



Peacemaking from Within: Adaptive Mediation of Direct Dialogue in Mozambique's New Peace Process (2013–2019)

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INTRODUCTION

Mozambique has faced several cycles of violent conflict since the independence war against Portuguese rule (1964–1974), followed by a long civil war (1977–1992) between FRELIMO (Mozambique Liberation Front) and RENAMO (Mozambican National Resistance), and its recent recurrence (2012–2019). Decades of peace negotiations have followed, resulting in three main peace agreements: the 1992 General Peace Agreement (GPA), the 2014 Cessation of Military Hostilities Agreement (CMHA), and the 2019 Maputo Accord for Peace and Reconciliation (MAPR). After the 1992 GPA, numerous peacebuilding programs have been implemented by various actors, ranging from traditional international donors

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such as the G19 group¹ to donors that have emerged in the last 15 years, for example China, Brazil, India, Vietnam, and the Gulf Countries (de Carvalho, Rozen, and Reppell 2016, 11).

From 1992 to 2012, Mozambique's peacebuilding process was hailed as a successful case of liberal peacebuilding, resulting from a successful mediation process led by a faith-based mediator, the lay Catholic association Community Sant'Egidio. However, recent events challenged more than 20 years of peacebuilding outcomes, with numerous factors contributing to the relapse of violence in the country. In 2012, the country saw a small-scale resurgence of conflict emerging between the Mozambican government and RENAMO due to tensions between both groups during peacetime (Vhumbunu 2017). The recurring conflict was characterized by a series of small-scale attacks in Mozambique's central and northern regions. Despite their limitations, the logistics and number of victims of the attacks were comparable to other intrastate conflicts, significantly impacting the peace prospects in the country and reopening the possibility of civil conflict. The failure of the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) process had been at the heart of RENAMO's concerns. Many of RENAMO's ex-combatants remained ineligible for pensions, which could have allowed them to maintain their dignity and provide for their basic needs. Young RENAMO recruits, many of whom were relatives of ex-combatants, concluded that resorting to arms was the only way to achieve a more effective peace agreement (Wiegink 2015). Therefore, RENAMO has been claiming for more decentralization, provincial autonomy, equal state resources allocation, and more opportunities to hold sufficient political power, while the objective of the Mozambican government has been the total disarmament of RENAMO's residual forces and the complete cessation of hostilities (Government Source 1 2020; Academia Source 1 2020).

The impact of the small-scale civil war worsened over time. By March 2016, the UNHCR reported over 10,000 Mozambican refugees fleeing to Malawi and a considerable increase in the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) (Shimo 2016). Other events added layers of complexity to the Mozambican peace and development context. In 2016,

¹Traditional peace and development donors in Mozambique include the UN, the African Development Bank, the World Bank, the EU, Portugal, Japan, Germany, Austria, Denmark, Portugal, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Norway, the UK, Sweden, Switzerland, Belgium, Spain, the US, and the Netherlands.

Mozambique's public debt crisis prompted international partners, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and several bilateral development agencies, to suspend their assistance (Cascais 2018). Since the suspension of foreign aid, which directly supported a considerable part of the national budget, a heavy negative impact was felt across the economy and in the Mozambican taxpayers' pockets (Academia Source 2 2020). Mozambique has also been prone to natural disasters, such as floods, droughts, and cyclones, which have only aggravated the economic, peace, and security crises. In 2019 alone, Cyclones Idai and Kenneth affected more than 2.8 million people in Mozambique (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) 2019).

As if all these events were not enough, an Islamic insurgency² in Northern Mozambique emerged in 2017, with the goal of establishing an Islamic state in the Cabo Delgado province (Faleg 2019). Violent extremism of this nature erupted for the first time in October 2017, in Mocímboa da Praia, when militants attacked a police station and government buildings. The violence has been centered in Mozambique's northeastern province bordering Tanzania—the least-developed region in the country (Matsinhe and Valoi 2019, 8). The attacks followed tensions between the extremist sect and other segments of the local community, who had been fighting over social and economic grievances, religious intolerance, and dissatisfaction with the local Frelimo-led authority. At the time of writing, insurgent attacks in Northern Mozambique have thus far caused nearly 4000 deaths and forced over 700,000 people to flee their homes (ACLED 2021; UNHCR 2021). Cabo Delgado remains a fertile ground for violent extremism, aggravated by an increased presence of government forces in the region, predominantly following hard-security approaches to address this crisis. President Filipe Nyusi admitted that the situation in Cabo Delgado could potentially jeopardize peace prospects in the country, including the ongoing DDR process with RENAMO (Rodrigues 2020).

Since 2012, a complex environment with serious challenges to peace and security in Mozambique has prompted international cooperation for sustaining peace in the country through various mediation initiatives, humanitarian aid, peacebuilding, development assistance, and security responses. A large number of RENAMO militants in the center and northern provinces of Niassa, Tete, Nampula, and Inhambane, including those

²Two active groups have been named in the literature and interviews: Ansar-al-Sunna or Al-Shabab and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/ISIS).

who are now linked with the Military Junta, are the first factor within the complex environment. The second is the ongoing Islamic insurgency in Cabo Delgado, a Muslim-majority province rich in natural resources and agricultural potential on the northeastern border with Tanzania. As a result, there is now a widespread perception of insecurity among Mozambican political elites and the population in general. Many consider Mozambique to be facing not one but two armed conflicts occurring simultaneously (Civil Society Source 2 2020). The Mozambican people's general perception is that the peace achieved in 1992 has been suddenly lost (Civil Society Source 3 2020).

Addressing a Mozambican changing context became a key priority for mediation efforts between 2012 and 2019. Peacemaking solutions often involved a sense of urgency due to the complex and uncertain environment described above. The recent peace process involved multiple stakeholders and featured three mediation stages addressing the RENAMO insurgency. Both conflict parties and several domestic and external mediation actors, such as individuals, states, international organizations (IOs), and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), attempted to find new solutions to the conflict and participated directly or indirectly in the mediation process. The distinctive mediation styles, methods, and approaches are described here in three main sections. The first section focuses on domestic mediation with no external process facilitation, the second on standard high-level international mediation, and the third on adaptive mediation as the facilitation of direct dialogue between both parties. Although this chapter distinguishes between mediation styles and their respective efficacy, it is essential to recognize that all stakeholders involved in the peace process, especially the Mozambicans that worked tirelessly in the various stages of the mediation process, tried their best to achieve peace and improve the lives of their compatriots.

This chapter also attempts to answer two main research questions within the context of the 2013–2019 peace process in Mozambique: (1) What are the key characteristics of standard and alternative mediation practices employed to reach the 2019 MAPR? (2) How were mediators able to adapt to uncertainty and complexity during the negotiations? By answering these questions, this chapter attempts to offer relevant lessons for mediators and peacebuilders around the world facing increasing challenges to their activities, including not only peace and security risks but also human security threats, such as natural disasters and the spread of infectious diseases. It also attempts to validate, through the case study of

Mozambique, that “adaptive mediation” is more effective than standard mediation approaches in complex and recurring armed conflicts. After initial failed mediation attempts by domestic mediators that favored more assertive mediation techniques, the mediation process welcomed high-level international mediation and a large group of external mediators. They focused on determined-designed mediation techniques that excessively dominated the mediation agenda, leading both parties to look for a new paradigm in terms of peace negotiations in Mozambique. Thus, the final mediation stage of the recent Mozambican peace process was flexible, adaptive, and pragmatic in style, addressing the failures and ineffectiveness of previous mediation endeavors. The mediators concentrated on encouraging the self-organization of both parties and ensuring national ownership of the peace process. They accomplished a new peace agreement in August 2019 by facilitating direct negotiations between the two main parties’ leaders, as well as incorporating representatives from both parties in the mediation team. An adaptive mediation strategy established an enabling environment for Mozambicans on both sides of the conflict to genuinely collaborate in developing a long-term pathway to peace.

This study is the result of fieldwork conducted in Mozambique, between January and February 2020, employing methods such as semi-structured interviews and participant observation, initially meant to cover the reformulation of peacebuilding programs after the signature of the 2019 MAPR, but opening an avenue of research on peacemaking initiatives that led to the signature of the new peace agreement.³ In addition, content analysis of online news coverage between 2012 and 2019 (mainly in Portuguese) and discourse analysis of the main stakeholders involved in the peace process shed light on formal and informal mediation activities that sustained significant peace gains and offered new pathways for peace in Mozambique.

³Previous data collection, between March and August 2015, in Maputo, Mozambique, was supported by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science’s Africa *Zuno-Junkan* Program. The author would like to thank Prof. Toshiya Hoshino and Prof. Virgil Hawkins’ support and guidance at Osaka University.

DOMESTIC MEDIATION WITHOUT EXTERNAL PROCESS FACILITATION

Between April 2013 and August 2015, 114 rounds of talks between RENAMO and the Mozambican government—led by the president at the time, Armando Guebuza—were facilitated by five mediators, four of them related to religious organizations and one from academia (Mozambique Information Agency 2015). At this point, Afonso Dhlakama, the RENAMO leader, retired to an uncertain location in the Gorongosa Mountains in Sofala province. RENAMO's initial requirement as of the eighth round of negotiations was for external international mediators to join the process, including the former South African president, Thabo Mbeki, the Italian bishop, Dom Matteo Zuppi, and other key figures from the United Nations (UN), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the European Union (EU), the African Union (AU), and the US. However, RENAMO gave in to Guebuza's preference to keep external involvement aside and relied on five domestic facilitators: (1) the Catholic priest Fr. Felipe Couto, (2) the Anglican Bishop Dinis Sengulane, (3) the Methodist Pastor Anastácio Chembeze, (4) the Muslim cleric Sheikh Saide Habibo, and (5) the academic Lourenço do Rosário. They formally joined the mediation process at the 33rd round of negotiations in Maputo on February 12, 2014 (Mozambique Media Online 2013; MediaFAX News 2014).

The five mediators often shared their vision for the peace negotiations during their interactions with the media. The dean of the Polytechnic University in Maputo, Lourenço do Rosário, highlighted the need to address the failed disarmament and reintegration of RENAMO men in the Mozambican armed forces (*Forças Armadas de Defesa de Moçambique* (FADM) and in the police (*Polícia da República de Moçambique* (PRM)). Together with decentralization, this was a policy issue that has not been addressed effectively by peacebuilding programs during the past 20 years. On the other hand, Rosário's position on revising the electoral law was that this was an issue to be addressed in the parliament, implying that this was not necessarily a priority of the mediation process (Carlos 2013).

Dinis Sengulane, the Anglican bishop for the region of Pequeno Limbobo, was previously involved in the 1989 Nairobi negotiations that preceded the 1992 Rome Peace Process. He often collected relevant inputs for the mediation process from Sofala and other provinces with strong RENAMO influence. Sengulane's vision for peace rested on three

main pillars: (1) engaging in formal and informal dialogue, (2) addressing issues of social character, and (3) progressively eliminating the instruments of war while recognizing that there is still a long way toward sustainable peace in Mozambique (Silva 2015, 113).

The Methodist minister Anastacio Chembeze, besides becoming one of the five domestic mediators, was appointed as the interim executive director of the Mozambican Electoral Observatory (MEO) to ensure an adequate monitoring of the October 15, 2014, elections. Chembeze was trained at the Mozambican peacebuilding NGO *Justa Paz*, created after the 1992 GPA, and at a sister institute, the Africa Peacebuilding Institute, located at the time in Mindolo, Zambia (Lofton 2014). The MEO was a coalition of religious and civil society groups that have been monitoring the elections since 2003. The members of the coalition included a vast number of observers and experiences rooted in local perspectives. In November 2013, the MEO observed municipal elections in Mozambique and later deployed 742 observers for the 2014 census (Hanlon 2014).

One of the main representatives of the Muslim community in Mozambique, Sheik Saide Habibo, underlined his intention to work with people in good faith to promote harmony and social, spiritual, and economic well-being for all Mozambicans in order to maintain long-term peace in the country. He added that peace actions should not be limited to national reconciliation but should also include activities to continuously promote ethics in civil society. As part of his mediation style and peace vision, Habibo supported the creation of the “Religious Network for Reconciliation and Peace,” a group of religious nongovernmental organizations that intended to support the realization of free, fair, and transparent elections in Mozambique. All five mediators would engage with various initiatives that directly or indirectly supported the peace process, since peace in Mozambique was conceived in the mediators’ mind to be a national project in which everyone should have the opportunity to participate (Horizonte 2014, 6; *Jornal de Notícias Newspaper* 2014).

The five domestic mediators received support from the Center for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD), an NGO based in Geneva, Switzerland, which provided technical know-how. The HD organized training retreats to support the national mediators’ skills in strategic thinking and communication. The HD also organized a religious leaders’ forum to promote a broader dialogue about reconciliation throughout Mozambique (Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue 2016, 10). Subsequently, the mediation agenda in this first stage of the peace process highlighted four main issues:

First, the focus on reforming the electoral system resulted in changes to the electoral law and allowed for political nominations and party control over electoral bodies. Despite these changes, RENAMO was unable to offer qualified staff to facilitate the election process for the 2014 national elections, which resulted in the relative failure of these negotiations. Second, the process highlighted security and defense issues, which led to the signing of an agreement to end hostilities. The 2014 CMHA represented another formal attempt to reintegrate RENAMO members into the Mozambican Armed Forces and the Police. Third, the mediators also attempted to draw attention to issues such as the state's politicization and, fourth, to the need for equal redistribution of wealth (Bertolaso-Krippahl 2013).

The 2014 CMHA established a Team of Military International Observers on the Cessation of Military Hostilities (*Equipa de Observação da Cessação das Hostilidades Militares* (EMOCHM) with 23 foreign military officers⁴ and 70 Mozambican officers⁵ to monitor the process of disarmament and the social reintegration of RENAMO's residual forces (Government of Mozambique 2014). The work of the EMOCHM required the Mozambican government to spend more than 540.2 million Mozambican meticaís to cover expenditures related to the monitoring mission, that is, accommodation, food, subsidies and allowances, consumables, fuels, communication equipment, training, and so on. The EMOCHM purchased a total of 59 vehicles and additional materials to accommodate the residual forces including tents, beds, lockers, generators, water tanks, stoves, refrigerators, and kitchen and bathroom supplies. The allocated budget was also spent on the salaries of international and national observers (Folha de Maputo Newspaper 2015). However, the mission was considered both ineffective and costly, as 20 percent of the reintegration budget was allocated alone for the needs of the EMOCHM. In the end, the Mozambican government was uncomfortable with the idea of external observers monitoring what was understood as a strictly "domestic" problem and, therefore, a problem that could be solved without the involvement of foreigners (Jornal Notícias Newspaper 2015).

In 2015, with the election of a new Mozambican president, Filipe Nyusi, the mediation process progressed with two rounds of bilateral talks

⁴From Botswana, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Kenya, Cape Green, Portugal, Italy, Great Britain, and the US.

⁵Half from RENAMO and the other half from the FRELIMO government.

between Nyusi and Dhlakama. In April 2015, the meetings between both leaders resulted in the draft of a new law on autonomous provincial governments, which would be later rejected by the parliament. In July 2015, a constitutional amendment concerning the revision on provincial governors' appointment was submitted by RENAMO, but it would also be rejected in the parliament. As the FRELIMO majority in the parliament kept politically sanctioning the result of the negotiations between both leaders, RENAMO would resort again to armed violence, with several attacks occurring mainly in the Tete province. In response, on September 25, 2015, Afonso Dhlakama saw his residence in Beira invaded by the Rapid Intervention Unit (*Unidade de Intervenção Rápida* (UIR)) and the Special Operations Group (*Grupo de Operações Especiais* (GOE)) of the PRM. Behind the scenes, the domestic mediators and Dhlakama's close advisers worked to schedule a meeting between Nyusi and Dhlakama. The mediators were able to persuade the RENAMO leader to leave his hideout and travel to Beira with them and a group of journalists on October 8, 2015. Dhlakama's home in Beira, however, was attacked the next day in a large military operation, his bodyguards were detained, disarmed, and only subsequently released, and the opposition leader was placed under house arrest. As a result, Dhlakama retook refuge in the Gorongosa Mountains, completely withdrawing from the mediation structure with no intention of negotiating with Mozambique's government (Botequilha 2015).

The trust between the five mediators and Dhlakama was severely weakened following the October 8 incident. This operation not only undermined confidence in the national mediators but also led to an abrupt interruption of the 2014 CMHA. A new cycle of uncertainty and military confrontation began, at a time when the country could hardly afford another conflict and the 2014 CMHA had lost its *raison d'être*. According to Maria Ivone Soares, the head of RENAMO's parliamentary group at the time, the main conditions for RENAMO to resume high-level talks with the Nyusi government were the inclusion of new mediators and a clearer mediation agenda that would allow the negotiation of issues related to autonomous provinces (Weimer and Carrilho 2017, 129–30). Accordingly, RENAMO requested the domestic mediators' removal, arguing that the Catholic Church and the South African president Jacob Zuma should assume the role of mediators instead (Júnior 2015). As a response, the five mediators underlined that their role in the political dialogue had been minimal since mid-2015. From that moment in time, the

direct involvement of the domestic mediators in the peace process became more difficult due to dynamics resulting from an administration change. FRELIMO had become divided between the “hardliners” supporting Guebuza’s confrontational approach and the “softliners” welcoming Nyusi’s policy of direct dialogue promotion (The Economist 2015).

The five mediators highlighted that one of the main causes for the failure of the peace negotiations was the ineffectiveness of the EMOCHM. However, speaking on behalf of the mediators, Fr. Filipe Couto argued that only two people would have the solutions to overcome the remaining challenges, that is, both Nyusi and Dhlakama. As a way to seal the conclusion of this mediation stage, President Nyusi publicly criticized “the intermediaries who, due to the importance they have intended to gain in the dialogue process, sometimes they have not faithfully transmitted the messages of both parties” (Filipe Nyusi in Matias 2015). It was not confirmed whether Nyusi was referring to the five mediators or other mediation team members; however, this statement confirmed that both parties believed the mediation structure and strategy would have to change to become more effective.

The domestic faith-based and civil society mediation structure without external process facilitation allowed for 114 negotiation sessions at the Joaquim Chissano Conference Center in Maputo. The mediation strategy was sufficient to achieve an amnesty law, followed by the 2014 CMHA and a new electoral law that enabled national elections in 2014 without much objection from RENAMO before the voting took place. However, this stage of the mediation process was not effective enough to avoid further conflict recurrence, and it failed to address grievances that had remained since the signature of the 1992 GPA. In October 2015, Lourenço do Rosário suggested that the disagreement between politicians and the military created obstacles to the negotiations. In addition, both RENAMO and FRELIMO remained internally divided between “doves” and “hawks,” that is, one faction looking for military confrontation (hawks) and the other political dialogue (doves) (Weimer and Carrilho 2017, 156).

Despite the good offices and the genuine commitment of the five national mediators, given the above context, this mediation structure was unable to adapt to a complex environment and emerging uncertainties. The trust was lost between both parties and the mediators because of the impact caused by several key events: the failure of the 2014 CMHA, the ineffectiveness of the EMOCHM, claims of fraud in the 2014 elections,

and various police and military operations threatening Dhlakama's life and safety. The mediation team also could not effectively build trust with the new Mozambican administration and find solutions to address the divide between Gebuza's and Nyusi's supporters inside FRELIMO. Finally, this mediation structure confirmed that domestic solutions without external process facilitation might result in significant deadlocks and the peace process's breakdown. As mentioned by De Coning (Chap. 2), "External influence has many advantages, including bringing leverage, encouraging accountability, opening political space, and encouraging more inclusive processes." However, instead of opting for external facilitation of direct dialogue, both parties first sought an external solution focused on a standard international mediation structure, which turned out to be determined-designed in nature instead of adaptive to an increasingly complex environment. In this stage, the peace process was handed over to external mediators in the hopes that both sides would agree on a version of the solutions they would design, leaving an excessive amount of deliberation and agenda-setting power in the hands of international mediators.

STANDARD HIGH-LEVEL INTERNATIONAL MEDIATION

President Nyusi has consistently aspired for continued dialogue with Dhlakama and aimed at holding the third round of talks with a new mediation team. In May 2016, the RENAMO leader agreed to discuss how to reestablish formal negotiations with the government. In this regard, a "Joint Commission"⁶ was formed in Maputo, initially preparing the meetings between both leaders within a four-point agenda to guide the formal negotiations. Each party selected two of these four items for the mediation agenda: (1) the decentralization and provincial autonomy of six provinces, and appointment of governors by RENAMO; (2) the end of military

⁶FRELIMO members: Jacinto Veloso (former minister of security); Alfredo Gamito (former minister of state administration and former member of parliament); Benvinda Levy (former minister of justice); Alves Muteque (president's office); António Boene (lawyer); and Eduardo Chiziane (professor of law, University Eduardo Mondlane). RENAMO members: José Butters (member of parliament); Jeremiah Pondeca (former member of parliament); André Magibire (member of parliament); Eduardo Namburete (member of parliament, professor of communication sciences, University Eduardo Mondlane); Maria Joaquina Inácio (party's senior staff); Leovilgildo Buanancasso (Council of State). Both FRELIMO and RENAMO nominated the international mediators who would later integrate the "Joint Commission."

hostilities; (3) the disarmament of RENAMO' combatants; and (4) the integration of RENAMO unarmed soldiers in the FADM, the PRM, and the Mozambique's State Security and Intelligence Services (*Serviços de Informação e Segurança do Estado* (SISE) (Vines 2019, 19).

The Mozambican government started by sending requests to the European Union (EU), the Catholic Church, and South Africa to join the new mediation team. Nyusi and Dhlakama reinforced the idea that, at this point, the way forward in the mediation process would be to seek international mediation, as this was the successful mediation strategy that led to the 1992 GPA (Lusa News Agency 2016c). The Mozambican government nominated the following mediators: Ketumile Masire, former president of Botswana, linked to the Global Leadership Foundation (GLF), along with Robin Christopher; Jakaya Kikwete, former president of Tanzania, represented by Ibrahim Msambaho; and the African Governance Initiative (AGI), linked to former British prime minister Tony Blair, represented by Jonathan Powell of InterMediate (UK). RENAMO appointed three mediators, namely the EU, which was represented by Mario Raffaelli (former mediator in the 1992 peace process) and Monsignor Ângelo Romano (Community of Sant'Egidio); the Vatican, represented by the Apostolic Nuncio in Maputo, Monsignor Edgar Pena, and the secretary of the Episcopal Conference of Mozambique, Auxiliary Bishop of Maputo, Dom João Carlos Hatoa Nunes; and the South African president Jacob Zuma, represented by Mandlenkosi Memelo and George Johannes of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Forty-seven sessions of negotiations were held by the Joint Commission and the international mediators in the five-star "Avenida Hotel" in Maputo (Reis 2017; Lusa News Agency 2016b; Hanlon 2016; Weimer and Carrilho 2017, 137).

By August 2016, the international mediation team's leader, Mario Raffaelli (representing the EU), noted the lack of immediate progress, as both parties were just "discussing ... discussing ... discussing" with no practical achievement, denoting an environment of extreme uncertainty after few rounds of international mediation. The head of the RENAMO's delegation at the time, José Manteigas, mentioned that one of the most contentious issues on the negotiation table was the appointment of RENAMO provincial governors in six provinces. In this context, the international mediation team decided to set up two subcommittees. One would prepare a legislative package on decentralization to be ready before the 2019 elections, and the other would focus on military issues (Matias 2016).

The work of the decentralization subcommittee was extensive. It aimed at supporting the process of revising the Mozambican Constitution and a number of different laws: (1) the law related to the reform of the state, (2) the law on provincial assemblies, (3) the basic law of the organization and functioning of public administration, (4) the law empowering local district authorities, (5) and the approval of the law of governing bodies and the (6) law of provincial funding. This set of new laws was meant to pave the way for a peaceful electoral process. However, the timing of this ambitious decentralization agenda was not ripe for a concrete agreement between both parties. RENAMO submitted a reform package to the subcommittee, but the lack of internal party consensus resulted in the failure of FRELIMO to submit a complimentary or alternative proposal to the Joint Commission. Therefore, the package of legal revisions mentioned above was not welcomed in all FRELIMO circles (Lusa News Agency 2016d).

Another challenge to this mediation framework was the lack of coordination between the two subcommittees on matters related to procedures, contents, and calendars, as well as the large presence of mediators, many of them non-Portuguese speakers, which slowed the progress of the negotiations. Finally, the exclusion of civil society organizations from the mediation process, including the third major party in the Mozambican parliament, the Democratic Movement of Mozambique (*Movimento Democrático de Moçambique* (MDM)), did not allow for an alternative, more open format of negotiations, for example through the creation of national committee for the revision of the constitution (Weimer and Carrilho 2017, 138–39). As the subcommittee's work was being developed, an escalation of attacks took place, possibly a strategy by RENAMO to strengthen its position during the negotiations (Fabricius 2016). This event hindered the negotiations between both parties, proving that some mediation initiatives might, in fact, result in more violence instead of more positive outcomes.

The next step suggested by the international mediation team was to seek an immediate ceasefire and to create a demilitarized corridor that would allow the mediators to meet with Afonso Dhlakama. Subsequently, a specific working group and the mediators would attempt to establish the conditions for a permanent ceasefire. Once both parties respected the suspension of hostilities and all types of violence, the working group would submit a new timetable to the joint commission to continue with the peace process (Lusa News Agency 2016a). In addition to working toward a ceasefire agreement, the international mediation team introduced a new

draft proposal on decentralization in October 2016. The mediators attempted to harmonize the document as much as possible, including both parties' demands, but they could not reach a final draft by the November 2016 deadline to submit the document to the Mozambican parliament ("O Século de Joanesburgo" Newspaper 2016). At this point, Mario Raffaelli changed his mediation strategy. Instead of negotiating new decentralization laws with both parties, the mediator sought to reach a negotiated agreement on the general principles of decentralization reform and leave it to the Parliament to transform it into law. This change in method was not very well received by the FRELIMO leadership, who felt that the Mozambican head of state and the RENAMO leader were being ignored in the process and that too much power was left in the hands of international mediators (Weimer and Carrilho 2017, 139).

As the issue of decentralization became the most contentious in this mediation stage, Nyusi stressed the need to create a specialized working group to discuss the decentralization package without political distinction or the international mediators' presence. The Joint Commission's work would end in December 2016 without any agreement on the decentralization package, and the international mediators abandoned Maputo, saying that they would only return if requested again by both parties (Lusa News Agency 2016d). Although it was impossible to meet RENAMO's requirement to govern in six provinces, the mediation style implemented by the international mediation team paved the way for the revision of the constitution on matters related to decentralization and provincial elections. However, the timing and conditions were also met for a rapprochement between Nyusi and Dhlakama.

After more than 200 rounds of negotiation, both Mozambican leaders surprisingly decided to engage in direct dialogue, abandon the high-level international mediation structure, and permanently dissolve the joint commission (Vines 2019, 20–21). This decision stands out as a clear example of local resilience, with both parties reclaiming ownership of the peace process through an adaptive approach. In this case, it is possible to argue that ineffectiveness was found in the standard international mediation structure, and effectiveness was found instead in the adaptiveness, resilience, and self-organization capacity of both FRELIMO and RENAMO, which, as demonstrated by complexity theory, are components of a complex system that is ever evolving.

During this stage of the mediation process, external mediators failed to effectively recognize the Mozambican context and its complexity,

unpredictability, and uncertainty. Both leaderships acknowledged that there was not enough motivation for international mediators to reach an effective agreement, as they earned expensive salaries, and through dozens of meetings attempted to justify their efforts without any practical achievements. Both Dhlakama and Nyusi became increasingly frustrated by the intrigues within their negotiating teams. Some felt that the international mediators who had been involved with the 1992 GPA and returned as mediators in 2016 were too concerned with protecting the legacy of the Rome agreement and exposed their opinions in an excessively public way (Reis 2019a; Civil Society Source 3 2020). The 1992 GPA mediation formula was based on the role of international mediators in supporting confidence-building between both parties and conducting effective power diplomacy. In fact, it was power diplomacy that guaranteed that political arrangements under the GPA were not imprecise or broadly undefined and ensured that enough political and economic incentives were provided to promote a democratic system in the context of a newly emerging post-Cold War liberal order. Third parties, superpowers, and international and bilateral donors, were willing to provide assistance and shoulder the necessary expenditures, allowing consensus to be formed and maintained for the implementation of the 1992 GPA (Gentili 2013). However, a standard high-level international mediation formula 20 years later, and under a different systemic and domestic context, would be condemned to remain ineffective.

As a result of the determined-designed process and directed-mediation employed by international mediators, the leaders of both parties decided to talk directly over the phone, something that had never happened in recent Mozambican history. Also, over the phone, both leaders agreed that a mediation model with a “long table” of negotiation and with many external mediators would not lead to an effective mediation outcome. At this point, both parties understood their interdependence and the importance of collaborating to reach a mutually acceptable agreement. Both Nyusi and Dhlakama hoped for a mediation framework that would foster a process through which the content of the agreements comes from within rather than from excessive input from external mediators or an external normative framework. Therefore, there was an increased perception among the Mozambican political elites that the pathway for a successful agreement would arise instead through direct dialogue between the leaders of both parties supported by an adaptive mediation model that would

not be heavily influenced by external interests, predetermined international standards, or the history and examples of past negotiations.

ADAPTIVE MEDIATION AS PROCESS-FACILITATION OF DIRECT DIALOGUE

Beginning in December 2016, a small mediation team of four members was led by the Swiss ambassador to Mozambique, Mirko Manzoni. The other team members were Neha Sanghrajka, mediation advisor at the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue; Jonathan Powell, director at Inter Mediate; and Eduardo Namburete, senior lecturer at Eduardo Mondlane University and member of parliament for RENAMO between 2005 and 2010 (Reis 2019b). This mediation team focused on facilitating direct dialogue between the Mozambican government and RENAMO, while promoting both parties' self-organization and resilience and responding in adaptive ways to the challenges that arose during the negotiations. More importantly, this mediation style was not conditioned by past 1992 GPA mediation practices, and it was fully committed to a nationally owned peace process.

The new stage of negotiations highlighted issues related to power-sharing, decentralization, and the demobilization and reintegration of RENAMO residual armed forces. Many RENAMO combatants and former combatants continued to demand further reintegration in the armed and police forces, generating a continuous climate of tension between both parties. RENAMO also highlighted the need for reintegration in the SISE and the need for equal redistribution of revenue from natural resources, as one of the world's largest gas reserves was discovered in Mozambique in 2012 (Academia Source #2; Academia Source #3).

After President Nyusi requested Manzoni to become the lead mediator of the peace process, the first challenge was to travel to the mountainous region of Gorongosa to meet with Dhlakama. Manzoni underlined that this implied not staying in five-star hotels but instead in the middle of the forest or the bushes. Maputo's journey to Gorongosa spanned over 1000 km and required taking several flights, riding four-wheel vehicles and bikes, and simply walking for long periods of time (Crawford 2019). Showing this level of effort was an important step to build trust with the RENAMO leader. Manzoni explained the genuine efforts of the small mediation team in this key initial moment of this mediation stage: "The

rebels always came to pick us up on foot in the same place, but then we never took the same path. We had to hurry to have a few hours of discussions and be back in the jeep before dark. At first, I thought that Dhlakama would end up coming to Maputo. (...) This has never happened, and we have been to the Gorogonsa mountains 35 times” (Petite 2020).

Besides the immediate positive impact of new mediation methods and a new strategy, the peace process was mainly centered on the direct communication between the two leaders, first via phone and at a later stage meeting in person. Direct dialogue emphasized the idea that the peace process needed more Mozambican control and to emerge from within instead of from the outside. Therefore, the mediation team’s initial stance was to focus on working as process facilitators of a direct and continuous dialogue between the two Mozambican leaders. The rapprochement between both leaders and the new mediation model quickly resulted in a ceasefire announced in December 2016. This ceasefire lasted initially for one week, then another 60 days after that, followed by another month, and then was extended permanently and without a deadline. This initial achievement allowed the two leaders to speak face to face in August 2017. The fact that President Nyusi traveled to the Gorongosa Mountains to meet Dhlakama was a clear sign of reconciliation and that the peace process was now in the hands of both leaders. As a result, the Manzoni mediation team and related mediation outputs were well evaluated by the two parties, who underlined the effectiveness and discretion of the mediators, as well as the ability to create an environment of trust (Reis 2019b). According to Manzoni, the small size of the mediation team and the soft skills of the mediators, such as discretion and humility, were fundamental to the effectiveness of the mediation process (Crawford 2019). In this regard, Manzoni said, “the peace process was deadlocked, and I believe the government appreciated my discretion. When I had criticisms, I communicated directly to those concerned rather than giving paternalistic lessons in the media” (Petite 2020).

After consultations with the RENAMO leader, President Nyusi announced on February 3, 2017,⁷ the redefinition of the mediation architecture, based on the regular contact and coordination of procedures and

⁷ On February 3, the Day of Mozambican Heroes, Mozambique commemorates the thousands who fought and died in the country’s independence war against Portugal. The date is based on the assassination of Eduardo Mondlane, a prominent independence leader in the country’s history.

the monitoring of progress between the Mozambican head of state and the RENAMO leader, leading to a much greater degree of trust-building. The mediation team expanded the architecture of the peace process by establishing two working groups of six people each: one working on decentralization and the other on military issues (i.e., disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration). In May 2017, an eight-person “Monitoring and Evaluation Team” was established and mandated to monitor the ceasefire. Additionally, on March 6, 2017, the Swiss ambassador established a “Contact Group” with six other ambassadors from the US (the co-chair), Botswana, China, the EU, Norway, and the UK. The Contact Group avoided the pitfalls of the previous international mediation stage, and these external stakeholders were able to gain both parties’ trust due to Manzoni’s focus on fostering direct dialogue with an attitude of discretion and encouraging the same within the structure of the Contact Group (Vines 2019, 21).

The progress of the negotiations continued during the second half of 2017. Nyusi confirmed that the mediation process would remain centered on four key points: (1) regular contacts between top leaders; (2) the work of two technical working committees on decentralization and military issues; (3) the supervision provided by the international contact group; and (4) information sessions with other Mozambican political parties and the public in general. In February 2018, Nyusi and Dhlakama met for a second time in central Mozambique. At this meeting, both leaders welcomed the reports elaborated by the working committees, and later Nyusi publicly announced the submission of a new draft law on decentralization to the Mozambican parliament, with the consensus of both leaders resulting from the direct dialogue initiative (Institute for Multiparty Democracy 2019, 2–3).

Unexpectedly Dhlakama passed away on May 3, 2018, due to complications related to diabetes. The RENAMO leader’s unforeseen demise resulted in a significant setback for a peace process that was at last on the road toward a final agreement. Manzoni and the mediation team were unexpectedly shaken by his death, which represented the height of complexity and uncertainty in an already-fragile peace process. In Manzoni’s own words, this event was a “mediation blackhole”: “When after more than two years of negotiation he died, honestly it was a blackhole as if everything was lost. Even now, I feel the emotion, because he was a strong man, and you could not expect him dying like that” (Mirko Manzoni in Crawford 2019). The negotiations stalled for months as RENAMO

adjusted to the loss of its leadership and prepared to choose a successor. Shortly after that, Ossufo Momade, a former lieutenant general (until 1992) and secretary-general of RENAMO (between 2005 and 2012), became the interim leader of RENAMO and was later elected as the effective leader at a party congress on January 17, 2019 (Henriques 2019).

RENAMO's leadership transition significantly delayed the pace of negotiations, caused in part by Momade's refuge in a safe haven in Gorongosa and the emergence of internal disputes inside RENAMO after Dhlakama's death. As a result of the mediation team's effort, Momade met with Nyusi for the first time in the city of Beira on July 11, 2018, which allowed for the continuation of previous negotiations and paved the way for the signing of an important Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on military issues in August 2018. The MoU represented an essential milestone in the peace process and the achievement of a clear consensus between both parties on DDR issues. Immediately after that, the mediation team and both parties created an institutional framework with four bodies to support the MoU's implementation: (1) the Military Affairs Commission with six members; (2) the Joint Technical Framework Group (*Grupo Técnico Conjunto de Enquadramento* (GTCE)) with four members; (3) the Joint Technical Group for Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration (*Grupo Técnico Conjunto de Desarmamento, Desmobilização e Reintegração* (GTCDDR)) with six members; and (4) the Monitoring and Verification Group (*Grupo de Monitoria e Verificação* (GMV)) with eight members (Institute for Multiparty Democracy 2019, 4). The latter included an additional international team made up of senior military advisers that would provide technical assistance and ensure the DDR process's credibility. The nine international observers were appointed by Germany, India, Ireland, Norway, Switzerland, Tanzania, the US, and Zimbabwe and were led by Javier Antonio Pérez Aquino, an Argentinian expert on DDR issues in Colombia (Forquilha 2020, 73).

The 2018 MoU broke the deadlock on military issues and fostered decisive steps toward reaching a new peace agreement. The process facilitation of direct dialogue continued with two rounds of direct talks between Nyusi and Momade in early 2019. In March 2019, Cyclone Idai caused extensive damage, killing several people in Mozambique. This event indirectly impacted the negotiations. The two conflicting parties took this key moment to demonstrate national unity, offering a sign of hope that it was still possible to reach an agreement during these challenging times. This is also the case with the national unity in Mozambique to address the Islamic

insurgency in the north of the country. The mediators identified these aspects as a significant change in the mindset of both conflicting parties, which were then making national interest a priority (Jaberg 2019). Subsequently, in June 2019, another meeting between the two leaders took place in Chimoió, in Manica province, during which they provisionally agreed to a definitive peace agreement (Vines 2019, 22).

The MAPR was signed on August 6, 2019, by the Mozambican president and FRELIMO leader, Filipe Nyusi, and by the RENAMO leader, Ossufo Momade. Two weeks later, on August 21, 2019, the agreement was cast into legislation by the Parliament, with 236 votes in favor and 14 abstentions from the smallest opposition party, the MDM. Both parties described this as being the final in a series of three agreements. The first agreement was the GPA signed in Rome on October 4, 1992, by President Joaquim Chissano and the late RENAMO leader, Afonso Dhlakama, which ended 16 long years of civil war between FRELIMO and RENAMO. The second was the CMHA, signed on September 5, 2014, by President Armando Guebuza and Dhlakama, which ended temporarily the armed conflict that had resurged in 2012, allowing for the October 2014 general elections. The new peace agreement attempts to address two critical issues that had failed after more than 20 years of the 1992 GPA implementation: the demobilization and reintegration of RENAMO fighters and the decentralization of political power in Mozambique. The new agreement represents a new milestone for peace and reconciliation. However, uncertainty and peacebuilding challenges remain in Mozambique.

The results of the 2019 national elections in Mozambique and the related post-electoral violence confirm that issues related to DDR, decentralization, and power-sharing remain to be addressed and that volatility and uncertainty remain on the Mozambican horizon. Besides, at the time of writing, the division of RENAMO into two groups, the political branch led by Ossufo Momade and the “Military Junta” led by Mariano Nhongo, is threatening to destabilize the implementation of the peace agreement. As Manzoni (Radio Télévision Suisse 2019) highlighted, providing support for the implementation of the peace accord is as important as reaching the peace accord, as well as having the UN and all the international cooperation partners’ support to achieve definitive peace in Mozambique. Despite the remaining peacebuilding challenges, peacemaking gains were possible due to the pragmatism and adaptive approach of the mediation team led by Manzoni, from which it is possible to highlight some lessons

learned: “We should try to learn from what was done. I think it can be replicated because it was done in a very simple manner, not with big machinery, just a lot of goodwill. (...) We remained very discreet until the very last minute, and this was one of the keys to the success of the process” (Mirko Manzoni in Crawford 2019).

Neha Sanghrajka, a former chief mediator of the Kenyan peace process in 2007 and a member of the mediation team led by Manzoni, also underlined that Mozambique offers many lessons for other peacemakers and peacebuilders involved in contemporary armed conflicts. Sanghrajka mentioned that the last stage of the mediation process was all about “national ownership,” when in other “standard” styles of mediation, this concept is often not internalized by international mediators. One of the main points of learning from the Mozambican process was that peace could never be imposed from the outside, but instead must be led by the people of the affected country. In contrast to the usual emphasis by external mediators on statistics, numbers, and indexes, effective mediation processes should be nationally and locally inclusive, incorporating local perspectives as much as possible: “Peace is not just log frames, indicators, words on a piece of paper. It is actually the combatant who is worried that his child will not recognize him after such a long war. It is the woman that cannot do business on the side of the road because there is a conflict” (Neha Sanghrajka in Chatham House 2020).

In terms of national ownership of the peace process, both parties should be acknowledged as the main key actors and stakeholders. Amid the uncertainty generated by its historical leader’s sudden death, RENAMO remained firmly committed to achieving peace rather than resorting to violence. Besides, the Mozambican government also had a vital role in the mediation process’s most uncertain moment. Filipe Nyusi, the Mozambican president, was present at Dhlakama’s funeral in Beira and delivered a eulogy recognizing the historical importance of Dhlakama for peace in Mozambique, generating a spontaneous moment of reconciliation on that occasion. Finally, it is important to note that all working teams involved during the last mediation stage were composed by Mozambicans from both sides of the conflict. They excelled working together and with the mediators during the negotiations: “It was this silent unity and resilience of the Mozambican people themselves that really pushed this process forward. We (the mediators) were just lucky to be able to help in whatever way we could” (Neha Sanghrajka in Chatham House 2020).

CONCLUSION

Addressing the failures and ineffectiveness of previous peace negotiations, the final round of the new Mozambican mediation process was adaptive and pragmatic in style. It privileged the process facilitation of direct dialogue between both parties—the Mozambican government and RENAMO—in the context of a nationally owned peace process. This effective style of mediation was focused on three main pillars: (1) self-organization and national ownership, which put the leaders of both parties and many Mozambicans from both sides at the center of the architecture of negotiations, to work together during the peace process; (2) an understanding of mediation as a synonym of process facilitation, with a small mediation team of four members working discretely and unassumingly amid challenging conditions; (3) an adaptive and pragmatic approach that enabled the mediators to deal more effectively with complexity and uncertainty during the negotiations, for example the sudden death of RENAMO's leader. An adaptive mediation structure, style, and methods allowed first for a permanent ceasefire in 2017, which led to the signature of the 2018 MoU on military affairs and, finally, the Maputo Accord for Peace and Reconciliation in 2019.

This case seems to indicate that in contemporary complex and recurrent armed conflicts, the effectiveness of the mediation process depends first on the resilience and adaptiveness of both parties in the conflict, as well as the local communities and all domestic stakeholders involved in the peace process. Second, it also depends largely on the mediators' mindset and the ability of the external mediators to listen to domestic actors while focusing on understanding the culture and context of the conflict-affected situation. A mindset of discretion and humility, and a smaller number of external mediators involved in the peace process, contributes to building trust among all parties. Third, when this mindset is allied to a pragmatic and adaptive approach, this will enable the mediators to face complex and uncertain environments more effectively.

In the Mozambican case, the collected data revealed that through an adaptive process facilitation of direct dialogue, both parties decided to pursue a peaceful resolution to the recurrence of conflict instead of resorting to violence. Dhlakama's sudden death was the most unexpected event occurring during the negotiations, but this "mediation blackhole" was mitigated by the adaptive approach of the mediation team and both parties. There is enough evidence to confirm that the most effective

mediation structure has emerged from within Mozambique, that is, from adaptive process facilitation of direct dialogue between both leaders instead of an externally determined-designed mediation initiative. Therefore, the implementation of the 2019 MAPR and related peacebuilding actions should also remain nationally owned and adaptive in nature while adequately supported by international cooperation partners. After the signature of the new peace agreement in 2019, Mirko Manzoni was appointed as the personal envoy of the UN secretary-general for Mozambique. The personal envoy's primary function is to deepen the dialogue between the Mozambican government and RENAMO and assist in implementing the MAPR. Using an adaptive approach applied to peacebuilding, Manzoni and both parties have made significant progress in consolidating early gains by advancing DDR activities first and expecting to progress on decentralization and reconciliation later. However, the post-conflict peacebuilding environment presents relevant implementation challenges, and peacebuilders should be careful to avoid past mistakes and strive to continue operating under a peacebuilding framework focused on flexibility, adaptiveness, and institutional learning.

At the time of writing, Mozambique continues to face an ongoing conflict in Cabo Delgado with extreme violence perpetrated by armed non-state actors. In addition, RENAMO's Military Junta, led by Mariano Nhongo, might resort to violence if better conditions for reintegration are not met during the implementation of the 2019 MAPR. Finally, the impact of climate change, frequent natural disasters, and the spread of infectious diseases, such as the SARS-CoV-2, might aggravate the fragility of the Mozambican context. Therefore, adaptive mediation and adaptive peacebuilding should be seen as an ongoing process and a long-term endeavor in Mozambique. Mediators and peacebuilders should continue to promote the self-organization and resilience of Mozambique's society through adaptive, pragmatic, and context-specific peace initiatives in order to effectively address emerging new peace threats, risks, and challenges, and ultimately sustain peace in Mozambique.

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