

MOZAMBIQUE News reports & clippings

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This is a personal project by Dr Joseph Hanlon, with no outside funding, and is thus irregular as time allows.

J Hanlon's new book "Moçambique recolonizado através da corrupção"

free on <https://bit.ly/MozRecol> (Portuguese only)

In this issue

+ Can Chapo take Trump's health money?

+ Warnings by Standard Bank on gas

Will the IMF allow Chapo to take Trump's health \$\$s?

"USAID's closure placed millions of lives at risk, studies show. Donald Trump's new program requires minerals and data as a price of aid. In Mozambique, clinics now face hard choices," reports Bloomberg in 29 May articles and videos. Donald Trump closed USAID on 24 January 2024, saying "it's been run by a bunch of radical lunatics". Total aid to Mozambique from the United States was abruptly cut in half, forcing major reductions to HIV, malaria, and tuberculosis treatments, as well as research, surveillance, and child health. The Bloomberg video was partly filmed in the Matola II health clinic. Twenty community workers who ran the local clinic lost their jobs.

Mozambique and the US government signed a memorandum of understanding on 15 December 2025 for a new 5-year \$1.8 billion programme. Tommy Pigott, Principal Deputy Spokesperson at the US embassy in Maputo, said that the MoU is conditional on [Mozambique increasing health spending by 30%](#). This is just when the IMF is demanding savage government spending cuts. Mozambique desperately needs the money, but if it follows the IMF demands, there will be no US health funding. The MoU apparently also has the same conditions as all new "America First" health agreements, that give the US unrestricted and unconditional access of health data and access to critical minerals.

The US suddenly on 11 December refused to sign an MoU with Zambia until terms are set for ["collaboration in the mining sector and clear business sector reforms"](#) giving more access to US companies. Caleb Orr, Department of State official in charge of energy and business development, travelled to Zambia, met with the President and announced that economic cooperation supersedes and is a pre-requisite for health funding. Secretary Orr said "we want to leverage US assistance to bring about reforms that will unleash business investment that enhances US access to critical supply chains." Zambia rejected the US deal on 4 May.

Ghana said "no" on 28 April. Both said they would not allow unrestricted access to its citizen health data by US biomedical companies and researchers, with no commitment that there would be any benefits to Ghanaians and Zambians. In December 2025 a Kenyan court accepted an appeal by 50 civil society organisations and blocked the MoU because of concerns about Kenyan's personal medical records.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/videos/2026-05-29/the-high-price-of-america-first-aid-deals-video> (free video). Bloomberg has a paywall but one article is free on the *Financial Post*.
<https://financialpost.com/pmnbusiness/pmnbusiness/trumps-health-aid-overhaul-faces-a-critical-test-in-mozambique>

Zimbabwe confirmed on 25 February that it had rejected the MoU. Secretary of Information and government spokesperson Nick Mangwana said the arrangement was "asymmetrical". "Zimbabwe was being asked to share its biological resources and data over an extended period, with no corresponding guarantee of access to any medical innovations - such as vaccines, diagnostics, or treatments - that might result from that shared data."

"In essence, our nation would provide the raw materials for scientific discovery without any assurance that the end products would be accessible to our people should a future health crisis emerge. The United States, meanwhile, was not offering reciprocal sharing of its own epidemiological data with our health authorities." He also said the US's withdrawal from the World Health Organization (WHO) and its pursuit of bilateral health agreements were upending structures already set up through the global health agency. (*Herald*, 25 Feb)

"It's a recolonisation of our health system," said Ayoade Alakija, a Nigerian ministerial health envoy and co-chair of the African Vaccine Delivery Alliance, of the \$5bn MoU Nigeria signed with Washington in December. "They can create vaccines and diagnostic tools with our data and we get scraps off the table." (*Financial Times*, 22 May)

So far, it appears that none of the MoU signatories have received funding. The sudden cut to aid included the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). There was a huge outcry and PEPFAR funding was resumed, now managed by the State Department. On 14 April the US and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS agreed to cooperate to distribute the important new vaccine Lenacapavir, a twice yearly injection which prevents contracting a sexually transmitted HIV-1 infection. Initial distribution in April went to nine African countries including Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Zambia which refused to sign an MoU, and South Africa which is banned from receiving US help.

There have been two important articles in the prestigious medical journal *The Lancet*. One in July 2025, which included two Mozambique-based authors, said: "We estimate that over the past two decades, USAID-funded programmes have helped prevent more than 91 million deaths globally, including 30 million deaths among children. Projections suggest that ongoing deep funding cuts - combined with the potential dismantling of the agency - could result in more than 14 million additional deaths by 2030." For many low and middle income countries "the resulting shock would be similar in scale to a global pandemic or a major armed conflict".

[https://www.thelancet.com/article/S0140-6736\(25\)01186-9/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/article/S0140-6736(25)01186-9/fulltext)

Exactly this happened in Mozambique.

A second article in *the Lancet* in April this year stresses that "under the America First Global Health Strategy, health cooperation is explicitly subordinated to geopolitical calculation In a leverage-based order, health ministries negotiating in isolation are structurally disadvantaged. They control programmes but not bargaining power." The article cites the sudden cut of HIV support to South Africa because of President Trump's bizarre allegation of white genocide. "Under a leverage-driven order, sustainability must be understood as risk management" - can essential services survive abrupt funding interruption without collapse?

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X\(26\)00016-1/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X(26)00016-1/fulltext)

Another important article is by Think Global Health: [Tracking the "America First" Bilateral Health Agreements](#)

Discreet warnings by Standard Bank on gas

Standard Bank is the banker for Mozambique's gas. But buried in a traditionally positive study issued Tuesday were three warnings. First, the use of potential huge jumps in GDP (gross domestic product) promotes exaggerated hopes of a bonanza. Second, the direct gains from gas are small, and 80% of gains depend on how the Mozambique government invests its gas revenue in non-gas areas. Third, it asks if a sovereign wealth fund is appropriate for a very poor country like Mozambique that needs investment now.

The very detailed macroeconomic study is of Rovuma LNG, one of three Cabo Delgado LNG projects. It's "operator" ExxonMobil will pipe the natural gas on-shore to the Afungi peninsula for liquefaction. <https://www.standardbank.co.mz/Rovuma-LNG-Estudo-Macroeconomico-Inicial-Atualizado>

High GDP increase paints a false picture

Gas companies ExxonMobil and ENI promise huge increases in GDP, but that is not a gain for Mozambique. GDP (Gross Domestic Product) is the total market value of all finished goods and services produced within a country. The value of the LNG is part of GDP, but much of that value is exported - gas company profits and dividends, and the largely foreign costs of construction and operation including imported materials and salaries and dividends that are earned by foreigners working in Mozambique but receiving in their country of origin. The ExxonMobil consortium must be repaid the \$29.7 billion construction cost of RLNG.

The much more important number is GNI (Gross National Income) which is the total income received by the country from its residents and businesses. Because the number of Mozambican skilled workers is small, and local inputs and supplies are limited, the actual GNI increase is less than half of the GDP increase. GDP is cited to create the mirage of a bonanza.

Gains come from local investment

Direct and indirect employment generated by the gas project itself will be small compared to the employment created by correct investment of gas revenue. According to the model used for the Standard Bank study, Oil&Gas directly contributes only 20% to GNI gain. The other 80% of the GNI gains will be in the non-Oil&Gas sector, notably agriculture (30%), manufacturing (9%) and trade & accommodation (9%).

The local gain is highly dependent on the effectiveness of government of Mozambique's use of its gas income (taxes, royalties, and dividends). Some will be spent on social services, but most must be allocated to productive sectors and investment that will "translate resource revenues into broad-based economic growth."

Does a sovereign wealth fund delay development?

For a rich country like Norway, putting money aside in a sovereign wealth fund (SWF) for future generations when the oil runs out is a sensible idea. But is it sensible for a poor country like Mozambique in desperate need of investment now?

Mozambique has been pushed to set up an SWF. Standard Bank says "57% of the government of Mozambique take will be allocated to investments in Mozambique and 43 % to the SWF domiciled outside of Mozambique (with all income from the SWF remaining outside of Mozambique and being credited to the balance of the SWF, outside of Mozambique)."

The first RLNG gas will be produced in 2030, with significant revenue only from 2036, a decade from now. It would seem to make more sense to delay the start of the SWF until 2040.

There are two reasons why the World Bank and international community has been pushing Mozambique to create an SWF. The first is that the government of Armando Guebuza took the \$2 billion secret debt at high cost to Mozambique including tens of millions of dollars in corruption.

Also, the IMF and other agencies argue that Frelimo is misusing its existing development funds to benefit oligarchs. So the SWF keeps gas revenues out of the hands of the Frelimo elite.

The second reason is almost the opposite. As part of the recolonisation agenda, key parts of the international community want to take half of the government's gas revenues and put them into New York banks and investment funds, locked away for 30 years - to support the US economy and not Mozambique.

So Standard Bank is really raising a fraught question: can the Frelimo elite be convinced to spend less on patronage and more on serious investment, or is it really better to lock that money in a foreign bank account?

NOTE: The Cabo Delgado gas field is divided into three undersea sectors, each controlled by a consortium which includes the Mozambique government's ENH (Empresa Nacional de Hidrocarbonetos).

Area 1 is the closest to the coast and is called Mozambique LNG; the operator is TotalEnergies (France) and gas is piped to the Afungi peninsula to be turned into LNG. Construction work has resumed there.

Area 4 is further offshore and ExxonMobil (USA) and ENI (Italy) are the largest consortium members. Area 4 is then divided into two halves; the zone closer to the coast is operated by ExxonMobil as RLNG and is the subject of the Standard Bank study above, with gas piped to Afungi. Construction might start next year.

The eastern half of Area 4 is too deep for a pipe to shore, and ENI is operator for the Floating LNG operation; one floating platform is already exporting gas.

Other news

TotalEnergies cannot prove \$2bn of its claim. TotalEnergies in October 2025 demanded to be paid \$4.5 billion for its costs during the force majeure closure after the Palma attack; the claim has risen to \$5bn. Mozambique contracted Bayphase, a British oil and gas consultant that specialises in analysing and verifying project cost estimates. Bayphase reported last month that TotalEnergies could not supply documentation or other proof for \$2 bn of the claim. Negotiations are underway. Whatever amount is finally accepted gets added to the project cost that must be paid off in the first years, probably delaying income to Mozambique by two years.

An IMF mission will be in Maputo 8-14 June.

UK High Commissioner says the unspeakable. Since 2022, the UK has spent \$25 million in support of people affected by the Cabo Delgado conflict, and last week High Commissioner Helen Lewis visited Cabo Delgado to meet government, UN and NGO leaders. She said "The United Kingdom believes that security solutions alone will not end this conflict. A comprehensive and integrated response, led by the Government of Mozambique, is essential to address the root causes of the conflict and achieve lasting peace. We recognise that sustainable change requires going beyond humanitarian assistance and investing in responsible governance, investment, and active private sector engagement." (Mozambique High Commission in Maputo, 1 June) For many people she said the obvious. But the Mozambican government had regularly told diplomats that the war is due to foreign intervention and they cannot say there are local causes. This was an "emperor's new clothes" moment. *Congratulations.*

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Elections

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To subscribe or unsubscribe: <https://bit.ly/MozBul-sub> Past election newsletters are on <https://bit.ly/CIP-EI>
Election study collaboration: We have detailed election data from 1999 through 2014 and are inviting scholars to use this data collaboratively. <http://bit.ly/MozEIData>

Important external links

Books by Joseph Hanlon can be downloaded, free: <https://bit.ly/HanlonBooks>

Flood, cyclone and weather: weather <https://www.inam.gov.mz/>

rainfall https://www.inam.gov.mz/images/DAPT_Previsoes/Manha/Previsao_Manha.pdf

Cyclone trackers, <https://bit.ly/Reunion-cyclone>, <https://www.metoc.navy.mil/jtwc/jtwc.html>

(which uses z time which is UCT - Coordinated Universal Time) and <https://www.cyclocane.com/>

Two LSE working papers - World Bank questions its Mozambique 'success' where oligarchs brought high inequality, poverty and corruption - <https://bit.ly/Moz-LSE-208c> and **How the IMF and World Bank caused a resource curse and civil war in Mozambique** - <https://bit.ly/Moz-LSE-209>

Minimum wage & exchange rate charts, tables 1996-2022 <https://bit.ly/MozMinWage2022>

Previous editions of this newsletter: <https://bit.ly/MozNews2023> and <https://bit.ly/MozNews2022>

My Mozambique archive: <http://bit.ly/Mozamb>

Cabo Delgado

Cabo Ligado weekly report on civil war <https://www.cabolidado.com/>

Archive with reports, detailed maps, and census data <https://bit.ly/Moz-CDg>

Special reports on the war

Evolution of the war: global vs local. 27 Feb 2020 <http://bit.ly/CDelgadoOrigins>

Religion is shaping Cabo Delgado civil war. 30 April 2020 <https://bit.ly/CDelgadoReligion>

Intensifying argument over roots of war. 28 June 2020 <https://bit.ly/Moz-492>

Are the drums of war silencing any hope of peace? 26 July 2020 <http://bit.ly/Moz-496>

A history of violence presages the insurgency. 13 August 2020 <http://bit.ly/Moz-498>

Military & economic intervention. 3 Sept 2020 <https://bit.ly/CDelgadoIntervene>

Cabo-Delgado-Free-for-all. 20 Apr 2022. <http://bit.ly/Moz-593>

Mozambique heroin transit trade

English - LSE - 2018 - <http://bit.ly/Moz-heroin>

Portuguese - CIP- 2018 - <http://bit.ly/HeroinaPT>

2001 first article- *Metical* - English and Portuguese <https://bit.ly/MozHeroin2001>

Gas for development?

Gas_for_development_or_just_for_money?_2015 bit.ly/MozGasEng

Gás_para_desenvolvimento_ou_apenas_dinheiro?_2015 bit.ly/MozGasPt

Background reading

Special reports

Social protection report - 2017 Mozambique - <http://bit.ly/MozSocPro>

Special report on four poverty surveys: bit.ly/MozPoverty

\$2bn secret debt - in English

Secret debt trial (Aug-Oct 2021) press reports <https://bit.ly/Moz-secret-debt>

Kroll - Full report on \$2bn debt - <http://bit.ly/Kroll-Moz>

Kroll report summary - <http://bit.ly/Kroll-sum>

Key points of Mozambique parliament report - Nov 2016 - <http://bit.ly/MozAR-debt-En>

Following the donor-designed path to Mozambique's \$2.2 bn debt - <http://bit.ly/3WQ-hanlon>

In Portuguese:

Parliamentary Report on the Secret Debt (complete) bit.ly/MozAR-debt

2018 Constitution - <http://bit.ly/2KF588T>

Twelve books by Joseph Hanlon can be downloaded, free: <https://bit.ly/HanlonBooks>

"Moçambique recolonizado através da corrupção" (2025) <https://bit.ly/MozRecol> (Portuguese only)

Zimbabwe takes back its land (2013) <https://bit.ly/Zim-takes-land>

Bangladesh confronts climate change (2016)

Chickens and beer: A recipe for agricultural growth in Mozambique (2014) is on <https://bit.ly/Chickens-Beer>

Há Mais Bicicletas – mas há desenvolvimento? (2008)

Civil War Civil Peace (2006): <https://bit.ly/Civil-War-Civil-Peace>
Moçambique e as grandes cheias de 2000 (2001)
Mozambique and the Great Flood of 2000 (2001)
Paz Sem Benefício: Como o FMI Bloqueia a Reconstrução (1997)
Peace Without Profit: How the IMF Blocks Rebuilding (1996) <https://bit.ly/Peace-wo-Profit>
Mozambique: Who Calls the Shots (1991) <https://bit.ly/Shots-Moz>
Mozambique: The Revolution Under Fire (1984)

These are still available for sale:

Galinhas e cerveja: uma receita para o crescimento (2014) (free in English)
Just Give Money to the Poor: The Development Revolution from the Global South (2010)
Do bicycles equal development in Mozambique? (2008) (free in Portuguese)
Beggar Your Neighbours: Apartheid Power in Southern Africa (1986)

Mozambique media websites, English:

Club of Mozambique (free): <http://clubofmozambique.com/>
Zitamar (paywall): <http://zitamar.com/>

Mozambique media websites, Portuguese (all with partial paywall):

Notícias: www.jornalnoticias.co.mz
O País: www.opais.co.mz
@Verdade: <http://www.verdade.co.mz>
Carta de Moçambique <https://cartamz.com>

Mozambique think tanks and pressure groups, Portuguese:

Centro de Integridade Pública: CIP <https://cipmoz.org/>
Observatório do Meio Rural: OMR <https://omrmz.org/>
Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Económicos: IESE <https://www.iese.ac.mz/>
Centro Para Democracia e Desenvolvimento CDD <https://cddmoz.org/> (some CDD in English)
Also CDD now controls Fórum de Monitoria do Orçamento - FMO (main debt group) <http://www.fmo.org.mz>
and RMDDH - Rede Moçambicana dos Defensores dos Direitos Humanos (a human rights group).
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