

Final Evaluation

Project “Dumisha Amani Zanzibar - Strengthening Community Peace Mechanisms in Zanzibar”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Authors: Bernardo Venturi and Hashim Pondeza – Agency for Peacebuilding (AP)

This report presents and discusses the findings from the final external evaluation of the "Dumisha Amani Zanzibar - Strengthening Community Peace Mechanisms in Zanzibar" project, which has been implemented by Search for Common Ground (Search) in partnership with the Foundation for Civil Society (FCS) with financial support from the European Union (EU). The overall focus of the evaluation has been on four criteria agreed with Search and partners: relevance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Data collection and analysis were carried out by the Agency for Peacebuilding (AP) with the support of Search's Tanzania team in October and November 2022. This study used a mixed approach that combined qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. This rapid response, 15-month-long project supported alternative peacebuilding mechanisms at the community levels to de-escalate and peacefully resolve conflicts in Zanzibar, including both Pemba and Unguja islands.

Overall, the project's activities fully reached the expected results contributing to preventing violent conflict in Zanzibar. This result was possible because the project activities fully addressed the identified needs of the target participants. It also involved relevant stakeholders in its activities. Chiefly, the project has ensured gender balance, social inclusion and also the participation of people with disabilities. In particular, the inclusion of people with disability represents a step forward compared to similar projects led by Search in Tanzania in the past. At the same time, following a recommendation in the project baseline, the Search and FCS deployment of a similar number of activities in both Pemba and Unguja. Particularly relevant was also the active participation of shehas in different activities. The participation of shehas represented a value added both for the dialogue among different stakeholders and for the implementation of conflict transformation mechanisms.

Despite the fact that concerns for the future remain in place, especially on elections-related matters, the project contributed to the reduction of local community conflicts as well as strengthening the peace process. From the data collected, it emerged that the project has strengthened and increased the chain of collaboration and mutual understanding between government representatives and other key stakeholders in addressing social disputes and other forms of conflict. The community survey shows that a large part of the population (80%) engages in dialogue or collaboration with people from another group. The improvement from the baseline (59%) data is notable.

The project participants also shared a significant number of positive narratives and stories of mediation and dialogue, in particular in Pemba. Furthermore, the project had a significant effect in transforming mutual negative perspectives among the involved groups. This is also due to improved skills through training on peaceful conflict resolution, a key project activity. These narratives are also supported by the fact that 85% (90% men, 78% women) of the stakeholders use conflict transformation or similar strategies, compared to 51% in the baseline (53% men and 47% women).

The activities have not only effectively delivered the project outputs, but they have also generated outcomes and contributed to tangible impact. One of the main areas of impact is represented by the increased institutional legitimacy of some actors. The information gathered shows a rather clear increase in this legitimacy especially due to dialogue among different stakeholders and the overcoming of many mutual negative perceptions. A clear example is represented by shehas: the wide involvement of shehas in the project helped to establish direct relations and to create more institutional legitimacy in their role of bridging between citizens and government. Political parties represent a second significant example. The project was effective in gradually bringing political parties across dividing lines into the same room and in dialogue on concrete issues. This ability to cross dividing lines was also confirmed by the fact that in the survey 98% of targeted community members and government stakeholders declared to see value in collaboration to address issues emerging during the electoral period.

Another focus of the project was on media. Journalists played an important role and were fully involved in the activities. Pemba confirmed an appetite for conflict transformation, also in terms of educational products and the Micheweni community radio in Pemba was mentioned throughout KIIs and FGDs by local journalists. As a limitation, the media campaign resonated less among the project participants and was sporadically mentioned among the most relevant activities. From the monitoring report, the result reached by the media campaign appears solid, but the connections with other project activities were more limited.

Finally, in terms of sustainability, the evaluation found that the majority of the changes achieved are sustainable and some conflict transformation mechanisms such as dialogue platforms will last. Many participants highlighted how the acquired skills will remain with them and they will continue to apply them in the future. Channels of communication among different stakeholders and mechanisms of conflict transformations represent the second area in which sustainability resonated, despite the fact that doubts related to the upcoming electoral period and to the unpredictable behaviour of the politicians were also present.

Based on these findings and analysis, further action should be based on the following recommendations:

- Enlarge the spectrum of stakeholders involved in the projects, especially justice and security actors.
- Shehas' commitment determined positive results and Search should continue to involve them.
- Establish a follow-up mechanism with the granted CSOs.
- Start working specifically on avoiding electoral-related conflicts.
- Involve more local facilitators.
- Revise and simplify the reimbursement and payment methods.
- Redefine the media strategy.
- Continue to clarify internal roles and avoid duplications.