

Opportunities and challenges for young people in Cabo Delgado's reconstruction



Introduction

Statistics in Mozambique show that young people are the majority of the population (79% of the population is under 35)¹. Although many are of working age, the biggest problem faced by this group is the lack of job opportunities and space for the creation and development of entrepreneurial ideas, limitations that often result

from the excessive bureaucracy that characterizes Mozambican public institutions².

In Cabo Delgado province, for example, by 2017 about 77.3% of the total population was under the age of 35, of which 39.5% was of working age. The province has the highest illiteracy rate in Mozambique - 53%, and about 80% of the total population with occupation

practices agriculture, forestry, and fishing³.

At the same time, from the end of the first and beginning of the second decade of this century, the province became involved in a Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) economy, driven by prospecting and research companies, exploration and production companies, and logistical support companies. In addition to

¹ Instituto Nacional de Estatística (INE): IV Recenseamento Geral da População e Habitação 2017: Resultados Definitivos. Moçambique, 2017.

² Jornal O País. Moçambique entre as 12 economias onde abrir empresas é mais difícil. Disponível em <https://www.opais.co.mz/mocambique-entre-as-12-economias-onde-abrir-empresa-e-mais-dificil/>, acessado em 4 Jul. 2022

³ Instituto Nacional de Estatística (INE)... *op.cit.*

the LNG projects, there is the precious stone (ruby) industry in Montepuez and the graphite mines in Ancuabe and Balama. The point in common is that all reserves (gas, rubies and graphite) are presented as among the largest in the world, which has obviously created great expectations within the population of Cabo Delgado, particularly among young people seeking mechanisms for affirmation in society.

Contrary to all created expectations, the first years of implementation and development of the projects showed a weak involvement of local young people, reflecting the poor access to professional and vocational education, and the lack of English command - the working language in large projects, a situation that led multinational companies to choose to hire young people from other geographical areas different from the projects location.

In fact, some scholars associate the emergence and structuring of violent extremism in Cabo Delgado with the frustration of youth expectations, linking the adherence of the youth of this province to recruitment with the idea of having been instrumentalized due to the lack of job opportunities, material resources, literary qualifications and marginalization⁴, in a context where they are in *wait-hood*⁵ with numerous unmet needs.

The violent extremism in Cabo Delgado is characterized by civilian beheadings, destruc-

tion of housing and state infrastructure, which has caused a serious humanitarian crisis that affects more than 800,000 displaced people and the loss of about 23,000 jobs due to the suspension of the activities of many companies, such as the French oil company TotalEnergies that suspended, indefinitely, the LNG project due to security issues⁶.

Since the beginning of the attacks in October 2017, the government has not assumed poverty, frustration of expectations, and socioeconomic inequalities as part of the causes of the conflict, as early readings by researchers and academics on the possible motivations for youth engagement in violent extremism suggested⁷. The authorities referred the explanation to "banditry" issues⁸ and domestic motivations resulting from the cyclical blackmail of war driven by individuals manipulated to prop up the ego of internal and external elites⁹.

However, in response to all this conjuncture, the promotion essay of the socio-economic development of Cabo Delgado is inaugurated from the first quarter of 2020, precisely with the creation of the *Agência de Desenvolvimento Integrado do Norte* (ADIN), through the Decree n° 9/2020, of March 18, of the Council of Ministers. The focus of ADIN is the promotion of multiform actions in order to boost socio-economic development in an integrated manner and foster social harmony throughout the northern region of the coun-

try, with special attention to Cabo Delgado.

This essay should be located in the broader context of the effort to reconcile the fight against violent extremism through the military front with the component of rebuilding the social and economic tissue. Thus, in addition to the creation of ADIN, in July 2021 troops from Rwanda arrived in Mozambique, and a month later the SADC military offensive (SAMIM - Mission In Mozambique) was officially launched.

Furthermore, the creation of ADIN also allowed the reconstruction process in Cabo Delgado to be multifaceted, involving different actors who present different projects and programs whose main component is the creation of an environment of social cohesion in the province and in the northern region in general. These actors look at the role that young people play in the conflict and how they can be empowered to participate in the peace building process and reconstruction of the socio-economic, political and cultural tissue, which would result in their involvement in the province's development.

These assumptions make it important to map the space of opportunities and challenges that young people may have within this multifaceted process, given the confluence, heterogeneity and dynamics of the actors who design and implement programs and projects for the Cabo Delgado reconstruction.

What are the opportunities and challenges for young people given the actors involved in the Cabo Delgado reconstruction?

The main task of the State is to solve the problems of its population, either by creating income redistribution policies or by creating the conditions and opportunities that allow each citizen to materialize his or her life project. However, in

a pluralist context and a manifest lack of state capacity, as Mozambique shows, the government is not the only entity that manages the society affairs. It should play the role of facilitator and consensus builder in order to allow actors such

as organized civil society, the private sector, academia, the media, and other forms of indirect administration of the state, such as municipalities or government agencies, to address the problems that the population faces in their daily lives.

⁴ MAQUENZI, J.; FEIJÓ, J. Pobreza, Desigualdades e Conflitos no Norte de Cabo Delgado. Observatório do Meio Rural, *Observador Rural: Documento de Trabalho*, n. 76, Julho 2019.

⁵ *Wait-hood* is a concept developed by political scientist Diane Singerman in 2007, to describe the period between teen age and adulthood, while young people wait to secure a stable job and get married. It is often used in the work on youth, social movements, and social change by the Mozambican anthropologist, Alcinda Honwana.

⁶ Comunicado da Confederação das Associações Económicas de Moçambique (CTA) – Recuperação das Vilas de Mocimboa da Praia e Palma. 10 de Agosto de 2021, disponível em: <https://cta.org.mz/2021/08/10/> acessado em 7 Jun. 2022

⁷ MAQUENZI, J.; FEIJÓ, J... *op.cit.*

⁸ The General Commander of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique, Bernardino Rafael, gave seven days to the criminals who are creating a change of order in Mocimboa da Praia to lay down their weapons. For more details see *Jornal Notícias*, available at: <https://www.jornalnoticias.co.mz/comandante-geral-da-prm-em-mocimboa-da-praia-atacantes-tem-sete-dias-para-depor-as-armas> accessed on 17 Jul. 2022

⁹ President Nyusi says violence in Cabo Delgado, in the north of the country, has an internal and external hand. For more details see DW, available at: <https://www.dw.com/pt-002/mo%C3%A7ambique-nyusi-pede-uni%C3%A3o-no-combate-aos-insurgentes-no-norte/a-52244014> accessed on 17 de Jul. 2022

Actors	Level	Interests
Government of Mozambique (<i>Secretário de Estado da Juventude e Emprego - SEJE, Secretaria de Estado do Ensino Técnico-Profissional - SEETP, Fundo Nacional de Desenvolvimento Sustentável - FNDS</i>)	Central	Create policies, programs, and projects with a view to socioeconomic development and a spirit of citizenship and patriotism in young people; Create policies for access to professional education; Manage the finances of the reconstruction process under the ADIN programs;
Agência de Desenvolvimento Integrado do Norte (ADIN)	Regional	Create opportunities for young people to discourage their membership in violent extremist groups, putting them at the service of the development of the northern region and the country;
Conselho Executivo Provincial de Cabo Delgado (CEP-CD)	Provincial	Create employment opportunities at the provincial level for youth; provide recreation and sports programs;
International Agencies: World Bank, African Development Bank (AfDB), United Nations Office of Project Services (UNOSP), Swiss Cooperation; Embassy of the Netherlands; Civil Society Organizations (CDD, MASC, IESE, CESC, AZUL Foundation);	International, National, Provincial and Local	Fund/develop alternative programs, such as civic engagement and political participation programs, leadership trainings, and 21st century and engagement in building peace and social cohesion Monitor the programs approved and implemented by the Government;
Private Sector: TotalEnergies, ENI, ExxonMobil, ENH, CTA, <i>Conselho Empresarial Provincial de Cabo Delgado</i> , local small entrepreneurs;	Internacional, Nacional, Provincial and Local	Recovery of the business environment in the province; Hiring skilled and quality labor to meet its investments;

Table 1: Key players involved in the reconstruction of Cabo Delgado, their level and interests in creating opportunities for youth¹⁰.

The role of the Government as a key player

One of the great opportunities that young people obtain with the presentation and consequent processing of their demands is the creation of policies, programs, and projects by the Government that address specific needs, such as reconstruction in the context of the conflict in Cabo Delgado. In this way, institutional changes were implemented at the time of the formation of the Government of the quinquennium 2020-2024, three years after the outbreak of violent extremism, with the extinction of the *Ministério da Juventude e Desportos* and of the *Ministério do Trabalho, Emprego e Segurança Social*, and the consequent creation of the *Secretaria do Estado da Juventude e Emprego* (SEJE), through Presidential Decree No. 2/2020, January 30.

SEJE has as its essential objective to define, promote and implement policies, strategies, programs and legal framework for the areas of youth, employment and volunteering that aim at socioeconomic development and spirit of citizenship and patriotism in young people. Therefore, this institution should show the path to be followed in the context of generational change, where youth would have a structuring role in the processes of governance and development of Mozambique.

From the analysis made, it can be seen that the programs and projects developed by SEJE were all structured to be implemented in the short and medium term (2021-2025) and have the **Programa EMPREGA** as their main interface. The EMPREGA Program is an

initiative for young entrepreneurs financed by the World Bank to the tune of 27.5 million dollars, with the aim of creating 50,000 jobs.

The *Fundo de Apoio às Iniciativas Juvenis* (FAIJ) began in 2015 and SEJE is continuing with the new model that began in 2020, where the management of funds began to be done by a commercial bank (Banco Comercial e de Investimentos - BCI) and had as beneficiary the provinces of: Inhambane, Gaza, Tete and Niassa. Therefore, it did not include the youth of Cabo Delgado province. The main requirement to access this fund is that the proponents must have a bank account and an operating license in the area they are applying for.

The *Creative Youth Award*, created by Ministerial Diploma No. 6/2014, of May 12, aims to boost creativity within young people, in the areas of entrepreneurship, technological innovation and artistic creation. Although it was conceived in 2014, its implementation and publicity has been remarkable in the last three years. For example, in 2021, the national gala was held in Cabo Delgado, with the aim of essentially serving as a vehicle for demonstrating solidarity and inclusion in the province affected by violent extremism.

The *AGORA EMPREGA* is one of the initiatives that had its pilot phase launched in Maputo province and consists in supporting young entrepreneurs who have at least the 10th grade concluded or a technical course of equivalent level. This competition has two phases: the First Pilot Phase - was launched in March 2022 and privileged the province and the City of Maputo; the Second National Phase - its implementation is planned for October 2022 to May 2025, throughout the country.

The *Concurso Meu Kit, Meu Emprego* is a SEJE initiative implemented by the National Employment Institute, with funding from the World Bank. In 2021 it distributed in Cabo Delgado, specifically in the districts of Pemba, Montepuez, Mecúfi, Namuno, and Metuge, 65 kits of the cutting and sewing specialty to, in a first phase, produce COVID-19 prevention masks.

Now, if on the one hand the programs formulated and timidly implemented by SEJE are multiplying, on the other their visibility and impact are not noticed. First, because they are initiatives that do not look at the specificity of the contexts, and second, because they privilege urban youth who have access to education, financial services, and the bureaucracy of the state, to the detriment of rural youth who suffer from lack of employment and marginalization and who are prone to be instrumentalized in practices that jeopardize the survival of the state.

¹⁰ Este trabalho reconhece a existência de um conjunto muito mais amplo de actores com interesses na reconstrução de Cabo Delgado, como por exemplo a academia, os media e os principais centros de pesquisa sobre conflito e *peace-building*. No entanto, reserva a sua análise para os actores indicados no Quadro 1 por serem relevantes para efeitos do tema proposto

População com idade para obter conta bancária em Cabo Delgado



Source: data from the National Institute of Statistics (INE), 2017.

The formulation of public policies with an impact on youth must take into account a holistic and concerted vision between different actors and institutions, due to their multidimensional nature. They must also address structural issues so that they have long-term sustainability and do not merely serve as electioneering policies aimed at creating an illusion of a better future in young people, which can stir up other conflicts.

One of the structural reasons put forward by the first attempts to understand the moti-

vations for the engagement of young people in Cabo Delgado in violent extremism is the deficit of technical-vocational and vocational training institutes, which has made and makes it so that the few young people with access to school education do not have a professional occupation after completing the 1st and 2nd cycle of general secondary education. The few public technical-vocational schools existing in Cabo Delgado, four are concentrated in the provincial capital Pemba, and two others in the districts of Macomia and Quissanga¹¹.

População rural entre 15 e 34 anos em condição de alfabetização em Cabo Delgado



Source: data from the National Institute of Statistics (INE), 2017.

The institution responsible for the vocational training of young people is the **Secretaria de Estado do Ensino Técnico-Profissional (SEETP)**, created by Presidential Decree No. 36/2020 of November 17. This institution has as central attributions the promotion of the creation of technical-vocational education and professional training institutions (paragraph g) and the promotion of the expansion of access to technical-vocational education and professional training (paragraph h).

In the case of Cabo Delgado, the design of new technical-vocational education schools in areas affected by violent extremism in the context of reconstruction would create training opportunities for youth, allowing them to participate in an informed way in the oppor-

tunities created by SEJE. However, no practical actions of this institution are known. Allied to this issue is the challenge of documentation requirements in a context where some young people have had their possessions set on fire during attacks by violent extremists.

In fact, in a context where 80% of the active population in Cabo Delgado practices agriculture, forestry and fishing as main survival and income activities, the entrepreneurial projects and programs implemented by the Government are supposed to provide support in those sectors and not try to instill exogenous solutions, as in the case of sewing kits, which may not have the potential to dynamize the economy and create a multiplying effect in the development of the province.

The Agência de Desenvolvimento Integrado do Norte (ADIN) as a point of confluence of actors and actions

As demonstrated, the northern region of Mozambique, which in addition to Cabo Delgado includes the provinces of Niassa and Nampula, presents almost homogeneous characteristics in terms of human and economic development indexes, and the structuring of violent extremism has taken shape in these provinces, especially with the tendency to recruit young people to join the ranks of violent extremists¹².

It was in this context that ADIN arose¹³ with the objective of offering a contrary narrative to that disseminated by violent extremists and creating opportunities in order to place society, especially youth, at the service of the development of the region and the country. To this end, a number of actions have been mobilized to address, in a first phase, the fight against violent extremism, and instruments such as the *Plano de Reconstrução de Cabo Delgado (PRCD)* and the *Programa de Resiliência e Desenvolvimento Integrado do Norte (PREDIN)* have been approved by the Government. These initiatives are mainly financed by the World Bank, the United Nations, the European Union, and the African Development Bank (AfDB), with the *Fundo Nacional de Desenvolvimento Sustentável (FNDS)* appearing as the main financial management actor.

In effect, PREDIN is the instrument that recognizes, for the first time, the exclusion and political and economic marginalization of youth as the major problems that must be addressed in the reconstruction of Cabo Delgado, with a view to building the resilience of youth in the face of violent extremism. Valued at USD 2.5 billion, the program is to be implemented over a five-year period. If implemented, PREDIN would present itself as a great opportunity to boost job and income creation for youth in Cabo Delgado and the northern region as a whole.

¹¹ FEIJÓ, J. (Coord.). *Conflito e Desenvolvimento em Cabo Delgado*. Maputo: Escolar Editora, 2021.

¹² FORQUILHA, S.; PEREIRA, J. Afinal, não é só Cabo Delgado! Dinâmicas da insurgência em Nampula e Niassa. *IDEIAS n. 138*. IESE, 9 Mar. 2021. pp. 1-2

¹³ TAVARES, A. Agência de Desenvolvimento Integrado do Norte (ADIN): uma solução ou paliativo para reconstrução de Cabo Delgado?. *Diálogos de Governança n. 004*. DCPAP-FLCS/UEM, 2 Nov. 2021. pp. 7-9

However, persistent challenges regarding the independence and transparency of the ADIN, with its mandate centralized in the Ministério da Agricultura e Desenvolvimento Rural (MADER), offer no guarantee of bringing about radical change that

can fully respond to youth problems by excluding civil society actors who would contribute to the independent monitoring of the implementation process. Ultimately, the presence of different actors in the ADIN structure would make this agency

a space for participation, confidence building, and intersection of actions with the function of contributing in a multifaceted way to the creation of social cohesion, peace building, and boosting development based on building the capacity of local youth.

The role of the Conselho Executivo Provincial de Cabo Delgado as implementer of actions in the field

The new decentralization package triggered in 2018 with the punctual revision of the Constitution of the Republic (CRM) and effective in 2019 with the indirect election of provincial governors does not allow much maneuvering for the realization of electoral promises.

The reasons for this have to do specifically with the dispute for space and protagonism between the Provincial Executive Council and the State Representative Services in the Province, in addition to the overlap in terms of financial and human resources and even in terms of bureaucratic organization. This situation constitutes an obstacle in presenting robust and realistic policies to solve the problems of young people, in addition to the fact that the Provincial Executive Council does not have a tax base to obtain its own revenues

in order to think of local solutions. In other words, the Provincial Executive Council, which is headed by a Provincial Governor elected in universal and direct suffrage, depends on financial resources from the central level.

Without much room for the materialization of electoral promises due to various factors, such as limited resources and limited involvement in the ADIN management structure, the Provincial Executive Council of Cabo Delgado is limited to developing programs to promote sports and entertainment to positively occupy the youth, in addition to implementing a modest plan to support the return of populations displaced by the conflict to their areas of origin.

Now, the institutionalization of the elected provincial governors occurred in 2020, so

three years after the conflict began and after surveys had indicated the lack of job opportunities and marginalization of young people in the province as reasons for their adherence to violent extremism. The *Conselho Executivo Provincial de Cabo Delgado* was expected to play a relevant role in mobilizing youth not to join violent extremism, but more importantly to be the focal point for coordinating opportunities at the provincial level and redistributing them in an equitable manner in order to involve them in the development process. The *Conselho Executivo Provincial de Cabo Delgado*, in the context of reconstruction, be an effective implementer of actions on the ground, seeking an alternative mobilization of resources, in order to materialize the essence of its creation.

International agencies and civil society organizations as proponents of alternatives and agents for monitoring government action

Civil society organizations in Mozambique play an important role in monitoring government action, often contributing to the discovery of cases of misuse of resources. However, civil society faces the closure of civic space, a situation that makes its work on the ground difficult, especially in Cabo Delgado.

In the context of the reconstruction of the socio-economic tissue of Cabo Delgado, civil society organizations have designed intervention programs that aim to create conditions for social cohesion, development of a culture of peace and harmony, and citizen engagement in human rights and participation in existing democratic spaces.

An example of this is the program “*Ações da Sociedade Civil para Coesão Social no Norte de Moçambique*”, implemented by a consortium consisting of the Center for Democracy and Development (CDD), the MASC Foundation (Fundação Mecanismo de Apoio à Sociedade Civil) and the Institute for Social and Economic Studies (IESE), with support from the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC). The focus of this program is capacity building for youth and

women in six districts in the northern region of Mozambique. In Cabo Delgado the districts of Montepuez and Chiúre are covered.

CDD leads the consortium in its youth agency component - which is materialized through Youth Hubs and Leadership Academies. This component aims to provide training in civic engagement, leadership, social entrepreneurship, and 21st Century skills, as a way to contribute to young people being included in the discussion of the problems that affect them and, through dialogue with government authorities, finding formulas for their solution. The Youth Hubs also allow young people to use the resources at their disposal to create opportunities for themselves, for other young people, and for society in general.

The *Centro de Apoio e Capacitação da Sociedade Civil* (CESC) runs the human rights program called EQUAL. Funded by the Kingdom of the Netherlands, The *IGUAL* focuses on building the capacity of local-level civil society organizations, including those working on youth issues, to take ownership of their rights and create a culture of citizenship. Also at the local level, the *Fundação Azul* is implementing

the *YOPIPIA* program that trains young people in life skills, entrepreneurship, and green technologies and prepares them for employment.

Through the *programa de Recuperação da Crise do Norte* (NCRP), implemented by the Mozambican government through FNDS and ADIN, with technical assistance from UNOPS and funding from the World Bank, the *Fundação Azul* participates in social cohesion actions through the creation of peace committees in the resettlement centers of Metuge district. In these committees, young people are trained in positive narratives of community journalism to reinforce success stories and carry out campaigns for peace and social cohesion.

Despite this effort in the implementation of these programs and others, there is the challenge of extending the space of action to other districts, as well as the difficulty in terms of penetration due to the conflict scenario that contributes to the closing of the civic space and limitation of the action of non-state actors.

The private sector as responsible for absorbing the labor force of the young

The private sector in Cabo Delgado is currently dynamized by multinational gas, precious stones and graphite companies, in addition to national and local companies that absorb the labor force of the province's youth. In addition to the challenges imposed by violent extremism that contributed to the temporary suspension of TotalEnergies' LNG project increasing the number of unemployed youth, this sector is governed by the laws of the market and, above all, the extractive economy requires highly

qualified labor, which is difficult to find among the youth of Cabo Delgado.

The kind of requirements demanded for access to employment in the extractive sector in a province where there has never been investment in technical-vocational training means that local young people lose out to young people coming from other provinces, since they are not prepared to meet the demands of multinational companies that have a globalized dimension, and therefore do not

look at borders when it comes to hiring qualified human resources.

One of the solutions would be the creation, within the scope of the proposed Local Content Law, of opportunities for vocational training and professional internships, including in national companies, such as the National Hydrocarbon Company (ENH) and others that make up the logistics range, for the subsequent insertion of young people in the extractive industry.

Final considerations

This paper has sought to analyze the profile of youth in Cabo Delgado to understand the motivations that contribute to their engagement in violent extremism, and then to present the framework of opportunities and the main challenges faced in the reconstruction process of the province, focusing on the programs, plans and projects presented by the Government, ADIN, the Cabo Delgado Provincial Executive Council, international agencies, civil society organizations and the private sector.

It was found that while there are employment opportunities driven primarily by the extractive industry that has characterized

the economy of Cabo Delgado since the late first decade and early second decade of the 2000's, there are also major challenges related to the low level of training and mastery of foreign languages, particularly English, necessary for the insertion of young people into the projects of multinational companies.

In the context of reconstruction, there are various initiatives that intend to offer another narrative to the youth so that they do not join violent extremism, highlighting the programs of the Government through SEJE, the role of the *Conselho Executivo Provincial de Cabo Delgado* and the initiatives of civil society organizations, partners and international agencies

that support the building of an environment of peace and harmony, social cohesion and youth entrepreneurship through training in skills that allow youth to access the job market.

In fact, the opportunities for youth in Cabo Delgado's reconstruction must present a holistic and contextualized approach to the local reality, but above all they must be coordinated and integrated, which would allow the inclusion of youth from other districts in a fair and transparent way. In this sense ADIN and the *Conselho Executivo Provincial de Cabo Delgado* are in the best position to articulate this process, through a structure that contemplates the different actors.



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