INSTITUTE FOR DEFENSE ANALYSES

Interpreting Group Tactics and the Role of the Government's Response in the Crisis in Cabo Delgado: Lessons for Combatting Violent Extremism in Africa

Dorina A. Bekoe
Stephanie M. Burchard
Sarah A. Daly
Austin C. Swift

March 2020

Approved for public release;
distribution is unlimited.

IDA Document NS D-13155

Log: H 20-000131

INSTITUTE FOR DEFENSE ANALYSES
4850 Mark Center Drive
Alexandria, Virginia 22311-1882

The Institute for Defense Analyses is a nonprofit corporation that operates three Federally Funded Research and Development Centers. Its mission is to answer the most challenging U.S. security and science policy questions with objective analysis, leveraging extraordinary scientific, technical, and analytic expertise.

About This Publication

This work was conducted under the IDA Systems and Analyses Center Central Research Program, project C550Q, "Countering Violent Extremism in Burkina Faso." The views, opinions, and findings should not be construed as representing the official position of either the Department of Defense or the sponsoring organization.

For More Information

Stephanie M. Burchard, Project Leader
sburchar@ida.org, 703-845-2526

Richard B. Porterfield, Director, Intelligence Analyses Division
rporterf@ida.org, 703-578-2812

Copyright Notice

© 2020 Institute for Defense Analyses
4850 Mark Center Drive, Alexandria, Virginia 22311-1882 • (703) 845-2000.

This material may be reproduced by or for the U.S. Government pursuant to the copyright license under the clause at DFARS 252.227-7013 (Feb. 2014).

Rigorous Analysis | Trusted Expertise | Service to the Nation

1. Introduction

Until recently, Mozambique was regarded as a successful example of post-conflict peace building. After the signing of the 1992 peace agreement that ended the country's 15-year civil war, Mozambique has remained relatively free from internal violence. Over the years, Mozambique National Resistance (RENAMO) and Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO), the two combatants of the civil war, have renegotiated their working relationship and the terms of engagement, which have occasionally resulted in a tense political standoff and outbreaks of sporadic violence. Despite these mostly political skirmishes, the threat of renewed civil war and accompanying violence against civilians has remained relatively low. In the past few years, that prognosis has changed. The emergence of an extremist group in Mozambique's northern province of Cabo Delgado, with a particular penchant for brutal attacks against security officials and ordinary citizens alike, has prompted many to re-examine Mozambique's social and conflict dynamics.

The resurgence of violence in Mozambique emerges ahead of a propitious time for the country. Some analysts project that within 30 years, the Mozambique's reserves of liquid natural gas (LNG) will make it the fourth or fifth largest LNG producer in the world.[1] Moreover, the location of the LNG reserves, in Cabo Delgado, among Mozambique's poorest and most marginalized regions, holds promise of much needed development. For these reasons and more, it is crucial that the government of Mozambique effectively address the unfolding violence in northern Mozambique before the crisis becomes intractable.

Since reports of armed groups attacking state security services and communities in Cabo Delgado began to surface in 2017, a number of researchers have attempted to understand the conflict drivers and motivations for violence. Even as the number of attacks has increased and the degree of brutality has worsened, little information has emerged to answer the pressing questions:

1. Who are the attackers?
2. What are they trying to accomplish?
3. Why did religious extremism take root and manifest violently in Cabo Delgado?
4. Why are the attacks so brutal?
5. How can the government effectively respond?

Our report makes use of on-the-ground interviews with subjects from a variety of sectors and backgrounds, many of whom have direct connections to stakeholders in Cabo Delgado, to help answer these questions. Much like existing analyses,[2] this report is not able to provide specific details on the attackers or their motivations; however, we are able to situate the group's behavior into a larger framework for analysis and illuminate some key aspects of the conflict, including potential motivations for the attacks and the impact of the government's response.

This report is organized into four sections. The first section provides an overview of what is currently known about the origins and drivers of the violent extremist threat in Cabo Delgado, including the evolution of support for Islam the region and an exploration of the local drivers of radicalization. Understanding the context from which this threat has emerged is essential to crafting an appropriate response.

The second section describes the ongoing violence in significant detail and examines the implications of the extremist group's tactics, with a particular emphasis on the brutality of the group's attacks. We believe this is a key contribution of our paper. Because of the dearth of specific information about the group or its origins, a close analysis of what information is known—namely the nature of the group's attacks, its commonly used tactics, and its primary targets—provides us with a way of extrapolating information about what might motivate group members and how the group may be structured. Perhaps one of the more puzzling aspects of the violence in Cabo Delgado, its shear brutality, points to weak group leadership structure and weak links to local communities. Case studies of other extremist groups suggest that those with weaker leadership, with shallow community ties, or operating in environments with many other groups are likelier to employ more brutal tactics.

The third section reviews how the Mozambican government has responded to the threat of violent extremism in the North. Despite the dominant view that the government has responded with overwhelming force against the attackers, we find evidence that the government has attempted a number of different tactics. The challenge for researchers and policymakers, we argue, is understanding why the government has failed in every attempt to stem the tide of violence. More recently, there has been a strengthening link between Russian assistance to the government in Cabo Delgado. The use of external assistance to combat an internal conflict invites an internationalization of the insurgency, which may have consequences that have not yet been fully considered.

Regrettably, Mozambique is one of several nations in Africa currently grappling with violent extremism. The last section compares events in Mozambique with the conflict currently occurring in Burkina Faso. By analyzing the similarities and differences between these two conflicts, we are able to draw out lessons from the patterns and distinctions

among these countries and about the circumstances that allow violent extremism to emerge and spread.

2. Origins and Drivers

Islam has been present in Mozambique since the seventh or eighth century, where it thrived and spread in the Sufi tradition through the late-20th century, primarily in the country's northern region. Today, an estimated 19 percent of Mozambicans are Muslim, while close to 60 percent are Catholic. With the advent of colonialism arrived the first of many divisions among Mozambique's Muslim communities—generated both as a result of colonial policy and as a function of trade and travel within East Africa. These divisions, still present today, are also reflected in the variety of Islamic practices and beliefs found in Mozambique—including of those adherents accused of perpetrating religious violence.[3]

During the colonial period, the Portuguese administration attempted to marginalize the influence of Islam, considering Muslim populations to be a threat to colonial rule.[4] Mozambique's Muslim community was excluded from attaining the elevated status of *assimilado,*[5] or assimilated, in part because Catholicism was seen as the determining characteristic of Portuguese culture and identity. In northern Mozambique, Portugal aligned itself with non-Muslim ethnic groups, specifically favoring the Makua over the Makonde, which deepened long-standing ethno-religious cleavages.[6] Despite Portugal's efforts to contain Islam's spread, conversion to Islam increased rapidly, due in particular to the spread of Sufism, a practice of Sunni Islam rooted in orthodoxy and characterized by mystic ritualism.[7] Wahhabist theology, the Saudi-originated Salafism that emphasizes puritanical adherence to the Quran and objects to less "pure" practices of Sunni Islam, pushed back against Sufism. Wahhabism arrived to Mozambique in the 1960s at the height of the colonial period, and it spread as Mozambicans returned from studies in Tanzania, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Oman, and Iraq, countries where Salafist movements had taken root. Religious leaders from these countries courted Mozambicans by making cultural and religious overtures.[8]

By the 1950s and 1960s, independence movements had been developing across the African continent, including in Mozambique. From 1964 to 1974, Mozambique fought a war of independence against Portuguese rule. Beginning in the late 1960s, Portugal adjusted its stance on Islam and pivoted its support to local Sufis in a bid to blunt their backing of Mozambican independence.[9] Nonetheless, Mozambicans won their independence in 1974.

The new government formed by FRELIMO, which was Marxist-Socialist in nature, sought to secularize the state by banning religious teachings and leaders, considering them

to be “backward.” Islam, in particular, was targeted.[10] In the 1980s, as civil war between FRELIMO and RENAMO erupted, the Mozambican Muslim community suffered yet another division. FRELIMO, having become concerned that Muslims in northern Mozambique were securing support from foreign Muslim-majority nations for RENAMO, subsequently loosened its stance on Islam.[11] The government’s support of the resulting Islamic Council of Mozambique favored Maputo-based elite Muslims, often of south Asian or Middle Eastern descent. The Islamic Congress of Mozambique, a parallel group comprising Africanist and Sufi representatives, also formed around the same time.[12] Thus, despite the fluctuating political fortunes of Muslims through colonial rule, independence, and the civil war, Islam has remained resilient in northern Mozambique.

In 1998, the growing divergence between the different practices of Islam, combined with long-standing tensions between African Muslims in the north and Moorish Muslims in the south, prompted the formation of a more fundamentalist breakaway sect. Two dozen young men severed from the Islamic Council in the north and founded their own organization called Ansar al-Sunna.[13] Ansar al-Sunna agitated for stricter adherence to Sharia law and the rejection of secular education that had been provided by the state since the 2000s. According to one interviewee, concerns surrounding the group’s practices were voiced around the time of its inception, following an incident where a young girl was sent home from school because of her ultra-conservative garb, deemed as an inappropriate religious expression by school administrators. The government delegated the situation’s handling to the Islamic Council.[14]

More recently, the central government in Maputo, confident in the nation’s tradition of tolerant Islam, has rejected the notion that other branches or sects of Islam represented a threat to the status quo and welcomed the financial and religious engagement of foreign nations. In 2008, religious historian S. Von Sicard noted that the Mozambican government engaged in a practice of granting visas and residency to foreign Muslim missionary organizations.[15] This practice has grown since then, with the numbers of Mozambicans embarking on hajj also increasing in the decade since.[16] As a result, students from northern Mozambique have been sent abroad to receive education in prestigious, albeit conservative, schools in Zanzibar, Uganda, Somalia, Kenya, Sudan, and Saudi Arabia. These connections have been slowly changing the character of Mozambique’s Islamic communities over the past two decades.

In the early 2010s, reports from northern Mozambique referred to a subgroup of Muslim adherents, mainly young men with shaved heads wearing turbans and black shorts, entering mosques with weapons and shoes.[17] The group’s disrespect for the sanctity of local mosques is indicative of the group’s view that other practices of Islam are illegitimate, as well as its uninterest in coexisting or cooperating with state-sanctioned Islamic institutions.[18] Scattered reports of violence surfaced as early as 2014 in Nhacole and

Macomia districts, although the first recorded attacks by extremists took place in April 2017.[19]

Locals refer to this group as "al Shabaab," or "the youth," although there is no evidence to suggest that this group is connected to the Somali terror group al Shabaab. They may be a radicalized sub-sect of Ansar al-Sunna, or an entirely different group, but in the absence of official communications from the group, it is difficult to discern its precise affiliation. Nevertheless, the group's preoccupation with religious practice is clear. In addition to Ansar al-Sunna and al Shabaab, the group has more recently been referred to as Ahlu Sunna Wa-Jamo (ASWJ), although there is no documented connection to the Somali terror group with this name. For the purposes of this paper, we will refer to the group as ASWJ.

Three known leaders of ASWJ have referenced and promoted a brand of Islamist extremism popularized by deceased Kenyan cleric Aboud Rogo Mohammed.[20] Rogo is believed to have contributed to the U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998. He allegedly provided support to al-Shabaab in Somalia, for which he was placed on a UN Security Council sanctions list. Rogo was shot and killed in Mombasa in 2012. Recordings of his sermons nevertheless continue to circulate along the Swahili coast and have gained popularity in northern Mozambique. The BBC reported that some of Rogo's followers fled to southern Tanzania before integrating with trafficking enterprises and crossing the porous border into northern Mozambique in 2015.[21] Rogo's highly political, radical teachings condemn the enrichment of elites and corporations at the expense of local populations, and

they are replete with anti-state rhetoric. Given the economic and political situation in northern Mozambique, it is unsurprising that Rogo's sermons have gained traction among aggrieved groups. While ASWJ is predominantly composed of locals from Cabo Delgado, it is believed that a number of members are from other countries in the region, including Tanzania and Somalia.[22]

3. The Resurgence of Violence in Mozambique

In one of the earliest documented cases, ASWJ staged an attack on August 27, 2017, in Mogovolas district police station in Nametil village, Nampula province. A group of attackers, described by witnesses as having “Arab dress,” killed one police officer and stole ammunition and weapons. Two months later on October 5, 30 armed and masked men stormed a police station in Mocímboa da Praia; three police officers and two of the armed assailants were killed.[23] At the time, a spokesperson for the Police General Command was emphatic in saying that there was no indication that the attack could be tied to fundamentalist or terrorist groups.[24]

From October 2017 through October 2018, ASWJ continued attacking various locales in northern Mozambique. At least 37 violent events took place during this time period in 20 different locations in Cabo Delgado.[25] Most were attacks against civilians, but there were a few violent clashes with the Mozambican government.[26]

Early on, officials in the capital, Maputo, were hesitant to acknowledge the threat ultraconservative groups like Ansar al-Sunna posed. The central government overly relied on decentralized efforts by religious community leadership to counter and contain the spread of Islamist extremist ideology. Despite repeated requests for intervention from both the Islamic Council and the Islamic Congress in the early 2010s, the government failed to mobilize any response. It was only in 2017, following initial reports of violent attacks, that police began arresting suspected group members in droves.[27] In October 2018, the government put 189 accused members on trial in Pemba.[28] The police have closed down three mosques founded by the group, which has inflamed hostility toward security forces.[29]

A. Patterns and Trends

From January 2016 to December 2019, Mozambique experienced a total of 703 violent events (see Table 1). Of these, approximately 43 percent occurred in Cabo Delgado (n = 302). Virtually all of these were ASWJ-related attacks; a handful were related to the 2019 election. Fatalities in Cabo Delgado have increased exponentially since 2016, when there was only one recorded fatality due to political violence. In 2017, there were an estimated 33; in 2018 there were 209; and in 2019, more than 689 fatalities were attributed to political violence. From August 2017 until December 2019, 74 percent of all the violence in the province of Cabo Delgado was directed at civilians.[30]

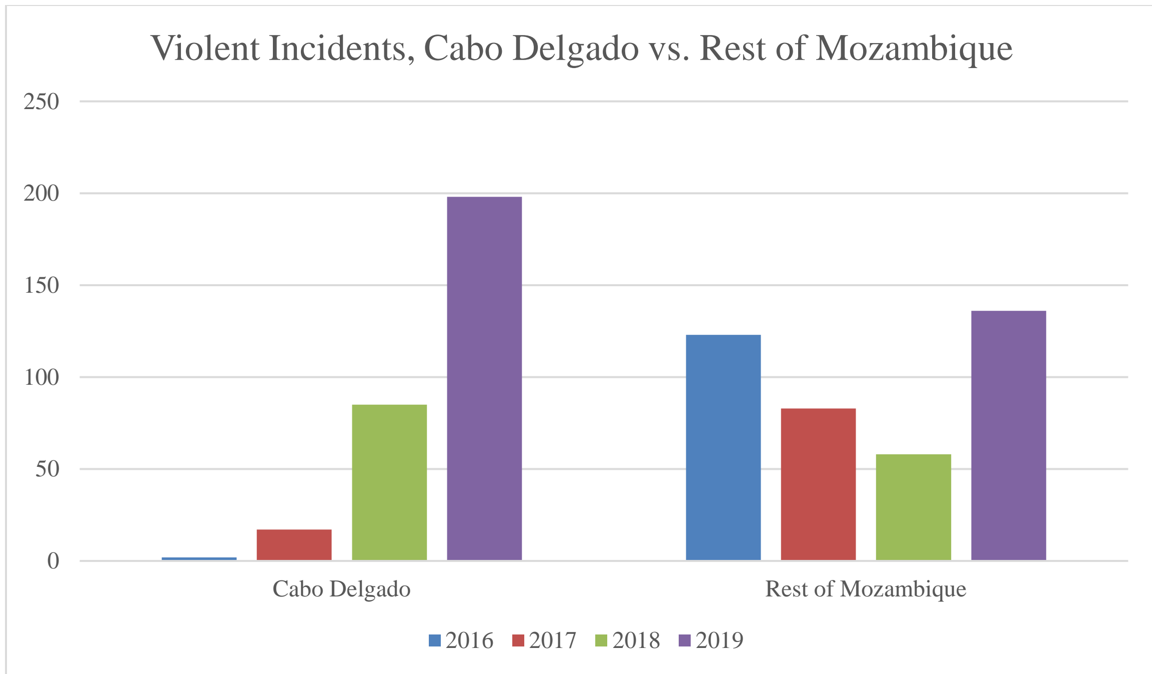

Table 1. "Violent Incidents in Mozambique by Location" by authors. Data from Armed Conflict Location Event Database (ACLED).

There are a few noteworthy trends in the nature of the group's attacks. The group's brutality has been on display since its earliest attacks, which have consistently involved beheadings and arson. ASWJ has targeted government installations and personnel as well as civilians. Several of the earliest attacks attributed to this group in late 2017 included a raid on a police station and ambushes of rapid-response police units; in each instance, the group stole equipment and supplies.[31] In the same period, the group attacked villages around Palma, burning houses in the tens and hundreds, stealing food and livestock, and beheading individuals. By April 2018, the frequency of the group's attacks on villages in the region had increased to about once per week, and sometimes more. In mid-May of 2018, Mozambican security forces began a military campaign against ASWJ, attacking the group's bases near Palma. This government push to counter the group preceded an uptick in ASWJ violence toward civilians, as well as an increase in clashes with security forces in June 2018 (see Table 2 and Table 3).[32] Following only minimal action in August, September, and October, the group regained momentum in November and December of 2018. Since then, its attacks have ebbed and flowed, but are steadily increasing in lethality and frequency, which may signal the group's growth in numbers, in resources, or both.

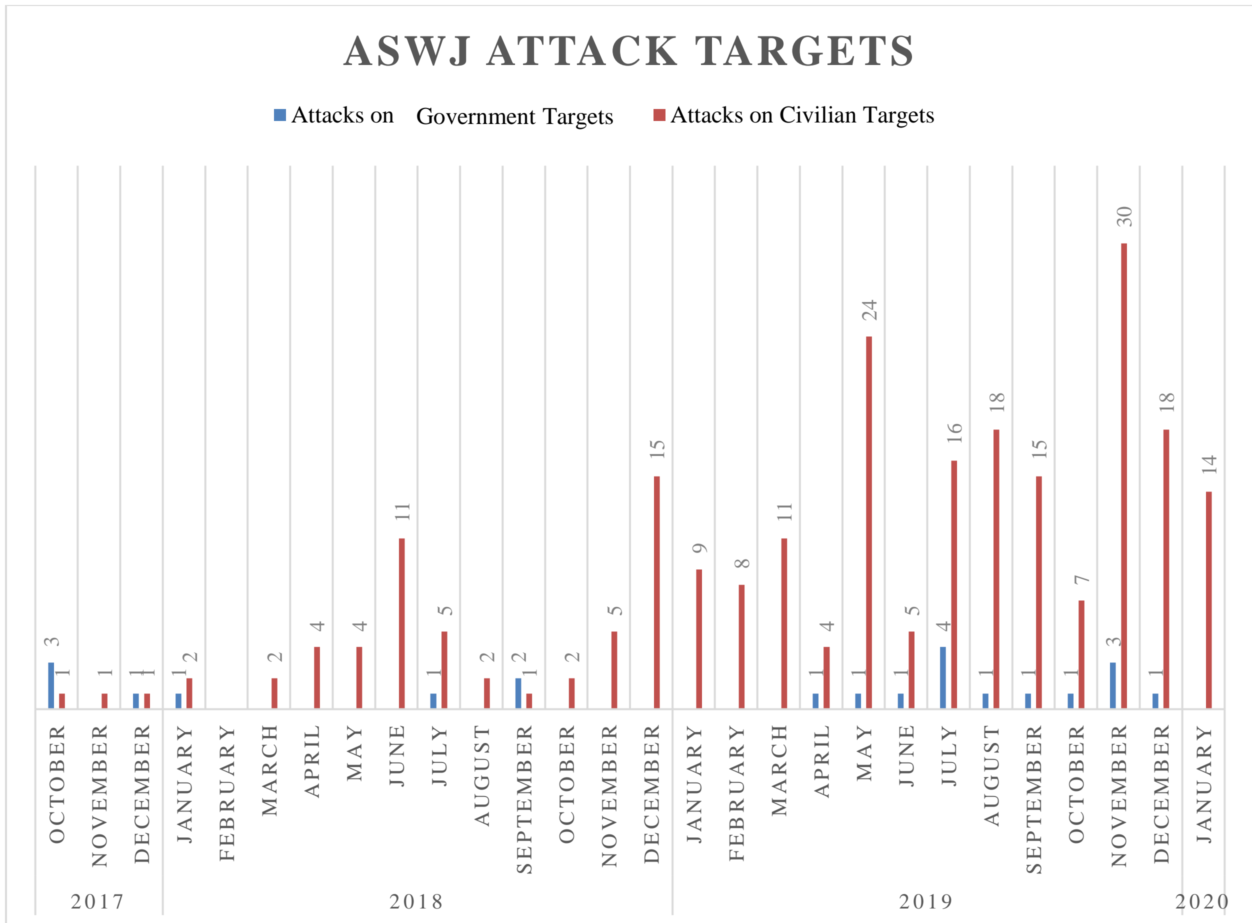

Table 2. "ASWJ Attack Targets" by authors. Data from ACLED.

The group has routinely targeted shops, homes, vehicles, and farmsteads to steal supplies and food; militants have killed shopkeepers, fishermen, and other civilians who did not comply with demands for goods and transportation or were otherwise non-compliant. ASWJ has also kidnapped women, in at least one case to assist in transporting looted goods away from the village.[33] These foraging attacks have not ceased as the group's violence has geographically spread, which could indicate that the group's need for immediate resources, including food, is ongoing. The group's modus operandi since 2017 has been more or less consistent in its targeting of (1) government installations such as hospitals, administrative outposts, and army bases, and (2) villages, where their activities include killing civilians, robbing businesses and homes, destroying property (particularly through arson), and raping and kidnapping women. In addition, suspected ASWJ militants have increasingly terrorized the roadways, particularly between Palma and Mocímboa da Praia. While at least one recorded attack on a passenger minibus occurred in 2018, during 2019 there was a sharp increase in attacks on trucks, minibuses, and even private vehicles, with bursts of heightened activity in January and February, October and November, and

again in late December 2019.[34] These roadside attacks are exceptionally deadly. Although attacks on villages do not always result in fatalities, attacks on trucks and passenger vehicles have frequently resulted in multiple deaths, often beheadings. In addition, the group often steals food or other supplies in these encounters, frequently burning or otherwise destroying the vehicle.

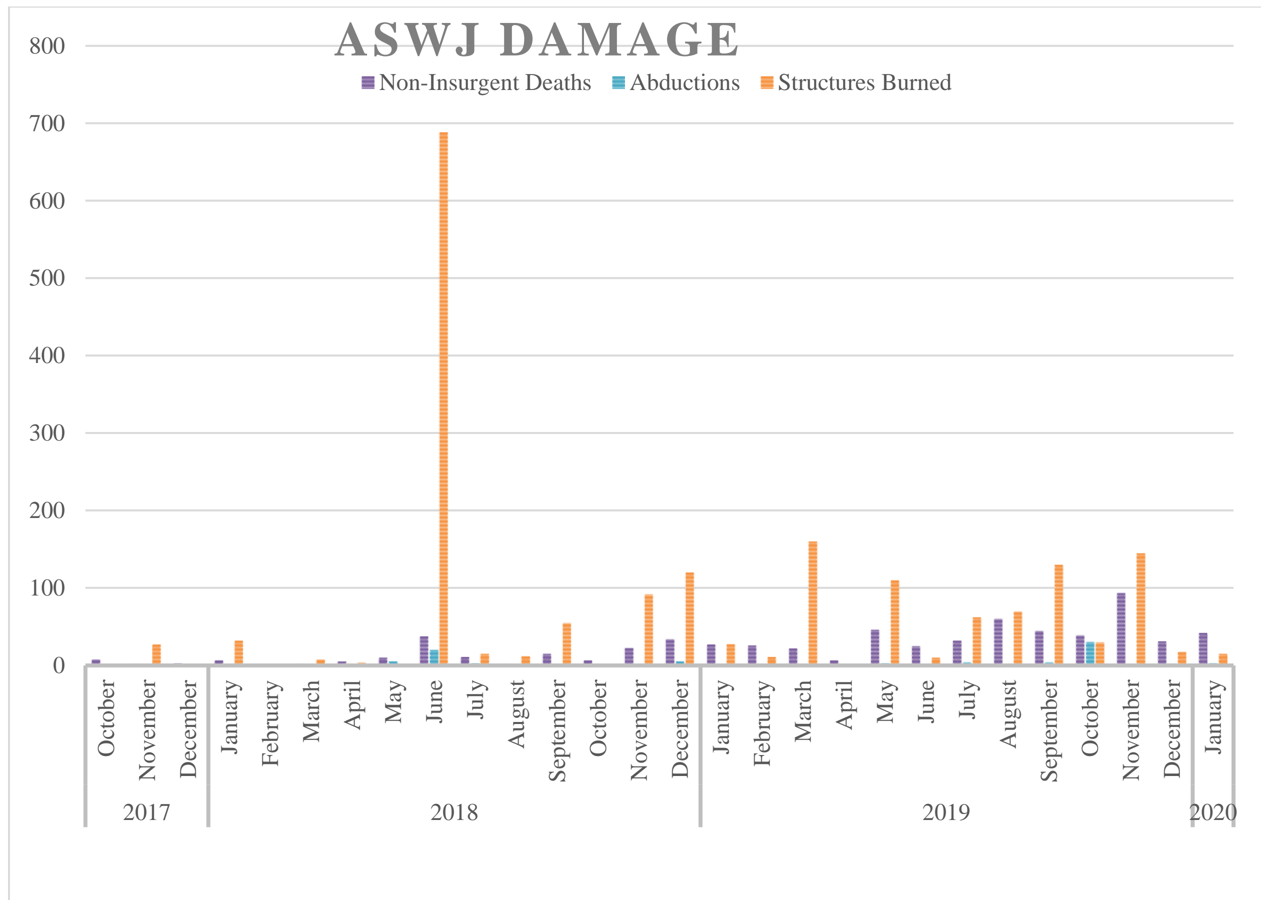

Table 3. "ASWJ Damage" by authors. Data from ACLED.

The data aggregated by ACLED do not provide definitive information about the victims of ASWJ's brutality, but our interviews suggested that in its raids, the group has gained a reputation for singling out specific individuals for execution. One interviewee, who had recently traveled to Cabo Delgado and spoken with locals affected by this violence, reported that the group targets those who collaborated with police or state security forces, spoke out against the group, or otherwise impeded the group. This includes both laypeople and community leaders. Attacks were described as incisive—group members knew who they were looking for and where they could find them.[35] This individualized targeting could in part explain why the group does not always kill inhabitants of the villages

it attacks. In addition to targeting detractors, ASWJ also appears to target teachers. In February, March, and May of 2019, the group killed four teachers in three attacks. There was an additional unconfirmed educator kidnapping, also in May 2019.[36] In all four instances, additional casualties were minimal or nonexistent. ASWJ, in addition to its prolific destruction of domestic structures, has also destroyed two schools, a mosque, and a hospital in Quiterajo in two separate attacks.[37] Given ASWJ's avowed rejection of state institutions and state-sanctioned Islam, it is surprising that the destruction of education and religious facilities appears, so far, unique to Quiterajo.

Over the past six months, there have been more clashes between ASWJ and Mozambican security forces, which is likely a reflection of the government's intensified approach to the situation, as well as the involvement of outside actors, such as Russian private military contractor the Wagner Group. Despite the intervention of the military, ASWJ has not been dissuaded from perpetrating violence on local populations or mounting attacks on military installations.[38] Interestingly, while unconfirmed by independent or official sources, of the seven ASWJ attacks that the Islamic State has claimed, four allegedly involved contact with the Mozambican military or police, and in aggregate they have resulted in an estimated 42 non-insurgent casualties. If substantiated, these claims indicate that Islamic State–linked ASWJ attacks are deadlier and more security-force focused than the group's attacks writ large.[39] Regardless of whether ASWJ has fomented ties with the Islamic State, both the frequency and number of its attacks have steadily increased since 2017 (see Table 4). Attacks are becoming more lethal. In 2018, there was an average of 2.46 fatalities per violent incident. In 2019, this figure increased to 3.48 fatalities per violent incident.

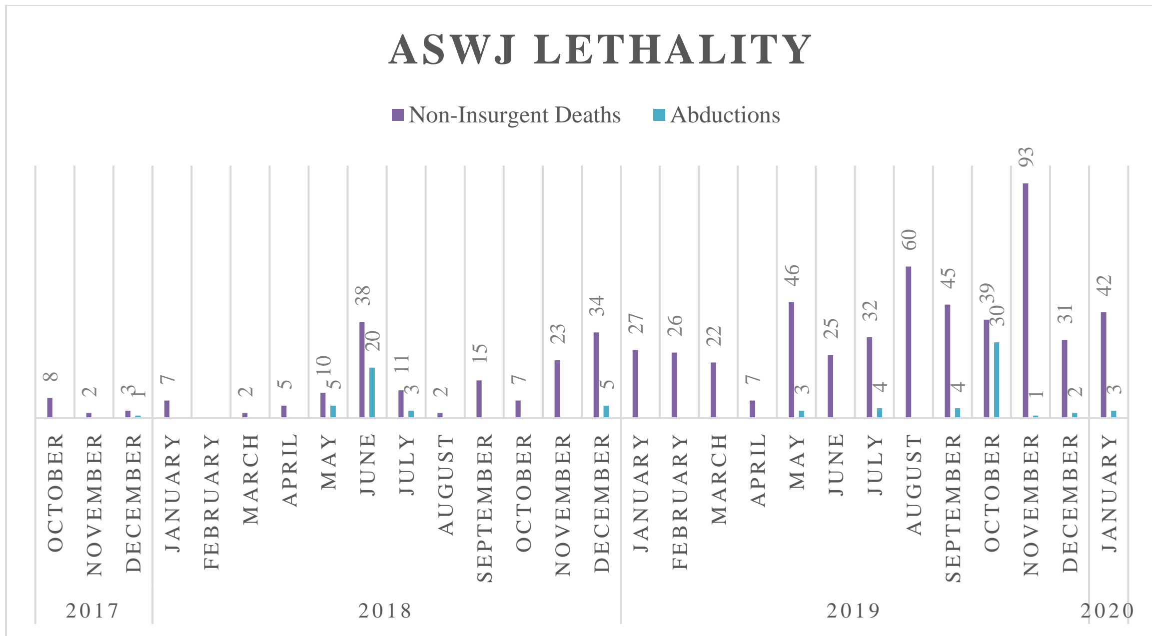

Table 4. "ASWJ Lethality" by authors. Data from ACLED.

In sum, ASWJ is distinguished by the high level of brutality it employs, its failure to take credit for any of the attacks attributed to it, and its silence on its objectives. The perceived lack of information has both stymied government efforts to address the crisis, as well as provided it with an excuse for inaction. For example, government officials question the feasibility of negotiation when the leaders of the group are unknown. Yet a review of other terrorist's groups and modus operandi can shed some light on the organizational state of ASWJ.

B. Analyzing the Tactics of Mozambique's Violent Extremists

1. Absence of Credit Claiming

The complexity of the political and religious situation in northern Mozambique has made it difficult for government officials and stakeholders—both local and international—to draw conclusions about the group, its objectives, and its tactics. ASWJ has remained silent, not offering reasons for its attacks, its high degree of brutality, or its overall objectives. At the tactical level, ASWJ does not claim credit for the violence it inflicts on communities. This leads to a variety of questions about the group, its size, and its organization, but also allows for the proliferation of disinformation within Mozambique and internationally.

Taking credit for acts of terror is surprisingly rare. Indeed, only in 2004, long after the world attributed the September 11, 2001, bombings to al-Qaeda, did Osama Bin Laden

admit to his role in planning the terrorist act. According to the Global Terrorism Database, terrorist groups claim only about 16 percent of all acts of violence attributed to them. Kearns (2019) argues that credit-claiming is less important when the terrorist group faces little or no competition.[40] But when many groups are competing either to signal ideological purity or loyalty, public ownership of violence assumes importance. In the case of Cabo Delgado, the absence of claims may suggest that in fact, only one group is perpetrating the violence. This supports what many of our interviewees suggested: that the extremist group in northern Mozambique is most likely a single group, although one possibly organized into smaller units active in different areas.

In the absence of credit claims or group narratives, disinformation surrounding the group and its motives has flourished. The lack of a unified official narrative contributes to information deficits that have stymied government efforts to address the crisis, as well as provided it with an excuse for inaction. For example, government officials question the feasibility of negotiation when the group leaders are not fully known. The government's lack of transparency surrounding the insurgency has compounded this effect. The government can (and has) alternatively dismissed and described the group as "criminals" or "thugs," diminishing the seriousness of the violence and justifying a slow and limited initial response. In the same way that the absence of official credit claims or communiques has facilitated weak governmental responses to this crisis, ASWJ's silence has also allowed opportunistic external groups, such as ISIS, to claim connections to the group and assert partial responsibility for their attacks. However tenuous this connection may be in reality, their insertion into a situation where rumors abound and confirmed facts are scarce has further complicated efforts to understand and address the threat posed by ASWJ.

2. The Significance of ASWJ's Brutality

ASWJ is a brutal violent extremist organization. Throughout 2017 and 2018, ASWJ carried out violent attacks in which group members stabbed, shot, beat, and beheaded victims. They have looted and destroyed villages, homes, farms, and state security installations, often burning targeted structures to the ground. Although some attacks have been perpetrated by assailants armed with firearms, most of the fatalities are the result of machete attacks. Some speculate this is because machetes are inexpensive and relatively easy to access. One interviewee suggested that the prevalence of machetes may in turn lead to beheadings as the most efficient form of execution by that weapon. But it may also be the case that the brutality of the attacks and the choice of weapon (machete) is deliberate. Mozambique, in general, is believed to have significant weapons caches associated with the country's civil war. One estimate places the number of hidden weapons in Mozambique at anywhere from 24,000 to 81,000. This is in addition to the illicit weapons that are believed to be trafficked throughout East Africa. Thus, it is unclear how difficult it would

be to access firearms in northern Mozambique. Further, many recent attacks have been against security forces, and there are several reports that ASWJ is seizing guns and ammunition as part of these attacks.

ASWJ's introduction of improvised and homemade explosives into the conflict in mid-2019 has sparked concern that the group has secured more advanced materials, expertise, and other resources that it initially lacked. In March 2019, ASWJ reportedly utilized an improvised explosive device in Cabo Delgado, an attack that killed "several soldiers."[41] In May 2019, the group used homemade explosives and guns to ambush a truck in Macomia; this attack resulted in the deaths of 16 people. In the case of the May attack, the presence of three soldiers on board the passenger truck did not deter the assailants. One of ASWJ's single deadliest attacks to date, it raises the question of what could be driving the group's brutality? Is it by design or necessity?

3. Outbidding: Weak Organization and Competition

Many of our interviewees suggested that ASWJ may not be well organized or coordinated. In particular, because the attacks seemed disconnected, some suggested that the province could be battling more than one group. Some research indicates that particularly brutal violence can take place when groups are poorly organized, riven by internal fractures, faced with external competition, or under weakened leadership. In this environment, groups may find themselves in a process of outbidding, with disastrous consequences. In the history of terror groups more broadly, some of the most horrific violence—such as deliberate targeting of children—has taken place under such conditions. In these circumstances, competing groups seek to demonstrate their seriousness through violence or militancy. In the Beslan massacre of 2004, Chechan separatists targeted an elementary school in a bid to signal their determination and relevance to the Russian government. In a three-day siege, the Chechen rebels took 1,000 hostages (mostly children) at an elementary school in Beslan, North Ossetia, Russia. While some of these children succumbed to starvation and dehydration, over 330 were killed by explosives detonated by the separatists and in the ensuing firefight between Russian security forces and the insurgents on the third day of the siege. Even by the group's own standards, the siege at the elementary school was brutal. But as Biberman and Zahid (2019)[42] argue, internal rifts within the rebel groups resulted in factions that attempted to outbid each other as a test of ideological purity and loyalty.

Because ASWJ has not explained its purpose or tactics, it is not possible to authoritatively conclude why the group employs such brutal attacks. But interviews with observers in Mozambique have yielded several possible explanations. According to one of our interviewees, ASWJ does not commit brutal acts randomly; notably, AWSJ did not attack areas from which it recruited. Insofar as violence and destruction can serve a

purpose, it appears that the group's targeting has shifted. In 2017, the group conducted attacks that coincided with raids to secure supplies, whether uniforms, weapons, or other supplies from state security installations or food and goods from homes and businesses. A number of our interviewees suggested that ASWJ has now begun to target individuals who resist or challenge it as well as those who cooperate with state or religious institutional efforts to counter the group's efforts. It is possible that these targeted executions are meant to serve as retribution for resistance or as a deterrent to others considering resistance. Still other interviewees offered less complex motivations for the group's brutality, suggesting that its purpose was to call attention to itself and its cause.

4. Weak Community Ties

Case studies of contemporary terrorist groups indicate that greater tactical brutality can also result from weak community ties. In this regard, it is useful to think of violent organizations as engaging in nurturing positive or negative reputations. Contrasting Hamas and Boko Haram can provide some insights: while both groups engage in terrorism, Hamas also seeks to provide services; Boko Harm, in contrast, does not attempt to supplant state governance or service provision. In this way, Hamas creates a positive reputation for itself, but Boko Haram does not.

Building a more positive reputation, however, requires longer time frames and a greater investment of resources. Moreover, concerns for building and maintaining a positive reputation may constrain the intensity or frequency of violence exacted by the group. In contrast, a coercive approach does not require such resources or restraint. This decidedly more negative approach may be dictated by a lack of investible resources or poor leadership. These groups often fail to build connections with local communities and in turn face fewer obstacles—whether ideological or personal—in wielding intense violence against them. Research finds that groups with cross-border support (i.e., from groups outside the community) are less inclined to invest in building a more positive relationship, perhaps in part because they have fewer or weaker community ties.

In the case of ASWJ in Mozambique, Habibe, Forquilha, and Pereira's reporting found evidence of religious and commercial ties to Tanzania; links to al-Shabaab and other terrorist organizations in Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania, and the Great Lakes region; and business, religious, and cultural relationships with individuals and organizations in Saudi Arabia, Libya, Sudan, and Algeria.[43] As we would therefore expect to find, the prevalence of non-local participation correlates with the high degree of brutality present in the conflict in northern Mozambique.

One interview suggested that links between ASWJ and outside groups stemmed from the common use of Swahili between northern Mozambique and other east African countries. Poor education in Cabo Delgado has resulted in the inability to read the Koran

in Arabic, used by traditional mosques. Knowing Swahili allows residents to access taped messages from Kenyan Aboud Rogo, the now-deceased cleric known for his extremist views. Many residents also do not speak or understand Portuguese, further increasing the influence of outside extremists that communicate in Swahili.

The tendency toward severe violence, however, is not limited to the ASWJ group. Government responses have been heavy handed and have left local populations vulnerable. At least one interviewee noted that the Mozambican government, concerned about defection and divided loyalties, has mainly deployed members of the armed forces from central and southern provinces to Cabo Delgado. This deliberate action to prevent the formation of community ties has been followed by the introduction of foreign fighters. In September 2019, the Mozambican government contracted with Russian private military company Wagner to fight the extremists (see more below). As both insurgents and government-endorsed counter-insurgents have ever-weakening ties to the communities, the violence and conflict has metastasized.

C. Assessing the Drivers of Violence and Radicalization

The literature on radicalization identifies several potential factors that affect the likelihood of extremist ideologies finding support. Several researchers have found poverty and economic inequality, for example, to be related to extremism, but there is not a consensus as to the exact role that relative deprivation plays in radicalization.[44] Political marginalization is also believed to be a factor affecting radicalization.[45] In Africa in particular, those who join violent extremist groups often believe that government is controlled by and for elites.[46] In addition, government abuse, especially that perpetrated by security forces, has been linked to radicalization in Africa.[47]

In northern Mozambique, we see evidence of the correlative factors for radicalization and terror recruitment. Cabo Delgado is certainly poor. It is the lowest ranked Mozambican province in terms of income, human development, and education (see Table 5). Cabo Delgado's low mark on the income index, however, is not far behind those of its regional neighbors Niassa and Nampula. There is, however, a substantial income difference between Maputo Province (and Maputo City) and the rest of Mozambique's regions, as well as more separation among lower scoring regions for human development and educational attainment, lending credence to the government marginalization thesis. Cabo Delgado is the most remote region, some 1,500 miles from the capital city. Citizens have long decried the lack of development and attention given to the region by the central government. Before 2017, there was little evidence that security forces were more aggressive in Cabo Delgado than in other regions of the country, but there have been a number of reports of abuses by security forces since the conflict broke out. It is possible

that government abuses are exacerbating the situation, but there is no conclusive evidence to support this.

So, what is driving ASWJ's violent emergence in Cabo Delgado? Early reports suggested that the group was primarily motivated by criminality.[48] The region is awash in natural resources and a large, extant illicit economy could support this narrative. Others, however, have argued that the group is composed of disaffected and disenfranchised youth who seek to terrorize the government. One interviewee pointed out that local religious authorities had been asking for assistance from the central government for years before the 2017 attacks.[49]

Region	Income Index*	Human Development Index*	Educational Index*
Cabo Delgado	.325	.375	.277
Tete	.331	.391	.318
Inhambane	.335	.455	.408
Niassa	.335	.407	.331
Nampula	.342	.423	.330
Zambezia	.348	.41	.359
Gaza	.354	.43	.378
Manica	.387	.472	.462
Sofala	.392	.464	.422
Maputo Province	.432	.52	.526
Maputo City	.518	.599	.641
Average	.361	.437	.386

* "Subnational Human Development Index (3.0)," *Global Data Lab*, updated 2017, https://globaldatalab.org/shdi/shdi/MOZ/?interpolation=0&extrapolation=0&nearest_real=0.

Table 5. Regional Development Indices, Mozambique (2017)

1. Promise of Commodities

One of the central doctrines of the spreading Islamism in Mozambique is to reject secular state structures in favor of establishing Islamic governance under Sharia law.[50] The

socioeconomic climate in northern Mozambique has proved conducive to the spread of this message. A lack of employment opportunities has left many young men unable to earn livelihoods or pay bride prices.[51] In Cabo Delgado and Niassa provinces, despite an abundance of natural resources, including oil, minerals, timber, and wildlife, these issues persist, fomenting resentment among the economically disenfranchised. In the past five years, the government in Maputo has granted contracts for extraction, including concessions on land, that displace entire communities and disrupt the livelihoods of farmers, fishermen, and artisanal miners.[52]

Concessions for ruby mining in Cabo Delgado were awarded to the British-based Gemsfields Group in 2012. Mozambicans living in the area of the mines have been relocated, sometimes forcibly and extrajudicially. In one reported case, security forces, in an effort to clear the concession area, burned down some 300 houses and assaulted residents.[53] In 2016, an investigative report based upon three years of research, 10 trips to the region, and over 50 interviews' worth of information, enumerated human rights abuses perpetrated in connection with Gemsfields operations in Montepuez. While Gemsfields denied all allegations of "sanctioning or condoning violence," local miners reported being harassed, beaten, and shot by gangs affiliated with the security forces assigned to protect the concessions.[54] Local police and state security forces regularly utilized inappropriate force, in some cases fatal, to clear artisanal miners from concessions.[55] Following the publication of the report, and a subsequent lawsuit brought against them in England, in 2019 Gemsfields agreed to pay an $8.3 million settlement on 273 claims of abuses connected to their ruby-mining concessions in Montepuez.[56]

East of Montepuez, the discovery of oil and natural gas off the coast has fueled promises of economic salvation as well as concerns about further disruptions and disappointment for local populations. The Anadarko Petroleum Company (now Occidental Petroleum), which successfully secured a bid for an offshore drilling project in 2017, has invested $20 billion into building a liquefied natural gas (LNG) plant at Palma.[57] Exxon is also moving ahead with its own $30 billion LNG project in the Rovuma basin, and has signed contracts with companies based out of the United States, Japan, and the U.K. to build plants over the next six years.[58] While both Anadarko and Exxon have reportedly performed their due diligence and advertised commitments to local community development, the heralded windfall of jobs and auxiliary benefits have not materialized.[59]

In Anadarko's case, resettlement efforts included community listening sessions, which were attended by local and national government representatives whose collaboration was stressed in various opening remarks.[60] Despite pronouncements of "compliance with the national legislation and international best practices," the minutes from the series of four meetings from July 2014 to December 2015 reveal concerns about access to land and sea, compensation schemes, and lack of job training in connection to the LNG project.[61] At

Maganja in July 2014, community members said they had not received compensation for property and goods or were not consulted on compensation before their property was seized.[62] At a follow-up meeting in August, community members stressed the need for continued access and proximity to fishing locations and their land for farming—in the absence of compensation and to combat hunger.[63] In Quitupo, residents voiced displeasure at the privileging of expatriates over locals for jobs such as auto mechanics, as well as post-facto offers to compensate for damaged property.[64] Residents at the meeting in Palma cited English language requirements for project-generated jobs and expressed concern regarding how cemeteries would be dealt with.[65] Minutes from follow-on meetings in late 2015 belie a lack of progress toward resettlement and clarity on its administration.[66] The community in Palma expressed frustration with the process: "The community members are already tired of meetings. They want to be compensated.… We are worried because promises have been made for a long time, but not yet materialized."[67]

Locals' impatience extends beyond the corporations to the Mozambican government, locally and in Maputo. In Senga, one resident challenged the government directly, stating, "I am asking why the government has not come to meet with Senga before the company's arrival. I did not know the Permanent Secretary of the Administrator before the company's arrival."[68] Mozambique's "National Development Strategy (2015–2035)," published in 2014, highlights natural resources as central to the country's economic growth.[69] Despite its intentions, the government failed to establish necessary jobs training programs in the wake of the Rovuma basin gas fields discovery in 2010 that would have prepared local workers to secure the technical jobs that are now available. Instead, skilled workers arrived from abroad, for whom specially built housing had been constructed.[70] In early 2018, Anadarko confirmed preparations for the arrival of 2,000 foreign workers.[71] Rumors portending an additional influx of tens of thousands of foreign workers have exacerbated the disappointment of northern Mozambicans, who feel ignored by a government located 1,500 miles to the south. The state's promises that the LNG projects would usher in development and a boost in social services remain unrealized.[72]

2. Politics as Usual

One of the rumored leaders of ASWJ, a Gambian known only as Musa, has capitalized upon local economic grievances to foment support for the group in Montepuez and surrounding areas.[73] One of the few field reports compiled on the group, conducted by researchers Habibe, Forquilha, and Pereira, indicates that economic conditions have facilitated its recruitment of informally or unemployed young men.[74] Indeed, our interviews reveal that while the entry point for recruitment is Islam, a major draw to joining the group—which at this point occurs voluntarily—is financial rewards, such as small loans to start a business or pay bride prices. Historic cleavages between the coastal Mwani and

the Makonde peoples further compound the tensions around economic opportunity in Cabo Delgado. The Makonde have benefitted from their political alignment with the ruling party dating back to independence, when they provided the military backing for FRELIMO.[75]

In Cabo Delgado, the benefits from the extractive industries flow to those closely aligned with the ruling party, FRELIMO.[76] This includes high-ranking military officials respected for their role in securing Mozambique's independence. Chief among them is General Joaqim Chipande, a former minister of defense and political supporter of current President Felipe Nyusi, who has capitalized on his close connections to the central government to secure holdings in minerals and liquefied gas.[77] In 2012, politically aligned violence followed the discovery of natural gas in Palma, when government security forces began an assault upon RENAMO bases in areas where RENAMO enjoyed a political majority, but was excluded from exercising influence over revenue from local natural resources.[78] Recent news revealing that high-ranking officials had secretly accrued $2 billion of debt further weakened the public's trust in FRELIMO elite.[79]

The ethno-political conflict has left large swaths of northern Mozambicans feeling alienated. Residents of Cabo Delgado enjoy strong cultural, linguistic, social, and economic ties with their northern neighbors in Tanzania that date back centuries. Although Portuguese is the most commonly spoken language in Mozambique, and used for official purposes by the government, many in Cabo Delgado speak Swahili and other local dialects. In the largely uninhabited region, security force and government corruption is high and public satisfaction is low.[80] This disconnect from the state apparatus has facilitated the transmission of anti-government Islamist ideologies in northern Mozambique.

4. The Evolution of the Mozambican Government's Response

Violence by ASWJ focused initially on government officials, installations, and symbols, although ASWJ did not hesitate to also target civilians. More recently, the group has targeted any community or individual that it deems obstructionist, including civilians. As stated previously, ACLED's data reveals that between January 2016 and December 2019 ASWJ has been responsible for nearly of all conflict in Cabo Delgado. Throughout the last two and one-half years, the government has been mostly Janus-faced: publicly denying the presence of an organized threat in ASWJ, while waging heavy retaliation after group attacks. Some say the group's increased brutality is a response to the government's approach, or perhaps ASWJ has escalated its violence in a bid for recognition on the national or international stage.

A. The Government's Denials

As noted above, ASWJ militarized in 2014 in Mocímboa da Praia, likely as a breakaway group from conservative, yet still mainstream, Islam in Cabo Delgado. The group advocates for the implementation of Sharia and shuns state government and institutions.[81] When ASWJ began snubbing sacred rituals and recruiting and radicalizing youth, alarmed locals reported the group to the Mozambican government, but the authorities did not take direct action.[82] One local politician later stated that he had attended four separate meetings in which the government was explicitly warned about the deteriorating situation.[83] Faced with state inaction, community elders attempted to intervene by organizing dialogues, but the group refused those overtures. Following schisms, some violent, with established mosques and clerical leaders, the group migrated to the coastal village of Maculo, where it set up its own mosques and organized separate worship and other activities. As the group settled into its new community, a number of violent episodes occurred. As our interviews illuminated, ASWJ adherents attacked and killed residents in Maculo, as well as in the nearby villages of Lalane, Sande, Chikuluia, and Unidade. There was no reported government response to these attacks.[84]

B. Heavy-Handed Reprisals

In October 2017, ASWJ attacked police and military outposts in Mocímboa da Praia.[85] As it had before, the central government sought to publicly downplay the attacks

and the group's significance, while simultaneously organizing retaliatory action. Government security forces from other districts and the provincial capital clashed with militants for several hours; 16 people, including two police officers and a community leader, were killed.[86] During ASWJ's occupation of Mocímboa da Praia, militants also attacked an administrative building.[87] They assured local residents that they would not be harmed, because the group's fight was with the state and police—a stance confirmed by the group's refusal to pay state taxes, participate in public education, or patronize public hospitals or clinics.[88] The government described the incidents in Mocímboa da Praia as isolated. Nevertheless, it proceeded to close three mosques and arrest suspects. By the end of November 2017, 150 people had been arrested.[89] In December, the chief of police reportedly offered to grant amnesty to any militants who would surrender.[90] The conciliatory approach was short lived, however; days later, on December 16, militants attacked a military convoy, killing the UIR (a specialized tactical police group known as the Rapid Intervention Unit) national director of reconnaissance and injuring five police officers.[91] Also in December 2017, two helicopters and a navy ship shelled Mitumbate village, believed to be a base for the militants, killing an estimated 50 people.[92] A week prior, the group reportedly ambushed a police convoy.

C. Controlling the Flow of Information

By 2018, reports from the media and non-governmental organizations began to feature the growing instability in northern Mozambique. In keeping with its efforts to downplay the threat, the government made it difficult for journalists to operate. In July 2018, for the first time in Mozambique, the government implemented accreditation fees and requirements.[93] According to the decree, the accreditation for foreign media cost $2,500 per trip to Mozambique. For freelancers and foreign correspondents based in Mozambique, annual accreditation costs $500 and $8,300, respectively. New Mozambican publications and community radio stations are charged $3,300 and $800, respectively.[94] For new national radio stations, a broadcasting license now costs nearly $35,000; they also incur annual costs to renew their license.[95] In at least one case, no price sufficed for accreditation: the government refused to accredit the BBC to report on the violence in June 2018, claiming that such a story would prove embarrassing to the country.[96]

In addition to these administrative shifts, also in 2018, the government began arresting and detaining journalists reporting on the situation in northern Mozambique.[97] The high-profile December 2018 arrest and detention of journalist Estacio Valoi and Amnesty International researcher David Matsinhe in Mocímboa de Praia brought to light the military's disregard for human rights and the government's determination to stop the flow of information.[98] In early 2019, journalists Amade Abubacar and Germano Daniela Adriano were arrested while investigating in Pemba. In February 2019, a radio

commentator was detained. The following day, the governor of Cabo Delgado gave a press conference in which he warned journalists not to report on violence or extremism in the province.[99] Abubacar and Adriano remained in detention without trial for more than three months, until their release in April 2019.[100]

D. Engaging External Partners

Despite its initial claims to have the situation under control, the Mozambican government has more recently entered into security agreements with regional neighbors and foreign partners. In January 2018, Mozambique signed a memorandum of understanding with Tanzania to increase cooperation for cross-border crime. In May and June 2018, Mozambique signed security agreements with Uganda and DRC, respectively.[101]

In March 2018, Mozambique began collaborating with Russia to address the ASWJ threat in the North.[102] In August 2019, the Russian private military company Wagner PMC deployed 203 soldiers to Cabo Delgado.[103] The Russian government also provided drones and helicopters for use in counterterrorism efforts.[104] Ill-trained and poorly prepared for the Mozambican terrain, the Wagner soldiers have struggled to quell the insurgency. In November 2019, ASWJ extremists killed 11 and injured 25 Russian mercenaries in at least three confrontations.[105] Up until these casualty reports surfaced, Russia denied that it had personnel on the ground in Cabo Delgado.[106] While Mozambique's ties to the Soviet Union/Russia date to the Cold War period, many attribute this renewed effort by the Russians as an effort to take advantage of Mozambique's geographical location and obtain favorable access to the country's vast reserves of gas and carbon.[107] During a Russia-Mozambique business forum in August 2019, Russia forgave 95 percent of Mozambique's debt to the Russian Federation, while President Nyusi welcomed increased Russian investment in Mozambique's liquid natural gas sector.[108]

E. Continuing the Cycle: Government Neglect and Unrest

Despite the increasing levels of violence in Cabo Delgado, the government still refers to ASWJ as "criminals."[109] The Mozambican Human Rights Council has urged the government to declare a state of emergency as a means to justify the heavy military presence, but declaring a state of emergency imposed constraints on the government. Per the constitution, it would require the government to be more transparent—something for which it has a demonstrated reluctance.[110]

The government has also refused to acknowledge the humanitarian crises exacerbated by ASWJ, despite reports of over 65,000 internally displaced people.[111] For its part, the government's crackdown on free press and information flow has mired the country in confusion. It has also exacerbated the anti-state sentiment fueling the insurgency by

sanctioning security force abuses in the name of countering ASWJ. According the Human Rights Watch, both insurgents and civilians have suffered from indiscriminate military crackdowns.[112]

Local communities threatened by ASWJ and failed by inadequate government response have attempted independent reprisals. In late November 2018, extremists attacked the village of Quinto Congresso. In response, village residents orchestrated a counterattack, during which the extremists killed two members of the village militia and burned 17 houses. On December 5, 2018, extremists attacked the village of Lilongo; villagers captured two suspected attackers and beheaded them.[113] This resistance may contribute to additional levels of violence levied against communities that attempt to fight back. In at least one reported case, in one Chitunda village, "angry residents allegedly threw out a unit of the defense and security forces for not protecting them against the terrorists," only to be attacked by insurgents in the weeks that followed.[114]

As the humanitarian situation in Cabo Delgado grows more acute, civilians will face increasingly impossible choices: to flee or to risk violence. In mid-2019, Cyclones Idai and Kenneth hit Mozambique, with the latter exacting significant damage in Cabo Delgado. It devastated domestic and state infrastructure, destroying some 45,000 houses and 19 health facilities.[115] In addition to the destruction of vital food supplies and livelihoods, these natural disasters diverted government attention away from the extremist threat in favor of immediate humanitarian needs in the affected areas.[116] Flooding in Cabo Delgado at the end of December 2019 has further exacerbated the strain on resources and highlighted the absence of sustainable state-led efforts to stabilize the region.

5. Comparing Mozambique and Burkina Faso

A. Common Pattern

Located on opposite corners of the African continent, Mozambique and Burkina Faso at first glance appear to share little in common. Burkina Faso is a landlocked nation in the heart of the Sahel, while Mozambique boasts over 2,500 kilometers of coastline in east Africa. Despite few geographical commonalities, both nations share a troubled history of regional marginalization, political grievances, and now the threat of violent extremism. While these cases are distinct in detail and regional context, many commonalities and patterns exist between the ongoing conflicts in Mozambique and Burkina Faso.

Before the spread of Islamism-linked violence, Burkina Faso and Mozambique enjoyed a reputation for religious diversity and openness.[117] In both countries, the path from stability to jihadist threat, which began with sporadic attacks on security forces, has escalated to weekly attacks that also target civilians. In 2020, the situations in northern Mozambique and Burkina Faso continue to deteriorate without signs of slowing. In both cases, ethnic and regional marginalization in poor and remote areas has bred communities' discontent with the central government. In Cabo Delgado and Burkina Faso, the teachings and unifying narratives of a charismatic Muslim leader have capitalized on local disaffection to bolster a counter-state agenda. In addition, the regional context of these conflicts has had a significant impact on whether and how violence spreads within a country as well as across borders. And finally, differing government responses and international community approaches also demonstrate that many efforts to contain and combat extremism have limited success. Solutions that seek to only address the militaristic aspect of the conflict will fall short in resolving the community-based grievances that allowed for extremist narratives and inducements to succeed in the first place.

B. Burkina Faso: Background to the Conflict

A former French colony, Burkina Faso gained independence in 1960 and suffered a series of coups from 1966 until the rise of leader Thomas Sankara in 1983. An ideological Marxist, he envisaged a hegemonic socialist state and a pan-Africanist utopia. His rejection of colonial legacies and cronyism made him unpopular with the urban elite.[118] In 1987, Blaise Compaoré, a former Sankara loyalist, seized power in a violent coup d'état, killing Sankara in the process. He swiftly moved to overturn Sankara's leftist polices and pursued partnerships with France and fellow strongmen across Africa. From 1987 to 2011,

Compaoré controlled Burkina Faso with an iron fist, amending the constitution to continue to hold office through electoral manipulation.

In 2011, after three decades under Compaoré's rule, student protests and military rebellions erupted throughout the country. In 2012, as extremist violence in Mali escalated, Compaoré and his ministers acted as mediators between government forces in Bamako and Ansar Dine, an Islamic paramilitary group allied with Tuareg rebels and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).[119] This brokering role may have helped to initially shield Burkina Faso from Islamist insurgent activity, as reports indicate that Compaoré had included in these negotiations an agreement for terrorists to "bypass" Burkina Faso.[120] In October 2014, Compaoré attempted to amend the constitution to stand for a fifth consecutive term. Miscalculating the intensity of the social fallout, Compaoré ultimately capitulated when the military dissolved the government and promised to hold democratic elections. Extremists capitalized upon the subsequent power vacuum by encroaching upon vast swaths of ungoverned space in the far North and Eastern border region.[121] The disbandment of the elite Regiment of Presidential Security (RSP) in 2015 further complicated matters, because the RSP were highly trained in counterterrorism operations and served as a hard force behind Compaoré's deals.[122]

In November 2015, Roch Marc Christian Kaboré was elected President of Burkina Faso.[123] Kaboré's administration faces a challenging atmosphere of rampant poverty and disenfranchisement, particularly in regions increasingly subjected to terrorism. According the ACLED, more than 1,300 civilians were killed in Burkina Faso in 2019.[124] Attacks on the capital, Ouagadougou, and expanding violence in the East highlight a rapidly devolving and fluid situation. According to the United Nations Refugee Commission, Burkina Faso is now one of the fastest growing humanitarian crises in the world. Estimates suggest that over 4,000 people are fleeing their homes daily, and more than 700,000 have been internally displaced since February 2019.[125] The pattern of escalation previously seen in Mali and Niger now threatens Burkina Faso's 19.8 million citizens.[126] Like Mozambique, the Burkinabé government is ill-prepared to cope with the mounting atrocities and the spread of a toxic ideology.

As in Mozambique, the violence in Burkina Faso originated in a northern area—far from the capital and beyond the reach of government administration, where the lines between government forces, Islamist extremist groups, and self-defense militias have increasingly blurred.[127] Since 2015, there has been a surge of attacks on hard and soft targets by an array of regionally active terrorist organizations. Unlike in Mozambique, in Burkina Faso the violence has reached the capital city. Ouagadougou has been targeted by gunmen in 2016, 2017, and 2018.[128] The attacks in Burkina Faso have also accelerated in frequency and sophistication. This intensification largely points to AQIM and its affiliates Al-Mourabitoun, Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM), Ansar Dine, and

Ansaroul Islam. In 2015, the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) rebranded itself as Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) and has since been credited with attacks on international forces in Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso.[129] Once confined to the far Northeast of the country, kidnappings, village incursions, and assaults on the military using improvised explosive devices have become widespread.[130] Most alarmingly, the extremist threat has continued to creep south, causing entire villages to empty.[131]

C. Conflict Drivers and Changing Religious Attitudes

Extremist violence in Burkina Faso began in December 2016 in Soum with attacks by Ansarul Islam.[132] The violence was led by Malam Ibrahim Dicko, a once-respected imam from Soum. Before founding Ansarul Islam, Malam Dicko had received support from many in Soum, as well as the central government in Ouagadougou. Al-Irchad, his organization founded in 2009, had received funding and official recognition.[133] Dicko rooted many of his arguments in the economic and social disenfranchisements in northern Burkina Faso. The region lacks investment in infrastructure and attention from the government in Ouagadougou.[134] Dicko's ideology gained popularity through his addresses on societal divisions, corruption, and exploitation by the state and traditional leaders.[135] His messages resonated among the Fulani, in particular. The Fulani, Burkina Faso's second largest ethnic group, are mainly found in Soum. The Fulani are divided into the nobles and Rimaibé, or slave descendants. Rimaibé were assimilated by the Fulani.[136] While slavery no longer exists as an institution in these communities, families' ancestral lines are known.[137]

Dicko addressed the ethnic friction in his sermons; he emphasized that there should be no difference between the Fulani/Peul and the Rimaibé.[138] He began to grow in popularity among the Rimaibé, who are the majority in Soum. But the Fulani/Peul chiefs began to consider him as a threat to their social order.[139] Dicko challenged traditional practices and the authorities of traditional chiefs.[140] He claimed that Islam forbade social inequities,[141] and his preaching grew increasingly extreme.[142]

Dicko's rejection of traditional practices in Islam resonated with the younger generation's disillusionment with Burkina Faso's religious leaders. During Burkina Faso's fourth republic, comprising the reign of Blaise Compaoré, Islamic scholars became critical of the government. In particular, young Muslims were mobilized to question the role of the state and the distribution of political power. Historically, Islam has been marginal to Burkina Faso's political and social history, despite its dominance among the population. Even the Compoaré administration, which seemed to reach out to Muslim leaders, ultimately disappointed many. While Muslim leaders were indeed influential within the government, this influence tended to further their own ends rather than benefit their faith community writ large.

Christian elites have ruled Burkina Faso for many years, and the Catholic Church has dominated post-independence Burkina Faso. With some records stating that Muslims comprise 60 percent of the population against Christianity's 25 percent, many Muslims contend that they are not reaping the economic, social, or political benefits from the state. Before the 2015 election, Muslim leaders circulated "Muslim concerns in Burkina Faso," a list of demands that highlighted concerns about participation in public and political positions, the government's treatment of religious groups, and the quality and access to education. Indeed, these concerns are not new. More recently, perhaps further exacerbating tensions, religiosity has grown: as Christians have become more fundamental, so have Muslims.

Dicko's increasingly extremist rhetoric eventually isolated him from the community.[143] He then left for Mali, where France's Operation Serval captured him in 2013. Upon release from prison in 2015, he formed Ansarul Islam.[144] The message seemed the same, but the modus operandi was not: Malam turned to violence.[145] While the activities of Ansarul Islam itself appear to be declining, extremist violence in Burkina Faso continues, propagated by other groups. The principal groups involved with violent extremism are Group for Support of Islam and Muslims and Islamic State in West Africa.[146] There also appears to have been a coordination among smaller extremist groups.[147]

The popularity of Dicko's rhetoric, and the persistence of his ideology beyond Ansarul Islam, demonstrates how effective grievance-based Islamism can be in activating disenfranchised Muslims, particular young people. Ansarul Islam and its successors in Burkina Faso have found success in offering solutions to small-scale community issues, such as service provision, informal business loans, or bride prices. A similar trend emerged in northern Mozambique, where ASWJ has been able to recruit young men disillusioned with the state of Mozambique and radicalized by grievance-based teachings of deceased Kenyan Aboud Rogo, who was popular along the Swahili coast. ASWJ has further highlighted the inadequacy of the secular state by providing services otherwise inaccessible to local community members in the far north of Mozambique; as in Burkina Faso, the group offers collateral loans for businesses or bride prices.

The messaging of charismatic Muslim clerics like Dicko or Rogo was appealing to communities in Mozambique and Burkina Faso because the regions most affected by violent extremism have suffered from decades of social disenfranchisement and years of communal, religious, and economic marginalization.[148] Notably, both conflicts originate in remote areas with profitable extractive industries. The presence of LNG and ruby deposits has fanned social unrest in northern Mozambique, as profits from these resources flow to political elites and multinational corporations, leaving local communities behind. Gold-mining operations have bred similar discontent across Burkina Faso.[149] Control of

commercial and informal gold mines has provided a stream of revenue for Islamist organizations, as security forces have struggled to assert state authority in rural areas away from Ouagadougou.[150] A lack of research has made it difficult to ascertain in both cases the extent to which these resources have funded or inflamed the respective insurgencies or influenced responses from the government and international community.

D. Comparing Government Responses

In Mozambique, officials in Maputo downplayed initial reports of a burgeoning extremist sect. Divergently, the brutality in the Sahel has long been acknowledged as a threat by Burkinabe politicians, and they have sought to deter the spread of extremism from neighboring states. In Mozambique, the government's failure to recognize early signs and heed community-originated warnings in the early 2010s crippled Maputo's ability to respond quickly and effectively to the spread of radical Islamic ideology before it manifested into violence. The government's repeated denials following the initial instances of violence in 2017 allowed the insurgents to gain experience, materials, and recruits. The institution of a media blackout, and the central government's reluctance to share information, has allowed disinformation to abound and stymied potential outside assistance. When the government did address the issue with force, reports of abuses further eroded northern Mozambicans' faith in the government's motivations, tactics, and ability to succeed. Now that the Mozambican government has enlisted the assistance of Russian mercenaries, the conflict has grown more complex and more intractable because international security forces, while potentially able to subdue the military threat, are unlikely to address the root causes of fundamental grievances.

The Burkinabe government has responded quite differently to a terrorist threat than the Mozambican government. As extremist groups first entered Burkinabe territory, the government employed a strategy of self-preservation, utilizing backroom politics to maintain regime stability, hoping the violence would naturally burn out. This was in part because these groups, unlike the presumed ASWJ in Mozambique, are known and named. Without sufficient security forces to protect civilians, jihadist groups, government forces, and regional self-defense militias have become entangled in a web of violence. Security forces have yet to stem the attacks on civilian targets, particularly schools. In 2019, as the violence escalated, the government changed tactics and unleashed its military. The Burkinabé military and the Koglweogo, a local "self-defense" militia, have also both been accused of human rights violations.[151] Like in Mozambique, the heavy-handed tactics of the security forces can feed into extremist narratives, or otherwise hinder effective community cooperation.

Both the United States and France have deployed units to aid in combatting terror groups in Mali and Niger, but the threats have not subsided.[152] Facing domestic pressure

to protect vulnerable villages, the Burkinabé government decided in January 2020 to arm civilians.[153] Its announcement stipulates that recruits for armament can be eligible if they are citizens over 18, without political affiliation, and are loyal and patriotic. The vetting process for who should and shouldn't receive a weapon remains murky, however. Further, it is likely that the flood of weapons could have opposite of the intended effect, leading to an increase in inter-communal violence.

E. Regional Context

One of the key differences between the violent extremism in Mozambique and in Burkina Faso is the state of the surrounding region. So far, the violence in Mozambique, while perhaps born out of foreign ideology or fundamentalists from Tanzania or elsewhere, has not seeped across borders or spread south beyond Pemba. Southern Africa is relatively stable from a security standpoint, and there is currently no alarm about risk of spillover. Burkina Faso, however, is in the middle of a volatile region. The Sahel has been plunged into an internationalized conflict surrounding diversified and expansive Islamic extremist groups. Burkina Faso faces threats and incursions from the Islamic State to the north, AQIM and Ansar Dine to the north and west, and Boko Haram to the east.[154] It is less surprising that the violence has spread so quickly within Burkina Faso, given the firmly established prevalence of these groups in the area. In Mozambique, the geographic isolation of the conflict has potentially slowed its spread.

6. Conclusions

At the outset, our research endeavored to answer the following five questions:

1. Who are the attackers in Mozambique?
2. What are they trying to accomplish?
3. Why did religious extremism take root and manifest violently in Cabo Delgado?
4. Why are the attacks so brutal?
5. How can the government effectively respond?

Our research and interviews have indeed provided some answers, although several questions remain—in particular about our understanding of ASWJ as an organization and its objectives—but the absence of more detailed knowledge about the motivations and organizational structure of ASWJ also does not seem unique to Mozambique. Many violent extremist organizations deliberately obfuscate the specific purpose of their violence or, because of linguistic barriers, their motivations are not communicated widely. In addition, the drivers behind the rise of violent extremism are complex and evolving, and there is often not a single cogent explanation for the formation of an extremist group. We better understand why extremist violence has erupted in northern Mozambique. We find strong support that extremist violence in Mozambique has roots in historical grievances, disenfranchisement, and notions of relative deprivation. In this regard, Mozambique resembles many other regions in Africa and elsewhere that are experiencing violence by extremist organizations. At the same time, however, other regions in Mozambique with similarly low levels of development and socioeconomic indicators do not experience extremist violence. Therefore, it is insufficient to conclude that Cabo Delgado's poverty and marginalization are the causes of the appearance of violent extremism.

As the paper notes, the violence exacted by ASWJ distinguishes itself by its brutality. Some of our interviews have suggested that the purpose of the group's brutality is to draw attention to the group. That has certainly occurred, as it is one of ASWJ's most distinguishing characteristics. But studies of other armed groups suggest that ASWJ's brutality might also be related to a weak organizational structure, outbidding, factionalization, or weak community ties. Our research does not shed light on the group's organizational structure or degree of factionalization. But ample documentation points to the region's close ties with other Swahili-speaking countries, because Mozambique's poor education system has left many of its young people with a weak understanding of Portuguese or Arabic. Youth have benefited from business and training opportunities in

Tanzania and have engaged with Islamic teachings in Swahili available on the internet and social media.

Finally, the government's heavy-handed approach does not seem effective. Again, other case studies support the idea that responding to extremism with overwhelming violence does not weaken extremist groups. Moreover, the involvement of Russian private military contractors has the potential to internationalize the conflict; in addition, the presence of foreign military groups could increase the ASWJ's brutality, as it shifts its focus away from indigenous communities. The Islamic State has already claimed responsibility for some attacks. A more effective government response could meaningfully addressing some of the grievances voiced by the region's residents by providing services—such as education and health care—that are sorely missing and reaching out to the ASWJ for possible negotiations to end the violence.

Despite the differences in the character of the terror threat facing Mozambique and Burkina Faso, their respective governments' responses have laid bare how ill-equipped these nations are to cope with violent extremism and its aftermath. First, weak institutional approaches to identifying and addressing the root cause of these crises, as opposed to the symptoms, stymie coordinated international efforts to address the local grievances and secure communities from attacks. Second, a failure to acknowledge and act on information allows for the spread of the violent extremist threats, particularly in environments where historical political, economic, and social marginalization are coalescing with an Islamist narrative. For both Mozambique and Burkina Faso, finding ways to better leverage community-based organizations and civil society to identify and assist areas at risk will be paramount in building resiliency. In addition, assessing who the terrorists are and why they are perpetrating violence against schools or military installations will allow governments to better exercise agency in addressing the threat, as well as better leverage international assistance to counter extremist group offerings of supplanted services.

[1] David Whitehouse, "Mozambique Must Seize Its LNG Opportunity," *The Africa Report*, May 15, 2019, https://www.theafricareport.com/12968/mozambique-must-seize-its-lng-opportunity/.

[2] Hilary Matfess and Alexander H. Noyes, "Counterproductive Counterinsurgency: Is Mozambique Creating the Next Boko Haram?" September 3, 2019, *The RAND Blog,* https://www.rand.org/blog/2019/09/counterproductive-counterinsurgency-is-mozambique-creating.html; Gregory Pirio, Robert Pittelli, and Yussuf Adam, "The Emergence of Violent Extremism in Northern Mozambique," Africa Center for Strategic Studies, *Spotlight,* March 25, 2018, https://africacenter.org/spotlight/the-emergence-of-violent-extremism-in-northern-mozambique/.

[3] Said Habibe, Salvador Forquilha, and João Pereira, "Radicalização Islâmica no Norte de Moçambique: O Caso de Mocímboa da Praia," IESE, *Cadernos IESE* 17 (2019): 25–30.

[4] Mario Machaqueiro, "The Islamic Policy of Portuguese Colonial Mozambique, 1960–1973," *The Historical Journal* 55, 4 (2012): 1097-1116.

[5] A subject of Portuguese colonialism could become "Portuguese" by adopting Portuguese language, religion, and dress.

[6] S. Von Sicard, "Islam in Mozambique: Some Historical Cultural Perspectives," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 28, no.3 (2008): 482.

[7] Liazzat Bonate, "The Advent and Schism of Sufi Orders in Mozambique, 1896–1964," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 26 (2015): 483–501.

[8] Liazzat Bonate, "Islam and Chiefship in Northern Mozambique," *ISIM Review* 19 (Spring 2007): 585–86; Sicard, "Islam in Mozambique," 482.

[9] Bonate, "Islam and Chiefship in Northern Mozambique."

[10] Bonate, "Islam and Chiefship in Northern Mozambique," 585–86; Eric Morier-Genoud, "Why Islamist Attack Demands a Careful Response from Mozambique," *The Conversation*, October 20, 2017, https://theconversation.com/why-islamist-attack-demands-a-careful-response-from-mozambique-85504.

[11] Von Sicard, "Islam in Mozambique," 482.

[12] Bonate, "Islam and Chiefship in Northern Mozambique," 585–86; Morier-Genoud, "Why Islamist Attack Demands a Careful Response from Mozambique"; Benjamin Nickels and Paulo Araujo, "Mozambique's Next Step in Countering Violent Extremism," *Africa Up Close*, Woodrow Wilson Center, October 5, 2018, https://africaupclose.wilsoncenter.org/mozambiques-next-step-in-countering-violent-extremism/.

[13] Liazzat Bonate, "Roots of Diversity in Mozambican Islam," *Islam en Lusophonie* XIV, no. 1 (2007): 129–49

[14] Dorina Bekoe, Stephanie Burchard, and Sarah Daly (Institute for Defense Analyses), interview with Zenaida Machado, April 4, 2019, Maputo, Mozambique.

[15] Sicard, "Islam in Mozambique," 483.

[16] Dorina Bekoe, Stephanie Burchard, and Sarah Daly (Institute for Defense Analyses), interview with Yussuf Adam, April 3, 2019.

[17] Habibe, Forquilha, and Pereira, "Radicalização Islâmica no Norte de Moçambique."

[18] Sunguta West, "Ansar al-Sunna: A New Militant Islamist Group Emerges in Mozambique," *Terrorism Monitor* Vol XVI, no. 12, June 14, 2018: 6; also Joan Swart, "Countering Ahlu Sunnah Wa-Jamo (Al-Shabaab) Insurgency in Mozambique," ITCT, January 16, 2019: 2, https://itct.org.uk/archives/itct_report/countering-ahlu-sunnah-wa-jamo-al-shabaab-insurgency-in-mozambique.

[19] Eric Morier-Genoud, "How a Local Mozambique Islamic Group Became Africa's Latest Terror Threat," *Quartz Africa*, February 24, 2019, https://qz.com/africa/1558111/mozambiques-islamist-threat-al-shabaab-has-roots-in-tanzania/

[20] West, "Ansar al-Sunna," 5.

[21] Joseph Hanlon, "How Mozambique's Smuggling Barons Nurtured Jihadists," *BBC*, June 2, 2018, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-44320531.

[22] Habibe, Forquilha, and Pereira, "Radicalização Islâmica no Norte de Moçambique," 15.

[23] Hilary Matfess, “Clear Throat, Murky Objectives: Ahlu Sunna Wal Jamaa and Instability in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique,” *ACLED*, November 11, 2018. https://www.acleddata.com/2018/11/30/clear-threat-murky-objectives-ahlu-sunna-wal-jamaa-and-instability-in-cabo-delgado-mozambique/.

[24] *See* “[R]eiteramos que não há nenhuma indicação, de se tratar até então de algum grupo fundamentalista, de algum grupo que possa estar ligado ao terrorismo.” *In* “Moçambique: 3 Polícias e 2 Atacantes Mortos em Mocímboa da Praia,” *RFI*, May 10, 2017, http://www.rfi.fr/pt/mocambique/20171005-mocambique-pelo-menos-3-policias-mortos-em-mocimboa-da-praia.

[25] Matfess, “Clear Throat, Murky Objectives.”

[26] Ibid.

[27] Morier-Genoud, “How a Local Mozambique Islamic Group Became Africa’s Latest Terror Threat”; see also: Pirio, Pittelli, and Adam, “The Emergence of Violent Extremism in Northern Mozambique.”

[28] Manuel Mucari, “Mozambique Puts on Trial 189 Accused of Deadly Beheadings,” Reuters, October 3, 2018, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mozambique-violence/mozambique-puts-on-trial-189-accused-of-deadly-beheadings-idUSKCN1MD24U.

[29] Pirio, Pittelli, and Adam, “The Emergence of Violent Extremism in Northern Mozambique.”

[30] “Mozambique,” *ACLED*, updated 2020, https://www.acleddata.com/tag/mozambique/.

[31] *ACLED*, see notes on attacks dated 5 October 2017, 17 December 2017, 23–24 December 2017.

[32] Matfess, “Clear Throat, Murky Objectives.”

[33] *ACLED*, see notes on attack dated 15 December 2017.

[34] *ACLED*.

[35] Dorina Bekoe, Stephanie Burchard, and Sarah Daly (Institute for Defense Analyses), Interview with Zenaida Machado, April 4, 2019, Maputo, Mozambique.

[36] *ACLED*, see notes on attack dated 9 May 2019, 3 May 2019, and 1 February 2019.

[37] *ACLED*, see notes on attacks dated 3 November 2018 and 10 September 2019.

[38] *ACLED*, see notes on attacks dated 2 April 2019, 17 August 2019, and 13 September 2019.

[39] *ACLED*, see notes on attacks dated 4 June 2019, 3 July 2019, 2 August 2019, 22 August 2019, 20 September 2019, 23 September 2019, and 10 November 2019.

[40] Erin M. Kearns, “When to Take Credit for Terrorism? A Cross-National Examination of Claims and Attributions,” *Terrorism and Political Violence,* January 2019, DOI: 10.1080/09546553.2018.1540982.

[41] “Mozambique: IED Attack in Cabo Delgado Province Kills Multiple Soldiers,” *Stratfor*, March 22, 2019, https://worldview.stratfor.com/situation-report/mozambique-ied-attack-cabo-delgado-province-reportedly-kills-multiple-soldiers#/home/error.

[42] Yelena Biberman and Farhan Zahid, “Why Terrorists Target Children: Outbidding, Desperation, and Extremism in the Peshawar and Beslan School Massacres,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 31, no. 2 (2019): 169–84.

[43] Habibe, Forquilha, and Pereira, “Radicalização Islâmica no Norte de Moçambique,” 15.

[44] Adesoji Adelaja, Abdullai Labo, and Eva Penar, “Public Opinion on the Root Causes of Terrorism and Objectives of Terrorists: A Boko Haram Case Study,” *Perspectives on Terrorism* 12, no. 3 (June 2018): 35–49.

[45] Sarah Lyons-Padilla, Michelle J. Gelfand, Hedieh Mirahmadi, Mehreen Farooq, and Marieke van Egmond, “Belonging Nowhere: Marginalization and Radicalization Risk among Muslim Immigrants,” *Behavioral Science and Policy* 1, 2 (2015): 1–12; “Journey to Extremism in Africa: Drivers, Incentives and the Tipping Point for Recruitment,” *United Nations Development Programme*, 2017, 5, https://journey-to-extremism.undp.org/content/downloads/UNDP-JourneyToExtremism-report-2017-english.pdf.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Anneli Botha, *Terrorism in Kenya and Uganda: Radicalization from a Political Socialization Perspective* (Maryland: Lexington Books, 2016), 216.

[48] “Al Sunnah wa Jama’ah (ASWJ) Terrorism Threat for Mozambique and Tanzania,” *Assaye Risk*, August 29, 2018, https://www.assayerisk.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/20180830_Ansar-al-Sunna-Mozambique-terrorism-article.pdf.

[49] Dorina Bekoe, Stephanie Burchard, and Sarah Daly (Institute for Defense Analyses), Interview with Salvador Forquilha, April 2, 2019, Maputo, Mozambique.

[50] Morier-Genoud, "Why Islamist Attack Demands a Careful Response from Mozambique."

[51] Pirio, Pittelli, and Adam, "The Emergence of Violent Extremism in Northern Mozambique."

[52] See*:* "Fishermen in Northern Mozambique Fear Resettlement Will Move Them Away from the Sea," *Club of Mozambique*, March 26, 2018, https://clubofmozambique.com/news/fishermen-in-northern-mozambique-fear-resettlement-will-move-them-away-from-the-sea/; and Borges Nhamire and Matthew Hill, "Exxon Awards $13 Billion in Mozambique LNG Contracts," World Oil, October 10, 2019, https://www.worldoil.com/news/2019/10/10/exxon-awards-13-billion-in-mozambique-lng-contracts.

[53] "The Blood Rubies of Montepuez: Troubling Pattern of Violence and Death for Responsibly Sourced Gems," *100 Reporters*, May 3, 2016, https://100r.org/2016/05/the-blood-rubies-of-montepuez/.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Pirio, Pittelli, and Adam, "The Emergence of Violent Extremism in Northern Mozambique"; Sabina Zawadzki, "Anadarko Approves $20 Billion LNG Export Project in Mozambique," Reuters, June 18, 2019, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mozambique-anadarko-lng/anadarko-approves-20-billion-lng-export-project-in-mozambique-idUSKCN1TJ2DI.

[58] Manuel Macari and Mfuneko Toyana, "Exxon to Make $500 Million Initial Investment in Mozambique LNG Project," Reuters, October 8, 2019, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mozambique-lng/exxon-to-make-500-million-initial-investment-in-mozambique-lng-project-idUSKBN1WN14E; Nhamire and Hill, "Exxon Awards $13 Billion in Mozambique LNG Contracts."

[59] See Anadarko's Resettlement Plan at http://www.mzlng.com/Responsibility/Resettlement/Resettlement-Plan/. See also Exxon's commissioned study: "Rovuma LNG Project: Macroeconomic Study," *Standard Bank*, March 19, 2019, https://corporateandinvestment.standardbank.com/CIB/Sectors/Oil-and-gas; "Harnessing Mozambique's Mineral Wealth," *Chatham House*, Interview with HE Armando Emilio Guebeza by Alex Vines, Chatham House (May 9, 2012): 5.

[60] Anadarko, "Volume V: Meetings," *Mozambique LNG*, May 27, 2016, 1. http://www.mzlng.com/content/documents/RP_Vol_5_Eng.pdf.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ibid., 91–92.

[63] Ibid., 276.

[64] Ibid., 148–49.

[65] Ibid., 182–85.

[66] Ibid., 764.

[67] Ibid., 898.

[68] Ibid., 231.

[69] Available at: "National Development Strategy (2015–2035)," *CABRI*, 2015, https://www.cabri-sbo.org/en/documents/national-development-strategy-2015-2035.

[70] Susan Njanji and Adrien Barbier, "Mozambique's Gas Boom Dream Under Threat," *Phys.org*, May 7, 2017, https://phys.org/news/2017-05-mozambique-gas-boom-threat.html

[71] Pirio, Pittelli, and Adam, "The Emergence of Violent Extremism in Northern Mozambique." The minister of labor traveled to Cabo Delgado in February 2018.

[72] "Harnessing Mozambique's Mineral Wealth," *Chatham House*, 5.

[73] Pirio, Pittelli, and Adam, "The Emergence of Violent Extremism in Northern Mozambique."

[74] Habibe, Forquilha, and Pereira, "Radicalização Islâmica no Norte de Moçambique: O Caso de Mocímboa da Praia."

[75] Morier-Genoud, "How a Local Mozambique Islamic Group Became Africa's Latest Terror Threat."

[76] Jose Jaime Macuane, Lars Buur, and Celso Marcos Monjane, "Power, Conflict, and Natural Resources: the Mozambican Crisis Revisited," *African Affairs* vol. 1, no. 24 (2017): 14.

[77] "Gas and Power: How Chipande has Made the Most of Nyusi's Presidency," *Africa Intelligence,* April 9, 2019, https://www.africaintelligence.com/aem/exploration--production/2019/04/09/gas-and-power-how-chipande-has-made-the-most-of-nyusi-s-presidency,108352767-art.

[78] Macuane, Buur, and Monjane, "Power, Conflict, and Natural Resources," 2.

[79] Ibid., 17.

[80] Swart, "Countering Ahlu Sunnah Wa-Jamo (Al-Shabaab) Insurgency in Mozambique," 4. See also West, "Ansar al-Sunna," 8.

[81] "Morier-Genoud, "Why Islamist Attack Demands a Careful Response from Mozambique."

[82] David Matsinhe and Estacio Valoi, "The Genesis of Insurgency in Northern Mozambique," Institute for Security Studies (ISS), October 31, 2019, https://issafrica.org/research/southern-africa-report/the-genesis-of-insurgency-in-northern-mozambique.

[83] Joseph Hanlon, "Alleged Islamist Base Shelled Near Mocimboa da Praia," Club of Mozambique, January 8, 2018, https://web.archive.org/web/20180111165116/http://clubofmozambique.com/news/alleged-islamist-base-shelled-near-mocimboa-da-praia-by-joseph-hanlon/?platform=hootsuite.

[84] Matsinhe and Valoi, "The Genesis of Insurgency in Northern Mozambique," 9.

[85] Andre Baptista, "Mais um Ataque Deixa um Ferido e Centenas de Desalojados em Palma," *VOA Portugues*, August 22, 2018, https://www.voaportugues.com/a/mais-um-ataque-deixa-um-ferido-e-centenas-de-desalojados-em-palma/4539157.html.

[86] "Mozambique's Jihadists Terror Group: Who Are They and What do They Want?" *News24*, June 14, 2018, https://www.news24.com/Africa/News/mozambiques-jihadists-terror-group-who-are-they-and-what-do-they-want-20180614.

[87] Matsinhe and Valoi, "The Genesis of Insurgency in Northern Mozambique,"6.

[88] Morier-Genoud, "Why Islamist Attack Demands a Careful Response from Mozambique."

[89] Matsinhe and Valoi, "The Genesis of Insurgency in Northern Mozambique," 6.

[90] Ibid.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Hanlon, "Alleged Islamist Base Shelled Near Mocimboa da Praia."

[93] "Mozambique: Effectively Closing the Media Space with Exorbitant Accreditation Fees," Amnesty International, August 14, 2018, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/08/mozambique-effectively-closing-the-media-space-with-exorbitant-accreditation-fees/.

[94] "Mozambique: New Media Fees Assault Press Freedom," Human Rights Watch, August 17, 2018, https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/08/17/mozambique-new-media-fees-assault-press-freedom#.

"Mozambique: Effectively Closing the Media Space with Exorbitant Accreditation Fees," Amnesty International.

[96] "Two Mozambican Journalists Freed after Being Held for Months," Reporters Without Borders, April 23, 2019, https://rsf.org/en/news/two-mozambican-journalists-freed-after-being-held-months.

[97] Matsinhe and Valoi, "The Genesis of Insurgency in Northern Mozambique,"15.

[98] "CPJ Joins Letter to Pope Francis Urging Focus on Human Rights During Mozambique Visit," *Committee to Protect Journalists,* September 4, 2019, https://cpj.org/blog/2019/09/cpj-joins-letter-to-pope-francis-urging-focus-on-h.php; "Estacio Valoi's Detention Diary," *Club of Mozambique*, December 21, 2018, https://clubofmozambique.com/news/estacio-valois-detention-diary/.

[99] Matsinhe and Valoi, "The Genesis of Insurgency in Northern Mozambique," 11

[100] "CPJ Joins Call for Immediate and Unconditional Release of Mozambican Radio Journalist Amade Abubacar," *Committee to Protect Journalists*, April 11, 2019, https://cpj.org/blog/2019/04/cpj-joins-calls-for-immediate-and-unconditional-re.php; "Another Journalist Arrested Yesterday in Cabo Delgado- MISA Mozambique," *Club of Mozambique*, February 19, 2019, https://clubofmozambique.com/news/another-journalist-arrested-

yesterday-in-cabo-delgado-misa-mozambique/; "Two Mozambican Journalists Freed after Being Held for Months," Reporters Without Borders.

[101] "Uganda: Mozambique and Uganda Sign Cooperation Agreement," *AllAfrica*, May 18, 2018, https://allafrica.com/stories/201805210212.html; "Congolese Authorities Pledge Support Against Extremists-Mozambique," *Club of Mozambique*, June 5, 2018, https://clubofmozambique.com/news/congolese-authorities-pledge-support-against-extremists-mozambique/; and "Tanzania, Mozambique Sign MoU in Curbing Terrorism, Drugs Trafficking," *Club of Mozambique,* January 16, 2018, https://clubofmozambique.com/news/tanzania-mozambique-sign-mou-in-curbing-terrorism-drugs-trafficking/.

[102] Borges Nhamire, "Russia Boosts Military Cooperation with Mozambique after Attacks," Bloomberg, March 7, 2018, https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-03-07/russia-boosts-military-cooperation-with-mozambique-after-attacks.

[103] Peter Fabricius, "Wagner Private Military Force Licks Wounds in Northern Mozambique," *Daily Maverick*, November 29, 2019, https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2019-11-29-wagner-private-military-force-licks-wounds-in-northern-mozambique/.

[104] Sergey Sukhankin, "Russia Prepares a Foothold in Mozambique: Risks and Opportunities," *Eurasia Daily Maverick,* The Jamestown Foundation, October 15, 2019, https://jamestown.org/program/russia-prepares-a-foothold-in-mozambique-risks-and-opportunities/.

[105] Fabricius, "Wagner Private Military Force Licks Wounds in Northern Mozambique."

[106] Ilya Arkhipov, Matthew Hill, and Borges Nhamire, "Russia Denies it has Any Troops Stationed in Mozambique," Bloomberg, October 8, 2019, https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-10-08/russia-denies-it-has-any-troops-stationed-in-mozambique.

[107] Andrew McGregor, "Why Mozambique is Outsourcing Counter-Insurgency to Russia: Hidden Loans and Naval Bases," *Eurasia Daily Monitor,* The Jamestown Foundation, November 4, 2019, https://jamestown.org/program/why-mozambique-is-outsourcing-counter-insurgency-to-russia-hidden-loans-and-naval-bases/.

[108] Ibid.

[109] Fabricius, "Wagner Private Military Force Licks Wounds in Northern Mozambique."

[110] Matsinhe and Valoi, "The Genesis of Insurgency in Northern Mozambique," 14.

[111] Philip Kleinfeld, "Fear, Hunger, and Mystery Killers Stalk Mozambique's Cabo Delgado," *The New Humanitarian*, December 4, 2019, https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/feature/2019/12/4/Mozambique-Cabo-Delgado-hunger-displaced-crisis.

[112] "Mozambique: Security Forces Abusing Suspected Insurgents," Human Rights Watch, December 4, 2018, https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/12/04/mozambique-security-forces-abusing-suspected-insurgents.

[113] Matsinhe and Valoi, 6.

[114] "Mozambique: Christmas Day Attacks in Cabo Delgado- AIM Report," *Club of Mozambique*, December 29, 2019, https://clubofmozambique.com/news/mozambique-christmas-day-attacks-in-cabo-delgado-aim-report-149921/.

[115] "UNICEF Mozambique Cyclones Idai and Kenneth Situation Report #12," *ReliefWeb*, July 31, 2019, https://reliefweb.int/report/mozambique/unicef-mozambique-cyclones-idai-and-kenneth-situation-report-12-march-july-2019.

[116] Kleinfeld, "Fear, Hunger, and Mystery Killers Stalk Mozambique's Cabo Delgado."

[117] Amy Hart, "Peace in the Land of Upright People: Religion and Violence in Burkina Faso," *Journal for the Study of Religion* 27, no. 2 (2014): 179.

[118] Ernest Harsch, "The Legacies of Thomas Sankara: a Revolutionary Experience in Retrospect," *Review of African Political Economy* 40, no. 137 (2013): 360; 362–63.

[119] Adam Nossiter, "Meeting in Mali Aims to Head Off a War: Diplomat Says Islamists Want to Negotiation, but Qaeda Ties Must End First," *International Herald Tribune*, August 9, 2012, 8; Tiemoko Diallo, "Burkina Faso Calls Upon Mali to Open Talks with Northern Rebels," Reuters, November 24, 2012, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mali-burkina-crisis/burkina-faso-calls-upon-mali-to-open-talks-with-northern-rebels-idUSBRE8AN0AT20121124.

[120] Julien Mechaussie, "Burkina Faso – a Terrorist Gold Mine," *AllAfrica*, November 17, 2019, https://www.dw.com/en/burkina-faso-a-terrorist-gold-mine/a-51287073.

[121] Joe Penney, "Blowback in Africa: How America's Counterterror Strategy Helped Destabilize Burkina Faso," *The Intercept*, November 22, 2018, https://theintercept.com/2018/11/22/burkina-faso-us-relations/

[122] Ibid.

[123] "Roch Marc Christian Kabore Elected Burkina Faso President," BBC News, December 1, 2015, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-34971505.

[124] "Armed Conflict Event Location Database," Burkina Faso Regional Overview, 2019, https://acleddata.com/tag/burkina-faso/.

[125] James Tasamba, "UN Says Violence Displaces 4,000 Daily in Burkina Faso," *Andalou Agency,* February 22, 2020, https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/un-says-violence-displaces-4-000-daily-in-burkina-faso/1741535#.

[126] "Burkina Faso Population 1960–2018 Data," Trading Economics, https://tradingeconomics.com/burkina-faso/population.

[127] "Populations at Risk: Burkina Faso," Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, January 15, 2020, https://www.globalr2p.org/countries/burkina-faso/.

[128] Data available on *The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project* (*ACLED*), updated 2020, https://acleddata.com/2020/02/27/regional-overview-africa16-22-february-2020/.

[129] "Unity is the Exception. Alliance Formation and De-Formation Among Armed Actors in Northern Mali," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 29, no. 4 (2018): 666–68; "Mapping Armed Groups in Mali and the Sahel," European Council on Foreign Relations, updated May 2019, https://www.ecfr.eu/mena/sahel_mapping/isgs.

[130] Héni Nsaibia and Caleb Weiss, "Ansaroul Islam and the Growing Terrorist Insurgency in Burkina Faso," *Combating Terrorism Center Sentinel* 11, no. 3 (March 2018), https://ctc.usma.edu/ansaroul-islam-growing-terrorist-insurgency-burkina-faso/.

[131] John Campbell, "Islamist Terrorism Spreads to Eastern Burkina Faso," *Council of Foreign Relations*, December 13, 2018, https://www.cfr.org/blog/islamist-terrorism-spreads-eastern-burkina-faso; see also Hermann Boko, "In Burkina Faso, the Terrorist Threat is Spreading to the East," *France24,* September 8, 2018, https://www.france24.com/en/20180908-burkina-faso-terrorism-threat-spreading-east-g5-sahel-mali-aqim-gsim-al-qaeda-jihad.

[132] International Crisis Group, "The Social Roots of Jihadist Violence in Burkina Faso's North," Report 254 / Africa, October 12, 2017, https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/burkina-faso/254-social-roots-jihadist-violence-burkina-fasos-north.

[133] Pauline Le Roux, "Ansaroul Islam: The Rise and Decline of a Militant Islamist Group in the Sahel," July 29, 2019, https://africacenter.org/spotlight/ansaroul-islam-the-rise-and-decline-of-a-militant-islamist-group-in-the-sahel/; Human Rights Watch, "By Day We Fear the Army, by Night the Jihadists," May 21, 2018, https://www.hrw.org/report/2018/05/21/day-we-fear-army-night-jihadists/abuses-armed-islamists-and-security-forces.

[134] International Crisis Group, "The Social Roots of Jihadist Violence in Burkina Faso's North"; Philip Kleinfeld, "Burkina Faso, Part 2: Communities Buckle as Conflict Ripples through the Sahel," April 18, 2019, The New Humanitarian, https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/special-report/2019/04/18/burkina-faso-part-2-communities-buckle-conflict-ripples-through-sahel.

[135] Human Rights Watch, "By Day We Fear the Army, by Night the Jihadists."

[136] International Crisis Group, "The Social Roots of Jihadist Violence in Burkina Faso's North."

[137] Ibid.

[138] Morgane Le Cam, "Comment est né Ansaroul Islam, premier groupe djihadiste de l'Histoire du Burkina Faso," *Le Monde,* April 12, 2017, https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2017/04/11/comment-est-ne-ansaroul-islam-premier-groupe-djihadiste-de-l-histoire-du-burkina-faso_5109520_3212.html.

[139] Ibid.

[140] International Crisis Group, "The Social Roots of Jihadist Violence in Burkina Faso's North."

[141] Ibid.

[142] Human Rights Watch, "By Day We Fear the Army, by Night the Jihadists."

[143] Le Cam, "Comment est né Ansaroul Islam, premier groupe djihadiste de l'Histoire du Burkina Faso."

[144] Le Cam, "Comment est né Ansaroul Islam, premier groupe djihadiste de l'Histoire du Burkina Faso"; Human Rights Watch, "By Day We Fear the Army, by Night the Jihadists."

[145] International Crisis Group, "The Social Roots of Jihadist Violence in Burkina Faso's North"; Human Rights Watch, "By Day We Fear the Army, by Night the Jihadists."

[146] Le Roux, "Ansaroul Islam: The Rise and Decline of a Militant Islamist Group in the Sahel."

[147] "The Changing Face of Burkina Faso's Terrorist Threat," The Conversation, January 26, 2020, https://theconversation.com/the-changing-face-of-burkina-fasos-terrorist-threat-130267.

[148] International Crisis Group, "The Social Roots of Jihadist Violence in Burkina Faso's North" See also Roland Benedikter and Ismaila Ouedraogo, "Extremist Expansion in Burkina Faso: Origins and Solutions," *IPI Global Observatory*, May 12, 2017, https://theglobalobservatory.org/2017/05/burkina-faso-extremism-al-qaeda-ansarul-islam/.

[149] David Lewis and Ryan McNeill, "How Jihadists Struck Gold in Africa's Sahel," *Reuters Special Report*, November 22, 2019, https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/gold-africa-islamists/.

[150] Phillip Sandner, "Burkina Faso: A Terrorist Gold Mine," DW News Africa, November 11, 2019. https://www.dw.com/en/burkina-faso-a-terrorist-gold-mine/a-51287073.

[151] John Campbell, "Security Service Human Rights Violations in Burkina Faso," *Council on Foreign Relations*, March 27, 2019, https://www.cfr.org/blog/security-service-human-rights-violations-burkina-faso; see also "Burkina Army Investigating Claims its Troops Carried out Executions," Reuters, March 15, 2019, https://af.reuters.com/article/idAFKCN1QW0UD-OZATP.

[152] Penney, "Blowback in Africa."

[153] "Sahel Crisis: Burkina Faso to Arm Civilians against Militants," BBC News, February 3, 2020. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-51268809

[154] "Violent Extremism in the Sahara Sahel," *Club du Sahel et de L'Afrique de l'Ouest,* updated 2017, http://www.west-africa-brief.org/content/en/violent-extremism-sahara-sahel

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing the burden, to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.
PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.

1. REPORT DATE	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED *(From–To)*
March 2020	FINAL	

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE

Interpreting Group Tactics and the Role of the Government's Response in the Crisis in Cabo Delgado: Lessons for Combatting Violent Extremism in Africa

5a. CONTRACT NUMBER
HQ0034-14-D-0001

5b. GRANT NUMBER

5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER

6. AUTHOR(S)

Bekoe, Dorina A.
Burchard, Stephanie M.
Daly, Sarah A.
Swift, Austin C.

5d. PROJECT NUMBER
CRP 550Q

5e. TASK NUMBER

5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)

Institute for Defense Analyses
4850 Mark Center Drive
Alexandria, VA 22311-1882

8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER

IDA Document NS D-13155

9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)

Institute for Defense Analyses
4850 Mark Center Drive
Alexandria, VA 22311-1882

10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)

IDA

11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)

12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited (16 July 2020).

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

14. ABSTRACT

The emergence of an extremist group in Mozambique's northern province of Cabo Delgado, with a particular penchant for brutal attacks against security officials and ordinary citizens alike, has prompted many to re-examine Mozambique's social and conflict dynamics. Our report makes use of on-the-ground interviews with subjects from a variety of sectors and backgrounds, many of whom have direct connections to stakeholders in Cabo Delgado, to (1) provide an overview of what is currently known about the origins and drivers of the violent extremist threat in Cabo Delgado; (2) describe the ongoing violence in significant detail and examines the implications of the extremist group's tactics, with a particular emphasis on the brutality of the group's attacks; (3) review how the Mozambican government has responded to the threat of violent extremism in the North; and (4) compare events in Mozambique with the conflict currently occurring in Burkina Faso. By analyzing the similarities and differences between these two conflicts, we able to draw out lessons from the patterns and distinctions among these countries and about the circumstances that allow violent extremism to emerge and spread.

15. SUBJECT TERMS

Ahlu Sunna Wa-Jamo (ASWJ); Burkino Faso; Cabo Delgado; FRELIMO (Frente de Liberación de Mozambique); liquid natural gas (LNG); Mozambique; Mozambique National Resistance RENAMO

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON Major, Philip L.
a. REPORT Uncl.	b. ABSTRACT Uncl.	c. THIS PAGE Uncl.	SAR	43	19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER *(include area code)* 703-845-2201

Standard Form 298 (Rev. 8-98)
Prescribed by ANSI Std. Z39.18