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Strengthening Resilience and Peace in Mozambique

CRS POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE GLOBAL FRAGILITY ACT IN MOZAMBIQUE

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Intro

The Global Fragility Act (GFA) presents a fresh opportunity for the United States government to rethink its basic assumptions, strategies, and implementation efforts around global conflict prevention and stability. The act helps our government to tackle the root causes of conflict and violence by mandating an inter-agency strategy (among the State Department, USAID, and the Department of Defense) to coordinate stabilization activities in priority countries and regions around the world, including Mozambique.

Since establishing a Mozambique country office in 2017, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) has been delivering emergency and development programs in Mozambique that build trust, strengthen livelihoods, and support disaster and conflict-affected communities through their recovery. Through its close partnership with Caritas in Mozambique, CRS has comprehensive geographic reach into communities in every province across the country. CRS brings decades of diverse technical expertise and experience in local capacity strengthening which improve the quality of Caritas' programming approaches.

Snapshot of a Country in Crisis

Since October 2017, Mozambique's northernmost province of Cabo Delgado has been inundated by an eruption of extreme violence by non-state armed groups (NSAGs). Ongoing battles and attacks against civilians have resulted in the displacement of nearly 1 million people, forced to flee their homes in search of safety.¹

While some external and media sources frame Mozambique's conflict as rooted exclusively in religion, analysis from CRS and other external groups suggests it is much more tied to wealth distribution, governance, and social cohesion – with religious tension playing a smaller role.² The conflict over these issues has further exacerbated existing cracks in the region's social structure – such as wealth inequality, a lack of economic opportunities, and breakdowns in vertical and horizontal social cohesion – which can be exploited by NSAGs.³ In particular, Cabo Delgado is extremely rich in natural resources, such as gemstones, oil deposits, natural gas, timber and gold.⁴ Many of these resources were recent discoveries and were estimated to be worth billions as recently as 2010. While the extraction and trade of these resources has generated significant wealth for multinational corporations and some national entities, individual Mozambicans and local communities have not received the benefits of the resources or influx of wealth, leading to resentment.⁵

Of the 1 million people displaced due to the conflict, nearly all have migrated elsewhere within Mozambique. This internally displaced (IDP) population is in urgent need of food, shelter, and non-food items.⁶ An additional 130,000 people in Central Mozambique have been internally displaced due to natural disasters.⁷ Increasing food insecurity continues to be a pressing issue for Mozambique, as the country's current "Crisis" (IPC Phase 3) level is expected to continue into 2023.⁸ Currently, 1.1 million people are severely food insecure, and many are turning to negative coping strategies such as selling assets or reducing health and education spending to minimize food gaps.⁹ COVID-19 and climate change have and will continue to act as force multipliers, heightening instability and making recovery even more challenging.

CRS Program Highlights

CRS programming in Mozambique is aimed at helping people to get back on their feet through income-generating livelihoods, while also addressing emergency needs, peacebuilding, microfinance, and conservation agriculture. In addition, CRS has social cohesion-specific programming, including its ongoing interfaith project Youth-Led Action for Peace. In this project, CRS collaborates with the Islamic Council, Commission for Justice and Peace, and Helvetas in Cabo Delgado to work within communities to build up resilient youth who are working to prevent violence. Youth learn technical and entrepreneurship skills to strengthen the diversity of their livelihood opportunities and other activities to collaborate across societal divides in the community. Further, they engage with faith leaders as well as local government and civil society leaders to build their connection and strengthen vertical ties. Through these activities, youth gain viable solutions aimed at prevention, and are empowered to become champions of dialogue and talk through issues.

Recommendations



Generate an environment for youth to thrive. In Mozambique, one of the key areas for investment is in income-generating youth livelihoods. Over the course of the ongoing conflict, youth have become disenfranchised in part

¹UNHCR. "Nearly 1 Million People Have Fled Five Years of Northern Mozambique Violence," October 4, 2022.

<https://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing/2022/10/633be4474/nearly-1-million-people-fled-five-years-northern-mozambique-violence.html>.

²"Stemming the Insurrection in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado." International Crisis Group, June 11, 2021.

<https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/southern-africa/mozambique/303-stemming-insurrection-mozambiques-cabo-delgado>.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Neha Wadekar and Ed Ram. "The Fight For Cabo Delgado: A Hidden War Over Mozambique's Natural Resources." Pulitzer Center, July 22, 2021.

<https://pulitzercenter.org/stories/fight-cabo-delgado-hidden-war-over-mozambiques-natural-resources>.

⁵ Emilia Columbo. "Stabilizing Mozambique." Council on Foreign Relations, August 29, 2022. <https://www.cfr.org/report/stabilizing-mozambique>.

⁶ OCHA. "Mozambique: Cabo Delgado, Nampula & Niassa Humanitarian Snapshot - August 2022," September 8, 2022.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/mozambique/mozambique-cabo-delgado-nampula-niassa-humanitarian-snapshot-august-2022-enpt>.

⁷ UNHCR Operational Data Portal: Refugee Situations. "Country - Mozambique." Accessed November 2022.

<https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/moz>.

⁸ FEWS NET. "Mozambique Food Security Outlook, June 2022 to January 2023," July 1, 2022.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/mozambique/mozambique-food-security-outlook-june-2022-january-2023>.

⁹ OCHA. "Mozambique: Cabo Delgado, Nampula & Niassa Humanitarian Snapshot - August 2022,"

due to the lack of inclusive economic development and lack of opportunities.¹⁰ Youth unemployment in Mozambique is 2-3 times that of adult unemployment, and young people must compete with 300,000 youths joining the labor force; over 75% end up joining the informal market.¹¹ Through the GFA, the US should invest in income-generating livelihoods for youth. As youth continue to migrate to other rural areas or cities within Mozambique, a variety of livelihood investments are needed, including vocational training, mechanics, and small business enterprises.

In addition to livelihoods, youth must be supported in their roles as **community leaders and peacebuilders**. Youth are a powerful source of creativity, innovation, and political mobilization—which can be a positive force when they are adequately supported and invested in. Through the GFA, the US should invest in programming to engage and amplify the voices of youth peacebuilders. The US can also continue to support interfaith youth peace programs, such as the Youth-Led Action for Peace program.



Invest in civil society. Local civil society, including faith-based organizations (FBOs) serve a unique and essential role in community development. Through the GFA, the US can directly support the role that an interconnected civil society, made up of capable and accountable local entities, can play in supporting effective, meaningful and sustainable humanitarian response and development at the community level. Broad and deep participation from a range of civil society actors in humanitarian and development interventions helps secure wide stakeholder representation and more inclusive approaches. This will empower citizens to hold governments accountable, drive change in their communities and countries, and ultimately address some of the root causes that are being exploited for violence in the region.

Local **FBOs and faith leaders** are particularly important when it comes to strengthening communities against external force given their existing recognized and respected peacebuilding platforms at the village, communal, and national levels.¹³ In an Afrobarometer study, 71% of Mozambicans said they trust their religious leaders “somewhat” or “a lot” compared to just 48% who said the same about their local government leaders.¹⁴ Where context permits, the USG should support efforts for interfaith dialogues and platforms at all levels of society where Christian, Muslim, and traditional actors can work together to demonstrate unity and leverage their collective voices for positive change.



Commit to diplomatic and security support. Through the GFA, the State Department and Department of Defense both have unique and essential roles to play in Mozambique. The State Department should leverage its diplomatic expertise to urge involvement of the Mozambican government in protecting civilians and ensuring dignified conditions for displaced Mozambicans. Further, given the proliferation of state and non-state actors in Mozambique, the US can use its diplomatic heft to develop power mappings of existing actors and assist in coordination where possible and appropriate. Through the Department of Defense, the USG can assist in training or other needs to increase security in Cabo Delgado to protect civilians, while also supporting efforts to inform civilians of their human rights and empower civilians to engage with UN efforts to improve accountability to affected populations.



Ensure programming is flexible. As the situation in Mozambique rapidly evolves, civil society needs to be able to adjust and reprogram to appropriately respond to such changes. The US should prioritize programming and funding mechanisms that allow implementers to pivot programs or shift focus along the humanitarian-development-peace nexus as context requires.

¹⁰ Amanda Lucey and Jaynisha Patel. “Youth Perspectives on Mozambique’s Insurgency: Is Inclusive Governance the Key to Stopping It?” Africa Portal, February 2, 2022. <https://www.africportal.org/features/tackling-youth-recruitment-mozambiques-insurgency-requires-inclusive-governance/>.

¹¹ SNV. “Opportunities for Youth Employment (OYE) in Mozambique, Rwanda and Tanzania.” Accessed November 23, 2022. <https://snv.org/project/opportunities-youth-employment-oye-mozambique-rwanda-and-tanzania>.

¹² Sangeeta Raja Jobanputra, Julia Sellers, and Audrey-Marie Moore. “Recommended Strategic Priorities: Youth Employment in the Mozambique Health and Social Services Sector.” USAID YouthPower2, April 12, 2021. <https://www.youthpower.org/resources/recommended-strategic-priorities-youth-employment-mozambique-health-and-social-services-sector>.

¹³ Nathalie Delapalme. “Africa Is the Continent of the Future. Are Democracy and Governance up to the Challenge?” Development Matters, September 23, 2019. <https://oecd-development-matters.org/2019/09/23/africa-is-the-continent-of-the-future-are-democracy-and-governance-up-to-the-challenge/>.

¹⁴ Afrobarometer (R8 2019/2021) Online Data Analysis tool. <https://www.afrobarometer.org/online-data-analysis/>