



Réseau des Enfants et Jeunes Africains pour les Droits de l'Homme (REJADH)
African Youth and Children Network for Human Rights (YCNR)

Campaign document

October 2016

“The Myth of Maputo”

Theme: Sexual violence

Objective: States have ratified and/or implemented the Maputo Protocol.

The campaign focuses on the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women, also called the Maputo Protocol. The Maputo Protocol was adopted by AU Member States in 2003. Up to date, all countries but Botswana and Egypt have signed the Protocol. However, 14 Member States have not yet ratified, including Somalia, South Sudan and Burundi. Those that have ratified, including Mali and DRC, have not (fully) implemented its dispositions and have not complied with their obligation to provide biennial reports on implementation.¹ National authorities from Burundi, DRC, Mali, Somalia and South Sudan have so far not demonstrated real political will to do ratify and/or implement the Protocol.

The adoption of the Maputo Protocol happened three years after the adoption of UNSCR 1325 (2000). UNSCR 1325 is the foundation of the Women Peace and Security agenda (WPS) and focuses on:

- Women’s participation in all peace processes from pre-negotiation to reconciliation phases
- Prevention and protection of girls and women from sexual violence in conflict and post conflict

The Maputo Protocol itself refers to UNSCR 1325 and guarantees women’s participation through its article 9 “Right to Participation in the Political and Decision-Making Process” and through its article 10 “Right to Peace” that focuses on women’s participation in peace processes. The Protocol also ensures protection from sexual violence in its articles 3 “Right to Dignity”, 4 “The Rights to Life, Integrity and Security of the Person”, 11 “Protection of Women in Armed Conflicts”, 22 “Special Protection of Elderly Women” and 23 “Special Protection of Women with Disabilities”. The full ratification and implementation of the Protocol will lead to comprehensive women’s participation in all peace processes and prevention and protection from sexual violence – both during time of peace and time of conflict. Implementing the Maputo Protocol will indirectly contribute to the implementation of the principles enshrined in UNSCR 1325.

The Maputo Protocol is, as of today, the most progressive supranational norm towards women’s rights. In other things, the Protocol guarantees a life free from violence, including GBV, to women and girls, especially from sexual violence. Unfortunately, the Protocol is not well known among communities and very few people have even heard about it. Most of national authorities and politicians have not demonstrated the will to take it up and to work towards its ratification and implementation. Hence the need to disseminate the Protocol and its content in order to mobilize all Africans to ask for its ratification and implementation and to mobilize all women and girls to ask for the respect of their rights.

Children who live in constant fear due to violence go through an intricate experience since their entire life is disrupted, they become withdrawn and unhappy, and sometimes they even become violent towards others as well. This type of life, in a manner of speaking, is a terrible form of child poverty and we must not let it continue.

That’s why it’s so important for us, as Arigatou International—End Child Poverty and our partnering communities, to invest in building the knowledge and confidence and leadership capacity of young people. So that young people can be part of the positive change to end GBV

¹ Malawi is the only country that has, so far, reported on implementation of the Maputo Protocol to the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights.