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BEIJING+30

MOZAMBIQUE REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BEIJING DECLARATION AND PLATFORM FOR ACTION

2024

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACIPOL	– Police Science Academy
ADGIR	– Support for the Development of Income-Generating Initiatives
BPfA	– Beijing Platform for Action
CAI	– Integrated Service Center
CEDAW	– Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CESC	– Civil Society Learning and Capacity Building Center
CIDHDIH	– Interministerial Commission for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law
CNAM	– National Council for the Advancement of Women
CNDH	– National Human Rights Commission
CPLP	– Community of Portuguese Language Countries
CSOs	– Civil Society Organizations
CSW	– Commission on the Status of Women
DUAT	– Right to Use and Benefit from Land
FAIJ	– Youth Initiative Support Fund
FDS	– Defense and Security Forces
FRELIMO	– Mozambique Liberation Front
GBV	– Gender-Based Violence
ICT	– Information and Communication Technologies
IDA	– International Development Association
IDS	– Demographic and Health Survey
INE	– National Institute of Statistics
INSS	– National Institute of Social Security
IOF	– Household Budget Survey
IPAJ	– Institute of Legal Assistance and Sponsorship
MDM	– Democratic Movement of Mozambique
MEF	– Ministry of Economy and Finance
MINEDH	– Ministry of Education and Human Development
MINT	– Ministry of the Interior

MISAU	– Ministry of Health
MGCAS	– Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Action
MPO	– Planning and Budget Module
PAMRDC	– Multisectoral Action Plan for the Reduction of Chronic Malnutrition
PASD	– Direct Social Support Program
PASP	– Productive Social Action Program
PES	– Economic and Social Plan
PESOE	– Economic and Social Plan and State Budget
PGB	– Biz Generation Program
POA	– Annual Operational Plan
PNAM	– National Action Plan for the Advancement of Women
PEP	– Post-Exposure Prophylaxis
PQG	– Five-Year Government Program
PRM	– Police of the Republic of Mozambique
PSSB	– Basic Social Subsidy Program
RENAMO	– Mozambican National Resistance
SAAJs	– Adolescent and Youth-Friendly Health Services
SADC	– Southern African Development Community
SCDM	– Mozambique Digital Certification System
SERNIC	– National Criminal Investigation Service
TARV	– Antiretroviral Treatment
SDGs	– Sustainable Development Goals
UEM	– Eduardo Mondlane University
UN	– United Nations
UNDP	– United Nations Development Program
UNICEF	– United Nations Children’s Fund
UNFPA	– United Nations Population Fund
UNODC	– United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNSC	– United Nations Security Council
US	– United States

VAT – Value Added Tax

WHO – World Health Organization

INTRODUCTION

Mozambique has made substantial advancements in promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls over the years. This National Report assesses the progress made and challenges faced between 2019 and 2023, including some references to the first months of 2024. The document highlights achievements, setbacks, and strategies used to overcome challenges, reaffirming the country's commitments, and identifying future priorities for the gender equality agenda. This is the second review period of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA), aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Republic's Constitution, contains the principle of gender equality in its Article 36. With this as a basis, Mozambique has approved several laws, policies, and national plans to promote gender equality and empower women and girls, as well as to address gender-based violence over the past years. These developments have strengthened the country's legislative framework, providing better protection for women and girls. The Five-Year Government Program (2020-2024), a key instrument for implementing the Governance Plan, integrates gender as one of its strategic objectives, emphasizing the promotion of gender equality, social inclusion, and protection of the most vulnerable groups.

During the reporting period, Mozambique achieved significant progress in several critical areas for women and girls. In health, there were notable advancements in sexual and reproductive health, including improved access to services and information. In education, there was an increase in the number of enrolled students in primary and secondary education, particularly girls. In terms of governance and decision-making, the number of women occupying significant positions in the sovereignty organs of the State has been increasing over the years. In addressing gender-based violence, several initiatives were implemented to support victims and prevent violence. In conflict mediation, peace agreements and initiatives to ensure equal participation of women and men in conflict prevention, mediation, and peace consolidation contributed to some stability in the country, particularly in conflict-affected areas. Some of the good that can be highlighted include increasing community members and leaders involvement in addressing conflicts and cases of violence in diverse contexts; reproduction and translation of legal instruments addressing gender-based violence into many local languages.

Despite the progress, Mozambique faced significant challenges. Natural disasters, such as cyclones and storms, devastated the country exacerbating the vulnerability of women and girls. The Covid-19 pandemic imposed additional restrictions and challenges, disproportionately affecting women and girls. Additionally, violence and armed conflicts continue to be obstacles to peace and sustainable development, and to address these and more challenges, Mozambique used various strategies, including national action plans and collaboration with diverse national and international actors. These approaches aimed to strengthen resilience and promote gender equality sustainably.

The methodology used in developing this report adhered to the guidelines outlined by the United Nations Women and Regional Commissions. The process actively involved various stakeholders, including different government levels, UN entities and development partners, academia, media, and the private sector, civil society organizations, including women-led organization such as Forum Mulher, Muleide, Forum das Mulheres Rurais, Associação de Mulheres com Deficiência, Mulheres na Midea. A coordination committee, led by the Ministry of Gender, Child, and Social Action, was designated, and received support from UN Women in the country. Various reflection and information validation meetings were held, as well as a sectorial meeting with the National Council for the Advancement of Women, which included gender focal points at the Ministry's level, representatives from the private sector, women's organizations, and religious institutions. This phase culminated in a national consultation meeting with all mentioned actors at different territorial levels and many other actors working on the promotion of gender agenda in the country, resulting in the consolidation of the report.

At present, the Government of Mozambique has prepared and submitted four implementation reports of the BPfA (1999, 2004, 2014, 2019). The present one marks the fifth report, prepared within a temporal context that converges towards a dual celebration: in 2025, the global community will mark the 30th anniversary of the 4th World Conference on Women and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), along with a decade of commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Regarding the structure, the report is divided into six sections following the general guidelines. The introduction is the first section and provides a synthesis of the review process and highlights the country's progress and challenges. The second section addresses the priorities, achievements, challenges, and setbacks in gender and women's empowerment over the past five years. The third section details progress in the 12 critical areas of the BPfA, grouped into six main dimensions, aligned with the 2030 Agenda. The fourth section outlines institutional mechanisms for women's advancement. Information on gender data and statistics is presented in the fifth section. Finally, the sixth section presents conclusions and outlines next steps, reflecting on lessons learned and identifying priorities to accelerate gender equality and women's and girls empowerment in the forthcoming years.

I. PRIORITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES AND SETBACKS

Overview

Over the past five years, from 2019 to 2023, the country has witnessed a series of significant achievements and faced substantial challenges in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The points to be addressed in this section highlight legislative advances and progress in strategic areas for the country, such as education and health, governance and decision-making, productive resources, and employment, preventing and responding to gender-based violence, conflict mediation and peace consolidation. On the other hand, persistent challenges such as gender disparities and violence against women remain significant obstacles. Setbacks have also been observed in areas where progress seemed assured, requiring a meticulous reassessment of implementation strategies. Faced with these obstacles and setbacks, priority goals include strengthening legislation to protect women's rights and their respective implementation, expanding access to resources and opportunities in all domains for women and girls, and addressing the root causes of gender inequality comprehensively and sustainably.

Achievements and facilitating factors, challenges and setbacks

Achievements and facilitating factors

During the period from 2019 to 2023, substantial investments were observed in implementing policies and programs aimed at addressing gender stereotypes, gender-based violence, promoting inclusive education, and raising awareness of equality issues. These efforts were reflected in various significant achievements in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BDPfA), in line with the United Nations' Agenda 2030, representing tangible advancements towards a more inclusive and egalitarian society. In this context, notable progress was made in several strategic areas, including the following:

Strategic Focus: Education and Training

Mozambique has a National Education System comprising levels such as primary, secondary, adult education, technical and vocational education, teacher training, and higher education. The Government's strategic objective was to promote an inclusive, effective, and efficient educational system that ensures the acquisition of skills required in terms of knowledge and attitudes to meet the country's development needs, with a focus on gender equality, preventing and responding to violence in schools, and empowerment of women and girls.

The advancements in the education sector reflect notable progress in increasing the enrolment of girls and women in schools. By 2023, the country was nearing the goal of achieving gender parity in general education, with a mere 0.01% gap remaining. This demonstrates a positive trajectory in girls' education, showcasing a significant shift from 2019. In that year, out of a total of 8,193,950 students attending Primary Education First Grade (EP1) to Secondary Education Second Grade (ES2), 3,951,742 were female, representing 48.2% of the students. By 2023, out of the 9,397,811 students attending Primary Education First Grade (EP1) and Secondary Education Second Grade (EP2), 4,597,943 were female, comprising 49.9% of the total enrolment. This achievement contributes substantially to mitigating gender disparities within the education sector. The increasing results in education, particularly in female enrolment, was observed across all levels of education. The existence of current infrastructure, including schools, universities, and higher education institutes across all provinces of the country is a very positive aspect, failing however, to adequately accommodate the demographic density. Addressing this infrastructure gap is imperative for sustaining and furthering the gains made in promoting gender equality in education.

Empowerment of girls and promotion of an inclusive and efficient education system

Inclusive and quality education is a driving force for women's empowerment in society. With the aim of promoting empowerment and retention of girls in school, as well as an inclusive, effective, and efficient education system, several initiatives were implemented during the period under review, with emphasis on the following:

- ▶ A significant increase between 2019 and 2023 of over 45% in the availability of essential inclusive resources, such as *braille* material, sign language interpreters, and schools infrastructures for children with special educational needs.
- ▶ During the years 2022 and 2023, as part of the 'Eu Sou Capaz' program, a total of 16,429 bicycles were distributed to female students in General Secondary Education across six provinces of the country. This initiative resulted in reducing the time taken by these students from their homes to schools.
- ▶ The distribution of 628,174 uniforms for girls in primary education, which contributed to promoting school identity and a sense of belonging and inclusion among the students.
- ▶ The 'Rapariga Biz' program contributed to the reintegration into school of 1,452 girls identified by mentors during selection and in sessions in 'Safe Spaces' created in schools.
- ▶ In 2020, a total of 797 scholarships were awarded for bachelors, master's, and doctoral levels, of which about 45% benefited women. In 2023, a total of 1,254 scholarships were awarded nationwide, including 950 for bachelors, 232 for master's, and 72 for doctoral levels, with about 39% benefiting women.

Strategic Focus: Legislation

Strengthening the Legislative System

Regarding the strengthening of the legal system, in 2019, Mozambique made significant advancements in reviewing and approving legal instruments to protect the human rights of women and girls. Notably, the government approved several key laws, including Law no. 19/2019 of October 22, on Prevention and Responding of Early Unions, which aims to eradicate harmful practices such as early unions, providing protection to victims and promoting their access to education and development opportunities. In the same year, the Law no. 22/2019 of December 11, Family Law, was approved, revising the old law dating back to 2004 to adapt it to current norms in the country, as well as updating and strengthening legal provisions related to family structure, protection of women's and children's rights. Law no. 24/2019 on the Revision of the Penal Code was also approved, which includes specific provisions to protect women's rights and punish crimes such as gender-based violence, sexual harassment, and other forms of abuse.

In 2020, a significant development was the approval of the Regulation on the organization and operation of "Integrated Service Centers (CAI)" for victims of domestic and gender-based violence under Decree no. 75/2020. This regulation establishes guidelines and procedures for the creation and operation of CAIs, which play a crucial role in providing support and protection services to women victims of violence. The Gender Strategy of the Public Administration (2020-2024) was approved, representing the country's ongoing commitment to promoting gender equality within the public sector. In 2022, the Gender Strategy of *Electricidade de Moçambique* (2021-2030), a Mozambican public company, was approved, aiming to promote equal opportunities for women within the company and ensure a work environment free from discrimination and harassment, with one of the objectives being to achieve 40% representation of women in the company by 2030.

Equal access to justice

In the context of equality and access to justice, the Institute of Legal Assistance and Sponsorship (IPAJ) plays a fundamental role as an institution dedicated to providing legal assistance to the most vulnerable persons in the country. In 2019, IPAJ handled a total of 5,834 cases, surpassing the planned 3,680. These cases covered a variety of legal issues, including 2,409 criminal cases, 1,244 civil cases, 837 cases of domestic violence, and 1,344 cases related to child protection. It is important to highlight that, of the total cases of people assisted, 3,757 (64.4%) were men and 2,077 (35.6%) were women. In 2023, IPAJ recorded a significant increase, assisting a total of 248,226 citizens. Of these, 166,311 (70%) were women and 81,915 (33%) were men, which compared to 2019 shows a growing trend in the number of women assisted compared to men, highlighting the significant demand for legal assistance among women. This is partly the result of

bringing public justice services closer to citizens with fewer resources and the constant engagement in raising awareness among women about the need to seek legal assistance whenever necessary, provided by various public, humanitarian, and civil society institutions.

Table I: Evolution of Legal Cases Involving Assisted Women from 2019 to 2023

Year	Total number of assisted individuals	Number of assisted women
2019	5.834	2.077
2020	161.640	45.040
2021	181.673	53.116
2022	-	9.004
2023	248.226	166.311

Source: IPAJ

Strategic Focus: Governance and Decision-Making

Mozambique ranks 3rd in terms of women's representation in the National Assembly at the SADC level and holds the 5th position at the same level within the African Union. It also holds a prominent international position in terms of women's representation in Parliament (19th place), with approximately 43% of women in the National Parliament (National Assembly).

In 2020, the country experienced significant changes in governance and decision-making processes with the establishment of the new elected Government. This transition brought the new model of Decentralized Governance, marked by previous election of 10 Provincial Governors, of which 3 were women (30%). There were also 11 Provincial Secretaries of State appointed, of which 6 were women, achieving a representation of 54.5%. Furthermore, parity of gender was reached in the Provincial Secretariats, reflecting notable progress in the inclusion of women in decision-making spaces.

The year 2022 marked a historic milestone for Mozambique, aligned with the gender equality principles present in the Constitution of the Republic and the United Nations' Agenda 2030. In this year, the country achieved gender parity in ministerial leading positions, with women holding 50% of these roles. This achievement was accompanied by the remarkable fact that three out of the country's five Organs of Sovereignty were led by women, including the National Assembly, the Administrative Court, and the Constitutional Council. Additionally, women's leadership was also observed in the Attorney General's Office. Furthermore, all three major political parties in the country (FRELIMO, RENAMO, and MDM) have 'women's leagues', whose main objective is to promote women's participation and representation in politics.

In the context of the municipal elections held in 2023, over 50% of those registered nationwide were women. Although sex-disaggregated data reflecting the number of women who voted is not yet available, the voter registration is a positive indicator of women's interest in participating in the country's electoral and political processes.

Strategic Focus: Health

Maternal Mortality and Institutional Births

In the scope of promoting safe motherhood to reduce maternal mortality (pregnancy-related mortality), the health sector has set ambitious goals to increase the coverage of institutional births over the years. By 2023, the country experienced a decrease in maternal deaths, with the numbers indicating approximately 400 per 100,000 live births, a number that was higher in previous years.

Although this reduction falls short of the target set by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of 70 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, the strides made signify a positive trajectory towards the objective, underscoring ongoing efforts and progress in addressing maternal mortality rates. These advancements have been supported by a range of factors, such as increased efforts in investigating the processes leading to maternal deaths, the implementation of a surveillance system to monitor maternal health, and improved responses to cases of maternal death. Additionally, the identification of various obstetric failures has played a significant role in understanding and addressing the underlying issues contributing to maternal mortality rates.

Despite the decrease in cases, challenges persist, particularly concerning the delayed arrival of women to health facilities in remote or peripheral areas. This delay not only poses a barrier to timely medical intervention but also underscores the need for targeted initiatives aimed at improving access to maternal healthcare services in underserved regions, and the Waiting Houses for Pregnant Women is a prominent initiative in this area, as will be seen further. In general, addressing this issue demands a multifaceted approach, encompassing strategies such as enhancing transportation infrastructure, implementing community-based education programs, and fostering partnerships with local healthcare providers.

Regarding institutional births, the country's achievements reached 87% of the targets set for 2019, with a total of 1,180,480 assisted institutional births, and 93% in 2023, with 1,349,858 assisted institutional births. These numbers demonstrate a continued commitment to providing quality maternal healthcare and ensuring the well-being of mothers and newborns.

Table II: Institutional Birth Coverage

Component	2019		2020		2021		2022		2023	
	Goal	Achieved	Goal	Achieved	Goal	Achieved	Goal	Achieved	Goal	Achieved
Institutional Birth Coverage	84%	1.118,480 (87%)	88.90%	1.150,089 (85%)	89%	1.230.078 (88.7%)	89.2%	1.309.998 (92.1%)	89.2%	1,349,858 (93%)

Source: MISAU

Sexual and reproductive health and family planning

In 2020, efforts were made to screen for cervical cancer, with 915,578 women at reproductive age being screened at family planning consultations, significantly surpassing the annual target of 498,384. Furthermore, there was an increase in the use of modern contraceptive methods, with 2,305,937 women adopting family planning. Regarding HIV/AIDS treatment, antiretroviral treatment services were available in 96% of the country's health facilities, providing free access to users. The following year, in 2021, the country continued to make advancements in women's health, and the estimated coverage for prevention of vertical transmission among pregnant women living with HIV reached 123%, reflecting the ongoing commitment to maternal health and HIV/AIDS prevention.

In 2022, efforts to screen for cervical and breast cancer resulted in a significant increase in the number of women undergoing this process. A total of 3,957,508 women at reproductive age were screened during family planning consultations, surpassing the annual target, and achieving a completion rate of over 100%.

In 2023, the country continued to invest in awareness and improvement of healthcare services, resulting once again in a significant increase in the screening for cervical and breast cancer, with screening examinations conducted on 4,011,603 women at reproductive age. Additionally, the SAAJs also saw an increase in the number of adolescents and young people served, especially women and girls, with a growing focus on mental health and sexuality.

Table III: Screening for cervical and breast cancer

Year	Total screenings for cervical and breast cancer
2019	-
2020	915.578
2021	1.209.886
2022	3.957.508
2023	4.011.603

Source: MISAU

Strategic Focus: productive resources and employment

In the realm of employment promotion, the creation of 371,388 new jobs in 2022 stands out, representing an achievement of over 100% for that year. Among the sectors contributing to this performance were the private sector, with 243,664 positions, the public sector, with 70,017 positions, the hiring of foreign labor, with 32,151 positions, the overseas work in mines, with 17,156 positions, and the Public Administration, with 8,400 positions. Out of the 371,388 positions created, 129,986 were filled by women, representing 35%.

In the employment program, 50 youth-led companies benefited from financing in the amount of 1,500,000.00 Meticals through the Business Plan Component. Out of these companies, 25 were led by women and 25 by men, reflecting equal participation of 50% for both. Additionally, 141 focal points were trained and capacitated on the operationalization of the “Sustainable Fisheries Plus” Program, covering knowledge and techniques of sustainable fishing, reduction of post-capture losses, social and environmental safeguards, as well as the mechanism for dialogue and complaints related to the *MozRural* and *MozNorte* projects. Among these focal points, 24 (17%) were women and 117 (83%) were men.

In the year 2023, within the scope of the Youth Initiative Support Fund (FAIJ) Program, a total of 3,414 young people applied in different areas of interest in the market, of which 1,038 were women, representing a women’s participation rate of 30.4%. For the Labor Market Internship, 157 young interns were hired, of which 97 were women, accounting for 61.78% of the total, operating in areas such as accounting, extractive industry and auditing. Regarding the ‘Access to Employment’ component, 9,064 young people were trained in different professional trainings, with 3,829 being women, representing 42.2% of the beneficiaries. Approximately 1,296 young people were trained through Mobile Units, with 612 women, totalling 49%, and 684 men, corresponding to 51%. To increase the capacities and skills to enhance the employability of young persons with disabilities, 93 persons with disabilities were integrated into the market, of which 41 were women, representing 44%, and 52 were men, corresponding to 56%.

Strategic Focus: Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Notable progress has been made to address gender-based violence, highlighted by legal instruments such as the approval of Law no. 24/2019, amending the Penal Code, which includes specific provisions to protect women’s rights and punish gender-based violence crimes, sexual harassment, and other forms of abuse, and the revision of Labor Law no. 13/2023 of August 25, in articles 67 and 68 concerning workplace harassment. The approval of Law No. 19/2019 of October 22 on the Prevention and Responding of Early Unions and the National Action Plan for

Responding to Gender-Based Violence in the Health Sector (2019/2022), also demonstrated the government's commitment to strengthening the framework for protecting women and girls.

In response to actions outlined in the Annual Operating Plan (POA), in attending victims of violence, 28,101 cases were attended to from January to December 2019, including 16,950 criminal cases, 9,475 civil cases, and 1,676 of other nature. In 2020, 22,978 cases were assisted, including 15,291 criminal cases, 6,657 civil cases, and 1,030 of diverse nature. The cases were recorded by the Offices and Victim Support Sections of Violence, where 12,398 women, 2,402 men, 7,455 children, and 723 older persons individuals were victims. During 2023, 18,728 cases were attended, compared to 28,101 in 2019, marking a 33% reduction. Of these, 13,022 were criminal cases (70%), 4,524 civil cases (24%), and 1,182 of other nature (6%).

Regarding early unions, 298 cases were reported during 2023, compared to 398 in 2022, showing a 25% reduction. In 2023, 668 children victims of early unions were also reunified in their own families or placed in alternative care, all female, out of the 687 planned, corresponding to 97% execution. 538 children victims of early unions were reintegrated into formal education and technical training, out of the 461 planned, corresponding to over 100% achievement, and 4 processes of unaccompanied minors and trafficking victims were instructed, to trace families and subsequent family reunification and reintegration, in the provinces of Manica, Sofala, Gaza, and Maputo.

The data reveal a notable decrease in the number of violence cases attended to in 2023 compared to previous years. This decline may indicate a series of potential changes in the social landscape and intervention policies. The decrease in the number of cases attended suggests both possible, progress in violence prevention and an improvement in the response capacity of competent authorities. However, it is important to note that these data may be influenced by a variety of factors, including changes in public awareness, more effective reporting policies, or even underreporting. Progress in addressing early unions is also highlighted, with the reintegration of affected children into formal education. Nevertheless, the data also point to ongoing challenges. The need to closely monitor trends and adapt intervention strategies in response to changes in social dynamics is crucial to ensuring the continued effectiveness of these efforts. This emphasizes the importance of a flexible, evidence-based approach to addressing violence in all its forms.

Strategic Focus: conflict mediation and peace consolidation

Within the strategic focus to ensure equal participation of women and men in conflict prevention and mediation, and peace consolidation, a series of significant actions have been undertaken, notably the strengthening of capacities of relevant actors from the public sector and civil society.

The defense sector has gender offices in all Military Units, focusing especially on gender-based violence issues, in a significant effort to integrate gender matters at all levels of the country. A total of 97 gender focal points, including 18 women, were trained on gender and gender-based violence. In 2020, 80,000 female youths were enrolled for military services and by 2022, women comprised 29.9% of the total registrants and represented 33% of those selected, highlighting a marked advancement towards gender inclusivity within the military sector. In the security sector, over 3,000 police officers and officials were trained in gender equality, peace, and security matters, with an emphasis on experience exchanges to strengthen their capacities.

In 2023, significant progress was made in integrating women into the Mozambique Republic Police (PRM), even surpassing the targets set by SADC for women's participation in the Defense and Security sector. Further in this context, several initiatives were launched to promote women's inclusion in leadership positions and recruitment across different areas, such as ACIPOL and the Common Technical Framework of SERNIC. Similarly, over 800 government and civil society employees were trained to provide comprehensive and holistic assistance to victims of violence, with a significant proportion of women among the beneficiaries of the training.

In parallel, over 160,000 women from across the country have been engaged since 2020 in initiatives aimed at peacebuilding, reconciliation, and social cohesion through initiatives such as the 'Movimento de Mulheres para a Paz,' (Foundation for Community Development - FDC) 'Acampamentos Solidários,' (*Grupo de Mulheres de Partilha de Ideias de Sofala*) and 'Elas por Elas' (CESC-Aliadas), which complement the government's efforts to involve women as actors in conflict mediation and peace consolidation and social inclusion, within the framework of the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security. These initiatives, mostly led by women, mobilize dialogue among a wide range of actors, including government institutions, political parties, community leaders, religious denominations, and women activists. Training women in conflict hotspot identification, mediation and resolution, and peace promotion is an important component of these initiatives. In 2023, 180 women were trained as peacekeepers at the community level in the provinces of Cabo Delgado, Manica, Nampula, and Sofala, with 18 of them trained in conflict mediation. The trained women led the establishment of 17 Safe Spaces and Referral Centers for women and girls at risk or victims of violence.

The skills of community leaders have also been strengthened through different trainings, such as the comprehensive training on the UN Normative Framework on Women, Peace, and Security, offered by *Joaquim Chissano University*, targeting individuals from the defense and security sector, local leaders, and members of civil society, especially women's organizations. In addition to community leaders, awareness-raising activities involving women have been carried out in conflict-affected areas to enhance response capacity and resilience.

These initiatives have aimed not only to empower women and promote the recognition of their role as key actors in conflict mediation and peace consolidation but also to strengthen a culture of gender equality and peace at all levels throughout the country.

Challenges and Setbacks

Over the past five years (2019-2023), alongside significant advances and achievements in promoting gender equality and implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Agenda 2030, Mozambique has faced a series of challenges and setbacks, including cultural resistance, lack of resources, and limited institutional capacity. Considering this situation, areas where setbacks and challenges have been particularly evident, posing threats to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in the country, are underscored.

Effective and efficient implementation of legal instruments

It is a fact that the country has a current legal framework highly positive to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, as well as addressing different forms of violence against them. However, the main challenge lies in their implementation. Financial limitations, human resource constraints, and lack of an integrated strategy across the policies and plans, aimed at achieving sustainable and measurable success indicators over the years, inhibit the impact of the legislative advances.

Another factor challenging the effective implementation of legal instruments are some deeply rooted cultural and social beliefs that assign specific roles to women as caretakers of domestic and family responsibilities, and to men as providers. These beliefs undermine the acceptance of gender equality policies within the family, community, and society. Associated with this, another challenge is limited access to information on approved laws and plans, particularly in remote areas, resulting in many women and men being unaware of these instruments and the implications in their lives.

Linguistic diversity and different literacy levels across the country pose additional barriers. The absence of comprehensive translation of legal documents, coupled with their dissemination through channels inaccessible to individuals with limited literacy, results in the exclusion of significant portions of the population and consequently, implementation faces considerable constraints.

Poverty and access to resources

Poverty is considered a systemic issue in the country, not only hindering the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of women and girls but also affecting other areas. More than half of Mozambique's population lives in poverty, with women and children being the most affected. Gender inequalities are observed within households, where around 60% of households headed by women are in poverty, compared to about 50% headed by men. This has consequences for limited access to education, health services, as well as low production and productivity.

Economic disparities are a concern, with persistent inequalities in access to productive resources, employment, and development opportunities faced by women. The lack of gender equality in access to land, financing, and employment perpetuates the cycle of inequality and marginalization of women in the country. Additionally, women in Mozambique often have less access to productive resources and financing due to higher rates of illiteracy compared to men. Female entrepreneurs frequently face challenges when seeking access to bank credit and other forms of financing, primarily attributable to gender biases pervasive within financial institutions, compounded by a lack of available guarantees.

Conflict mediation and peace consolidation

Armed conflicts and extreme violence have become more exacerbated in recent years, affecting the lives and dignity of the population, predominantly affecting women and girls due to a combination of economic and social factors. Armed conflicts have terrible consequences for women and girls, including deep social and psychological traumas, unexpected pregnancies resulting from sexual violence coupled with the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases, exacerbated poverty, and social disconnection. Additionally, they result in setbacks in access to education, health, economic opportunities, and participation in decision-making, among many others. Although combined efforts from the government, development partners, civil society, and communities to extinguish armed conflicts in the country are yielding observable results, there is still a long way to go for peace and security consolidation.

Gender-Based Violence

Gender-Based Violence remains a significant challenge, with alarming and recurring cases of violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, sexual assault, and exploitation of girls and women being frequently reported. Despite efforts to increase awareness and strengthen protective laws, cases persist, and many victims still face limitations to accessing support services and justice.

Crimes such as the rape of minors under 12, are becoming an increasing concern in the country, with cases continuously reported by media channels in different parts of the country. Although cases of this nature are reported, there is not a proportional follow-up to report perpetrators sanctions, which would serve as a deterrent against future incidents within society. Data from the 'Spotlight' initiative showed that this is partly due to a general lack of comprehensive data on gender-based violence, such as investigations, judicial processes, and sentences imposed on perpetrators. A complementary challenge to this is the continued use of traditional forms of registering complaints and cases of gender-based violence by sectors and weak coordination among them in terms of management and holistic analysis of these cases. Records are still made manually, for example at police stations and health centers, and are communicated without further analysis of the processes involved and subsequent referral.

On the other hand, many girls live in rural areas with fewer resources for legal and social protection services in case of violence, and situations involving family members as perpetrators and other known persons increase the fear of reporting complaints, often due to victims' financial and housing dependency or even fear and shame.

The increasing cases of women being murdered by partners or unknown individuals also tend to become alarming in the country, with situations such as internal displacement, armed conflicts, housing in very remote and poorly lit areas contributing to this. The Women's Observatory has created an online platform to register such cases, and various women's organizations are calling for severe penalties for perpetrators, including legislation on femicide and non-bailability of crimes of violence against women and girls.

To address issues related to women's safety and well-being, collaborative efforts among government entities are exemplified by existing multisectoral mechanisms like the Multisectoral Mechanism for Integrated Assistance to Women Victims of Violence. This mechanism coordinated by MGCAS and in collaboration with MINT, MISAU, and the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional and Religious Affairs, have various achievements on addressing gender based violence issues, however also diverse limitations in their effectiveness, including human, material, and financial resources, such as inadequate budgeting, limited retention of qualified personnel, and their absence in many units to specifically respond to GBV-related cases. Additionally, there is weak integration of other social actors at the provincial, local, and community levels in the coordination process.

Climate change and natural disasters

Many women in the country depend on subsistence agriculture as the main source of income for themselves and their families and prolonged droughts, floods, cyclones, and storms directly affect

agricultural activities and result in production losses, leading to hunger and food and economic insecurity. Another challenge is related to post-disaster recovery, as access to financial and technological resources that would boost resilience and adaptation to climate change is limited or non-existent in many areas of the country. The destruction of infrastructure, such as health services coupled, by a lack of hospital medical care during climate crises, increases health risks for women and children, particularly concerning reproductive health services, endangering maternal and child health. Gender-based violence and exploitation are further setbacks in climate crisis situations, as forced displacement increases the vulnerability of women and girls to these threats.

Political participation and representation

In 2023, women represented more than 50% of the registered voters for municipal elections in the country, however, they were the least represented in political leadership positions in terms of candidacy for electoral contests. Moreover, while notable progress is being made in gender parity in central government bodies, challenges persist at the local level, with few municipalities being led by women. Therefore, the challenge lies in breaking cultural patterns and entrenched social beliefs in many societal contexts that active politics are only for men.

Hence, the ongoing challenge lies in fostering awareness and empowering women, especially those eligible to vote, regarding the critical significance of active political engagement. This entails more than voter registration; it encompasses substantial representation in political candidacy, involvement as election observers, and participation on polling station boards, among other crucial roles.

Initiatives for effective political and electoral participation of women in the country have been carried out, with emphasis on civil society organizations' leading one in recent years, in collaboration with the National Electoral Commission (CNE), and support from UN Women and UNDP, that have been implemented nationwide.

Despite the significant progress highlighted earlier, further endeavours are requisite to surmount myriad obstacles and ensure the safety and equal opportunities of women. Efforts should be coordinated conjointly, involving governmental, community, family, and individual levels, as well as the continued involvement of development partners, civil society actors, the private sector, among others, to foster women's leadership capacity and access to resources, as well as safety and justice in cases of violence. It is also essential to ensure that laws and policies actively promote gender equality and protect women's rights in all spheres of society, as well as effective and efficient implementation.

2. The five priority areas that have accelerated the progress of women and girls through laws, policies, and/or programs in the last five years

Over the past 5 years, Mozambique has witnessed significant advances in promoting gender equality and the progress of women and girls in several key areas, notably: *i) equality and non-discrimination under the law and access to justice; ii) promotion of quality education and training; iii) elimination of domestic violence; iv) access to healthcare, including sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights; and v) conflict mediation and peace consolidation.*

These successes have been made possible through the development and implementation of gender policies and strategies, as well as the strengthening of the legal framework to promote gender equality and empower women. For the purposes of this section, the main laws and strategies developed, focusing on the key areas mentioned above, will be addressed.

Equality and non-discrimination under the law and access to justice

In Mozambique, significant progress has been made regarding ensuring equality and non-discrimination before the law, as well as access to justice for women, and the revision of the Succession Law, Law no. 23/2019, represents a significant milestone in this process. This revision ensures that women are recognized as primary beneficiaries in cases of the husband's death, thus promoting gender equality in property rights. This progress is particularly crucial in rural areas, where women's access to land ownership is traditionally limited.

In addition to legal changes, comprehensive strategies have been implemented over the past 5 years to improve women's access to justice in the country, and the regulation of CAI is a prominent example of this approach. The Institute of Legal Assistance and Sponsorship (IPAJ), is dedicated to providing legal assistance to the most vulnerable, and the standardization of operating norms aims to improve assistance to victims.

Additionally, the approval of the Public Administration Gender Strategy (2020-2024), through Resolution no. 39/2020, of July 8, has played a crucial role, providing not only a facilitating instrument for promoting gender equality and eliminating discrimination but also driving the necessary changes at all levels of the Public Administration.

Quality education, training, and lifelong learning for women and girls

In the context of promoting quality education for women and girls, various actions have been carried out, with the following highlights:

- ▶ As part of the prevention of violence and sexual harassment in schools, the Ministry of Education and Human Development (MINEDH) approved the Multisectoral Mechanism for Prevention, Reporting, Referral, and Response to Violence against Children in Schools, including victim assistance, aimed at preventing and responding to violence issues, including

sexual harassment in educational institutions, to ensure a quality environment that promotes the retention of girls in education.

- ▶ A quota of 10% for women was established in agricultural and industrial subjects at Technical and Vocational Education and Training Institutes, benefiting 312 female students and promoting women's participation in areas traditionally dominated by men.
- ▶ The program 'Eu Sou Capaz' was implemented, launched in 2021 and led by the First Lady of the Republic, with the aim of empowering and retaining girls in school.
- ▶ The Regulation for Combating Corruption and Sexual Harassment was disseminated in all 252 Technical and Vocational Education and Training Institutions, aiming to ensure a safe educational environment free from harassment.

Elimination of violence against women and girls

Significant steps have also been taken in combating Gender-Based Violence, with emphasis on the implementation of the National Plan for the Prevention and Combating of Gender-Based Violence (2018-2021). Measures have also been implemented to protect the rights of girls, focusing on the eradication of early unions, through the implementation of the National Strategy for the Prevention and Responding of Early Unions (2016-2019).

The approval and implementation of the Regulation for the Organization and Functioning of Integrated Centers for Victims of Domestic and Gender-Based Violence through Decree no. 75/2020, and the Gender Strategy of Public Administration (2020-2024) - Resolution no. 39/2020, of July 8, as seen earlier, were crucial in addressing the issue of GBV as well as measures to eradicate it in the country. Also noteworthy is the approval of the Manual for Engaged Community Facilitator in the Prevention and Responding of Gender-Based Violence (2022), to ensure that efforts to address GBV reach all territorial levels of the country.

Access to healthcare, including sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights

In the realm of access to healthcare, including sexual and reproductive health, the National Cancer Control Plan (2019-2029) represents a significant advancement in addressing cancer, acknowledging it as a priority public health concern. Given that cervical cancer ranks among the deadliest forms of cancer affecting women, this plan holds particular importance. In line with the National Cancer Control Plan (2019-2029), the National Action Plan for Response to Gender-Based Violence in the Health Sector (2019-2022) brought significant advancements for women. This included prioritizing the enhancement of the health system's capacity, particularly in maternal and child health, and the reduction of pregnancy-related mortality. The country also approved and implemented the National Strategic Plan for HIV and AIDS Response (2021-2025), aiming for a comprehensive response that includes prevention, care, treatment, and mitigation of the disease's consequences.

Conflict Mediation and Peace Consolidation

In this area, the operationalization of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (2018-2022) and the 'Women, Peace, and Security' Project stand out, both aimed at implementing United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security. An important highlight is also the project 'Promoting the Effective Participation of Women and Girls in Peace, Security, and Recovery in Mozambique.' This project has played a crucial role in conflict areas, especially in the province of Cabo Delgado, as it has made it possible to increase the participation of women and girls in peacebuilding and post-conflict recovery processes. This not only strengthens the inclusion of women in peace initiatives but also contributes to building more resilient and cohesive communities.

3. Promotion of the rights of marginalized women and girls: measures and examples from the last five years

In Mozambique, adolescents and young people, particularly females, represent the social group most vulnerable to sexually transmitted infections (STI) and HIV, exacerbating the prevalence of HIV among girls. Conversely, the armed conflicts that have occurred in the country in recent years have led to an increase in the population of refugee and displaced women, posing a substantial setback in gender equality efforts, affecting the economic and social stability of women and girls, who are often marginalized and have their rights reduced as a result of these conflicts. Also, the marginalization of girls and children due to high rates of early marriages, which result in severe consequences such as school dropout and early pregnancies, poses a substantial setback. The measures taken to mitigate the impacts of these issues within the framework of promoting and implementing various gender policies and programs will be addressed next.

Women and Girls Living with HIV vs. the 'Rapariga BIZ' Program

Knowledge about HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa, in general, is high, but understanding of preventive measures is still limited. In Mozambique, only 31% of women and 51% of men have comprehensive knowledge about the subject, which contributes to the increase in marginalized groups of women living with HIV. Social and cultural barriers that still persist in the country, manifesting as discrimination against these women in many contexts.

One of the responses to these data has been the intensification of actions implemented through the 'Geração Biz Program' (PGB). This is a multisectoral program led by the State Secretariat for Youth and Employment (SEJE), in collaboration with the Ministries of Health, Education, Gender, and Justice. The PGB aims to promote sexual and reproductive health and prevent HIV/AIDS among adolescents and young people through health, school, and community approaches. During the period analysed, the program focused on prioritizing and integrating these objectives into government policies, as well as strengthening its implementation, using youth associations as a key resource. The 'Rapariga Biz' initiative, a component of the PGB, supported by the

Governments of Sweden, Canada and joint UNFPA-UNICEF fund, reached 179,639 girls in mentoring sessions in 20 districts of the country's most populous provinces, Nampula and Zambezia. The participants gained knowledge and skills on sexual and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, gender-based violence, and developed decision-making abilities.

Marginalized groups of young girls vs strengthening the country's legal framework

In this point, the focus is on girls who are victims of early marriages. Studies and research reveal that Mozambique has one of the highest rates of early marriages in the world, ranking 10th globally, as 48% of girls aged 20-24 married before the age of 18 and 14% before the age of 15, contributing to high rates of early pregnancies, obstetric fistulas, and school dropout among them. To address this problem, in addition to the approval of instruments defending women's human rights, such as Law no. 19/2019 of October 22, on Prevention and Responding of Early Marriages, and Law no. 23/2019 of December 23, which criminalizes the actors and promoters of early marriages and ensures greater protection of girls' and women's rights, a child reunification program was also created, with results indicating the rescue of girls from early marriages across the country.

Displaced women and girls vs. the National Plan for the Advancement of Women and the National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security

The Government and different organizations have implemented significant measures to support and protect internally displaced women, victims of the country's armed conflicts. The implementation of Resolution no. 21/2019, which approves the National Plan for the Advancement of Women (2018-2024), is an important advance, with objectives including guaranteeing women's rights to public and private spaces, as well as to public services, and promoting their participation in peace consolidation. This was substantiated by the National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (2018-2022), specifically aimed at actions related to women's peace and security in the country, particularly in the context of armed conflicts. This plan was led by the Government of Mozambique, in partnership with UN Women and the Norwegian Government, and is currently undergoing analysis and evaluation of its implementation and the drafting of a new plan for the coming years. This was an instrument that represented various gains for women in the country in the area of peace and security, highlighting the empowerment of women as defenders of peace and security in decision-making processes, the creation of socio-economic opportunities for women affected by conflicts, as well as many capacity-building activities for public institutions and civil society, including community-based organizations on peace and security.

It should be noted that in the country, many UN agencies, the EU, Embassies, International Programs, NGOs, and CSOs have made efforts and contributed both technically and financially to

the peace and security agenda in the country, and the internally displaced women and girls are in particular considered a priority group.

4. Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in face of crises in the last five years

The country faces significant challenges related to climate crises, partly due to its geographical location, with about 60% of the population living along the vast coastline, and partly due to the increasing global climate changes. In March and April 2019, the country was severely hit by cyclones Idai and Kenneth that particularly destroyed the central and northern provinces, with Sofala being the most affected. In 2022, the country suffered another climate crisis with the impact of Cyclone Gombe and Storm Ana in different regions. The country was again negatively impacted in 2023 by Cyclone Freddy, which severely affected the province of Zambezia in the central region and the effects of these climatic events were devastating for the country, resulting in the loss of many lives. Damage to major infrastructure networks on which millions of people depend paralyzed the economy and frontline services, including healthcare, exacerbating public health problems such as malaria and cholera.

The Covid-19 crisis also negatively impacted the country, especially in health and the economy sector. In the health sector, there was pressure on national services to ensure testing and treatment in case of infection by the virus, which was not always met due to a shortage of professionals and inadequate infrastructure. This, in association with limited knowledge of the disease by healthcare professionals, similar to other parts of the world, and scientific limitations on the healing process.

In education, the temporary closure of schools to prevent the spread of the disease among students led to the adoption of remote learning using the internet. However, many students lacked access to adequate digital devices, and the educational infrastructure was limited in supporting remote learning, among other limiting factors.

Economically, lockdown and social distancing restrictions significantly harmed numerous sectors, notably hospitality, tourism, and commerce. There was widespread job loss and loss of income sources, significantly affecting the informal sector and small businesses. While the negative impacts of Covid-19 were felt nationwide, women and young people were particularly disproportionately affected due to their greater vulnerability to unemployment, a large part of which belonged to the informal sector and involved in activities such as domestic work, which was severely impacted by layoffs during the pandemic.

Therefore, between 2020 and 2022, crucial measures were adopted to mitigate these impacts, including the financing of three joint projects in the Public Health area, focusing on Covid-19, between Mozambique and other countries, fostering sectoral engagement and the implementation of risk mitigation activities. In the health sector, in 2022, there was a significant

increase in cervical and breast cancer screening, attributed to the retreat of the pandemic and enhanced awareness campaigns.

The armed conflicts that have affected the northern region of the country in recent years present another recurring challenge for women and girls, who are more vulnerable to effects such as sexual violence, as noted in previous points.

The Government of Mozambique, development partners, and other stakeholders, aware of the negative impacts of the pandemic, natural calamities, and armed conflicts, have maintained continuous efforts to respond to the demands brought by these crises, adopting different strategies such as economic incentive measures, social assistance programs, and support for small and medium enterprises, as well as key sectors like agriculture. For example, concerning adaptation and mitigation to climate changes, Local Adaptation Plans were developed and updated in 2022, with the participation of 428 people, including 256 women, across many districts.

5. Priority areas and actions for the next five years

Mozambique recognizes the importance of gender equality for sustainable and inclusive development. In light of the challenges posed by persistent gender disparities in different spheres of society, the country seeks innovative strategies and concrete actions to promote significant and lasting change in the coming years. A very positive aspect that demonstrates the Government's commitment over the years was the realization of one of the priorities defined in the last national report on the implementation of the BPfA (+25), for the period 2014-2018, which advocated for the "approval of the law on and against early marriages," which was achieved in 2019 with the approval of Law no. 19/2019 of October 22, the Law on Prevention and Combat of Early Marriages.

In this context, for the coming years, the main emerging priority areas and actions include:

Sexual and Reproductive Health

Reducing maternal mortality rates is a priority for the country in the coming years. This will include robust mechanisms for implementing policies in this area, aiming to reduce rates of early pregnancy and maternal mortality. These mechanisms involve improving and accessing quality health services, ensuring they are particularly accessible in rural areas, comprehensive sexual and reproductive education, and empowering women to make informed decisions about their bodies, consent, and reproductive rights. It also includes constant monitoring and evaluation of the impact of interventions and strategies used.

Promoting women's political participation

In the coming years, it will be pertinent to have legislation to regulate equitable political participation and representation between men and women in the country. Significant representation and effective participation of women in decision-making processes and politics, in general, are crucial to ensure that their specific needs and perspectives, as well as their rights, are considered at all levels of governance and that gender equality is prioritized in the country's major policies. This should involve strengthening policies, programs, and measures, including legislative initiatives that encourage and empower women to actively participate in political processes, support and monitor women's candidacies at both local and national levels, and ensure their inclusion in governance agendas and decision-making processes.

Addressing Gender-Based Violence

Eradicating violence against women and girls is a fundamental priority. Mozambique is focusing efforts on preventing and responding to GBV by strengthening laws protecting women and girls and imposing severe penalties on perpetrators, including making sexual violence and femicide crimes non-bailable. In this regard, emphasis should be placed on increasing social awareness with a focus on transformative approaches to discriminatory social norms against women and girls and disseminating information about the punishment for cases of violence. Actions should include the active engagement of men and boys and community leaders in combating GBV and ensuring access to support services for victims, especially psychosocial, and economic empowerment.

Mitigating Armed Conflicts, promoting peace, and social cohesion

A society free from armed conflicts, where peace and social cohesion are a lived reality, remains a priority for the country in the coming years and adopting a more integrated and inclusive approach involving all societal layers and encompassing not only areas affected by armed conflicts is fundamental. Some strategic actions include the inclusion of peace education programs in schools and communities to promote a culture of respect and tolerance early on, strengthening cooperation with international organizations and neighbouring countries for continued support in peace and security initiatives, and economic empowerment by creating jobs and building comprehensive and quality basic service infrastructures.

Economic empowerment of women

To reduce gender economic disparities, it is essential to promote women's access to productive resources, decent employment, and development opportunities. This includes initiatives to facilitate women's access to financing, land, and information and communication technologies (ICT), which the country has made a priority.

Strengthening education and awareness

Investments in education and awareness are crucial to promote gender equality early on, and Mozambique should prioritize education on gender issues at all levels, from primary to higher education, and seek to increase awareness of women's rights and harmful social norms. The goal is to increase awareness, and make it more comprehensive and transformative, involving men and boys and community leaders, and ensuring that women and girls are exposed to transformative gender approaches to build equitable social dynamics.

Coordination and multisectoral partnerships

An integrated and collaborative approach is essential to effectively address gender challenges, and thus the country aims to strengthen coordination between government sectors, civil society, the private sector, development partners, the media, and academia to ensure a comprehensive and holistic response to gender issues. This includes improving coordination mechanisms in the gender area to make them more integrated, holistic, and dynamic, with active interaction among the sectors and actors involved.

II. PROGRESS ACROSS THE 12 CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN

Overview

This section will address the main advances in the 12 critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action. The aim is to highlight the alignment of the Platform with the 2030 Agenda, facilitating reflections on the synergistic implementation of both. The 12 areas of concern have been grouped into 6 general dimensions, and considerations have been given not only to the structures's description of the Beijing Platform and the 2030 Agenda but also to their implications, priorities, advancements, setbacks, and challenges. In this regard, the analysis will be based on the following 6 dimensions:

- ▶ *Inclusive Development, Shared Prosperity, and Decent Work*
- ▶ *Poverty Eradication, Social Protection, and Social Services*
- ▶ *Freedom from Violence, Stigma, and Stereotypes*
- ▶ *Participation, Accountability, and Gender-Sensitive Institutions*
- ▶ *Peaceful and Inclusive Societies*
- ▶ *Environmental Conservation, Protection, and Rehabilitation*

INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT, SHARED PROSPERITY AND DECENT WORK

Critical areas of concern:

- *Women and poverty*
- *Women and the economy*
- *Human rights of women*
- *The girl child*

6. Promotion of gender equality in the labor sector, including informal employment and entrepreneurship

The National Institute of Statistics (INSS) recorded in the latest Household Budget Survey (IOF), launched in 2023, a national unemployment rate of 18.4%, with rates among women at 18.1% and among men at 18.7%, showing no significant difference by gender. Compared to the 2019 IOF, unemployment increased by just over one percentage point for both women and men. Specifically, the unemployment rates for women increased from 17.7% to 18.1%, while for men, elevated from 17.4% to 18.7%, and the national average unemployment rate saw an increase from 17.5% to 18.4%. In urban areas, the unemployment rate is higher (31.0%) than in rural areas

(12.1%), which may partly be attributed to the nature of work, as the majority of the population living in rural areas regularly engage in subsistence agricultural activities.

In the public sector, there are no wage disparities between men and women for the same job or category (men and women receive the same salary), and in the private sector, the Labor Law does not include discriminatory criteria based on gender for salary determination.

The financial services sector has seen a better gender balance in the workforce, considering staff, management positions, and the board of directors collectively. The “other” sectors and financial services are the only ones showing a better balance (with over 40% of women in management positions). On the other hand, the financial services sector stands out for allocating the highest budget for initiatives aimed at increasing the number of female clients.

Large companies have the lowest representation of women in the overall workforce and in management positions, and the Technology, Media, and Telecommunications sector has been the most successful in hiring women up to 2023, although it has fewer gender-based labor policies and benefits.

To address the persistent inequalities over the years, many strategies have been implemented in the country in the last quinquennium, by the government, private sector, and development partners. Among them, the “Meu Kit, Meu Emprego ” Program stands out, whose regulations were approved in 2023. Under the aegis of the Secretary of State for Youth and Employment, this program consists of providing tools for the development of activities aimed at increasing self-employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for income generation and job creation for young people, with a gender perspective, contributing to their participation in the country’s development. The result of the kit distribution exceeded the set target by over 100%, demonstrating the positive impact on women’s inclusion in the labor market and the achievement of the program’s objectives, improving women and men capacity for starting, maintaining and/or growing their business projects.

Similarly, aiming at reducing poverty and disparities between boys and girls in economic development, the Council of Ministers, at its 14th Ordinary Session on April 28, 2020, ratified the Grant Agreement between the Government of Mozambique and the International Development Association (IDA) to implement the project named ‘Mozambique: Development and Empowerment for Youth,’ which has two components: ‘Eu Sou Capaz’ and ‘Emprega’, which is further divided into ‘Agora Emprega’ and ‘Acredita Emprega’. For both, there is a quota of 50% participation for women and 50% for men.

The ‘Agora Emprega’ program provides technical and financial support to young people with formal businesses or in the process of formalization, micro, small, and medium enterprises, covering all regions of the country. Meanwhile, the ‘Acredita Emprega’ program materializes through training grants, services, and support subsidies for business formalization and is aimed at supporting vulnerable young people or those engaged in informal market activities. As part of its implementation, vocational training scholarships were awarded to young people in various

areas, with 5,750 in the province of Maputo (southern region), 10,000 in the provinces of Cabo Delgado and Nampula (northern region), and 5,000 in the provinces of Zambézia, Manica, and Sofala (central region). These initiatives have led to improved living conditions for beneficiaries and their families, the expansion of business opportunities for young entrepreneurs, both women and men, in all regions of the country, as well as increased employment and income for young people.

Sports as an emerging professional area in women's empowerment

Sports in Mozambique have emerged as a key area for social empowerment, participation, and representation of women, with several athletes gaining national and international recognition. Since a Mozambican woman won the gold medal for the world and Olympic champion in the 800 meters in 2000, more women have stood out in different sports over the years, with notable examples including boxers winning medals in world and continental championships, as well as beach volleyball duos dominating regional competition in Zone VI of Africa. In women's basketball, the senior national team and Mozambican clubs have accumulated African titles and excelled in world championships and pre-Olympic tournaments.

In addition to individual and team sports, Mozambican women are also breaking barriers in football, traditionally dominated by men. Female coaches and referees are paving the way and inspiring young people to follow in their steps, despite low representation at higher levels of training. The presence of women in Mozambican sports not only raises the level of competition but also promotes gender equity. Boxing, previously perceived as a male sport, now sees women victoriously occupying that space, significantly contributing to the elimination of gender stereotypes. This demonstrates that women can balance sports careers and personal responsibilities while continuing to challenge and overcome existing social and cultural norms.

7. Strengthening of rights in care and domestic work, social services, and work-life balance in Mozambique

Care and Domestic Work

In Mozambique, many women mainly perform the role of unpaid caregivers, which overburdens them with a disproportionate share of responsibilities and has been a barrier for them in the labor market, perpetuating the view that their paid work is secondary to unpaid care. Meanwhile, paid domestic work has traditionally been neglected in terms of labor and social protection, despite some recent progress.

According to the latest census, there are half a million domestic workers in the country, with 50% women and 50% men, indicating gender parity in this sector, which is a positive sign regarding addressing historical gender disparities in this area. However, it is important to note that challenges persist over the years, with domestic workers facing precarious conditions such as lack

of a responsive minimum wage, workplace safety, and compensation in case of unjustified dismissal. Furthermore, the inappropriate classification of domestic workers as self-employed, rather than dependent workers, for registration purposes with the National Social Security Institute (INSS) exacerbates the situation, as it negatively impacts their labor, security, and social assistance rights.

Another pertinent challenge is the weak implementation of the existing regulatory framework (Decree no. 40/2008 approving the domestic labor regulations), which hinders the effective guarantee of these workers' rights, and the collective organization of domestic workers is also hindered by these difficulties, within a context where the trade union movement often faces marginalization.

In summary, there have been few initiatives to strengthen care and domestic work in the country and acting bodies, however, the persistent challenges described above highlight the urgent need for policies and actions that promote equality of rights and opportunities for domestic workers, thus ensuring their protection and dignity in the labor market.

Social Services

Regarding social services, although there is no specific legislation approved by the competent authorities in this matter, Mozambique's legal framework has included the Social Protection Law, Law no. 4/2007, of February 7, 2007, which laid the legal foundations for this process. Among different Basic Social Security Programs, the Productive Social Action Program (PASP) was a significant milestone in supporting families in vulnerable situations, offering monthly cash transfers and public work opportunities for those facing poverty and needs, followed by complementary measures to strengthen their economic autonomy. Since its inception, PASP has played a vital role in supporting thousands of households, with its positive impact on economic autonomy, especially among women, being remarkable. In 2022, the program achieved a notable feat by meeting 99% of the planned target, benefiting a total of 29,746 families, a significant proportion of which are led by women.

Work-Life Balance in Mozambique

Regarding the balance between family life and work, the State ensures protection for parents and guardians, in performing their social responsibilities of caring, educating, and ensuring the health of their children, without prejudice to their professional responsibilities, as provided in Article 12 of the Labor Law.

Concerning maternity, the new Labor Law extends maternity leave from 60 to 90 consecutive days for women, allowing the leave to begin up to 20 days before the expected date of delivery. Paternity leave has been extended from 1 to 7 days, starting on the day following the child's birth. Regarding the continuity of a professional career, the aforementioned law establishes that during

pregnancy and after childbirth, a female worker has the right not to have her employment contract terminated, except for expiry, and is protected against dismissals during pregnancy and up to one year after the end of the leave.

8. Technological innovations and digital inclusion

The Government of Mozambique has demonstrated a growing commitment to promoting digital inclusion as an integral part of the country's socioeconomic development. However, the country still faces numerous challenges in providing ICT-related services, and the percentage of the population with access to the internet remains low, at around 20%. Recognizing Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) as crucial resources for progress, the Government has implemented a series of policies and legal measures to boost the digital sector, with a strong focus on digital inclusion.

One of the main advancements in this regard was the implementation of the National Financial Inclusion Strategy (2016-2022), aimed at increasing accessibility to financial services, especially for rural populations and vulnerable groups. This was achieved through the use of digital platforms based on mobile telecommunications networks and the widespread use of digital payment systems, aiming to reach a substantial percentage of the adult population with access to formal financial services. There has been a significant growth in access to and use of digital financial services, with a substantial increase in the volume of transactions conducted through mobile devices, services currently available in bank branches and across all mobile phone networks in the country. Additionally, the approval of the Mozambique Information Society Policy and the corresponding Strategic Plan (2019 - 2028) also reflects the commitment to promoting technological innovation and access to information nationwide.

In the field of education, initiatives such as MoRENet (Mozambique Research and Education Network) have gradually facilitated access to digital education throughout the country, connecting educational and research institutions and providing digital services to the academic and scientific community.

In terms of legislation, Mozambique witnessed significant advancements in 2019 and 2020, with the approval of several laws and regulations to strengthen the legal framework related to ICT. These include the Regulation of Consumer Protection for Telecommunications Services (Decree no. 44/2019 of May 22), the African Union Convention on Cybersecurity and Personal Data Protection (ratification - Resolution no. 5/2019 of June 20), the Regulation of the Mozambique Digital Certification System (Decree no. 59/2019 of July 3), and the Regulation of Telecommunications Network Security (Decree no. 66/2019 of August 1).

9. Macroeconomic and tax measures for economic advancement and gender equality in Mozambique

Over the past five years, Mozambique has faced a series of challenges that have impacted its economy and the lives of its citizens, especially women. As seen before, the Covid-19 pandemic, natural disasters such as floods and cyclones, and the need to extend the state of emergency multiple times have significantly and adversely affected the country. However, the Government has adopted strategies and macroeconomic and fiscal measures to mitigate these impacts while promoting economic advancement and gender equality.

One of the key measures taken was the implementation of sustainable fiscal and monetary policies to support the private sector and ensure the resilience of Mozambique's financial system. The Bank of Mozambique allocated 500 million US dollars to establish a credit line for commercial banks, aiming to increase foreign currency liquidity and address the economic challenges resulting from the pandemic.

These measures enabled the implementation of additional actions, such as providing foreign currency credit lines to local banks and recommending the restructuring of credits, suspension of interrogations, and executions arising from delays in meeting obligations. Measures were also adopted to facilitate customs and tax processes, such as waiving advance payments and deferring tax payments.

Regarding the cost of living, there was a 10% reduction in electricity tariffs from June to December 2020, benefiting all consumers, including both businesses and individuals. An exemption from Value Added Tax (VAT) was also granted for basic products such as sugar, cooking oils, and soaps for one year, starting in May 2021, aimed at minimizing the costs of these products for the population. These measures had a significant impact on women, who are often the primary breadwinners for their families. The reduction in electricity tariffs and the VAT exemption for basic products eased the financial burden on women and ensured access to essential items for their households.

There were also significant changes to the VATCode, including reducing the general VAT rate from 17% to 16% in 2022, and introducing a reduced rate of 5% for medical and sanitary services provided by private hospital establishments. The VAT exemption on the importation of production factors for agriculture and electrification, aimed at increasing agricultural production and competitiveness and promoting more investment in renewable energies, represented advancements in both areas. These changes directly benefited women by reducing the costs associated with these services.

Some exemptions were eliminated to ensure more equitable taxation. The VAT exemption on the transmission of ancillary goods to funeral and cremation services when carried out by private entities was removed, as was the exemption on leasing real estate in rural areas for commercial, industrial, and service provision purposes. On the other hand, new exemptions were introduced to directly benefit the most vulnerable population, such as exemptions granted for the

transmission of iron bicycles up to 4 speeds, the provision of waste removal services when carried out by agents contracted by public entities, and the transmission of production factors of solar panels for rural electrification, until December 31, 2025.

POVERTY ERADICATION, SOCIAL PROTECTION, AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Critical areas of concern:

- *Women and poverty*
- *Education and training of women*
- *Women and health*
- *Human rights of women*
- *The girl child*

10. Actions to reduce poverty among women and girls in the past five years

The aim on addressing poverty and the pursuit of social inclusion remain challenges despite the country's efforts to promote economic development and improve living conditions for the population. Social indicators in Mozambique reveal a concerning reality with limited access to basic services and high rates of poverty, inequality, and vulnerability to economic and environmental crises.

The poverty rate, which was 62.8% between 2019/20, has increased in recent years, reaching 68.2% in 2022. This increase poses an alarming challenge for the country, especially considering a population of over 31.6 million inhabitants, of whom more than half live below the poverty line. This implies limited access to education, health, and other basic services, particularly in rural areas, exacerbating income inequality and undermining social cohesion. Women and children are among the most affected groups by poverty in the country, with UNICEF data showing that about half of the people in poverty are under 18 years old.

Among the government's key strategies to address this challenge is the implementation of the National Development Strategy (2015-2035), which aims to drive the country's economic transformation and elevate the living conditions of the population. Structured around four fundamental pillars, the strategy seeks to develop human capital, promote investments in productive infrastructure, foster research, innovation, and technological development, and strengthen institutional coordination to leverage the industrialization process.

Despite the efforts and investments made, the results have fallen short of expectations, with a significant increase in poverty levels since 2019. This setback is particularly concerning for Mozambican women, who continue to be the most visible face of poverty, facing additional challenges compared to men, partly because they are the ones most engaged in subsistence agriculture in rural areas, where poverty rates are highest. Persistent inequality in job opportunities, restrictions on access to income generation, and difficulties in obtaining microcredit have contributed to the economic marginalization of women. Although development policies and strategies have sought to address these issues, the results so far have been insufficient to reverse this worrying trend.

In response to the persistent challenges of poverty and inequality, Mozambique is in the process of developing a new strategy for the coming years aimed at addressing the identified gaps and failures in previous strategies, as well as responding to the emerging challenges facing the country. The strategy for 2024-2043 includes specific measures to combat poverty among women and girls and ensure equitable access to resources and opportunities for them through the implementation of economic empowerment programs, strengthening women's access to financial services such as microcredit and savings, and creating social protection policies tailored to the specific needs of women in vulnerable situations.

11. Measures to improve access to social protection for women and girls

The National Basic Social Security Strategy (2016-2024) represents a significant milestone in the country's commitment to combating poverty and vulnerability, ensuring that economic growth benefits all citizens, especially those in the greatest need. This strategy, developed based on the goals of the National Development Strategy (2015-2035), the African Union's Agenda 2063, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, aims to promote a dynamic approach to social protection, recognizing the potential of basic social security instruments to strengthen human, productive, and social capital, as well as the resilience capacity of vulnerable families and individuals.

Since the promulgation of the Social Protection Law in 2007, the Government has been working to establish an effective and efficient system of basic social security. The National Basic Social Security Strategy (2016-2024) reaffirmed this commitment, seeking comprehensive social protection for the most vulnerable groups of the population, with the aim of ensuring a sustainable exit from vulnerability in the long term.

Social protection plays a fundamental role in reducing vulnerability to social risks, providing crucial support for women. One of the main areas of focus of the strategy is promoting gender equality and strengthening the role of women in society. Positive results already observed include increased school attendance in districts with high poverty rates, expansion of institutional maternal care such as 'Waiting Houses for Pregnant Women,' which allow disadvantaged women to wait for childbirth near a health facility capable of monitoring the end of pregnancy and providing timely treatment in case of complications, and the distribution of essential goods for newborns.

To meet the specific needs of vulnerable female-headed households and other vulnerable groups, the Government has also implemented specific assistance programs. In 2019, the Basic Social Subsidy Program (PSSB) served 442,246 households, of which 291,609 were headed by women, representing 65.9% of the total. In the Direct Social Support Program (ADGIR), 16,669 households were served, of which 9,390 were headed by women, corresponding to 56%. In the PASP, 127,612 households were served, with 83,803 women, accounting for 65.6% of the total beneficiaries.

Legal changes were also introduced regarding the division of marital property, with the revision of Law no. 23/2019, of December 23 (Succession Law), which ensures that the woman is the main beneficiary in case of the spouse's death, as well as in the division of common assets in case of separation and access to inheritance among common-law partners.

Similarly, with a view to social protection for girls, the Government, through the SEJE, created 1,039 'Safe Spaces,' covering 30 districts in 5 provinces of the country, namely: Cabo Delgado, Nampula, Zambézia, Manica, and Sofala, reaching a total of 56,486 girls. Additionally, 24 beneficiaries joined the Support for ADGIR component. This initiative aims to provide specific support to vulnerable groups, with a special focus on female-headed households, promoting economic inclusion and empowerment of marginalized communities.

12. Promotion of women's and children's health in Mozambique

Strengthening national structures for implementing a gender perspective in the health sector is a fundamental priority in Mozambique. To this end, the Family Health Department was established as an integral part of the National Directorate of Public Health, responsible for developing and implementing strategies and standards for women's and children's health. This program aims to support the formulation of public policies and action plans aimed at improving the health indicators of this specific group, reflecting the priorities of the Economic and Social Plan (PES) and its relationship with the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Regarding access to healthcare, innovative measures have been implemented to massify safe maternity and reduce maternal, neonatal, and infant mortality as have been seen before. As part of these initiatives, the health sector planned to increase the coverage of institutional births, aiming to achieve a rate of 89.2% by 2023. As a result of these efforts, 1,349,858 institutional births were assisted, corresponding to an achievement of 93%. The use of 'Waiting Houses for Pregnant Women' continues to be a highly relevant strategy for rural areas, where access routes and means of communication are major barriers to accessing health services, especially for institutional births and essential care for newborns. In 2023, about 46% (764/1,663) of maternity units in the country had 'Waiting Houses for Pregnant Women'.

In the context of the national cancer control program, the launch of the National Cancer Control Plan (2019–2029) stands out, aiming to reduce and treat new cancer cases. Cervical cancer is the most common cancer among women in Mozambique, accounting for about 32 out of every 100 new cases of all cancers in women. The number of deaths per year exceeds 3,000 cases. With financial support from various cooperation partners, one of the plan's focuses is on training more medical professionals in the field of oncology.

The HIV/AIDS Program provides antiretroviral treatment services in 1,690 Health Units, corresponding to 96% coverage nationwide, free of charge for all users. Until December 2022, about 1,288,022 women over 15 years living with HIV received antiretroviral treatment,

representing 86% of the total accumulated. Data from the first half of 2023 indicate that 99% of pregnant women with HIV have already received antiretroviral treatment. The SAAJs recorded an 89% increase in the number of new users in 2023, totaling 1,687,880 adolescents and young people attended, with 70% being women.

Addressing malaria is another fundamental component for the health of women and children in the country, considering the severe consequences of the disease, especially for pregnant women and children. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), malaria is one of the deadliest diseases in Mozambique, with about 42% of deaths occurring in children under 5 years of age. In 2018, the WHO 'High Burden to High Impact' initiative was launched in the country, aiming to accelerate malaria control measures in 10 African countries (including Mozambique), and India, as the countries with highest cases of malaria worldwide. The main objective of the initiative is to significantly reduce the number of deaths and infections from malaria.

13. Advancement of education and skills for women and girls, including underrepresented sectors

The Government has set as a top priority in the past 5 years the promotion of an inclusive and efficient educational system capable of providing women and girls with the necessary skills to meet the demands of development. To achieve this goal, several measures and strategies have been implemented in the Education sector, aiming to ensure a safe and inclusive educational environment for all students.

Progress in girls' education inclusion

Implemented Initiatives and Strategies:

- ▶ Prioritization of the allocation of female teachers in districts with high dropout rates of girls, as well as in areas affected by early marriages and gender-based violence.
- ▶ Establishment of a 50/50 quota policy in teacher training institutes, ensuring equal representation of men and women in trainees.
- ▶ Implementation of the 'Mozlearning Program', promoting a safe and inclusive school environment for girls.
- ▶ Implementation of the School Mentoring Program in 335 schools.
- ▶ Dissemination of the Multisectoral Mechanism Manual for the Prevention, Reporting, Referral, Response to violence against children in schools, including assistance to victims and its operational plan.
- ▶ Conducting diversified activities commemorating the International Day of the Girl, using radio and television programs to promote reflection on themes such as prevention and addressing of early marriages and sexual harassment in schools.

- ▶ Capacity-building of 65,623 girls through the 'Eu Sou Capaz' program to develop decision-making skills and competencies, with a special focus on vulnerable girls. Participants were equipped with practical knowledge and resources to address challenges and make decisions about their lives and educational future.

Some of the positive results include the impact on schools covered by the programs, with girls' enrollment in the last cycle of primary education registering an average increase of 28% between 2020 and 2021, reflecting tangible progress in girls' access to education and retention rates, alongside efforts to foster a safer and more inclusive school environment. Lessons learned highlight the importance of multisectoral collaboration, capacity-building programs, and effective implementation of gender equality policies to promote girls' education effectively.

14. Actions to address gender gaps in post-pandemic economic recovery (Covid-19)

The year 2020 was marked by unprecedented challenges due to the Covid-19 pandemic, negatively impacting the society. Hereafter, the measures adopted by the Government to promote post-pandemic economic recovery will be highlighted, with a focus on reducing gender disparities in areas such as employment, social protection, and education.

Key economic measures

In the face of the challenges presented by the pandemic, the importance of inclusive policies and targeted strategies to ensure economic and social recovery, especially for women, was evident. Implementation of measures such as expanded social protection, psychosocial support, and gender-focused training emerged as essential tools to address inequalities and promote a more equitable and resilient future.

The Government implemented fiscal and monetary policies as part of its strategy to support the private sector and mitigate the economic impacts of the pandemic. One of the most significant measures was the reduction of the Value Added Tax (VAT) rate, aimed at alleviating the tax burden on consumers and stimulating consumption. This reduction directly contributed to lowering the cost of living for citizens, especially concerning basic goods, which had a temporary VAT exemption.

The Government also extended tax deadlines, providing greater flexibility and financial relief for businesses and individuals during a period of economic uncertainty and allowing stakeholders more time to fulfill their tax obligations without facing penalties or fines.

Regarding the expansion of Social Protection for Women, the Government implemented the Post-Emergency Direct Social Action Program, which consists of temporary unconditional social transfers for vulnerable families, benefiting 707,480 households, of which 480,999 were women (68%), significantly contributing to strengthening the social safety and promoting the well-being of these women nationwide.

In the context of damage mitigation and psychosocial support for women in vulnerable situations, “dignity kits” containing basic personal hygiene items and food were distributed. This action was followed by a series of training sessions involving activists, religious leaders, and psychosocial support service providers, addressing gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence, aiming to strengthen the assistance provided. Additionally, strategic activities were conducted to raise community awareness about gender-based violence and promote a culture of respect and equality, even in times of crises.

FREEDOM FROM VIOLENCE, STIGMA AND STEREOTYPES

Critical areas of concern:

- *Violence against women*
- *Human rights of women*
- *Women and the media*
- *The girl child*

15. Prioritized actions to address violence, stigma, and stereotypes

In the scope of prioritized actions to address violence, stigma and stereotypes, activities focused on preventing and combating gender-based violence were conducted, alongside awareness campaigns against other forms of discrimination. Normative instruments promoting equal rights between men and women were extensively disseminated as part of these initiatives. Analyses concentrated on three priority areas: i) Domestic violence, encompassing sexual violence; ii) Premature and forced unions; iii) Sexual harassment and violence in public spaces, educational environments, and workplaces.

Domestic violence, encompassing sexual violence

Actions Taken:

- ▶ Implementation of the National Plan for Prevention and Responding Violence.
- ▶ Implementation of the Data Management System by MISAU.
- ▶ Approval of the First Intention Form and Good Practices Manual for the Health Sector.
- ▶ Approval of the training manual for the prevention and response to GBV in humanitarian situations and respective community and clinical guidelines.
- ▶ Implementation of the ‘Spotlight’ initiative in Mozambique aimed at eliminating violence against Women and Girls from 2019 to 2023 across the country.
- ▶ Encouragement of men’s engagement in GBV preventive actions.
- ▶ With the approval of the Regulation of Integrated Assistance Centers for violence victims, community sensitizations and trainings were conducted for actors involved in multisectoral mechanisms responding to GBV and CSOs working in the protection of GBV victims, contributing to knowledge of processes and improvement in coordinated victim care (by 2020, 17 centers were already operational, out of the existing 22, representing 77% implementation).
- ▶ Revision and approval of a progressive legislative package to promote gender equality, followed by the dissemination of laws and policies to prevent and respond to GBV, premature unions, and the creation of a multisectoral mechanism for GBV prevention and response in schools.

- ▶ 2,000 employees and service providers and over 4,000 community leaders received training on GBV and on the application and control of instruments to combat it.
- ▶ Government partners supported the development of five gender sectoral strategies and action plans against GBV, and 1,300 government officials received training in Gender-Sensitive Planning and Budgeting.
- ▶ In response to the National Plan for Prevention and Combating Violence (2018/2021), the health sector approved a National Plan for Gender-Based Violence Response (2019/2022).

Premature and forced unions

In 2023, a total of 4,852 cases of premature unions were reported, representing a significant increase compared to the previous year, where 1,712 cases were reported, indicating an increase of 3,140 cases. This increase can largely be attributed to the effectiveness of awareness and sensitization campaigns conducted within communities, encouraging reporting and referral of GBV cases. The most common types of premature unions included unions involving children, engagements with children, and sexual acts with children.

Actions Taken:

- ▶ Seminars involving traditional and religious leaders were held nationwide.
- ▶ Dissemination of the Premature Unions Law no. 19/2019 of October 22, through debates on community radios and distribution of informative posts.
- ▶ Mentorship sessions in 'Safe Spaces' and marches as part of the 16 days of activism to encourage the fight against premature unions.
- ▶ 314 seminars and 1,333 lectures were promoted nationwide, surpassing established targets, and the events reached a significant audience, benefiting more than 15,000 individuals, with slightly over 9,000 being women. Additionally, 294 debates, including radio, television, and community sessions, were organized, exceeding planned coverage expectations for the period.
- ▶ Psychosocial support was provided to 379 children who were victims of violence, with 300 being female and 79 male. Around 140 government representatives, civil society organizations, and community leaders were trained to provide comprehensive and holistic assistance to violence victims, in line with the Multisectoral Mechanism for Integrated Assistance to Women Victims of Violence.
- ▶ Intensive work was done to reunify and reintegrate children victims of premature unions. Individual and group psychological counseling was provided to over 500 girls rescued from premature unions and/or victims of sexual violence, and over 8,000 adolescents were registered through mobile brigades for birth registration, partly as a form of protection against premature unions.

- ▶ A child-friendly brochure on the law for the prevention and combating of premature unions was developed and widely distributed, along with posters for key services (social action, health, justice, police).

Sexual harassment and violence in public spaces and educational environments

In the realm of legislation, the education sector saw advancements with the approval of the Regulation for Addressing Corruption, Abuse, and Sexual Harassment in Institutes and Schools of Professional Technical Education, aimed at eliminating gender-based violence. In 2020, the MINEDH approved the Multisectoral Mechanism for Prevention, Reporting, Referral, and Response to Violence against Children in Schools, including victim assistance, implemented over the past years, with support from Movement for Education for All (MEPT), CESC, and UNICEF. Still within the education sector, UEM, the largest public university in the country, approved the Regulation for Prevention and Responding Sexual Harassment in the institution. UEM also has Gender Coordination Center (CeCaGe), an organic unit responsible for research and coordination of actions to promote gender equality at UEM and in society at large.

Programs such as 'Fala Minha Irmã', 'Campanha Porta a Porta', 'Diálogos Intergeracionais', 'Chapa das Manas', among others, were created within the scope of addressing violence in public spaces, addressing issues related to GBV in different environments and engaging men in addressing gender-based violence 'Conversas de homen', within the "Spotlight" initiative.

16. Strategic Measures Adopted to address Gender-Based Violence

Significant efforts have been made to address gender-based violence through specific actions, such as:

Introduction and Strengthening of Laws to Address Gender-Based Violence, as well as their application and implementation

The Law no. 24/2019 on the Revision of the Penal Code was approved, which includes specific provisions to protect women's rights and punish crimes such as gender-based violence, sexual harassment, and other types of abuse.

Notably, Article 205 provides that:

"Anyone who, abusing the authority conferred by their functions or taking advantage of their position of hierarchical superiority or authority inherent to the exercise of employment, office, or function, coerces someone with the intent of obtaining sexual advantage or favor, is punished with imprisonment for up to 2 years and a corresponding fine."

This article also establishes that the same penalty applies to anyone who sexually coerces someone with the promise of any benefit, taking advantage of domestic relationships, cohabitation, or hospitality.

Compared to previous legislation, the Penal Code approved by Law no. 35/2014 of December 31st, it is noted that the punishment for such crimes was less severe, with only fines given to those who sexually coerced someone with the promise of any benefit.

The tightening of sanctions is fundamental to convey a clear message that society does not tolerate gender-based violence. By increasing penalties for crimes such as domestic violence, sexual harassment, and other types of abuse, the State sends a strong signal that such behaviors are unacceptable and will have severe consequences.

This stricter approach not only aims to punish offenders but also seeks to deter the occurrence of these crimes, promoting a culture of respect and gender equality. The tougher sanctions may encourage more victims to report the abuses they have suffered, as they may feel more protected and confident that justice will be served. This is crucial to breaking the cycle of violence and ensuring that victims receive the support and protection they need to rebuild their lives.

In addition to the revision of the Penal Code, it is also worth highlighting the approval by the National Criminal Investigation Service (SERNIC) of its Institutional Strategy for 2023-2030, launched in October 2023, and developed with the support of the UNODC. This strategy included in its pillar 5 “Institutional Development and Cross-cutting Issues,” a series of fundamental initiatives to increase the response level to gender issues in SERNIC operations.

Furthermore, in 2024, the Attorney General of Mozambique released a compilation of existing legislation on domestic violence, family, and gender-related issues, presented and distributed at a multi-sectoral seminar attended by various administrative bodies, public officials, journalists, representatives of academia, and civil society. The tool aims to enhance the capacity of criminal justice professionals to respond to violence against women, including gender-related homicides, and violence against children.

17. Strategies for preventing gender-based violence

One of the main strategies for preventing gender-based violence is the empowerment of women and girls, aiming to promote their economic independence and access to resources, as well as fostering equitable relationships within households, communities, and society. In this context, among the main strategies developed by Mozambique, specific actions carried out in the following areas stand out:

Empowerment of women and girls to promote their economic independence and access to resources, and promote equitable relationships within households, communities, and society - The support of the “Spotlight” Initiative between 2019 and 2023 was crucial for promoting the economic empowerment of women and girls, with the main objective of eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls, promoting a fairer and more equal society. This global United Nations initiative was supported by the European Union and was under the responsibility of the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Action, in partnership with the EU and various civil society organizations.

Promotion of gender equality values in primary and secondary education, including comprehensive sexual education - The multisectoral ‘Geração Biz’ Program was strengthened with the objective of reducing vulnerability to HIV and AIDS and promoting Sexual and Reproductive Health among adolescents and young people. This program adopted three main approaches: the health approach, implemented by the Ministry of Health, which offers various services and counseling; the school approach, led by the Ministry of Education and Human Development, which aims to educate young people about Sexual and Reproductive Health and direct them to additional assistance, as well as mutual respect between girls and boys, promoting school environments where both feel safe; and the community approach, conducted by SEJE, which provides information and directs young people to necessary medical assistance. These joint efforts, associated with the ‘Rapariga Biz’ component, significantly contributed to the reintegration and retention of girls in education.

Creating safe environments, including in schools - In the scope of creating safe environments, including in schools, as previously mentioned, the Government launched the SAAJs in a coordinated manner, involving MISAU, MINEDH, and SEJE, aiming to prevent early pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases to accommodate young girls in defending their sexual and reproductive rights. One of the results of this action is the demand for services in health units through counseling corners in schools (face-to-face approach spaces).

18. Measures and Strategies to Combat Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence

A relevant point to emphasize is the strengthening of criminal legislation. The revision of the Penal Code brought substantial innovations by introducing new types of crimes, making changes in wording and established penalties, as well as incorporating aspects previously covered in other legislation. Among the most significant changes regarding technology-facilitated violence, the criminalization of some behaviors as crimes against sexual freedom stands out, including the criminalization of the use of minors in pornography, as outlined in Article 212, as well as the establishment of crimes related to automated databases, as stipulated in Article 254. Also noteworthy is the establishment of the crime of invasion of privacy, provided for in Article 252, which punishes acts such as the improper disclosure of private information.

The criminalization of these behaviors is considered a remarkable advancement within the Mozambican judicial and legal system, not only in combating such crimes in general but also in a particularly crucial aspect: the protection of women, given that they continue to be the main target in matters of gender-based violence, regardless of how it materializes.

However, it is important to recognize that, despite the advances made, especially concerning legislative revision, there is still a long way to go to create a safer environment for women, particularly when considering the technology component.

19. Financial support to organizations focused on preventing and responding to various forms of discrimination and gender-based violence

The funding for initiatives focused on preventing and responding to discrimination and gender-based violence is diverse in the country and comes from different organizations, notably cooperation and development partners. For example, the World Bank provided a grant of 90 million dollars to support victims of natural disasters in the central region of Mozambique, and this funding, estimated to benefit approximately 3.36 million people, especially prioritized the needs of women and school-age children, recognizing their vulnerability to various forms of violence in crisis and emergency situations.

Another significant investment was approximately 7.7 million dollars from Canada for the implementation of the *Aliadas* project, focused on women's empowerment, implemented by CESC. This project aims to strengthen the role of women in society, promoting their active participation in various sectors and addressing specific challenges they face, thus contributing to building a more inclusive and equitable society.

With a total budget of about 4.5 million dollars, the UN Women project “Promotion of Effective Participation of Women and Girls in Peace, Security, and Recovery in Mozambique,” implemented in 14 districts and 7 provinces with the support of Norway, supported various initiatives of CSOs, aiming at empowering women in issues related to preventing and responding to gender-based violence, as well as leadership development, socio-economic support, and institutional strengthening.

In addition to these, various UN agencies, the EU, Embassies, International Programs, NGOs, and CSOs have provided financial support to organizations focused on addressing different forms of discrimination and gender-based violence in the country.

20. Measures taken to address the representation of women and girls, discrimination, and/or gender bias in the Media, including social media

In this area, a series of initiatives were promoted to highlight the role of women and their contribution to the country's development. This included 639 social mobilization sessions at the Social Communication Institute, as well as 6 training sessions involving 35 journalists. These trainings focused on capacitating journalists for better coverage of events related to violence against women and girls.

In 2019, a total of 13,339 state employees and agents were trained across the country, of which 6,415 were women, representing 48% of the total. This initiative focused on disseminating knowledge about and using Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). In the following year, 2020, 17,207 women were trained, representing 44.9% of the total. During 2023, 35 television programs were produced and broadcast focusing on girls' education, prevention of early unions and pregnancies, combating sexual harassment in schools, and gender-based violence. These programs featured active participation from community leaders involved in addressing early unions and promoting gender equality.

Furthermore, in terms of results achieved in the private sector, the Technology, Media, and Telecommunications sector is the second closest to gender balance, with 39% of women in the workforce as of 2023. There has been a significant increase in hiring women for management positions in recent years, and between 2021 and 2022, although most sectors hired more men than women, the Technology, Media, and Telecommunications sector stood out by hiring more women (56%) than men for management positions.

21. Measures specifically taken to address violence against marginalized groups of women and girls

Addressing gender-based violence has always been a fundamental priority for the country and is an essential component of the pillar aimed at Consolidating National Unity, Peace, and Sovereignty. Violence against women and girls is a global problem that profoundly affects the health, well-being, and human rights of the population as a whole, and specifically vulnerable groups in the context of Mozambique. As in many other countries, vulnerable women and girls face unique and often greater challenges when it comes to protection against violence. To address this complex issue, a series of specific measures have been implemented in the country to protect and support these vulnerable communities. These measures not only seek to protect these groups from violence but also aim to promote a culture of respect, equality, and dignity for all women and girls.

The operationalization of instruments such as the Social Action Policy and Implementation Strategy approved by resolution no. 46/2017 of November 2nd, which identifies the main vulnerable groups, among them: children, women and girls, people with disabilities, older women, persons addicted to drugs, chronic patients, prisoners and ex-prisoners, refugees and repatriates, displaced and returnees, victims of calamities with involuntary resettlement, can be highlighted.

This plan spurred the development and approval of instruments for the protection of vulnerable groups such as:

- ▶ National Disability Area Plan II, implemented until 2019, addressing issues of inclusion of persons with disabilities in all spheres of society.
- ▶ National Action Plan for Children II, also implemented until 2019, which addressed, among other priorities, ensuring the protection of all Mozambican children up to 18 years old, and informed the development of Plan III, which will last until 2032.
- ▶ Resolution no. 10/2021 of December 27th, which ratifies the Marrakesh Treaty, to facilitate access to published works for people with visual impairments or other reading difficulties. The Constitution of the Republic is already published in *Braille*, as well as the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and school textbooks from grades 1 to 3.
- ▶ Resolution no. 11/2021 of December 27th, which ratifies the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa.
- ▶ Resolution no. 12/2021 of December 27th, which ratifies, with reservations, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa.
- ▶ National Plan for Older Persons (2022-2029), whose objectives are to promote their participation, appreciation, and integration in the country's development processes.

In addition to the mentioned measures, the Government has focused on access to education as part of its strategy to address gender-based violence among vulnerable groups, especially women residing in rural and remote areas. Recognizing that education plays a crucial role in empowering women, the Government has built additional schools, with a special focus on rural areas where a significant part of the population resides, and scholarship and financial assistance programs targeted at marginalized groups have also been implemented, with special emphasis on supporting girls. These scholarships and financial aids not only encourage school attendance but also help mitigate the financial challenges faced by low-income families, allowing girls to continue their studies and reach their full potential. These initiatives aim not only to provide access to education for women and girls in these regions but also to create opportunities for them to develop skills, achieve financial independence, and actively contribute to their communities. By expanding the school network in rural areas, the Government recognizes and

responds to the specific needs of these communities, especially women who often face additional barriers to accessing education due to distance and lack of resources.

PARTICIPATION, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND GENDER-SENSITIVE INSTITUTIONS

Critical areas of concern:

- *Women in power and decision-making*
- *Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women*
- *Human rights of women*
- *Women and the media*
- *The girl child*

22. Promotion of women's participation in public life and decision-making

The commitment to gender parity has set ambitious goals, aiming for balanced representation of women at all levels of power and decision-making, in executive, judicial, and legislative bodies. This included the implementation of temporary special measures, such as quotas or reserved seats, to achieve gender balance. Awareness and training actions were carried out to strengthen women's empowerment in society, resulting in significant changes in the political landscape. In 2022, the country reached a historic milestone by achieving gender parity in the Government, aligning with the Constitution of the Republic, with 50% of ministerial positions held by women.

In addition to the above, several measures were successfully implemented to promote women's participation in public life and decision-making, including:

- ▶ Training for Active Participation - a total of 3,951 members of various associations, predominantly women, benefited from gender equality training programs. This exceeded the planned target for 2023, demonstrating a strong commitment to empowering women to take on leadership roles.
- ▶ Awareness in Power Spheres - 34 institutions, including 18 public and 16 private, were sensitized to the inclusion of women in leadership and decision-making positions.
- ▶ Multigenerational Engagement - multigenerational forums were held to dialogue with adolescents and young people, encouraging their active participation in decision-making and national development processes. More than 342,551 young people participated in these forums nationwide, with 60% being girls.
- ▶ "Training on Local Governance, Women, and Development" - involving 50 women parliamentarians, the training was successfully conducted. This initiative provided learning and experience-sharing opportunities for women playing significant roles in the country's political sphere. The ongoing challenge in the quest for gender equality in public

life and decision-making highlights the need for additional measures to ensure not only the achievement but the sustainability of their equitable participation.

23. Promotion of women's access to expression and participation in decision-making in Media, including Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

In the country, data shows that in social media and ICT, the presence and representation of women are still low. The coverage of gender issues in journalistic publications is also low, and their limited access to media is a contributing factor. The analysis reveals that although there has been some progress, women continue to be underrepresented in the media, and their issues are often marginalized.

Regarding gender trends in social media channels, the following points are noteworthy:

- ▶ Presence of female collaborators in scriptwriting over the years - when analyzing gender distribution by type of media, some variations are observed. Community radios have the highest proportion of female collaborators at 29%, followed by television with 24%, while print newspapers have the lowest predominance at 21%. This trend has been consistently highlighted in the Annual Gender Reports in Media by H2N, emphasizing the importance of implementing specific actions for each media channel for gender equality.
- ▶ Presence of men and women by media type -the proportion of female collaborators increased from 27% in radios and 35% in newspapers in 2022, compared to 2021. For 2023, an increase to 45% and 59%, respectively, was recorded.
- ▶ Gender and leadership positions in scriptwriting - in print journalism in 2023, only four women held leadership positions (compared to three in 2022), contrasting with 17 men in such positions. In community radios, the presence of women is even lower, with only nine women in leadership positions compared to 46 men. In television, there are only five women leaders compared to 17 men, although this represents a slight increase from 2022 when there was only one woman in a leadership role.
- ▶ Presence of women and men as television program hosts - there is a trend of women predominantly serving as hosts of entertainment programs and newscasts, while men dominate sports and debate programs. Women represent $\frac{3}{4}$ of the total hosts of entertainment programs and newscasts.
- ▶ Gender in journalistic publications - to analyze gender representation and publication trends of gender articles in the print media, 312 newspaper editions were evaluated in

2023, with 7,336 published articles analyzed. The data again revealed a disparity between men and women. Considering the sources cited in the articles, 73% were men and 27% were women. In images, 54% were male figures and 46% were female.

In 2022, a national public consultation was held on the Social Communication and Broadcasting Law Proposals - 2022, aimed at defining the legal framework to regulate the activities of social media. Conferences and workshops were also held to promote women's access to expression and participation in public life and decision-making. Additionally, a contest was held to elect the 30 most influential women in media (2024), recognizing women who stood out in the field.

A total of 915 debates were held, including 63 television debates, 760 radio debates, and 92 community debates, aiming to expand the dialogue on gender issues and promote women's participation in decision-making. These debates provided a platform for women's voices and discussions on topics relevant to women's empowerment, from reproductive rights to equal pay. A total of 1,221 people were trained, of which 695 were women, in the field of ICT. The training promoted digital inclusion and empowered women to use ICT as tools to enhance their participation in the public sphere, whether through access to information or digital content creation.

Through 264 programs titled "Field and Development," broadcasted by Radio Mozambique's National Antenna and in conjunction with Community Radios and Rural Radios, messages highlighting the role of women and their contribution to the country's development were transmitted. These programs not only recognize the importance of women in media but also highlight their achievements and challenges, inspiring other women to get involved in different societal spheres.

In 2021, the Internet Governance Forum was held by the National Institute of Information and Communication Technologies (INTIC), along with an Annual Webinar in February, themed "Safer Internet Month." The same year saw the First Youth Forum on Internet Governance and the creation of the National Center for Cyber Incident Response.

More than 7000 girls and young women have access to digital literacy across the country in the past years through initiatives such as 'African Girls Can Code', 'Muva Tech', 'Shine'. These initiatives offered beneficiaries basic or advanced literacy and have a particular focus on developing digital skills and leadership capacity so that girls and young women can position themselves to access employment opportunities or undertake business in or through the digital world.

One highlight is the approval by the Government of the following regulatory instruments, with the aim of massifying the use of ICT in the country:

- ▶ The Strategic and Operational Plan for the Information Society in 2019, which is the strategic instrument that, aligned with the Policy for the Information Society and other guiding documents of the country, establishes the development priorities of the Information Society for the period 2019-2028, with a focus on determining tools for greater access for women to information.
- ▶ The Regulation of the Digital Certification System of Mozambique (SCDM) in 2019, which encompasses the digital certification activities of public and private entities.
- ▶ The ratification of the African Union Convention on Cybersecurity and Personal Data Protection in 2019, which aims to protect individuals, particularly women, from cyber-attacks and exposure of their image on the internet.
- ▶ The Regulation of the use of the domain.Mz in 2020.
- ▶ The National Cybersecurity Policy and Strategy, 2021, which defines the legal, technological, and procedural measures aimed at protecting legal entities and individuals, and assets, with a focus on critical information infrastructures, in cyberspace.
- ▶ The Regulation of Registration and Licensing of Providers and Intermediaries of Electronic Services and Operators of Digital Platforms, in 2023, which establishes the mechanisms and procedures for the registration and licensing process.
- ▶ It is essential to continue working to ensure that the voices and perspectives of women are widely reflected and respected in the Media and society as a whole. The approval of the Internet Usage Regulation is planned for the coming years, aiming to regulate internet use in the country and protect women in cyberspace.

24. The National Structure for Women

Structurally, Mozambique has several government institutional bodies responsible for dealing with gender issues. The Ministry of Gender, Child, and Social Action (MGCAS) stands out as the main central body of the State responsible for coordinating and directing the implementation of policies related to gender, childhood, and social assistance in the country, established by Presidential Decree no. 1/2015, of January 16, with its Organic Statute approved by Resolution No. 18/2015 of July 10, defining its attributions as follows:

- ▶ Promotion of gender equality and equity in economic, social, political, and cultural development;
- ▶ Promotion, protection, and guarantee of children's rights aiming at their integral development;

- ▶ Promotion of social assistance to individuals and families in situations of poverty and vulnerability, including women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities, and those with chronic and degenerative diseases;
- ▶ Coordination and promotion of the action of governmental and non-governmental institutions acting in the areas of gender, childhood, and social assistance.
- ▶ To fulfill its attributions, the Ministry of Gender, Child, and Social Action has the following competencies in the area of gender:
 - ▶ Elaborate proposals for laws, policies, strategies, programs, and development plans in the gender area, as well as proceed with their dissemination, monitoring, and evaluation of implementation;
 - ▶ Promote the ratification and observance of international law standards in the gender area;
 - ▶ Establish and promote mechanisms for permanent dialogue with civil society acting in the gender area;
 - ▶ Promote actions that raise awareness in society at large about the importance of gender equality for the socio-economic development of the country;
 - ▶ Adopt and promote measures for the prevention and combating of gender-based violence;
 - ▶ Promote and defend balanced participation of women and men, girls and boys at all levels, sectors, and decision-making bodies.
- ▶ MGCAS also has a National Gender Directorate, which has the following responsibilities:
 - ▶ Elaborate proposals for laws, policies, strategies, programs, and plans from a gender perspective, and proceed with their dissemination, monitoring, and evaluation of implementation;
 - ▶ Promote actions aimed at eliminating discrimination based on sex and valuing the role of gender relations in the family and society;
 - ▶ Promote the adoption of norms and measures that ensure equal opportunities for access to goods and services for women and men, girls and boys;
 - ▶ Design mechanisms and programs to raise society's awareness of the importance of gender equality and equity for the socio-economic development of the country, among other attributions.

25. Strategies and tools for gender equality promotion

Interministerial Coordination Mechanisms, civil society and development partners

To ensure collaboration among different ministries and departments to address gender issues in a coordinated and effective manner, the Government has adopted medium and long-term plans over the years, such as Agenda 2025, which advocates for inclusive country development, as well

as the SDGs, the African Peer Review Mechanism, and the Government's Five-Year Program (PQG). All these instruments are integrated transversally into strategies and specific actions for gender equality and women's empowerment. Strategies and actions are operationalized annually by sectors, guided by the National Council for the Advancement of Women, at the central, provincial, and district levels, through the Economic and Social Plan (PES) and the State Budget.

In this way, the following regulatory instruments and institutional mechanisms guiding gender equality integration have been operationalized:

General Regulatory Instruments

- ▶ Gender Policy and Strategy for its Implementation – Resolution no. 36/2018 of October 12
- ▶ Public Administration Gender Strategy (2020-2024) - Resolution no. 39/2020 of July 8
- ▶ National Plan for the Advancement of Women (2018-2024)

Mechanisms

- ▶ Ministry of Gender, Child, and Social Action
- ▶ Provincial Social Affairs Services
- ▶ Provincial Directorates of Gender, Child, and Social Action
- ▶ District Health, Women, and Social Action Services
- ▶ National Council for the Advancement of Women (Central Level)
- ▶ Provincial Council for the Advancement of Women
- ▶ District Council for the Advancement of Women

In addition to the mentioned gender mechanisms, there are gender commissions and related structures that actively contribute to gender-related initiatives, such as the National Parliament, through the Commission on Social Affairs, Gender, Technology, and Social Communication and the Parliamentary Women's Office.

In line with international mechanisms, Mozambique has promoted collaborative platforms, notably the Gender Coordination Group and the Violence Thematic Group, led by MGCAS, bringing together various stakeholders, including Ministries, civil society organizations, the private sector, trade unions, academia, UN agencies, embassies, and other development partner institutions, all committed to promoting gender-related objectives, with the Catalan Agency for Cooperation as co-chair. There is also the Donor Gender Working Group, which includes various partners supporting the country's development through funding and other support for various social initiatives. The UN Agencies also have a Gender Thematic Group, that includes representatives from all agencies in the country to address gender issues and incorporate gender perspective in their actions. Within civil society, women's and girls organizations stand out,

including the Forum Mulher, which serves as a facilitation mechanism among various feminist organizations in the country; other organizations dedicated to promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls in the country include Muleide , 'Mulheres na Midea' , 'Associação Mulheres de Carreira Jurídica (AMMCJ)', Forum das Mulheres Rurais (FOMMUR), Associação de Mulheres com Deficiência (AMMD), Women's Observatory initiative, Gender Links, Girl Move Academy, BeGirl, and many others. Intermediary organizations, such as FDC, CESC, Oxfam, also participate in diverse programs regarding this coordination mechanisms.

Gender Audits

The Ministry of Gender, Child, and Social Action has a General Inspection, whose function is to monitor compliance with technical, legal, and organizational standards regulating the activities of the Ministry, as well as institutions and other entities engaged in gender, child, and social action activities.

To improve data collection with a gender approach in the context of monitoring the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to monitor specific gender impacts, Mozambique has implemented mechanisms involving various stakeholders, both national and international, at all administrative levels (central, provincial, district, and municipal). These mechanisms have been established to ensure effective interaction among various stakeholders, providing an adequate environment for the exchange of information and experiences. Among the spaces created are the District, Administrative Post, and Locality Advisory Councils, along with Development Observatories at the central and provincial levels. Another important mechanism is consultations with women's organizations, through engagement and consultation processes with women-led organizations to ensure that their perspectives and needs are considered in gender-related policies and programs.

26. Actions of the National Human Rights Commission of Mozambique for the promotion of gender equality and addressing violations of Women's Rights

Mozambique has an important structure dedicated to the promotion and protection of human rights, called the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH). This commission was established by Law no. 33/2009 of December 22, with the aim of strengthening the national system for the promotion, protection, defense, and improvement of the human rights situation of citizens. The creation of the CNDH also aims to consolidate a culture of peace, as stipulated in the Constitution of the Republic.

In 2022, recognizing the need to coordinate the country's institutional efforts in the field of human rights and international humanitarian law, the Interministerial Commission for Human

Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CIDHDIH) was created through Presidential Decree no. 6/2022 of April 28. This commission, subordinate to the Council of Ministers, has as its main function to coordinate the elaboration of reports and other communications to regional and international human rights and international humanitarian law bodies, as well as to monitor and implement the recommendations of these bodies at the internal level.

Over the past five years, the CNDH and CIDHDIH have played a fundamental role in promoting and protecting human rights in the country, with a focus on women and children. One of their main activities has been to facilitate dialogue and cooperation between government institutions and regional and international human rights and international humanitarian law bodies. This included significant interaction with the UN human rights treaty monitoring bodies, as well as the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council.

In parallel, CIDHDIH has played a crucial role in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of recommendations issued by these regional and international human rights and humanitarian law bodies. This diligent monitoring aimed to ensure that competent national institutions comply with the standards and principles established in the human rights instruments ratified by the Mozambican state. Additionally, the CNDH has been dedicated to promoting and safeguarding constitutional provisions related to human rights. Declared priorities include addressing cases of police violence and torture and eradicating judicial corruption.

Concerning human rights violations, individuals and organizations have also the legal right to seek legal measures for human rights violations in Mozambique's courts. As established by law, citizens can bring legal actions through the Office of the Attorney General, the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH), and the Mozambique's Order of Lawyers, aiming to obtain the cessation of human rights violations, compensation for such violations, or both. However, it is important to note that the CNDH lacks the authority to initiate legal proceedings and is therefore tasked with referring cases to the competent judicial system. Therefore, although the CNDH is an active advocate for human rights, its operations often face significant obstacles such as scarcity of resources, formal human rights training limitation for some members, that compromise its effectiveness in promoting and protecting the fundamental rights of Mozambican citizens.

PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES

Critical areas of concern:

- *Women and armed conflict*
- *Human rights of women*
- *The girl child*

27. Actions to build and sustain peace, promote a peaceful and inclusive society for sustainable development, and implement the women, peace and security agenda

Adoption and implementation of a National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security

Over the past five years, the implementation of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (2018-2022) and the ‘Women, Peace, and Security Project,’ within the context of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security, has been a focal point in initiatives aimed at promoting sustainable peace and social inclusion in Mozambique.

The activities carried out aimed to establish specific platforms to ensure the adequate representation of women as advocated by Resolution 1325, highlighting the approval and implementation of the National Action Plan and the Project for Promoting the Effective Participation of Women and Girls in Peace, Security, and Recovery, which included capacity building for Integrated Women’s Support Service Providers for Victims of Gender-Based Violence, covering approximately 574 people.

Between 2021 and 2024, training sessions were conducted involving governmental institutions such as the Attorney General’s Office, the National Criminal Investigation Service, the Supreme Court, the Police of the Republic of Mozambique, and the Armed Forces of Mozambique, among others, to promote an effective, responsible, and human rights-based response to the investigation, prosecution, and trial of offenses related to terrorism, involving many government stakeholders working on the prevention and/or response to terrorism. Additionally, participation in SADC tactical and command exercises was noted, involving eight officials from the country.

A study on the Socioeconomic Recovery Opportunities for Women and Girls in the post-conflict context was conducted in several provinces to identify strategies for the economic empowerment and socioeconomic recovery of these groups. Preliminary results indicated the existence of approximately 76,000 potential beneficiaries in 14 districts, prioritizing women heads of households, girls heads of households, and girls from households without income. This component informs different initiatives and programs of organizations dedicated to promoting peace, security and social cohesion actions in the country.

These actions have demonstrated Mozambique’s commitment to promoting a peaceful and inclusive society, particularly concerning the participation and protection of women in peace and security processes.

28. Measures to increase women's leadership, representation and participation in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, humanitarian action and crisis response

Women remain disproportionately impacted by armed conflicts worldwide, enduring severe violations of their rights and forming the majority of refugees and internally displaced persons. Mozambique has experienced a similar trend since the outbreak of armed conflicts in the northern regions in recent years. Between 2019 and 2023, extensive actions were undertaken to enhance women's leadership, representation, and participation in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, humanitarian action, and crisis response at decision-making levels in situations of armed conflicts and other crises, as well as in fragile environments.

The activities included:

- ▶ Members of the Police Science Academy (ACIPOL) underwent specialized training sessions at Joaquim Chissano University focused on Women, Peace, and Security. These training sessions delved into crucial subjects such as gender dynamics, methods for preventing and addressing violence against women, and strategies for addressing sexual harassment.
- ▶ 156 women actively participated in the process of Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) in the country, contributing to efforts aimed at preventing political-military conflicts.
- ▶ 28 representatives, comprising 22 women and 6 men, from women-led organizations across all provinces of Mozambique, underwent training focused on conflict prevention, mediation, and resolution. This initiative extended its reach to districts most impacted by armed conflicts.
- ▶ Over 300 representatives from community-based and civil society organizations were provided with advanced knowledge about the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda and were equipped with strategies for its effective advocacy and promotion in the context of peace and security in Mozambique.
- ▶ Training was conducted for 123 soldiers, comprising 78 women and 45 men, from the Military Academy in Nampula province, with the aim of preparing them as trainers in topics related to women, peace, and security for the defense and security sector. This training served to enhance the soldiers' comprehension of the pivotal roles played by women in conflict prevention and resolution, as well as in the sustenance and advancement of security and peacebuilding endeavors. Additionally, participants were equipped with strategies to effectively enhance the security, physical and mental well-being, economic stability, and overall welfare of women and girls in both conflict and non-conflict settings.
- ▶ Six informational and awareness-raising lectures were organized on the normative framework of United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1325 regarding women, peace, and security, targeting approximately 750 military personnel, encompassing officers, sergeants, and privates of the Armed Forces of Mozambique in military units in the southern and central regions of the country.

The country has also implemented measures to strengthen the judicial and extrajudicial response capabilities of national institutions regarding violations of humanitarian law and the human rights of women and girls in situations of armed conflict and humanitarian action. This included promoting the representation of women in the Defense and Security Forces (FDS), with career progression opportunities in different military areas of expertise. The Ministry of National Defense dedicated efforts to improving the FDS infrastructure to meet the specific needs of women.

Within the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP), an Action Plan was developed that reflected Mozambique's reality for the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. Concurrently, a two-month training on the UN Normative Framework on Women, Peace, and Security was held in the country. Additionally, Gender Offices were established in all Military Units to specifically address issues related to gender-based violence.

In 2023, the country conducted a series of prominent national events led by the Presidency of the Republic, aimed at strengthening dialogue and commitment to protecting groups affected by armed conflicts in the country. These included the presidential event on "Threats to International Peace and Security – Addressing Terrorism and Preventing Violent Extremism through enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and Regional Organizations and Mechanisms"; the Ministerial event on "Women, Peace, and Security"; the event at the level of Permanent Representatives on "Maintaining International Peace and Security: Security Sector Reform"; and the International Conference on "Mozambique at the UNSC: Promoting International Peace and Security."

29. Measures to eliminate discrimination and violations of children's rights, including girls

Malnutrition, early pregnancy, exposure to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases

During the period under review, Mozambique initiated several endeavors to mitigate health outcome disparities caused by malnutrition, early pregnancy, and exposure to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, notwithstanding the persistently alarming statistics. The target to reduce chronic malnutrition to 20% by 2020, as per the PQG (2015-2019) and the Multisectoral Action Plan for the Reduction of Chronic Malnutrition (PAMRDC) 2011-2020 was not achieved. However, decline in chronic malnutrition was observed in some percentage and exhibited bigger numbers in urban areas (from 43.7% to 35.4%) vis-a-vis rural areas (from 49.7% to 46.5%), implying that chronic malnutrition, as well as general poverty, disproportionately impacts rural regions over urban ones.

The Government, through entities such as the Ministry of Health (MISAU) and the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Action (MGCAS), implemented initiatives to furnish medical aid to HIV/AIDS orphans and other vulnerable children, alongside providing professional training for healthcare personnel on relevant matters. Within the healthcare domain, the administration of

Post-Exposure Prophylaxis was adopted as a measure to prevent the sexual transmission of HIV to children and women who were victims of sexual violence. A notable proportion of sexual violence cases received treatment with PEP, while the majority of victims of such violence received appropriate care for sexually transmitted diseases.

Through a networked effort between the Government and its development partners, many actions were also implemented around food and nutritional security and combating malnutrition in the country, especially among children. Examples include UNICEF's and US Government work in supporting children under five years old to recover from malnutrition, with a focus on areas conflict-affected and other vulnerable areas around the country. Another example is the "Care Group Mothers" an initiative adopted by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), consisting of women chosen at the community level based on their knowledge of nutrition, considering the environmental and agricultural community context, and their capacity to disseminate knowledge on nutrition, health, and home gardens. After being trained by professionals, they transmit the training information, as well as practical training to other women, mothers and influential family and community members, allowing dissemination and appropriation of nutrition knowledge by communities.

Within the Sexual and Reproductive Health framework, through the "Rapariga Biz" Program, the proportion of girls and young women accessing contraceptive methods grew by 28% between 2016 and 2021 in the provinces of Nampula and Zambezia. In 2023, the rate of early marriages among girls and women who participated in the "Rapariga Biz" program was 1.1% compared to 40% of girls who did not participate in the program. In the same year, the rate of early pregnancy among girls and young women who participated in the program was 0.9% compared to approximately 50% of women and girls who did not participate in the program.

Policy for the reduction and eradication of early and forced marriages

Noteworthy is the implementation of policies and programs aimed at reducing and eradicating early and forced marriages, through advocacy efforts by civil society to raise awareness about diverse national legislation on this issue, including in conflict zones and areas exposed to conflict. For example, the dissemination of Law no. 19/2019, of October 22, the Law on Prevention and Addressing Early Marriages, which, as previously mentioned, established sanctions for the celebration of early marriages that disregard the minimum age, both civil and criminal in nature, and the Civil Registry Code to mitigate the risk of early marriages due to alleged ignorance of the child's age.

Strengthening girls' access to quality education, skills development and training

In the field of education, the Government adopted national strategies to promote inclusive education, aiming to ensure that children with special educational needs or disabilities could attend regular schools. Another inclusive measure was the abolition of the legal provision that

required pregnant adolescents to be transferred to night classes; this allowed many girls to return to schools, attending classes again during the daytime. Other actions included, in 2022, the training of 150 girls for the entrance exams at UEM for science and technology, engineering, and mathematics , with 29 girls being admitted. In 2023, the numbers doubled, with 300 girls being trained, of whom 30 were admitted. Overall, there was a significant increase in the number of children enrolled in schools across the country. Many country's development partners have played a crucial role in this process, supporting the development of equitable and multisectoral educational strategies, expanding access to pre-primary education, and introducing digital innovations to enhance learning. However, challenges remain to ensure quality and inclusive education for all children.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION, PROTECTION AND REHABILITATION

Critical areas of concern:

- *Human rights of women*
- *Women and the environment*
- *The girl child*

30. Integration of gender perspectives in environmental policies and programs: adaptation and mitigation to climate change

Climate events have negatively impacted infrastructure, livelihoods, and the well-being of local communities, highlighting the urgency of effective adaptation and mitigation measures to climate change over recent years. In terms of adaptation and mitigation to climate change, initiatives were implemented for the development and updating of Local Adaptation Plans, with the active participation of the stakeholders, including women, men, youth and older persons.

The sessions for consultation were directed towards the identification, selection, and prioritization of resilient infrastructure, resulting in the establishment of crucial facilities such as maternity and general health centers in regions susceptible to climate-related adversities. Seminars were offered to underscore the pivotal role of women in addressing climate change, with the aim of augmenting their awareness and active engagement in mitigating this pressing concern. Moreover, technicians from the District Councils for the Advancement of Women underwent specialized training focused on integrating climate change considerations into planning, adaptation, and mitigation strategies, emphasizing the importance of gender-sensitive approaches.

Additionally, the allocation of Land Use and Benefit Rights (DUAT) to women and the government's investment in measures to promote women's autonomy in land management were emphasized. In 2020, a total of 1,550,744 DUAT were authorized, of which 723,643 were allocated to women, representing 46.6% of the total. There was a slight increase of 1.4% compared to the previous year. In 2022, a total of 14,243 DUAT were authorized, of which 6,103 were allocated to women, representing 43.3% of the total. In that year, three provinces benefited from the World Bank project for the allocation of DUAT, namely the provinces of Manica, Sofala, and Tete.

Agriculture is another key area in the country where a gender perspective is framed to address climate change and build resilience. It is one of the main economic activities in the country, involving a large part of the Mozambican population, particularly women, in rural areas. In 2019, public extension services assisted approximately 745,343 producers nationwide, of whom 51% were women, including Emerging Commercial Small Farmers (PACES), small farmers (PAs), and agricultural extension workers. The number increased to 1,036,806 producers assisted in 2020,

with 60% being women. In 2023, assistance was provided to 749,317 producers nationwide, with approximately 50% being women.

Specific training was conducted for the empowerment of women in the context of sustainable natural resource management and climate change adaptation, benefiting women across the country. Combined actions in the sectors of education, science and technology, labor and agriculture were implemented, focusing on professional training and women's empowerment.

31. Integration of gender perspectives in disaster risk reduction and climate resilience

Significant efforts have been made to involve women in natural resource management, acknowledging their crucial role in this context. These efforts include training programs to empower women in managing resources such as water and firewood, considering their substantial reliance and often having to travel long distances to access them.

There has been progress in the representation of women in Water Committees, where women represent more than 60% of the members. Minimum participation quotas, ranging between 40% and 50%, have been established, and approximately 20% of women in these committees hold leadership positions, such as president or treasurer. However, challenges persist regarding women's participation in the management of Water Supply Systems, with representation still varying between 10% and 20%.

Within the scope of Environmental Education of the CPLP and Galician Communities, the VII International Congress was convened, witnessing significant women participation, representing 54.5% of the total of 550 attendees. This event proved instrumental in fostering dialogue and collaboration among environmental educators, researchers, professors, technicians, and representatives from diverse sectors, encompassing local communities, students, and political actors, to develop more inclusive and gender-sensitive approaches in environmental management and adaptation to climate change.

III. NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND PROCESSES

Overview

This section will address the underlying principles of the National Plan for Gender Equality in Mozambique and the policies, strategies and programs implemented to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, focusing on the main identified areas of intervention. The role of national institutions, coordination processes, and financing in the effectiveness of implementing gender equality policies will be presented with the aim of providing a comprehensive understanding of the progress, as well as the challenges and opportunities faced by Mozambique at the national level in promoting gender equality and eliminating discrimination against women, as recommended by CEDAW and other international human rights instruments.

32. National Plan for Gender Equality

In 2006, the Council of Ministers ratified the Gender Policy and its Implementation Strategy, reaffirming the commitment to integrate gender equality and women's empowerment in all governmental spheres. This commitment aligns with regional and international agreements, of which Mozambique is a part, including the BDPfA.

However, despite the advances made, challenges persisted in the effective participation of women in political, economic, social and cultural areas. In response to this, the National Action Plan for the Advancement of Women (PNAM 2018-2024) was conceived and approved by the Council of Ministers through Resolution no. 21/2019 of April 22, which outlined a series of actions to be implemented by different actors, including the State, civil society, development partners, religious institutions and the private sector. This plan addresses key intervention areas such as promoting peace and security for women, access to health and sanitation, equality in education and vocational training, economic empowerment, access to energy and technology, among others.

The central objective of this plan is to strengthen the promotion of gender equality in all sectors of the country's development, adopting a comprehensive approach that integrates the gender perspective into all policies and actions. The formulation of the IV PNAM was based on the evaluation of the previous plan and various instruments such as, the Gender Policy and its Implementation Strategy, the Government's Five-Year Program (2015-2019), sectoral plans and strategies, SDGs, BDPfA, Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), the African Union's Agenda 2063, and the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.

Based on Resolution no. 21/2019 of April 22, the strategic objectives of PNAM include:

- ▶ Ensuring women's right to live free from discrimination, with dignity, integrity and security both in the private and public spheres, and to actively participate in peacebuilding.
- ▶ Ensuring women's access to health, including sexual and reproductive health, as well as access to water and sanitation.
- ▶ Promoting equal access to education and technical training for men and women at all levels.
- ▶ Promoting the empowerment of young women.
- ▶ Integrating gender perspective into national policies, strategies, plans and budgets.
- ▶ Ensuring women's equitable access to productive resources, promoting productivity and formal employment.
- ▶ Expanding women's access to energy sources, infrastructure, transportation and communication and information technologies.
- ▶ Sensitizing media outlets to gender issues and women's participation in decision-making.
- ▶ Integrating gender perspective into human settlement programming, natural disaster response processes and resettlement.
- ▶ Strengthening institutions for the integration of gender perspective at all levels.
- ▶ Reinforcing coordination and articulation among different actors in the field of gender equality and women's empowerment.

The implementation of PNAM has partly been responsible for the advancements in gender equality and empowerment of women and girls in different sectors of society observed over the years.

33. Gender budget tracking system and statistics

An important milestone in gender planning and budgeting was the development of the Guide on Planning and Budgeting Procedures, Monitoring and Oversight of issues related to Gender-Based Sexual Violence/Harmful Practices/Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights in 2019, followed in subsequent years by the development of actions aimed at ensuring the implementation of a gender-sensitive Economic and Social Plan and State Budget (PESOE). In this regard, in 2023, the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) developed the Gender Marking Mechanism in PESOE actions, which consists of incorporating gender-sensitive markers at the Planning and Budgeting Module level, classifying actions according to their degree of gender sensitivity, as well as allowing for tracking of their respective budgets. In 2019, 5 trainers benefited of a training in integrating issues related to gender-based sexual violence/harmful practices (early unions), sexual and reproductive health rights of women and men into planning and budgeting processes and instruments, monitoring and oversight. More recently, in 2023, members of the Parliamentary Women's Office were also trained in Gender-Sensitive Planning and Budgeting.

Regarding statistics, a notable gap in the country's gender data system is the lack of a specific coordination body for gender statistics that could link producers and users of such statistics. Despite this challenge, the National Institute of Statistics (INE) has made a notable effort by establishing Gender Statistics Units in all provinces of the country, with 10 focal points, resulting

in the production of some provincial gender statistics. INE, as a public institution with legal personality and technical, administrative and financial autonomy, has oriented its activities to meet the official statistical information needs of the country, including statistics on human development, gender and the environment.

However, significant challenges persist in disaggregating data by gender. Data collection and analysis face difficulties, resulting in gaps in understanding and addressing gender disparities in many areas, as well as in allocating adequate budgets by both the Government and development actors, despite support for statistical development in some sectors. The Ministry of Health is one of the exception, explicitly allocating budget items for gender statistics in many areas of concern. Lack of experience and training in gender statistics among staff in the ministries also contributes to the limited integration of gender into the produced statistics.

34. Contributions of different actors in the preparation of this National Report

The preparation of this National Report was a collaborative and inclusive effort, marked by the involvement of various sectors and actors from the central to the local level. Contributions played a crucial role at each stage of the process, as follows:

- ▶ Coordination Meetings with MGCAS and Definition of Action Timeline - the process began with coordination meetings led by the Ministry of Gender, Child, and Social Action (MGCAS), which spearheaded the process and received support from UN Women in the country. During these meetings, the action timeline outlining the necessary activities for the preparation and finalization of the report was delineated, and the responsible technical team was formed.
- ▶ Meetings with the Designated Technical Team - meetings were held with the technical team designated by MGCAS to draft the report. During these meetings, sectoral and national information collection took place, including policies, programs and execution reports, among others, as well as reflections on the topics covered.
- ▶ Sectoral Consultation with the National Council for the Advancement of Women (CNAM) - sectoral consultation meeting was conducted with CNAM, involving representatives from Ministries, the Women's Organizations Representation Forum, religious organizations and the private sector.
- ▶ National Consultation Meeting - a broad national consultation meeting was organized, with the presence of CNAM at both central and local levels, Provincial Gender Directorates, Civil Society Organizations, Development Partners, UN Agencies, religious institutions, academia, media, the private sector and trade unions, among other actors. The purpose of this meeting was to consolidate the preliminary report by incorporating valuable contributions and perspectives from the actors in a holistic manner.

The active and collaborative engagement of different actors was fundamental to ensuring the solidity of the report, demonstrating the joint commitment to promoting gender equality and women's and girls empowerment in Mozambique.

35. Implementation of recommendations on gender equality and discrimination against women

Since the 2019 review of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), in which specific recommendations were made for Mozambique, the country has progressed in implementing the necessary measures to follow these recommendations. The observations of CEDAW in 2019 highlighted concerns about disproportionate levels of poverty among women in the country and emphasized the need for measures to ensure equitable access to land and resources, strengthen social protection services and promote awareness and address gender-based violence.

Following that review, Mozambique has adopted several measures to address these concerns and implement CEDAW's recommendations. In the agricultural sector, initiatives have been implemented to ensure women's access to land and resources, thereby contributing to reducing gender disparities. Social protection services have been strengthened to address challenges arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, with a focus on women in vulnerable situations. In the field of education, measures have been taken to promote women and girls' access to and retention in education, including actions to reduce school dropout rates among girls and raise awareness of their rights.

Despite significant progress in the 12 critical areas of action outlined in the BDPfA, challenges persist. It is imperative that the country continues to implement CEDAW's recommendations and intensify efforts to promote gender equality and address discrimination against women.

IV. DATA AND STATISTICS

Overview

This section will address the major advancements observed in gender statistics in Mozambique over the past five years, highlighting areas such as education, employment, different sectors of activity and violence. Additionally, it will present priorities for strengthening national gender statistics, the specific gender indicators adopted to monitor progress towards the SDGs, as well as challenges related to data availability in certain indicators. Finally, the importance of National Gender Equality Profiles as fundamental tools for monitoring progress and guiding efforts towards women's empowerment and gender equality in Mozambique.

36. Key areas of progress in the last five years

Over the past five years, the country has witnessed some advancements in various areas, captured by gender statistics at the national level. Examples of key areas include:

Education

There has been a reduction in literacy rates, both for women and men. According to data from INE, from 2020 to 2022, the literacy rate decreased from 39.9% to 38.3% for the population aged 15 and older. Specifically, the literacy rate among women decreased from 51% to 49.2%, while among men, it decreased from 27.4% to 25.9%.

Violence

There has been a significant reduction in intimate partner violence rates, both for women and men. For example, the number of women aged 15 to 49 who reported experiencing at least one of the three types of intimate partner violence decreased from 46% in 2011 to 33% in 2022-23. It was observed that the majority of violence victims seek help from family, highlighting the importance of family support in such cases.

Different sectors of activity

Women and men are increasingly present in the agriculture, forestry, and fishing sectors, with a significant increase from 2020 to 2022. Among women, approximately 82% represent the workforce in this sector, while among men, it is around 68%. It is important to note that women are more concentrated in self-employment, especially in agriculture, suggesting the need for measures to promote a more equitable distribution in the labor market.

37. Priorities for strengthening national gender statistics

Ensuring the production of quality administrative statistics in all sectors, with a focus on sex-disaggregated statistics, is one of the country's priority strategies for the coming years. In this regard, the UN Women Regional Office for Eastern and Southern Africa (ESARO), in collaboration with the INE, organized and conducted the Workshop on Administrative Data Quality Assurance in 2024, an event that involved the participation of 27 out of the 35 expected public sector entities, aiming for a future where sex-disaggregated statistics are a sustainable reality in Mozambique.

This initiative will be extended beyond the country capital to reach the other provinces. The Time Use and Care Economy Survey is also planned, a joint activity involving the INE and MGCAS, with support from the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and UN Women. This initiative is part of the Gender Statistics and Monitoring Systems Capacity Building Project, which was implemented in four African countries, including Mozambique, selected by the African Development Bank. The INE has been striving to incorporate variables in surveys that can provide relevant data for gender statistics. These measures aim to improve the quality and scope of available statistics and address those that are still non-existent in the country.

38. Specific gender indicators to monitor progress on the SDGs

Mozambique has adopted indicators to monitor the Sustainable Development Goals, with 12 indicated below, specifically addressing gender issues (SDG 5), of which 50% have available data.

Indicators with available data:

- ▶ Proportion of women and girls aged 15 and older subjected to physical, sexual, or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the past 12 months, disaggregated by type of violence and age.
- ▶ Proportion of women and girls aged 15 and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than intimate partners in the past 12 months, disaggregated by age and location of occurrence.
- ▶ Proportion of women aged 20 to 24 who were married or in union before age 15 and before age 18.
- ▶ Proportion of seats held by women in the National Assembly.
- ▶ Proportion of women aged 15 to 49 making their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use, and reproductive health care.
- ▶ Percentage of individuals owning a mobile phone, disaggregated by sex.

Indicators without available data:

- ▶ Proportion of girls and women aged 15 to 49 who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting, by age.

- ▶ Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic work and care work, by sex, age and location.
- ▶ Proportion of women in management positions.
- ▶ Proportion of the total agricultural population with property rights or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex and participation of women among landowners or rights holders, by type of mandate.
- ▶ Proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women's equal rights to property and/or control over land.
- ▶ Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment.

39. Data Disaggregations Provided by Key Surveys

Data disaggregations in INE surveys

The general surveys conducted by the INE in Mozambique consistently disaggregate data by sex, age and geographical area. This practice is followed in both sample surveys, which include national and provincial disaggregations, and in the general population census, which covers all geographical areas of the country. This is supported by Law no. 7/96 of July 5, 1996, of the National Statistical System, which establishes the mandatory disaggregation of statistical information, to ensure that collected data are analyzed comprehensively and representatively, allowing for a deeper understanding of socio-economic and demographic dynamics in Mozambique. However, the focus is predominantly on demographic data and other macro areas, with statistics not being disaggregated for each sector in detail by sex.

Demographic and health survey (IDS)

The main objective of the 2022-23 IDS is to provide updated estimates of specific demographic and health indicators for Mozambique, which allow for monitoring and evaluating the performance of public policy implementation, as well as indicators relevant to achieving the SDGs. Implemented by the INE, for its elaboration to be as comprehensive as possible, the Government relies on its own funding and support from various partners: United States Agency for International Development (USAID), World Bank, UNICEF, Commonwealth & Development Office of the United Kingdom (FCDO), Canada and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance.

Mozambique Gender Equality Profile - 2022

Mozambique launched its second Gender Equality Profile in 2022 under the coordination of the MGCAS, followed by the first profile published in 2016, with joint efforts from UN Women and the European Union. National Gender Equality Profiles are fundamental tools for monitoring the progress of commitments made by the country in the empowerment of women and gender

equality, containing relevant information such as the current scenario, opportunities, constraints, and recommendations for gender equality in the country. The profiles help verify the evolution of results in the face of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the commitments of the BDPfA and the CSW, adopted by Mozambique.

V. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE STEPS

Over the past five years (2019-2023), Mozambique has undergone a complex journey in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BDPfA), with significant progress coexisting with substantial challenges. One of the main lessons learned amidst the various advancements and setbacks is the importance beyond the formulation of gender equality and women's empowerment policies, of their effective implementation. Thus, Mozambique should continue to strengthen the legislative framework and, furthermore, ensure that policies are effectively applied. The creation of an information repository on specific actions in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment in the country is an important step for the future, which will ensure holistic recording of various initiatives and implementations by different actors, as well as promote their visibility and evaluate impacts.

The process of reviewing the implementation of the BDPfA provided a valuable opportunity to reflect on the progress made and the challenges faced in promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls in Mozambique. While notable progress has been achieved in areas such as legislation protecting women's rights, empowerment policies, health, productive resources, among others, persistent obstacles have been encountered, such as gender disparities in various sectors and violence against women in different settings, which demand a holistic and coordinated approach. The lessons learned during this period are crucial to guide future efforts and consolidate the achievements made. The integration of different sectors into the BDPfA implementation process has proved fundamental. Coordination among various sectors of society is essential to effectively address challenges and leverage progress. Collaboration among the Government, civil society, the private sector, international organizations, academia, media, among others, is essential to ensure a comprehensive and sustainable approach to promoting gender equality in the country.

Looking to the future, several priority areas have been identified to accelerate progress towards the SDGs and the BDPfA. One of these areas is the active involvement of women at all levels of decision-making in the country. This has been identified as a crucial factor for the success of gender equality initiatives. Increasing women's participation in leadership and decision-making positions is an ongoing priority, to be promoted through specific capacity-building programs and incentives.

The review highlighted the need for robust monitoring and evaluation systems to track progress and identify areas for improvement. There is a need to strengthen the production of statistical data on women's participation in different sectors of society, as accurate and up-to-date data are essential for informing effective policies and programs and monitoring progress over time. Additionally, disaggregation of data by sex and the implementation of gender-sensitive budget markers are important tools to ensure transparency and effectiveness of policies.

Investing in education, with a focus on retaining girls in the education system and improving access to sexual and reproductive health, is essential. Education and health are fundamental pillars for the empowerment of women and girls and for the promotion of an equitable society.

Intensifying efforts to prevent and respond gender-based violence can be achieved through awareness campaigns, victim support services, and strengthening the judicial system to handle cases of violence, as well as a more integrated strategy involving actors at all territorial levels of the country.

The development and strengthening of policies and programs that address the resilience of women and girls to climate change and natural disasters is a growing necessity. The adaptability of communities to natural disasters and crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, and climatic disasters has been an important lesson in recent years. Strengthening community resilience and ensuring that gender policies are flexible and adaptable to different emerging contexts are essential to address future challenges. Furthermore, the importance of effectively implementing inclusive policies that guarantee women's access to resources and opportunities in all sectors of society is recognized, including measures to address emerging challenges such as the vulnerability of adolescents and young people to sexually transmitted infections and HIV, the negative impacts of armed conflicts on the economic and social stability of women, as well as the various forms of marginalization faced by them.

Additionally, it is crucial to continue addressing issues such as early unions, which often result in school dropout and early pregnancies, as well as the persistence of sexual violence, which remains a significant threat to women and girls. Poverty, identified as a systemic challenge in the country, greatly contributes to perpetuating gender inequality, requiring a comprehensive approach that not only provides access to financial resources but also promotes women's economic autonomy. Another emerging priority is the promotion of inclusive digital transformation, ensuring that everyone has access to digital technologies and the necessary skills to use them.

Mozambique has demonstrated a strong and continuous commitment to promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls. The significant achievements made in the last five years are a testament to the dedicated efforts of all parties involved. However, as challenges persist, it is essential for the country to continue learning from the review process and apply these lessons to address future obstacles. Renewed dedication to the implementation of the of the BDPfA and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is essential to ensure that Mozambique advances sustainably, providing a fairer and more inclusive future for all women and girls in the country.

