

THE GLOBAL INITIATIVE
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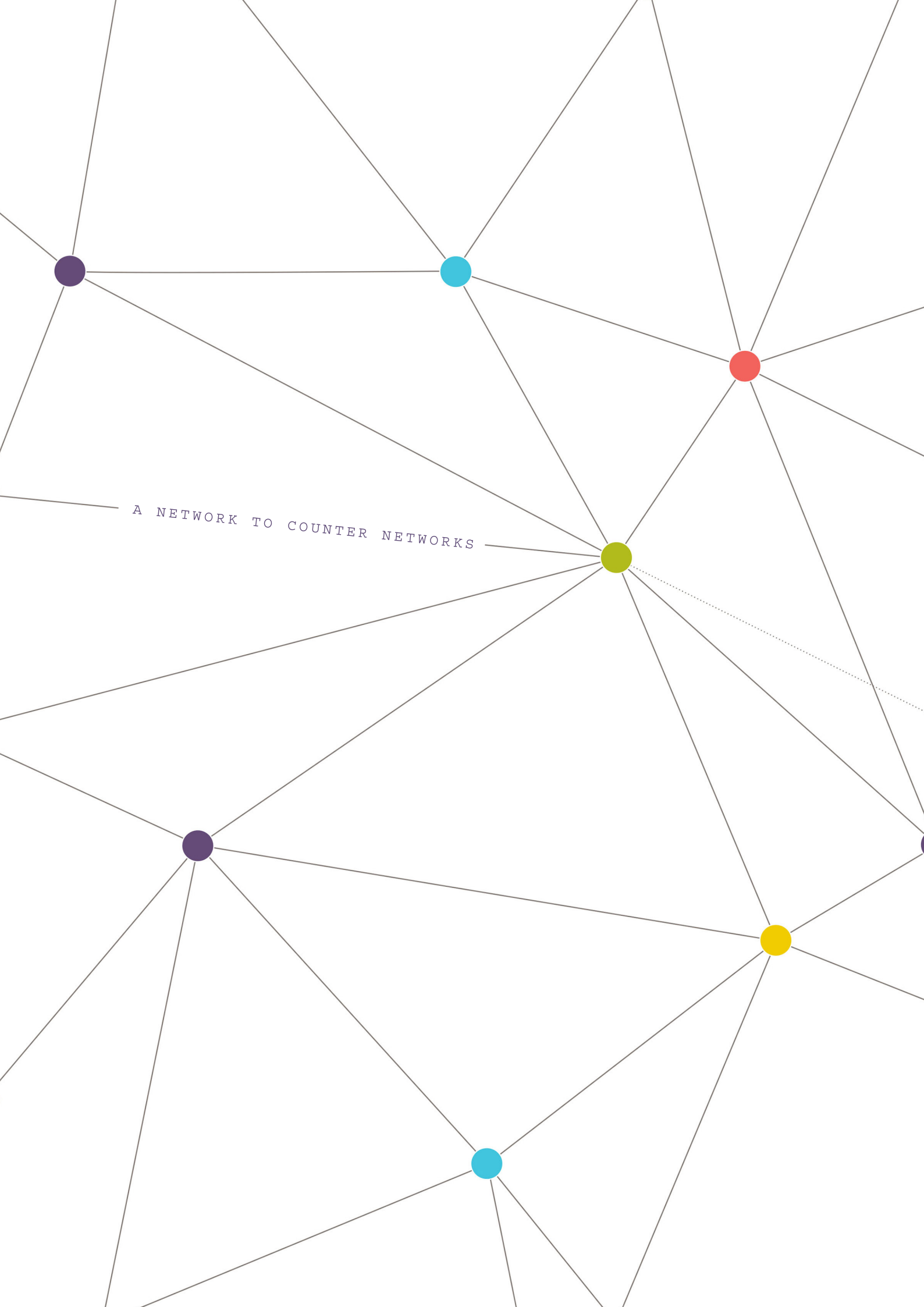
WHERE **CRIME**
COMPOUNDS
CONFLICT

Understanding northern
Mozambique's vulnerabilities

SIMONE HAYSOM



October 2018



A NETWORK TO COUNTER NETWORKS



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Pemba, Mozambique: ranger with a gun looking at feet of elephants after poachers had killed the animals for illegal ivory trade

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Summary and key findings

This report seeks to explain how the outbreak of violent conflict in northern Mozambique, driven by a group known locally as 'Al Shabaab', is linked to a large and dynamic illicit economy in the region. It asks not only whether, and how, the group derives funds from the smuggling of various types of contraband, but it also explains how the illicit economy itself has generated the conditions for this insurgent movement to emerge and how it may continue to fuel the phenomenon. Crucially, it argues that the state's own efforts to quash the movement are undermined by its long-standing involvement in the illicit economy.

Drawing on our own interviews and previous research in the region, the report shows how illicit trades – ranging from wildlife poaching and drug trafficking to artisanal mining and human smuggling – have fostered corruption and undermined state legitimacy, provided livelihoods and local investment where the licit economy has not, and kept borders porous and the coastline unmonitored. Political figures, the ruling party and their elite criminal associates have openly benefited from both the licit and illicit extraction of natural resources, while the local community has often been punished for their involvement in informal illicit economies and denied the benefits of formal investment and economic growth. Into this crucible of resentment, extremists have stepped, offering opportunities for study and capital, and mobilizing their recruits to challenge violently the existing power relations.

One of the most disturbing realizations of the report is that the militant group is more economically and socially embedded than previously believed and may now rely on an organized collection of donations within northern Mozambique. The report concludes by tracing connections with similar developments in neighbouring Tanzania, arguing for a regional perspective on both the illicit economy and the extremist phenomenon.

Key findings

- The militants do not control any major contraband trade. Rather, the illicit economy as a whole provides varied opportunities and is a source of grievance.
- Illicit trade has also fostered corruption in the north and, in this way, has played a vital role in the breakdown of law and order, which has allowed the insurgency to establish itself locally and across the region.
- The militant group is more economically and socially embedded than currently believed and may now rely on an organized collection of donations from across all of northern Mozambique, including Nampula and other parts of the country.
- The insurgency is also the product of a regional phenomenon of Islamic extremism, which links it to similar occurrences in Tanzania, Kenya, Somalia and Sudan.
- Current efforts to limit smuggling and the free flow of people and goods in the region of Mocímboa da Praia and the Tanzanian border are not succeeding.
- Given the factors that underlie conditions in the north, it is likely that the illicit economy and the insurgency will grow, and violence will increase. If so, it is possible that northern Mozambique will become a platform for launching assaults and furthering the aims of criminal networks across the wider region.

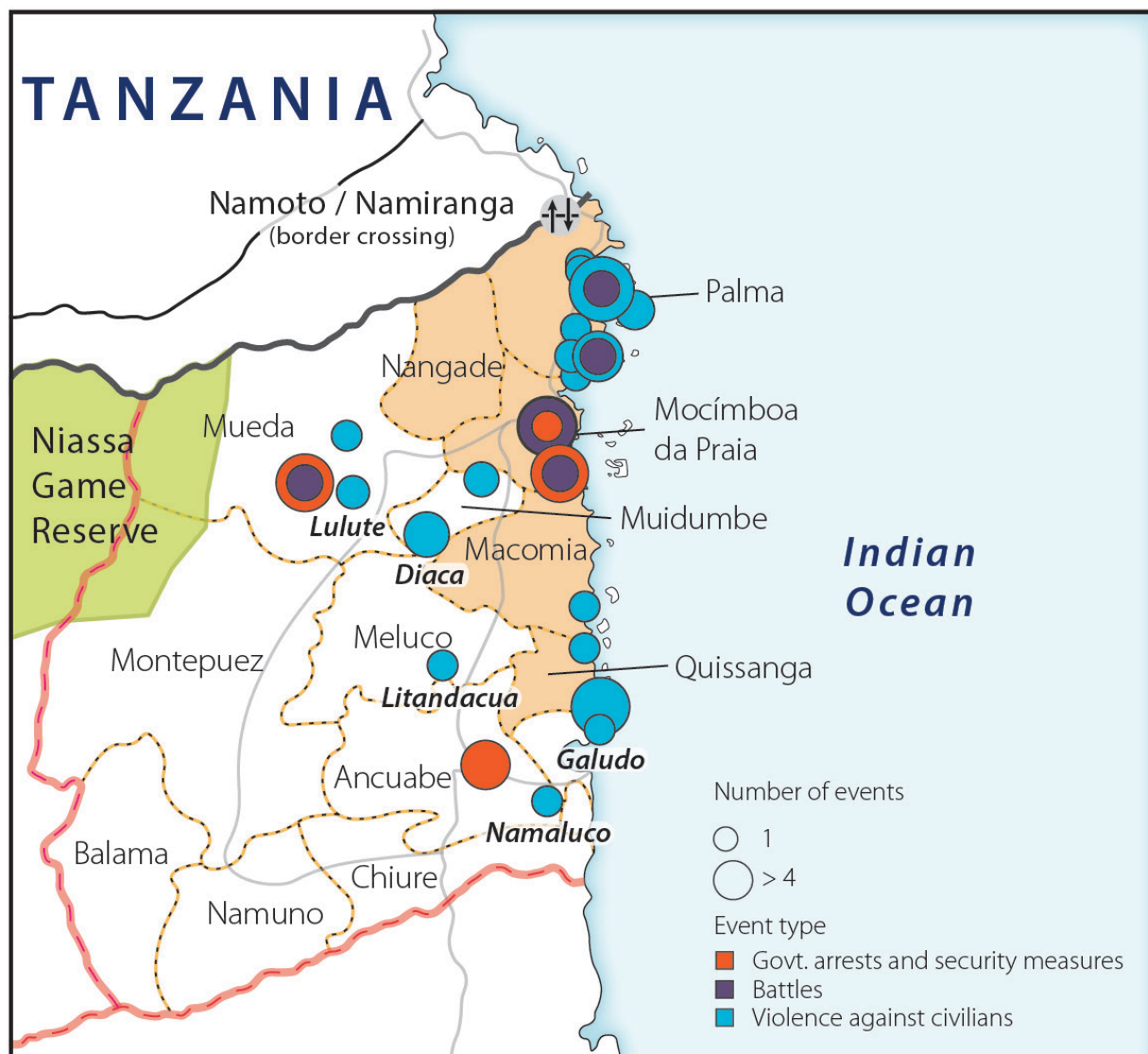


Background

In September 2017, the Global Initiative (GI) conducted in-depth research into how criminal networks in east- and southern-African coastal regions were socially, economically and politically embedded. One of the clear conclusions from this work was the particular vulnerability of northern Mozambique.

Our work revealed that, over time, a significant local heroin-trafficking economy had developed, largely off the radar, and that wildlife trafficking, human trafficking, illegal timber felling and gemstone smuggling were flourishing, facilitated by corruption and an attitude of indifference. Mocímboa da Praia emerged as a key node of criminal activity, with arms and people smuggling also taking place there. At the same time, it was clear that the large external investments in oil and gas exploitation near the Rovuma Valley in the north, and in ruby and other minerals and gems near Montepuez and Mueda, had escalated the growth of illegal trades, whether through drawing in foreign workers who found opportunities to link Mozambican resources with foreign consumers, or by masking the generation of illicit wealth under the cover of 'boom times'.

Map 1: Political violence in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique



Source: Adapted from ACLED, <https://www.acleddata.com/2018/07/21/mozambique-update/>

All of this has unfolded in an unstable political environment. Since the signing of peace accords in the early 1990s, security in northern Mozambique has remained fragile and the region continues to be vulnerable to political instability, with ongoing conflict between ruling party Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (FRELIMO) and rivals Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO) periodically breaking out into violence.¹ Tensions between the two parties flared up again in 2013 and continued to threaten an outbreak of violence until a peace agreement was finalized.² Other aspects of political instability appear to have strong links to the illicit economy. In October 2017, the Mayor of Nampula, Mahamudo Amurane, a respected political figure from a minor political party, the Democratic Movement of Mozambique (MDM), was assassinated. Amurane was a known anti-graft campaigner, and allegations emerged that the killing was commissioned either by figures within Amurane's own party who did not want their corrupt activities disrupted, or by the powerful families based in Nampula, whose interests in the illicit economy the mayor threatened.³

Since the signing of peace accords in the early 1990s, security in northern Mozambique has remained fragile and the region continues to be vulnerable to political instability.

Just a few weeks after the research for this report had been completed, the obscure coastal town of Mocímboa da Praia in the province of Cabo Delgado became a site of violence. In early 2015, radical preachers had moved in to towns in the north of the province, taking control of existing mosques or establishing their own and preaching an anti-state ideology. By late 2015, they had begun to set up their first military cells. They are known to locals as 'Al Shabaab', and so this report makes use of the same name. They do not appear to have a link to the Somali extremist group of the same name. The group is also believed to have capitalized on long-standing feelings of marginalization of the predominantly Muslim Mwami ethnic group by the mostly Catholic Makonde,⁴ as well as issues of youth unemployment and poverty. At base, their demands are cookie-cutter jihadist demands: rule by Sharia law, the rejection of formal education and healthcare, and a rejection of state taxes and other state authority. Starting in October last year, the group has launched a series of deadly attacks on state structures and civilians – at least 75 had occurred by the end of August 2018.

Who is Al Shabaab?

Some commentators have linked the group to the sect of Ansar al-Sunnah, meaning 'Defenders of tradition', which has a presence in Tanzania and elsewhere along the east coast. For this reason, many refer to the group as Al Sunnah wa Jamaa. Our information is that the Mozambican movement contains former members of al-Sunnah, but that it is separate – however, this issue is not entirely clear, and their ideological position remains somewhat vague. There are some gaps in our understanding of how the group has organized and what its primary motivation is. This report references symptoms of an organized leadership with a strategy several years in the making and a vision for its evolution, but we cannot yet define the precise structure of the group or its ideology. While these gaps are significant, they should not prevent analysts from taking the militants seriously as a destabilizing force with the potential to wreak serious havoc on the local community.

These events triggered a large-scale security response from the Mozambican government. In the aftermath of the Mocímboa attacks, in which the state effectively lost control of the town for almost 24 hours, the police announced the start of a counter-insurgency operation. The police arrested hundreds of people, and government forces destroyed and closed mosques and have reportedly killed dozens of people, including women and children. The response from the insurgents has been an escalation in attacks and civilian deaths and displacement in 2018. The current body count stands at about 203 (including 123 civilians, 18 members of security forces and 62 militants) and the group has beheaded several of the victims, including women, children and religious leaders. Livestock has



been stolen, villages pillaged, and crops and over 800 homes burnt to the ground.⁵ Many people living in remote villages in areas where the militants operate have taken to sleeping in the bush at night to evade nocturnal attacks. There remains a fractious relationship between community leaders and government, which appears to struggle to identify who is in Al Shabaab and who is not.⁶

A significant focus of the international media coverage has been the threat the insurgency poses to the liquefied natural gas (LNG) investments off the coast of Cabo Delgado. A number of foreign companies are expected to invest around US\$100 billion in developing the gas field for extraction.⁷ However, expectations were that Mozambique would become a relevant LNG exporter by 2023, and that date has been pushed further back due to delays related to the gas price and the debt crisis the country was plunged into in 2014. The violence has raised concern over risks to about US\$30 billion in gas-projects companies, including Eni SpA and Anadarko Petroleum Corporation. Most of these installations are offshore, and the companies say their installations haven't been affected by the unrest. But Anadarko had been planning to use Palma as the base of its operations, and a village less than five kilometres away from an Anadarko construction camp, near Palma, has been targeted.⁸ Unsurprisingly, then, private military contractors have moved into the area on contracts with LNG companies to protect their installations and workers.⁹

Rumours also spread that the controversial businessman Erik Prince would become involved.¹⁰ Prince established a name for himself by providing private military services to the US government through the company Blackwater USA, which was involved in a notorious civilian massacre in Iraq in 2007. Certainly, Lancaster 6 Group (L6G), a company to which Prince is linked, is in discussion with the government over a multi-billion-dollar deal that would see L6G, in partnership with Mozambican state company ProIndicus, providing security services in northern Mozambique. L6G has reportedly promised to stop the violence within three months and guaranteed the security of the assets of exploration companies and the gas production itself – and to put forward its own resources to do so, in exchange for gas revenues further down the line.¹¹ As the deal is still speculative, this report does not delve into its implications, save to point out that such an intervention may in fact escalate violence, rather than stop it, and that it provides another indication of forces and interests swirling around the insurgency that could compound its root causes and exacerbate its consequences.

It is also worth mentioning that the constellation of interests around the oil and gas exploration and their protection has given rise to a repeated refrain of 'false flag' accusations – the allegation that the government, or the foreign investors behind the LNG companies, or a combination of the two, have created the insurgent movement in order to derive even greater profits from their investments. These persistent rumours seem to obscure a clearer analysis of the drivers of the insecurity – a situation that is not helped by the difficulties imposed both by the security situation and by the state on gathering information in the areas close to where Al Shabaab operates.¹² The persistence of these rumours is yet another indication of abysmal levels of trust and legitimacy that FRELIMO – and foreign investors – command in the north.

The militants and funding from the illicit economy

At the time we visited in September 2017, there were claims from residents that Al Shabaab was making a move into the drug market, albeit in the cannabis trade, in coastal territory of importance to heroin traffickers. No other mention was made of their substantial involvement in other contraband trades. Since then, one study and several press articles have put forward theories about the motivation and sources of support for this group that suggest substantial funding from various illicit trades.

According to a study by Muslim cleric Saide Habibe and Maputo-based academic researchers João Pereira and Salvador Forquilha, the group's resources come from poaching and trafficking – illegal wood or timber, vegetal charcoal, ivory and rubies – in addition to internal and external donations.¹³ Funds would be used to maintain group members and their families, to pay for Tanzanian spiritual leaders to travel to Mozambique, to recruit new members,



for propaganda and to purchase guns.¹⁴ While this general story seemed plausible, the study attributed astronomical profits to the militants from these trades – US\$30 million from rubies alone, or US\$3 million a week from timber and rubies.¹⁵ These figures did not accord with their rather rudimentary weaponry and barefoot fighters, nor account for the fact that they were not listed as major criminal players only a few months earlier. (Since then the group may have acquired heavier equipment and uniforms, but the point still stands that they do not appear to be funded to the tune of several million dollars a week.)

Nonetheless, the presence of an armed group – albeit, at this point in time, a poorly armed group – in the midst of several lucrative illicit trades raises several rather acute questions about the potential for the situation to degenerate into a state of much greater instability. The history of guerrilla movements shows that the access to illicit funding can entrench a conflict that would otherwise dissipate. There is, however, a spectrum of involvement that militants can have in illicit trade, from light participation, to pragmatic partnerships with criminal networks, to wholesale adoption of the illicit enterprise (at which point ideology might become much less of a driving force than continued profit).

We need to know not just if this group makes money from illicit trade but also whether or not

- it controls the whole trade from source to sale, or just some portion of the trade chain;
- this control derives from territorial control (of a road, district or port), control of the harvesting site (e.g. a mine) or control of the people who produce the commodity;
- profit is derived from taxing the passage of the goods, leaving production and sale to other parties, or vice-versa;
- the group is in fact in a partnership with a separate organized-crime network, and how stable that partnership is.

A cross-cutting objective of this report is to develop a more sophisticated understanding of the so-called Al Shabaab phenomenon, and to explain the group's relationship to the broader criminal economy in the north. It also seeks to place this phenomenon in the broader context of a) the other criminal networks and illicit flows in the north; b) the specific mechanism through which the group derives funding; and c) regional criminal economies and militant extremist movements.

Finally, the report makes a case for what is at stake: namely the threat posed to prospects for development in the region, and for a deepening crisis, with more violence and displacement, as well for northern Mozambique to become a platform for launching assaults and furthering the aims of criminal networks across the region. Our prognosis is bleak.

Methodology

Research for this report was conducted in June and July 2018. Two primary GI researchers travelled to the north of Mozambique on separate research trips, each visiting some of the following locations to conduct interviews: Nampula, Nacala, Macomia, Pemba, and Mocímboa da Praia. Local researchers did follow-up research in some of these locations to ask discrete questions relating to emerging findings. The GI team spoke to fishermen, NGO workers, religious leaders, hotel owners, street traders, business leaders, victims of militant attacks, and members of local political structures. In total 22 interviews were conducted in Nampula and Cabo Delgado in 2018. This analysis also draws on interviews conducted in Nampula, Pemba and surrounds during September 2017, when the GI was researching the heroin trade in Mozambique. Interviews were also conducted with social scientists in Maputo and with students in Sudan, as well as security analysts across the region, and information was sourced through correspondence. Documentary sources included press coverage, government documents, civil-society investigations and reports, and academic literature. To compare the situation in Mozambique to phenomena over the border we also reached out to collegial networks in Tanzania to source analysis from there.



The research was limited by time and access. For reasons related to security and the scope of the study, fieldwork was conducted in a short space of time, and while it built on connections made on previous fieldwork trips in some cases this limited the scope to develop trust with local people. The north of Mozambique is also linguistically diverse, and to mitigate limitations here we employed several researchers who could cover many of the main languages in use. While researchers were tasked with building a sample that was representative, the gender dynamics of the current conflict were not a specific focus of this research project, and the majority of the research team were male, which may have meant limited access to women. As research in Tanzania has highlighted the different roles that men and woman play in supporting militant movements there, this may be a significant gap.

Because our time was limited and because several observers, as well as the mainstream media, cover this issue, the report does not address the tension and competition between FRELIMO and RENAMO in the north, nor explore the potential for this to erupt into violence before the next round in elections. Our research team also faced a resistance to speak on the part of villagers and community leaders in Mocímboa da Praia and other northern towns – this was a result of threats or pressure from the state that people who had participated in previous studies had faced. Military roadblocks and curfews also restricted movements, and the threat of attacks by militants discouraged travel to some areas.

Corrosion, grievance and opportunity: A detailed picture of illicit trade in the north

The three northern provinces of Niassa, Cabo Delgado and Nampula are home to a massive game park and conservation area, forests full of valuable hardwoods, gem- and mineral-rich geological seams, a handy number of airports, a small port in Pemba and a deep-water port in Nacala, as well as hundreds of small marinas, coves and landing beaches along a poorly monitored coast. Within this region there are several organized-criminal operations for the trafficking of ivory, rubies, timber, drugs and people, and a number of other trades that create a dynamic criminal economy, operated by multiple criminal actors. Although many of these trades have been present for decades – heroin since the 1990s and timber since the early 2000s, for example – and others, like ivory, have a history that stretches back many hundreds of years, the intense dynamism of this criminal economy can be traced back to about 2010 when LNG exploration started, rubies began to be mined, and the Chinese demand for timber and ivory exploded. During the same period, migrants scrambled to the north, in search of local opportunity or en route to South Africa, and drug traffickers made use of virtual impunity for contraband to route tons of heroin from Afghanistan to the West via the east coast of Africa. In a vicious circle, illicit trade has both capitalized on and driven corruption and has created both grievance and opportunity for the local community – a set of conditions crucial to understanding the Al Shabaab phenomenon.

The networks that profit from different illicit trades in the north are largely distinct, but they sometimes involve more than one trade, and also often intersect where they rely on the use of the same infrastructure, such as a port, or middleman. It is not a situation where one group has strong territorial control; this is not even the case with the state. This report will not explain the way these trades operate in detail, but rather highlights several key features that help to explain how the illicit economy underpins instability in northern Mozambique, and in particular appears to have fed into the rise of the Al Shabaab group. Many of the actors profiting from these trades are involved in small networks, operating with various degrees of formality. The most formally organized are those who have registered businesses and public roles as important businessmen within the elite; the least formal are those who have illegally entered the country and whose enterprises are informal, like many of the African-migrant ruby traders. Most of these trades are simultaneously overt in their operations and well hidden



Map 2: Northern Mozambique – Niassa, Nampula and Cabo Delgado provinces



by the overwhelming impunity for anyone able to afford political protection, which means that despite exposés by the press and NGOs, no senior figures have ever been arrested or charged. As this situation implies, figures in all the major illicit trades have reached accommodations with the state, even at very high levels of the ruling party, FRELIMO.

The GI’s Heroin Coast report,¹⁶ released in June, described the activities of perhaps the most powerful, organized and, at the same time, legitimized, criminal syndicate: the families that control the transit heroin route through Mozambique. These families are Mozambicans of Pakistani and Indian origin and are connected by marriage and through business partnerships. In conversation with interviewees they are often referred to, in English, as ‘the mafia’, and for ease of reference in this report they are referred to as the ‘Nacala mafia’, due to their ‘capture’ of that major port.

The alleged members of this mafia are named in our Heroin Coast report, and their links to the drug trade are substantiated by numerous interviews, as well as US sanctions, and inferred from previous offences and public information about their links to the ruling party and control of key port infrastructure. However, they have never



been charged with trafficking or convicted of such. The nature of their relationship to the state we characterized as an elite pact.¹⁷ Through sharing an unknown portion of their profits from the trade with a network within the FRELIMO elite, they have gained unrivalled access to key infrastructure and have amassed huge power. (Our interviewees were particularly afraid of being named or in any way traced to information about their activities, and they clearly command fear in the local community, even though we were not told of any specific acts of violence or retribution on their part.) Their containers are not scanned at ports, and at one point they enjoyed what amounted to a police escort for their road-based heroin shipments on their route to South Africa.¹⁸ Money from their trafficking activities is invested in hotels, shopping centres and land, mostly in Nampula, as well in Pemba and Maputo.¹⁹

As such, they form a powerful economic elite in the north of Mozambique, with open ties to the most senior FRELIMO politicians in Maputo. Mohammed Bachir Suleman, the alleged kingpin of heroin trafficking in Mozambique had highly visible links to former presidents Joaquim Chissano,²⁰ who attended Suleman's son's wedding in 2001, and Armando Guebuza, who allegedly received a US\$1 million campaign contribution from Suleman and twice visited his Maputo Shopping Centre, including for its official opening.²¹ At the beginning of his tenure, the current president, Filipe Nyusi, appeared to distance himself from these families, but in June 2018, he travelled to Nampula for the inauguration of the five-star Grand Plaza Hotel, which is owned by one of the individuals linked to the Nacala mafia.

A set of Asian networks control the illegal timber trade in the north (and central provinces), and also play a significant role in the ivory trade. Here again, formally registered Chinese companies operate with apparent legitimacy in the timber sector. Although these companies are ostensibly legitimate, the industry is rife with criminality, and laws are broken both in the harvesting of logs and in their export. Several civil-society and journalistic investigations have discovered that hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of Mozambican timber has been trafficked out of the country over the years. In 2013, the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) found that a staggering 76% of Mozambique's global timber exports in that year had been cut illegally (that is, in excess of the legal harvest limit) and that 48% of China's imports in 2012 were not registered or licensed for export by Mozambican authorities.²² Despite a flurry of denials and promises of investigations, the timber sector remains rife with criminality and corruption.

A set of Asian networks control the illegal timber trade in the north (and central provinces), and also play a significant role in the ivory trade.

In 2016, the World Resources Institute showed that over US\$400 million worth of Mozambican timber arrived in China, but only US\$100 million worth of timber exports were declared in Mozambique. Here political protection is tied to specific figures within FRELIMO, notably José Pacheco, a former governor of Cabo Delgado and former Minister of Agriculture. The previous year, the EIA published results of an investigation into Chinese timber companies which described in detail their seemingly corrupt relationships with Pacheco and other senior government figures: 'Liu [a Chinese businessman accused of illegally exporting Mozambican timber] claimed that his close relationship with the [then] Minister of Agriculture – José Pacheco – had helped in securing forest concessions, boasting that "me and him are like brothers."²³ The pair had purportedly first met when Pacheco was governor of Cabo Delgado and Liu was setting up in the province. Liu went on to say that 'when he [the Minister] needs money, he has come looking for me.'²⁴ Indeed, the EIA learned that Pacheco had visited Liu three times during a FRELIMO party conference being held in Pemba at the time of the EIA's visit.²⁵ During the same FRELIMO congress in Pemba, the EIA found that the Deputy Minister of Agriculture had been sleeping at the house of another Chinese businessman they had found was illegally exporting Mozambican timber. Pacheco no longer has the same influence he had over timber resources or the Pemba port, which was also a major hub for ivory export during his tenure, but as illegal exports continue, it is safe to assume that these networks have found alternative sources of protection.



Nacala Port: A boat entering the port



Nacala compound: Entrance to a compound in Nacala



Ivory is another key commodity that passes through the north of Mozambique, exported by Vietnamese or Chinese networks.²⁶ Since 2009 a new poaching crisis has severely reduced elephant populations in East Africa – between 2009 and 2014, Tanzania lost 60% of its elephant population and Mozambique lost 53%.²⁷ Niassa Reserve alone lost 10 000 elephants in the five years between 2010 and 2015. Ivory export routes moved from Tanzania to Mozambique in around 2015, when Tanzania stepped up enforcement to stem elephant poaching, and a lot of the ivory that is shipped out of Mozambique has been poached in neighbouring countries. Chinese networks moved their export operations to Pemba port in Mozambique, where they appeared to have relatively free reign. ('We're able to move anything through Pemba. Everyone there has been bought,' a trafficker told EIA investigators²⁸ – this sentiment was echoed by our interviews in Nampula and Pemba in September 2017.) Vietnamese networks also play a crucial role in exporting ivory to Asia.²⁹ These networks use Nacala and Beira ports, in addition to Pemba. Both the Chinese and Vietnamese also traffic other wildlife products, such as rhino horn, lion bone and pangolin.

A few years ago, there was no evidence that profits were being kept locally, but recently there has been more investment by these Chinese businessmen, first in commercial space and retail goods, and now in the tourism sector in Nampula, Nacala and Pemba. A CNN report recorded an ivory deal being conducted at the new Chinese-owned China Mall in Pemba, which it listed as a regular venue for such transactions.³⁰ Other Asian networks present in the north are Thai networks, whose actors have reportedly moved into garnet mining, exporting the products via Nacala.³¹

A third category of networks is those made up of migrants from other African countries, particularly citizens of Tanzania, Mali, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Somalia, Nigeria, Cameroon and Burundi. African-migrant networks in northern Mozambique are involved primarily in small-scale drug trafficking (selling small quantities of a variety of drugs for the local market), and the smuggling of precious stones (such as gold, rubies,

China Mall: Recently built China Mall in Pemba where CNN recorded ivory deals taking place



garnets, tourmalines and emeralds) and small amounts of timber and wildlife. Many have acquired – through formal or informal processes – a Travel Declaration (Declaração de Circulação),³² which gives asylum seekers the right to move freely through either the province of Nampula or the whole of Mozambique. The profits from these various enterprises appear to be primarily invested in small shops selling a variety of goods, such as car parts, food and clothes. Some traders have invested in private and commercial property (small houses or shops) in order to launder their money. These traders do not appear to have strong political connections, but because their trades still require law breaking, they are both corrupting of and targeted by the police and customs officials.³³

Some of these networks have strong links with southern Tanzania, in which poachers and wildlife traffickers operate, for example.³⁴ At several points along the Tanzania–Mozambique border, traffickers are able to find easy routes north or south, depending on their desired direction of travel. Some traffickers play more organized roles in the illicit economy: Tanzanian networks are responsible for much of the elephant poaching in Niassa, and are also involved in transporting ivory poached in other territories along routes across Mozambique. Heroin for domestic markets (particularly in South Africa) is also an enterprise controlled primarily by Tanzanian networks; often transported by loosely linked mules carrying small volumes, heroin also travels south over the Tanzania–Mozambique border. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to make this border watertight, as it cuts through the territory of an ethnic group in the north, and fluidity of movement is important for local economies and social relations.

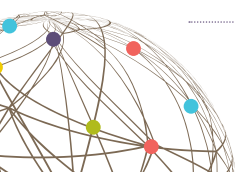
These networks of African migrants involved in trading in illicit commodities are often connected to international markets through Asian networks. Tanzanian poaching networks sell ivory to Chinese businessmen, who ship it to mainland China, often via transit countries in East Asia. The Chinese have similarly been linked to the ruby trade and are also said to buy illicit timber from more informal networks (and are reported to hide ivory tusks or rubies within logs of timber, a Russian-doll approach to nesting different commodities with different levels of political protection).³⁵

Networks of African migrants involved in trading in illicit commodities are often connected to international markets through Asian networks.

As regards the mineral-resources trade, foreign traders typically hire poorer rural Mozambicans to artisanally mine rubies, emeralds and garnets in the countryside, which are then brought to Nampula to be sold. Artisanal ruby miners do this on this side of an industry dominated by a foreign company, Gemfields, whose Mozambican operation, Montepuez Ruby Mining (MRM), is 25% co-owned by General Raimundo Pachinuapa, a senior FRELIMO figure. MRM won mining concession rights in 2011, and their operations have become increasingly securitized as they have tried to relocate the local community from the concession land and prevent their access to ruby-rich areas. Locals claim that in pursuit of these aims they have been beaten, murdered, and their crops and homes burnt down by local police and private security forces. According to our sources, the Mozambique police also extract bribes from the local community by charging them a tax to enter into the ruby fields.³⁶ Gemfields is currently embroiled in a court case in London under accusation of human-rights abuses in Mozambique.

The presence of Somalian and Ethiopian networks in northern Mozambique owes much to another regional criminal economy – that of human smuggling. Mozambique lies in the path of a human-smuggling (and sometimes trafficking) route from the Horn of Africa to South Africa. For migrants wishing to leave the Horn, South Africa is not the most sought-after destination (these are in Europe and North America), but it is the more affordable option.³⁷

The human-smuggling industry runs primarily out of Nairobi and uses a chain of *mukalas* (human smugglers) to get migrants through the many jurisdictions on their journey. Migrants were at first transported in minibuses, using handlers to cross borders, often on foot, to avoid immigration officials. Over time, smugglers began to make more use of the ocean to transport migrants along the coast by dhow when weather permitted. According to Rowan Gerety, who interviewed smugglers in Nampula:



Migrants travelled overland from the border town of Doble, in southern Somalia, to the Kenyan port of Mombasa; then, by dhow—a large wooden boat with triangular sails—from Mombasa all the way [along the Tanzanian coast] to the northern beaches of Mozambique. [...] Sometimes, the dhows were able to continue farther south to the small port of Moçimboa da Praia, a picturesque town bordered by white-sand beaches and mangrove forests. There, eighty kilometres from the Tanzanian border, [the *mukala*] waited in a guesthouse near the colonial slave market in Mocímboa Velha, and he loaded his passengers as soon as they were off the boats.³⁸

Events in 2010 may have laid the basis for a substantial number of migrants from the Horn to establish themselves in northern Mozambique. The majority of these migrants were fleeing forced recruitment by al-Shabaab (the Somali group), famine and poverty, but it is possible that these networks also laid the basis for ex-fighters to establish links with local communities – particularly in Mocímboa da Praia and Palma. The triggering factors for this was pressure from South Africa on its neighbours to disrupt the flow of migrants south, which led to hundreds, then thousands, of migrants from the Horn being bottled up in the north of Mozambique, including a period where they were effectively abandoned (by smugglers) along the Cabo Delgado coast where dhows dropped them off.³⁹

Human smuggling in northern Mozambique

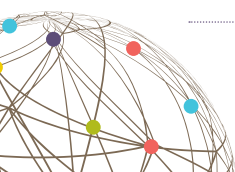
Up until 2010 there was a roaring human-smuggling trade that passed unhindered through Mozambique en route to South Africa. But in 2010 South Africa leaned on a range of states – Mozambique, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Malawi – to curtail the migrant flows. This pressure was effective – not at stopping the flow of people entirely but at trapping them in a certain jurisdiction for periods of time – and may account for the concentration of Somalians and other migrants in northern Mozambique. Smugglers suddenly found themselves unable to bribe their way out of arrest and were detained, which interrupted the Mozambican leg of operations.

At the same time, a similar crackdown took place in Tanzania, which closed its border and instituted redoubled patrols, and in Zimbabwe and Malawi. This meant that when the Mozambican authorities tried to deport migrants back across the Rovuma they were blocked, and migrants started to build up in Palma and along the coast, with no local *mukalas* to guide them south. *Mukalas* further up the chain didn't immediately react to the new situation and continued to send dhows laden with migrants south, even though there was no one to pick them up and help them continue their journey. Eventually the *mukalas* began using the Marratane refugee camp as an assembly point, sending migrants there first to register, and then picking them up from the camp.⁴⁰

Additionally, between 2010 and 2012 Pemba and Montepuez were considered boom towns – logistics centres for LNG exploration and ruby extraction were being set up and labourers and engineers were arriving from everywhere, which resulted in a huge expansion of support services and investments in real estate. These were places of massive opportunity that generated their own centres of gravity for immigration.

Later the refugee camp of Marratane became a staging ground for human-smuggling networks in Mozambique. Gerety quotes a senior police official in Nampula on the essentially uncontrolled and unmonitored influx of migrants that this facilitated:

[When people arrive at Marratane] they don't even stay there for three days. Someone shows up with a container truck and starts to take people away. Now, we don't know



who these people are or where they come from. So, are you a refugee or are you a militant? Are you using Mozambique as a transit country or are you staying here?⁴¹

These migrants have in turn found purchase in the economy of the north through their involvement in illicit trades, such as that in gemstones. Foreign ruby traders, in particular, have forged economic relationships with local people who mine on their behalf, and have in some cases become benefactors and operators in local communities by building mosques and establishing general-dealers stores with their profits.⁴² Thai, Pakistani and Burmese people, capitalizing on corruption in the immigration department at district and provincial level, have also moved into these areas, and have cornered support-service niches selling tools and wheelbarrows to the miners; this foreign ownership of the local economy also fuels local grievances.

Unlike the Nacala mafia and the Asian networks involved in the timber and ivory trades, these networks do not appear to have high-level political connections. In fact, they often challenge the economic interests of political figures in ways that throw the nature of the northern Mozambique criminal economy into relief. The primary example of this involves the ruby fields. While figures in government are in direct financial partnership with Gemfields in the extraction of rubies, state security forces have been deployed to protect MRM's interests through violence and the dispossession of the local community and migrant traders. At the same time, tax revenues from the ruby mines, intended for spending to the benefit of local communities, have disappeared from state coffers.⁴³ That these informal African traders do not enjoy high-level protection is embodied in a reported state security operation, instituted in 2016, to remove them by force on account of their alleged involvement in criminality.⁴⁴

This is a potent example of one mechanism through which the government's handling of the illicit economy and the prevalence of state corruption drive local grievances. In instances where the state has opposed illicit trade, this has been in order to side with foreign corporations (in both ruby mining and the timber sector). The profits have not

Figure 1: Relationship between corruption, illicit trade and extremism in northern Mozambique



translated into basic services or broad employment opportunities. Where the state has participated directly in the illicit economy, through involvement in heroin trafficking, for example, any resulting local investment has been in luxury hotels (sometimes employing smuggled or trafficked labour)⁴⁵ and land speculation, to little or no benefit of the local community.

Northern Mozambique exhibits a classic compounding set of factors that allow several problems to fester (see Figure 1). Untapped commodities or markets attract criminal actors, who may recognize new opportunities for illicit trade, which, in turn, attracts new criminal actors. Criminal networks both take advantage of corruption and foster it; corruption generates poor socio-economic conditions, which push people to find employment or other resources in illicit trades. When marginalization is thrown into this mix, militants can find a comfortable place in this system.

Northern Mozambique exhibits a classic compounding set of factors that allow several problems to fester.

Although it is grand corruption that has seen locals locked out of the spoils of illicit trade, petty corruption is also rife and predatory. Traffic police are highly organized around the extraction of bribes from truck drivers, taxi drivers and the owners of private vehicles.⁴⁶ Customs officials are also considered to be highly corrupt. Our interviewers from customs officials in the north confirmed that for a range of agencies (customs, border guards, police and migration officers) the most coveted positions are at the Namoto and Negomano border crossings, two of the most important posts between Mozambique and Tanzania, as these have high volumes of traffic, particularly in contraband, for which greater bribes can be extracted.⁴⁷ Businessmen and -women in the tourism industry in several locations complained about the rise of a 'facilitation tax' in the last few years whenever they had to renew licences or other documentation at government offices.⁴⁸

It is important to note how structural these problems are; these phenomena are not the expression (or not solely the expression) of individual greed or deviance on the part of state officials. At a low level, customs and police officers pay for their positions, often entering into them in debt to their superiors, who expect them to cover these debts by extracting bribes from the populace.⁴⁹ At a higher level, FRELIMO's system of collecting party finance, particularly in the run-up to important campaign events, relies on extracting 'donations' from public officials. The best example of this is the arrangement documented by CIP in 2014 in Zambezia province, where officials in the Forestry Department were instructed by FRELIMO to make a large donation to the party. With no explicit instruction to do so, these officials then illegally sold a number of licences to Chinese companies to cut timber, the proceeds of which were deposited into the FRELIMO Provincial Committee's bank account.⁵⁰

In the north, the heroin trade provides a starker example of an established system of bribes. Our sources claim that the Nacala mafia provides payments to a network within FRELIMO in exchange for facilitating the passage of their product through the country. This arrangement has endured through several administrations, which suggests it is more closely linked to party interests than individual ones. After decades of corruption and few dividends for the local community during FRELIMO's rule, the party's legitimacy is low in many parts of the country, and it may need such funds to stay in power.

As the GI has argued before, political protection can also be provided by keeping institutions weak. The interests that both high-level political actors and some members of the local community have in this illicit economy also creates an incentive to underfund or undermine law-enforcement institutions. Law-enforcement agencies are severely neglected and underfunded for a country that has measured high economic growth for the past two decades. According to an analyst working for an intergovernmental organization who toured the country on a fact-finding mission:

The 'criminal investigation department' is seen, including by prosecutors, as seriously under-resourced, poorly trained and inexperienced. There is little motivation for police or investigators. Many people, politicians, persons with high social status, successful



criminals, etc. are viewed as untouchable, so investigators will view it as pointless to pursue them. In the provinces, I encountered commanders of the Environmental Police who were responsible for large areas but who had no vehicles. Some applied to some Border Police. The living conditions for such personnel were appalling. Others would tell me that they had vehicles but they were unserviceable or they did not have a budget for fuel. The Marine Police, at the time of my visit, had no vessels. Customs have no seagoing vessels. The Navy does some enforcement-related activities off the coast but has no training in crime-related matters, searching, document inspection, etc.⁵¹

At the epicentre of the origins of the Al Shabaab movement in Mozambique, in and near Mocímboa da Praia, this can be seen in the ease with which people and goods cross the nearest border (with Tanzania) and arrive and leave the coast:

Awasse is small village located close to Mocímboa da Praia on the road from Pemba. It is supposed to be under tight police control, especially since the outbreak of insurgent violence, to stop arms or militants from entering Mocímboa da Praia. When the cars and buses from Tanzania arrive in Awasse, which is near the border crossing, all occupants are supposed to leave their vehicles, with their luggage, to be search by a joint force of police, military, customs, migration officials and the border guard. Given the number of agencies involved, it is supposed to be one of the most rigorously monitored crossroads in Cabo Delgado.

Yet based on the observations of the GI team in July 2018, it is extremely easy to pass through this crossing with prohibited goods. On two occasions members of our team crossed the post without being searched, first in a private car and the second time in a private bus, owned by Nagi Investment Company. On both occasions, when customs officers approached members of our team, they told them not to 'worry' about our bags – 'just give me a cool drink,' our researchers were told. Further interviews revealed that customs officers are allowing people to pass with such goods as guns, wildlife trophies, drugs and mineral resources, in exchange for bribes that amount to a decent income.⁵²

In Mocímboa da Praia itself there are two neighbourhoods that appear to be outside of government control: Nabobozi and the suburb of Nacala. Nabobozi is a small unregistered marina, an area where fishermen launch their boats and return after being at sea. It is not regulated by the state or any formal organization but is controlled by the fishermen and business people who use it. According to one customs officer, 'Nabobozi is a protected neighbourhood by local population who benefit by illicit activities, and drugs, ivory and timbers are loaded and unloaded there.'⁵³ In 2015, customs officers escaped a mob lynching there, after they seized a large quantity of *cannabis sativa* (the most common drug in northern Mozambique). Describing the event, one interviewee recalled: 'When we went to load and take it to the Custom Storehouses, the local population screamed at us saying, "Leave our products." And they came at us, trying to attack us. We left the drugs and ran away.'⁵⁴

Nacala is a similar place to Nabobozi, equally full of small artisanal boats. Most of these are handmade vessels with outriggers, but artisanal boats are not necessarily small. Some of the boats manufactured by the local community have the capacity to load more than 15 tonnes of goods and reach deeper into the high sea than police boats. There are several other places like Nabobozi and Nacala along the coast – near Palma and Macomia in Cabo Delgado, and also in Nampula province.

What does corruption and the criminal economy have to do with the Al Shabaab phenomenon? Neither our interviews nor the research done by others have provided evidence that Al Shabaab controls any of these trades, or that they are in a position to disrupt the trade routes.

***In
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To answer the questions posed at the beginning of this report:

- There is no evidence that Al Shabaab controls a substantial portion of any of these trade chains.
- There is no evidence that it has territorial control or sway over a group of people that allows it to control production, though the group may have leverage over coastal landing sites or remote border crossings.
- There is also no evidence that the group is in partnership with a separate organized-crime network.
- However, Al Shabaab may, by virtue of a more indiscriminate taxation system (described below), be collecting taxes from its membership's opportunistic involvement in illicit trade.

As this last point suggests, by simply being resident in the north individuals in the movement are presented with many economic opportunities related to these trades (but few related to the licit economy) – providing transport for contraband on boats, as drivers or loggers, or if they have a little capital, in setting themselves up as small businessmen in the gem or drug trade. Which, as we explain below, is exactly what many appear to have done.

Perhaps as crucially, as others have suggested, resentment and grievance underpin young men's desire to join a subversive, socially destructive movement. The constellation of corruption, dispossession and unfair distribution of resources in the economy of the north provides plenty of material for grievance both in the north and further afield.

Lastly, it is important to note how both petty and grand corruption, and their links to illicit flows, are now baked into the systems of governance in the north. Similarly, illicit trades are strongly socially and economically embedded in the north, and this makes it more difficult to disentangle them from the militant funding sources or shut them down entirely.

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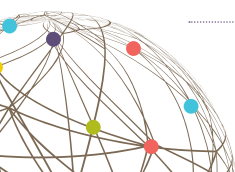
Follow the money

As the previous section explained, for over two decades the economy of the northern provinces of Mozambique has been characterized by the presence of a large illicit sector trading in a variety of goods. This illicit economy has been facilitated by relationships between overtly corrupt (but never prosecuted) senior government figures and the businessmen making a killing from illicit trade. Some of these arrangements have involved foreign companies who were exploiting or abusing local peoples, with backing from the state. And despite a flurry of economic activities and a lot of investment in property, particularly in hotels, there were few dividends for the local community in all this. Issues of land rights, provision of services, and employment for locals simmered and generated immense resentment for various powerful elites, right up to the governing party itself. Enter the insurgents.

This section seeks to address how the Al Shabaab insurgents have funded their movement and what relationship this funding has with the illicit economy.

The extremist phenomenon: Recruitment and funding

Our interviews in towns in Cabo Delgado and Nampula paint a picture of a movement that has slowly built a resilient and diverse economic base in Mozambique, recruiting young men not only through the offer of wages or bounty but by providing them with capital to enter into both the illicit and licit economies.



Previous reports have revealed how young men were offered money, direct employment or bursaries in exchange for joining the movement and given money to travel to neighbouring countries either to take up these offers or to undergo jihadist training. However, civil-society members in Palma described to us how the early leaders of Al Shabaab had first begun to recruit young people into their mosques and madrassas (rather than an armed movement) with the offer of business loans.⁵⁵ These loans could be invested in any sector of their interest and all new adherents to the sect moved into business. Some of them bought new boats for fishing, some started small shops selling food and consumer goods, and others established themselves as car-repair men or vendors of building materials or electrical tools.⁵⁶

Some new members invested in entering the illegal mining trade or smuggling (licit and illicit goods) from Mozambique to Tanzania. This does not appear to have been in attempt to control these trades in an organized fashion, but simply because the illicit economy is indistinguishable from the local economy in areas where smuggling is prevalent. As one journalist noted: 'I have to remind you that the business from Tanzania was more sustainable and the most profitable trade. Because of corruption, cross-border traders don't pay customs fees and a product that costs 300 meticals in Tanzania can be sold for 1 000 to 1 200 meticals in Mozambique.'⁵⁷ These traders used the same route across the Tanzanian border that was used for drug, wildlife, timber and ruby trafficking – all trades facilitated by public officials in immigration, customs, and the police and border forces who took bribes to allow free movement from one country to the other. Observers in Palma believed that cross-border trade with Tanzania became a major source of revenue for the group and allowed it to build up a financial base in preparation for the attacks that began in October 2017.⁵⁸

A close look at the profiles of some of the insurgents reveals how important their entry in the local economy was to both recruitment and funding. In Mocímboa da Praia, Nuro Adremane and Jafar Alawi, who were early leaders of the group, each owned a small shop with an equally small local customer base. Over the last four years (since the arrival of Al Shabaab in the town), they travelled regularly to Tanzania for business. Their small shops became big ones and began to bring in large sums of money. Adremane and Alawi bought expensive cars and houses in Palma, which raised the level of esteem they were held in by the town's youth. After the attacks broke out, the two sold many of these assets, but these assets had been powerful tools for recruitment.⁵⁹

Al Shabaab was also able to recruit Bacar Faque, a renowned 'economic agent'⁶⁰ from Quiterajo, Macomia District, who at the age of 40 did not fit the typical mould for recruitment. But Faque was well known across Cabo Delgado and Nampula and travelled as far as Nampula city and Maputo for business, as well as to Tanzania. Faque is also believed to have been a leader in the Al Shabaab movement, and his itinerant business may have helped him to recruit for and fund the movement.⁶¹

Additionally, interviews with friends and family members of militants in towns along the coast allowed us to build up profiles of 13 other men who have joined Al Shabaab. All of them were under 40 and shared the following characteristics:

- Almost all of them had been members of Al Sunnah sect, which they had abandoned in 2014 to join the new Al Shabaab sect.
- None of the men had been schooled beyond the eighth grade, with the exception of Insa Sumail, whose home town is Nanga, who had completed the tenth grade.⁶²
- All of them owned small businesses selling miscellaneous commodities, such as rice, sugar and mobile-phone credit. At the same time, some of them were involved in illicit businesses, such as illegal ruby mining, elephant poaching and the smuggling of the proceeds of wildlife and mineral-resources crime.
- Over time these men all developed their businesses into international trades (with Tanzania and Malawi) and interregional trades (with many doing business across Cabo Delgado and Nampula provinces and even in Maputo).



These commonalities suggest that membership of Al Shabaab was a powerful way for young men to expand their economic opportunities, through both the diversity and geographic reach of their trades (both licit and illicit). As this report goes on to explain, this funding mechanism may have reached deeply into the country's north.

It is, however, important to appreciate that many men who took loans from Al Shabaab did not know what exactly they were getting themselves into. When the call came, one of things that was required of recruits was that they sell the new assets they had acquired, presumably to fund the attacks that began in October. In the week before the Mocímboa fire, young men across the towns of Cabo Delgado sold their stock, stores and houses and left their homes to travel to Mocímboa da Praia. Not everyone was prepared to do this, however. Our information is that Al Shabaab's recruiters were vague about the conditions attached to their loans. Young men were told that the loans were interest-free and could be invested however recipients saw fit – but when the movement called on them for help, they were obliged to answer. Those who held on to their assets without the movement's permission, and without joining the fight or paying their dues, are now being targeted. This is why attacks on whole villages result in only a few deaths; the men who have defaulted are beheaded – and if they cannot be found, family members are made to pay the price.⁶³

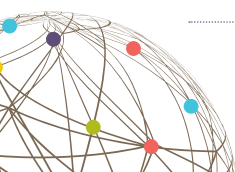
Regional funding and extremist links

There are other phenomena with startling parallels to the Al Shabaab movement. We cannot state with any certainty that they are linked, nor can we explain the mechanism of their connections, but they do deserve documentation as we develop our understanding of the insurgent movement, its regional links and its relationship to the illicit economy.

First, it is worth noting that a strikingly similar phenomenon occurred around the ruby fields of Montepuez and Muede in the months before the October attack: after a security operation by the state against African migrants accused of committing petty crimes, the class of migrant shop owners who had been involved in the ruby trade sold their assets and moved to unknown locations. We have also received reports that these traders were prolific mosque builders – it is not clear whether they were simply devout Muslim immigrants and traders, or whether they were in fact linked to Al Shabaab.⁶⁴ Locals in the north have suggested that the profits from this selling of assets might also have gone to funding for the Al Shabaab movement.

Our research has also revealed the possibility that the group is still funded by small businesses located all over the country, though concentrated in Nampula and Cabo Delgado provinces. We have found evidence that small and medium-sized businesses – from car-repair shops to *capulana* (sarong) salesmen – pay a donation, or a tax, to an unknown group.⁶⁵ This money follows a sophisticated and complex laundering route via Mogadishu, Somalia and Dubai, until it reaches Khartoum, which appears to be where a cohort of the group's leaders are located. The donations do not immediately leave the country: first they are deposited into a Mozambican bank account which has been indicated by 'agents' of an international-money-transfer network. The money is then transferred between several different Mozambican accounts before being transferred out of the country via a mobile money service called Taaj Money. Taaj is an international money-transfer service with branches in several countries,⁶⁶ including in the UAE and Somalia, where it has its headquarters, but it is not legally registered in Mozambique. The GI has seen evidence of these Taaj transfers, all to Sudanese numbers.

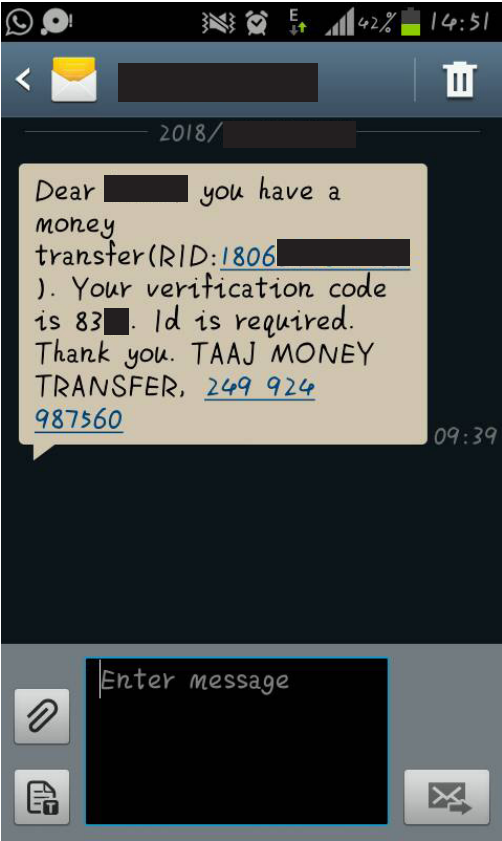
The role of these 'agents' in money laundering pre-dates the Al Shabaab phenomenon; it can be traced to the bursaries offered by Muslim benefactors to Mozambican youths to attend university in Sudan. Sudan is under economic sanctions and cannot easily receive money from abroad. Their local banks are neither permitted to receive money nor to transfer it to another country, and there are no visa services available. For Mozambican students in Sudan, two Somali mobile-money agencies (Taaj Money and Wapha) are the main means by which they receive money from and transfer money to Sudan.⁶⁷



Today, about 50 young Mozambicans are studying at the International University of Africa in Sudan, without support from the Mozambican government. Some Al Shabaab members have been recruited at the mosque attached to this university. According to some of these students, all foreign students from African countries receive support from benefactors through Taaj – these benefactors are known to them only as Muslim philanthropists making ‘dawah’⁶⁸ payments, and are not relatives of theirs. The majority of Mozambican students at this university are from Nampula and Cabo Delgado provinces, and they receive a higher level of financial support. As one student informed us: ‘If you are Mozambican student from Nampula and Cabo Delgado you are very privileged. They receive lot of money from Nampula and Cabo Delgado. The students who suffer are from the other Mozambican provinces.’⁶⁹

The actions of the Al Shabaab movement are strikingly similar to events in Tanzania, where there is little doubt that the networks behind such activities constitute a violent extremist movement, though their level of organization is up for debate. Here we draw on reports from the Pwani region (close to but not including Dar es Salaam) and the adjacent Tanga region, which abuts the Kenyan border. The movements are referred to with a generic term – *walokole wa Kiislamu* (born-again Muslims) – although they have also been linked to the Ansar al-Sunnah sect. They are said to have been influenced by the Kenyan preacher Abu Rogo and trained by returned fighters who had travelled to Somalia to fight for the Somali al-Shabaab. Like the Mozambican Al Shabaab movement, they denounce state taxation, education and healthcare, and have tried to force the same cleavages in the social fabric along the coast, notable between the youth and older generations, and between Muslims and Christians, and by promoting the idea of a ‘pure’ Islam that non-adherents to the movement (e.g. the general Muslim community) have betrayed. They too came into conflict with state-aligned establishment Muslim associations, and were kicked out of mainstream mosques and built their own, which then became sites of recruitment and radicalization. The parallels also extend to their relationship to the illicit economy, and the ways in which it is exploited both as a source of grievance to drive recruitment and – in the same disorganized, opportunistic way – for revenue.

Money transfers:
Screenshot of messaging confirming transfer via Taaj Money



In Pwani, some locals' livelihoods depended on illicit logging and the illegal charcoal trade drawn from nearby forests and the Selous Game Reserve. Locals accused the police and game wardens of collaborating to confiscate their produce and selling it on the side for profit (unless they were given a bribe by said impoverished locals). In February 2017, a policeman and two officials from the Ministry of Natural Resources were killed in an attack by *walokole wa Kiislamu* militants. In a note left at the scene, the killers explicitly rationalized their attack as revenge for the abuse of the community through denying them a right to profit from natural resources: 'There is no way to get rid of this abuse; it is through a gun only,' the note read.

In the aftermath of the attack, the local community was also mobilized to collect their confiscated produce. The militants also exploited grievances about the illegal transfer of community land to local and foreign investors by corrupt government officials. Lastly, they have exploited and amplified a narrative that the central government had marginalized the (Muslim) ethnic community of the coast, in favour of (Christian) inland ethnicities.

Recruitment of youth in Pwani also relied on offering young people loans to start businesses, the provision of motorcycles, building of new mosques, and the offer of bursaries for study. *Walokole wa Kiislamu* also became involved in poaching in the Selous, illegal logging and the charcoal industry. When the government cracked down on these sources of finance by more strictly controlling illegal logging and charcoal, *walokole wa Kiislamu* switched to acts of banditry, robbing banks and mobile-phone shops, and hijacking vehicles.⁷⁰

The phenomenon in Tanga has numerous connections to Kenya: through links to armed groups operating in Kenya (some affiliated with al-Shabaab), and the journeys of students and radical teachers back and forth across the border. Yet there is no clear link to international finance, or affiliation to big-brand terrorist organizations, such as ISIS and al-Qaeda. Because it shares a border with Kenya, Tanga is also a regional hub for drug trafficking and people smuggling. This group also appears to engage in a range of crimes to sustain itself financially, though not in the highly lucrative and organized flows of heroin, but rather in smuggling khat⁷¹ and marijuana, through charcoal production, and break-ins and robberies.⁷²

Recently, the Mozambican state admitted there were links between extremist groups in Tanzania and Mozambique, with the Mozambican Al Shabaab recruiting in Tanzania and with Al Shabaab militants taking shelter there. One hundred and eighty nine alleged militants are currently on trial in Pemba for their involvement in violent acts – 50 of them are Tanzanian. Although we cannot say for certain that all this activity – stretching right up to Kenya – is linked, there is certainly cause for concern. These could be independent developments, shaped by similar pressures, with disaffected groups finding the obvious ways to raise funds in their local economies. It is certainly the case that extremist preachers have been plying the coast for decades, and certain features of the coast's political economy – smuggling, corruption, and perceived or real marginalization – have been present for several decades more, though perhaps not at the same intensity as they are now. But if this is the case, we should at least be asking why there has been an increase in attacks by these groups (in Tanzania) and the emergence of a new militant group (in Mozambique) in the same period, in a cross-border region linked by trade, language and religion. And it should remain an open question whether something more intentional and organized is happening along this coast, from Kenya at least as far south as Angoche, and maybe further.

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Conclusions

When our team visited Mocímboa da Praia in June 2018, the district was supposed to be under tighter governmental control than ever before, as the state tried to tackle the insurgent threat. Yet we found that timber, wildlife and mineral resources were still being smuggled from strategic places in Mocímboa da Praia and further north along the coast. In the Nabobozi neighbourhood we met eight men manufacturing a big new artisanal boat, which they expected to be able to put into operation in a month's time (see the photo). 'This boat has the capacity to load and transport 15 to 20 tonnes of goods and it can travel from here [Mocímboa da Praia] to Tanzania or to Nacala Port and it can reach high sea,' said one of the boat builders.⁷³ They didn't say what goods it would transport, but customs officers told us they thought the boat would be used for transporting timber and drugs. Police boats cannot go that far out to sea – what the men were building was directly intended to evade the new measures to curb smuggling. The crackdown supposedly under way does not appear to be capable of really containing smuggling or the open flow of people and goods to areas where the insurgents operate, nor does it seem willing.

There is much we still don't know about the funding mechanisms of the insurgency. But it is clear that their economic base in northern Mozambique is diverse and resilient; it is both supported by and connected to the illicit economy, but not dependent on any one funding source. At the same time, the militants appear to be poorly funded, in so far as their weaponry and supplies are fairly rudimentary.⁷⁴

The situation is also dynamic – as long as the insurgency develops and grows in strength, its connections to the illicit economy will change. If the movement becomes sufficiently powerful it may indeed attempt to leverage a more lucrative position in the trade chain, for example by taxing the entry and exit of contraband along the coast or by transporting goods itself across the territory. For goods that can be extracted locally – such as gems, timber and ivory – it is conceivable that the group could attempt to control production or harvesting, but it is more likely that it would enter into an arrangement with existing networks that have the skills and contacts in these industries. (This

Under construction: Artisanal boat that can carry up to 15 tonnes on the high seas, under construction in Nabobozi Marina in Mocímboa da Praia



is, however, probably as far as it will go. They will not be able to, for example, establish their own links with heroin suppliers in Pakistan or timber or ivory buyers in China.)

It is important to not see the organized-criminal networks and insurgents as simply interchangeable, but rather to understand and anticipate their relationship with one another in more nuanced ways. Similarly, it is advisable to neither overstate nor undersell the ideological dimensions of the crisis: the parallels with the extremist violence in Tanzania do suggest concerted processes of religion-based radicalization, perhaps along a large swathe of the Indian Ocean coast. Our findings with regard to mobile money transfers to Sudan may also suggest a regionally interconnected recruitment and funding drive that stretches all the way to the Horn of Africa.

Our concern with understanding these links is also to assess what impact they will have on development prospects. At present, this threat appears to be primarily conceived of in terms of the threat to LNG investments. However, the majority of these investments are offshore, and while the insurgency may raise costs for the companies operating there, these companies are capable of both flying over insecure areas and hiring private security forces which are far better armed and trained than the militants.⁷⁵ The local community (and maybe, in future, foreign NGO workers) remain the softest, and therefore most attractive, targets for the militants, at least for the time being. The insurgency may, however, affect their development of support services in onshore locations. Lastly, the logical escalation of their modus operandi, if they are able to acquire the expertise and resources to pull it off, would be the kidnapping of foreign workers, which has been a lucrative source of income for militant Islamist groups in Mali and Nigeria.

The escalation of the insurgency – as well as of the state's response – will however have an immediate impact on local populations in the form of violence, and on a more massive scale, displacement as people flee violence or are forcibly displaced by militants or government forces. Insurgencies have a dark intimacy, which means that local populations take an enormous toll, and they are incredibly hard to stamp out. The fighters are the sons and brothers of the villagers they attack, and the state will rely on intelligence from the local community which amounts to them handing over family members to a government that has been known to carry out extra-judicial executions.⁷⁶ The army will be stationed among a local community with whom they often do not share a common language and from whom they can expect little trust. There are already reports of poorly paid, poorly disciplined army troops raiding villages for food, or harassing locals for money, food or sex.⁷⁷

Unfortunately, our analysis suggests that it is unrealistic to expect anything to improve in the medium term. In fact, with local elections planned for 2018 and national elections in 2019, the state has conflicting incentives as far as its activities in the north go. The illicit economy is a source of party finance, or political finance, for powerful figures within the administration, and it may be seen as a crucial source of funding for winning these elections. At a lower level, state officials, such as police and customs authorities, have become reliant on bribes to supplement their incomes and 'pay off' their positions. In some areas, the livelihood of the local community depends on the community playing a role in illicit economies. Decades of underinvestment in securing borders or establishing, for example, an effective coastguard, also mean there are no quick fixes for improving the performance of state officials. It is hard to see how the authorities could take meaningful action to prevent militants entering the country (or leaving it for training), receiving weaponry, or deriving income from smuggling, without taking actions that would put them at an electoral disadvantage.

Their current response – heavily reliant on policing and military action – appears to lack the intelligence capabilities necessary for it to be effective and runs the risk of alienating the local community further.⁷⁸ Nor will this strategy address the primary sources of discontent in the local community – burgeoning corruption and the lack of access to licit economic opportunity. The militants are still militarily weak, and the violence could still be contained. But if it is handled clumsily, the situation could develop in a direction that sees northern Mozambique become a zone for launching assaults and furthering the aims of criminal networks across the region.



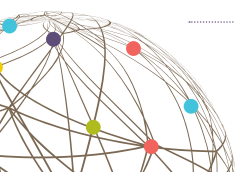
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Notes

1. *Momentos de instabilidade política em Moçambique - uma cronologia*, Deutsche Welle, 6 August 2014, <https://p.dw.com/p/18xjM>.
2. *Renamo retoma os ataques no centro de Moçambique e condiciona o seu fim ao consenso no diálogo político*, Verdade, 2 June 2014, <http://www.verdade.co.mz/destaques/democracia/46546-renamo-retoma-os-ataques-no-centro-de-mocambique-e-condiciona-o-seu-fim-ao-consenso-no-dialogo-polit>.
3. Such allegations were published in the Nampula-based electronic newspaper, *Jornal IKWELI (electronico)*. See editions 119, 120 and 122 in 2017. The link to local elites was mentioned by a businessman who associated with the Nampula business elite, interviewed on the Nampula Coast, July 2018.
4. The Makonde make up the majority of the population of the northern provinces of Mozambique, and several of the most high-profile figures in the ruling party come from this ethnic group. In northern Mozambique, as with other countries along the Indian Ocean coast, there is some widespread religious tension between Muslims and Christians, and long-standing grievance about perceived or actual marginalization of (predominantly Muslim) groups living near to the coast by (predominantly Christian) inland groups.
5. These figures are from personal correspondence with a reliable source. The Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset (ACLED) records 191 fatalities from various clashes between government forces, armed groups (sometimes identified specifically as Al Shabaab) and civilians between 1 September 2017 and 1 October 2018. Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported in June 2018, that over 1 000 people had been displaced after Al Shabaab burnt down their homes; with attacks in recent weeks using a similar modus operandi, this figure is likely to now be much higher. HRW, Mozambique: Armed Groups Burn Villages, 19 June 2018, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/06/19/mozambique-armed-groups-burn-villages>.
6. Interview with religious leader, Mocimboa da Praia, July 2018.
7. Future exports of LNG could represent an average annual growth rate of 24% GDP between 2021 and 2025 and total fiscal revenues until 2045 of about US\$500 billion, according to predictions by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) made in 2016. See IMF, Republic of Mozambique: Selected Issues, Country Report 16/10, 2016, in A Roe, Extractive industries and development: Lessons from international experience for Mozambique, WIDER Working Paper 2018/56, May 2018.
8. London-listed explorer Wentworth Resources Ltd said it hasn't been able to gain access to its onshore licenses for safety concerns. The US Embassy advised Americans in the area to consider leaving due to 'violent extremism' in June 2018. On 8 June 2018, local staff at Anadarko refused to go to work because they feared an attack. The company then asked its foreign staff not to leave their compound. See E Morier-Genoud, Mozambique's own version of Boko Haram is tightening its deadly grip, The Conversation, 11 June 2018, <https://theconversation.com/mozambiques-own-version-of-boko-haram-is-tightening-its-deadly-grip-98087>.
9. Interview with security analyst, Johannesburg, August 2018.
10. A former chairman of Blackwater (a US private military mercenary firm), Prince was involved in the Secret Loans scandal. Prince's Frontier Services Group (FSG) formed a joint venture – called Tunamar – with Ematum, whose chairman was Antonio do Rosario (a senior official of the intelligence and security service – Serviço de Informação e Segurança do Estado, SISE – during the Guebuza administration). See *Entendimento com ProIndicus e a Lancaster 6 Group Multinacionais negam acordo sobre segurança, Moçambique para todos*, 15 June 2018, http://macua.blogs.com/moambique_para_todos/2018/06/entendimento-com-proindicus-e-a-lancaster-6-group-multinacionais-negam-acordo-sobre-seguranca.
11. According to press reports, these plans were justified by the extremist Islamic insurgency. The project, called Pro6, would be a 50–50 joint venture between ProIndicus and L6G, to be implemented over five years at a cost of US\$750 million. Since Mozambique does not have any capital to put forward, L6G offered to finance 80% of the cost with its own funds, to be repaid by 2023 when gas production in the Rovuma basin starts. Prince's connection with L6G is still to be proven, but the company's CEO, Christaan Durant, worked closely with Prince at FSG. See M Hill and B Nhamire, Burning Villages, Ethnic Tensions Menace Mozambique Gas Boom, Bloomberg, 2 July 2018, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-07-02/burning-villages-ethnic-tensions-menace-mozambique-s-gas-boom>.
12. It has become incredibly expensive and difficult for foreign and local journalists to reach affected areas in the north. Foreign journalists have been detained for questioning, and the government recently raised the cost of foreign-press accreditation to between US\$2 500 and US\$8 300 (MT150 000–MT500 000), while local journalists must pay US\$500 (MT30 000) to write for foreign media. The main objective of these fees appears to have been to discourage coverage of the elections, but they will inevitably affect reporting on the conflict. Additionally, many journalists – local and foreign – are simply turned away at roadblocks by the military.
13. S Habibe, F Salvador and J Pereira, *Radicalização Islâmica no norte de Moçambique: O caso da Mocimboa da Praia*, 2018, <http://www.open.ac.uk/technology/mozambique/sites/www.open.ac.uk.technology.mozambique/files/files/Moci%CC%81mboa%20da%20Praia.pdf>.
14. See M Hill and B Nhamire, Burning Villages, Ethnic Tensions Menace Mozambique Gas Boom, Bloomberg, 2 July 2018, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-07-02/burning-villages-ethnic-tensions-menace-mozambique-s-gas-boom>.
15. Club of Mozambique, Mozambique: Islamists funded by illegal trade in timber and rubies – AIM report, 23 May 2018, <http://clubofmozambique.com/news/mozambique-islamists-funded-by-illegal-trade-in-timber-and-rubies-aim-report>.
16. S Haysom, P Gastrow and M Shaw, Heroin Coast: a political economy along the eastern African seaboard, ENACT, June 2018, <http://globalinitiative.net/the-heroin-coast-a-political-economy-along-the-eastern-african-seaboard>.
17. In our June report, we describe it as a resilient “practice” between top drug traffickers and top officials. It is believed to be based on a broad understanding among some members of the leadership elite – not all of whom may be directly involved – that a quid pro quo exists around the heroin trafficking economy, whereby government protection is extended to the trade. In return, traffickers make payments that benefit representatives of the ruling elite, ensure there is little local consumption, and make investments in the Mozambican economy out of the proceeds of their trade. See S Haysom, P Gastrow and M Shaw, Heroin Coast: a political economy along the eastern African seaboard, ENACT, June 2018, <http://globalinitiative.net/the-heroin-coast-a-political-economy-along-the-eastern-african-seaboard>.
18. Workers at the port and for the Kudumba scanning company told colleagues that they were forbidden from scanning Moti's containers. Interviews with scanner-company employees, Nampula and Maputo, 17 September 2017.

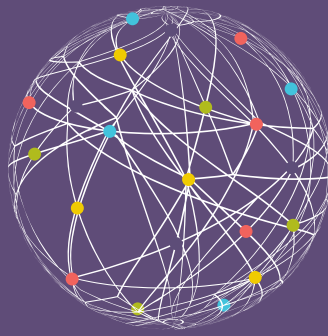


19. Nampula's premium hotels are owned by two families, that of Momade Rassul, though the ARJ Group, and that of Abdul Gani, through the ATG Group. The Grand Plaza is owned by Gani. In 2014, then president Armando Guebuza attended the inauguration of the New Hotel, owned by Rassul's brother, Amin. Other hotels owned by these families are the City Hotel, the Paraiso Hotel and the Milenio.
20. Reported in Savana on-line, 20 October 2009. Article no longer available online.
21. These figures were reported in Savana on-line, 20 October 2009; in *Noticias*, 23 June 2006; and AIM English, 9 May 2007. Articles no longer available online.
22. EIA, First Class Crisis: China's Criminal and Unsustainable Intervention in Mozambique's Miombo Forests, July 2014, <https://eia-international.org/wp-content/uploads/First-Class-Crisis-English-FINAL.pdf>.
23. EIA, First Class Connections: Log Smuggling, Illegal Logging, and Corruption in Mozambique, February 2013, <https://eia-international.org/wp-content/uploads/EIA-First-Class-Connections.pdf>.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
26. EIA, The Shuidong Connection: Exposing the global hub of the illegal ivory trade, July 2017, <https://eia-international.org/report/shuidong-connection-exposing-global-hub-illegal-ivory-trade>.
27. MJ Chase, et al., Continent-wide survey reveals massive decline in African savannah elephants, *PeerJ*, 4, 2016. See also J Hance, Mozambique loses almost 10,000 elephants in just five years, Mongabay, 26 May 2015, <https://news.mongabay.com/2015/05/mozambique-loses-almost-10000-elephants-in-just-five-years>.
28. EIA, Taking Stock: An assessment of progress under the National Ivory Action Plan process, September 2018, <https://eia-international.org/wp-content/uploads/EIA-report-NIAP-2018.pdf>.
29. Vietnam has been an important transshipment point for wildlife products entering China since at least 2008. EIA, Exposing the Hydra: The growing role of Vietnamese syndicates in ivory trafficking, September 2018, <https://eia-international.org/wp-content/uploads/EIA-report-exposing-the-hydra.pdf>.
30. D McKenzie, B Swails and E Valoi, The last hope for the elephants: Can a Chinese law help stop the slaughter in Africa?, CNN, 19 June 2018, <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/06/19/africa/mozambique-ivory-trade-china-africa-intl/index.html>.
31. Interview with civil-society member involved in issues related to mining, Pemba, July 2018; interview with civil-society member involved in issues related to natural resources, Pemba, July 2018.
32. These are supposed to be issued by Instituto Nacional para o Apoio aos Refugiados (National Institute for Refugee Support, INAR).
33. Interviews conducted in Nampula in July 2017 and August 2018.
34. Interview with security analyst operating in Mozambique, by phone, June 2018; correspondence with security analysts based in Kenya, July 2018, by email.
35. Interview with civil-society member involved in issues related to mining, Pemba, July 2018; correspondence with small-business owner based in Ilha de Moçambique, July 2018, by email.
36. Interview with civil-society-organization member involved in local economic and social development near Palma, Ilha de Moçambique, July 2018.
37. According to Rowan Gerety, 'to be smuggled to Europe via Sudan and Libya cost \$25000 in 2011, while the journey south to South Africa cost \$3200. Dubbed "the USA of Africa" South Africa offers the possibility of earning relatively good money in the informal economy, and the theoretical protection of immigration laws. As a result, it has the highest number of asylum seekers in the world.' RM Gerety, *Go Tell the Crocodiles: Chasing Prosperity in Mozambique*. New York, NY: The New Press, 2018.
38. RM Gerety, *Go Tell the Crocodiles: Chasing Prosperity in Mozambique*. New York, NY: The New Press, 2018.
39. Ibid.
40. In 2011 Gerety's sources told him that boats had stopped landing near Palma or Mocimboa da Praia, but our sources report recent sightings of migrant boats as far south as Pemba – with one report of a boat of 90 illegal migrants docking at an illegal harbour in Cabo Delgado in October 2017.
41. A Canderinho, the second-ranking cop in Nampula Province, quoted in RM Gerety, *Go Tell the Crocodiles: Chasing Prosperity in Mozambique*. New York, NY: The New Press, 2018.
42. Interview with civil-society member involved in issues related to mining, Pemba, July 2018; interview with civil-society member involved in issues related to natural resources, Pemba, July 2018; interview with civil-society-organization member involved in local economic and social development near Palma, Ilha de Moçambique, July 2018.
43. According to the African Investigative Publishing Collective (AIPC), MRM Gemfields has an agreement with the Mozambican state to pay it 10% of the sales value of each ruby auction in royalties, and 2.75% of this is paid to the Montepuez district in royalties at the end of every budget year. According to Gemfields the nine auctions to date have generated a total revenue of US\$288 million. With corporate tax paid, as well as US\$29 million in royalties, Montepuez district's 2.75% of that figure would amount to over US\$7 million – this is the money that has gone missing. Adding to the perception that the distribution of ruby resources has been corrupt, the remaining licences for mining in Montepuez have been allocated to individuals linked to the ruling party, including former public works minister Felício Zacarias, former defence minister General Joaquim Alberto Chipande, former mayor of Maputo David Simango, former agricultural minister José Pacheco, FRELIMO-connected lawyer Lukman Assada Amame and the former head of Mozambique's security service, General Lagos Lidimo. See M Domegni, et al., The Plunder Route to Panama: How African oligarchs steal from their countries, *ZAM Chronicle*, 32, 2017.
44. Interview with civil-society member involved in issues related to mining, Pemba, July 2018.
45. Interviews with hotel staff in Nampula and Nacala, July 2017.
46. As witnessed by one of our research team. This researcher took taxis between various locations in Nampula and Cabo Delgado, which were stopped regularly by traffic police. The taxi driver, whose vehicle and licenses were in perfect order, was 'charged' a bribe at seemingly standard rate of US\$5, which he said had been factored into the quote given by the taxi-rental service.



47. Interviews with customs officials, Palma and Maputo, July 2018, and Nampula, July 2017.
48. Interview with hotel owner, Nampula, July 2018; interview with hotel owner, Cabo Delgado, July 2018.
49. Interviews with customs officials, Palma and Maputo, July 2018, and Nampula, July 2017.
50. See L Mabunda, *Partido Frelimo financia-se com dinheiro de contrabando de madeira na Zâmbézia, a Transparência*, 11, 2014, https://cipmoz.org/images/Documentos/Anti-Corrupcao/329_CIP-a_transparencia_11.pdf.
51. Informal report provided to the GI by an analyst working for an intergovernmental organization, October 2017.
52. Interview with journalist, Macomia, July 2018; interview with senior member of civil-society organization, Palma, July 2018; interview with member of civil society organization, Palma, July 2018; interview with small-business owner, Mocímboa da Praia, July 2018.
53. Interview with customs official, Palma, July 2018.
54. Interview with customs official, Palma, July 2018.
55. Interview with senior member of civil-society organization, Palma, July 2018.
56. Interview with religious leader, Mocímboa da Praia, July 2018; interview with member of civil-society organization, Palma, July 2018.
57. Interview with journalist, Macomia, July 2018.
58. Interview with senior member of civil-society organization, Palma, July 2018; interview with member of civil-society organization, Palma, July 2018.
59. Interview with religious leader, Mocímboa da Praia, July 2018. Adremane has subsequently been arrested by the Mozambican authorities and Alawi has disappeared.
60. A Mozambican term for an officially recognized businessman.
61. Faque was arrested by the Mozambican military two days after the attack on Mocímboa da Praia, in the Marere region, while he was transporting some fishermen from Quiterajo (in Macomia district) to Mocímboa da Praia. A few days later, he was freed due to lack of evidence of his involvement in the radical group. This information comes from interviews with local people who knew Faque, July 2018.
62. Sumail was at least 23 years old and married with two children. He was employed in a small store in Macomia, which he later abandoned to devote himself to the new sect.
63. Interview with senior member of civil-society organization, Palma, July 2018; interview with a military source, by phone, July 2018.
64. Interview with civil-society member involved in issues related to mining, Pemba, July 2018; interview with civil-society member involved in issues related to natural resources, Pemba, July 2018.
65. Interviews with small-business owners, Nampula and Palma, July 2018.
66. There are Taaj branches in more than 100 countries. In Africa, its branches are in Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Djibouti, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Rwanda and Uganda.
67. Interviews with Mozambican students in Sudan, by phone in Sudan and in person in Maputo, July 2018.
68. To give dawah means to inform, educate or invite someone to Islam. Here the payments are helping to support these students' religious education.
69. Interviews with Mozambican students in Sudan, by phone in Sudan and later in person in Maputo, July 2018.
70. See WJ Walwa, Understanding community resilience amidst rising violent conflicts in Tanzania, *The African Review*, 45, 1, 2018, 124–142, and JJ Jingu, The Flurry of Crimes in Kibiti and Rufiji and the Quest for Effective Early Warning and Response Mechanism, *The African Review*, 45, 1, 2018, 93–109.
71. A plant whose leaves are chewed as a stimulant.
72. Ibid.
73. Interviews with fishermen, Mocímboa da Praia, July 2018.
74. There are, however, conflicting reports that in a recent attack the militants had military uniforms and used an RPG – though a later correction said that there was no RPG, but that rather a tree was used to block the vehicle's path. See Cabo Delgado terrorists kill 12 civilians in deadliest attack yet, *Zitamar*, 21 September 2018, <https://zitamar.com/cabo-delgado-terrorists-kill-12-civilians-in-deadliest-attack-yet>.
75. Interview with security analyst, Johannesburg, August 2018; interview with civil-society-organization member involved in local economic and social development near Palma, Ilha de Moçambique, July 2018.
76. See Verdade and Savana, Confessions of a Mozambican hitman: 'This person in the photo should be shot', *Daily Maverick*, 17 March 2016, <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2016-03-17-confessions-of-a-mozambican-hitman-this-person-in-the-photo-should-be-shot/#.WuGVbS97EWq>. For more context on the use of assassination in Mozambique, see R Horsley and S Haysom, Mozambique's quiet assassination epidemic, ENACT, 11 May 2018, <http://globalinitiative.net/mozambiques-quiet-assassination-epidemic>.
77. Interviews in Cabo Delgado, July 2018.
78. Interview with religious leader, Mocímboa da Praia, July 2018.





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