

## Our Stories: Cartography of a Conflict

CATARINA CASIMIRO TRINDADE

*Mukadzi, Colaboratório Feminista*

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1405-8153>

TASSIANA TOMÉ

*Mukadzi, Colaboratório Feminista*

<https://orcid.org/0009-0002-8636-8123>

### Abstract

This photo-essay, entitled ‘Our Stories: Cartography of a Conflict’, is born from the fieldwork carried out in the scope of the research ‘Past, Present and Future in the Voice of Women and Girls Affected by the Conflict in Cabo Delgado: A Feminist Analysis’, as a way of naming and disseminating the diversity of voices of displaced women, and broadening the visibility of their stories, which have very often been reduced to statistics. The aim of this article is to share their perceptions and demands, their stories and journeys in search of security and possible horizons for their re-existence. This photo-essay shows that women displaced and affected by the conflict need to be named, singularised in their aspirations, needs and struggles. Their life stories are the reason for this work. It is their pain and resilience, their desires, their invisible and visible powers, their strategies for rebuilding their lives, families and communities that we want to make known. Their voices need to be heard, read, understood and placed at the centre of all governmental and civil society interventions for reconstruction, humanitarian response and peacebuilding in Cabo Delgado. Each woman participating in this photo-essay has chosen to share her story and her face, and has decided how to be photographed and represented, with the desire that somehow their trajectories become sources of direct knowledge to guide the paths to Peace in the province. They want to be known and recognised in their dignity, in their determination and perseverance, as well as in their deepest needs. The story of each woman shared in this article is a local and national reference to build a nonviolent future in Mozambique.

## **Keywords**

Cartography, herstories, feminist analysis, displaced women and girls, armed conflict, Cabo Delgado security, peacebuilding

## Our stories must be heard

This photo-essay is born from the fieldwork carried out in the scope of the research ‘Past, Present and Future in the Voices of Women and Girls Affected by the Conflict in Cabo Delgado: A Feminist Analysis’, which intended to bring forth the voices and stories of displaced women, their perceptions, needs, struggles, dreams, aspirations and strategies for rebuilding their lives and communities, as they have been marginalised or made invisible in the development of key strategic government responses to the conflict such as the National Plan for Reconstruction of Cabo Delgado<sup>1</sup> and the Program for Resilience and Integrated Development in the North of Mozambique<sup>2</sup>.

It aims to contribute to amplify and share the voices of displaced women from Cabo Delgado, showing their different and diverse perspectives through their life stories and photos. This photo-essay emerges as a way of naming those who have had their stories often reduced to statistics. It brings reflections about the displacement process, invisible conflicts and solidarities resulting from the massive migration flows, transformation in gender roles as an aftermath of the conflict and perspectives on peacebuilding through the stories and voices of Amissina Patrício, Sifa Suahele, Catarina Bento, Ancha Celestino, Tima Bakar and Awa Jorge. Each of them has chosen to share their story and face. They have decided how to be photographed and represented, with the desire that somehow their journeys can be sources of direct knowledge to open and guide the paths to Peace and to the reconstruction of their lives and the province. The women portrayed here were included in the research as participatory subjects and co-producers of knowledge through their experiences and perceptions, rather than being merely considered objects of study. The research and chosen methodologies aimed to facilitate women’s political and social agency through tools that enable self-knowledge and self-reflection such as ‘life stories’, ‘conversation circles’ and ‘timelines’. All fieldwork, tools, methods and research decisions were flexible and redefined depending on the concerns, safety, needs and well-being of the women interviewed. Respect to free and informed consent, right to privacy and confidentiality were ensured, but they all willingly chose to reveal their identities and to be seen.

It is important to note that we identify as feminists and the research was carried out with a feminist and intersectional approach, in which gender was a fundamental category of analysis in articulation with other key social categories such as race, ethnicity, religion, class, age, sexual orientation, marital status, place of origin, among others. We aimed to find a heterogeneous group of women, as much as the context allowed us to do so, and to recognise them as plural agents and subjects reflecting different historical and social points of view, rather than as a homogeneous social group. During the conversations, it was important for us to also locate ourselves, to

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1 Plano Nacional de Reconstrução da Província de Cabo Delgado (PRCD), in Portuguese.

2 Programa de Resiliência e Desenvolvimento Integrado do Norte de Moçambique (PRE DIN), in Portuguese.

share our own stories and motivations, to foster a 'non-extractivist' relationship with the women interviewed and to offer an active and empathic listening. All conversations and interactions had a profound impact in both our lives and, we believe, theirs. They want to be known and recognised in their dignity, in their determination and perseverance, as well as in their deepest needs. The story of each woman presented is a local and national reference to build a nonviolent future for Mozambique.

## Our Stories

Sifa Sualehe, from Macomia District, Cabo Delgado  
(in Nacussa B village, Ancuabe district, Cabo Delgado province, 2021)

Last year, Al-Shabab occupied my village for a week. The population fled to the bush without water, without food, walking with children in their arms, until their feet cracked. Along the way, we saw children falling and dying from thirst and hunger. We removed grass and covered the bodies, leaving them right there. We continued with our walk, towards the headquarters of Macomia. Many people died along the way, especially children. We came here to escape the war. We survived thanks to God, because we didn't manage to take anything, not even cassava to eat in the bush. There wasn't enough time, so we decided to just walk. My mother fainted on the way, she was helped by a group that had flour, they made baby food and gave it to my mother, she woke up and was fine. The groups helped each other along the way.

When we arrived at Macomia headquarters, those who had money started buying things. The IOM car selected elderly people, women and children to take, the men were not carried, they were left looking for a way to come here.

In the centre we live well. We help each other. We don't have any problems between us. As for our customs, we have done women's ceremonies, for example when a family has a girl who already seems to be *mwale* [initiation rites] they invite the other and they do something and give a little advice. Between 10 and 15 years old, they can have a ceremony, because in the past girls waited until they were 14 or 15 years old to have a ceremony, but now they rush starting at 10, 11, 12, 13 years old and families are afraid that girls will get pregnant before they do the ceremony. That's bad luck for us.

In my village there are still some people, but as they do not receive support, because of hunger, many are dying, they go out into the bush in search of *yinana* [a kind of tuber] and that is where they are found by bandits and they kill them. We know because it is a group with a lot of people who go into the woods, those who can see something, run away to give information at the Macomia headquarters.

My dream is to see my children become good people so that tomorrow they can help me. I want to go home because home is home. Going back to doing what I used to do in order to survive, because here it's just a matter of sitting down and making amends with my husband, because men don't have anything to do. We just look at each other. So, to be able to alleviate this suffering, I just want to go back home.



Figure 1: Expressions. Photograph by Tassiana Tomé.

Catarina Bento, from Diaca, Cabo Delgado  
(in Cuaia village, Metuge district, Cabo Delgado province, 2021)

My mother died when I was little. They took her from Maca to Tanzania, she died from tuberculosis. My father died when I was 6 years old. I grew up with my uncle. I lived like that, living with someone who didn't see me born. Some days I lived well, other days I lived badly, amidst swear words, but I lived anyway until I grew up.

When Al-Shabab arrived in Diaca, they burned the post chief's house, the hospital and some of our houses. They didn't take any of us because the chiefs had already warned us that it was better to flee. I carried my children through the bush, but on the way, the plane was shooting a lot and with all the confusion, I lost two of my children. I was crying all the time. I tried looking for them, but I couldn't find them. There were many people in the group that were fleeing. Each one chose the direction they were going to take, where they could go to live. In the place where I stayed, in Awasse, after a while we were also warned that Al-Shabab were coming, so I had to run away again. Families left together with water in a gallon, a bit of flour, salt and dried fish. Those who had rice ate rice, those who had dry cassava ate cassava, those who had white *xima* [ground maize porridge] ate white *xima*. Before leaving (Awasse), I was called to a meeting at a nearby school. They showed us a group of children. There were many children, others were babies, they were crawling. In the middle of them, I saw my son and I started to cry. When he saw me, he ran to me, 'Mommy, mommy, mommy!' I didn't expect to find my son after two months. It was because of my uncle's help that we reached Metuge. He called a friend and said, 'I have a displaced niece, named so-and-so, go look for her in the resettlement centre.' This friend of his came and found me. 'Now where do you go from here?', he asked. I said, 'I don't know.' So, that's when he said that my uncle was in Pemba, that he could take me there. In Pemba, my uncle had no way of sheltering me, but he was just going to help me out. He gave me 200 Meticaís and I went to Metuge, where they lent me someone's house and I started to live in Taratara and from there I received food support from the World Food Programme (WFP). One of the times I received support I had rice, beans and oil, but a thief came in and stole all our food. That month, I suffered a lot for not having anything to give the children. I made *matapa* [a dish made with chopped cassava leaves, cooked in a sauce made with crushed peanuts and coconut milk] without *xima*, without rice, without anything, giving the children to eat just like that. So, from there I asked myself, 'Until when can I borrow a house?' That's when I came to this resettlement centre to get support from the government. And when I came here to this centre, when I arrived here, they offered me a tent where I am living until now. I spread *capulana* [traditional fabric] here and sleep with the children. I have friends, an old friend who has been sitting with me and another who is family. In the centre, I am the only Makonde, I feel alone. What I would like is to go back home, but war is starting again. These women support me, 'You can't cry, this is war, everything happens in war. You have to have faith, if so far you haven't heard that she died, she must be alive, have faith'; those were the words that calmed me down. These days they came to inform me that my missing daughter is on her way here. It's a miracle! I'm grateful because, in this war, many still haven't been lucky enough to find their relatives.



Figure 2: Family/Closeness. Photograph by Tassiana Tomé.



**Amissinia Patricio, from Mecufi, Cabo Delgado**  
(Cuaia village, Metuge district, Cabo Delgado province, 2021)

Before the war, we had our things, farms, animals, our way of living. We lost our families, children, brothers, fathers, mothers. Even my sister was taken away and I have no hope of ever seeing her again. We live in fear of more violence and what will happen in the future.

The day things started, I remember well... It's our tradition to wake up early and fetch water. So, three girls from our village went to the well very early, before starting work on the fields. These girls, on the way, met a group of insurgents. The insurgents asked if there were troops in the area. The girls answered no, so they said, 'Go and don't say you saw us. If they say so, we will go in and burn all the houses and kill everyone.' I live near the well. I asked 'why are you crying?' They didn't respond, but I persisted and they ended up revealing what happened. That's when some of our men went out with guns into the pit and saw boot prints. Then we called the authorities asking for help. As soon as the reinforcement helicopter landed, they began to exchange fire and the enemy ended up fleeing, but then they attacked the villages of Muaja and Naputa. The entire population fled, we went into the bush and stayed hidden there for five days. When it started to rain, we wondered what to do. We saw that returning home was not possible and we continued our journey. I came here with these three children, my sister's children and with my brother-in-law.

Last year, when I was still at the first centre, some activists arrived and selected ten women to be trained. I was in that group. I even went to Maputo. We learned about physical violence and that a woman should not just wait for her husband, she should be active to help around the house. Here at the centre, they chose me to be an activist because they saw that I was an open, active woman and knew how to speak. I sit with women and encourage them to be dynamic, not to be isolated, I also mobilise women to dance *Tufo* [traditional dance]. Singing and dancing helps you forget a lot.

In the first centre, where we left, everyone went with a plate to receive food, then we complained because the food never arrived. We asked to start cooking so we could share the food better. Now they give us rice every month and then we spend 2 months without receiving anything, and men receive it, but before it was women. The problem is that men have several women, one in one centre and another in another. A woman may have a name on the list to receive, while in the other centre her husband receives. So, the husband will have to divide what he received between the two wives, while one of them has already received it. This harms the one who does not have a name on the list.

We have a lot of worries here, we don't have land to produce food, we don't have schools and hospitals either, we sleep on the ground, there is a lack of pots and drinking water, and with the rains everything here floods. I would like to return home, to work on the farm and feed my children. I had a 13-hectare farm, with papaya trees, banana trees, mango trees and other products. I even had people who worked for me. As soon as I hear it's safe, I'll go back.



Figure 3: Stop violence against women. Photograph by Catarina Casimiro Trindade.

Ancha Celestino, from Macomia-Sede, Cabo Delgado  
(in Nacussa B village, Ancuabe district, Cabo Delgado province, 2021)

At night we began to hear that they entered Mucojo, Mocimboa, until they arrived in Palma. That's when we realised there was war. Then the attacks began, some were killed, others burned inside the cars. We had to run into the bush, hide there. We walked for five days, just walked, without looking back, as if we were blind with fear. In the bush, we looked for food along the way, found cassava, ate it, and continued to flee and went back to sleep in the bush. I even went so far as to sleep on top of a snake, but it didn't bite me because that kind of snake knows people in need.

I got here fighting, as I needed to get somewhere. Some of the land has an owner, others left a long time ago. There are those who accept payment for us to use the land and others who do not. We only received help three times from the WFP, they gave us food.

In my homeland, the way I lived, I went to the farm, made ice cubes, sold them, made *maheu* [traditional alcoholic drink], sold, earned my living that way. In those days, I was married, my husband had many wives, so after we fled the war, he left me and went to be with another woman. I am a mother of 9 children. The house I built here, I did it alone. The sticks I needed, I cut with my own hands. Here, alone women do not wait for men to build a house for them. I couldn't wait either, some of my children are still children for me to support, others fled to Pemba, the oldest stayed in the village because he got used to staying in his land. My husband... he's here with the other woman, he doesn't help me.

I don't know who started this war, maybe it was white people, but white people can be our political leaders. White people are the ones in charge of us. I would like this war to stop so we can go back to living on our lands. These owners only know how to fight.



Figure 4: Women do not wait for men. Photograph by Catarina Casimiro Trindade.

Tima Bakar, from Macomia, Cabo Delgado  
(in Nacussa B village, Ancuabe district, Cabo Delgado province, 2021)

We saw people with strange faces and we ran away. They recruited children, adults, women and girls to marry, and men to train with weapons. In our area, men were recruited to work in distant fields, where the government forbade them to go. In those forbidden lands, we started to find dead people, and we saw that the case was big. That's when the war spread across the Macomia zone. I'm a community leader here in the village. They said they didn't want a man anymore, they wanted a woman, everyone pointed at me. I hid, it's a lot of responsibility, but they said, 'It must be this lady, she reads a little, and does government work, we want her to be our leader, here with the displaced people.' So I took office that day. This is how we are trying to change things. When we arrived here, the food did not reach our people, they called the names of the village owners, not the war refugees. We complained three times, they didn't do anything, until we ended up talking to the Administrator, reporting the whole situation that the landowners have everything in their houses and we have nothing, that they receive and we don't. Now that has changed, they write the names of each household and we have food. The sticks to build, we cut ourselves. We told the Government that they didn't help us, neither to build houses, nor bathrooms, now at least we are asking for tarpaulins. The head of the post came out and told us to go to the bush to get grass to cover our houses. I asked, 'Could it be that we are not refugees, others are supported and we are not, what is the difference?' He did not answer. We still haven't received anything. No canvas material, no lamp, no latrine covers, nothing, we always get people who make promises, so others are coming back, saying, 'It's worth dying in our houses!'

They say that the Government military went to a site and put poison in the Al-Shabab's water, and they are dying like dogs. But the only soldiers who are doing great work are those who come from Rwanda. If it weren't for them, we wouldn't still be alive. They have different means, they have maps, they have a plane and they place the enemy in traps. They are working well.

These terrorists are monsters. They recruit and train you and invade your area again to kill your mother, father, brothers, sisters and all family members. They say that only this way can you learn. Sometimes they ask about religion, when you say you are Muslim everything is fine, but when you say you are Christian and Makonde they say 'Cut him! He's Nyusi's little brother, this one. If one of your companions cry, kill him too.'

To forget all this, we dance *Nihapo* [traditional dance], we dance *Tufo*, we also play checkers, children play football. This is how we get bad thoughts out of our heads. I am asking for peace, people are suffering. I would like this war to end, to build my house, because I had a motorcycle, a bicycle, a television and much more, but I lost everything and I would like to recover everything I lost. I only want peace.



Figure 5: They wanted a woman. Photograph by Catarina Casimiro Trindade.

**Awa Jorge, Macomia, Cabo Delgado**  
(Nacussa B village, Ancuabe district, Cabo Delgado province, 2021)

I studied up to 12th grade. I wanted to be a Portuguese teacher, but then I had to go back to my mother's house and I couldn't continue. In 2018, I went to Montepuez to start teacher training. When I got there, I looked for my name on the list, I saw that they only had names of people from Maputo and other provinces, no one from here. We've known about this conflict for a long time. I don't know if it started in 2017, I don't know. What I do know is that when the insurgents arrived in Macomia, they fired. They stopped on the road to Mucojo, Pemba, and Mueda, they shot. It was the moment when we managed to enter the bush and escape. The military did nothing, they also fled. Even though they had weapons, they were afraid. Even in the bush, we found the body of a soldier killed by the insurgents. So we knew we were on our own. When the insurgents arrived, they took the pretty women and the ugly ones were sent home. I don't know if it was because they had clear skin. One of them was taken away from her husband and they said, 'This one is beautiful, she's going to be the chief's wife.' The men, on the other hand, were beaten and if they weren't helped, they were killed. The women, they beat them and left them. Those were the stories we heard, as we walked away from home, me, my husband, my husband's family and my little sister's child. We got here a year ago. My husband used to make doors. When we got here, last year, he tried to make doors to sell, but nobody would buy. He doesn't give me anything, he says he has nothing because he's not doing anything. We don't have tarps, plates or buckets. In the early days, it was the WFP who gave us food. The hospital is very far away, we have to go to the village looking for a motorbike to get there. Energy too. To charge the cell phone, we go to the neighbourhood to borrow the solar panel and pay 10 Meticaís for each time we use it. At school, some children are lucky because they were enrolled and are receiving classes right here, with teachers who come from the village. I would like to speak with the government to end the war. Having that opportunity, I am going to tell them that here, where we are, the owners of the land are going to make us slaves, make us cultivate for them in exchange for bread. It's been like this since we got here. If you can't end this war, you better bring food and clothing to the people, because we don't have anything.



Figure 6: We don't have anything. Photograph by Catarina Casimiro Trindade.



## Final Reflections



Figure 7: Map of Displacements in Cabo Delgado – describing the pathways taken by the women interviewed for the research ‘Past, Present and Future in the Voices of Women from Cabo Delgado: A Feminist Analysis.’<sup>3</sup>

From 2017 to 2022, almost 1 million people in Cabo Delgado were forcibly displaced due to the conflict, equating to 1 in 3 residents fleeing. This led to extensive internal migration within the province and was compounded by Cyclone Kenneth. The map above outlines key escape routes and destinations, pathways of pain and re-existence, primarily Pemba, Metuge, Montepuez and Ancuabe. It depicts the traumatic journeys of internally displaced women, marked by unrecorded human losses but also showcasing remarkable resilience and solidarity. They travelled distances of 100–300km, mainly on foot, occasionally by boat, or using buses and cars from relatives. Unfortunately, there is no data on the number of deaths among the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) during these mass migrations. Amissina, Sifa, Catarina, Ancha, Tima and Awa shared their escape stories and routes to hosting villages and resettlement centres. They had to leave in a hurry; most were unable to carry any belongings.

Amissina, Sifa, Catarina, Ancha, Tima, Awa and many others were compelled to abandon their homes and ancestral lands, vital for sustenance, livelihoods and cultural and spiritual practices. These lands represented identity, dignity and community. Their displacement resulted in a loss of belonging and self-sufficiency,

3 Muthiana, *Exposição Nossas Histórias – Cartografia de um Conflito*, 2022, <https://muthiana.com/exposicao/>.

particularly tied to land use, including food production and access to medicinal plants.<sup>4</sup> The land where they sang and danced, where they prayed and practised their customs, ceremonies and rituals, the land which is more than property, it is '*identity, way of life, dignity, access to goods, material and immaterial*'.<sup>5</sup> The stories of the escape and displacement represent the painful rupture of life as they knew it, but also represent the perseverance and agency of women who had to strategise possibilities for them and their families to re-exist. Currently, 83% of internally displaced people live in hosting villages/extensions of existing villages, and 17% are in resettlement camps.<sup>6</sup>

The massive and forced migration flows within the province of Cabo Delgado in such a short period of time generated a high demographic pressure in the districts that have become the main destinations of the internally displaced peoples. This has resulted in social tensions and conflicts, established between the IDPs and local or 'native' communities, creating new intra-community dynamics across different ethnic groups. Women have been affected with greater intensity by these social tensions and conflicts caused by the migration flows, due to the traditional gender roles, which place them as the main caretakers, primarily responsible for guaranteeing daily management of families' lives. These conflicts between 'displaced' and 'native' people are mostly centred around the access for livelihood resources for daily subsistence, the access to education and health services, as well as in the host families, where forced labour and the mistreatment of children and girls were reported. Also, the women interviewed reported the embezzlement of donations and food stamps by local community leaders and local authorities to the benefit of their relatives and 'native' communities. These women also described the scenario of distrust they face, especially women whose relatives, husbands and children were captured by the insurgents, making them suspects in the involvement with the insurgents.

Living in displacement centres and hosting villages, where the situation is quite precarious, has greatly impacted women and girls, deepening inequalities through the withdrawal of the authority and legitimacy they possessed in some spheres of their lives. But their stories show us that the conflict and its consequences – namely the escape from their homes – have also generated some changes in women's power relations and agency. When they describe their day-to-day life in the host villages, we start to understand that they weave, with each other, a series of strategies of resistance, mutual aid and solidarity through which they seek to give a sense of normality to their current lives. They were the ones who built their current homes and classrooms for their children, as well as a place to say their prayers. They are also in charge of cleaning the villages, taking care of children (including orphaned children) and the elderly, of food (they look for pieces of land where they can plant and dry cassava to cook) and fetching water. They are not only in charge of all domestic tasks

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4 C. Osório and T. Cruz e Silva, *Narrativas e práticas sobre direitos humanos no contexto do(s) Conflito(s) em Cabo Delgado: uma análise de género*. WLSA Moçambique, 2021.

5 T. Cunha, *Já somos gente de pouca esperança, só vivemos. Cabo Delgado e a Guerra na vida das mulheres e raparigas*, 62.

6 IOM UN Migration, 'Crise do Norte de Moçambique - Relatório de Avaliação de Localização Multi-Setorial 5', 2021, <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/crise-do-norte-de-mocambique-relatorio-de-avaliacao-de-localizacao-multi-setorial-5-agosto>.

and reproductive work, but also began to assume part of the productive work. There is a strong sense of solidarity between them.

Their assigned reproductive roles were reinforced with the increase in their responsibilities. This situation is strongly linked to the fact that men have lost their sources of income and are currently living off odd jobs, something that is increasingly scarce. In this sense, the women are also assuming roles and tasks that would be traditionally attributed to men (like building houses or looking for means of subsistence in order to take care of their children and other relatives). Ancha Celestino stated, '*we women are the men!*' If, on one hand, this statement points to the burdening of obligations and responsibilities on the part of women, on the other it points to an emotional and social fragility of men due to their inactivity.

However, the analysis that the conflict reinforced gender roles assigned to women, subordinated them and silenced them, is only part of the equation. Assuming new responsibilities also shows women's proactivity and has the potential to transform their perception of themselves, not just as providers. They participate in the reconstruction of their own lives, creating forms of resistance through small initiatives that they develop (saving initiatives, preserving traditional rituals, dancing, reinventing forms of income such as selling firewood and charcoal and clearing land), becoming agents of transformation, contestation and resistance.

In all the stories presented, '*We want Peace*' is the main demand, tirelessly repeated with the same force and intensity. For the women interviewed, the paths to Peace need to go beyond military solutions and interventions; they need to address the structural issues that are at the root of the conflict and to find possible forms of dialogue. Without addressing socioeconomic grievances, military suppression of the insurgent movement will not resolve the heightened and created local (and ethnic) tensions and disputes over access to resources and services. Furthermore, to rebuild confidence in the possibility of Peace, the involvement of all key actors is fundamental. These six women argue that strategies should be found together and leaders identified to open spaces and opportunities for dialogue with the insurgents. At the same time, they understand that the issue of redistribution and shared management of natural resources is the key and the condition for a shared future of Peace. They also draw attention to Mozambique's accumulated experience in Peace negotiations. However, it is important to remember the gaps in gender dimensions.

Although women have historically always had a very relevant role in pacification and reconciliation at the community level, the various peacebuilding processes in Mozambique have been characterised by the marginalisation of women's participation at all levels and areas of negotiation, such as the issue of managing disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration actions, and none of the formal peace agreements mention gender issues or issues related to women in the context of conflicts. This exclusion of women in peacebuilding decisions had important gender implications in the format of Peace agreements, which excluded issues related to the impact and reparation of violence suffered by women, their aspirations and needs in the processes of socioeconomic reconstruction and social reintegration. Furthermore, the option for amnesty laws after the conflicts also meant that issues related to the punishment

of gender-based war crimes were not brought to justice, and processes of reparation for women survivors of the conflicts were completely neglected. Other issues, such as security sector reform, also lacked a gender approach.

Building the paths to Peace requires rethinking the extractivist development paradigm, its connection with patriarchal structures and militarisation, as well as rethinking approaches to reconstruction and humanitarian intervention, so that they open the way to solutions and alternatives that can gradually lead to economic transitions aimed at linking people's well-being with environmental protection. Thus, it is increasingly necessary that actions to respond to conflict and the support to displaced people have systemic and integrated approaches, which articulate Peace, development and humanitarian response, from a gender perspective.

In conclusion, the voices, life experiences and journeys of Amissina, Sifa, Catarina, Ancha, Tima and Awa show not only how the current conflict in Cabo Delgado has drastically affected and continues to affect their lives and those of their families, but also how they are not passive and silent victims. On the contrary, they reflect on the conflict and military intervention, demand Peace and dialogue and reinvent themselves every day to face the difficulties and obstacles they face as displaced people, far from their homes and origins, each woman in their own way. It's their life stories, their pain and resilience, their journeys, aspirations, invisible and visible powers that should indicate and guide any future programme, policy and strategy aimed at benefiting displaced women and families.

Through their voices and sharing of their stories, they are demanding for access to land for agricultural production and food security; access to various means and sources of financing for income generation and collective savings (and forms of rotating credit); access to decent housing in safe places not vulnerable to floods, close to cultivation areas, with access to water, hygiene and basic sanitation and electricity; access to comprehensive health services (including sexual and reproductive health); access to education services (for children, secondary education, vocational technical education and adult literacy) oriented towards income generation opportunities at local level and, ultimately, security and Peace.