

1st Solidarity Camp of DELPAZ Women
Manica Province
Inhazónia, Barué District
November 20th and 21st, 2023

"Empowered Women for Peace, Social Inclusion, and Local Economic Development"

Position Statement of the Women and Men Who Participated in the Camp

This position statement arises from the discussions and collective dialogue that took place during the first Women Solidarity Camp organized by DELPAZ Manica and held on November 20th and 21st, 2023, in Inhazónia, Barué District, Manica Province. Under the theme "Empowered Women for Peace, Social Inclusion, and Local Economic Development," the event was honorably attended by the Director of the Provincial Directorate for the Environment, representing the Governor of Manica Province, the Permanent Secretary of Barué District, the Chief of Inhazónia locality, and members of the Provincial Coordination Committee of the DELPAZ Program.

A total of 170 women and men actively participated in the camp from the DELPAZ implementation districts in the provinces of Manicaⁱ, Teteⁱⁱ, and Sofalaⁱⁱⁱ, as detailed in the following table:

	Women	Men	Total
DELPAZ in Manica	100	25	125
DELPAZ in Tete	9	6	15
DELPAZ in Sofala	18	12	30

This event was organized by the Sofala Group of Women for the Sharing of Ideas (GMPIS), one of the members of the Consortium of Civil Society Organizations involved in the implementation of DELPAZ program activities in Manica Province, in collaboration with Helpcode, the consortium leader, and other partner organizations (Community Development Foundation, ProgettoMondo, Eduardo Mondlane University).

The participants are beneficiaries of DELPAZ activities in the three Provinces and their respective districts, including members of producer associations, participants in community training and in vocational training courses, beneficiaries of public infrastructure. Activists from GMPIS coming from several Districts of the Central Region of Mozambique also actively participated, taking on roles such as moderators, facilitators, writers, cooks, and logistical staff.

The position statement serves as a guiding document for the planning of activities carried out under DELPAZ to ensure that DELPAZ reflects the voices, perspectives, and needs of women and men in target communities. It also serves as a testimony to the importance of collective practices in strengthening the role of women at the local level.

Objectives and Methodology of the Solidarity Camp

The objective of the first DELPAZ Solidarity Camp in Manica was to create conditions for the voices and stories of DELPAZ women from Manica, Tete, and Sofala to be shared and heard. Through dialogue, the participants aimed to develop a statement that would serve as an advocacy tool to ensure that the needs of DELPAZ women are properly considered, allowing women to build concrete solutions for peace, social inclusion, and economic empowerment based on solidarity and community recognition.

The camp is a collective practice of solidarity, inclusion, and diversity. It promotes the activation of women as local actors, builds their leadership, increases their participation and voice in local decision-making processes, and addresses and dismantles everyday discriminatory practices while advocating for their rights. The methodology of the solidarity camps contributes to peace, security, and socioeconomic recovery by increasing knowledge that can lead to concrete actions. It is an innovative model managed by and for women in the community, based on effective and low-cost solidarity principles. The camps are organized through self-organization of women, aiming to create awareness of inclusion and support for women and girls within communities, involving men in reflecting and sharing their views on camp themes and supporting gender equality initiatives ("He for She").

To ensure the inclusion of everyone, the camp uses feminist community-based methods that focus on a transformative approach, dialogues in local languages to create empathy and boost self-esteem, and safe spaces (such as the women's campfire held on the night of November 20) with educational and self-help debates.

The camp included both plenary sessions and group work, guided by the following questions:

- What were the consequences of the conflict in the lives of women and girls?
- What are the consequences of climate change in the lives of women and girls?
- What is the current situation of human rights, especially women's rights?
- What practical solutions can be found? (focus on economic and social empowerment)
- How does economic and social empowerment contribute to peace?
- How can we ensure that practical measures of economic and social empowerment reach everyone without creating further divisions or inequalities?

These questions were discussed in 5 thematic groups:

- Armed conflicts;
- Human rights;
- Climate change;
- Gender and the Resolution 1325;
- Peacebuilding^{iv}.

Each group had a facilitator and co-facilitator, while the men's group had a facilitator only, and all groups had a person in charge for taking notes.

Issues discussed in different groups

In the first group, focused on *armed conflicts*, three types of consequences that most affected women were identified:

Psychological consequences

- Due to physical injuries or unpleasant emotional experiences, women were traumatized during the conflict, living in hiding and fearing capture. They lived isolated from each other and in fear, with some women and girls being sexually assaulted. However, with the help of empowerment training and workshops, women are now learning to share and overcome their traumas;
- Women's needs were not considered: even when pregnant, they were forced to go to combat, carrying weapons, which led to mental distress, premature births, and, in some cases, the loss of babies;
- Many deaths occurred, directly affecting families; sometimes, information about the loss of a family member arrived late, leaving women in the dark for a long time.

Material consequences

- Due to armed conflict, people were forced to flee to other locations, abandoning their homes, fields, and all material possessions, leaving their native villages. This resulted in many women losing their belongings and land.

Social consequences

- The caregiving role of women and girls was exploited during the conflict when women were taken to carry war materials, leaving daughters to care for the family;
- After the DDR (Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration) process, many former combatants had the right to social reintegration, but women who, in various ways, participated in the conflict were excluded from the process, and their right to reintegration was not recognized;
- After the war, women's and girls' access to education became even worse than before: priority was given to men in accessing education, with women left to do domestic work and eventually giving up the training process.

In the second group, about human rights, the following rights that women would like to be fully enforced - and that, on the contrary, were negatively affected by the conflict - were mentioned:

- The right to life;
- The right to identity and name;
- The right to freedom of expression;
- The right to health;
- The right to education;
- The right to land (DUAT);
- The right to gender equality;
- The right to live a life free from gender-based violence.

In the absence of the application of these rights, there are consequences for everyone - women and men: fear of expression, perception of not having a recognized identity, no space to build housing or cultivate, unable to write and read, no opportunity to make informed choices for oneself, etc.

In the third group, related to *climate change*, the following problematic factors were identified, which directly affect women's lives and increase the risk of social exclusion:

- Lack of rain creates problems with seeds rotting in the soil and the appearance of weeds;
- On the other hand, when there is flooding or excessive rainfall, diseases and pests appear and crops are devastated, leaving farmers at a loss as to how to reuse the seeds for the following season;
- With the loss of crops, also due to the abandonment of the fields, the products on the markets become more expensive; but it is the buyers or middlemen who are always in the most advantageous position because they try to impose prices on the farmers;
- The challenges in agricultural production end up being another incentive for early marriages, due to the lack of sustainability in the families' economic activities.

In the fourth group, on *Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security*, it was mentioned that:

- When the men who were beneficiaries of the DDR process returned to their villages, some wives were scorned and ignored by their husbands, and some were forced to go "looking" for another younger woman for their husbands, who had returned with some money, making the situation of the first wives even worse;
- On the other hand, many women who started marital relations with combatants were told that the relation would end once they returned to their community of origin, and were therefore abandoned;
- Many women were neither informed nor involved in the DDR process, and only their husbands benefited directly.

In the fifth group, on *peacebuilding*, it was discussed that:

- Peace is the engine of local development for the consolidation of a country, but we need to be aware that peace can be destroyed by a lack of economic empowerment;
- Unity starts from the home to the community, and building it requires dialogue between key players such as institutions, civil society and religious and community leaders;
- There is a need to keep the promises made during the dialogue between the government, civil society and religious and community leaders;
- There must be freedom of expression in order to build peace, and women must be involved and have the space to speak and express their opinions;
- Given the influence exerted in the community by community and religious leaders, it is essential to involve them in mediating conflicts and building effective peace.

Solutions

From the consequences raised in the sub-themes discussed, the women and men debated and agreed on the following solutions:

In response to the consequences *for recovery and social integration after armed conflicts*, the Solidarity Camp proposed:

- Forming associations and cooperatives;
- Promotion of revolving credit (savings), based on the empowerment experience of many women already active in savings and *xitique* groups;
- More in-depth knowledge of best market and commercialisation practices;
- Identification of the main barriers and opportunities for women's financial inclusion;
- Promoting forms of "digital" economic empowerment: for example, through the telephone, women producers can share photos of their products and buyers can appreciate and choose what they need and request the quantity they want; payment can be made through digital mobile wallets;
- Identification of strategies for agricultural innovation and diversification of the products to be marketed;
- Involvement of women in the decision-making process in the communities;
- Replication of the topics covered in the Camps in order to reach everyone, including through community radio stations;
- Organising visits to the communities in coordination with the population, starting with the *secretarios de bairros*, so that the presence of new visitors doesn't provoke mistrust and misinformation and doesn't lead to further conflict.

Regarding *human rights*, the proposals include:

- Empowering women and ensuring that they know the mechanisms for reporting cases of human rights violations (early marriages, cases of violence, land theft, etc.) to the authorities;
- Women who know about human rights should pass on this information to other women, giving talks in the communities together with community leaders, religious leaders and other influential people within the community;

To deal with *climate change* in a sustainable and lasting way, the camp participants put forward the following proposals:

- Create water reservoirs for irrigation;
- Sow seeds at the right time;
- Avoiding unnecessary products, such as chemicals that negatively affect the soil;
- Produce at the right time in the lowlands, avoiding the rainy season to prevent flooding;
- Make infusions of leaves and ashes to combat weeds;
- Manure the land with animal excrement;
- Use mulching;
- Avoiding uncontrolled burning by organising talks in the communities on agricultural techniques that protect the environment;
- Planting trees and combating deforestation;
- Promote mechanisms (e.g. through agricultural co-operatives) that allow agricultural producers to negotiate more advantageous prices with intermediaries and buyers, avoiding being compromised.

Regarding the implementation of *Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security*, it is necessary to:

- Continue to hold solidarity camps and thematic workshops, and community dialogues;
- Share Resolution 1325 through community radios;

- Increase the number and participation of women in community structures to facilitate or allow women to speak openly in the communities, empowering them to build their leadership capacity.

The solutions proposed for *Peacebuilding* are very much focused on economic empowerment and access to basic rights:

- Strengthening agricultural production, animal husbandry and commercialisation, because when people are occupied, they never think of taking up arms;
- Making sustainable and local use of existing natural resources such as water, forests and minerals in order to exploit and generate income so as to retain the population focused on work and not on conflict;
- Promote training in handicrafts, such as carpentry, dressmaking and beekeeping;
- Ensuring access to health care for all with first aid centres, health centers, raising awareness, promoting interventions in the water and sanitation sector);
- Hold regular community meetings to discuss relevant issues in an inclusive way, and ensure that there is good communication, avoiding asymmetries in access to information.

In the area of *economic and social empowerment*, the proposals made are:

- Promoting access to forms of individual or family income generation that are sustainable and allow people to have money, for example by creating opportunities for small businesses;
- Carrying out project activities with precise and clear objectives, without weakening the economic activities already underway and ensuring that everyone has access to the same opportunities;
- Teach others without discriminating anyone, aware that "we are all capable", regardless of gender or age or background;
- Involve women in all activities and decision-making processes at community level;
- Create job opportunities and access to land and resources for women and girls;
- Promote gender equality through the inclusion of women in key sectors of activity, whether financial, commercial, industrial, technological, etc;
- Ensure the continuity of women's camps.

The groups also discussed the best *strategies for working* in the communities to be considered for DELPAZ:

- Communities want peace, not war, because war means poverty. All the key actors need to negotiate well for a lasting peace, because this has a positive impact on the lives of communities, families, women and men;
- When working in agriculture, it is important not only to focus on commercialisation, but also on improving the nutrition of families;

- Within the family, there must be teamwork between men and women in order to add value in agricultural production (economic component), but also in decision-making (social component): men must therefore change their behaviour and contribute to household chores, sharing tasks with their wives, so that they always work together;
- The women and men who took part in the solidarity camp should increase awareness, as mentors, among the members of their communities on these issues in order to live in peace, in collaboration with community leaders;
- DELPAZ women and men should work to ensure the sustainability and continuity of the actions that are promoted within the framework of the project, so as not to end everything when the project ends. For example, in agricultural activities, it is important to have own resources to continue and to train local technicians who can provide assistance whenever necessary;
- DELPAZ has already shown that through its ongoing activities, women and men are being empowered. Women who used to do nothing are now involved in activities of their own: it is necessary to continue with this approach and activities, also with events such as the Solidarity Camps in each District, so that more people in the communities are reached.

Finally, the different provincial delegations shared their hopes and ideas about achieving peace and security for all:

DELPAZ in Manica

- There must be dialogue between the parties, who must sit down and seek solutions for peace;
- Awareness needs to be raised, which can change people's behaviour for the better;
- Maintaining vigilance and security in the province and communities is part of social well-being;
- Looking at the equitable distribution of resources, through the construction of infrastructure in communities, with capital from investments, is important to create job opportunities for youth, and more opportunities for the development of communities and Districts;
- Investing in agricultural production: in order to be secure, communities need to produce to feed themselves and commercialize their production;
- INSS payments must be guaranteed to ensure well-being in the old age, by channelling social discounts into all income-earning activities.

DELPAZ in Tete

- Community dialogues should be promoted to raise awareness about peace and security;

- Communities and their main concerns should always be heard through community dialogues;
- It is necessary to reject violence and help each other;
- Projects such as savings schemes contribute to people's freedom and should be promoted and their continuity guaranteed;
- Scholarships for children to attend school regularly are necessary to avoid school drop-out;
- The inclusion of party and religious groups, including women - regardless of party affiliation, religion, ethnicity, etc - in all decision-making processes and dialogue at community level must be ensured; women must be effectively involved in conflict resolution.

DELPAZ in Sofala

- The unity (national unity) of all peoples and communities must be promoted; ensuring permanent dialogue between institutions, communities and community leaders to promote peace;
- It is necessary to create opportunities for everyone, without discrimination or marginalisation, for example by promoting agriculture and marketing, new production techniques and access to the market, sustainable exploitation of local natural resources (fish, minerals, land, etc);
- Using force should be avoided in the event of any complaint or disquiet by the population in the communities;
- Everyone must respect human rights and the law, starting with local leaders.

We thank everyone for their co-operation in implementing these solutions!

ⁱ DELPAZ districts in Manica Province are: Bárué, Gondola, Guro, Macossa e Tambara.

ⁱⁱ DELPAZ districts in Tete Province are: Dôa, Moatize and Tsangano.

ⁱⁱⁱ DELPAZ districts in Sofala Province are: Chemba, Cheringoma, Chibabava, Gorongosa and Maringué.

^{iv} This group was made up of men only, according to the "He for She" methodology.