



MOZAMBIQUE

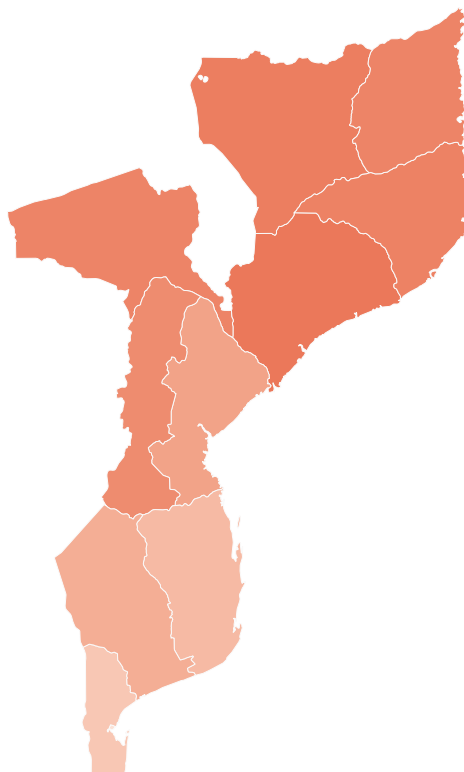
COUNTRY PROFILE



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MOZAMBIQUE

Percentage of women aged 20–24 years who were first married or in union before age 18.



Source: Mozambique AIDS Indicator Survey 2015. **Note:** This map is stylized and not to scale. It does not reflect a position by UNFPA or UNICEF on the legal status of any country or the delimitation of any frontiers.

The country context

Mozambique is home to 4 million child brides. Of these, 1.5 million married before age 15. Across the country, 53 per cent of all young women are married in childhood. Projections for the elimination of the practice in the country are not possible for Mozambique as the country has not shown evidence of progress in reducing the prevalence of child marriage over recent decades. Hence, it is not possible to build on observed rates of change: the projected prevalence will remain the same as today's levels – with more than half of all girls marrying in childhood – until signs of progress are evident.¹



Unlike the situation in Mozambique, globally over the past decade, the proportion of young women who were married as children decreased by 15 per cent, from nearly 1 in 4 to 1 in 5. This means that, over the last 10 years, the marriages of some 25 million girls have been averted. This remarkable accomplishment is under threat over the coming decade, making it even more difficult for Mozambique to change the course of development – up to 10 million more girls globally will be at risk of child marriage as a result of COVID-19, bringing the total number of girls at risk to 110 million.² The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) further estimates that nearly

24 million children and adolescents, including 11 million girls and young women, may drop out of school due to the pandemic's economic impact.³

Despite these setbacks and challenges, the elimination of child marriage by 2030 remains a priority under Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 on gender equality. This monumental task puts pressure on the global community to deliver effective interventions and policies at scale, generating calls for coordinated efforts and renewed commitments from stakeholders, particularly governments, to invest more to accelerate an end to child marriage.

Key highlights



Close to

1,300

adolescent girls were provided life-skills training, including counselling support to improve their psychosocial well-being and resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, a total of

1,900

village mentors and safe spaces facilitators were provided with content on gender-based violence (GBV), teenage pregnancy and child marriage via the phone in order to provide quality support and mentoring to girls at risk in their communities.

Sustained support and advocacy resulted in the approval and dissemination of a multisectoral child-friendly mechanism for prevention, reporting and referral of and response to violence against children in school, including child marriages, by the Ministry of Education.



Over **2 million adolescent girls and boys** were reached by the popular entertainment-education radio drama 'Ouro Negro' with nine episodes in a mini-series aired, targeting adolescents on content related to child marriage, teenage pregnancy and COVID-19 prevention.

The mentorship manual and implementation guide targeting boys and young men on gender equality and positive masculinities was successfully piloted as part of **Phase II programme adaptation of the Global Programme**, with close to



5,000

boys and men engaged in dialogue sessions despite the pandemic. Pre- and post-session assessments showed a



9.8 per cent

increase in knowledge among the participants on the negative consequences of child marriage, a



38.9 per cent

increase in understanding of reporting mechanisms for violence against children and child marriage, and a



23 per cent

increase in boys' and young men's willingness to change their behaviour and attitudes towards gender norms.



2020 Achievements



In Mozambique, the focus of the Global Programme is to accelerate action to end child marriage **by enhancing investments in and support for married and unmarried adolescent girls**, and by engaging young people (among other key actors) as agents of change in catalysing shifts towards positive gender norms.

Providing intensive support to marginalized girls

Results from a Global Programme-commissioned review that assessed child marriage evaluations published from 2000 to 2019 suggest that targeted interventions that enhance girls' human capital (e.g., schooling, life-skills, livelihood and gender rights training) and their employment opportunities are the most successful channel for delaying their marriage in programmes evaluated to date.⁴ In Mozambique, the focus of the Global Programme is to accelerate action to end child marriage by enhancing investments in and support for married and unmarried adolescent girls, and by engaging young people (among other key actors) as agents of change in catalysing shifts towards positive gender norms. In 2020, the programme also worked to make sure to mitigate the secondary impacts of COVID-19 on the lives of adolescent girls.

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The Global Programme in Mozambique is applying a 'leave no one behind' approach in multiple layers, by direct interventions reaching marginalized girls and young women – building their knowledge, agency and skills – and by facilitating access to and strengthening of adequate youth-friendly and gender-sensitive services; by contributing to an enabling environment through community interventions and engagement with men and boys; and through policy and legislative advocacy and technical support. The most vulnerable and marginalized adolescent girls are among those left behind in Mozambique and consequently at the greatest risk of child marriage. Hence, the Global Programme aims to reach the ones furthest behind by targeting girls and young women aged 10–24 years old in two of the most populated provinces in the country, Nampula and Zambezia. The targeted girls are living in remote and hard-to-reach areas with scarce access to sexual and reproductive health and GBV information and services, and they are mostly out of school and illiterate, some are pregnant and/or married, and some girls live with albinism or some form of disability.



Throughout the year, **psychosocial support** was provided at an individual level to

1,295
girls, including life-skills training through a total of

3,194
consultations with peer community mentors.

It is well known from previous public health crises that adolescent girls are disproportionately affected by emergencies. Hence, the Global Programme enhanced its psychosocial support to girls during the year. The support takes into account the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic is disproportionately affecting girls and women by exacerbating existing systemic gender inequalities at all levels, with potential implications

for the incidence of child marriage. The psychosocial support works to strengthen the resilience of girls and young women as well as positive norms that support equality and an enabling environment for their empowerment. Throughout the year, psychosocial support was provided at an individual level to 1,295 girls, including life-skills training through a total of 3,194 consultations with peer community mentors. To ensure outreach during the pandemic, the support was provided via phone. Training in psychosocial support was conducted for 29 district focal points and monitors to enable them to provide quality psychosocial support and supervision to the mentors.

Challenges, lessons learned and next steps

A key lesson learned through the COVID-19 pandemic is that it is feasible to use online learning and training platforms to reach and engage adolescents and young people, especially those in youth associations and groups. This is a low-cost and effective approach for capacity-building, knowledge sharing, planning and monitoring, and it will be important to continue to build the capacities of young people in using virtual communication technologies and to encourage them to transfer these skills to their peers.

With the mentorship sessions suspended and many services disrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic, girls and young women are facing greater risks of violence and harmful practices, including child marriage. Despite the challenges caused by the pandemic, many mentors have been proactive and resourceful agents of change in the COVID-19 response, by continuing to engage with and support their mentees throughout the year through individual mentorship sessions upon request via door-to-door visits, phone calls or individual meetings, giving information about sexual and reproductive health and rights, GBV and COVID-19 prevention. Yet, these informal mentorship sessions/encounters have been sporadic and not aligned with the regular mentorship cycles. To ensure continuation of psychosocial support provided to girls, adaptation to phone-based counselling was necessary. However, the target of girls to be reached was not achieved due to delays in inception of the new approach and the fact that not all 4,800 mentors have access to phones. To ensure that all mentors can be reached for further engagement with the mentees, either all mentors need to be provided with a phone, or alternative ways of reaching all mentors need to be devised.


With sexual and reproductive health and GBV services disrupted, and regular support and protection systems malfunctioning, the COVID-19 pandemic reinforced the urgency of leaving no one behind by adding additional challenges and vulnerabilities to already marginalized groups, including the adolescent girls and young women

targeted by the programme. Going forward, an even stronger focus will therefore be put on reaching girls living with disabilities, building on a plan developed with support from sectoral interventions for children with disabilities.

Enhancing the family and community environment

Multilayered social and behaviour change activities reached more than 2 million family members, adolescents and children in Mozambique in 2020 with an integrated package of messages on essential family practices, protective behaviours (including a specific focus on child marriage) and COVID-19 prevention. This was achieved through multiple channels, including the 'Ouro Negro' radio drama series, community dialogues and faith-based organizations.

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Through two annual coordination meetings in the provinces of Zambezia and Nampula, with all implementing partners and government actors participating, UNICEF made significant progress in terms of building synergies and collaboration between different community engagement platforms, such as community radio, youth associations, religious and community leaders, and services led by the Government and civil society at the local level, for increased joint action to end child marriage. Through capacity-building, these actors were able to sustain collective promotion of and awareness-raising around children's rights and uptake of adolescent-friendly health services, including the SMS Biz/U-Report platform (e.g., the newly established peer-counselling hub in Nampula) and Linha Fala Crianca (the national child helpline), as well as spark a dialogue on ending child marriage in communities.

The Global Programme also worked with civil society organizations to support the challenging of harmful social norms and to promote gender equality. In 2020, UNFPA supported the foundation for community development (FDC) and the Network of Women's Associations of Zambezia (NAFEZA) in mobilizing influential actors at the community level, including community and religious leaders, midwives, parents and other decision makers. A total of 157 influential actors participated in dialogues addressing themes related to combating child marriage and to promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights of girls and young women. At least 16 cases of child marriage were dissolved in three targeted districts as a result of community mobilization.

Through external evaluations and programme reports of the Rapariga Biz programme, a need has been identified to strengthen the programme's gender-transformative approach by enhanced engagement of boys and young men through a boys' mentorship model to enable positive masculinities and equitable social norms – benefiting both boys and girls – to build more just and equitable communities in the targeted districts. Hence, under the leadership of UNFPA, a mentorship manual and implementation guide targeting boys and young men around issues of sexual and reproductive health and rights, HIV and GBV, life-skills, gender equality and positive masculinities was developed and piloted in one district each in Zambezia and Nampula provinces. A total of 4,819 adolescents and youth aged 10–24 years were reached through 20 community dialogue cycles. The results from the dialogues have been encouraging, with pre- and post-surveys showing a 9.8 per cent increase in knowledge of the harmful consequences of child marriage among the participants, a 38.9 per cent increase in understanding reporting mechanisms for child marriage and for violence against children, and a 23 per cent

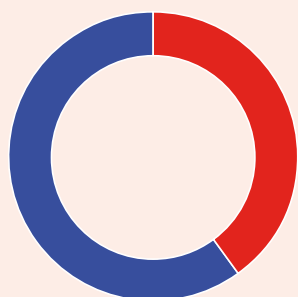
increase in people's willingness to change their attitudes and behaviours related to harmful gender norms. Another remarkable change in behaviour is in how the Matronas people in Murutho and Aube communities have changed the guidance they provide during initiation rituals, now encouraging girls to continue education and avoid sex even after the initiation.

The entertainment-education radio drama series 'Ouro Negro' continued to run in 2020, with 2 million regular listeners of nine newly produced episodes, developed in partnership with the youth advisory group. The episodes focused on preventing and mitigating the secondary impacts of COVID-19, including themes such as adolescent sexual and reproductive health, HIV, violence against children and child marriage, with specific messaging towards young people living with disabilities. The episodes were broadcast twice a week through 115 radio stations in both Portuguese and several local languages (Emakwa, Cisena, Elomwe, Ndao and Tsonga). UNICEF, in collaboration with Radio Mozambique, also produced 55 radio spots on early childhood development, psychosocial support and violence against children, translated into 17 local languages and broadcast through 12 radio stations. These messages reached over 5 million children, including 100,000 children aged 3–6 years, and their families during the year.

Some 3.5 million young people were reached through a social media campaign targeting adolescents with messages on COVID-19 prevention, violence against children, and mental health in 2020 through the Global Programme. In addition, with complementary funds, social media, radio, WhatsApp and music platforms were used to continue outreach to and engagement with adolescents in the absence of planned interpersonal communication. UNFPA, UNICEF, Coalizao and the Secretary for Youth and Employment launched an adolescent-friendly social media campaign by using local creative artists and their social media followers to promote COVID-19 prevention practices. Between August and October, the campaign reached over 4.1 million individuals, recording 8.8 million impressions and close to 419,000 engagements. Further, a TikTok mask challenge video recorded 53,000 views and received 12,000 likes through the UNICEF social media account, and over 100 adolescents and young people in Maputo, Nampula and Zambezia provinces participated in the campaign offline by sharing their pictures and videos under the challenge. The campaign was also able to extend its reach by associating with PCI Media and Radio Mozambique to produce programmes with local artists talking about COVID-19; these were aired through all 12 radio stations of Radio Mozambique across the country.

Around 319,000 adolescents and young people (41 per cent female) systemically engaged with the U-Report/SMS Biz mobile platform in 2020 by asking questions related to sexual and reproductive health, HIV prevention, child marriage and GBV.⁵ To leverage the effectiveness of the platform, the Secretary for Youth and Employment, the Ministry of Health and UNICEF repurposed two SMS Biz counselling hubs, with 52 trained counsellors to respond to COVID-19-related issues. This set-up allowed the counsellors to address more than 500,000 queries on COVID-19 between April and December 2020.

As the programme pivoted due to the COVID-19 pandemic, one innovative approach the Mozambique team used was the launch of a national 'child marriage innovation challenge'.⁶ The aim of the challenge was to source new solutions to existing challenges regarding ending child marriage from the technology, innovation and entrepreneurship communities in Mozambique. A specific focus was placed on engaging youth in developing innovative solutions within three core areas: male engagement; community awareness around the law to prevent and combat premature unions; and tracking and referral of child marriage cases. Some 98 submissions



41%

female



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were received, demonstrating the great interest and engagement from young people in social change, and a technical panel selected three top candidates, proceeding to a high-level panel composed of representatives from UNFPA, UNICEF, the Ministry of Gender, the National Coalition to End Child Marriage and IdeiaLab, which selected the final winner of the contest – a community-based initiative led by young people in Cabo Delgado. The challenge made visible the added value of focusing on digital and innovative means of reaching and engaging with young people as change agents, especially in times when movements are restricted.⁷

Challenges, lessons learned and next steps

Due to the measures put in effect to stop the spread of COVID-19, all education and community engagement activities (including training) planned by the Global Programme were suspended and/or postponed to the last quarter of 2020 and 2021. In order to comply with the Government's containment measures, the programme adjusted its strategies for community and interpersonal communication interventions by focusing on communication channels other than face-to-face where possible, such as mass media, social media and the use of phones. A community leaders' guide was finalized during the year, which will be distributed during training in 2021.

Due to the movement restrictions, the outreach to boys and young men in 2020 was limited to the piloting of the mentorship manual. Printing of the manual is currently ongoing, to take this work forward in 2021 (partially funded by the Rapariga Biz programme).

The lack of connectivity and technology at all levels, including among implementing partners, made communication and monitoring challenging in 2020. To address this gap, the programme procured technological equipment (e.g., laptops and modems) and provided training in online conferencing to several key partners, including government actors, to ensure continuity of services and monitoring of activities, even if remotely.

Going forward, the programme will include paralegals in community outreach activities such as dialogues under the Rapariga Biz programme, to specifically address girls' rights and raise awareness of the new child marriage law at the community level. The paralegals will also play a role in identifying cases of child marriage in the communities and supporting girls and families to denounce the practice. UNFPA will also ensure continuation of funding for the implementation of selected submissions from the child marriage innovation challenge, focusing on disseminating the child marriage law and tracking child marriage cases in targeted districts.

Considering the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic affecting the country, community engagement activities will have to continue to be adapted to COVID-19 prevention measures. Mass media, social media and phone-based and online tools and platforms will continue to be used to ensure a wide range of young people and community members are reached with key messages related to child marriage, violence against children, and the promotion of protection and health services. In the event that places of worship will be closed, UNICEF will use creative ways to engage faith-based organizations to ensure that messages related to child marriage continue to be disseminated.

Strengthening systems

In 2020, the violence against children referral and reporting mechanism for schools (which also includes harmful practices) was approved and launched by the Consultative Council of the Education Ministry, with support from the United Nations and civil society organizations. The mechanism was developed in collaboration with and with full support from justice actors such as the police and the courts system. The mechanism aims to ensure the support of multisectoral actors in addressing violence in a child-friendly way. To support the roll-out, a simplified brochure has been produced and printed, with distribution ongoing. Further, to strengthen the child protection system in the country, child marriage and violence against children district plans were supported, and training and operational support provided to activate the response plans.

The programme supported the Government to conclude a mapping and capacity assessment of social services, falling within the scope of the Social Action Services Program (PROSAS), a new component of the National Strategy for Basic Social Security (ENSSB II 2016–2024) in Mozambique. The mapping exercise provided evidence-based knowledge on the capacity of social services to attend to the needs of beneficiaries across the country, improving awareness of the availability and capacity of staff for each service. UNICEF also supported the Government to strengthen the capacity to respond to cases of violence against women and children. Based on the standard operating procedure (SOP) for case management, developed with UNICEF support, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare revised and approved case management guidelines and tools to address all types of child protection cases. The SOP and guidelines aim to harmonize the response of the Government towards victims of violence and those whose rights have been violated. The guidelines were piloted in Nampula and Inhambane provinces in 2020, and training for government social workers was started



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during the year in Nampula and Cabo Delgado, reaching 60 social workers in total. Roll-out of the guidelines and training to the rest of the provinces is scheduled for 2021.

Due to COVID-19, most of the education activities in 2020 were postponed to 2021; however, the programme was able to ensure the integration of messages around prevention of violence against children into the distance learning activities going on during the pandemic. The programme was also able, with the leveraging of additional funds, to initiate the revision and integration of referral protocols for violence against children, child marriage, GBV, and mental health and psychosocial support into the existing psychosocial support training manual for teachers, and use it to train gender, school health and emergency focal points on the provision of psychological first aid and referrals of children affected by COVID-19 to specialized mental health and psychosocial support services. The manual also includes the recently approved implementation model from the violence against children in schools mechanism. In 2021, the plan is to scale up teacher training on the manual in programme focus districts.

Challenges, lessons learned and next steps

Mozambique has the lowest ratio of social workers in the region (1 per 75,000 people), with the lowest ratios found in Nampula and Tete provinces (1 per 144,000 and 115,000 people, respectively). The number of social welfare staff based at district level is not nearly enough to respond effectively to the demands from the community level to provide care and support to vulnerable families. PROSAS aims to address these gaps, but resource allocations for the sector remain a challenge. In addition to this, social workers were important front-line professionals in the pandemic response. However, increased demand for services from the already thin workforce meant that the priorities of the services deployed to the emergency made it difficult to ensure implementation of actions aiming to construct a long-term programme. The lack of temporary shelters for victims of child marriage and at-risk girls who refuse to be married also remains a challenge.

Another challenge during the year was that, with the COVID-19 outbreak, the risk of violence and psychosocial problems increased. The Government, in partnership with the Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative and with UNICEF support, developed a training package on case management services and psychosocial support for families and children – training that can be delivered face-to-face or remotely. So far, 1,289 children who are survivors of violence have received psychosocial support through the government services. The teachers' psychosocial support manual is also being adapted to incorporate modules for violence against children and GBV in times of COVID-19.

During the pandemic, schools were closed in Mozambique, making it difficult to implement activities involving students. During the year, focus was therefore given to capacity-building of education officials and school council members to prevent cases of violence and child marriage as part of the back-to-school campaign.

A lesson from the year is seen from the results achieved with the approval of the violence against children in schools mechanism. This approval shows that prevention of violence (including child marriage) is a multisectoral issue that cannot be addressed by one sector alone, but requires joint efforts from different government and non-governmental actors. Considering the stronger mandate of the multisectoral reference group to respond to cases of violence against children after the revision of the SOPs, UNICEF will continue to support the group in focus districts together with the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

A training-of-trainers package is under development, including modules on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, and will be tested at the beginning of 2021. This will allow focus districts to monitor and provide support to cases of violence against children and child marriage. Following up on the approval of the violence against children in schools mechanism, UNICEF, the Ministry of Education and civil society organizations will take the lead in providing support to the operationalization of the mechanism, including: development of a reporting and referral operational plan; training gender and school health focal points in the use of the mechanism, on menstrual hygiene management, and on the use of the new guide on life-skills activities; building the capacities of the child parliament and youth associations to understand the mechanism and share the information among their peers; and investing in capacity-building of education sector actors to ensure availability of skilled personnel and that schools provide gender-sensitive education. The implementation of the mechanism will also need to

be complemented by additional policy tools, such as a policy on the retention of pregnant girls in education.

Facilitating supportive laws and policies

An analysis of longitudinal data on child marriage policies published in 2020 by the World Policy Analysis Center found that the rate of child marriage reduced by an average of 6 per cent in countries that enforced child marriage laws. The same study found that child marriage laws, combined with advocacy efforts surrounding their enactment, foster improvements in gender-equitable attitudes.⁸ This is consistent with the hypothesis that gender egalitarian laws positively impact norms regarding women's equality and empowerment at national and subnational levels.⁹ In Mozambique, the Global Programme was a driving force in the development of the Law to Prevent and Combat Premature Unions (adopted in July 2019) and, in 2020, the programme supported the Government in conducting an effective, transparent and inclusive evaluation of the National Strategy to End Child Marriage 2016–2019. The objectives of the evaluation were to: assess the degree of achievement of the objectives, results, goals, activities and indicators of the strategy; assess the quality and quantity of resources available for the implementation of the strategy; identify the challenges inherent to the implementation of the strategy; and assess the level of knowledge among children and adolescents about the strategy. The results from the evaluation – yet to be published – will form the basis for the new child marriage strategy for Mozambique; the Global Programme will support the development of the new strategy in 2021.

The implementation of the national strategy on child marriage is multisectoral and brings together the ministries of gender, child and social action, health, interior, justice, education and human development, and the State Secretariat of Youth and Employment. The Global Programme is facilitating the implementation of the strategy by providing support to ensure greater coherence and linkages between key sectors, accompanied with strategic actions to empower girls, mobilize gatekeepers and sensitize families and peers, and strengthen health, protection and education services in programme areas to deliver adolescent-friendly and gender-sensitive services. During the COVID-19 pandemic, support provided to the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Action to strengthen multisectoral coordination at national, provincial and district levels was reprogrammed to take place virtually.

To respond in a quick and effective way to the secondary effects of COVID-19 (possible increases in cases of child marriage and violence against children), UNICEF in

coordination with the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Action decided to re-activate a response plan used in 2019 during the violence against children national survey. The ministry organized regional training on the response to cases of child marriage and violence against children, targeting 51 technicians who had not been trained in 2019, and – with support from UNICEF – the six priority districts in the country developed district response plans and allocated funds and key IT equipment to enable the employment of an effective and timely response to cases of child marriage and violence. Data on number of cases addressed and solved are yet to be collected, and a joint evaluation together with the ministry is planned to assess whether this pilot activity should continue through 2021.

Challenges, lessons learned and next steps

A persistent challenge in Mozambique has been the fragmented, weak and parallel coordination mechanisms for addressing child marriage, violence against children, GBV, sexual and reproductive health and rights and HIV/AIDS, and child protection (and other related issues), which are led by different institutions or different departments of the same institution – as this hampers effective work and duplicates effort and investment of resources. For this reason, in 2018 UNICEF started to support IOM in the child marriage focus provinces and districts in strengthening the multisectoral reference group, which consists of all justice, social action and health authorities and actors. The reference group, led by the attorney's office and co-led by the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Action, initially had the sole mandate to respond to trafficking cases. In 2019, as a result of UNICEF advocacy and technical assistance, the attorney's office and the ministry approved a new SOP for the reference group, which gave a clear mandate to also respond to cases of violence against children (including child marriage).

Another challenge in the country is the continued weak leadership and limited convening power of the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Action at all levels (national, provincial and district). Further, the process of decentralization in the country delayed disbursements of funds, especially at the provincial level.

COVID-19 also posed a challenge during the year, leading to the postponement of several planned activities. These included the revision of the protocols and guidelines for shelters for girls at risk of marriage and girls already married, the development of an operational plan for the implementation of the new child marriage law, and the organization of government exchange visits with countries that have succeeded in reducing child marriage prevalence. Various initiatives to increase knowledge of the child marriage law have been undertaken with communities and justice partners, but a well-structured, comprehensive operational plan needs to be developed in 2021 – to

increase dissemination and to strengthen structures and multisectoral mechanisms to support survivors.

Generating and applying data and evidence

In 2020, UNICEF and Ipsos advocated with the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Action for the endorsement of the planned social norms baseline study on child marriage, and to adjust and finalize the research protocol and questionnaire submitted to the review board. Final approval by the review board will allow the cognitive testing process to take place.

The programme also adapted its research plans as the COVID-19 pandemic hit in 2020, and planned to conduct a qualitative study on girls' vulnerabilities in light of COVID-19 through a reality-check approach, specifically looking at risk factors related to child marriage. The study was delayed during the year, but is expected to be finalized in 2021.

Partly leveraging other funds, in December 2020 UNICEF organized a social forum in Zambezia with a thematic focus on child marriage. The forum engaged administrators from programme focus districts, with the main objective of including child marriage indicators into the district plan (PESOD) from 2021.

Building on the high-level launch event for the UNFPA *State of World Population* report in 2020, UNFPA developed a concept for a regular series of technical webinars on child marriage for knowledge sharing and for advocacy purposes – to be implemented on a quarterly basis in 2021. Planned themes for the webinars include masculinities; the effect of COVID-19 on child marriage; child marriage in humanitarian contexts (specifically looking at the case of Cabo Delgado); social and gender norms; and the mental health of adolescent mothers and married girls.

Challenges, lessons learned and next steps

Lack of mobility due to COVID-19 containment measures impacted the monitoring of activities and data collection during the year. Some activities had to be suspended altogether, but where possible, alternative modalities were applied, such as phone-based interviews. The social norms baseline study was put on hold, as it was considered that the complexity of the in-depth questionnaire and the sensitivity of the subject matter meant it would have to be conducted in the planned face-to-face modality. However, its implementation and the dissemination of the forthcoming results is a priority for 2021. Another priority for 2021, that was deprioritized in the COVID-19 context, is the elaboration of a concept related to temporary shelters for victims of child marriage and violence against children.

Partnerships and working as one


In 2020, the Global Programme engaged 304 partners across regional and country offices – an increase from 249 partners in 2019. In Mozambique, the programme worked with eight partners, of which five are civil society organizations, one a government body (the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Action) and one an academic institution. Of the five civil society organizations, four have a specific focus on youth rights, and two of these also specialize in children's and women's rights. UNFPA and UNICEF also provided technical support to the national partnership Coligação para Eliminação dos Casamentos Prematuros (CECAP), through a United Nations-to-United Nations agreement. This support included, for example, capacity-building and facilitation of advocacy efforts around mitigation of secondary effects of COVID-19 related to GBV, child marriage and adolescent sexual and reproductive health for the women's rights and youth-led organizations that are members of CECAP. The programme also strengthened the capacity of CECAP itself to coordinate provincial-level interventions by the local authorities and civil society organizations to support girls' rights, by recruiting a programme assistant to be based at Associação Moçambicana para Desenvolvimento da Família (AMODEFA), the new lead organization of CECAP.

To strengthen multi-stakeholder advocacy, coordination and resource mobilization around the child marriage agenda in Mozambique, in 2020 UNFPA and UNICEF hosted a technical lunch on child marriage with key donors, namely the high-level policy group on child, early and forced marriage, involving Canada, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The lunch focused on four priority areas: the coordination mechanism; the Global

Programme; addressing knowledge and information gaps; and opportunities for working better together. As a follow-up to the technical lunch, the high-level policy group initiated a high-level dinner on child marriage in early 2021. This initiative is intended to remain an ongoing forum to assess the progress and needs of the child marriage agenda in Mozambique, and follow-up meetings are planned in 2021.

Throughout 2020, UNFPA and UNICEF had ongoing discussions on how to improve the programmatic synergies across the two organizations in the implementation of the Global Programme, as well as how to provide the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Action with technical assistance for their overall leadership and coordination role in the implementation of the national strategy on child marriage. As a result of these discussions, there has been an agreement that bimonthly meetings will be held between the ministry, UNFPA and UNICEF in 2021.

There are several opportunities in 2021 in the drive towards improving effectiveness and efficiency in responding to and advancing the child marriage agenda in the country. These include the fact that both UNFPA and UNICEF are to develop their next country programmes; that both organizations contribute to the development of the next United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Mozambique; the development of a new national strategy and costed implementation plan on child marriage; and that UNFPA has initiated a Youth Partners Group to serve as a platform for strategic advisory and multisectoral coordination to harness the demographic dividend and maximize investments in the youth agenda.



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Communicating the need to end child marriage

At the commencement of Phase II of the Global Programme in March 2020, several posts were published on social media in Mozambique to highlight the occasion, including through Twitter and Facebook.¹⁰ To further showcase the impact of the programme, an article about girls and young women as change agents in the COVID-19 response in Mozambique, coming from the Rapariga Biz empowerment programme, was published in English and Portuguese during the year.¹¹

As the UNFPA *State of World Population* report was published in 2020, a launch event specifically highlighting child marriage was arranged in Mozambique, with the participation of Graça Machel, the Minister of Gender, a parliamentarian, the ambassador of Sweden to Mozambique, a social activist and a Rapariga Biz mentor. The virtual event was attended by more than 100 people streaming it online.¹² The programme also produced a fact sheet on child marriage based on the 2017 census data, and a child marriage sectoral issue paper during the year, to keep the focus on the issue during the pandemic.

Summary of output indicator performance (2020)

Indicator	Target	Result
Indicator 1111: Number of adolescent girls (aged 10–19) who actively participated in life-skills or comprehensive sexuality education interventions in programme areas	55,599	4,185
Indicator 1121: Number of girls (aged 10–19) supported by the programme to enrol and/or remain in primary or secondary school	1,756	1,226
Indicator 1211: Number of boys and men actively participating in group education/dialogues that address harmful masculinities and gender norms	3,000	1,295
Indicator 1221: Number of individuals (boys, girls, women and men) who participate in group education/dialogue sessions on consequences of and alternatives to child marriage, the rights of adolescent girls, and gender equality	46,216	4,819
Indicator 1222: Number of individuals (boys, girls, women and men) reached by mass media (traditional and social media) messaging on child marriage, the rights of adolescent girls, and gender equality	1,700,000	2,000,000
Indicator 1223: Number of local actors (e.g., traditional, religious and community leaders) with meaningful participation in dialogues and consensus-building to end child marriage	200	157
Indicator 1231: Number of civil society organizations newly mobilized in support of challenging social norms and promoting gender equality by the Global Programme	0	2
Indicator 2121: Number of primary/secondary/non-formal schools in programme areas providing quality gender-friendly education that meets minimum standards	150	160
Indicator 2131: Number of service delivery points in programme areas providing quality adolescent-responsive services (health, child protection/gender-based violence) that meet minimum standards	15	6
Indicator 2211: Number of partnerships (both formal and informal) established to deliver adolescent-responsive social protection, poverty reduction and economic empowerment programmes and services	N/A	N/A
Indicator 3111: Number of policies or legal instruments addressing child marriage drafted, proposed or adopted at national and subnational levels with Global Programme support	16	2
Indicator 3211: Number of pieces of evidence and knowledge generated that focus on what works to end child marriage	2	0
Indicator 3212: Number of pieces of evidence and knowledge generated that apply a gender analysis	0	0
Indicator 3221: Number of South–South cooperation activities (conferences, expert visits, peer consultations, study tours, communities of practice) supported	N/A	N/A

N/A, not applicable.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Mozambique AIDS Indicator Survey 2015.
- 2 United Nations Children's Fund, *COVID-19: A threat to progress against child marriage*, UNICEF, New York, 2021, <<https://data.unicef.org/resources/covid-19-a-threat-to-progress-against-child-marriage/>>, accessed 17 August 2021.
- 3 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, in collaboration with McKinsey & Company, *COVID-19 Response – Remediation: Helping students catch up on lost learning, with a focus on closing equity gaps*, UNESCO, Paris, July 2020, <www.mckinsey.com/-/media/McKinsey/About%20Us/COVID%20Response%20Center/Overview/COVID-19%20Education%20Response%20Toolkit/202010_UNESCO-McKinsey%20Response%20Toolkit_Remediation_VF.pdf>, accessed 17 August 2021.
- 4 Malhotra, A., and S. Elnakib, '20 Years of the Evidence Base on What Works to Prevent Child Marriage: A systematic review', *Journal of Adolescent Health*, vol. 68, no. 5, 2021, pp. 847-862, <<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2020.11.017>>.
- 5 Three polls on issues related to child marriage were run during the year, on the impact of COVID-19 on education (<<https://smsbiz.co.mz/opinion/4568/>>), on violence against children (<www.smsbiz.co.mz/opinion/4400/>), and on demand for health services during the pandemic (<<https://www.smsbiz.co.mz/opinion/4351/>>).
- 6 United Nations Population Fund Mozambique, *Hackathon Começa com Chamada Nacional para Propostas de Inovação para Proteção da Rapariga contra as Uniões Prematuras*, Notícia, UNFPA, Maputo, 24 November 2020, <<https://mozambique.unfpa.org/pt/news/hackathon-come%C3%A7a-com-chamada-nacional-para-propostas-de-inova%C3%A7%C3%A3o-para-prote%C3%A7%C3%A3o-da-rapariga>>, accessed 17 August 2021.
- 7 To read more about the challenge and the winning submission, see: End Child Marriage, '3 Quick Questions with Patricia Grundberg from UNFPA Mozambique', in 'Child Marriage and Legal Frameworks', *UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage newsletter*, May 2021, <<https://mailchi.mp/c6258dcf5b7e/newsletter-child-marriage-and-legal-frameworks>>, accessed 17 August 2021.
- 8 Omidakhsh, N., and J. Heymann, 'Improved Child Marriage Laws and Its Association with Changing Attitudes and Experiences of Intimate Partner Violence: A comparative multi-national study', *Journal of Global Health*, vol. 10, no. 1, June 2020, art. 010707, <<https://doi.org/10.7189/jogh.10.010707>>, accessed 17 August 2021.
- 9 Harper, Caroline, et al., *Gender, Power and Progress: How norms change*, Advanced Learning and Innovation on Gender Norms and Overseas Development Institute, London, December 2020, <www.alignplatform.org/sites/default/files/2020-12/align_-_gender_power_and_progress-singles-digital.pdf>, accessed 17 August 2021.
- 10 See: <<https://twitter.com/UNFPAMozambique/status/1237648814535856129>>; <www.facebook.com/UNFPAMozambique/photos/525555274817988>.
- 11 United Nations Population Fund, 'Girls and Young Women are Agents of Change in the COVID-19 Response in Mozambique', UNFPA, Maputo, 11 May 2020, <<https://mozambique.unfpa.org/en/news/girls-and-young-women-are-agents-change-covid-19-response-mozambique>>, accessed 17 August 2021.
- 12 United Nations Population Fund Mozambique, 'Mesa Redonda Virtual: Soluções para Acabar com o Casamento Prematuro', 16 July 2020, <www.youtube.com/watch?v=iOXVLIbuGIU>, accessed 17 August 2021.

UNFPA-UNICEF
GLOBAL PROGRAMME
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ACT NOW:
Accelerating gender equality
by eliminating child marriage
in a pandemic

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