The evidence on Mozambique tends to focus on diagnosing the issue of child marriage (prevalence and trends, drivers, and consequences) rather than responding to it (interventions to prevent and respond to the issue of child marriage). Overall, the research is more formative in nature, highlighting a need for greater attention to implementation studies and impact evaluations.

A strong focus of the evidence is on the closely connected issues of adolescent pregnancy and child marriage, with adolescent pregnancy identified as both a common driver and consequences of child marriage in Mozambique.

Less is known on what works to prevent child marriage and respond to the needs of married girls and boys in Mozambique. Of the intervention literature in Mozambique, most draws from the ‘Yes, I do’ programme conducted in rural Mozambique.

There is a need for greater understanding of the needs of married girls and how to best respond to them. Interventions addressing the needs of married girls can provide rare insight into the marital relationship, including power dynamics which influence key health
The Yes, I Do programme designed to keep girls in school

End-line evaluation: The study highlighted teenage pregnancy as a common driver of child marriage as well as a consequence of it among both in-school and out-of-school youth in Mozambique. The end-line found that, over time, community stakeholders became more active in preventing child marriage and teenage pregnancy, and sexual and reproductive health services and information were perceived to be improved and more accessible.

Kok et al 2021: This study explores how young people exercise agency in rural Mozambique in relation to sex, relationships and marriage.

Additional studies on adolescent pregnancy and child marriage in Mozambique

Pires et al 2017: Assessed the causes and consequences of early pregnancy and child marriage, and their prevalence in and around Nampula province.

Packer 2020: This study conducted in rural Mozambique explored how adolescent girls’ future aspirations relate to marriage and childbearing.

We know from other contexts that cash and asset transfer programmes work to delay marriage (for example, the Berhane Hewan programme in Ethiopia). It is critical to focus on exploring economic interventions to delay marriage in Mozambique and to draw from existing evidence from other contexts. UNICEF is supporting the Acompanhamento Familiar (family support programme), which is being implemented in Nampula province. Rigorous documentation of the implementation and impact of programmes such as this will be essential for cross-country learning and adaptation.

and social behaviours and outcomes such as use of family planning, mental health, safety, etc. Addressing violence experienced by married girls is another area of research and programmatic neglect.

There are critical gaps in our knowledge on economic livelihood and normative approaches to address child marriage in Mozambique. Poverty and inequitable gender norms are central drivers of child marriage, yet interventions addressing norms and/or the economic livelihoods of girls and their families are few in number.

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