



## EVIDENCE BRIEF

### Women and Drought in Southern Mozambique: More Responsibilities, Less Power, and Increased Vulnerabilities (2016)



#### Why is it important?

This study looks at the gendered impact of the 2016 drought in southern Mozambique, specifically the ways in which it affected women and girls. The report is beneficial for those wishing to better inform their policy and programmes targeting women and girls in southern Mozambique, as well as other similar drought-affected areas.

#### Methodology

The study followed a combination of qualitative research techniques that characterize Rapid Assessment Procedures. This approach has been applied to study attitudes, behaviours and the motivation of individuals and collective actors within their social and cultural cosmology. Several data collection methods were used: focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, and structured direct observations. The study was a rapid assessment and it sheds light and gives key indications on the impact of the drought on women and girls. A desk review was conducted to gather relevant information to design the research instruments and protocol.

#### Key findings

##### Increased workloads and responsibilities

Additional activities for women: while prior to the drought they relied on an agrarian economy, they now have to embrace traditional masculine activities, such as harvesting wood. Women now spend 10 to 12 hours collecting water, and girls have to join them. Men continue to migrate towards urban areas, particularly South Africa, and women and children are now also migrating. There is an increased burden on women and grandmothers to provide for the household.

#### Gender-based violence (GBV)

Child marriage may potentially be a mechanism for coping with the drought. There is evidence of young women and girls moving to areas of richer cattle herders and rhino hunters. There is increased marital conflict due to scarcity of resources.

#### Sexual and reproductive health

Transactional sex is a means to access food and financial resources. There are reports of young women migrating to male worker compounds and regions with wealthier men. Women's hygiene has been compromised.

#### Conclusion

Young women have become increasingly exposed to early and unwanted pregnancies, child marriage, and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV. Despite a shift in the division of labour between the sexes, there is an asymmetrical gendered power dynamic that leads to increased exposure to conflict and GBV, including domestic violence and perpetrator authority at home. Exposure to HIV and STIs is on the rise, along with unwanted and early pregnancy and maternal death, due to compromised personal hygiene and the prevalence of transactional sex. Water collecting activities have compromised the education of girls. Women are increasingly exposed to abandonment and widowhood due to the migration of men.

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