

CDD PROMOTES DIALOGUE WITH YOUTH IN PEMBA AND MONTEPUEZ

## Youth in Cabo Delgado demand transparency and inclusion in natural resource governance

- With the objective of expanding and strengthening its Youth Hubs, promoting citizen-centered governance of natural resources and the extractive industry, on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of September the Center for Democracy and Development (CDD) organized dialogues with young people from the Youth Hub of Pemba and the Youth Hub of Montepuez, in Cabo Delgado province. The dialogues are part of the Project Promoting Accountability and Engaging Citizens in the Governance of Natural Resources in Mozambique, implemented by CDD, with support from the Ford Foundation.



Young people from the CDD Youth Hub in Pemba

At the event, the youth shared their expectations regarding the exploitation of natural resources and benefited from training on the different mechanisms for transparency and participation in the governance of natural resources. The dialogue was facilitated by Américo Maluana, who provided a background on the extractive industry sector in Mozambique, highlighting not only its transformative potential, but also the risks associated with the exploitation of natural resources. The experience of several countries, especially in Africa, shows that many resource-rich states have suffer from resource curse, remain poor, and the exploitation of their natural wealth has not benefited the population. This trend is explained by factors such as poor institutional quality and lack of transparency and accountability, which is conducive to corruption. Corruption

risks can be mitigated by adopting good practices, such as:

- Transparency in contracts and the criminalization of bribery;
- Mechanisms for monitoring operations (also in state-owned enterprises) that include audits, parliamentary oversight, civil society and media monitoring;
- Transparent and accountable revenue collection systems through sound fiscal regimes;
- Determining responsible ways to manage, invest and spend revenues, through sovereign wealth funds and strategic planning processes.

## Youth perspectives on natural resource extraction in Cabo Delgado

The negative experiences resulting from the exploitation of other resources with no gains for the population, reduce the expectations of young people regarding the potential benefits of gas exploitation in the Rovuma Basin.



Youth from the CDD Youth Hub in Montepuez

Timóteo Fijamo, a member of the CDD Youth Hub in Montepuez, said that young people no longer have expectations from natural resource exploitation projects. “The expectations would be a development for the people, based on these exploited resources. But there is a breakdown in expectations because our governance policy doesn’t seem very good to me. The very agents who look after these resources are in a delicate situation where they can no longer be trusted, and on that assumption, I imagine that there is not much to expect with these resources, other than problems.”

Fijamo cited the case of Montepuez ruby mining: “We have Rubi Mining, but we’re not seeing any benefits. The people only see helicopters flying back and forth, transporting the wealth extracted from their communities, but they see no benefit for the people



who are close to the resources. The people can’t see the positive impact of those resources,” he explained. Therefore, he believes that with natural gas exploration the situation will not be much different.

Speaking along the same lines, Gildo Somar, a member of the Youth Hub in Pemba said, “I’m not going to say what I hope or what will improve but I’m going to ask what has improved because there are resources that have been exploited for a long time and the population remains the same. People there are either voiceless or their tiny voices reach nowhere. Nobody hears them.



Felisberto Júlio, member of the Youth Hub Montepuez, stressed the need to create mechanisms that benefit youth: “We would like our Government to create conditions for the well-being of young people, through the improvement of education and health sectors.



For Manecas Alide Quisado, Mozambique has everything to develop, because it has a lot of wealth. “Years ago, they drove the local people away empty-handed and that is one of the factors that lead these communities to ally themselves with the criminals from Mocímboa [insurgents]. If we look at other resources, we have wood here, wood has been exploited for years. Trucks of wood pass by here every day, but our schools don’t have desks.

The resources should not just give salaries to the people who work in the companies, but should guarantee development.



Marques Marcelino, from the Youth Hub of Montepuez, calls for greater participation of local leaders and youth in the decision making of the exploitation of these natural resources. Additionally, he highlighted the importance of transparency in revenue management. “We complain because we don’t know where these funds go and what is done with them. If there was transparency, we would know that there is no infrastructure, no improved schools, because the fund was allocated for other things. But since there is no transparency, we end up speculating things that are not. So I call for transparency in the management of funds from the sale of natural resources.”

Mesmaio Ramos, also from the Youth Hub of Montepuez, argued that the government should, in the first place, look at vulnerable



people because the lack of opportunities is a very serious problem that makes Mozambicans, particularly young boys and girls, join violent extremism.

Saranque Iassine, from the Youth Hub in Pemba, argues that transparency is fundamental for the participation of young people in the governance of natural resources. In his perspective, “for young people to have participation in the exploitation of natural resources, there must be transparency in governance itself. If young people don’t know what is happening with our resources that are being managed by the government, then they have no way to intervene because everything is hidden. In order for young people to intervene there has to be transparency on the part of the Government.” For Iassine, transparency avoids corruption, because when things are hidden, there is a greater possibility of corruption occurring in the management of resources.



Young people’s concern about transparency was noticeable. In this aspect, young people were informed that despite the persisting challenges, Mozambique has taken significant steps towards transparency in the extractive sector, with emphasis on the implementation of the Extractive Industry Transparency Initia-

tive (EITI). This initiative constitutes a standard that allows the disclosure of relevant information along the value chain of the extractive industry, covering contracts, production data and revenues. It also allows civil society to participate in a forum for dialogue between companies and government.



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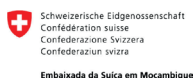
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