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## ***USAID ADVANCING GIRLS' EDUCATION (USAID AGE)***

### **BACKGROUND**

Despite Mozambique's "Education for All" policy, school enrolment and attendance rates for girls remain low. More than half of Mozambican girls drop out of school by the fifth grade, only 1 percent attend college, and illiteracy rates for women are double those of men. The gender gap widens around age 15, suggesting early marriage and increasing household responsibilities as key drivers of dropout. The challenges girls face in staying in and succeeding at school include: low cultural value placed on girls' education and earning power, sexual and physical violence at school by other students and teachers, inadequate feminine hygiene products and services, and harmful traditional practices. Missing school leads girls to fall behind their male peers or to fail to return to school all together. Girls in Mozambique are also at high risk of physical, sexual or emotional violence, even at school. About one-third of 15-year-old girls report having survived physical violence and 46% report having survived domestic, sexual, or emotional violence from their partners. Girls are often attacked on the way to or from school. Sexual abuse in schools is committed both by students and teachers, often in exchange for grades.

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

In partnership with the Government of Mozambique, USAID AGE focuses on empowering adolescent girls and promoting girls' school attendance in Zambezia and Nampula communities with low female school enrollment. It will also expand girls' safe access to quality education and improve learning outcomes by educating learners about issues like malnutrition, menstrual hygiene management, and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases. The program provides training and materials to teachers and school principals to support skills and behaviors that improve learning outcomes and increase the transition to the next grade level. Activities will also establish youth clubs focused on ensuring that girls stay in school and are safe from violence and reinforce the importance of girl's education with community outreach. The activity aims to empower girls and their families to succeed in school and graduate and end violence against girls with the support of Mozambique's education, health, and legal systems and protection services. AGE will equip learners with key literacy, numeracy, social, and life skills to eliminate violence against girls and young women, including gender-based and sexual violence, early marriages and early pregnancies. The activity focuses on services, systems, and community to empower girls and their families to succeed in school and graduate and end violence against girls. Through schools, religious leaders, and community awareness, AGE engages parents, teachers, and leaders in discussions on the protection and empowerment of girls and enforcement of gender-sensitive policies and practices that promote learning and increase girls' access to health and sanitation services. Lastly, the activity aims to change perceptions of the roles that girls play in their families, school, society, and the economy.

### **EXPECTED RESULTS AND IMPACTS**

The program expects to achieve the following results for youth, women, and girls between the ages of 10-19:

- Decreased student absenteeism and school dropout rates for youth, women, and girls;

- More parents and community members identify barriers to girls learning and advocate for education for girls and other social rights;
- Higher 7th grade retention rate and improved grades for girls in 782 primary and 42 secondary schools;
- Teachers using gender-responsive teaching methods to improve literacy, numeracy, and overall teaching quality and implementing safety interventions for girls;
- Community health workers providing family planning information, referrals, and or other health services;
- More interventions providing gender-based violence services, health, legal, psychosocial counseling, shelters and hotlines; and
- More girls and boys gaining access to basic sanitation service and trained in sexual and reproductive health rights and personal hygiene.

<p><b>IMPLEMENTING PARTNER:</b> Civil Society Capacity Building Center (CESC) sub-partners: N'weti, Kukumbi, UATAF-AFC, World Vision</p>	<p><b>GOALS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased access to school for girls 10-19 and increased community support for girl's education.</li> <li>● Improved girls' retention, and performance in upper primary and secondary schools.</li> <li>● Increased girls' access to key social services such as health and Water and sanitation hygiene.</li> <li>● Increased safety of girls at school and in the household.</li> </ul>	<p><b>LIFE OF ACTIVITY:</b> April 2022 - April 2027</p>
<p><b>GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS:</b> Nampla and Zambezia</p>		<p><b>USAID FUNDING:</b> \$10.67 million</p>
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