



GENERATION EQUALITY **IMPACT STORY**



ENSURING THE FULL REALIZATION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS' SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS IN MOZAMBIQUE

Photo: UNFPA Mozambique / Mbuto Machili

BODILY AUTONOMY AND SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS (SRHR) is the focus of one of the six Generation Equality Action Coalitions, the innovative, multi-stakeholder initiative convened by UN Women that is mobilizing governments, civil society, international organizations and the private sector to deliver tangible impact on gender equality and women and girls' human rights by 2026. Ahead of the Generation Equality Forum in Paris (30 June - 2 July 2021), when the Action Coalitions' plans will be officially launched, this special edition of the [Impact Stories series](#) will include six briefs focused on each of the Action Coalitions' themes.

In Mozambique, girls and young women face a wide range of challenges, including entrenched gender discrimination, harmful practices such as child marriage, widespread gender-based violence (GBV) and high rates of adolescent pregnancy, which affect their possibilities of reaching their full potentials.

"I always dreamed of becoming a fashion designer because I am delighted to see people from my community well dressed and with tailor-made outfits," recounted Elsa dos Santos, a 27-year-old single mother residing at the periphery of the Nampula province in Mozambique. "My

Photo above: Raquiela, Zambezia province, is a mentor with the Rapariga Biz programme, the first joint UN programme for adolescent girls in Mozambique.



The **Generation Equality Forum** is a milestone global event to advance action and investment for gender equality convened by UN Women and co-chaired by the governments of France and Mexico in partnership with civil society and youth.

The Forum kicked off in [Mexico City from 29 to 31 March 2021](#), and will culminate in [Paris from 30 June to 2 July 2021](#), when heads of State and Government, international organizations, civil society, the private sector and youth organizations will gather to launch the **Global Acceleration Plan for Gender Equality**. Structured around **six Action Coalitions**, the plan will include concrete commitments and intergenerational, multi-stakeholder partnerships to advance gender equality over the next five years.



Register for the Paris Forum at: <https://forumgenerationegallite.fr>

Learn more about the **Action Coalitions** and its leaders at: <https://forum.generationequality.org/>

#ActForEqual! for **#GenerationEquality**

opportunity came in 2019 when, through the Rapariga Biz Programme, I was trained in tailoring and design.”

The multi-sector sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) initiative, Rapariga Biz (2016-2021), is the first joint UN programme for adolescent girls in Mozambique. It is led by the Government, coordinated by UNFPA and implemented by UNICEF, UN Women and UNESCO with funding from Sweden and Canada. The programme empowers adolescent girls from the Nampula and Zambezia provinces to prevent child marriage, teenage pregnancy and protect them from harmful practices through knowledge on sexual and reproductive health, leadership, citizenship and human rights.

One of the components of the programme is to support the full realization of SRHR among adolescent girls and young women through their economic empowerment. Interventions on these topics take place between mentors and mentees in safe spaces identified by the girls, where they can strengthen their skills on sustaining their income levels and share information on access and control over productive assets for their micro and small enterprises.

Dos Santos, a survivor of an abusive union, was first introduced to Rapariga Biz in 2016, where she became a mentor to younger girls as well as a community facilitator on financial literacy with one of the village savings groups led by girls and young women. In 2019, a tailoring course facilitated by Rapariga Biz and implemented by the educational and vocational training centre, IPPELAC, allowed her to learn the skills and establish her business, which now allows her to afford rent and other daily household expenses.

In the Napula province, safe spaces also provided an opportunity for girls and young women to obtain professional certification in electrical installation, plumbing, auto-mechanic work, sewing and cooking.

As a way of reducing the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19, 70 adolescent girls and young women previously trained

PARTNERS FOR CHANGE

Rapariga Biz is a multi-sector sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) initiative led by the **Government of Mozambique**, coordinated by **UNFPA** and implemented by **UNICEF**, **UN Women** and **UNESCO** with funding from **Sweden** and **Canada**. Since 2016, the programme has reached nearly **700,000** girls and young women in the Zambezia and Nampula provinces through mentorship, psychosocial support, information on SRHR and more.

In 2020, the Government of **Canada** has committed an additional **CAD 2.5 million** (approx. USD 1.9 million).

in cutting and sewing in the Nampula province, including dos Santos, engaged in the production of masks using capulana, the local name for a type of fabric worn primarily in Mozambique. “Many people cannot afford to buy the masks sold at the pharmacy,” explained dos Santos. “My masks comply with guidelines from the Ministry of Health for homemade masks.”

“The holistic approach of Rapariga Biz is what makes it a model sexual and reproductive health and rights programme,” said Marie Laetitia Kayisire, UN Women Representative in Mozambique. “Aside from cultural elements, the high incidence of poverty weakens access to choices, making adolescent girls and young women vulnerable to intergenerational sex, forced marriage, negative coping strategies and HIV infection. UN Women is at the core of supporting their economic empowerment to instill the full realization of adolescent girls and young women’s SRHR in Mozambique—and it works.”

As **Action Coalitions leaders**, **Argentina**, **Burkina Faso**, **Denmark**, **France**, **North Macedonia**, the **Global Financing Facility for Women, Children and Adolescents (GFF)**, the **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)**, the **Children’s Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF)**, **Alliance Droits et Santé**, the **Asian-Pacific Resource & Research Centre for Women (ARROW)**, **Fundación para Estudio e Investigación de la Mujer (FEIM)**, **International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)**, **International Women’s Health Coalition**, **Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights**, **La Comisión de Niñez y Juventud Indígena (ECMIA)** and **Clue** will commit to ensure that all women and girls exercise their sexual and reproductive health and rights.