and youth parliaments.
  - Invest in finding and support youth engagement in civic engagement by supporting their interests and social movements (environmental and climate justice, women’s rights, etc.), with a focus on youth-led solutions to local challenges.
  - Promote initiatives that bridge the old-young divide and ease generational tensions (such as inclusive community discussions with a diverse stakeholder group).
  
- *The digital divide:* USAID/Mozambique and other stakeholders should
  - Support initiatives to expand internet access throughout the country, particularly for schools, health facilities, and other points of public service delivery. The Bluetown cloud-based information provision is a model that can be considered for further dissemination.
  - Support initiatives to improve electricity access and mobile telephone coverage in rural areas.
  - Incorporate digital skills development training into initiatives that support girls’ clubs or other safe spaces for youth activities to help young people learn productive and positive internet usage.
  - Connect young people to one another, using technology, to promote exchanges (for example, use Zoom or Google Meet to connect Dreams ambassadors in Maputo to those in Sofala for information exchange and peer support).

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## ANNEX A: METHODOLOGY SUMMARY

The Mozambique Youth Assessment was based on the following data:

1. Focus group discussions (FGDs)
2. Key informant interviews (KIIs)
3. Life histories
4. Computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI)
5. Online youth survey
6. Online donor survey
7. Online NGO survey

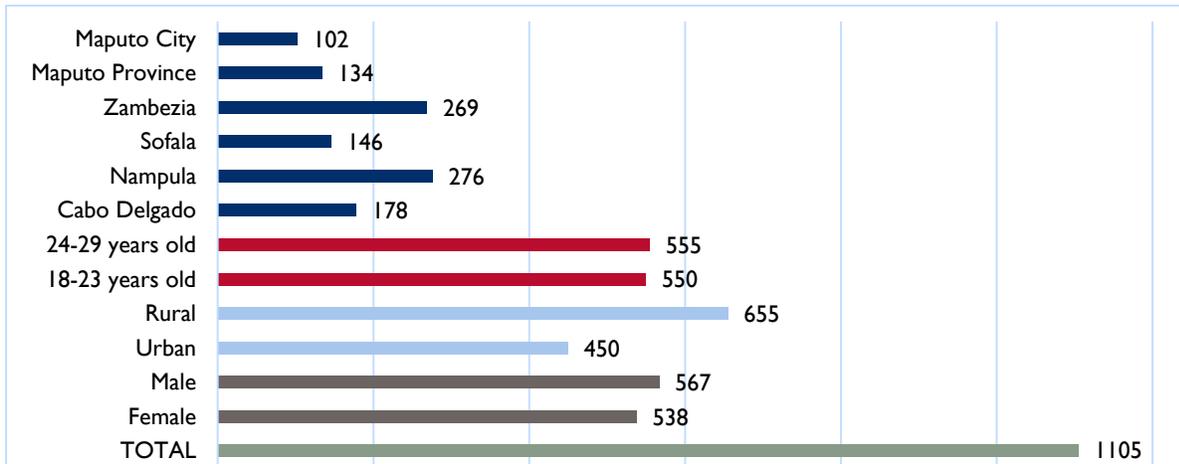
**FGDs.** The team conducted 150 FGDs across 5 provinces: Cabo Delgado (20), Nampula (39), Zambézia (36), Sofala (20), Maputo Province (20), and Maputo City (15). One-quarter of FGDs took place in urban areas and two-quarters in rural areas.

**TABLE A: FGD SAMPLING DESIGN**

Province	National Allocation (2017 census)	Weighted	Urban		Rural		TOTAL
Cabo Delgado	8.3%	14%	7	33%	13	67%	20
Nampula	20.6%	26%	13	33%	26	67%	39
Zambézia	18.5%	24%	12	33%	24	67%	36
Sofala	8.1%	13%	7	33%	13	67%	20
Maputo Province	7.1%	13%	7	33%	13	67%	20
Maputo City	4%	10%	15	100%	-	-	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>66.6%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>150</b>

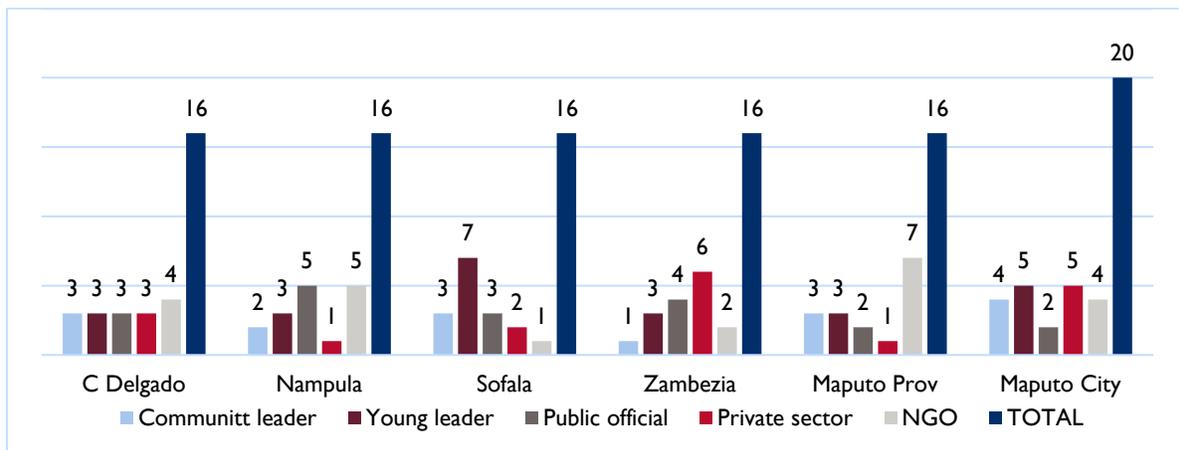
**FGD participants.** FGDs had 1,105 participants aged 18–29 years—567 males (51 percent) and 538 females (49 percent), 655 from rural areas (59 percent) and 450 urban (41 percent), 555 aged 24–29 years (50 percent) and 18–23 years (50 percent), 105 from Maputo City (9 percent), 134 from Maputo Province (12 percent), 269 from Zambézia (24 percent), 146 from Sofala (13 percent), 276 from Nampula (25 percent), and 178 from Cabo Delgado (16 percent).

**FIGURE A: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION PARTICIPANTS**



**KIIs.** The team conducted 100 KIIs in Cabo Delgado (16), Nampula (16), Zambezia (16), Sofala (16), Maputo Province (16), and Maputo City (20) clustered into community leaders (16), young leaders (24), public (19) and private (18) sectors, and NGOs (23).

**FIGURE B: SUMMARY OF KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS**



N=100 key informants.

**Top-level KIIs.** In addition to the 100 KIIs in the five provinces, plus Maputo City, the team leader conducted several top-level KIIs at central level in Maputo City. Below is the list of individuals involved in top-level KIIs.

1. [REDACTED] Vodacom
2. [REDACTED] USAID/Mozambique Education, Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance (EDG)
3. [REDACTED] USAID/Mozambique Education, Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance (EDG)
4. [REDACTED] TOTAL local content
5. [REDACTED] USAID/Mozambique Education, Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance (EDG)
6. [REDACTED] BIOFUND

7. █████ Premier SuperSar
8. █████ USAID/Mozambique Integrated Health Office (IHO)
9. █████ USAID/Mozambique Integrated Health Office (IHO)
10. █████ public officer, Ministry of Youth and Sports
11. █████ DFID/Mozambique
12. █████ USAID/Mozambique Integrated Health Office (IHO)
13. █████ International Youth Foundation
14. █████ TOTAL social investment
15. █████ International Youth Foundation
16. █████ USAID/Mozambique Education, Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance (EDG)
17. █████ Vice-Minister of Science and Technology, Higher Education and Vocational Training
18. █████ BIOFUND
19. █████ UNFP
20. █████ USAID/Mozambique Agriculture, Environment and Business (AEB)
21. █████ USAID/Mozambique Agriculture, Environment and Business (AEB)
22. █████ Vice-Minister of Labour, Employment and Social Security
23. █████ USAID/Mozambique Education, Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance (EDG)
24. █████ National Director of Youth and Sports
25. █████ International Youth Foundation
26. █████ TOTAL social investment
27. █████ USAID/Mozambique Agriculture, Environment and Business (AEB)
28. █████ USAID PRO
29. █████ TOTAL local content
30. █████ Vodacom

**Life histories.** The team conducted 24 life history interviews, with four in each province. A 50-50 gender quota was considered in urban (two) and rural areas (two). This suggests that one life history in each area was with a female and the other with a male.

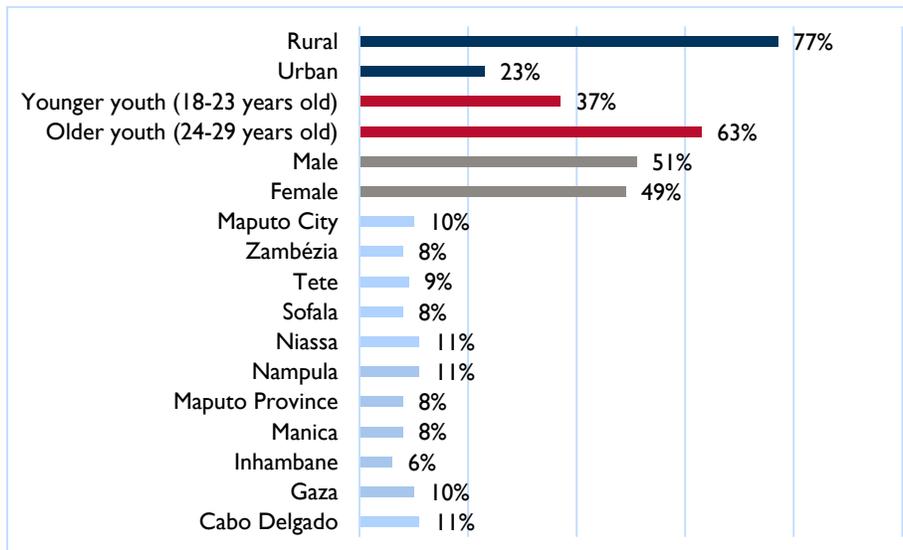
**TABLE B: SUMMARY OF LIFE HISTORIES**

Province	Residential Location		Total
	Urban	Rural	
Cabo Delgado	2	2	4
Nampula	2	2	4

Province	Residential Location		Total
	Urban	Rural	
Zambézia	2	2	4
Sofala	2	2	4
Maputo Province	2	2	4
Maputo City	4	0	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>24</b>

**CATI** involved 514 young adults aged 18 to 29 years, of which 37 percent were 18–23 years old and 63 percent 24–29 years old. About 51 percent were male and 49 percent female. About 23 percent were from urban areas and 77 percent rural. The majority of the 514 young adults interviewed had secondary education (71 percent), and one-quarter (25 percent) tertiary education. An insignificant proportion said that they had only primary schooling (4 percent). An almost equal number of interviews were conducted in each province, with Inhambane being relatively lower in distribution.

**FIGURE C: SUMMARY OF CATI SURVEY BY DEMOGRAPHICS**



Although this survey design tried to be as representative as possible, its implementation depended on the use of a telephone. The interviewee had to have a telephone to be contacted by telephone operators based at MMEMS/MSI who conducted the interviews and had to show willingness to participate in the interview. Telephone operators tried their best to meet representativeness criteria by asking after finishing an interview whether the respondent knew someone else in the specified location of a certain gender and age who was willing to participate.

**Online youth survey.** The online survey was responded to by 50 young people covering eight provinces: Nampula (22 percent), Zambézia (16 percent), Tete (6 percent), Manica (22 percent), Sofala (8 percent), Inhambane (2 percent), Gaza (8 percent), and Maputo Province (6 percent), plus Maputo City (10 percent). They were invited to respond to the online survey through several sensitizations by

MEMS/MSI through networking such as email and Facebook. About two-thirds (66 percent) were male and one-third (34 percent) female. All had some years of, or had completed, university.

**TABLE C: ONLINE YOUTH SURVEY RESPONDENTS BY PROVINCE**

Province	Frequency	Percentage
Nampula	11	22%
Zambézia	8	16%
Tete	3	6%
Manica	11	22%
Sofala	4	8%
Inhambane	1	2%
Gaza	4	8%
Maputo Province	3	6%
Maputo City	5	10%
Total	50	100%

This survey is not representative. Young people were invited to respond through the internet, and only those with access to a computer, iPad, or smartphone with internet could participate. The idea behind collecting the data in this form was to complement other forms of data collection in this youth assessment. For this reason, the online survey data are not analyzed by demographics in the youth assessment report.

## ANNEX B: YOUTH PROGRAMS BY PROVINCE

### USAID YOUTH PROGRAMS

#	Program Name	Province
1	Youth Labor Preparation, PEPFAR/IYF (OVC)	Sofala, and Maputo Province
2	DREAMS (AGYW)	Maputo Province
3	USAID/Total (new)	Cabo Delgado
4	Media Strengthening Program	Nampula, Zambézia, Niassa, Sofala and Cabo Delgado
5	USAID/Car Foundation	Sofala
6	Nikhalamo	Zambézia
7	ADPP	Sofala, Tete and Nampula
8	PEPFAR funds for education	Nampula and Zambézia
9	Prosecutors training	Gaza, Sofala and Niassa
10	Community radio training	Nationwide
11	Civic advocacy	Nationwide
12	Youth parliament	Nationwide

### DONORS' YOUTH PROGRAMS

#	Program Name	Province
1	Projectos inovadores da sociedade civil e das ligações de actores (PISCCA) - "Inserção económica, desenvolvimento sustentável e democracia local em Moçambique	Cabo Delgado, Maputo Province, Maputo City, and Zambézia
2	Young Africa - Skills 2 live	Cabo Delgado, Maputo Province, and Sofala
3	Ready +	Cabo Delgado, Gaza, Inhambane, Manica, Maputo Province, Maputo City, Nampula, Niassa, Sofala, Tete, and Zambézia
4	PSI social market health program	Gaza, Inhambane, Maputo, Nampula, Sofala, and Zambézia
5	My choice	Cabo Delgado, Gaza, Inhambane, Manica, Maputo Province, Maputo City, Nampula, Niassa, Sofala, Tete, and Zambézia
6	Value chain and youth development	Cabo Delgado
7	Rapariga Biz - Action for Girls and Young Women's Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Mozambique	Nampula, and Zambézia
8	Rapariga Biz – One UN SRHR for girls and young women in Mozambique	Nampula, and Zambézia
9	Ungumi / Reaching the Poorest: Supporting Quality Sexual Reproductive Health	Zambézia

#	Program Name	Province
10	Advancing Sexual and Reproductive Health for Women and Girls in Cabo Delgado (Partner: Aga Khan Foundation Canada, AKFC)	Cabo Delgado
11	Supporting Family Planning and Abortion Services in Mozambique	Manica, and Tete
12	Action for Girls' and Young Women's Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Mozambique (aka Rapariga Biz (implemented by UNFPA, UNICEF, UNWOMEN & UNESCO)	Nampula, and Zambézia
13	Healthy Women and Girls	Nampula
14	Disability: Education, Employment and Information and Communication Technologies -AID	Cabo Delgado, Gaza, Inhambane, Manica, Maputo Province, Maputo City, Nampula, Niassa, Sofala, Tete, and Zambézia
15	Joba	Maputo City, Sofala, Tete, and Nampula
16	Muva	Maputo City, Sofala, and Zambézia
17	Harnessing the Demographic Dividend Project	All provinces

### CSO YOUTH PROGRAMS

#	Program Name	Province
1	Ungumi	Zambézia
2	Redes.rapariga em desenvolvimento educação e saúde	Niassa
3	Capacitação dos jovens na conservação dos mangais	Inhambane
4	Nurturing Good Leadership for Developmental and Transformational Change in Mozambique	Cabo Delgado, Nampula, and Niassa
5	Transferência de Conhecimento	Gaza, Inhambane, Manica, Maputo Province, Maputo City, Sofala, and Tete
6	AGROJOVEM	Cabo Delgado, Gaza, Inhambane Manica, Maputo Province, Maputo City, Nampula, Niassa, Sofala, Tete, and Zambézia
7	COVida - Programa de Prestacao de Servicos e Assistencia a Crianças Orfans e Vulneraveis	Cabo Delgado, Gaza, Inhambane Manica, Maputo Province, Maputo City, Nampula, Niassa, Sofala, Tete, and Zambézia
8	Yes, I do	Nampula
9	Youth Speak Forum	Cabo Delgado, Gaza, Inhambane, Manica, Maputo Province, Maputo City, Nampula, Niassa, Sofala, Tete, Zambézia
10	YALI RLC - Maputo	Maputo City
11	Orange Corners Maputo	Maputo City

#	Program Name	Province
12	(Fortalecimento de Parcerias para a Promoção de Saúde e Direitos Sexuais e Reprodutivos da Mulher e Rapariga em Cabo Delgado)	Cabo Delgado
13	Gender Equality, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, and Adolescents in Mozambique (projecto Junt@s)	Cabo Delgado, Gaza, Inhambane, and Maputo
14	Reaching Vulnerable Adolescent Girls in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique	Cabo Delgado
15	Supporting Family Planning and Abortion Services in Mozambique (projecto Impacto)	Manica, and Tete
16	SEU FUTURO, SUA ESCOLHA- Fortalecendo os Direitos e a Saúde Sexual e Reprodutiva das Adolescentes e Jovens-	Zambézia
17	Ignite	Gaza, Inhambane, Maputo, Maputo City, Nampula, and Sofala
18	Vale a Pena	Gaza, Maputo City, and Nampula
19	combate à violência sexual no Polana Caniço	Maputo City
20	NIKHALAMO- Educacao da Rapariga	Zambézia
21	Tua Cena	Gaza, Maputo Province, Maputo City, and Nampula
22	Vale a Pena	Gaza, Maputo Province and Maputo City

### OTHER NON-STATE ACTORS' YOUTH PROGRAMS

#	Program Name	Province
1	Escolhas, IYF/Mozal	Maputo Province
2	Dzima, IYF/Mozal	Maputo Province
3	Bhindzhula, IYF/Mozal	Maputo Province
4	Via rotas para o trabalho, IYF/MasterCard Foundation	Nationwide
5	Leadership for conservation of Mozambique, Biofund	Nationwide
6	Total LNG Mozambique	Cabo Delgado

### GOVERNMENT YOUTH PROGRAMS

#	Program Name	Province
1	Fund of Supporting Youth Initiatives (FAI) - government	Nationwide