Reimagining Conflict: the (In) visible web of conflict in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique

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Conflict: From the Latin for "to clash or engage in a fight", a confrontation between one or more parties aspiring towards incompatible or competitive means or ends. Conflict may be either manifested, recognizable through actions or behaviours, or latent, in which case it remains dormant for some time, as incompatibilities are unarticulated or are built into systems or such institutional arrangements as government, corporations, or even civil society. (Glossary, UNPEACE - Africa Programme, 2005)

Ideas about conflict are central to discourses and praxis of peacebuilding. But diverse conceptualisations of conflict notwithstanding, in many cases, a narrow perspective continues to dominate peacebuilding analysis and strategies. Based on complexities in contexts of our current fierce world, nuanced analyses demand an expanded, multidisciplinary, interlinked *political economy lens* (as put forward by DAWN, 2019) on conflict. Strategies that lead to structural and sustainable change towards peacebuilding require an understanding of intersecting inequalities underlying the context and root causes of conflict. As currently recalled with regard to the Northern Mozambique (Habibe et al., 2019) context of conflict, the complexity of the phenomena requires more in-depth interdisciplinary research that takes into account a multiplicity of historical, social, political, economic and religious factors. Moreover, it suggests that more than bringing conclusions, research can lead to a series of questions.

So, what do we mean by conflict? Reflecting on this question is an exercise in looking at conflict and peacebuilding as a continuous learning process rather than a race, chasing

for narrow answers or single agents to blame or criminalise[1]. A holistic perspective of conflict goes beyond the boundaries of national settings and accounts for historical patterns of structural inequalities and intersecting and layered power relations in any given context. For instance, it is critical to understand "that violence is at the heart of social organisation, and gender relations and violence are mutually constitutive" (Confortini, 2006 *in* DAWN 2019). Within this perspective, it is key to reflect that "the root causes of violence may well be present prior to, during and in the aftermath of conflict and war" *(DAWN, 2019:01)* and that social justice and democracy[2] are key factors to be addressed at the core of the conflict and peacebuilding debate. As noted in the pan-African feminist digital platform Africa Feminism (2019)[3] , a notion of Feminist peace also relates to:

"Equal participation at all levels and in all peacebuilding processes. Equal participation would entail addressing gender power relations within households, the community and institutions, interrogate the use of power and masculinities that perpetuate inequalities and normalize the abuse of women. All these different forms of inequalities exist in situations of conflict and post conflict settings".

The exercise of looking at the same situation from various perspectives does not mean to lose focus. Metaphorically, we can think of it as a holistic view of the forest, which in turn can allow us to gaze at each tree, that are also at the core of the ecosystem, and all of which enable us to live and breathe. The present analysis is based on multiple lenses, including interlinkages (DAWN, 2014) and a *body sensitive[4]* look at conflict situations that the author employed as tools to overcome some of the challenges historically faced by advocates for social justice in dealing with apparently conflicting approaches: combining holistic and crosscutting analysis (i.e. *gender integration*, *inclusion*, *diversity, etc*.) to attain quality focused results for social interventions (i.e. context specific thematic challenges and enforced discriminations). In this way, the exercise proposed is to look at the various domains of *(in)visible conflicts*, through diverse complementary approaches/lenses carefully applied according to the context.

An ***Intersectionality** lens*, originally inspired by reflections on *Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color (*Kimberley Crenshaw, 1991:05) gives visibility to multiple discriminations, for instance, to "the fact that women of color are situated within at least two subordinated groups that frequently pursue conflicting political agendas (…) and experience racism in ways not always the same as those experienced by men of color, and sexism in ways not always parallel to experiences of white women". Also, to bring to light that "gender subordination and discrimination also result in violence against women, as do vulnerabilities inherent in multiple and intersecting identities such as class, ethnicity, religion and other socio-

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[1] A key question for feminist reflection in that sense (by *Mbembe, A. 2003: 12 on Necropolitics): "Is the notion of biopower sufficient to account for the contemporary ways in which the political, under the guise of war, of resistance, or of the fight against terror, makes the murder of the enemy its primary and absolute objective?"*

[2] An Interview on South Africa's Violent Democracy notes that "For von Holdt, Violence and democracy are not mutually exclusive" and "today's violence is closely linked to the important changes unfolding in South Africa". *Global Dialogue*, ISA digital magazine http://globaldialogue.isa-sociology.org/south-africas-violent-democracy-an-interview-with-karl-von-holdt/ (access, 02/10/2019). See Also: Karl von Holdt, 2013 on *new forms of violence and the reproduction of older patterns of violence*.

[3] *Helen Kezie-Nwoha*. 28/06/2019: http://africanfeminism.com/what-feminist-peace-means-in-changing-contexts-of-conflicts/ (access 02/10/2019)

[4] This approach has been applied since 2011 within the human development work carried out by the author in Cabo Delgado, through the independent project *IRUTHU* (meaning "Body" in local language Makua).

cultural belongings which also exacerbate such violence." (DAWN, 2019:02). Through a gender perspective, *intersectionality* also helps to address masculinities and make clearer that while women, intersex or trans persons are to some extent subject to discrimination, multiple factors combine to determine their *social location* (See AWID, 2004), agency and/or vulnerability to face conflict situations.

While sexual violence (rape and other types) is undoubtedly a key dimension to be tackled through a gender-based analysis on conflict, there are key spaces to broaden the spectrum of the analysis: looking at gender beyond a synonym of "women"; interrogating cis-heteronormativity; and interlinking sexual violence to other socio-economic and cultural dynamics, reaching beyond a narrow perspective in which "the focus on sexual violence in conflict by international law results in sidestepping other types of direct physical and psychological violence and structural violence, inter alia, which result in the loss of land, displacement, lack of shelter, restrictions on livelihoods, access to commons and deprivation of sexual and reproductive health services." *(DAWN, 2019:01)*.

Bringing to light the multiple dynamics of power embedded in conflict situations is also crucial. As noted by Crenshaw (1991:12): "The struggle over which differences matter and which do not is neither an abstract nor an insignificant debate (…) these conflicts are about more than difference as such; they raise critical issues of power". In that sense, *a lens on **Necropolitics**, that looks at "*contemporary forms of subjugation of life to the power of death" (Mbembe, 2003:39) has also been central to the present reflection on (in)visible conflicts, including to better understanding that:

"The ultimate expression of sovereignty resides, to a large degree, in the power and the capacity to dictate who may live and who must die.[5] Hence, to kill or to allow to live constitute the limits of sovereignty, its fundamental attributes. To exercise sovereignty is to exercise control over mortality and to define life as the deployment and manifestation of power." (Mbembe, 2003: 11)

"The historical self-creation of humankind is itself a life-and-death conflict, that is, a conflict over what paths should lead to the truth of history: the overcoming of capitalism and the commodity form and the contradictions associated with both." (Mbembe, 2003: 20)

The *Necropolitics* lens used here also sees death as symbolic processes, manifested through gradual individual or collective disempowerment, weakness in access to rights and social justice, invisibility, inequalities in treatment and depression (from recurrent experiences of discrimination and stigmatisation), among others. Advancing on a feminist reflection on some of Achille Mbembe's` key proposed questions on Necropolitics, that draws[6] on "what Michel Foucault meant by *biopower*: that domain of life over which power has taken control"[7], can be a core exercise to deal with (in)visible conflicts.

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[5] *Mbembe*, 2003:01 FN 01: "The essay distances itself from traditional accounts of sovereignty found in the discipline of political science and the subdiscipline of international relations. For the most part, these accounts locate sovereignty within the boundaries of the nation-state, within institutions empowered by the state, or within supranational institutions and networks".

[6] Draws on the concept of biopower and explores its relation to notions of sovereignty (*imperium*) and the state of exception (Mbembe, 2003:12)

[7] Foucault, *Il faut défendre la société*, 213–34. In Mbembe, 2003:12

Under what practical conditions is the right to kill, to allow to live, or to expose to death exercised? Who is the subject of this right? *(Mbembe, 2003: 12)*. Arriving at answers to these and other interrogations on *necropolitics* is also an exercise in opening the social justice spectrum and merging concepts and perspectives without losing sight of its different standpoints. It is within a complementary view that a decolonial approach has also been a key tool, especially to bring to light the determinant role played by contextual history and structural racism/ethnic racial discrimination in reinforcing conditions of greater vulnerability to conflict, less visibility of violence faced and restricted access to mechanisms for guaranteeing human rights to black communities of northern Mozambique.

Both agency and vulnerability are to be examined, as conflict can be seen in multiple and consecutive ways in a variety of forms, going from *deprivation of liberty* to the exercise of freedom of expression. A combined look at power relations and multiple identities related to conflict situations also implies a focus on processes of empowerment and representation, an area of conflict of ideas among progressive advocates for social justice. This includes acknowledging the importance of the key voice and expertise of those whose bodies and concrete conflict experiences put them in a *standpoint of speech* (See Djamila Ribeiro, 2017) to better analyse, advocate and be *acknowledged as an expert to generate public policies (See* Mauro Cabral, 2012). This identity journey also requires a conflictual but essential collective- or self-reflection on how privileged bodies both individuals and groups can fruitfully engage in global social justice causes, guided by human Affect/Affection and sense of citizenship, without losing sight of the predominant role of the ones whose bodies are shadowed and most affected by multiple inequalities and necropolitics that create conditions for greater vulnerability to conflict.

As an ongoing process of reflection, the following lines are based on shared experiences, through a decade of observation, activism, advisory roles and qualitative research[8], in a period marked by the introduction of the extractive industry in the context of Cabo Delgado, Mozambique. Rather than providing in-depth analysis on a focused subject, the choice made here was to share excerpts of fieldwork notes and available data, as a contribution for future analysis.

Cabo Delgado: A decade of structural shifts and resilience, in multi-dynamic contexts

- In the past decade, the Province of Cabo Delgado, in the North of Mozambique experienced the consequences of a "big investment boom" (Feijó and Maquenzi, 2019), with significant change in the volume of investments. Development programmes shared the scenario with the starting of *megaproject extractive investments of oil and gas/hydrocarbons and mining companies[9]* within a multi-dynamic setting:
- A heterogeneous social space with different ethnolinguistic groups, migratory phenomena and miscegenation: northern coast associated with the ethnolinguistic group Mwani (mostly Islamic); northern part, with the Makonde (mostly Christians); and the South, with the Macua (majority of the population mostly Muslim; (Feijó and Maquenzi, 2019),

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[8] 2011 to 2019: engagement in 13 projects implemented in districts of Cabo Delgado (governmental and non-governmental led development programs).

[9] Exploring Ruby, Graffiti and other minerals. Montepuez Roby Mining (District of Montepuez) and Syrah Resources (Balama District) have fully started activities, others are in process of implementation.

- Strong patriarchal norms and gender persisting inequalities and also significant changes[10]. Socio-cultural structure setting including dynamics of matrilineality, patrilineality and ambilinearity[11]; polygamy; high rates of early unions and child pregnancy; silenced barriers to denounce domestic violence; and women`s agency through the exercise of sexuality coexisting with strong gender-based vulnerabilities;
- Despite the strong pace of investments, poverty persists (Feijó and Maquenzi, 2019), and income inequality increased (Gini index) [12];
- Significant national biodiversity conservation areas, marine and coastal: Quirimbas National Park;
- Increased multilateral development programs – food security and nutrition; agriculture; gender education/training and others linked to the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals;
- Increased Private-Public-Partnerships, with legislation that still lacks specific provisions regarding the challenges brought to light by the extractives;
- Since 2017, violent "insurgent conflicts" as they are generally referred to, despite the nature and causes being still unclear – with hundreds of people cruelly killed (total numbers still also unclear), population displacement and houses burned near the region where extractive investments operate;
- Growing local evidence/awareness of the negative impact of climate change in agricultural production;
- Cyclone Kenneth (March 2019) devastating part of the Province.

These contextual factors overlap and intersect within a wider canvas characterised by extractive industries and mega development projects. Focusing on the context enables us to offer a relatively nuanced reading of visible and invisible conflicts, and their continuities and ruptures in Cabo Delgado.

Locating (in)visible conflicts: arenas that require further reflection and analysis

Market/profit-orientation, inclusion and sustainability*: conflicting development agendas?*

During the past decade, diverse socio-economic and environmental programmes were implemented in the Province of Cabo Delgado as part of the national strategies to advance the SDGs. As prioritised in the National Development Strategy 2015-2035, a focus on inclusive and sustainable growth led to intersecting affirmative actions to promote women's economic empowerment and youth inclusion within the "extractive industry value chain", to be achieved through skill and professional training, adult education and literacy classes and entrepreneurial/financial management capacity building, among other means. The Strategy is also intended to specifically promote the inclusion of rural population in the market economy and income generation of agriculture producers, to strengthen domestic markets.

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[10] Field notes: Cabo Delgado Gender Most Significant Changes Study. AKF Mozambique, 2014 (Unpublished work).
[11] Government of Cabo Delgado- DPMAS, 2009. *Perfil de Género (Gender Profile of Cabo Delgado Province)*
[12] Gini index from 0.42 in 2008/09 to 0.47 in 2014/15. Source: MEF/DEEF, 2016.

On environmental sustainability, from the projects put forward by Government, UN agencies or CSOs focus on the approach of environmental compensation, including the idea of 'rewards' and funds by extractive companies, rather than approaches of 'preservation', 'respect for nature' (important in the context, as an ancestral cultural value) and 'ecological justice' as demanded by some CSOs and local community leaderships, that require structural changes in the market-led approach, i.e. decrease in financial investments based on the extractives and agribusiness to the detriment of environmental conservation and food sovereignty and autonomy of small agriculture producers[13]. With regard to the BIOFUND[14], President Nyusi stated: "It is up to us to resist the discourse which claims that nature should be blindly subjugated to the needs of economic progress. Mozambique will not be Mozambique if it loses its natural heritage."

In practice, however, the last decade of experience in Cabo Delgado brought to light challenges to conciliate market- and profit-orientation, inclusion and sustainability (SDGs/National Development Strategy) in a context of raising agribusiness and extractive investments. A series of youth debates on inclusion in extractive industry[15](2017), raised concern on whether mega-investments based on the capitalist, profit-led approaches could, in practice, be consistently implemented together with food security, social inclusion and environmental conservation policies aimed at enhancing national sovereignty and tackling structural inequalities through redistributive actions, that challenge the system of accumulation of capital. Compensation policies were also questioned in terms of corporate social responsibility actions or fiscal benefits, with conditionalities or otherwise, included in the contracts of the extractive companies, but limiting the increase in public tax revenue: do these strategies lead to structural sustainable inclusive economic growth?

On the financial side of things, last June, the news that "Anadarko Petroleum approved a $23 billion[16] Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Project in Mozambique which could help transform the economy of one of the world's poorest countries"[17] was proudly shared by the Government. Undoubtedly, the context is to be transformed but the nature of the transformation remains unclear. In practice, can economic transformation be consistent with ecological justice actions that are part of the 2030 agenda? Understanding human conflict in the exploitation of natural resources is a critical step, for everyone, towards the efforts to tackle conflicting development agendas. Recent analysis on the conflict in Pemba initiated relevant analysis that can illuminate the potential for mutually reinforcing synergies among the various crises that recently affected the country: conflict, environmental and financial spheres (see extracts in Box I).

Yet reinforcing an intersectionality/gender perspective is a major challenge, including for national CSOs. Despite various sectoral debates and research on the social/gender impacts of the extractive industry and strategies implemented (i.e. gender focal points in each government sector and in some companies) to link income and other inequalities based on gender, race/ethnicity, place of origin, etc., affirmative actions are still seen by

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[13] See also: CSOs from Mozambique, Brazil and Japan reiterate opposition to ProSavana: https://clubofmozambique.com/news/civil-society-organizations-from-mozambique-brazil-and-japan-reiterate-opposition-to-prosavana/. (Access 02/10/2019)

[14] See http://www.biofund.org.mz/en/ (Access 19/09/2019)

[15] Plataforma Inclusão, 2018. Extracts of Final Report/Video Report debate (Maputo, May, 2018)

[16] National Petroleum Institute. Other media sources give different figures that vary from 20 Billion to 25 Billion.

[17]Source: https://clubofmozambique.com/news/mozambique-gas-riches-near-as-25bn-lng-plant-approved-134613/ (Access 02/10/2019)

many as a 'privilege' for women, youth and people with disabilities. Implementing integrated/inter-sector actions remains a challenge, particularly because collaborative work and participatory approaches require more time, usually not available in result/market-oriented projects that prioritise one-off, quantitative outputs rather than process or structural change outcomes.

Rapid economic growth - low inclusiveness: socio-economic conflicts

In the past decade in Mozambique, extractive industry investment has substantially contributed to rapid economic growth (average GDP growth of 7%)[18]. During the same period, there was an increase in inequality[19] and unmet expectations that growth would greatly impact poverty reduction[20]. Data pointed to a geographic concentration of poverty, with higher incidence in rural, northern (including Cabo Delgado) and central areas of the country[21]. In general, the past decade was considered a period of low inclusiveness, as growth mainly benefited the non-poor[22].

A recent study (Feijó and Maquenzi, 2019) on Cabo Delgado notes a historic persistence of poverty in the region. A triad of mutual dynamics[23] are used to explain the conflicts of Cabo Delgado: (a) *poverty settings* as the main '*fuel'; (b)* raised expectations and inequalities as the '*oxygen';* and *(c)* violent and extremist identity movements as *'the ignition'* for the insurgent attacks. To this analysis of *"violent radical movements, with regional dimensions, function as the ignition in an environment marked by poverty and socially flammable, is fed, in turn, by (historical) social inequality and frustrated expectations"* (Feijó and Maquenzi, 2019:22)

Analysis on the persisting inequalities in the region, including gender-based, and their mutual relationship with conflicts manifested in various forms should not be dissociated. However, their dynamics need to be better understood and interlinked, so as not to lead to narrow conclusions that risk either providing direct connections that are already shown to be not sustainable, or that criminalise the victims. Current debates refer to local youth, with their historical multiple vulnerabilities who joined the 'insurgent' groups, as part of a context of unmet expectations of inclusion within the opportunities brought by the extractive industry. With regard to this concern, the Pemba Declaration calls the Government to review their military action strategy to include training in human rights and citizenship as well as focus on amnesties and incentives for social re-inclusion[24].

Indeed, the frustration of expectations is to be noted as a potential source for raising conflicts within the population. When extractive investments started, they were promoted as being able to usher in mass creation of jobs as well as improved access to public services such as schools, hospitals, energy, etc. Analysis recalls that optimistic speeches

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[18] MEF/DEEF (2016) and World Bank (2016).

[19] Gini index from 0.42 in 2008/09 to 0.47 in 2014/15. Source: MEF/DEEF, 2016.

[20] See: (1) Feijó and Maquenzi,2019: General decrease in the incidence of multidimensional poverty, especially in the extreme south of the country, although there it is still very high in central and northern Mozambique; (2) Household Budget Survey (IOF): slight reduction in consumption-based poverty from 51.7%, IOF 2008/09 to 46.1% , IOF 2014/15; increase in the number of poor by approximately 700,000 (11,136,448, IOF 2008/09 to 11,826,280, IOF 2014/15).

[21] MEF/DEEF (2016) and World Bank (2016)

[22] World Bank (2016)

[23] M*aking* an analogy with the explanatory phenomenon of fire.

[24] https://omrmz.org/omrweb/wp-content/uploads/DECLARAÇÃO-DE-PEMBA-FINAL.pdf (Access 10/10/2019) Free Translation

were responsible for the exaggerated social expectations (Sekelekani, 2018). Along the way "the implementation of investment dragged on for years with periods of absence of reliable and timely information locally available, frustrating the expectations of the population. The low access to information was fuelling rumours and various speculations" (Feijó and Maquenzi, 2019:08).

A report of a mining company expressed that it was particularly conscious of the importance of economic inclusion and actively seeks out ways to cooperate with women's and youth groups and find ways to create local employment in readiness for when the Cabo Delgado Province benefits from the boom associated with oil and gas production[25]. While it is a positive discourse, it is known that corporate social responsibility strategies have limitations to respond to structural inequalities and pose other challenges such as conflicting roles among public-private partnerships, often resulting in weakening the role of the State in providing quality public services and guaranteeing human rights for all.

Human and natural resources: conflicts and synergies

In the past decade, the Cabo Delgado province has experienced a chaotic process of extraction of natural resources. Uncontrolled human pursuit of financial gains was conflicting with a diversity of environmentally related challenges. On the one hand, you find local citizens who share a feeling of lack of respect for their own local and ancestral natural resources that are deeply acknowledged as core to the continuation of the life cycle. For instance, Cyclone Kenneth, which strongly affected Cabo Delgado in 2019, was seen by many as a warning sign from nature of the inability to match human exploitation of resources with environmental preservation. This is also related to the ancestral knowledge that any persons seeking to extract resources should ask permission from nature through ceremonies. As a natural disaster, the cyclone generated an opportunity to expand strategic debates on the interconnections of current climate, conflict, economic and social crises. However, fragmented sectoral strategies seem to have prevailed. For instance, despite the fact that Cyclone Kenneth severely affected the same villages that were subject to insurgent attacks, post-conflict and post-cyclone actions were mostly dealt with as two separate situations (sometimes taking place in the same village but run by distinct teams).

Part of the 'chaotic' extraction processes affected the Conservation Area of the Quirimbas National Park, which, in turn, has increasingly been subject to intense poaching activities mainly focused on killing elephants for ivory extraction, and uncontrolled wood extraction, both legal and illegal. A recent study also points to the illicit local economy as one of the main sources of financing current violent insurgent conflicts.[26] The ocean, its resources and its life synergies with the local population are also at stake: "where 10 years ago lived families of artisanal fishermen with close interaction with the sea, today there are unauthorized access spaces. Access to the sea is conditioned and, in some areas, prohibited for fishing. As compensation, a monthly value of 5,000 meticais was awarded to the affected families (…) local fishermen could get a revenue (…) clearly superior to the current compensation". (Feijó and Maquenzi:07)

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[25] Gemfields, Report 2018: 60 https://www.gemfieldsgroup.com/reports_and_presentations/annual-report-31-december-2018/ (access 01/09/2019)
[26] IESE, 2019: 30-32.

The use of an intersectionality lens and decolonial approach focuses on the trends involving how humans are dealing with natural resources. It calls attention, for instance, to young black women and girls with increased burdens of work (cumulative domestic, entrepreneurial and agriculture tasks) while black male youth (with a gender role of working in activities that require physical strength and dealing with valuable goods) has been attracted to work in illegal mining with high vulnerability to accident risks. This year, an artisanal ruby mine in Cabo Delgado collapsed during the rainy season, leaving 10 dead[27]. This invisible (due to very limited international or national media coverage) and preventable accident was not the first and reinforces the need to strengthen a focused look at conflicts involving the relationship between humans and natural resources. The fact that this region has increasingly been affected both by rising inequalities, accidents related to chaotic mineral exploitation and by unusually heavy rains throughout the year in periods that historically were non-raining seasons, constitutes an opportunity to bring to light more holistic strategies that promote both resilience to climate change and inclusive growth that values the human lives of African local communities while respecting their natural resources.

Within the highly unequal power dynamics, the view that the knowledge of local populations is less valuable prevails. Programs promoting adult education and literacy, for example, have raised a key debate. Although most of the population believes that formal study can help improve their lives, there is a shared feeling that their local, ancestral, historical knowledge is to be equally valued. Environmental conservation is an area that they have rich empirical knowledge to share. Notes shared in Pemba on the historical roots of the crises in Cabo Delgado[28] bring insights for interlinking various areas of conflict and proposing further reflection on the idea that Cyclone Kenneth was unleashed by the same extractive forces that feed the armed insurgency.

Locals and outsiders: identity conflicts on labour and land rights

"We have a 'culture of work', but within our culture!" This phrase expressed by an activist theatre group[29] from Cabo Delgado summed up a debate that gained space and became central in the past decade. Extractive companies and subcontracted firms suggested or imposed their own patterns of work on the local contexts, some for necessary scientific reasons, others just desired for the execution of the tasks. In many ways, the culture of work brought by the megaprojects conflicted with the local communities' own local culture of work.

The fact that a significant part of the population had their first experience of permanent, paid work in the past decade opened a whole new set of socio-cultural challenges related to conflicting perspectives from companies and local workers on the meaning of 'work'. While some company agents suggested or imposed, depending on the cultural sensitivity of the corporation, that local workers should learn from the standard type of work patterns demanded by extractive companies, some local workers resisted accepting another way of living brought in from outside. When expatriate workers settled in socio-cultural

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[27] See https://clubofmozambique.com/news/cabo-delgado-artisanal-ruby-mine-collapse-leaves-10-dead/ (access 02/10/2019)

[28] Source: Paolo Israel, Universidade do Cabo Ocidental (Pemba, 2019): Apontamentos Sobre As Raízes Históricas da Crise Corrente. https://omrmz.org/omrweb/wp-content/uploads/Israel_Apresentação_Pemba.pdf (access 01/09/2019). Free translation

[29] Theater group Matibule e Amigo (presentation, 2017). Plataforma Inclusão Project

contexts different from their own but with salaries and benefits significantly higher than the local or national labour force, veiled inequalities tended to become visible and non-violent conflicts revealed, initially through demand for inclusion in local consultations, more recently through marches and direct demands made to the companies.[30]

Intersectionality of inequalities and discriminations based on gender, migration status, religion, place of residence and origin among others were also unveiled. For instance, recent qualitative data (**Feijó and Maquenzi**, 2019) reveals feelings of discrimination and expressions of conflict that are aggravating the situation in Cabo Delgado, along with an increased flow of migrants representing greater competition from the 'vientes' (outsiders) to the 'natives' (original peoples). Among the local youth, a perception developed that the opportunities benefited those from the South or Maputo as well as 'foreigners.' Despite investment, there is locally the conviction that "little has been done for the local population, mostly Muslim. This discontent increases social tension and insecurity in the region". (Feijó and Maquenzi:08). Activities to promote inclusion of women faced great challenges both because they were more likely to face multiple discriminations as black Muslim women, black local women, black migrant women, etc. and because of strong gender roles in regard to labour and tasks that are subject to pervasive social norms present in the human resources in the companies, amongst male household members, government officials, etc.).

A frequent complaint was that certain jobs performed by foreigners or Mozambicans from outside the Province could be carried out by 'locals' and that the use of criteria based on tribalism and regionalism that were seen as harmful practices and discontinued in post-colonial processes has unfortunately returned. Inequalities among Mozambicans started to be expressed in layers: local residents in districts where the companies operate demanded fair and transparent criteria for hiring locals and "outsiders", nationals from other regions or foreigners. As noted by Sekelekani (2018 in Feijó and Maquenzi, 2019), youth gathered in Palma where most extractive investments are, protesting an alleged blockade to job opportunities in construction work, claiming that such opportunities were seized by individuals from the South. Wanting equal treatment of workers, such as between locals and non-locals or women and men, has also been a key demand.

Youth debates on inclusion in extractive industries demanded a balance between "work cultures" and "local cultures"[31]. The aim of searching for a balance was clearly to avoid cultural conflicts and to preserve the feeling of peace, considered extremely valuable by local populations. With rising inequalities, peaceful coexistence can become a challenging process that requires mutual respect, adaptation to habits, attitudes and different ways of thinking and acting. Language barriers aggravated by existing discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, generation and nationality, amongst others, make it even more difficult, requiring specific culturally sensitive policies to overcome.

As noted, inclusive policies still lack a focus on autonomy and equality in decision making as well as on social justice in combating racism, xenophobia and sexism, among other practices deep-rooted in unequal power relations. For instance, an intersectionality and decolonial lens reveal that frequently heard arguments, usually by privileged groups,

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[30] Field work notes and reports - Plataforma Inclusão project, 2017
[31] Debates facilitated by the Open Terrace Center (Cabo Delgado), in 2018.

that locals, women or youth lack "autonomy", "individual free enterprise" or "initiative" or show *passivity, laziness* or *little interest* in work can be understood as a return of neocolonial thinking, terms such as "re-colonisation" started to be raised within the local population.

Resettlement processes have also been subject to conflicting negotiations and relationships. Issues related to timing, compensation, guaranteeing fertile and sufficient land (Velasco, s.d.[32]in Feijó and Maquenzi, 2019) are among the challenging advocacy areas brought to light by CSOs. Some empirical examples are: involuntary conflict between populations seeking to resettle and resident population in the places of destination, motivated by compensation values of money and quality of residences; perceptions that the displaced people receive more benefits than the hosts; anticipated increased pressure on available resources including arable land and firewood; political conflicts among traditional leaders; and cultural and spiritual difficulties such as loss of cemeteries, transfer of graves and treatment of sacred sites (Feijó and Maquenzi, 2019). Challenges on how to guarantee the effective participation of women in resettlement consultations when gender inequalities in the context result in limitations on speaking the official language and lack of empowerment to speak in public; and on land property rights in both monogamous and polygamous family units were some of the gender related examples that, through an intersectionality lens, call attention to the specific barriers faced by rural women.[33]

Such dynamics that put local populations` land and labour rights at stake alert that gender, class, religion, age, race/ethnicity and other intersecting inequalities can potentially boost conflict situations. Opening mindsets for diversity, improving mutual understanding and respect to find the balance between human rights and culturally sensitive approaches are core steps to facing conflicts.

Unequal violent silenced conflicts

"Do you want to know how we die? No one ever comes here to find out how we live."
(Peasant from Palma district, Cabo Delgado. Novel 'Confession of the Lioness', *by Mia Couto)*

Until a few years ago, tourists could frequently be heard expressing admiration at the capacity of the population of Cabo Delgado to interact in a peaceful multicultural environment. This pursuit of peace existed within a context of multiple inequalities and respect for diversity. When violent conflicts broke out in 2017, they took everyone by surprise. Two years later, the question of how the apparently united, peaceful environment could have become so fragile is still frequently asked.

In violent 'insurgent' conflicts, hundreds of people[34] were brutally killed, many by decapitation, houses were burnt, and populations of entire villages displaced. Though

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[32] VELASCO, Palmira (s.d.) "Em que ponto se encontra o projecto de gás do Rovuma?" in Sekelekani. Acesso em 02/10/2019:
http://www.civilinfo.org.mz/files/Em%20que%20ponto%20se%20encontra%20o%20projecto%20de%20gas%20do%20Rovuma.pdf
[33] Preliminary results - Research on the Impacts of the megaprojectis to women and girls in Cabo Delgado. DPMAS, 2013.
[34] Numbers differ, "hundreds" have been used by most of the studies and media so far, since there is no official number of deaths yet.

they occurred near the region where extractive investments operate, no direct relationship is confirmed so far. Access to information on the attacks is severely restricted. For that reason, civil society (See box 1 Pemba Declaration, 2019) recently demanded that the Government removes any obstacles to access information for journalists, researchers and citizens of the places where the conflicts took place. Two years have passed and the reasons for the attacks are still unknown. National and international newspapers[35] and the few existing studies produced refer to various factors, none of them yet confirmed. Lack of inclusion among youth groups in regard to opportunities created by the extractive companies was pointed out as a possible motive for young men to have joined the insurgent groups (**Feijó and Maquenzi**, 2019).

Official statements on TV and in newspapers and speeches urge youth and women not to accept job offers from unknown sources. A small amount of unofficial news refers to women who were kidnapped although no cases have yet been officially confirmed. Research carried out so far points to a diversity of factors, including an increase of religious extremism as a regional and global tendency (Habibe et al. 2019); reconfiguration of power relations and shifting dynamics within ethnolinguistic groups; and stigmatisation of the (Islamic) coastal population with reinforced feelings of self-exclusion (**Feijó and Maquenzi**, 2019).

For those who are from the region or are committed to social justice, the silence involving these conflicts is becoming unbearable. The invisibility of these severe conflicts clearly expresses the lack of importance given worldwide to populations in remote areas of Southern Africa. Invisibility as noted by LGBTI CSO LAMBDA is a core indicator of discrimination[36]. In a scenario of intersected discriminations and necropolitic conflicts affecting LGBTIs, people with disabilities among other minority groups often go unmentioned by a major segment of the media.

With this very worrying scenario of increased human rights violations and invisibility, Mbembes` (2003) necropolitics lens becomes critical to bring to the centre of the conflict and peacebuilding the need for an intersecting view of trends of structural racism, ethnic, gender and generational discrimination and unveil unequal power relations and inequalities embedded in the silence, invisibility and lack of data on crimes affecting socio-economically disadvantaged groups.

Most of the analyses on the current insurgent conflicts taking place in the Province of Cabo Delgado still lack a gender perspective. Efforts that are not focused on the Cabo Delgado context serve as key sources of information for future strategies on conflict: i.e. a recent study on the Impact of Armed Conflicts on Life of Women and Girls in Mozambique (Field Research Report in Nampula, Zambézia, and Sofala And Gaza Province, see ASFC, 2019). Also, to be noted is that a national action plan for the implementation of the UN Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security was launched in 2008[37]and is highlighted by the government[38] as a condition to sustainable development, to be reinforced by the existing legal framework for the promotion of

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[35] Media sources include: https://clubofmozambique.com ; https://cartamz.com; http://opais.sapo.mz
[36] See, in Portuguese: http://www.lambdamoz.news/invisibilidade-indicador-de-discriminao- (access 02/10/2019)
[37] Partnership between Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Action, UN women and Norway and Iceland
[38] see http://www.mgcas.gov.mz/st/Site/FrontOffice/default.aspx?module=article/article&id=11048&idseccao=25 (access 1/10/2019)

gender equality. In Cabo Delgado, the Plan was presented this year and some actions begun in some districts.

Corruption – transparency – social justice: conflicting or complementary ethical dynamics?

Another domain of conflict expressed throughout the past decade refers to corruption and lack of transparency. Conflicts about justice tend to arise when local populations feel the criteria to access opportunities created through efforts towards inclusive development in extractive contexts, including jobs, education and training are unfair or not clear. Rapid and illicit enrichment without effort is also a source of anger that can lead to conflict, as happens when vacancies are filled by recommendation or favouritism such as nepotism, tribalism, or regionalism. An intersectionality lens calls attention to facts that tend to affect mostly young women: sexual harassment, including the exchange of sexual favours for jobs or education/training opportunities, is an example shared by youth in debates.[39]

Within these settings, people either maintain silence, especially since corruption is seen as 'normal' or engage in struggles for social justice. Some corporations included anti-corruption/sexual harassment policies or provided a communication channel for those who wish to complain. Youth debates[40] rigorously demanded corruption and sexual harassment be discontinued. In partnership with the ILO, the government launched a campaign "Job vacancies are not for sale!"

Anti-corruption strategies still lack a more consistent link to social justice, poverty and inequalities as it does with conflict and peacebuilding analysis. Reflections on sexual harassment as a type of corruption are also to be further explored, especially as a demand that came from young women. CSO strategies focus more on institutional corruption instead of corruption in its intrinsic dichotomy. This is to guard against the probability of spreading anger from a feeling of injustice throughout the population but also as part of the historical structural unequal power relations that make individuals both practice and comply with corrupt practices by others.

(In) visible conflicting gender power dynamics for structural social change[41]

In the past decade, gender equality actions were put forward as part of social development programs that existed in the context before the extractive industry began investing, as well as directly linked to the impacts of the extractive industry. Analysis, debates and focused policies aimed to prevent situations of increased gender inequalities and conflicts. Analysis on the gender impacts of extractives pointed to interlinked dimensions and challenging trends in the areas of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights,

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[39] Excerpts: Youth employment and Inclusion Dialogs (Report Plataforma Inclusao, 2016); Field notes, Terraço Aberto Debates, 2014.

[40] Excerpts from reports: Youth employment and inclusion dialogs (2016). Plataforma Inclusao project, 2016.

[41] Unpublished work. Excerpts from reports and fieldwork notes (activities led by the author) including: *Research on the gender impacts of the extractive industry in Cabo Delgado Province (2013); Research on the Gender Most Significant Changes in Cabo Delgado (2013); Gender Market Hub linkages; Domestic determinants to women' and girls' access to education and entrepreneurial activities; Social determinants of domestic violence (2014); Gender Institutional and community approaches; Gender household dynamics; Women entrepreneurs and gender equality in access to markets; Gender Based Violence and Early Marriages; Women`s access to Adult Literacy Education (2015); Gender Integration in Public Sectors (2016); youth inclusion/inclusive and sustainable growth (2017); Governance and inclusion (2018); Inclusive education (2019); Gender integration in revewable energy and climate change (2019).*

resettlements, migration, education, employment/entrepreneurship, economic empowerment and governance, among others. Gender integration researches also pointed to significant changes since the beginning of the decade. Key areas to be noted are:

Education: domestic violence was observed in contexts where husbands still 'do not allow' their wives to attend functional literacy classes. Contradictions exist between ideas on the promotion of women's empowerment and societal norms that guide husbands to limit women`s access to education. Age intersects with gender inequalities when middle aged women tend to find greater barriers to accessing education because of societal roles of taking care of the household and babies and to give priority to young family members, either to go to school or enjoy leisure time.

Entrepreneurial activities - domestic violence: in some cases, husbands tended to react with violence to women's economic gains due to the fear of losing their power over women. This potential increase in women's` vulnerability to domestic violence impacted gender project strategies, i.e. those that focus on activities directed at households or couples. Many husbands who encourage wives to sell/trade still assume the profit is their property. There are cases where wives give the full amount of their sales to their husbands, due to the fear of being beaten if the amount differs from 'expected' or if an excess is assumed to be as a result of sex trade.

Intergenerational gender conflicts: lack of dialogue between parents and children on SRHR is a common pattern, negatively influencing girls` access to information and public services. It is also a determinant factor in conflicts between parents and adolescent girls/boys.

Unequal distribution of resources and decision-making: Husbands do not typically distribute resources transparently. For some couples, it is normal to give an 'extra' for the man to decide what to do. In cases where the women engage in entrepreneurial activities, they tend to cover most of the household expenditures, based on the idea that is the wife`s role to take care of the household. When women try to access equality in household decision making, conflicts tend to arise. In some contexts, young women tend to be more educated and able to negotiate better, keeping some money for their own desired products.

Unequal gender roles: despite the significant changes of the past that have placed women as directors, as Governor, and in other leadership posts, gender roles were reinforced with the increased employment opportunities brought by the extractive industry. Women were associated with certain types of work and fruitful conflicts for equality took place in cases where women proposed to engage in tasks/professions not seen as 'feminine'. Change in gender roles also occurred through affirmative action, for instance, when one company proposed a woman as a 'machine operator'. Affirmative action also leads to conflicts of ideas/approaches with those who still see it as a 'privilege' instead of a mechanism for reducing inequalities based on traditional gender roles. Also, to be noted and to be further studied are rural young women and men tending to maintain most of the societal gender roles, despite their increased educational levels and access to information on human rights.

Poor confidence or jealousy as a great source of domestic silenced conflict: as a result of efforts in promoting women's empowerment both economic and educational and in roles of governance, restrictions on women' mobility were noticed, particularly on

participating in adult literacy or entrepreneurial activities. In governance activities, some husbands accompanied wives or delegated friends to 'take care' (control?) of them.

Women's psychological conflicts: 'inferiority complex', shame, fear, lack of self-esteem or courage were identified as strong barriers to women`s process of empowerment. These are internal conflicts that don't yet receive the necessary focus from gender equality projects. An intersectional perspective of these trends brings to light that women with disabilities, living with HIV, the elderly, LGBTI and others who are also part of other historically discriminated groups face these barriers more strongly and/or violently.

Domestic violence as a silenced conflict: for the past decade, the increase in officially recorded incidents of domestic violence was first understood as a rise in violence. With time, it became clearer that the increase in number was not necessarily a 'negative' indicator, as if before it had happened with less frequency, but could be a result of successful strategies to spread information on the law against domestic violence (29/2009). The absence of data is a key area that requires further study to assess the impact of increased access to information in bringing to public attention GBV cases that were previously dealt with silently, as taboo and 'private' domestic violence conflicts.

Early pregnancies or premature unions: Informal negotiations involving payments or goods prevail as a mechanism of conflict resolutions for early pregnancy or premature unions. Silenced conflicts, because girls tend to be in strongly unequal power relations, tend to arise when girls are hindered from attending school or meeting colleagues. Government has started campaigns for girls to attend school despite early pregnancies. When such campaigns fail to tackle household dynamics, i.e. through sensitisation, conflicts tend to arise either because parents don't agree with the policy or it is opposed by mothers and grandmothers who get the extra burden of household and babysitting work. Similar situations arise when girls are pressured to reconcile teenager activities with the role of a mother. Recently, early pregnancy cases under the law involving both girls and boys have increased, leading to conflicts among their families and challenges for legal assessment on children having consensual sex leading to pregnancy. Multiple challenges are expected in the application of the recently approved Law to Prevent and Combat Premature Unions in this province, which has one of the higher rates of such violations in the country[42].

Unequal polygamous relationships: unequal sharing of financial resources, of crop division or land rights to multiple wives in cases of polygamy, are noted as a silenced conflict and potential cause of violent domestic conflicts but are not yet given the necessarily focused attention. Men expressed conflict in having to make unwanted decisions as when they feel "pressured by society to get another wife" when their income increases.

Women' excessive workload (productive and reproductive spheres): identified occurrences of sexual violations when a woman refuses to have sex and her husband forces her, with a focus on women entrepreneurs/agriculture producers who argue that

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[42] see https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/child-marriage/mozambique/ (access 02/10/19) and UNICEF 2015 (Casamento Prematuro e Gravidez na Adolescência em Moçambique: Causas e Impacto https://www.unicef.org/mozambique/media/586/file/Casamento%20Prematuro%20e%20Gravidez%20na%20Adolescência%20em%20Moçambique:%20Causas%20e%20Impacto.pdf (access 02/10/2019)

they have excessive workloads and by night feel too exhausted to have sex. In general, it was noticed that women entrepreneurs either accumulate tasks, both productive and reproductive or tend to leave the household tasks to girls in the family. An intersectional lens shows that girls also tend to be overloaded with work, handling both school and household tasks.

Conflict of tradition and human rights: Strategies thus far have failed to create possible channels of communication or consensus in regard to the content and age of entry into initiation rites. Further reflection and consensual strategies are needed since legal application on the age of consent and SRHR of adolescents are still unresolved debates. While these in-depth debates are carried on, household availability of resources to pay for the ceremonies is often what determines when a girl or boy participates in the rites. Depending on the context, boys can participate at five years old and girls at nine years old.

Gender based violence beyond 'women': as part of the multiple efforts to combat GBV, diverse workshops on masculinities and engagement of men in the promotion of gender equality were held in the region in partnership with HOPEM - Men for Change Network in Mozambique. LGBTI groups have also been proactive in the region, especially through support of the organisation LAMBDA, as part of an effort to document facts and credible evidence for advocacy against gender-based violence in line with the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review mechanism (UN Human Rights Council).[43]

Box 1. Human *conflictuality* in the exploitation of natural resources in Cabo Delgado Province - reflections and perspectives. [44]

A conference organised in August 2019 by CSOs[45] in Pemba (Capital of the province of Cabo Delgado) has initiated an exercise of framing relevant reflections through a broad conflict analysis. Among the key interlinked points raised, the reflections carried out in Pemba would get strengthened if its various specific assessments were further looked at through a gender perspective. A brief overview of the content of the 11 presentations[46] give an idea of how the notion of *conflict* can be looked at, through a variety of interlinked perspectives and themes: *Conflict of interest; conflictual relationships; insurgent separatist conflicts; Oil and Gas Conflict Resolution: consensual conflict resolution; ethical virtues in conflict resolution; causes of conflicts (political, environmental and social); conflict resolution (negotiation, conciliation and mediation); human conflictuality in the exploration of natural resources; Labour and social conflicts; Ethnic-religious conflict; land conflicts; conflicting relationships (Conflict between local communities and foreign miners; Conflict between locals and companies; Conflict between host and resettled communities); social conflicts ("we" and "them"); identity / cultural conflicts; Political conflicts[47].*

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[43] See http://www.lambdamoz.news/workshop_nampula_mrpu_lambda (Access 08/10/2019)

[44] Conference Conflitualidade Humana na Exploração dos Recursos Naturais – refleccoes e perspectiveas – Pemba, 24/08/2019

[45] Observatório do Meio Rural (OMR), União Provincial dos Camponeses (UPC), Centro de Integridade Pública (CIP), Diocese de Pemba and Departamento de Ética, Cidadania e Desenvolvimento da Universidade Católica (UCM).

[46] Available: https://omrmz.org/omrweb/conflitualidade-humana-na-exploracao-dos-recursos-naturais-na-provincia-de-cabo-delgado/

[47] Free translation. List is not exhaustive but to give an idea of the diverse ways in which the concept of *Conflict* can be understood and applied.

The final Pemba Declaration[48] noted that:

- The situation in northern Mozambique in general and Cabo Delgado province, in particular, is worrying due to the transformations[49] generated by the exploitation of natural resources;

- Such exploitation takes place in a chaotic manner, in a scenario that began with an absence of the State and widespread opportunism. Harmful practices in the informal and chaotic exploitation of natural resources have been interrupted by the repressive *defence and security forces* (limiting thousands of people's access to natural resources such as gems, graphite, land, fishing resources, but also wood and ivory);

- Resettlement processes have been chaotic, where the State appears in alliance with the "*big capital*"[50], aggravating the situation of the poverty of the populations;

- The phenomena of widespread poverty has coexisted with the emergence of high but frustrated social expectations that generate conflict;

- The intensification of the military conflict with the protagonists of the armed attacks aggravates the poverty levels in the province, making many young people vulnerable to be captured by violent movements, feeding on a vicious cycle.

Final remarks

The fourth of October is Peace Day in Mozambique. In 2019, it marked two years of suffering, fear, vulnerability and invisibility brought to the region of Cabo Delgado since the armed conflicts started. In the Provincial capital of Pemba, some people went to the streets to March for Peace. The little media coverage given to the March noted that citizens see no reason to celebrate and urged for the armed conflicts to end.

The reflections shared though this case study noted a variety of potential perspectives through which it is possible to examine conflicts. The shared excerpts of studies, fieldwork and observations, complemented by key analyses produced in Mozambique are meant as a contribution to ongoing debates in search for ways to deal with the complexity of our time by combining holistic/crosscutting analysis to quality focused outcomes in development interventions in conflict settings. Questions and insights for further reflection noted through this case study include:

- The combination of diverse approaches helps to carry on the exercise of strengthening an understanding of the complexity of our fierce world[51] by

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[48] Pemba Declaration: August 23th, 2019 by Comissão Episcopal de Justiça e Paz (CEJP), a União Provincial dos Camponeses (UPC) de Cabo Delgado, o Departamento de Ética, Cidadania e Desenvolvimento da Universidade Católica (UCM), o Observatório do Meio Rural (OMR), o SEKELEKANI, o Centro de Integridade Pública (CIP) e Justiça Ambiental (JA!). Free translation

[49] Presentations of the Conference included exemples of transformations (socio-economic, populational, political, cultural domains).

[50] Original in Portuguese, Free translation. Meaning refers to strong capitalist schemes, including big investors and exploitative industries.

[51] See DAWN 2014

interlinking political economy perspectives of conflict (socio, economic, political, cultural and environmental) without losing focus. The use of multiple lenses to look at (in)visible conflicts helps to identify common patterns of inequality and discrimination without losing sight of the specificities of the context in which the conflicts take place. In the present exercise, combined lenses were useful in their way to grasp complexity and look at the context through various specific angles and/or focus.

- While the use of the framework of conflict can be broadened and further explored, it is to acknowledge that the notion of conflict is already present and is useful to address, through a variety of standpoints, diverse interlinked terrains of social justice (see Box 1 for examples).

- Strategies to tackle the challenge of combining focused and holistic perspectives to conflict may require the exercise of strengthening collaborative, rather than competitive, shared work with partners including individuals, institutions, sectors, intra-households, communities or at state levels that share the common struggle for social justice. Efforts of integration and opening mindsets instead of looking at realities through a narrow, "either or" perspective, reinforcing any form of fundamentalism seem crucial to gather powerful progressive synergies to propel violent conflict resolution.

- Acknowledgement and sensitivity to deal with identity and representation, opening up space for those whose bodies are most affected to take leadership and participate meaningfully in decision-making in conflict settings/processes affecting them. Revising personal privileges and changing patterns of multiple discriminations that are part of the root causes of violent conflicts are major challenges to be faced, including by progressive actors.

- Through work with vulnerable groups, whether or not in situations of violent conflict is, apart from the focus on violence prevention, also key to address agency and autonomy of the actors, instead of reinforcing a victimisation approach.

- Expanding the lens on conflict is also about reflecting that: conflict prevention and peacebuilding is a daily path that goes through private and public spheres; conflicts are not only negative because non-violent conflicts can be constructive for debate and as a tool for empowerment through self-affirmation, freedom of expression and/or proactive actions in reaction to multiple inequalities and discrimination or environmental degradation; conflicts can also be an individual/personal process that doesn't necessarily require immediate social relations to take place.

- Feminist perspectives on necropolitics could be further analysed, including intersectionalities of determinants of vulnerability and invisibility and the impact of fear on human rights defenders.

- Dealing with (in)visible conflicts require an in-depth (self)reflection on 'fear' and binary thinking and their interconnections. Connecting multiple synergies to gather "knowledge against fear" and enjoy a lively, interdisciplinary field of

different methodological approaches and academic forms (Butler, J. in SPW, 2019[52]) seems to be key to advance gender strategies to deal with both violent and non-violent conflicts. Debates on questions such as 'does all the complexity of the world only fit in two possibilities? Who do we effectively include and who do we leave out?' can be productive. These among others (see de Mauro, Martin. 2015) may help to open spaces for key fruitful debates and (self)reflections on existing fundamentalist mindsets where only two possibilities exist, which tend to limit the ability to look at diversity, integration, solidarity, cooperation, mutual learnings, decolonisation and intersectionality among other multi-perspectives to deal with complexities embedded in conflict settings.

- Root causes for the strong silence/invisibility and lack of response to informal news that pointed to kidnappings of women and girls require further collective reflections on how women have been specifically affected by the conflicts in Cabo Delgado. Understanding these facts as not just a problem of 'women' is crucial to advance strategies for conflict resolution. Moreover, acknowledging the presence of absence, including the fact that the absence of data is core data and that invisibility is a core indicator of discrimination[53], is key to deal with current conflicts and post-conflict scenarios.

- Strategies for conflict resolution should not disregard ancestral knowledge coming from local communities. Experiences of a complementary decolonial and human rights approach in Cabo Delgado, i.e. in regard to local content/ 'culture of work', have been successful in showing that local knowledge that doesn't limit/violate the exercise of human rights is to be valued and taken in as a key part of development strategies.

- Working on human rights in conflict situations and dealing with people who are in constant fear, require that advocates also takes care of themselves. For instance, activism to encourage women to fight together for change, to say yes to themselves: 'Yes, I want to be myself. I want to take control of my life.' (Graça Samo[54]) should be accompanied by a constant reflection that "owning our bodies depends integrally on having access to the social resources for assuring our bodies' health and well-being; self-ownership and proper caretaking go hand in hand with shared ownership of the commons" (Ros Petchesky[55]).

- Interconnecting patterns of conflict based on multiple inequalities and discriminations that are occurring in diverse parts of the world are a key to expand the lens on (in)invisible conflict. Through a necropolitics approach we can further reflect on the pattern of inequalities and discriminations, interconnections and root causes of invisibility currently affecting, for instance, both the rural black youth population of Cabo Delgado and black boys from favelas of Rio de Janeiro where

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[52] Sexuality Policy Watch, interview with Judith Buttler: https://sxpolitics.org/judith-butler-on-gender-ideology/20136 (accessed, 03/10/2019)

[53] See LAMBDA see, in Portuguese: http://www.lambdamoz.news/invisibilidade-indicador-de-discriminao- (access 02/10/2019)

[54] Source: https://learningpartnership.org/who-we-are/partnership/forum-mulher

[55] Article by Petchesky Ros, 2013: "The body as property: a feminist revision". https://programaddssrr.files.wordpress.com/2013/05/the-body-as-property-a-feminist-re-vision.pdf (access 02/10/2019)

daily brutality takes place, where a predominantly black and low-income population lives.[56]

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[56] Article by Oliveira, Flávia. 20/10/2019: *É Necropolitica que se chama:* https://oglobo.globo.com/opiniao/e-necropolitica-que-chama-23960866 (access 26/10/2019)

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