

THE ECONOMIC COST OF CHILD MARRIAGE IN MOZAMBIQUE

Why child marriage affects Mozambique's future

Who Is Most Affected?

Girls from poorer families are much more likely to marry before 18 than girls from wealthier families.

Child marriage is far more common in rural areas than in cities.

Some provinces are much more affected than others. In Cabo Delgado, more than 6 in 10 girls marry before 18. In Maputo, it is less than 2 in 10.

Girls who marry as children are more likely to leave school early and stay trapped in poverty.

Learn more

Scan the QR code to read the full study and see more data about the cost of child marriage in Mozambique.

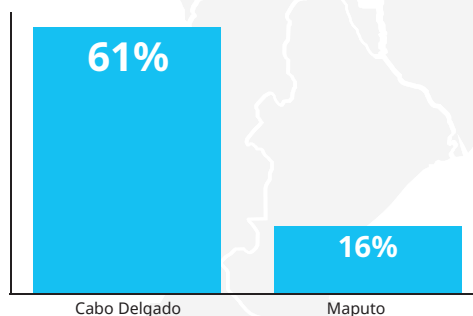


Every year, child marriage costs Mozambique more than 4 per cent of its economy

Child marriage is when a child marries or enters an informal union before turning 18. It harms girls' health, education and future choices. It also affects Mozambique as a whole. In 2021, the country lost about MZN 42.4 billion because of child marriage, more than 4 per cent of the national economy.

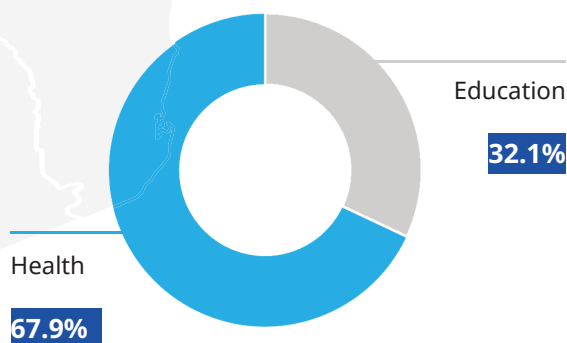
Infographic 1: Where child marriage is most common

Child marriage prevalence by province (%)



Infographic 2: Where the economic cost falls

Economic Cost Breakdown (% of total)



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WHY MARRIAGE BEFORE 15 IS EVEN MORE DANGEROUS



Marriage before age 15 is less common, but it causes even greater harm. Girls who marry this young face bigger risks to their health, safety, education and future.



Marriage before 15 costs Mozambique around MZN 17.9 billion each year.



Each case of marriage before 15 creates much higher costs than child marriage in general.



Girls married before 15 are more likely to get pregnant early, leave school and face serious health problems.



Child mortality affects almost 25 per cent of children born to mothers married before 15 while the national average is 7 per cent.

WHAT HAPPENS IF NOTHING CHANGES?

If child marriage continues at the same level, Mozambique will continue to lose billions of meticais every year. More girls will leave school, more families will stay in poverty, and the country will lose skills and talent it needs for the future.

WHAT THIS MEANS

Ending child marriage is not only about protecting girls' rights. It is also one of the smartest investments Mozambique can make to improve education, health and economic growth.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?

Increase investment and align funding in high-prevalence regions, with a focus on the poorest girls in rural areas, especially those affected by climate shocks and crises.

Develop and resource a specific national action plan to combat early/child marriage.

Strengthen the implementation and enforcement of Law 19/2019.

Ensure access to sexual and reproductive health services.

Promote income-generating opportunities and livelihoods, and expand social protection programmes for girls.

Harmonise mechanisms for reporting, referral and managing cases.

Help girls stay in secondary school and prepare for work and independent lives.

Give special attention to preventing marriage before age 15 because the harm is even greater.

Strengthen child protection community structures engaging religious and traditional leaders to transform social norms and behaviors

Include child marriage prevention in national plans for education, health