Between 2008-2012 a series of protests were held in Mozambique against the rising cost of living, as well as the county’s widespread inequality and political corruption1. Food was the primary source of concern for Mozambicans, which by 2010 had risen to the highest level in 2 years2. At that time, a study published by the GlobalAlliance for Improved Nutrition found that “44 per cent of Mozambican children suffer from stunted growth and nearly 20 per cent of those younger than five are underweight.”2 Members of the public thus grew increasingly frustrated with the lack of adequate government response and began to organize protests in cities across the country1.

This period of widespread social unrest brought rise to new forms of collaborative storytelling to detail the outcomes of the public protests. In particular, a blog by Carlos Serra called Diário de um sociólogo, or “Diary of a Sociologist” once a repository of sociological analyses and reflections, became a critical form of participatory journalism3. While mainstream media outlets offered limited, and oftentimes inaccurate information related to the protests, the blog became an alternative public sphere to mobilize Mozambicans.

Carlos Serra stated in an interview that it was “the first, often the only, but always the most detailed and in-depth source of information and analysis […] with dozens of daily entries and updates”4.

Through eye witness accounts provided via text messages, phone calls and emails, the story of the protests was told as the events unfolded. The blog described “scenes of vandalism’, shots being fired in the zones of Xiquelene, Hulene and Mavalane, and the ‘involvement of young people who are minors’”4. It details the moments when “streets were barricaded, tyres burned, cars damaged and bonfires lit”4. Through the increase in the blog’s popularity, a network of citizen journalists was formed across the country. This new means of political participation helped mobilize citizens to advocate on their own behalves, and ultimately led to the development of a range of government subsidies to help lessen the financial burden placed on Mozambicans by the rising cost of living5.

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