

# Mozambique News Agency

## AIM Reports

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## HIV prevalence in Mozambique rises

Despite the many millions of dollars spent on preventing the spread of HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, the disease is continuing to advance in Mozambique. According to the survey on Indicators of Immunisation, Malaria and HIV/AIDS (IMASIDA), published on 8 May by the Ministry of Health, the prevalence of HIV in 2015 among people aged between 15 and 49 was 13.2 per cent. The previous estimate, from 2009, was a prevalence rate among the same age group of 11.5 per cent.

By referring to margins of error in the two surveys, it can be claimed that the difference is not “statistically significant”. However, one thing is certain – the expected decline in HIV prevalence has not materialised.

IMASIDA is based on interviews of 5,283 men and 7,749 women in 7,169 households. The interviews were held between June and December 2015.

The survey shows that women are more vulnerable to HIV infection than men. The HIV prevalence rate among women is 15.4 per cent, while among men it is only 10.1 per cent.

In line with previous surveys, IMASIDA found many more infections in cities than in the countryside. The HIV prevalence rate was 16.8 per cent in Mozambican urban areas, and 11 per cent in rural areas.

The worst hit provinces are in the south of the country. Around a quarter of the adult population of Gaza province is HIV-positive. Some comfort can be taken from the slight decline in the prevalence rate from 25.1 per cent in 2009 to 24.4 per cent in 2015.

But in Maputo province, the prevalence has increased, from 19.8 to 22.9 per cent, while in Maputo city it is much the same (16.8 per cent in 2009 and 16.9 per cent in 2015). Alarming, Inhambane province has registered an enormous jump in the prevalence rate, from 8.6 to 14.1 per cent.

Sofala is the worst hit province in the centre of the country, where HIV prevalence has risen from 15.5 to 16.3 per cent. Zambezia is not far behind, with a prevalence rate that has risen from 12.6 to 15.1 per cent.

But the other two central provinces have seen a decline in their prevalence rates. In Manica, the rate has fallen from 15.3 to 13.5 per cent, and in Tete from seven to 5.2 per cent.

The north remains the region least affected by the epidemic – but even here there is an alarming rise in HIV infections. In Cabo Delgado, the prevalence rate jumped from 9.4 per cent in 2009 to 13.8 per cent in 2015. In Niassa, the increase was from 3.7 to 7.8 per cent, while in Nampula the rate rose from 4.6 to 5.7 per cent.

The worst hit age group is people between 35 and 39 years old. In this group, 17.5 per cent of the men and 23.4 per cent of the women are HIV positive.

Among those aged between 14 and 24, 6.9 per cent are infected – in this age group, women are three times more likely than men to be infected. The prevalence rate is 9.8 per cent among women and 3.2 per cent among men.

IMASIDA found that knowledge of how HIV is transmitted and how it can be prevented had declined since 2009. Only 56 per cent of men and 47 per cent of women interviewed in 2015 knew that it is possible to reduce the risk of HIV infection by using condoms, and by limiting sexual relations to one, non-infected partner.

### Cahora Bassa forced to reduce production

A shortage of water in the reservoir behind the Cahora Bassa dam on the Zambezi is obliging the dam operating company, HCB, to reduce the amount of power it generates.

HCB has five giant turbines, each of which can produce 415 megawatts, giving the dam a maximum generating capacity of 2,075 megawatts. But in December 2016, the height of the reservoir was 312 metres above sea level, the lowest it had been for the last 26 years. The level of the reservoir rose over the next three months, but not enough to make the HCB management feel comfortable about the situation.

Reported in the Maputo daily “Noticias” on 4 May, the HCB chairperson, Pedro Couto, announced that from June to December this year, HCB will switch off two of the five turbines. “HCB will have to use only the amount of water that flows into the reservoir in the next few months”, said Couto. The three active turbines, he added, will produce about 1,200 megawatts.

The low level of the Cahora Bassa lake is the result of several years of poor rainfall, and particularly of the 2016 southern African drought.

The shortfall in the dam’s electricity generation in 2016 was about 2.8 per cent. HCB had planned to produce 17,163,499 megawatt-hours, but the final figure was only 16,688,600 megawatt hours.

HCB sold 8,828,118 megawatt-hours to its largest client, the South African electricity company, Eskom. 687,506 megawatt-hours were sold to Zimbabwe, and most of the rest was for Mozambique’s domestic consumption.

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This is a condensed version of the AIM daily news service – for details contact pfauvet@live.com

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## Natural resources belong to all – President Nyusi

Mozambique's natural resources belong to all Mozambicans, and not merely to the residents of those places where they are found, declared President Filipe Nyusi on 6 May.

Speaking at a rally in the Namanhumbir administrative post, in the northern province of Cabo Delgado, President Nyusi criticised those who try to prevent Mozambican or foreign companies from exploiting resources on the grounds that "they belong to us".

He said that natural resources are assets of all Mozambicans and constitute factors of national unity. The exploitation of those resources by licensed companies, he added, allows the State to raise income from taxation, and that money is then used to develop the country, and for the welfare of the entire Mozambican people.

Namanhumbir contains the largest known deposit of rubies in the world, which are exploited by the company Montepuez Ruby Mining Ltd, which is 75 per cent owned by the British company Gemfields.

"Some people say 'the rubies belong to us'", remarked President Nyusi. By that same logic the electricity generated by the Cahora Bassa dam on the Zambezi River, should belong to the people living in the dam town of Songo, "but everywhere we go, people say they want Cahora Bassa power. Even here they want Cahora Bassa power – but they say 'the rubies belong to us!'. What is this?"

Before Montepuez Ruby Mining started work, the rubies were looted by illegal, artisanal miners, many of them foreigners, who paid no taxes. There have been violent confrontations between the police and the illegal miners, but the chairperson of the company, Samora Machel Junior told reporters that the problem has been brought under control.

"We must know how to coexist with companies", said President Nyusi. "Recently I visited Botswana and there they exploit diamonds. There is coexistence, there is no conflict between the companies and the population".

In Cabo Delgado, last year mining companies paid the equivalent of US\$43 million in taxes, which was money the government used to develop the country.

## Power sales increase by 78 per cent

The publicly-owned electricity company, EDM, increased its sales of power by about 78 per cent in 2016. According to EDM, in 2016 the company's sales of electricity amounted to 29.122 billion meticaïs (US\$460 million), compared with 16.348 billion meticaïs in 2015.

In terms of gigawatt-hours, the increase was four per cent, rising from 3,907 gigawatt hours in 2015 to 4,054 in 2016.

There was a 79 per cent increase in the amount EDM exported to neighbouring countries, from 862 gigawatt-hours in 2015, to 1,541 gigawatt hours last year.

These figures were presented in a report given to an EDM assessment meeting held in Maputo on 12-13 April. Gains made in sales of power were to some extent cancelled out by a rise in the costs of acquiring and producing electricity, which rose from 9.8 billion meticaïs in 2015 to 22.5 billion last year – an increase of almost 130 per cent.

The company also faced losses from the theft of electricity and vandalism of equipment. It put the cost of vandalism at 24 million meticaïs last year.

EDM hopes to connect 200,000 new clients to the national grid this year. The company says it will deal directly with the manufacturers of electricity meters, and believes this will reduce the cost of acquiring the meters by 50 per cent.

## Prime Minister calls on firms to pay their debts

The companies Proindicus and MAM (Mozambique Asset Management) must do all in their power to restructure their business so that they can comply with their debt servicing obligations, declared Prime Minister Carlos Agostinho do Rosario on 3 May.

Speaking on the second day of a question and answer session between the government and the parliamentary deputies, Rosario insisted that the primary responsibility for the debts lies with the two companies, and not with the government, which is merely the guarantor. It was up to Proindicus and MAM to renegotiate with their creditors.

Proindicus, MAM and a third company, Ematum, took out loans for over two billion dollars in 2013-14 from European banks (mainly Credit Suisse and VTB of Russia). The previous government, headed by President Armando Guebuza, illicitly guaranteed the loans.

As a parliamentary commission of inquiry found last year, the government guarantees violated the Mozambican Constitution (since only parliament, which was kept completely in the dark, can approve such debts). The guarantees also violated the ceilings on guarantees stipulated in the 2013 and 2014 budget laws.

Unlike the bonds issued under the Ematum loan, which were converted into government bonds in 2016, the Proindicus and MAM loans have not been converted into sovereign debt, contrary to claims by opposition parties, which read the inclusion of the guarantees in the General State Account (CGE) as somehow "legalizing" the debts.

"Conversion or not into sovereign debt will follow the norms included in the respective contracts after the possibilities of payment by the companies have been exhausted and in conformity with what may be determined by the Attorney-General's Office", said Rosario.

"That is why we say that registering the two guarantees in the CGE does not change their nature, but merely registers them in the public accounts", stressed the Prime Minister.

Although they should have figured in the 2013 and 2014 accounts, the guarantees were still being hidden from the public in those last years of the Guebuza government, and so they were included late, in the 2015 CGE.

The 2015 CGE was debated and approved by the Assembly in April, with the opposition parties Renamo and the Mozambique Democratic Movement (MDM) claiming that it was unconstitutional even to mention them in the CGE. Both parties now say they are lodging a request with the Constitutional Council, the highest body in matters of constitutional law, to declare the 2015 CGE unconstitutional.

Rosario told the Assembly that the CGE ought to reflect all transactions that could produce any alteration in state assets. The only reason the government included the two guarantees in the CGE, he said, was "to allow control and monitoring by the Administrative Tribunal, bearing in mind that all acts that affect the public finances should be registered in the General State Account".

This registration, he added, in no way affected the international independent audit into Ematum, Proindicus and MAM that is currently under way. In the light of the audit report (due to be delivered by the company Kroll Associates by 12 May) the Attorney-General's Office "must decide on subsequent actions that it may deem necessary in defence of the interests of the state".

In other words, in Rosario's view, the CGE changes nothing, and transactions or guarantees that were illicit at the time do not suddenly become legal merely because they are registered in the CGE.

## Paralysed buses back on the roads

Following an angry visit by President Filipe Nyusi in April to the Maputo municipal bus company, EMTPM, some of the buses that were off the roads simply for lack of new tyres or batteries are now circulating again.

The company has received technical support from Mozambique Railways (CFM), and from the Port of Maputo. Staff from these two institutions identified 30 EMTPM buses that only needed tyres and batteries. CFM and the port guaranteed 180 tyres and 60 batteries.

When Transport Minister Carlos Mesquita visited EMTPM on 5 May, he was told that 19 of the paralysed buses would be back on the roads as from 8 May. This would bring the number of EMTPM operational buses up from 42 to 61.

Mesquita blamed the problems on “failure to undertake programmed and preventive maintenance, which calls into question the sustainability of the fleet”.

“The company must bank on training its workers, particularly in the technical area, to avoid situations of this sort from recurring”, he said. In EMTPM, a bus battery has a useful life of just six months, “but we know that batteries last for years if maintenance is done in a regular and preventive way”, Mesquita added.

As Mesquita was leaving the premises after a meeting with the EMTPM Board of Directors, he found there were several more buses off the roads waiting to be refuelled.

Mesquita was irritated that buses should be stopped for want of diesel and pointed out that there were passengers at the bus stops trying to go home.

## Police refuse to confirm identity of corpses

The general command of the police on 9 May insisted it does not know the identity of the two bodies exhumed from a shallow grave in Moamba district, 70 kilometres north-west of Maputo, on 5 May – even though they were positively identified by relatives.

There is little doubt the bodies belong to Jose Coutinho and Alfredo Muchanga, two convicted prisoners, who were seized from police custody in central Maputo on 24 April.

At the time it was thought that fellow criminals had rescued them from the police – but the grim discovery in Moamba shows that, far from being released, they were taken to be executed and hence silenced.

They were seized in Maputo at around midday on 24 April. Moamba residents told the television station STV that they had heard gunshots at around three that afternoon. Thus it seems that the men were driven immediately to their deaths.

No serious attempt was made to hide the bodies. They were dumped in a shallow grave and Moamba residents exhumed them. STV showed a photograph of Coutinho to one of those who dug up the bodies and he confirmed that Coutinho was indeed one of the men in the grave.

At the morgue in Maputo Central Hospital relatives identified both Coutinho and Muchanga. Yet despite this evidence, the spokesperson for the police General Command, Inacio Dina, claimed that the police still do not know the identity of the bodies. Dina said the police are waiting for a forensic report which should identify the bodies and indicate the cause of death. “The identification of a body by the police depends on the examination by forensic doctors”, he said. “A report is produced which contains the identity of the individuals and the probable cause of death. This is the report the police are waiting for”.

Coutinho was suspected of involvement in the murder last year of senior Maputo prosecutor Marcelino Vilanculos, who

was gunned down outside his home in Matola city on 11 April 2016. Vilanculos was handling a number of high-profile, sensitive cases, including the wave of kidnappings of business people of Asian origin.

Another suspect in this case, Abdul Tembe, who allegedly drove the car used by the death squad, escaped from the Maputo top security prison under mysterious circumstances last October. Tembe’s escape led to the arrests of the director of the prison, Castigo Machaieie, and eight other prison staff.

The lawyers for a third suspect, Edith d’Compta da Camara Cylindo, submitted a writ of habeas corpus earlier this year – but, according to a report in the Maputo daily “Noticias”, the Supreme Court turned the request down.

The Vilanculos murder seems deeply entwined with the spate of kidnappings of business people that hit Mozambican cities as from 2011. The Attorney-General’s Office (PGR) has accused the fugitive Momad Assife Abdul Satar (“Nini”), one of the men convicted of the murder of top investigative journalist Carlos Cardoso in 2000, of “forming a criminal organization with the purpose of kidnapping citizens, and later demand large sums of ransom money”.

The PGR argues that Satar formed “a criminal alliance” with Coutinho and Cylindo which ran the kidnapping ring.

## Government to relaunch sport hunting

The Mozambican government announced on 4 May that it intends to relaunch sport hunting to build what it describes as a world-class sustainable tourism industry.

Speaking at the Annual Meeting of Sport Hunting in Maputo, the Minister of Land, Environment and Rural Development, Celso Correia, argued that legal hunting is one of the greatest factors supporting conservation in the country.

“Today sport hunting is the largest source of revenue for the conservation areas in Mozambique”, said Correia. “If we look at the areas where sport hunting exists, they are areas with better conservation of wildlife, and where there is an increase in the number of animals”.

Occupying an area of 1,500 square kilometres in the central province of Sofala, the Marromeu conservation area was established as a special reserve for buffaloes, and this species has thrived there in recent years.

Correia said he is well aware of the problems involved in relaunching sport hunting on a larger scale. Some of the problems facing legal hunting are lack of protection against organised crime, such as poaching, and the encroachment of illegal mining on conservation areas.

The tourism operators also complain of difficulties in importing guns and ammunition for hunting, the degradation of wildlife habitats, notably by the uncontrolled bush fires that are a feature of slash and burn agriculture, and an increase in human settlements in hunting areas.

The operators urged the government to take urgent measures to solve these problems, claiming that the lack of a favourable environment for sport hunting is a serious obstacle to a substantial increase in the number of tourists visiting Mozambique.

In fact, hunters are a small minority of the tourists visiting Mozambique. Over the last ten years, the number of foreign hunters visiting Mozambique has averaged 427 a year. But they bring in substantial sums of foreign exchange. Last year, Mozambique collected US\$622,000 in revenue from the issuing of hunting licences, the provision of guides for hunting safaris, the sale of permits to kill particular species, and the issuing of certificates under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

## Troop withdrawal from Gorongosa complete by end of June

Government forces will withdraw from 28 positions in the central district of Gorongosa by the end of June, according to Afonso Dhlakama, leader of the opposition party Renamo, cited in an interview published in the independent weekly "Savana".

President Filipe Nyusi announced the start of this withdrawal on 27 April. Dhlakama claimed this was a quid pro quo for the truce he declared in late December, and which has now been extended for an indefinite period.

"With this indefinite truce, the President of the Republic would commit to removing all the positions of the government forces that are around the Gorongosa region", said Dhlakama. "They would leave in phases. We shall draw up a calendar, but with a final date so that by the end of the first half of this year, all the troops have been withdrawn from the Gorongosa region".

He claimed the government positions had surrounded the Gorongosa mountain range. Dhlakama is now living in a Renamo base in the Gorongosa foothills. Since the war was now over, he added, the military concentration in Gorongosa no longer made any sense.

Only police positions would remain, Dhlakama said, in such places as Gorongosa town and the Vanduzi and Canda administrative posts.

One of the positions from which the Mozambican armed forces (FADM) is withdrawing is the former Renamo military base of Mazembe. Dhlakama said this will be converted into a joint centre for government and Renamo officers to supervise the truce in the central provinces.

"They will have transport so that, in the event of violations in these provinces, or complaints from the communities, they would have to go and investigate", the Renamo leader said.

A second centre is being established in Maputo. According to Dhlakama, "this will have the mission of receiving reports from Gorongosa, and from various provinces". The Maputo centre would analyse these reports and pass them onto to the working group between the government and Renamo that is dealing with military matters.

Dhlakama recognised that "this process is very complicated and it's slow", but he thought it better to go slowly "and try and purge once and for all the problems of the previous agreements". He believed a final agreement could be reached by the end of 2017.

He thought it crucial that he and the President should reach agreements in principle before the details were discussed in the government/Renamo working groups.

"The groups are negotiating the points that the two of us already know about", he said. "If a Renamo group sits down with a government group and negotiates something that I don't agree with, and that the President of the Republic doesn't agree with, then there's no success".

Dhlakama hoped that the agreement he eventually signs with President Nyusi "will be the last agreement and that Mozambicans may rest once and for all".

## Increased profits for rail and port company

Mozambique's publicly-owned port and rail company, CFM, made a net profit of 2.29 billion meticaais (US\$35 million) in 2016, according to a report given on 27 April by the company chairperson, Miguel Matabel, to a meeting of CFM's Council of Directors.

This was an increase of 21 per cent on the results of 1.89 billion meticaais achieved in 2015, despite what Matabel described as the unfavourable international situation that CFM had faced in 2016. Operational profits were 4.6 billion meticaais in 2016, which compares with 2.5 billion in 2015.

Those port terminals directly managed by CFM handled 6.2 million tonnes of cargo during the year, which was 18 per cent of the total cargo handled in Mozambican ports (most of the terminals are run by private sector companies who have leased them).

But there was a reduction in goods traffic moving along CFM's railway lines. The lines carried only 2.2 million tonnes in 2016, much less than the 3.9 million tonnes carried the previous year.

The company's results were also hard hit "by unfavourable exchange rate variations", said Matabel, referring to last year's sharp depreciation of the metical against the US dollar and the South African rand, which are the main currencies used in the transactions between CFM and its clients.

"The challenges ahead of us are enormous", said Matabel, "but, as the rail workers that we are, we are used to overcoming them, and we are relying on the willingness of our workforce".

The Permanent Secretary in the Transport Ministry, Pedro Ingles, told the meeting "for us CFM is strategic and makes a difference to our national economy. Its performance is reflected in the balance of payments, and hence its challenges and expectations are reflected in the daily lives of Mozambicans.

"CFM should reinvent itself to meet our expectations and those of a demanding and highly competitive market", Ingles urged. "This means we must have the boldness necessary to awaken our creative initiative so that we can show that we are capable of going shoulder to shoulder with our most direct competitors".

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