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REPUBLIC OF MOÇAMBIQUE | Província de Cabo Delgado

Protection Analysis Update

Update on conflict related protection risks trends

JANUARY 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Northern Mozambique a significant number of people are returning to their districts in Cabo Delgado amid continued displacement and attacks by Non-State Armed Groups (NSAGs). Insufficient humanitarian assistance in areas of displacement, limited livelihood opportunities, challenges in accessing land and the perceived improvement of the security situation contribute to IDPs returning to their areas of origin. Up until August 2023, NSAGs had targeted security forces and are seeking communities' acceptance through commercial exchange, with attacks against civilians driving displacement, including forced displacement of newly returned IDPs. Attacks against civilians in Mocimboa da Praia and Macomia districts in September and December 2023, as well as in January 2024, have added to the complexity of the response.

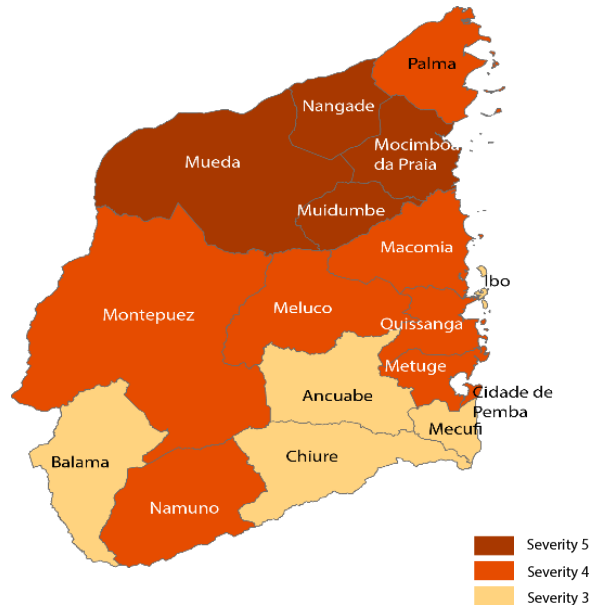
According to [DTM-IOM Round 19](#), the number of IDPs in Cabo Delgado decreased to 627,846 people as of August 2023, while the number of returnees increased to 540,958. 55% of IDPs in the country live in host communities, while the remaining displaced population reside in IDP sites. Returns are taking place in areas where insecurity persists, or where the government's ability to provide basic social services has been hampered by the destruction of public infrastructure. This has prompted IDP mixed-movements between areas of return and displacement, as well as between urban/peri-urban locations and rural villages. Returnees require humanitarian assistance until development and stabilization programming scale up and national services are re-established. Although a large number of IDPs have physically "returned" to their district of origin, the majority do not meet the eight criteria of the [IASC Framework for Durable Solutions](#), which prescribes when a durable solution is achieved. Human rights and international humanitarian law violations combined with limited capacity of the Mozambican government and humanitarian actors to address the affected population needs have had a cumulatively devastating effect on the population's coping capacities and increased their vulnerabilities, escalating existing protection risks. The overall protection environment in Cabo Delgado requires continuous protection assessment and analysis to early-warning purposes and to subsidize adequate response. The most critical protection risks identified are:

1. **Forced recruitment and association of children in armed forces and armed groups**
2. **Sexual violence against women and girls**
3. **Unvoluntary and induced returns in adverse circumstances**
4. **Impediments and restrictions to effective access to land and tenure security**
5. **Limitations and restrictions to access to information, including meaningful engagement and consultation**

URGENT ACTIONS NEEDED

Amidst the continued conflict in Cabo Delgado and protection risks, it is of utmost importance to:

- Ensure the protection of the civilian population, including establishment of clear monitoring mechanisms and protocols, and a robust approach to activate and support dedicated Protection of Civilians (PoC) mechanisms at a district level.
- Immediately reinforce all available means and mechanisms, including institutional structures, to ensure meaningful community consultation, engagement and accountability to affected population to reduce unsafe and uninformed returns of IDPs in adverse circumstances, access to response mechanisms and enhance the potential of durable solutions.
- Revitalize the existing emergency protection response to provide an efficient, coordinated and tailored response to the important number of persons forcibly displaced, in light of the increase of attacks by the end of 2023.



| People in Need | People Targeted |
|----------------|-----------------|
|----------------|-----------------|

1,424 million

772,000

The above figures are from the HRP 2024 Mozambique Response

CONTEXT

| FATALITIES | | ORGANIZED VIOLENT EVENTS | | IDP CONFLICT | | RETURNEES | | IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE DEVICES | |
|------------|--------|--------------------------|--------|----------------|--------|----------------|--------|------------------------------|--------|
| 270 | | 177 | | 627,846 | | 540,958 | | 21 | |
| % PERIOD | % YEAR | % PERIOD | % YEAR | % PERIOD | % YEAR | % PERIOD | % YEAR | % PERIOD | % YEAR |
| - | -85% | - | -82% | - | -28% | - | +258% | - | +2100% |

Source for statistics on civilian casualties and organized violent events: ACLED January 2022 –December 2023.

Since 2017, Northern Mozambique has been the epicentre of a conflict resulting from attacks perpetrated by NSAGs. According to ACLED, the conflict has caused 5,702 fatalities since 2017, of which 2,484 are civilian casualties. Furthermore, property has been lost, villages, settlements, and infrastructure have been destroyed, the availability of basic services has become even more limited, civil administration has been severely impacted and over a million people have been forcibly displaced within Cabo Delgado and towards other provinces of Mozambique. The most recent development during the reporting period has been characterized by a steady return movement of IDPs to their areas of origin, with an increase of 188,521 returnees from November 2022 to August 2023, according to [DTM-IOM Round 19](#).

Comparatively, NSAG activity in the first half of 2023 was lower than in the same period in 2022. According to ACLED, between January and December 2022, a total of 984 incidents were reported, resulting in a total of 1,752 fatalities, while in a similar period of 2023, a total of 177 violent actions were reported, causing a total of 270 fatalities (among which 75 were civilian). According to ACLED, there have been changes in the NSAGs’ “modus operandis” in the reporting period, with most violent attacks being directed at security forces rather than civilians, in an apparent change of strategy towards the local communities in an attempt at “winning hearts and minds”. However, this approach was subject to several conditions for the communities, such as cooperating with the NSAGs, facilitating trade and goods supplies, and not cooperating with security forces ([ACLED](#)).

While in the first half of 2022, NSAGs attacks were recorded for the first time in Cabo Delgado's southern districts, the first half of 2023 saw NSAG attacks limited to the northern districts of Cabo Delgado, mainly Macomia, Muidumbe and the southern part of Mocimboa da Praia. Nevertheless, the period of June to October 2023 saw an increase in armed clashes between NSAGs and armed forces in these three districts, which has impacted civilians, particularly children, after a period of relative calm observed in the previous quarter. As of 14 September, 18 people were reportedly killed by beheading by NSAGs during attacks in Mocimboa da Praia district ([ACLED](#)). The year of 2023 has also seen an increase in the use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) by NSAGs. According to reports by ACLED, a total of 21 documented instances of IED incidents were reported in 2023 in comparison with only one in 2022. These incidents have all been registered in areas under military operations, namely in the districts of Macomia and Mocimboa da Praia. The return of communities to their areas of origin exposes them to additional protection risks such as unexploded devices, as many are returning to areas in which heavy armed clashes between NSAGs and security forces occurred, increasing the risk of civilians being affected by explosive remnants of war (ERW) and/or unexploded ordnances (UXO).

As the armed conflict in Cabo Delgado will enter its seventh year in 2024, continued violations of International Human Rights Law (IHRL) and of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) continue to displace populations, expose them to additional protection risks and fuel grievances. As of December 2023, protection actors have reported incidents of killings, including alleged extrajudicial killings, abductions, forced displacement, severe limitations to the freedom of movement, sexual and physical assault, survival sex, sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), gender-based violence (GBV), physical, mental, sexual and psychological violence, alleged forced disappearances, recruitment and use of children, arbitrary arrests and detention, destruction and looting of homes and property. These have also been highlighted by the [United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights](#).

The conflict can also be characterized as “complex” due to the different parties involved, which include the Mozambican armed forces (Forças Armadas de Defesa de Moçambique – FADM), the Southern African Development Community Mission in

Mozambique (SAMIM) and the Rwandan Defense Force, which are all involved in countering the attacks and threats posed by NSAGs across Cabo Delgado. Other actors involved included the *Força Local* and the *Namparamas*. *Força Local* is fighting on the side of the Mozambican Armed Forces and have since become an official part of the Mozambican military structure.

In this context, challenging security, material, legal, social, and living conditions have been preventing IDPs and returnees from finding durable solutions in a consistent and dignified manner.

UNDERSERVED AND CONFLICT-AFFECTED AREAS

The Protection Cluster's response at the end of 2023 was ongoing in all 17 districts of the Cabo Delgado province to address the protection needs of the affected populations. However, there are variations in the scale, scope, and quality of the response across the districts. Notably, there is a larger concentration of displaced populations and protection partners in the southern districts (Pemba, Metuge and Montepuez), whilst fewer partners were present in **Macomia, Meluco, Muidumbe, Nangade and Quissanga**, located in the northeastern part of Cabo Delgado. Reasons include security concerns, lack of funding and challenges in access. According to [DTM-IOM Round 19](#), these five districts host 174,442 IDPs and 163,957 returnees. They have little or limited access to protection response and experience an absence of public services by either Government or Development Actors. These areas do not only host returnee families but also IDPs that have sought refuge in these districts and most recently IDPs that had been displaced within these same districts. In addition, these districts are severely impacted by the conflict and are therefore areas that are highly militarized.

In 2023, the Protection Cluster participated in the Inter-Cluster Rapid Needs Assessments (RNA) to these five districts in order to shed light on the most prominent protection risks and needs of the affected populations. The five inter-cluster missions that had been organized to each respective district highlighted the absence of specialized protection services, including response to gender-based violence (GBV), child protection (CP), housing land and property (HLP), civil documentation, and the absence of specialized services for people with disabilities and others with specific needs. With limited humanitarian response, IDPs in these areas live in a dire humanitarian situation, with inadequate housing, lack of basic services, and with limited access to key economic and social rights, all of which contributes to exposing them to protection risks. Therefore, people returning to their districts of origin do not have access to services since to respond to address their most urgent needs.

In addition, these areas continue to be impacted by attacks by NSAGs, which further triggers displacement. These attacks have resulted in family separation during flight, gender-based violence, incidents of abduction and civilian casualties. This also means that recently "returning" IDPs who were just re-starting their lives are displaced a second or third time and are further exposed to a multitude of risks such as protection risks arising from staying long term in over-crowded spaces. Protection Cluster partners have reported on the urgent need of food and shelter/NFI, individual protection assistance, civil documentation, MHPSS and access to public services, as further explained by the Protection Cluster's Reports following the attacks in September 2023, in Moçimboa da Praia ([Flash Report no. 1](#); [Flash Report no. 2](#)) and Macomia ([Flash Report – Ibo and Quissanga](#)).

DETERIORATION OF CONDITIONS IN DISPLACEMENT AREAS

The year of 2023 was marked by a decrease of humanitarian assistance in Southern Cabo Delgado where IDPs are concentrated (and herein called "displacement areas"). This decrease has also continued in early 2024, further reducing support to IDPs concentrated in southern Cabo Delgado. Despite the protracted nature of displacement across different districts of Cabo Delgado Province, most IDPs in these southern districts are still relying on humanitarian support due to challenges in accessing livelihood opportunities, including access to small rural landholdings known as *machambas* that Mozambicans traditionally have used to survive. Although announcements have been made that additional stabilisation and development programmes are scaling up, these still require time for their impacts to be felt at community and household level. Hence, humanitarian aid will continue to be necessary to support the transition from humanitarian to development support at the same time as self-reliance and resilience-building activities scale up in both displacement and return areas.

A major development during the reporting period has been the reduction in funding to various humanitarian partners operating in Cabo Delgado. For instance, according to OCHA's Financial Tracking System, the HRP in 2021 was 36.1% funded compared to 12.9% funded for 2023 for all sectors. This has also impacted, among others, the distribution of food assistance.

Yet, with the reduction of food distribution due to funding constraints, IDPs reported not having another option but to look for ways to survive, sometimes resorting to harmful coping mechanisms that heighten protection risks ([Protection Cluster's Community Consultation on durable solutions](#), 2023 and [UNHCR Protection Monitoring Report April-June 2023](#)), including through theft, begging, or survival sex in the case of women and girls.

Furthermore, in some areas, the plots of lands allocated to IDPs within sites were distributed without providing tenure security and were either fallow and/or far from IDP sites, forcing IDPs to travel long distances to reach their fields. Therefore, with virtually no effective or secure access to quality land or natural resources to provide for their livelihoods, IDPs in sites have been almost solely dependent on humanitarian aid, which has reduced substantially in the past months due to funding limitations. Finally, tensions between IDPs and host communities and discrimination by host against IDPs have further hindered the prospect for local integration and thus encouraging further movements or returns.

Adding to this context, IDPs are discriminated against when seeking employment, in accessing services and in accessing land as informed by Protection Cluster Partners ([Protection Cluster's Community Consultation on durable solutions](#), 2023). [AVSI's multisectoral assessment \(May 2023\)](#) confirms that the main source of conflict between IDPs and host communities is access to land and water. Furthermore, according to UNFPA's study on *Access to Justice for GBV services* (July 2023), the majority of host community members believe that IDPs need to prove they are members of their community before receiving GBV support, highlighting the persistent belief that services for IDPs are conditional rather than guaranteed. All these dynamics demonstrate an increased deterioration of social cohesion, further impeding local integration.

IMPEDIMENTS AND RESTRICTIONS TO ACCESS LEGAL IDENTITY

The conflict has negatively impacted access to and contributed to loss of civil documentation of the population since these valuable documents for accessing services and human rights were either left behind or destroyed during the flight of IDPs to safer districts. According to recent protection monitoring, around 31% of IDPs do not possess civil documentation, 88% of which reporting their civil documentation being lost or destroyed as a direct consequence of the conflict and/or displacement, according to [UNHCR Protection Monitoring exercises](#) (Jan to Sep 2023).

This situation is directly increasing vulnerabilities and deprives the affected population of the necessary capacity to cope with the complex set of threats they are affected by, exacerbating critical protection risks including: exposure to extortion, harassment; arbitrary detention by authorities as their inability to identify individuals can lead to them being considered as potential NSAGs; exposure of women and girls to GBV at the hands of law enforcement officials and other actors in power or authority positions; discrimination and stigma; lack of freedom of movement; child protection risks as the children cannot prove their age, such as child marriage and pregnancy, child recruitment, underage labor, incarceration of children in adult facilities, difficulties in family reunification processes, as well as barriers to access education, employment, justice, healthcare, bank services and access to humanitarian aid (Community Consultation on intentions and solutions, [Mueda](#) and [Montepuez](#), 2023). Women are not only at higher risk of harassment and abuse from authorities but have also reduced freedom of movement and access to healthcare and other services. Specifically, women and girls have reported being exposed to the risk of sexual harassment and assault by armed forces at checkpoints and roadblocks, being particularly vulnerable when lacking ID cards or when their belongings are searched, according to [UNHCR's safety audits \(2022 and 2023\)](#). The lack of civil documentation has been identified as a risk factor for Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) as it increases individuals' reliance on local leaders who provide identification forms that can be used to access aid ([Mozambique SEA Risk Matrix](#), 2023).

The UNHCR [Protection Monitoring exercises](#), the [DTM Mobility Tracking Assessment - Round 19](#) and the [RRM reports](#) published throughout the year highlight civil documentation as one of the most pressing protection need for IDPs, which was also highlighted in [OCHA's coordinated inter-cluster mission to underserved areas in 2023](#). [UNHCR Protection Monitoring Report April-June 2023](#) highlights additional barriers for those who lost their civil documentation as the costs related to their reacquisition can be prohibitively expensive for affected populations, either to the fees associated with the documents themselves, or the cost to reach the civil registries. The same report also presents the disparity in access to civil documentation among the affected population with a higher proportion of IDP respondents in host communities not having any civil documentation than IDPs in sites. The lack of civil documentation also hinders IDPs' self-sufficiency, limiting access to durable solutions since civil documentation is a prerequisite to access the formal labour market and to the full exercise of HLP rights.

PROTECTION RISKS

RISK 1

Forced Recruitment and Association of Children in Armed Forces and Armed Groups

The reporting period was characterized by two major developments which add to the complexity of the protection environment and the further militarization of the conflict. First, the re-emergence of the *Namparamas* in Cabo Delgado as an armed actor in November 2022, a voluntary self-defense group also formerly active during the Mozambique civil war period. In Cabo Delgado, they re-emerged in Namuno District as a community initiative and, as observed in the past in the context of the Mozambique Civil War, their members base their power on “spiritual magic” to protect the community from conflict related violence. Their involvement in the current armed conflict triggers serious protection risks for the civilian population. One of them being the group’s alleged involvement in [killing of civilians](#), aggressive behaviour, illegal screening of civilians, including violent body searches of men and women, as reported by Protection Cluster partners. Also, further reports indicate further involvement of the *Namparamas* in incidents affecting civilian safety and security, including riots beating, arresting, looting and torching property ([Lessons Learned or Ignored: New Insights from the Mozambican Civil War](#), 2022). The *Namparamas* lack legal recognition, furthering concerns on the lack of oversight and accountability for its members’ human rights violations. In addition, the lack of clear understanding of *Namparamas*’ recruitment, particularly child recruitment and training practices, also increases the likelihood of risks associated with protection incidents.

Secondly, on 14 April 2023, the Mozambican government approved an amendment to the 2019 legislation governing the Defence and Security Armed Forces ([Lei da Defesa Nacional e das Forças Armadas de Defesa de Moçambique, no 18/2019 de 24 de setembro](#)) to grant legal status to a communal militia, commonly known as *Força Local*. The legalization of *Força Local* is intended to “strengthen the role of FADM in combating and containing the spread of terrorists incursions, protection of community settlements and public and private infrastructure”, according to the [Minister of Defence](#). Within this amendment, *Força Local* now operates within a specific legal framework and within FADM’s command structure. The Protection Cluster has identified risks and challenges from this legalization, such as lack of age verification processes for recruitment into the *Força Local* which are further complicated by the lack of access to civil documentation in Cabo Delgado. This is highlighted in the report on Children and Armed-Conflict ([Secretary-General Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict](#), June 2023), where the Secretary General raises concerns on the recruitment and use of children by *Força local*, with the identification and verification of one case. There are also concerns related to the support provided to the *Força Local* to ensure they are effectively trained in order to prevent the risks of misconduct and abuse against the civilian population. Some of these risks have been raised through the Protection Cluster, AoRs and safety audits where harassment, physical assault and sexual abuse of women and girls have been raised ([UNHCR GBV Safety Audits, 2022 and 2023](#); and [Protection Cluster’s mission to Moçimboa da Praia, Dec. 2022](#)).

The NSAGs are the main perpetrators of abduction, recruitment and use, killing and maiming of children in Cabo Delgado. The Secretary General report states that 133 children (72 boys, 61 girls) were verified to have been recruited and used by NSAG in support roles, such as porters and spies and combatant roles. It is concerning that there are trends for both girls and boys to be abducted for use in the armed groups and even more disturbing that there are children as young as 2 years old that faced this violation ([Secretary-General Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict](#), June 2023). In 2023, the UN have reported continued trends in the abduction and recruitment of children by armed groups, for example in recent attacks in [Pangane](#), [Macomia District](#) and [Naquitengue, Moçimboa da Praia](#) (September 2023), where preliminary reports indicate the abduction of children and youth. This calls for increased attention to implement prevention measures for children’s abduction and recruitment into armed groups. Children who have escaped from NSAGs have experienced atrocities during their abduction and roles within the armed group and have sometimes been involved in physical or sexual violence. Once released or escaped, they can suffer further victimization, as they are considered as ex-NSAG and, as such, can be exposed to discrimination, stigmatization and rejection from their communities. From January to October 2023, 353 liberated children that were associated with armed forces and armed groups were identified and efforts are made to reintegrate them in their families and communities with the provision of access to mental-health and psychosocial support services and life skills activities (Child

Protection AoR, 2023). In addition, liberated children were reported held under administrative detention for alleged association with NSAGs for prolonged periods of time, while they or their caregivers are investigated for suspected ties to NSAGs, or detained in adult's facilities with disregard for their vulnerabilities, further violating their rights and exacerbating the trauma they experienced. The Secretary General reports the detention of three children by the FADM for alleged association with NSAGs; two of them are reported to be released ([Secretary-General Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict](#), June 2023).

RISK 2 Sexual violence against women and girls

The [GBV AoR Bi-annual report June 2023](#) report indicates that, in conflict areas, sexual abuse, trafficking and forced marriage are amongst the most often GBV-related rights violations. Fear of sexual violence during NSAG attacks is also a key reason for women and girls' first displacement as well as secondary displacement. [Human Rights Watch](#) states that hundreds of women and girls have been kidnapped by the NSAG and forced into marriage or used as sex slaves. They face stigmatization and rejection from their communities upon their return. According to a [Protection Cluster mission to Mocimboa held in December 2022](#), the needs of women and adolescent girls who have returned with children born out of forced marriages to the NSAGs have not been adequately catered for. Abducted women and girls for the purpose of sexual slavery, as a result of which victims and their children, including those born into captivity, have suffered devastating physical and psychological repercussions, as reminded by the [Secretary General's Conflict-Related Sexual Violence report \(July 2023\)](#). Some women and girls, including their children, have also been arbitrarily detained for prolonged periods, while investigated for suspected ties to NSAGs.

Sexual violence is also widespread in areas of displacement where 87% of GBV are reported, according to [UNHCR's Incident Trends Analysis](#), whilst showing displacement locations are unsafe for women and girls. Adolescent girls and young women are often more exposed to other protection risks related to sex work or survival sex in exchange for food or to meet their basic needs, almost always done without the use of protection which increases the exposure to HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. They are also exposed to conflict-related sexual violence as they face sexual assault by weapon bearers ([Secretary General's Conflict-Related Sexual Violence report - July 2023](#)). [UNHCR Protection Monitoring](#) (Jan-Sep 2023) has identified 98 cases of women and girls forced to sell sex for assistance or services, as a result of their socio-economic situation.

This already fragile protection situation is compounded by high risk of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). Given the extreme vulnerability of the populations affected by the conflict and displacement, the modality of beneficiary registration, capacity gaps and barriers in accessing community-based reporting mechanisms, the occurrence for SEA is extremely high. SEA incidents have been reported, including instances in which community leaders demanded money or sex in exchange for humanitarian assistance and inclusion in distribution lists ([CARE](#), 2022; [UNHCR Safety Audits, 2022 and 2023](#); [Mozambique SEA Risk Matrix](#), 2023). The risk of SEA perpetrated by humanitarian workers in this context is also high. Additional exposure to SEA is seen for women without civil documentation who require testimonies or declarations to support their inclusion on beneficiary lists for humanitarian assistance. Women and children leading households, and children who are separated or unaccompanied are particularly at risk of SEA. Protection partners identified additional barriers to reporting when perpetrators are local leaders, who are themselves tasked by the authorities in drawing up lists of beneficiaries for humanitarian assistance. Positive developments have emerged at government level, including the updating and validation of a new Code of Conduct for the INGD (*Instituto Nacional de Gestão e Redução do Risco de Desastres*), which identifies community leaders as "humanitarian actors" who should also be bound by the principles within INGD's Code of Conduct. In 2023, the Protection Cluster and the PSEA Network also strengthened their collaboration with the Social and Environmental Safeguarding Division within the INGD appointed in 2022 aimed at advancing protection and PSEA efforts ([Mozambique SEA Risk Matrix](#), 2023).

Structural inequalities, gender norms and power dynamics enabling greater representativeness to men than to women drive sexual violence against women and girls in communities. The lower level of literacy of women than that of men, increases inequality and the inability to access information ([GBV AoR Secondary Data Review](#)). Men owning most of leadership roles in community, and functions in law enforcement and security create an unfavorable protection environment for women and girls. Women are also less likely to own a cell phone, as household revenues tend to be managed by men and women's labour is less likely to be remunerated, making it more difficult to access information or access mechanisms to file a complaint and receive feedback, including regarding SEA related concerns. Finally, the family status of a women can put her at further risk of

SEA and other forms of GBV since women head of household are less respected in society as considered weak and easily manipulated by community leaders and other GBV perpetrators.

The Provinces of Cabo Delgado also presents high prevalence of child marriage, where the rate was reported at 60% before the conflict ([Instituto Nacional de Estatística and UNICEF, 2021](#)). Although prohibited by Mozambican law, the practice is common in the province and is in part driven by socio-cultural practices. Child marriage increased significantly due to displacement, as families increasingly use child marriage as a harmful coping strategy to ease their economic burden ([Save the Children, 2022](#)). All the associated complications of child marriage were correspondingly prevalent at high rates, such as higher rates of morbidity and mortality, adolescent pregnancy puts girls at risk of incomplete education and poor labour market outcomes further affecting their livelihood opportunities and economic dependency. The displacement has also impacted negatively on the access to education for displaced children, which has led girls to enter into relationships at a much earlier age, which result in early and unplanned pregnancies. With displacement increasing separation of families, girls separated from their families can contribute to them being forcibly or deceptively pushed into marriage during flight and in displacement areas. Unaccompanied girls may also engage in early marriage as a coping strategy to ensure their financial security or protection within a marital relationship (GBV AoR Strategy 2023-2025). This also may be linked to the cultural context where the term “marriage” is loosely used to describe women cohabiting with men, possibly but not necessarily confirmed through payment of lobolo, rather than officially being married, through traditional ceremonies, *uniao de facto* or marriage, the latter two of which are actual formal and legal processes. [UNHCR Protection Monitoring exercises](#) (Jan to Sep 2023) have identified 16 cases of families forced to agree to marry their daughters due to their vulnerable socio-economic situation.

Besides the efforts of humanitarian partners, there is limited provision of specialized GBV case management, medical and legal assistance to survivors and unavailability of *Centros de Atendimento Integrado* (the Government’s version of a “one-stop-shop”, which includes a variety of services for survivors such as health care and legal assistance) or safe shelters in Cabo Delgado. There is no existent mechanism or strategy for prevention and response to conflict-related sexual violence (including reintegration of women and girls who experienced abduction and sexual exploitation/abuse by non-state armed groups). ([GBV AoR Bi-annual report, June 2023](#); [Conflict-related sexual violence – Report of the UN Secretary General](#), July 2023).

Women and girls with disabilities are among the most vulnerable and socially excluded groups, being isolated in their homes, overlooked during needs assessments, and not consulted in the design of programs and interventions. They also have difficulties in accessing humanitarian assistance due to a variety of societal, environmental, and communication barriers. Lack of information on where to go and seek sexual and gender-based violence response services, exclusion from participation in different social gatherings, and participation impacted the help-seeking behaviours of women and girls with disabilities. The double discrimination due to gender and disability thus increases exclusion from basic services information, health, education, and work, especially in rural and conflict areas. This heightens the exposure to GBV risks and increases barriers to report GBV and SEA.

The conflict is exacerbating existing structural barriers in access to public services and justice, while disrupting existing government GBV services, which has compounded the existing GBV, SEA and child marriage protection risks. The capacity of the limited GBV services available to provide *quality* responses is extremely limited due to the scale of needs, lack of adequate resourcing and limited technical capacity. GBV survivors’ safety, care and recuperation are hence heavily impacted. Limited focus on prevention programmes and durable solutions, as well as limited GBV mainstreaming in the humanitarian response are gaps further hindering the prevention and response of GBV ([GBV AoR Bi-annual report - June, 2023](#)).

RISK 3 Unvoluntary and induced returns in adverse circumstances

Since autumn 2022 the return of a portion of the IDPs to their areas of origin has been recorded. According [DTM Mobility Tracking Assessment - Round 19](#) (August 2023), an estimated 540,958 returnees were identified in Cabo Delgado Province. People returning to their district of origin account for 46% of those on the move and most of the returnees are recorded in Palma and Mocimboa da Praia districts. Based on [UNHCR Intention Survey](#) (April-June 2023), around half of the displaced population still hope to return to their places of origin (56% in April-June and 57 % in Jan-March 2023) but only a small number plan to do so in the near future (14% immediately, 11% within the next 3 months and 6% within the next 6 months, the remaining 69% would only do it when security/conditions will allow).

Despite the large numbers, the Protection Cluster has often cautioned that these returns should be analyzed carefully before considering them voluntary. These returns are occurring amidst the reduction of humanitarian assistance and the lack of factual, up to date and relevant information provided to IDPs for them to base their decision upon, which questions the voluntariness of these returns ([Protection Cluster's position paper on Principled Returns](#)). This is further confirmed by the continuous protection and security risks still existing in areas of return and the fact that a portion of IDPs have not yet reached their villages of origin or habitual residence but have returned to the "sedes" (or district capitals) of their respective districts.

The intentions of IDPs also varies from place to place, although overall, returns are principally motivated by: lack of services and of livelihood in places of displacement; the need to "re-claim" one's housing, land or property in return areas and tensions with host communities. These motivating factors have also been corroborated by the community consultations coordinated by the Protection Cluster ([Protection Cluster Mission to Moçimboa da Praia](#); Protection Cluster mission to Montepuez, Sept. 2022; [Protection Cluster community consultation in Ibo](#), Dec. 2022; Protection Cluster's [Community Consultation on intentions and solutions](#) in Mueda, June 2023, Protection Cluster's [Community Consultation on Durable Solutions in Montepuez](#), 2023).

IDPs consulted by the Protection Cluster report that if they had easier access to food and livelihoods opportunities for their families they would rather choose to remain in the area of displacement ([Mueda – Community Consultation on intentions and solutions](#), June 2023) as the IDPs in southern Cabo Delgado are struggling to meet their daily needs due to limited access to land ([Land Availability, Accessibility and Use](#), FAO–2023). In Montepuez, the IDPs report feeling "abandoned" and "expelled" from the area of displacement following the authorities' decision to phase out emergency humanitarian assistance and the restructuring of leadership of IDP sites. The latter decisions by the authorities, and despite the resumption of emergency distribution and the restructuring of leadership rather than the dissolution, have encouraged premature return movements of IDPs, and further triggered other protection risks such as family separation as parents decided to leave their children in displacement areas (Protection Cluster's [Community Consultation on Durable Solutions in Montepuez](#), 2023).

The severe reduction of funding for humanitarian assistance, particularly food security assistance has driven IDPs to return. IDPs mentioned that they are being cornered on having to choose between hunger in locations of displacement or returning to their place of origin where the security situation remains uncertain ([Community Consultation on Durable Solutions in Montepuez](#), 2023). Despite WFP having tried to mitigate the harmful consequence of food reduction by targeting those most in need has initiated a "vulnerability-based targeting" (VBT), this has contributed to those who do not meet the criteria feeling compelled to return to their district of origin in the search of livelihoods opportunities or to re-claim their previously abandoned *mashambas*. In Montepuez, for instance, there was a temporary suspension of food and NFIs and the reduction of families receiving food rations impacting families' decision to return. [DTM-IOM Round 19](#) reports a decrease (from 80,911 to 21,031 persons) in the presence of IDPs in Montepuez (April-August 2023), confirming that the level of humanitarian response and assistance in displacement areas has a heavy impact in the decision to return of IDPs to unsuitable areas.

UNHCR Intention surveys have reported that around a third of IDPs mentioned not having sufficient information to be able to make an informed decision. These IDPs have mentioned that they are lacking information on the security situation in the area of origin; what kind of assistance is provided and/or livelihood opportunities; whether social protection programmes are available and whether their children will be able to go to school ([Community Consultation on Durable Solutions in Montepuez](#), 2023). Community consultations done by the Protection Cluster in Mueda also demonstrated that IDPs feel there is a gap on information on the conditions in areas of return. Furthermore, IDPs are still unaware of plans by district authorities that might impact them (Protection Cluster [Mueda – Community Consultation on intentions and solutions](#), June 2023) and IDPs in Montepuez who wish to return mentioned that they would need official, reliable and updated information on durable solutions and on the situation at their place of origin to make an informed decision to remain or return.

On other factors influencing returns, *Linha Verde*, the toll-free inter-agency hotline "1458" for the humanitarian response used by affected population to make requests for information, assistance or raise concerns in relation to humanitarian assistance, reported receiving twelve calls, between April and June 2023, specifically made by IDPs who informed *Linha Verde* that they were requested to return to their areas of origin by local authorities – some of them mentioning that they preferred to remain in their areas of origin but were feeling "pressured" and "prompted" to move back.

Direct or indirect incentive to return relate to various government officials at local, provincial and national level who have

made public statements in the media alluding to greater security situation in return areas, in some instances referring to the expulsion of NSAGs from all districts ([DW, August 2023](#)), although some actors, including the Center of Public Integrity (*Centro de Integridade Publica*), have expressed concerns about this narrative since the relative security is guaranteed by external military operations ([VOA, May 2023](#); [DW, August 2023](#)) and NSAGs attacks are still recorded ([ACLED](#)). Other government officials have also recently publicly refer to the return of the majority of the displaced population and to the resumption of public services in areas of origin ([DW, July 2023](#); [Diario Economico, October 2023](#)), although local organizations, including the Center of Public Integrity and the *Observatorio de Meio Rural*, raised concerns on the precarity of the living conditions in return locations ([VOA, May 2023](#), [Voz de Cabo Delgado, September 2023](#); [OMR, March 2023](#)). Further contributing factors by the government were the distribution of residential documentation (*Atestado de Residencia*) in places of displacement by Moçimboa da Praia District Administration, the radio communications from the government of greater security in Northern Districts ([Protection Cluster Joint Assessment of Empty Shelters](#), Montepuez, Sept. 2022) and the coordination with district authorities to invite IDPs to return ([Protection Cluster's Community Consultation, Ibo District](#)).

Protection partners have also raised concerns regarding the conditions in return areas. Protection risks in areas of return are reported, including military presence in communities, violence against civilian, instances of GBV including conflict related sexual violence, instances of child recruitment and use in hostilities, limited to inexistent access to essential services and absence of specialized protection services. This is further compounded by limited access to land and lack of land tenure security, massive destruction of housing and property, limited livelihood opportunities which perpetuate socioeconomic vulnerabilities across all population groups, exposing individuals, particularly women and girls to further protection risks and human rights violations and abuses ([RRM, 2023](#); [OCHA's RNA, 2023](#)). The inadequate infrastructure and risks related to the presence of unexploded ordnances and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in residential areas and rural lands has also been reported ([Protection Cluster Mission to Moçimboa da Praia](#); [Cabo Ligado](#)). The district with high returnee numbers continue to be impacted by attacks from NSAGs. Incidents of abduction and civilian casualties continue to be recorded, further exposing local populations and returnees to security threats and further displacement ([Protection Cluster Flash Reports, September and October, 2023](#)). According to [AVSI's multisectoral assessment \(May 2023\)](#), respectively 16% and 20% of IDPs surveyed in Nicuapa and Ntele mentioned that “half of the population who returned to their places of origin came back to displacement areas”. Nevertheless, in other locations such as in Palma District, UNHCR Protection Monitoring reported that 100% of the returnees surveyed reported not regretting returning, although Palma did not suffered attacks in 2023 and access to services is provided by authorities, humanitarian, development, and private sector actors.

RISK 4

Impediments and restrictions to effective access to land and tenure security

In Cabo Delgado there are severe impediments to effective access to land for IDPs and returnees, tenure insecurity and restrictions to community awareness of HLP rights, risk of forced evictions, illegal expropriation, illegal occupations, and land conflicts/tensions, which are heavily at the heart of the conflict.

In 2023, the Protection Cluster's Community Consultations on Durable Solutions highlighted the restrictions and impediments to access to land as an important protection risk hindering the potential to achieve local integration in displacement areas ([Mueda](#) and [Montepuez, 2023](#)). According to [UNHCR Jan-Sep 2023 Protection Monitoring](#), only 12% of IDPs reported having a land title (DUAT), meaning 88% are without any tenure security and at heightened risk of forced eviction, illegal expropriation, and illegal occupation. [UNHCR's Protection Monitoring](#) further revealed that for those IDPs who intend to return home, “accessing my HLP in the place of origin” was the second highest reported reason for return. In spite of efforts by authorities to allocate land for cultivation, many displaced families are still negatively impacted by the lack of access to fertile agricultural land, though more than half depend on agriculture for survival ([AVSI Household survey, 2023](#)). Only 15% of IDPs ([study by FAO on access to land \(2023\)](#)) reported having access to agricultural land through host communities (borrowing, allocation by friends/relatives/family, inheritance, land invasion, renting, and buying). Also, 70% of IDPs, 32% of returnees, and 26% of host families reported that, due to their status, they are unable to expand their *machambas* to produce crops to satisfy both household food security and cash generating income. The FAO [Land Availability, Accessibility and Use \(2023\)](#) further points out that while 73% of host community respondents feel their land tenure is secure, only 19% of displaced respondents feel the same. Community leaders have reportedly charged displaced people 500-1,000 meticaís to be able to cultivate land and

construct shelters, making displaced people less willing to relocate or return when they otherwise would have, as this would imply the forfeiting of an investment ([Protection Cluster’s Joint Assessment of Empty Shelters](#), September 2022). The conflict hinders local integration as a solution and the socioeconomic inclusion of IDPs, and often results from the following situations: (i) lack of due diligence in selecting the IDP sites, leading to misunderstandings on who the true owners of the land are, if the latter are willing to lend it for use by displaced people, until when, and with what (if any) implicit or explicit expectations of compensation; (ii) disproportionate distribution of humanitarian assistance to displaced people compared to host communities that also face similar vulnerabilities, leading to resentment among the host community and driving them to forcibly evict displaced people from their allocated land in some instances ([Land Availability, Accessibility and Use](#), FAO–2023). Furthermore, displaced people who occupy abandoned houses, known as secondary or “good faith” occupiers, also face the constant risk of eviction by the legal owner, exposing them to further protection risks ([OCHA multi-sectorial rapid needs assessment, 2023](#)). The 2023 FAO land assessment found widespread reports of forced evictions among IDPs in host communities, and that most displaced people believe they will be evicted within the coming years. ([Land Availability, Accessibility and Use](#), FAO–2023).

In return areas, the destruction of HLP (Housing, Land, and Property) is one of the main concerns. As indicated by [UNHCR’s Jan-Sep 2023 Protection Monitoring exercises](#), 66% of respondents have reported that their HLP in their place of origin is damaged or destroyed, with no program of restitution or compensation. Additionally, an average of 24.2% of returnees in the districts of Mocimboa da Praia, Palma, and Quissanga have reported not finding their land available ([Land Availability, Accessibility and Use](#), FAO–2023). Moreover, with increased returns, arable land and access to the sea for fishing are diminishing, leading to conflicts among the population, as reported by returnees in Palma and Mocimboa da Praia districts to the [Observatorio de Meio Rural](#). The limited access to land or sea triggering conflict is in part due to the increase of population in these two districts, the concentration of returnees in secure areas and the prohibition of fishing by the private sector. Furthermore, security concerns have been reported as a significant impediment for returnees in accessing agricultural land, as highlighted by [OCHA RNA in the Macomia district \(May 2023\)](#), where returnees reported being unable to resume their livelihood activities due to insecurity when accessing their farmland situated far from residential areas, where they may be exposed to conflict related risks and animal attacks. According to FAO in 2022, *four out of five Mozambicans rely on agriculture for their livelihoods* ([FAO, HRP, 2022](#)). Therefore, the challenge of accessing land, especially agricultural land, can have a detrimental impact on the livelihoods of the affected population and significantly hinder the sustainability of returns. In [UNHCR’s Intentions and Return report \(Jan to Sep 2023\)](#), access to HLP ranked as the second main reason for respondents (18%) in Metuge District wanting to return, meanwhile, damaged HLP was reported among respondents (15%) and ranked fourth overall as a reason for not wanting to return. Barriers to accessing HLP rights predate the conflict but have been exacerbated by it, affecting notably vulnerable groups, such as female-headed households, which face constraints in accessing land compared to their male counterparts ([Rapid Needs Assessment, ACTED, 2023](#)), further hindering their ability to sustain themselves and their dependents. There are widespread reports of illegal expropriations in the northern districts of Cabo Delgado that were carried out without consultation and after the rightful owners had fled to displacement areas due to the armed conflict ([CDD 2022](#)). Communities in similar situations in the past have faced a “history of intimidation and persecution of those complaining about land expropriation,” leading them to remain largely silent on such issues ([CDD 2022](#)). The districts most affected by illegal expropriation are implicated in extractive industries and are also the primary districts of return, including Nangade, Mocimboa da Praia, Muidumbe, Macomia and Palma ([Anadarko Mozambique: Socio-economic and community health baseline, 2014](#)). Key informants further report people illegally acquiring land titles in Palma and other resource-rich northern districts of Cabo Delgado, in the hopes of profiting from future extractive activities.

RISK 5

Limitations and restrictions to access to information, including meaningful engagement and consultation

According to an inter-agency [Information and Communication Needs Assessment](#) conducted by the Community-Engagement/AAP Working Group, from December 2022, the main information that were unavailable to the people and that they felt they needed were on general information (14%) and security situation (13% in areas of origin, security situation in the current location (10%), where to get food (10%), access Shelter and NFI (6%), access legal aid services (6%), get cash support (5%), access support for livelihood (5%), access to medical care (4%). As per [UNHCR’s latest Protection Monitoring exercise \(Q2\)](#), the top information needs for IDPs relate to livelihood, food and civil documentation assistance, financial support.

As reported above, information about places of origin to make an informed decision whether to return or not remains the highest information need. [UNHCR Intention Surveys](#) and Protection Cluster's Community Consultation on intentions and solutions ([Mueda](#) and [Montepuez](#), 2023) similarly identified the need for IDPs to have access to official, reliable and updated information on the situation in their areas of origin, including the presence of basic services such as education and health, livelihoods and opportunities to resume agriculture (farming and fishing) activities, markets and entertainment activities for children and the young people, which will further inform if they will be able to secure their basic needs. According to FGDs, displaced families are neither fully aware nor informed of what basic services are available or functioning in return areas. Therefore, the lack of official information on the conditions and the security situation in the return area impedes IDPs who wish to return to materialize their movement or take an informed decision to locally integrate in the area of displacement. Also, the information needs are reported to be higher for IDPs living in host communities than IDPs in sites ([UNHCR PM, Q2](#)).




Furthermore, following a community consultation conducted by the Protection Cluster, community members pointed out that they need to be consulted on the authorities' decisions that have a direct impact on their daily lives and on their access to basic services. Specifically in Montepuez, the IDPs stressed the need to be informed, in a participatory manner, on the Government's plans for the future, making reference to the district authorities' decisions to restructure IDPs leadership into local community structures and phase out humanitarian distributions. Due to the lack of community participation and consultation, IDPs shared their lack of understanding of the situation during FGDs with the Protection Cluster, during which they said they felt having been "abandoned."

As reported in the [Information and Communication Needs Assessment](#) (December 2022), the second highest information needs are related to access to services and humanitarian assistance. According to [UNHCR Protection Monitoring exercises](#) (Jan to Sep 2023), the majority (59%) of IDPs reporting not receiving information about available services say that it is because they do not know who to ask for the information. UNHCR's protection monitoring exercises further identified livelihoods assistance (including land for cultivation), civil documentation assistance, and safety and security as their main *protection* information needs. In terms of humanitarian assistance, IDPs consulted would like to receive information about food assistance and financial support as their top two *humanitarian assistance* information needs. According to [UNHCR Protection Monitoring exercises](#) (Jan to Sep 2023), 73% of IDPs receive information in person and through community structures (86%). Similarly, the [Information and Communication Needs Assessment](#) reports that IDPs need information on how and where to access essential services such as food, shelter, cash support, medical care, and water in displacement areas. The respondents also mentioned that they lack security and general information on the current location. Information on how to stay safe and prevent incidents of attack and harassment was also requested by the respondents.

Finally, the reports from [January to July 2023 of Linha Verde 1458](#), the toll-free inter-agency hotline used by affected population to make requests for information, assistance or raise concerns in relation to humanitarian assistance, also serving as a mechanism to report abuses in humanitarian assistance, highlight the need for information to the affected population, with close to 80% of the cases received being "requests for information" regarding humanitarian assistance, especially food. It is worth noting that between 91% and 94% of the callers to *Linha Verde* are reported to be men, suggesting the potential inaccessibility of this hotline for women, potentially due to illiteracy, language barriers or lack of a telephone device. Although, according to WFP, a more detailed analysis of the cases also shows men calling on the behalf of their wives and daughters, suggesting that the use of the hotline service is also informed by household leadership structures and that it likely remains inaccessible for women who are heads of household, and who are those at heightened risk.

RESPONSE

PROGRESS MADE ON PROTECTION (January – December 2023)

| | | | | | | | |
|---------|---------|---|---------|---|---------|---|---------|
| PIN | 1.620 M |  | 799 K |  | 788 K |  | 1.098 M |
| TARGET | 872,518 | | 513 K | | 512 K | | 475 K |
| REACHED | 646,907 | | 322,406 | | 391,716 | | 306,572 |

In the period covered by this analysis, the Protection Cluster, AoRs and partners have been conducting several actions to reinforce community engagement and consultations, to enhance the access to information of IDPs and ensure their meaningful engagement to ensure durable solutions. Specific engagement focused on their rights linked to durable solutions, civil documentation, the situation in return areas regarding security and level of access to services, mine risk education considering the return of IDPs to conflict affected areas and the increase of IEDs causing civilian casualties, among others.

Additional dedicated efforts allowed reaching 80,127 with engagement activities on GBV prevention, risk mitigation and response, and the creation of a children associated with armed forces and armed groups (CAAFAG) Task Force that is working towards incorporating the relevant government departments to develop a workplan which will be part of the CAAFAG reintegration strategy. Specific engagement of authorities has begun to increase communities' enjoyment of their HLP rights and mitigate the risk of HLP violations.

To address from an integrated perspective some of the core drivers of the risks identified, the Protection Clusters, AoRs and Partners have been focusing on the lack of civil documentation and increased the coordination with the Community Engagement & AAP Working Group to determine the best channel of communication of the information needed by the IDPs.

ACCESS-RELATED CHALLENGES AND ACTIONS

The returns taking place in areas where insecurity persists, or where the government's ability to provide the full range of basic social services has been hampered by the widespread destruction of critical public infrastructures and only partial return of the civil administration has hindered the necessary local structures and mechanisms to strengthen meaningful consultation and community engagement mechanisms, specifically in the areas of **southern Moçimboa da Praia, Macomia and Muidumbe Districts**.

CRITICAL GAPS

Challenges in protection funding, which by the end of 2023 stood at 24.3% ([HRP 2023, Financial Tracking Service](#)) for the Protection Cluster including the AoRs proved to be an immense challenge to respond to the evolving protection risks and resulting needs in Mozambique. At the time of this analysis, the Protection Cluster, AoRs and Partners face gaps in capacities to reach out all communities in need, strengthen the dialogue with authorities with regards to community outreach and leverage community-based protection programmes that would help strengthening and scale up the meaningful engagement and consultation with communities. Particularly, the capacity to establish integrated community-based protection approaches that can expedite the identification and referral of critical cases and ensure the timely and safe re-integration of victim of violations are currently challenging and require support and attention. Due to security concerns, lack of funding and challenges in access is additionally limiting protection partners presence in **Macomia, Meluco, Muidumbe, Nangade and Quissanga**, where the RNA identified absence of specialized services such as response to gender-based violence (GBV), child protection (CP), housing land and property (HLP), civil documentation, and the absence of specialized services for people with disabilities and others with specific needs.

In these conditions, while Protection Cluster, AoR and Partners, working alongside the Community Engagement & AAP Working Group are identifying iterative strategies and approaches, the conditions to ensure AAP are still not in place.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK 1

Forced Recruitment and Association of Children in Armed Forces and Armed Groups

GOVERNMENT and PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT

- The Government to expedite the issuance of a handover protocol, and to consider the endorsement of the Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups (CAAFAG) (the Paris Principles), and the Vancouver Principles.
- *Força Local*, in coordination with FADM, to adopt clear age verification protocols and internal operating procedures in line with IHRL that include prevention measures to avoid the recruitment of children.
- The Government to continue to engage with the United Nations on a prevention plan through the creation of an inter-ministerial group to support discussions on Children and armed conflict (CAAC), particularly through an expedited exchange of letters to that effect.
- Children who have been allegedly associated with armed groups should not be prosecuted or threatened with prosecution or punishment solely for their membership of the group, and all feasible measures should be taken to ensure that children associated are demobilized, disengaged, or otherwise released, and provided with all appropriate assistance for their physical and psychological recovery and their social reintegration.

RISK 2

Sexual violence against women and girls

GOVERNMENT and PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT

- Mozambican authorities to provide rights-based, gender-sensitive, child-sensitive, and dignified reintegration and rehabilitation services, including comprehensive post rape care, to rescued women and girls through clear structures and mechanisms from the government that support women and girls released from captivity.
- Sign and socialize the recently approved Code of Conduct for Humanitarian Actors and include PSEA in all government training associated with humanitarian responses (including induction processes).
- Strengthen accountability mechanisms associated with the Code of Conduct (where should misconduct be reported, who should respond and how).

HUMANITARIAN COMMUNITY

- Engage communities on community-led / community-preferred SEA reporting mechanisms; increase PSEA visibility and community awareness about PSEA and the right to report in all sites and in host communities. Ensure clear messages are disseminated to the community regarding how SEA reports will be handled/investigated to manage expectations and build trust in the process.
- Reinforce services to assist survivors, through referral mechanisms, the harmonization of protocols including regarding legal assistance, clinical attendance, case management and Information Education and Communication (IEC) materials.

RISK 3

Unvoluntary and induced returns in adverse circumstances

GOVERNMENT

- Promote the active engagement of forcibly displaced people and host communities in Cabo Delgado on decision that impact them and provide reliable and up-to date information on conditions and services available in displacement and return areas, to ensure sustainable and equitable, free and informed decision-making processes on return and/or local integration, and to deepen relationships and trust between government and communities.
- To not reduce services in areas of displacement if there has been no change in population needs, nor without a sound understanding of people's intentions regarding durable solutions, to avoid pushing IDPs to choose a particular solution.

DONORS

- Commit funding for humanitarian actors that would enable to respond to the needs of affected population in both displacement and return areas so as to allow a scale-up of activities in return areas without forcing humanitarian actors to reduce their activities in displacement areas and hence encouraging return movements.

AHCT

- Develop an evidence-based provincial framework for solutions in Cabo Delgado jointly with authorities, development actors and any other relevant stakeholder.
- Support and conduct analysis to facilitate the comprehension of population dynamics and to define priority activities for implementation within a humanitarian and developmental context.

HUMANITARIAN COMMUNITY

- Government and humanitarian actors should not reduce services in areas of displacement if there has been no change in the needs of that population nor without a sound understanding of people's intentions regarding durable solutions, to avoid contributing to IDPs opting for a particular solution without enough information or against their will.
- Develop key messages for communities regarding their rights, durable solutions principles, and situation in displacement and return areas.
- Continue and scale-up community consultation and intention's survey in order to understand people's intentions regarding durable solutions so as to inform programming.
- A community-based approach should be adopted that addresses the needs of IDPs, returnees and host communities (in displacement and return areas), which in turn reduces the risk of tensions arising and facilitates local integration.
- Due consideration should be provided to implementing activities aimed at enhancing the potential for local integration.

RISK 4

Impediments and restrictions to effective access to land and tenure security

GOVERNMENT and PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT

- Authorities should conduct HLP due diligence before establishing an IDP site.
- Special consideration should be given to ensure that women's rights to own, manage, enjoy and dispose of property are inherent in the rights to be free from discrimination to an adequate standard of living (including adequate housing), to enjoy financial independence and to earn a livelihood. Securing women's rights to land, housing and property become essential when fulfilling the rights of all to HLP.
- Allocation of resettlement plots and associated cultivation areas should be done by meaningful consultation with host communities in order to avoid tensions.
- IDPs right to not to be subjected to forced eviction must be protected.

HUMANITARIAN COMMUNITY

- Engaging in activities aimed at supporting the affected population in acquiring land titles, such as land delimitations and demarcation to serve the critical purpose of safeguarding the rights of affected populations, whether they are internally displaced persons (IDPs) or returnees.
- Conducting community consultations on Housing, Land, and Property (HLP) due diligence as essential steps in promoting social cohesion within host communities.
- Conducting community consultations on HLP due diligence as essential steps in promoting social cohesion within host communities.

- Humanitarian actors should support HLP CSOs and leverage their expertise.
- HLP violations against individuals and communities must be systematically monitored and referred for specialized legal services.

RISK 5

Limitations and restrictions to access to information, including meaningful engagement and consultation

GOVERNMENT

- Increase the participation of technicians and local authorities from the districts in field missions with the humanitarian community to meaningfully consult IDPs before decisions that affect them are made. These efforts should also take into consideration the specific needs of persons with disabilities.
- Encourage the participation of leaders of the displaced population in community meetings and strengthen the relationship between displaced and host communities.
- Establish an accessible and reliable channel of information about services available in displacement and underserved areas.

HC and HUMANITARIAN COMMUNITY

- Conduct mapping of community structures, the identification of informal information provision and an analysis of the community mechanisms for information sharing needs.
- Diversify the community feedback mechanisms to better enable access for women, children older people, persons with specific needs, also ensuring they are prepared to provide gender and disability sensitive information and support.
- Intensify the dissemination of the Inter-Agency hotline (*Linha Verde*) in all communities (IDPs, hosts, returnees) and through awareness-raising among partners and community-volunteers, as well as posters with self-explanatory images.
- Develop a Communication with Communities strategy to respond to affected communities' information needs.
- Better coordinate data collection amongst humanitarian actors to avoid duplicating efforts with repeated surveys and to ensure that feedback is provided following the surveys to communities.
- As in some districts the authorities are moving towards the villagization of IDP sites with the purpose of having an integrated community composed of IDPs and host communities, it is necessary for village leaders to be sensitized to mitigate discrimination against the displaced as well as to ensure proper representation of IDPs in community structures.

Methodology

The analysis has been based on both quantitative and qualitative data from existing secondary data sources, protection assessments, and reports covering events from January 2023, including data from key country-wide protection monitoring tools. In addition, in June 2023, the Protection Cluster jointly with the Gender Based Violence (GBV) AoR, the Child Protection (CP) AoR and the Housing, Land and Property (HLP) AoR organized a Protection Analysis Workshop. The workshop was based on the Protection Analysis Framework and counted with the participation of 16 partners (DPGCAS, SPAS, INGD, Muleide, ADEL, AMUPD, AMASI, ASAC, FAMOD, AVSI, StreetChild, CARE, CUAMM, Helpcode, NRC, Helpo, Plan International, Pathfinder, Ayuda en Acción, UNHCR, OHCHR, IOM, OCHA, WFP, UNICEF and UNFPA).

Limitations

Data available in Cabo Delgado is predominantly limited to areas that are currently accessible by humanitarian actors. Areas in Nangade, Macomia, Mecufi, Meluco, Muidumbe are currently underserved due to access, security and funding constraints. The Protection Cluster has participated in inter-cluster rapid assessment missions to these areas to analyse protection risks and needs.



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For more information on the work of Mozambique Protection Cluster: [Mozambique: Protection | ReliefWeb Response](#)