



AGENCY FOR
PEACEBUILDING



TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE AND PEACEFUL SOCIETY IN MOZAMBIQUE

Evaluation report

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ABOUT THE AGENCY FOR PEACEBUILDING

The Agency for Peacebuilding (AP) is a non-profit organisation whose mission is to promote conditions to enable the resolution of conflict, reduce violence and contribute to a durable peace across Europe, its neighbouring countries, and the world. AP is the first Italian organisation specialising in peacebuilding. This allows us to occupy a unique role in the European landscape: on the one hand, we interpret and synthesise relevant topics for the benefit of Italian agencies and institutions working on peace and security; on the other, we highlight experiences, capacities, and resources specific to the Italian system, which can contribute to the resolution of violent conflict.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

The report has been written by Bernardo Monzani, who also coordinated the evaluation. The team also included Gervasia Muchanga Ntauazi, who led on data collection in Mozambique, and Daniel Canosa, who assisted with the context analysis. The team members would like to extend their gratitude to Lacerda Lipangue and Gina Dias from Finn Church Aid and the Network of Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers (FCA/ NRTP), whose support was crucial to ensure the successful completion of the assignment. Finally, we would like to thank all those individuals who took time to participate in the evaluation.

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**The Network for
Religious and
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings from the evaluation of the "Towards an Inclusive and Peaceful Society" (TIPS) project, which was launched to address conflicts linked to natural resource management in Mozambique. The project aimed to contribute to turning Mozambique's abundant resources—from gas to coal, mining and timber—into a force for economic growth and peace, rather than a trigger for dispute, division and conflict. Set against a backdrop of socio-economic tension and environmental issues, the TIPS project focused on empowering local communities and improving dialogue between them, the government and private companies.

Finn Church Aid and the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers (FCA/ NRTP) led the implementation of the project across five provinces (Cabo Delgado, Inhambane, Niassa, Sofala and Tete), and working in partnership with two Mozambican non-governmental organisations (NGOs): the Institute for Multiparty Democracy (IMD) and the Institute for Social and Economic Studies (Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Económicos, or IESE). The project's strategies included the completion of in-depth research on the linkages between natural resources management and conflict, the training of CSO representatives and community leaders to better manage natural resources-based conflicts, and the creation of spaces where stakeholders could come together to talk and solve problems.

The evaluation followed the implementation of the project, which ran from January 2021 to December 2023, with the goal of assessing the project's success and identifying lessons learned and best practices helpful for the design of future interventions. The project was evaluated against the criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

Relevance. The evaluation found that the project was extremely relevant to the needs, concerns and priorities that Mozambican communities, as well as authorities and private companies, face around natural resource management. It also managed to involve all the right stakeholders, chiefly the community leaders and CSO representatives. An independent context analysis was completed as part of the evaluation, which confirmed the communities' needs and priorities, as these have been targeted under the project. Because of the frequency and scope of the conflicts around natural resources, one of the main needs identified by FCA/ NRTP was the lack of dialogue between communities, government, and the private sector. In all provinces, this was very much confirmed by informants—during the research conducted under the project, and in the interviews and focus groups conducted as part of this evaluation. The fact that the

project sought to bridge this gap by facilitating interactions through local government (i.e., at district and provincial levels), is, as such, indicative of the intervention's high level of relevance.

Effectiveness. The project was largely effective, achieving both of its expected outcomes and making contributions towards its specific objective. The most important positive achievements have been the changes in skills and knowledge among those who were trained, and the creation of spaces of interaction and dialogue. Combined, these outcomes served to increase the self-efficacy of participating CSO representatives and community leaders, meaning their sense of their own agency in engaging in and resolving natural resource-based conflicts¹. The realization of these outcomes, however, varied from district to district, and in this regard, effectiveness was affected by the engagement of authorities and company representatives, which was a key challenge.

The strengthening of capacities, hereby intended as knowledge and skills for conflict resolution and for engaging on natural resource management, of participating CSO representatives and community leaders was one of the project's main positive outcomes. This was a key objective under the project, and it was achieved beyond original expectations. The training sessions have emerged, in fact, as a standout activity. The second main positive outcome of the project was the fostering of greater collaboration among CSOs, communities and authorities. Overall, the sequence of activities established by the project—starting from the research, going into the training workshops, and then into the community dialogues and the provincial forums—should be considered effective and a model to be replicated in the future.

The project was able to trigger a good level of participation on the part of government representatives in nearly all locations. However, the latter's full engagement was more limited: officials took part to the research, and to dialogue meetings, yet only in some cases did their participation result in actual responses to instances or complaints raised by communities. The participation and engagement of private company representatives was more difficult still, representing perhaps the most significant challenge to the project's success. Because of this, its effectiveness varied from location to location. For instance, the most compelling and clear evidence of effectiveness, in relation to greater collaboration, was found in Tete and Cabo Delgado.

Efficiency. FCA/ NTRL set up efficient coordination mechanisms, which ensured the implementation of the project. The project also made efficient use of its financial resources, yet dealing with scale and distances proved a challenge. Challenges also included scheduling conflicts and the diverse project management

¹ Self-efficacy is more generally, and formally, defined as "people's beliefs in their capabilities to produce desired effects by their actions" (Bandura, 1997, p. VII).

experience among partners, but these were effectively managed thanks to the coordination mechanisms set up under the project. The project's coordination was further bolstered by the clear differentiation between operational implementation and strategic management, facilitated through the creation of a project management group and a steering committee. The main challenge under this criterion related to the size of the budget vis-à-vis the geographic scope of the project. Several people noted how the budget was somewhat constrained in terms of facilitating the participation of CSO representatives and community leaders in community dialogues and provincial forums, due to the high costs associated with travel from distant areas.

Impact. FCA/ N RTP saw the main challenges around natural resources-related conflict in Mozambique as involving three main actors: communities, authorities and private companies—with CSOs playing an important intermediary role. The achievement of impact under the project was thus seen as the logical result of three complementary strategies: improved understanding, improved capacities (in particular among CSOs and community leaders), and greater, more inclusive and meaningful interaction between the three key actor groups. This, according to the theory of change, would lead to the empowerment of CSOs and community leaders, intended as an improved sense of self-efficacy, and a change in mindsets among authorities and companies. Overall, the evaluation confirmed that the project's logic was valid. In practice, however, evidence of impact was found in about half of the cases where primary data collection was done. This means that the TIPS project had impact, but also that this impact could be increased in the future.

A practical example of impact was found in Moatize district, in Tete. There, FCA/ N RTP and IMD were able to implement all strategies as originally intended: the research identified key issues and helped to establish trust-based relations, in particular between the implementers and local CSOs and community leaders who were already engaged in addressing natural resources-related conflicts. For instance, among those involved was the leader of a Natural Resource Management Committee that had been created in Benga, a location where a group of families were complaining that they had not been compensated for the loss of land to mining operations². Thanks to the project, and the drive of this one individual, the Committee made a presentation and submitted a document to the district authorities listing violations practiced by the mining company, and the possible consequences. This led to direct negotiations with the mining companies at the centre of the complaint, which eventually led to the families receiving the compensation requested³.

² “Local Communities Compensated by Mining Company After Lobbying Actions”, Case study under the TIPS project, FCA, 2024.

³ A similar situation occurred in Montepuez district, in Cabo Delgado, where the intervention of a local leader, trained under the TIPS project, and the willingness of the company involved in the complaint, made it possible to resolve a conflict around the peaceful resettlement of 105

This example points to the importance of ensuring the full engagement of authorities and company representatives: where the project succeeded in doing so, that is where evidence of impact was found. Yet, this could not be ensured at the same level in all locations. Indeed, the participation of government and representatives appears in many cases to have been due to the personalities involved, whereas dialogue has not yet been accepted as a systematic procedure. Lastly, where impact was recorded, external factors appeared to have played an important role, and there was evidence, in particular, that the project's achievements were facilitated by recent changes in the way the Mozambican government approached natural resources management, in the country's Northern provinces in particular.

Sustainability. The main achievement under this criterion is linked to the changes in the skills and knowledge of participants, chiefly the CSO representatives and community leaders involved in the training workshops and subsequent activities. In their own words, it is clear that those who have gained new skills and knowledge will continue using them after the end of the project. There is also practical evidence of this, with several cases where they have already used what they acquired in the project to write petitions or engage government representatives. Another interesting contribution made by the project under this criterion is the creation of new relationships between CSO representatives and community leaders on the one side, and groups of paralegals on the other. Paralegals can, in fact, play an important role in assisting communities to address conflicts over natural resources, by helping communities to understand what they are entitled to under the law, and also in navigating judicial systems and processes. The research also represents an important contribution to sustainability, whereas the main limitation is the same found under relevance, effectiveness and impact: authorities' engagement was not consistent, and companies' engagement less so.

To conclude, the TIPS project was extremely relevant to the challenges communities faced around natural resource management in Mozambique. It was also effective, achieving its intended outcomes in relation to capacity building and the establishment of collaborative multi-stakeholder spaces for dialogue and conflict resolution. Where authorities and companies were effectively engaged, specific conflicts were successfully addressed, and trust between the different actors improved. Importantly, the participation of authorities was good—no small feat in a context like Mozambique, where the issue of natural resource management can be very sensitive, politically. Their engagement was somewhat inconsistent, however, and that of private sector representatives even more so. This happened for reasons external to the project,

families (Source: "Dialogue and Lobbying Restore Peace Between Communities and Mining Company", Case study under the TIPS project, FCA, 2024).

but which nevertheless negatively affected the extent to which the project contributed to impact, and how sustainable it was.

The project's greatest contribution can perhaps be found in how it developed and tested a model that—by integrating research, training and dialogue—proved to be successful in addressing the causes and dynamics of natural resources-based conflicts in the country. It is in light of this consideration, and of all the findings discussed in the evaluation report, that the following recommendations are offered:

- 1. Continue training activities.** The needs in terms of knowledge and skills are still significant for CSO representatives, community leaders and government representatives. For these reasons, initiatives to improve those capacities should continue.
- 2. Continue dialogue activities.** Similarly, dialogues between communities, authorities and companies continue to be too few and often ineffective. For these reasons, initiatives to improve the number and quality of such tripartite dialogues should also continue.
- 3. Adopt a community-based approach to organizing dialogue activities, perhaps funding local CSOs.** Linked to the above, the impact of similar initiatives could be expanded by adopting a more community-based approach in organizing dialogue activities.
- 4. Strengthen collaboration with paralegals to increase access to information for communities.** This was an original element under the project, which, given the identified needs in term of lack of information, could be expanded through, for example, a training of trainers.
- 5. Organize training workshops and dialogue sessions only with women.** Gender equality remains a challenge across training and dialogue activities. To offset this, FCA/ NRTP should organise events only for women, targeting female CSO representatives and community leaders.
- 6. Identify and work with government (and company) champions.** FCA/ NRTP should try and build on the “government champion” model piloted in Cabo Delgado: to find, in each province, one or two people from government who could support and facilitate the engagement of their peers. This will be even more necessary for company representatives. On their part, government and company representatives should be more eager to take part in dialogues with communities.
- 7. Invest in national-level advocacy.** The effective replication of the model piloted under the project, as well as the sustainability of results, will be ensured only if national authorities remain committed to greater transparency, accountability and dialogue in relation to natural resource management.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADIN	<i>Agência de Desenvolvimento Integrado do Norte</i> (Northern Integrated Development Agency)
COREM	Council of Religions in Mozambique
CSO	Civil society organization
CSR	Corporate social responsibility
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
EU	European Union
FCA/ NRTP	Finn Church Aid and the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers
FGD	Focus group discussion
FRELIMO	<i>Frente de Libertação de Moçambique</i> (Liberation Front of Mozambique)
IDI	In-depth interview
IESE	<i>Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Económicos</i> (Institute for Social and Economic Studies)
IMD	Institute for Multi-party Democracy
NGO	Non-governmental organization
RENAMO	<i>Resistência Nacional Moçambican</i> (Mozambican National Resistance)
SADC	Southern African Development Community
TIPS	Towards an Inclusive and Peaceful Society

INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings of the final evaluation of the "Towards an Inclusive and Peaceful Society" (TIPS) project, which was launched to address the conflicts linked to natural resource management in Mozambique. The project aimed to contribute to turning Mozambique's abundant resources—from gas to coal, mining and timber—into a force for economic growth and peace, rather than a trigger for dispute, division and conflict. Set against a backdrop of socio-economic tension and environmental issues, the TIPS project focused on empowering local communities and improving dialogue between them, the government, and private companies. The project sought to work in five provinces across the country—Cabo Delgado, Inhambane, Niassa, Sofala and Tete—and recognized that the challenges faced by each of these were different and varied.

The project's strategies included the completion of in-depth research on the linkages between natural resources management and conflict, the training of key actors, chiefly civil society organization (CSO) representatives and community leaders, to better manage natural resources-based conflicts, and the creation of spaces where stakeholders could come together to talk and solve problems. This report assesses how well these strategies worked and looks at the project's ability to adapt to unexpected challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic. The effectiveness and impact of the TIPS project in enhancing community capacities to manage conflicts have been thoroughly assessed. Additionally, the report investigates the potential longevity of the project's outcomes and its ongoing contributions to peace and stability in Mozambique, hereby intended as its relevance and sustainability.

The goal of the evaluation has been two-fold: first, to assess the project's success in achieving expected outcomes, and, secondly, to identify lessons learned and best practices helpful for the design of future interventions in the domains of natural resources management and peacebuilding. Findings are presented in relation to the criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Data collection included interviews and focus group discussions with project staff, partners, project participants and key stakeholders (such as government representatives) in several locations, and a review of relevant documents.

Following the introduction, the report presents the methodology and backgrounds to both the project and the context. The evaluation findings are then discussed, by criterion. Finally, conclusions and recommendations for future actions are presented.

METHODOLOGY

Objectives and approach

The overall purpose of the evaluation was two-fold: first, to assess the project's success in achieving expected outcomes, and, secondly, to identify lessons learned and best practices helpful for the design of future interventions in the same domain as the TIPS project. The specific objectives were to:

- Assess the implementation of project activities and initiatives in relation to the inputs, outputs and core deliverables as outlined in the project's original proposal, indicative timeframe and logical framework, and in light of current context;
- Assess the coordination and management of project staff roles and responsibilities;
- Assess the efficient use of funds by the project staff in relation to the original proposal;
- Assess the expected and unexpected outcomes achieved in terms of needs, relevance and appropriateness, and the contribution the consortium has made towards strengthening the leadership and capacities of civil society actors to prevent and address natural resource-based conflicts through multi-stakeholder dialogue and engagement at multiple levels;
- Provide concrete proposals based on the evaluation, including recommendations from project partners and perspectives of those outside project staff, to enhance the relevance, outcome and impact of the future projects of a similar nature; and
- Make justified and well-founded recommendations on the possible continuation of the project and the necessary refinements to ensure maximum impact.

The methodology for the study was based on principles of action research, and the evaluation was, as such, guided by key lines of inquiry and research questions that were finalized and agreed jointly with staff from Finn Church Aid and the Network of Traditional and Religious Peacemakers (FCA/ NRTP), and which informed data collection and analysis. Additionally, the evaluation used Contribution Analysis, a theory-based evaluation approach, particularly useful “for assessing causal questions and inferring causality in real-life programme evaluations”⁴. The overall aim of Contribution Analysis is to provide an evidence-based approach to assessing causality and impact of a programmatic intervention. Rather than

⁴ See BetterEvaluation for more information (http://betterevaluation.org/plan/approach/contribution_analysis).

presumptively or conclusively assigning value to programmatic interventions, Contribution Analysis seeks to “reduce uncertainty” of the causal value of programmatic interventions towards outcomes and impact⁵.

This approach, which was used to review the project’s logic, or theory of change, and to answer questions related to effectiveness and impact, was included given the fact that all data collected was qualitative. While this can be a limitation in evaluative practice, in the context of Contribution Analysis it can be an added value: the approach requires, in fact, the development of a narrative of impact, which is primarily focused on explaining why and how change happened—and for this, qualitative data is generally more relevant and useful. The full list of evaluation lines of inquiry is included in Annex 1.

Data collection and analysis

The study used both primary and secondary data sources, and included the activities summarized below.

Table 1. Breakdown of evaluation activities

Activity	Description
Document review	A total of around 30 documents were reviewed. These included project documents produced by FCA in the context of this project (including the research and monitoring reports), as well as external sources relevant to the project’s locations and topics. For the latter, please see the bibliography included as Annex 2.
Theory of change workshop	One online workshop was conducted, which included the participation of five participants, including staff members from FCA and IMD. The diagram resulting from the workshop is included as Annex 3.
In-depth Interviews (IDIs)	A total of 16 interviews were completed, including: 7 representatives from implementing agencies, 4 CSO representatives, 1 community leader, 1 paralegal, 1 private company representative and 2 government representatives (3 women, 13 men).
Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)	A total of 5 focus groups were completed, with a total of 16 participants, including CSO representatives and community leaders (5 women and 11 men).

⁵ “Contribution Analysis,” INTRAC (2017), page 1.

The data collected for the evaluation was analysed relying on triangulation and pattern analysis, and Contribution Analysis. Triangulation was implemented by methods and sources. The pattern analysis was done across all collected data, to identify trends among sources, while statistical analysis was done on the surveys, by disaggregating and aggregating collected data. Contribution Analysis was used to assess the project's impact.

Limitations

The main challenge encountered by the evaluation related to the scope of activities. Because of financial and time constraints, primary data collection took place only in the provinces of Cabo Delgado, Inhambane and Tete, and, within those locations, only informants from the provincial capitals or nearby districts could be engaged. Additional informants were reached from other provinces, but only remotely. Overall, while secondary sources were helpful to obtain information about the project's success in other locations, this information remained limited. For this reason, the evaluation report presents examples primarily from locations where primary data collection took place. Another challenge regarded the engagement of informants from the government and private sector companies. While individuals were effectively interviewed, many requests of interviews were left unheeded, which mirrored (and indeed validated) a key challenge for the project as a whole. Conducting interviews with these stakeholders could have helped to shine a light on their attitudes towards the TIPS project, or similar endeavours, but these remain only somewhat explored. Lastly, the completion of the evaluation was delayed, compared to original plans, because of the arrival of tropical storm Filipo, which required the postponement of one mission.

The aforementioned limitations did not affect the completion of the evaluation, and the findings presented in this report fully reflect the chosen approach and are well aligned with international evaluation standards. Where limitations have impacted the quality of findings, this has been mentioned in the report.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The "Towards an Inclusive and Peaceful Society" (TIPS) project was a three-year initiative that began in January 2021 and ended in December 2023. Designed with strategic intent, the TIPS project's overarching goal was to enhance conflict prevention, crisis preparedness, and peacebuilding efforts in Mozambique through the inclusive governance and management of natural resources. The project was implemented by Finn Church Aid and the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers (FCA/ NRTP), who worked in partnership with the Mozambican Institute for Multiparty Democracy (IMD) and the Institute for Social and Economic Studies (Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Económicos, or IESE). It was funded by the European Union (EU).

At its core, the project sought to bolster the leadership and capacities of civil society actors, equipping them to effectively prevent and manage conflicts stemming from the management and exploitation of natural resources. This objective was pursued through the development of multi-stakeholder dialogues and engagements at both provincial and district levels, fostering increased collaboration and mutual learning among communities, CSOs, government authorities, and private sector companies. Furthermore, the project focused on enhancing and institutionalizing the participation of CSOs and community leaders in natural resource governance processes.

The TIPS project was underpinned by a theory of change, which hypothesized that a comprehensive understanding of conflict roots and impacts by communities, CSOs, and local authorities, coupled with their ability to mediate conflicts, would lead to more inclusive policies and more equitable distribution of natural resource benefits, thereby mitigating violent conflict effectively. Implementation spanned across five provinces: Cabo Delgado, Inhambane, Niassa, Sofala, and Tete. Leadership was provided by FCA/ NRTP, with significant contributions from both partners, IMD and IESE, as well as from project associates including the Council of Religions in Mozambique (COREM).

The project's efforts commenced with extensive research across these provinces, resulting in multiple outputs—including a comprehensive research study and several briefs—which illuminated the underlying causes of conflicts and shaped subsequent strategies and stakeholder engagements. The research took place in the first year of implementation and was coordinated by IESE and FCA/ NRTP.

Following the research, FCA/ NRTP and IMD organized capacity-building workshops tailored for CSO representatives and community leaders, with the objective of enhancing their conflict resolution and natural

resource management skills. These training workshops were a key activity of the project: they took place in all five provinces, and involved over 70 CSO representatives and 100 community leaders.

The third and last component of the TIPS project featured the creation of multi-stakeholder dialogues at various levels, assembling a diverse mix of stakeholders to foster the kind of mutual understanding and collaboration vital for resolving natural resources-based conflicts. FCA/ NRTP and IMD sponsored two types of events: the so-called provincial forums, which sought to gather participants from civil society, communities and government at provincial level; and community meetings, which sought to bring together CSO representatives, community leaders, government and company representatives in specific districts.

These dialogues were complemented by strategic institutional engagements, including the organization, in Maputo, of an international conference on natural resources and conflict. All these efforts were aimed at institutionalizing the role of CSOs in natural resource governance, and influencing policies to secure more inclusive and sustainable outcomes. This goal was supported by thorough documentation and dissemination of the project's processes and outcomes, ensuring that the insights gained could inform future policymaking and project designs, thereby extending the legacy of the TIPS initiative.

CONTEXT ANALYSIS

Causes of conflict around natural resources

It is a well-known fact that Mozambique is endowed with abundant natural resources, including coal, mineral sands, off-shore gas, rubies, and timber. These resources hold the potential to significantly improve the country's economic standing. However, their management and exploitation have often led to conflict. This phenomenon, commonly referred to as the “resource curse,” is not unique to Mozambique, and the literature suggests that the leading causes of conflict around natural resources in the country include socio-economic marginalization and exclusion, environmental degradation, and inadequate compensation for displaced communities.

Mozambique's socio-economic landscape is characterized by stark marginalization and exclusion, driven by unequal wealth distribution, including from its natural resources. Consequently, there's deep-rooted resentment and a sense of economic exclusion among the communities affected by the efforts of companies to explore, mine or otherwise exploit specific natural resources, which is regularly aggravated by forced relocations and insufficient compensation for dispossessed land, loss of livelihoods or environmental damages. Such socio-economic disparities are not confined to resource-rich areas, but reflect the national situation, with a pronounced gap between the more developed Southern regions, including the capital, Maputo, and the marginalized Northern provinces. This divide fuels mistrust towards the state and contributes to socio-economic grievances, which feeds violent conflict.

Environmental degradation in Mozambique also presents a critical challenge that exacerbates socio-economic disparities. The extensive exploitation of natural resources has led to significant environmental impacts, including habitat destruction, water pollution and community displacement. Communities dependent on natural ecosystems for their livelihoods—such as agriculture, hunting, fishing, and small-scale mining—are often the hardest hit. The destruction of local environments not only diminishes the regions' natural heritage, but also deepens the economic vulnerabilities of already marginalized populations, pushing them into further poverty and exclusion.

At a more immediate level, natural resource exploitation generally entails the resettlement of communities, or compensation for any other negative effect, such as pollution. Around resettlement and compensation tensions grow and violent conflict regularly flares up, usually though minor or localized incidents, such as demonstrations or violent confrontations, which pit communities on the one side and security forces or

private companies on the other. This said, incidents occurring over a long period of time can have deep negative impacts on social cohesion, and contribute to undermining trust in government. This, coupled with the aforementioned socio-economic disparities, can contribute to larger escalations, as is the case in Cabo Delgado province.

The insurgency in Cabo Delgado

The conflict in Cabo Delgado exploded in 2017 and has come to dominate the attention of the Mozambican government and the international community. Analysts agree that the violence is driven by grievances related to economic stagnation, social tensions, and also environmental factors, including the expected wealth to be generated by the discovery of significant gas reserves. While these factors are found in other provinces, what has made the conflict in Cabo Delgado different is the emergence of an Islamist insurgent group, called Al-Shabaab (but distinct from the Somali group with the same name). Al-Shabaab has attacked security forces and civilians alike, leading to a humanitarian crisis. It has been able to do so by in large part by tapping in to the aforementioned community grievances.

The Mozambican government's reaction to the conflict in Cabo Delgado has focused on suppressing the insurgency, restoring stability and securing strategic areas and essential infrastructure—including around natural resource exploitation. In conducting these efforts, however, the government has been accused of fomenting tensions, by committing alleged human rights abuses and enlisting local militias from the Makonde ethnic group, which is primarily comprising Christians, with the main goal of operating in interior regions to contain the spread of Al-Shabaab in Muslim-dominated coastal areas. Analysts suggest that the response from the Mozambican security forces and other groups associated with the government has, as such, undermined social cohesion, contributing to the already low trust that communities had for authorities⁶.

Recent developments suggest a change in approach, however. The government has launched several initiatives to address the socio-economic grievances fuelling violent conflict, such as the establishment of the Northern Integrated Development Agency (ADIN) and efforts to direct donor aid towards economic growth, youth employment, and rebuilding trust in affected communities. These measures could have an impact on addressing the causes of conflict, and they indeed include efforts to promote dialogue with communities and to rebuild trust. Such initiatives underscore the recognition that military solutions alone cannot resolve the roots of the conflict.

⁶ See, for example: "Stemming the insurrection in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado", International Crisis Group, 2021.

Conflict and tensions in other provinces

While the insurgency has monopolized the discourse on conflict in Mozambique, the "resource curse" dynamic—where natural resource abundance leads to conflict rather than prosperity—also affects other provinces outside of Cabo Delgado, including Niassa, Inhambane, Sofala, and Tete.

For instance, Tete, known for its vast coal reserves, has seen its development hindered by inadequate infrastructure and environmental concerns. In several cases, the forced displacement of communities, without fair compensation, has sowed feelings of betrayal. In others, the restriction of access to essential productive lands and natural resources has led to loss of livelihoods. Mining operations in the province have also caused significant environmental degradation, notably affecting air and water quality. The situation is worsened by a pronounced lack of effective communication channels between affected communities, authorities, and mining companies, fostering a sense of neglect.

In general, anywhere there is natural resource exploitation, the everyday realities for affected populations are often characterized by displacement, loss of livelihoods, and human rights violations. Yet, it is worth noting that the literature review found that little information is available, in the public domain, on areas beyond Cabo Delgado and Tete. This is surprising, given the fact that other provinces, such as Inhambane, but also Niassa and Sofala, feature challenges related to natural resource management, which are similar to those of Cabo Delgado and Tete. Yet, information about tensions that have been generated by exploitation efforts remains scarce at best.

What information there is suggests that conflicts over natural resources have remained difficult to solve across the country and, over the last three to four years, notably intensified in the North⁷. This period has witnessed a surge in organized attacks by militant groups—with Cabo Delgado being the epicentre, but not the only province affected. Violent incidents have affected towns, strategic locations, and infrastructure, which has led to significant displacement and a humanitarian crisis. The involvement of foreign fighters has not only complicated the security situation, but has also introduced a more ideologically driven aspect to the violence, raising concerns about the implications for regional stability. Throughout this period, local populations have continued to express grievances over their exclusion from the benefits of natural resource extraction projects, despite the significant economic development potential offered by natural gas reserves and mining activities. The lack of improvement in living standards for local communities has deepened feelings of marginalization and fuelled discontent.

⁷ See, for example: "Exploring Resource and Climate Drivers of Conflict in Northern Mozambique", Stephanie Meek and Minenhle Nene, South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), 2021.

These grievances are amplified by historical and ethnic disparities. Historical disparities have pitted the resource-rich yet marginalized Northern provinces and the more developed Southern areas, including the capital, Maputo. Ethnic tensions have generally involved the Makonde, Makua, and Mwani groups, adding complexity to natural resource-based conflicts. The general conflict and peace outlook has then been made worse by poor governance, marked by very high levels of corruption and weak institutions, and the unmet expectations around the wealth to be generated by natural resources, which has sparked political and social unrest, at times almost as much as actual exploitation. In both cases, unrest derives from the lack of trust in the government, which is seen as failing to deliver on development promises and equitable resource distribution.

The role of national and regional actors, private companies and NGOs

The political landscape also significantly influences conflicts, with the Liberation Front of Mozambique (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique, or FRELIMO), the ruling party since Mozambique's independence, and the Mozambican National Resistance (Resistência Nacional Moçambicana, or RENAMO), a former rebel group turned political party, playing central roles. In the Northern regions, the Makonde's storied resistance against colonialism deeply intertwines with current socio-political dynamics. Their celebrated role in FRELIMO's liberation efforts has translated into considerable political and military influence in contemporary Mozambique. However, this legacy has led to perceptions of Makonde favouritism in government and resource distribution, exacerbating ethnic tensions.

In response to the escalating instability, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and international partners have offered support to help Mozambique regain control and stabilize the region. The deployment of an SADC military force underscores a regional commitment to Mozambique's stabilization, which is indeed shared by other countries with historical ties to the country, or interested in its wealth. However, while the interest of the international community for a stable Mozambique is clear, their interventions can be seen with scepticism and it is unclear whether and how they might aid with the needs communities continue to face, in Cabo Delgado and in other provinces alike.

Finally, the role of multinational companies and foreign investors in extracting natural resources, like gas and minerals, should not be underestimated—and is, in fact, crucial. A lot of communities' grievances are directed at the private companies, which are seen as external actors operating with a near complete lack of transparency and accountability. Mozambique has laws in place that are meant to regulate natural resource exploration and exploitation, and which give a significant role to community-based institutions.

In fact, laws indicate clearly that a percentage of shares from such operations should return to communities: these are set as 20% of shares from state revenues for forest and wildlife exploitation licenses (under the 1997 Land Law and the 1999 Forest and Wildlife Law, and as 2.75% of shares from oil and gas deposits (under the 2014 Mining and Petroleum Laws).

There are further provisions on resettlement and compensation embedded in the legal code, including, for example, Decree 31 / 2012, which regulates the resettlement process in mining areas. Such laws require that communities with rights to revenue-shares create community-based Natural Resource Management Committees and open a bank account. Where communities have the right to 20% of revenue-share, this should normally be paid directly to the Committees; where they have the right to 2.75%, this would normally come from the State Treasury. Yet, companies by and large work exclusively with the central government—the ultimate authority for granting operating licenses—effectively cutting out affected communities and contributing to their sense of injustice. Private companies have as such been the target of demonstrations and even insurgents' attacks, especially in gas exploration projects in Cabo Delgado, but also in Tete around coal mining operations.

Multi-national companies are consensually seen as key actors in the conflict, who also have the potential to support social cohesion and peace. They are encouraged to promote social stability through conflict-sensitive business practices, job creation, and community development projects—and the Mozambican government is indeed a participant in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). If the potential for these companies to play a significant role in providing employment opportunities, even in reintegrating ex-combatants into society, in practice this seldom happens. There are, across the literature, some examples of virtuous practices, but these remain exceptions in the broader context.

Finally, there are CSOs and NGOs actively working on peacebuilding in Mozambique, although few with a specific focus on natural resources. Similarly, while there are CSOs and NGOs working on natural resource management, few of them have experiences in peacebuilding. In this respect, the TIPS project represented somewhat of an exception. In addition, the recent shift of attention to conflict in Cabo Delgado has translated into the launching of many civil society-led initiatives in that province, at the detriment of other provinces where conflict is also present. In relation to this, too, the TIPS project represented something new, and original.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

Relevance

The project was extremely relevant to the needs, concerns and priorities that Mozambican communities, as well as authorities and private sector companies, faced around natural resource management. It also managed to involve all the right stakeholders, chiefly the community leaders and those CSO representatives already working on natural resource-based conflicts in targeted areas.

Overall, the communities' needs targeted under the project are fully aligned to those identified and described in the context analysis. Broadly speaking, the needs had already been identified in the original project proposal, and then confirmed by the CSO representatives and community leaders engaged during the research.

All evidence points to the fact that, in all targeted provinces, conflicts around natural resources abound and usually focus on the decent resettlement of affected communities, their compensation, the loss of livelihoods, and environmental degradation and pollution and access to services. In other words, when natural resource exploitation operations are launched, this tends to trigger actions to resettle communities, or to compensate them for losing access to livelihoods (such as land to cultivate), or to pollution. Around these actions, communities often develop complaints, which, when unaddressed, lead to frustrations and grievances against authorities and private companies. These grievances, however, can also be fed by a sense of historical injustices, which relate to dynamics of social and political marginalization. The most oft-cited manifestation of this mixture of immediate and historical grievances is the lack of trust in the government, which communities often see as corrupt and colluding with private companies. This is captured, for example, in the following quote:

“The companies negotiate everything with the government and we are only presented to the entrepreneurs and the communities at the time of the beginning of their activities”⁸.

Because of the frequency and scope of the conflicts around natural resources, one of the main needs identified by FCA/ NRTP was the lack of dialogue between communities, government, and the private sector. In all provinces, this was very much confirmed by informants—during the research conducted under

⁸ Interview with CSO representative in Inhambane, AP, March 2024.

the project, and in the interviews and focus groups conducted as part of this evaluation. The fact that the project sought to bridge this gap by facilitating interactions through local government, is, as such, indicative of the intervention's high level of relevance.

Similarly, the original proposal and the research both honed in on the lack of adequate forums where all stakeholders involved in natural resource management could discuss complaints and address conflicts—thus providing a non-violent, dialogue-based alternative to actions such as demonstrations, occupations or acts of vandalism, which are what usually take place when communities feel that they are not being heard. Given this, the establishment of multi-stakeholder dialogue forums, a key strategy under the project, was extremely relevant. These forums brought together community representatives from different districts at the provincial level to engage in discussions with each other and with government representatives. The main aim of this approach was to foster a collaborative environment for conflict resolution, which represented, again, evidence of strong relevance, given how it responded to what communities and CSOs engaged on natural resources-related conflicts felt that it was missing.

In this context, the project's decision to engage mainly at provincial and district levels was also very relevant. As noted in the context assessment, and as highlighted also in the research published under the project, the governance architecture around natural resources in Mozambique is weakest at the sub-national levels: benefits to communities are, in fact, supposed to be championed by provincial assemblies on the one side, and by natural resource management committees on the other. Yet, these bodies are often incapable of engaging, or, in the case of committees, sometimes even actively excluded from playing their mandated role.

The project helped to provide information to CSOs and community leaders on the legal rights and obligations under the laws on natural resources governance, like the 20% and 2.75% returns that they should be getting on profits generated through exploitation (as these are defined by the Land Law and the Mining Law respectively). The evaluation confirmed that many CSOs and most community leaders had only limited awareness of what the laws actually said, and for this reason the project's efforts to increase their access to information were also very relevant—and very much appreciated by all those interviewed during the evaluation. Indeed, FCA/ NRTP correctly identified access to information as a key need, for communities in particular, and the research was launched with the specific aim of filling this need. At the same time, the need also extended to more general information about the rights of communities under the law, and the governance architecture in place to manage complaints against authorities and companies. This information was part of the training workshops, and was seen as extremely useful and important by all participants.

Central to the project's high mark under this criterion was the research. Aside from the very high quality of the final research report that was produced by the project, the research had two additional elements of value added.

First, it served as a meaningful moment to build strong and trust-based relationships between the project's implementers and participating CSOs and community leaders—and not just in provincial capitals, but in each target district as well. A total of 27 districts were, in fact, visited as part of this activity, including some that are seldom the focus of similar research efforts, either because they are difficult to access or because of research priorities. This effort was important: it produced an extremely rich document, and served to give voice to people and communities who otherwise would likely not have had such an opportunity⁹. Research activities also involved some government and private company representatives, which was also important and contributed to fostering the participation of these actors in later activities.

Secondly, the research served as a detailed map of natural resources-based conflicts around the country. Each of these conflicts was carefully considered, with useful indications as to the actors involved and the causes behind them. Again, the level of detail is worth noting, in no small part because it offsets a broader trend, in relation to similar research efforts, which in recent years have tended to focus overwhelmingly (if not exclusively) on the insurgency in Cabo Delgado. This remains a key conflict, with consequences for the whole country; yet, there are many other conflicts in Mozambique around natural resources, which end up being underreported. Overall, the quality of the research, and the research process, helped establish solid bases upon which later activities were effectively built and implemented.

A few challenges were recorded under relevance. First, some key actors could not have been engaged as originally planned. In particular, CSO representatives and community leaders from some of the more faraway and least accessible districts could not be consistently engaged, because of limited financial resources in the originally agreed budget, in spite of their needs being the same as all other CSO representatives and community leaders targeted under the project (this challenge is further discussed under efficiency).

⁹ The scope of the research is truly unlike any other report found or reviewed for this evaluation. Normally, research efforts under projects like TIPS are much more limited in scope, focusing in (usually) either a province or a handful of districts. FCA's research was much more ambitious, and this ambition complicated the completion of the activities, which, according to several informants, was logistically challenging to execute and took longer to complete than initially expected. Yet, the final product is an extremely rich and detailed document, and a clear outlier compared to what is available, on topics related to natural resources and conflict in Mozambique, in the public domain.

In terms of engaging government and private company representatives, the project had success and also faced some limitations. On the positive side, FCA/ N RTP was able to secure the participation of government representatives, at both provincial and district levels. Authorities took active part in the research at the start of the project, and later attended many of the multi-stakeholder meetings. Their participation made the project all the more relevant, given the dynamics that hinder effective conflict resolution around natural resources in Mozambique. Similarly, private company representatives also took part in project activities, but their participation was more limited, both in terms of numbers and also in terms of quality. This is a challenge that influenced the project's effectiveness and impact also.

Another limitation was that government and company representatives were not among the targets of capacity-building efforts, even though these actors also had needs and priorities. For instance, natural resources management committees lack the capacities for meaningful community engagement, or for conflict resolution, and are often influenced by political parties, which was identified as a key barrier to community participation in decision-making processes related to natural resource management. Yet, government representatives were involved mainly in the multi-stakeholder dialogues, and not in the training events. Obviously, this was done by choice—the TIPS project was designed to be a civil society and community-led project—but, in the face of needs, the project could have achieved even greater relevance had it tried to lead government stakeholders through a capacity-strengthening process similar to that conducted for CSO representatives and community leaders.

Lastly, while the information given to CSO representatives and community leaders through the training workshops was relevant, those interviewed during the evaluation suggested that they would have appreciated even more of it—or, simply, more time to go over the relevant information. Several reports reviewed for the evaluation argue, in fact, that Mozambique's legislation on natural resource management is quite developed and strong on paper. As discussed in the context analysis, there are several laws that clarify the rights of communities and the responsibilities of both authorities and companies. Laws have, however, been approved in different waves, and there are indications that while the Land Law is strong and clear, the more recent laws, including the Petroleum law, are less so. Similarly, there are legal provisions regulating conflict resolution, not least through democratic processes, but also involving traditional authorities. The legal system is, in other words, complex and informants rightfully noted that they needed more information to navigate through this complexity.

Effectiveness

The project was largely effective, achieving both of its expected outcomes and making contributions towards its specific objective. These were confirmed through the measurement of project indicators—see Annex 4 for the full list—and validated by the evaluation.

The most important positive achievements under the project have been the changes in skills and knowledge among those who were trained, and the creation of spaces of interaction and dialogue. Combined, these outcomes served to increase the self-efficacy of participating CSO representatives and community leaders, meaning their sense of their own agency in engaging in and resolving natural resource-based conflicts¹⁰. The realization of these outcomes, however, varied from district to district¹¹, and in this regard, effectiveness was certainly affected by the engagement of authorities and company representatives, which was a key challenge.

The main positive outcome from the project was the strengthening of capacities, hereby intended as knowledge and skills for conflict resolution and for engaging on natural resource management, of participating CSO representatives and community leaders. This was a key objective under the project, and it was achieved even beyond original expectations. The training sessions have emerged, in fact, as a standout activity: by equipping participants with skills in conflict resolution, the project saw immediate and tangible effects. Participants felt empowered and several government entities, for example in Niassa and Cabo Delgado, were quick to recognize the value of these newly trained individuals, involving them in ongoing efforts to resolve conflicts with communities or between a community and a corporate actor.

Informants interviewed during the evaluation were unanimous in their appreciation of the training workshops organized by FCA/ NRTP and IMD. They all confirmed that the training efforts provided very useful skills in conflict resolution and relevant knowledge about natural resource management. Many of them could recollect specific notions they learned, even though the trainings had taken place nearly a year before evaluation, if not more. The following is a series of quotes that reflect this finding:

¹⁰ Self-efficacy is more generally, and formally, defined as “people’s beliefs in their capabilities to produce desired effects by their actions” (Bandura, 1997, p. VII).

¹¹ This statement should be qualified. As noted in the methodology section, data collection for the evaluation took place in three of the five provinces targeted under the TIPS project (Cabo Delgado, Inhambane and Tete), and essentially covered only a handful of districts in each, such as Moatize in Tete and Janghamo in Inhambane. For this reason, what the evaluation can say about districts in which data collection was not conducted is limited. At the same time, the document review and interviews with informants familiar with the whole project were used to fill this gap—and this finding has found to be valid based on this information.

“One of the greatest outcomes of TIPS for us is the strengthening of our capacity in terms of knowledge to be able to advocate for the rights of communities”¹².

“Both in the trainings and in the workshops, we learned new elements, and [the events] contributed to a greater understanding of conflicts, the legislation surrounding the exploitation of natural resources, and the 2.75% [revenue share]”¹³.

“In the meetings, we leaders were taught about the law; we were prepared for the consultation process; we were advising the community in a resettlement process”¹⁴.

“I see communities, the government and companies thinking differently from before, because nowadays communities know how to ask the government about the 2.75% [revenue share] for communities, companies and the government to respect the principle of social responsibility”¹⁵.

“The activities that produced significant changes were the trainings, as these involved the main actors interested in these issues and with the capacity to intervene fully”¹⁶.

Importantly, the training workshops were effective in all locations. Indeed, the events were led by the same trainer in all locations, and using the same curriculum. This model was effective, creating a common base for all participants, across different locations. All those interviewed expressed very good impressions about the results of this activity, regardless of locations, and linking their judgement to the quality of the events, which, in their view, were expertly done.

The second main positive outcome of the project was the fostering of greater collaboration among CSOs, communities and authorities. In the project’s logic, this activity was meant to follow the training workshops and build on the relations established during those activities (as well as the findings from the research). This clearly happened, and the sequence of activities—starting from the research, going into the training workshops, and then into the community dialogues and the provincial forums—should be considered effective and a model to be replicated in the future. At the same time, the effectiveness of this activity varied from location to location.

¹² Interview with CSO representative from Tete, AP, March 2024.

¹³ Focus group discussion with CSO representatives from Inhambane, AP, March 2024.

¹⁴ Focus group discussion with community leaders from Inhambane, AP, March 2024.

¹⁵ Focus group discussion with CSO representatives from Cabo Delgado, AP, April 2024.

¹⁶ Interview with CSO representative from Sofala, AP, April 2024.

The most compelling and clear evidence of effectiveness, in relation to greater collaboration, was found in Tete and Cabo Delgado. There are also cases from other locations, including from Inhambane, Niassa and Sofala, but these presented more challenges and appeared as less clear-cut examples of effectiveness (although in part this is certainly due to the evaluation's limited scope, as explained in the methodology section).

This said, in all locations the multi-stakeholder dialogues were implemented as envisioned, creating a platform for advocacy where major stakeholders in natural resources-based conflicts—including the government, private sector, CSOs, and community leader—could converge. Furthermore, and as expected, these dialogues allowed for the discussion of the issues at the centre of conflicts, and of the complaints brought forth by communities, demonstrating an effective mechanism for stakeholder engagement.

The fact that the dialogues featured different stakeholders is important because it addressed a key need identified in the research: in target locations, dialogues such as the ones organized under the TIPS project had not happened effectively before. Importantly, trained CSO representatives and community leaders were given a good level of responsibility in organizing the community dialogues and the forums: they played a significant role in preparing the advocacy agenda, showcasing the project's commitment to incorporating diverse inputs and facilitating constructive dialogues. Indeed, the project paid special attention to inclusivity, particularly regarding gender and youth, and efforts were made to ensure broad participation among these groups during both the training workshops and the dialogue sessions. This said, while inclusion was achieved, in the sense that the project was able to engage a diverse group of participants, the participation of women remained below the project's original expectations. This represents a challenge to address in the future.

The participation from both government entities and private companies was also notable, indicating the project's success in bringing together various actors to address community issues. But this collaboration was nevertheless limited and varied significantly from one province to another. Overall, the project faced continuous challenges in attracting authorities and, even more so, company representatives to all dialogues—a point further discussed below.

Everywhere the dialogues and forums took place they were found to be useful and effective. The following series of quotes is, as the one before, included to reflect this finding and also show the positive tone used by nearly all informants—most of whom were CSO representatives and community leaders—during interviews and focus group discussions:

“The community of Mboza [in Tete province] had a concern, over the lack of water in the area where they were resettled. They called the company to a meeting and there they presented their concerns, and the company within the scope of its social responsibility was sensitive to the issue and set up water boreholes in the requested places”¹⁷.

“Because of these meetings, the government began to listen to the concerns of the communities, since before [these meetings], technicians from the District Services of Economic Activities decided what to do with the value of the 2.75% [revenue share] without consulting the communities”¹⁸.

“In the public consultations with the company, we were able to defend our community, because we were prepared. In the meetings we asked ourselves about the compensations, what the community will gain from this”¹⁹.

The achievement of these outcomes represents a clear improvement compared to the pre-project situation. And what the evaluation has also found is that this has improved the self-efficacy of participating CSOs representatives and community leaders. Through the trainings, these actors were, in fact, given a chance to increase their awareness about methods to address complaints and grievances—new methods compared to what, they themselves acknowledged, were used before. Where CSO representatives and community leaders were able to engage in the full sequence of activities—the training workshops, followed by community dialogues—and where these efforts resulted in a response from authorities or private sector companies, this then resulted in participants gaining a sense of confidence in their own agency, which, by their admission, they were lacking before the project.

In some cases, the dialogues also led to the resolution of specific conflicts over natural resources exploitation—as will be further discussed in the section on impact—which indeed represents the intention of the project, as expressed in its overarching goal. Yet, what is valuable to highlight is just how much the improvements in participants’ self-efficacy are just as important on their own, and separate from any achievements in resolving conflicts: thanks to the project, participants know, in fact, how to engage on natural resources-based conflicts, and many of them claimed that they will be able to do so in the future as well.

This said, there were variations from location to location. Outcomes appear to be more fully achieved in Tete compared and Cabo Delgado to Inhambane, for example (this being locations where the evaluation

¹⁷ Interview with CSO representative from Tete, AP, March 2024.

¹⁸ Focus group discussion with CSO representatives from Inhambane, AP, March 2024.

¹⁹ Focus group discussion with community leaders from Inhambane, AP, March 2024.

was able to conduct data collection missions). In Tete, for instance, feedback from all key actors—CSOs, community leaders and government representatives—confirmed that the training workshop was effective, that they contributed in turn to the organization of successful community dialogues, in several districts, and of the provincial forums. Generally speaking, authorities and private companies attended these events, and, because of them, some disputes were addressed and resolved. In Inhambane, conversely, informants indicated that authorities did not participate consistently in either district or provincial-level events, and this appears to have limited the project's effectiveness beyond the training workshops and the dialogues. In other words, these events were successfully held in the province, just as they were in all those targeted under the TIPS project, but they did not yield, based on available information, outcomes of the same quality as those found in Tete.

As already noted under relevance, in working with authorities and private company representatives the project had success, but also faced limitations. The best way to understand where the project met expectations and where it did not is to distinguish between participation (i.e., taking interest and part in one or more activities) and full engagement (i.e., responding to the instances made by communities and making a commitment to resolving conflict).

The participation of authorities was a very positive aspect of the project. It was generally high, although it varied from province to province, as already noted. It was most successful in Tete and Cabo Delgado, according to multiple sources. It was more difficult in Inhambane, although eventually a government representative did attend one of the provincial forum meetings there. According to some of the people interviewed, this might have been due to the fact that, in some cases, those invited were provincial agency, or department, directors—high-level officials with little time to take active part in the project beyond attending the launch of specific activities.

The engagement of authorities was more successful in some locations and less in others. As will be discussed more in the section on impact, some government representatives, having participated in the project, acknowledged the instances, or complaints, received by communities and responded to them. This was not, however, a general response, and in many districts the participation of the government did not translate into a commitment to address an existing conflict.

The difficulties in engaging authorities had additional implications. For example, in Inhambane it took more time than expected to complete the research as the authorities in that province were hesitant to give the authorizations necessary to work on issues related to natural resource management. In general, the issue itself was seen as very sensitive and a source of tension between communities and authorities. For

this reason, FCA/ NRTP took time to establish trust with authorities at all levels. The project did not turn away from addressing sensitive issues such as corruption or nepotism/alignment with political parties; however, acknowledging that doing so directly could involve high risks, including to people's safety, it sought to avoid any action that could be seen as excessively antagonistic. Based on the information gathered for the conflict analysis, this was an appropriate approach, which did not rule out the possibility of articulating evidence-based critiques of government action, as it was done in the research report, for instance, or during community dialogues that were held in several districts.

The greatest challenge was with engaging private sector companies. Using the same distinction used for authorities, the project successfully managed expectations around the participation of company representatives. In a few cases, they also managed their full engagement, to the extent that company representatives took concrete measures to address conflicts. In general, however, the participation of representatives from this actor group was the exception rather than the rule. And ultimately, this meant that, while the project was effective at creating or strengthening collaborative spaces on natural resources management, the engagement of company representatives remained systemically weak.

Lastly, two more challenges should be mentioned. The first was the insurgency in Cabo Delgado, which disrupted several activities, and created delays. The second is the COVID-19 pandemic, which significantly impacted the project's initial planning and execution. Restrictions on gatherings and travel affected the organization of meetings and the planning phase, posing a considerable challenge to the finalization of the research in particular.

Efficiency

FCA/ NRTP set up efficient coordination mechanisms, which ensured the implementation of the project in spite of the challenges encountered, as these are described just above. The project also made efficient use of its financial resources, yet dealing with scale and distances proved a challenge.

To ensure timely and efficient implementation of activities, the project employed a multi-layered coordination strategy that included the creation of a project management team for weekly planning and reviews, and a steering committee that met quarterly for high-level strategic oversight. In addition, FCA/ NRTP coordinated bi-monthly operational meetings involving partner representatives based in the target provinces, as well as the partners' finance teams, and a simplified quarterly reporting process for progress updates. Lastly, a WhatsApp group was set up for immediate communication needs.

Despite the challenges posed by scheduling conflicts and the diverse project management experience among partners, these coordination mechanisms proved largely effective. Flexibility in re-scheduling meetings and providing additional support for partners unfamiliar with such project work helped overcome initial hurdles. Moreover, the post-COVID shift to face-to-face meetings significantly improved stakeholder relationships and communication.

The project's coordination was further bolstered by the clear differentiation between operational implementation and strategic management, facilitated through the aforementioned project management group and the steering committee. This separation allowed for more focused discussions in both areas, although the steering committee faced initial difficulties due to the consortium's newness and the disparate nature of the partners' efforts. It is worth noting that IMD and IESE were given a very high level of responsibility under the project, as well as a high level of autonomy in implementing activities.

The two organizations are, however, very different: IMD is an organization that works on strengthening the country's multi-party democratic system, and is therefore very attuned to working on political issues; IESE is an academic centre with expertise in research; both organizations had limited experience of peacebuilding, and with working with communities at the grassroots level. The collaboration between these organizations was not always smooth. On the research, for example, IESE contributed to producing a high-quality, rich document; IMD, however, felt that this needed to be adapted into a more operationally minded, and ultimately simpler, training curriculum. Eventually, a compromise was reached, which, as the findings from this evaluation show, did not compromise the project's effectiveness. More generally, the functioning of coordination mechanisms was also enhanced by individual leadership and commitment, notably from staff members like FCA/ NRTP's project coordinator, who played a crucial role in meeting deadlines and facilitating workshops.

Communication took place effectively between the strategic and operational levels of implementation, and there is no evidence that this was negatively affected either by the COVID-19 pandemic or by staff turnover within the partners. All those engaged during the evaluation were generally satisfied of how the project involved them, in particular during the research and training activities. A staff member confirmed, for example, that the first day of the training workshops in each province served as a moment for staff members to listen to participating CSO representatives and community leaders. This listening was well appreciated, and created a lot of goodwill towards the project.

In terms of financial management, the project managed resources in a centralized manner. FCA/ NRTP, IESE and IMD confirmed the budgets for specific activities, and then used the allocated financial resources.

The project did not envision any support to third parties, although external consultants were brought on board whenever necessary, including, for example, in the case of the enumerators hired to conduct research activities, and the trainer who led the training workshops. In general, this simplified logistics and administrative processes, and translated in well executed activities, with a high level of satisfaction on the part of those who took part in them.

The main challenge under this criterion related to the size of the budget vis-à-vis the scope of the project. Several people noted how the budget was somewhat constrained in terms of facilitating the participation of CSO representatives and community leaders in community dialogues and provincial forums, due to the high costs associated with travel from distant areas. This forced a re-adjustment on the part of FCA/ NRTP, which increased the allocations to participants' travel. At the same time, FCA/ NRTP also made the decision to create provincial task forces composed mostly of participants who came from the provincial capitals and close-by districts. This decision was necessary to relieve pressure on available financial resources, but it ended up limiting the participation of people from those districts that were deemed too far.

Another challenge related to communication around the communication dialogues and provincial forums. Some of the participants interviewed during the evaluation commented that they sometimes received little information about the events they were asked to attend, or that this information came quite late or right before the events were to take place.

Impact

As part of the evaluation, the project's theory of change was assessed to develop a clearer understanding of whether, how and why FCA/ NRTP contributed to impact, as this has been defined under the project—i.e., improved conflict prevention and peacebuilding in relation to natural resource governance and management in the five provinces. For the valuation, the theory of change was then used to frame FCA/ NRTP's "contribution story"—how, in other words, the organization sees the linkages between what it did and what it achieved—and it is against this story that the evidence collected has been used, to either validate or invalidate the contributions made by the project to impact-level changes²⁰.

²⁰ The creation of the "contribution story" and its validation through all available evidence are key parts of the Contribution Analysis evaluation approach, as this has been described in the methodology section.

The theory of change of the TIPS project, as defined in the original proposal, reads as follows²¹:

“If communities, civil society actors, and local authorities have a comprehensive understanding of the multiplicity of root causes of local conflicts and the potential impact of their actions; if the local communities and CSOs are capacitated to mediate local conflicts; and if the authorities, private sector and communities increasingly interact with each other through dialogue; then civil society and communities are empowered to advance more inclusive policies and equal distribution of benefits deriving from natural resources; thereby mitigating natural resource conflicts”²².

Overall, FCA/ NRTP saw the main challenges around natural resources-related conflict as involving three main actors: communities, authorities and private sector companies—with CSOs playing an important intermediary role. The achievement of impact was then seen as the logical result of three complementary strategies: improved understanding, improved capacities (in particular among CSOs and community leaders), and greater, more inclusive and meaningful interaction between the three key actor groups. This, according to the theory of change, would lead to the empowerment of CSOs and community leaders, intended as an improved sense of self-efficacy, and a change in mindsets among authorities and companies.

The project’s theory of change was reviewed at the start of the evaluation, and the diagram that resulted from this workshop can be seen in Annex 3. Essentially, the workshop confirmed the project’s overarching logic, and FCA/ NRTP’s pursuit of the three aforementioned strategies. Based on this theory of change, the project’s contribution story has then been summarized and broken down in a total of eight specific causal mechanisms²³, and each was then validated using the available evidence. The table below gives an overview of these findings.

²¹ The theory of change statement has been slightly re-phrased: for example, where the statement originally said ‘when’, this word has been replaced with ‘if’, which is the more standard practice. The theory of change is otherwise unchanged.

²² TIPS project proposal, FCA, 2020, page 7.

²³ In theory-based evaluation approaches, causal mechanisms should be understood as a system of interlocking parts that transmit causal forces between a cause (or a set of causes) and an outcome. Causal mechanisms can thus be through of a unit encompassing an agent responsible for an action (or actions), the action (or actions) and the consequence of those actions. See, for further information and examples: Beach, D. (2016). “It’s All about Mechanisms – What Process Tracing Case Studies should be Tracing,” *New Political Economy*, Vol. 21, No. 5, pp. 463-472.

Table 2. Validation of causal mechanisms

Causal mechanism	Evidence and validation
<p>1) FCA, IMD and IESE engaged all stakeholders in all provinces, and built trust with them by capturing their concerns and priorities into the research.</p>	<p>This effectively happened. In general, both primary and secondary sources of information confirmed that FCA, IESE and IMD established very positive relations, in particular with CSO representatives and community leaders in all provinces. Relationships with authorities were positive, but varied from location to location. Relations with private sector companies were difficult to establish.</p>
<p>2) The research produced original and previously unavailable insights into the nature of natural resources-related conflicts in target locations.</p>	<p>This effectively happened. The research was topical and shed light on conflicts that had not received a lot of attention before. Importantly, the research looked at conflicts in all provinces, in a total of 27 districts, and allowed for the engagement of CSO representatives and community leaders in each of these districts.</p>
<p>3) CSO representatives and community leaders gained useful skills and knowledge on conflict resolution and effective, non-violent engagement to address natural resources-related conflicts.</p>	<p>This effectively happened. The training workshops were one of the project's main positive outcomes: all participants appreciated them, and saw them as critical for gaining relevant and useful new skills and knowledge.</p>
<p>4) CSO representatives, community leaders, authorities and private sector representations came together to discuss the causes of conflicts and identify, together, possible solutions.</p>	<p>This happened, but only in part. Community meetings and provincial forums were effectively held, but unevenly across provinces. Participation by CSO representatives and community leaders was good. Participation by authorities varied, although, in some provinces, it was lower than expected. Participation by company</p>

	representatives was generally lower than expected, and represented a key challenge.
5) Authorities and private sector representatives acknowledged complaints by affected communities and provided a response.	This happened, but only in part. Authorities acknowledged complaints, but only in some cases. In others, CSO representatives and community leaders managed to send the complaint, but did not receive any answer.
6) Communities and CSOs increased their awareness and confidence for constructive, non-violent engagement with authorities and companies.	This happened. There are indications, for instance, that awareness and confidence have increased in some districts of Tete, Niassa and Cabo Delgado. Albeit data collection could not be done in all districts, it is likely that this change would be recorded there, too.
7) Communities accepted the responses by authorities or private companies and felt that these addressed their grievances or concerns.	This happened, but only in part. There are a few cases where responses were recorded and communities' complaints were addressed, effectively solving conflicts. However, in most other districts, the evidence could not be found.
8) Communities, authorities and companies interacted on natural resources-related conflicts in ways that built trust, reducing negative (i.e. violent) conflict and confrontations.	This might have happened, but the evidence is mixed. In some districts in Tete and Cabo Delgado, there is evidence of a change in mindset that reflects greater trust. However, the contribution of the project, compared to other forces, could be validated.

Overall, the project's theory of change can be validated as a model, even though, in practice, evidence of impact was found in about half of the cases where primary data collection was done. This sheds light on some key assumptions made by FCA/ NRTP and how important it is that they hold true.

Take the case of the project's efforts in Moatize district, in Tete. There, FCA/ NRTP and IMD were able to implement all strategies as originally intended. The research identified key issues and helped to establish trust-based relations, in particular between the implementers and local CSOs and community

leaders who were already engaged in addressing natural resources-related conflicts. For instance, among those involved was the leader of a Natural Resource Management Committee that had been created in Benga, a location where a group of families were complaining that they had not been compensated for the loss of land to mining operations²⁴. Thanks to the project, and the drive of this one individual, the Committee made a presentation and submitted a document to the district authorities listing violations practiced by the mining company, and the possible consequences. This led to direct negotiations with the mining companies at the centre of the complaint, which eventually led to the families receiving the compensation they had requested.

A similar situation occurred in Montepuez district, in Cabo Delgado, where the intervention of a local leader, trained under the TIPS project, and the willingness of the company involved in the complaint, made it possible to resolve a conflict around the peaceful resettlement of 105 families²⁵. The contribution of the project is reflected in the following quote:

“[The most surprising positive change was] when the government replied to our position letter. They said that they could answer one point, but not another. That was the result of the training, and the letter, which was signed by ten members of the community. This is about being able to say that we did something good. In years before, [the government] would not have answered. What happened different in 2023? It is the meetings we organized. And they solved the problems of the water, of the road, and of the small market”²⁶.

In Moatize and Montepuez districts, FCA/ NRTP and IMD were not only able to implement all strategies as expected; they also benefited from a (likely) pre-existent commitment on the part of local authorities and, perhaps more importantly, from the companies involved in the communities’ complaints. In other words, the participation of these actors appears to be fundamental, just as recognized by the project’s theory of change. Yet, what the project’s experience seems also to suggest, is that this participation cannot be assumed.

The important question, then, is why did these actors participate in the project in some locations, and not in others? The evidence collected as part of the evaluation cannot provide a definitive answer, but only some interpretations. These are useful to guide the design of similar actions in the future, but should also be tested through additional learning exercises. It is possible, for instance, that the role of authorities is linked to their mandate for supporting the resolution of natural resources-related conflicts, and that this

²⁴ “Local Communities Compensated by Mining Company After Lobbying Actions”, Case study under the TIPS project, FCA, 2024.

²⁵ “Dialogue and Lobbying Restore Peace Between Communities and Mining Company”, Case study under the TIPS project, FCA, 2024.

²⁶ Interview with project staff member, AP, March 2024.

mandate is presently weak. The weakness can be clearly seen in the general lack of resources for facilitating consultative processes or planning a more robust monitoring of companies' operations in known hot spots—i.e., in locations where it is known that there is conflict between communities and companies. The lack of resources is particularly problematic at district and provincial levels, and it affects authorities as much as CSOs.

If the mandate for engaging on natural resources-related conflicts is weak among government representatives, it is weaker still among private company representatives. Indeed, all information collected, through primary and secondary sources, suggest that the cases where companies responded to complaints made by communities (working with the project's support) were exceptions to the general situation, which remained characterized by companies' failures to engage with communities. Legally, it is also the case that companies in Mozambique operate with much greater leeway than even government agencies enjoy, in terms of how they carry out their operations. In practice, companies are accountable first (and often only) to the national ministries responsible for licensing, which undermines any incentives for community engagement at provincial or district level.

Where the project succeeded in engaging authorities and company representatives, this could have been due to the personalities involved. In both Tete and Cabo Delgado, for instance, the project was able to rely on the support of particularly open-minded and friendly individuals—in Cabo Delgado, this person was, in fact, even referred to as the “champion” for the project, and several informants confirmed that he played an effective role in facilitating the links between CSOs, communities and authorities engaged in the project. The strategy of identifying such “champions”, among both government officials and company representatives, could indeed be successful for overcoming the structural lack of incentives that hinders their participation in initiatives like the TIPS project.

Lastly, where significant contributions were made, external factors appear to have played an important role. There is evidence, in particular, that the project's achievements were facilitated by changes in the way the Mozambican government approached natural resources management, in the country's Northern provinces in particular. In 2020, the government created ADIN, with a particular goal of “making better use of the potential of and existing natural resources in [Cabo Delgado, Niassa and Nampula] provinces”²⁷. More generally, the government seems to have adopted a more open and transparent approach to governance challenges, which, as noted in the context analysis, could be a response to the insurgency and the crisis in the North. This openness has reinforced the mandate of authorities, and indeed

²⁷ “Government of Mozambique creates Agency for Integrated Development of the North”, Club of Mozambique, 2020.

several informants noted that the government itself is now promoting open consultations and collaborating with CSOs in Cabo Delgado. This change, which is related to the context and the political pressures faced by the government, suggest that advocacy might be required to overcome challenges in engaging authorities.

Sustainability

The main achievement under sustainability is linked to the changes in the skills and knowledge of participants, chiefly the CSO representatives and community leaders involved in the training workshops and subsequent activities. In their own words, it is clear that those who have gained new skills and knowledge will continue using them after the end of the project. There is also practical evidence of this, with several cases where CSO representatives and leaders have indeed used what they acquired in the project to write petitions or engage government representatives.

Sustainable conflict resolution and prevention around the management of natural resources in Mozambique ultimately depends on the relationships that exist between communities (and their leaders), authorities and companies. This has been made clear in the context analysis and is also at the heart of the project's theory of change, as discussed in the previous section. On the positive side, the project has made a contribution to improving these relationships, which have been important and led to several, notable positive changes. For instance, most of the CSO representatives and community leaders engaged during the evaluation describe the impact of the project in relation to the new skills and knowledge it gave them.

Gaining these skills and knowledge was important, and they were put to good use. In several locations, the community dialogues and provincial forums also helped to reset the relationship between community leaders, CSOs and government representatives—and to foster what multiple informants have referred to as “proximity” between these actors, as reflected in the following quotes:

“The workshops contributed to a change on the part of the government in relation to the role of civil society. Nowadays we are already invited to participate in meetings convened by the government”²⁸.

“The project has created proximity between CSOs, local leaders and government, [whereas] before there was no joint work”²⁹.

²⁸ Focus group discussion with CSO representatives from Inhambane, AP, March 2024.

²⁹ Focus group discussion with community leaders from Inhambane, AP, March 2024.

An interesting contribution made by the project under this criterion is the creation of new relationships between CSO representatives and community leaders on the one side, and groups of paralegals on the other. Paralegals can play an important role in assisting communities to address conflicts over natural resources, by helping communities to understand what they are entitled to do under the law, and also in navigating judicial systems and processes. Their role is formalized in law and also recognized by communities, yet paralegals can face important challenges in serving communities, including a lack of formal recognition³⁰.

In some locations, the TIPS project was able to foster these connections, which helped both groups—communities and paralegals. The most often cited example was in Tete, where the convening of community dialogues included paralegals working in Moatize district. In those events, these individuals were successfully connected with a national CSO, called *Justiça Ambiental*, and this organization helped the paralegals to become a legally recognized organization. This is a good example of sustainability.

Additional examples of how the TIPS project fostered new connections include engagement with ADIN in Cabo Delgado, and with other organizations working on peacebuilding and social cohesion in Mozambique, like the Community of Sant’Egidio and the Aga Khan Foundation. Additionally, and thanks to the assistance of the EU Delegation, project staff also participated in inter-agency coordination platforms, such as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), and was involved in exchanges with a visiting group of members of the European Parliament. In general, these efforts suggest a strong commitment to partnerships, as well as a general recognition, by other entities working on natural resources and conflict in Mozambique, of the value and expertise of FCA/ N RTP.

Lastly, the research represents an important contribution to sustainability. As already discussed, the research study, and all related briefs, represent important, original and timely sources of analysis, which are likely to contribute to the framing of natural resources and conflict in the country in the near future. The efforts by FCA/ N RTP to share the findings from this research, and the experiences of the project more generally, through the international conference in Maputo and through exchanges with other NGOs, also contributed to give value to these outputs.

The project’s contributions to creating sustainability have one important limitation, however, which is the same limitation found under relevance, effectiveness and impact: authorities’ engagement was not consistent, and companies’ engagement even less so. This means that for every successful case of impact,

³⁰ See, for example: “Paralegals and the protection of land rights in the communities of Manhiça and Massingir, Southern Mozambique”, Crescêncio Tamele et al., Horizontal Learning Network, 2023.

where CSOs and communities were able to engage authorities, make petitions, and obtain responses, the number of cases where this did not happen was always greater. And the challenge, in all those cases, was always the lack of response by authorities and companies.

In relation to companies specifically, where they were successfully engaged, one important factor appears to have been the existence of a commitment to corporate social responsibility (CSR), combined with the presence of a representative with the mandate to work on this issue. In terms of improving sustainability, it might therefore be useful to map those companies with active CSR programmes, and also the scope of these efforts—or, whether, in other words, they extend beyond companies' headquarters and into districts and communities where companies have active operations.

The other main challenge under sustainability remains funding. It remains unclear, in fact, the extent to which dialogue efforts will happen without financial resources. This is a worry that several informants have, and it is well supported both by experience and by the information collected by the project. Ultimately, organizing meetings require funds, even if just for travel, and indications are that those funds are not generally available to CSOs and community leaders. On this front, there is an important role to be played both by the government and by international donors.

Lastly, the many conversations held during the evaluation suggest that the sustainability of the project might be improved by facilitating greater ownership among participants. Many of the CSO representatives and community leaders, when they were interviewed about the project, often said that they were trained. They say this in very positive terms, which, as already discussed, is an important indication of the project's success, under effectiveness. Yet, they do not always acknowledge that the training workshops were meant to get them to launch dialogues; rather, they generally describe their participation in the project as participation in a series of events. This suggests that their sense of agency continues to be somewhat limited, possibly passive, something that could be changed with additional programmatic cycles, but also, perhaps, by applying a more participatory and community-based approach.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The TIPS project was extremely relevant to the challenges communities faced around natural resource management in Mozambique: conflicts were abundant all over the country, and the project effectively mapped and worked in multiple locations where such conflicts were a primary concern. The project was also effective, achieving its intended outcomes in relation to capacity building and the establishment of collaborative multi-stakeholder spaces for dialogue and conflict resolution.

Where authorities and companies were effectively engaged, specific conflicts were successfully addressed, and trust between the different actors improved. Importantly, the participation of authorities was good—no small feat in a context like Mozambique, where the issue of natural resource management can be very sensitive, politically. Their engagement was somewhat inconsistent, however, and that of private sector representatives even more so. This happened for reasons external to the project, but which nevertheless negatively affected the extent to which the project contributed to impact, and how sustainable it was.

The project's greatest contribution can perhaps be found in how it developed and tested a model that—by integrating research, training and dialogue—proved to be successful in addressing the causes and dynamics of natural resources-based conflicts in the country. Given the number and scope of these conflicts, this should be seen as a very significant contribution, one that will be useful to all those actors working on peacebuilding in Mozambique. At the same time, it is important to note how, according to the evidence collected, what was crucial for the project's success was how it focused on conflicts that were, ultimately, community-based conflicts, affecting people in locations that were (and often continue to be) beyond the reach of interventions by either the government or NGOs.

In light of these considerations, and of all the findings discussed in the evaluation report, the following recommendations are offered, in the hope that they can inform the future work of FCA/ NRTP, IMD, IESE and all other organizations working to promote the prevention and resolution of natural resources-based conflicts in Mozambique:

1. Continue training activities. The needs in terms of knowledge and skills are still significant for CSO representatives, community leaders and government representatives. Community leaders in particular all too often lack appropriate knowledge about the legal obligations of companies and their own rights in relation to natural resources. Generally speaking, CSO representatives and government representatives

still have little knowledge about the best approaches and tools to facilitate dialogue and resolve conflicts. For these reasons, initiatives to improve those capacities should continue: FCA/ NRTP should, to the extent possible, replicate the training workshops it organized, and potentially expand them; donors should support such efforts.

2. Continue dialogue activities. Similarly, dialogues between communities, authorities and companies continue to be too few and often ineffective. The project made important contributions in this respect, and the decision to focus on provincial and district-level dialogues was particularly relevant. For these reasons, initiatives to improve the number and quality of such tripartite dialogues should continue: FCA/ NRTP should, to the extent possible, replicate the provincial forums it organized, and potentially expand the community dialogues; donors should, again, support such efforts.

3. Adopt a community-based approach to organizing dialogue activities, perhaps funding local CSOs. Linked to the above, the impact of similar initiatives could be expanded by adopting a more community-based approach in organizing dialogue activities. These should be designed and implemented at the district level, with ownerships residing squarely in the community. This could be achieved by opting to fund local CSOs rather than organizing such events directly.

4. Strengthen collaboration with paralegals to increase access to information for communities. This was an original element under the project, which, given the identified needs in term of lack of information, could be expanded, with the expectation that it would contribute to greater impact. In particular, paralegals could be engaged through a training of trainers, which would then give the knowledge and autonomy to conduct access to information workshops on their own, potentially expanding the reach of the project.

5. Organize training workshops and dialogue sessions only with women. Gender equality remains a challenge across training and dialogue activities. To offset this, FCA/ NRTP should organise events only for women, targeting female CSO representatives and community leaders.

6. Identify and work with government (and company) champions. This being one the main challenges encountered under the project, FCA/ NRTP should try and build on the “government champion” model piloted in Cabo Delgado: to find one or two people from government who could support and facilitate the engagement of their peers. This will be even more necessary for company representatives. In this case, it could help to conduct a mapping of companies, looking to identify those who already have active CSR programmes or initiatives in the country. On their part, government and company representatives should

be more eager to take part in dialogues with communities, acknowledging that such efforts are well within their mandates.

7. Invest in national-level advocacy. The effective replication of the model piloted under the project, as well as the sustainability of results, will be ensured only if national authorities remain committed to greater transparency, accountability and dialogue in relation to natural resource management. For this reason, it will be important to ensure that FCA/ NRTP has a link to national policy-makers. Efforts like the international conference in Maputo are helpful, and greater impact could be achieved also by increasing participation in initiatives such as EITI.



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