

CDD Launch Youth Leadership Enhancement and Agency Development Project in Cabo Delgado



On October 12, the Center for Democracy and Development (CDD) in partnership with the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA) launched Youth Leadership Enhancement and Agency Development (LEAD) Project, which seeks to “influence, motivate and equip young people to believe in their individual and collective innovative power to transition from frantic job seekers and mere beneficiaries of services and corporate stipends to innovators and catalysts of inclusive development and transformational change. LEAD seeks to place youth at the center of development endeavors by (i) enhancing their leadership for transformation capacities, and (ii) increasing their effective engagement in local and national governance processes.”

Held under the slogan “Empowering Young People to Promote Social Cohesion”, the one-day event was attended by 47 young people from 16 of the 17 districts of the province, namely Ancuabe (1), Balama (3), Chiure (1), Ibo (3), Macomia (2), Mecufi (1), Meluco (1) Metuge (4), Mocimboa da Praia (3), Montepuez (4), Mueda (5), Muidumbe (1), Namuno (2), Nangade (3), Palma (3), Pemba (10) and the representative of the Christian Council.

Speaking on the “Experiences of Religious Coexistence in Cabo Delgado: Advice for Youth People”, Emerson Ubisse, the representative of the Christian Council, said “...religious coexistence here in Cabo Delgado is good. We, the Christian Council (CCM) are members of COREM (Mozambique Council of Religions),



Clube da Paz (Peace Club), Grupo Moçambicano da Dívida (Mozambique Debt Group), and other platforms. Mozambique has been a great example of religious coexistence for many countries in Africa and beyond. Here in Cabo Delgado, CCM has always worked and had partnerships with the Islamic Council in several areas of social and economic development.”

Ubisse highlighted that Christians and Muslims have always worked and lived together harmoniously at institutional and personal levels. “We live together. We work together. We know one another by names. We are all for peace and citizens’ rights”, he said. “Someone is trying to inject in our minds the idea that there is a religious coexistence crisis in Cabo Delgado. That is not true. There are excuses to recruit and use young people for other than developmental agendas... Someone is instilling that it is normal in Africa to destabilize governments on the basis of coups.”

Towards the end of his remarks, Ubisse delivered direct challenges to young people telling them “to think critically and reject the normalization of wars and guns in Africa and in Mozambique in particular. You must learn to speak out and share your ideas. You must develop love for reading. You must make a difference and it does not matter whether you are Frelimo or Re-

namo or MDM or Muslim or Christian or atheist. Religious coexistence is good here in Cabo Delgado” he concluded.

Introducing the project, CDD LEAD coordinator, Julião Matsinhe, said that the project envisions empowered youth who act as catalysts of development and social cohesion starting from the community and district levels. He also explained that LEAD will have a Leadership Academy to train select young people on leadership in areas such as economic development, democracy and good governance, human rights, and civic and community education. LEAD will also have a Youth Hub which is a mechanism to influence thousands of young people and increase their engagement in local and district government processes.

“LEAD is an opportunity for you to develop necessary leadership capacities to assume positions of influence in the development of our communities, districts, province and the country” Matsinhe said. He also said that although the project will be based in Pemba, it will have active groups with relevant interventions in every district and “you will be equipped with skills and knowledge to innovate, engage the government and other development actors, and catalyze change, and inclusive development and promote social cohesion in your districts.”

Young people exchange ideas on the economic situation of Cabo Delgado



The highlight of the event was a two-hour discussion among young people on the socioeconomic situation of young people in Cabo Delgado. Zaida Cássimo, a young entrepreneur and CDD activist, gave an overview on the topic highlighting lack of job opportunities and credit lines for youth startups, economic exclusion of local youth by government and big companies, and child marriage and gender inequality which places girls at a worse off situation. In spite of all of these, she also highlighted opportunities for improvement drawing on her own experience when she had to move to Montepuez in 2019 to try out her business ideas. Young people followed with several exchange of ideas on their economic situation.

“There are areas where the government and the people are clearly in conflicts here in Cabo Delgado. There are people who feel forced to fight for their own survival because they realize that the government is bringing people and companies from outside to explore their local resources and marginalize them (local communities”.

“The main reason behind the insurgency is poverty. The gap between the rich and the poor is very big. Second, youth are excluded from the sectors of development. There is a need to promote full and inclusive access to social services.

Many young people do not have access to education, employment, health, and housing. Yes, we do need self-employment, but that starts with access to education and acquisition of relevant skills. Without these skills and education, young people will not be dynamic and they will be easily lured into the insurgency”.

“I am from Nangade. I would like to disagree with my colleague when he says lack of access to education and health is a factor to young people joining the insurgency. Most youth in district have finished grade 7. I agree with him when he says lack of job opportunities is one of the reasons young people join the insurgency. Many young people have finished grades 10 and 12 and have stayed unemployed for years and with no hope for any job opportunity. This is the problem”.

“Many countries in Southern Africa go through the same socioeconomic challenges that we face. How many of them resort to violence and guns? Mozambique tends to solve their differences with guns or wars or killings. If you speak something that someone does not like, you get killed with a bullet. Why do we have to resort to guns to solve our differences? I think our problem lies on public policies which must be designed in an inclusive way. Communities must be included in the design, implementation

and monitoring of public policies. This does not happen”.

“There is community exclusion in decision making processes. Public decisions must be made in response to people’s needs and wishes. Communities that have been reallocated due to economic infrastructure development feel hurt because they have lost their social and cultural properties including their relation with their ancestors. The government wastes resources doing things without first agreeing with the intended beneficiaries. The construction of the Montepuez market, for example, did not obser-

ve people’s wishes and the market has not been used by the community since it was built two years ago”.

Towards the end of the two-hour discussion, Celiano Rage, on behalf of the Youth Hub, extended an invitation to all young people to come together in a solidarity campaign to collect goods including food and clothes for displaced people in several districts in Cabo Delgado. In an affirmative and combat-readiness-like response, young people gave a roaring and sustained applause to the invitation. LEAD has begun.



EDITORIAL INFORMATION

Property: CDD – Centro para a Democracia e Desenvolvimento
Director: Prof. Adriano Nuvunga
Editor: Emídio Beula
Author: Julião Matsinhe
Team: Emídio Beula , Agostinho Machava, Ilídio Nhantumbo, Isabel Macamo, Julião Matsinhe, Janato Jr. and Ligia Nkavando
Layout: CDD

Address:
 Rua Dar-Es-Salaam Nº 279, Bairro da Sommerschild, Cidade de Maputo.
 Telephone: +258 21 085 797

CDD_moz
E-mail: info@cddmoz.org
Website: http://www.cddmoz.org

Partners



Financial Partners

