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# PREVENTING CHILD AND EARLY FORCED MARRIAGE IN CABO

## DELGADO

### BACKGROUND

In Mozambique's Cabo Delgado province—one of the poorest in Mozambique—18% of young women aged 20-24 marry by the age of 15 and 61% marry or live with a partner by the age of 18. Cabo Delgado has the second highest rate of child marriage and the highest rate of adolescent pregnancy in the country—65% of adolescents aged 15-19 are already mothers or pregnant. In Cabo Delgado early marriage is a leading cause of school drop-out among adolescent girls, and early pregnancy is associated with a variety of negative health outcomes for both mothers and their children. While Mozambique passed a national law criminalizing early marriage in 2019, the law is not well known nor enforced. Cabo Delgado has been subject to natural disasters and conflict, including attacks by armed insurgents, which have disrupted social services, education, livelihoods; displaced populations; and led to increased poverty. Reducing child, early, and forced marriage (CEFM) will enhance girls' freedoms and life options, keep them connected to and supported by their families and peers, and break cycles of poverty.

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Preventing Child Marriage in Cabo Delgado project, works with adolescent girls and young women, their families, communities, school and health staff, judicial and law enforcement authorities, and policymakers to reduce CEFM. The project provides young women with knowledge and skills, making them more likely to complete school, earn an income, and take advantage of health and social services. The project partners with the Government of Mozambique, including provincial and district institutions, and local and traditional authorities to better enforce laws that protect AGYW from CEFM. It also partners with *Ophavela* to offer informal trainings and economic opportunities to adolescent girls and young women and help them succeed.

### EXPECTED RESULTS AND IMPACTS

The project will improve the lives and livelihoods of an estimated 22,000 girls and young women aged 10-24 (with a focus on 10-19-year-olds) by providing social, educational, and economic opportunities as alternatives to CEFM. The impacts will be:

- Increased awareness of and public support for child marriage laws, child protections and women's rights among community leaders, police, judiciary, and councils.
- More girls (10-19) confident in their ability to pursue alternatives to child marriage.
- Fewer girls who drop out of school due to pregnancy or marriage.
- More parents, adolescents, and community and religious leaders who understand the harms of child marriage, discrimination, and violence.

- Increased number of facilities providing family planning and gender-based violence services targeted toward youth.
- Increased reporting of CEFM and other forms of gender-based violence to police.
- Approval of the national strategy to prevent CEFM.

<p><b>IMPLEMENTING PARTNER:</b></p> <p>Pathfinder International*</p>	<p><b>OBJECTIVE:</b></p> <p>Improve the lives and livelihoods of adolescent girls and young women by reducing child, early, and forced marriage (CEFM) and the negative socioeconomic implications of early marriage. Focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Empowering young women with social support and economic opportunities.</li> <li>● Shifting community norms around CEFM.</li> <li>● Increasing young women’s use of adolescent-responsive health services.</li> <li>● Enforcing laws and policies that delay early marriage.</li> </ul>	<p><b>LIFE OF ACTIVITY:</b></p> <p>July 2020 - July 2023</p>
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\*This project is part of an innovative partnership between USAID and the TOTAL-led Mozambique liquified natural gas project, where TOTAL is providing an additional \$5.12 million in funding to promote improved community health outcomes, prevent child marriage, and encourage positive youth development in Cabo Delgado Province.