

Mozambique Operational Update

January-March 2025

A woman showcases crafts made by GBV survivors during the International Women's Day 2025 in Pemba, Cabo Delgado
©UNHCR/ Isadora Zoni

Population Figures

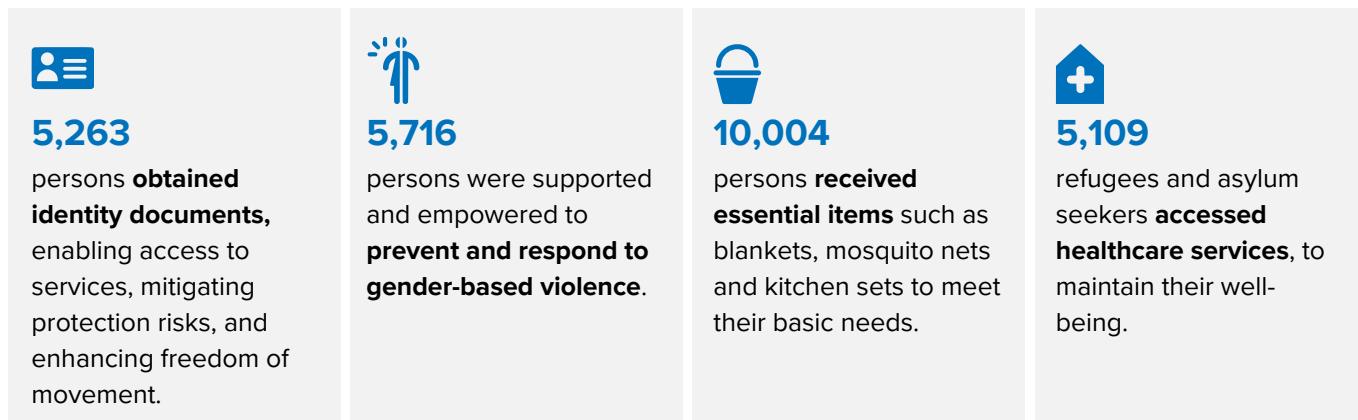
→ **716,878**
Internally Displaced Persons (IDP)

→ **610,981**
IDP Returnees, many of them with specific needs

→ **24,444**
Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Source: UNHCR Operational Data Portal

KEY RESULTS (January-March 2025)



FUNDING

As of 31 March 2025



■ Funded
■ Funding gap

UNHCR appealed for **USD 42.7 million** for its 2025 programme, of which **USD 31.8 million** is still required to continue supporting forcibly displaced populations.

OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

Over 577,000 people remain displaced internally in northern Mozambique due to ongoing conflict in Cabo Delgado where non-state armed groups (NSAGs) carry out repeated attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure. Meanwhile, over 610,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) have returned to their areas of origin. However, many continue to face precarious conditions marked by inadequate shelter, limited access to essential services, protection risks, and few livelihood opportunities.

In addition to conflict-driven displacement, nearly 140,000 people remain displaced due to the impacts of the climate crisis. Mozambique - among the world's most climate-vulnerable countries - was struck by three major tropical cyclones in the 2024-2025 season: Cyclone Chido (December 2024), Cyclone Dikeledi (mid-January 2025), and Cyclone Jude (early March 2025). These storms affected more than one million people and caused widespread destruction of infrastructure and basic services, particularly in Cabo Delgado and Nampula provinces. Many of the hardest hit districts were already hosting large numbers of IDPs who had been uprooted by conflict, compounding existing vulnerabilities and straining local capacities.

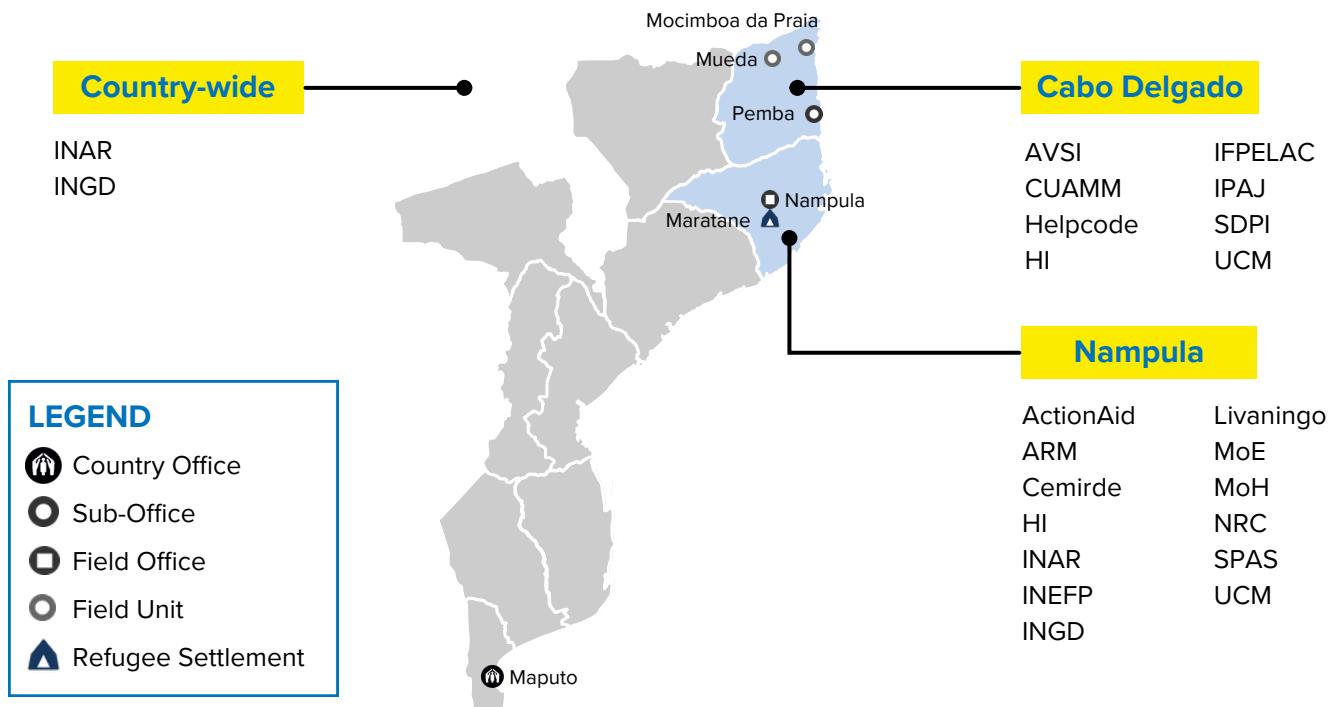
Mozambique also continues to host approximately 25,000 refugees and asylum seekers primarily from Central and Eastern African countries, many of whom have lived in protracted displacement for over a decade.

UNHCR's response in Mozambique is anchored in four interlinked priorities aimed at addressing immediate protection needs while advancing long-term solutions for displaced populations:

- 1 leveraging comprehensive protection and solutions data and analysis to inform evidence-based advocacy and programming;
- 2 preventing and responding to protection needs and risks;
- 3 supporting national systems and government leadership; and
- 4 playing a catalytic role in driving durable solutions and promoting the inclusion of forcibly displaced people in the planning and advocacy efforts of others.

These priorities are implemented in close collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders, including the Government of Mozambique, UN agencies, NGOs, civil society, development partners, and host communities, to ensure a coordinated and sustainable response.

UNHCR AND PARTNER PRESENCE





INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

Advocating for gender equality during the distribution of core relief items in Sassalane, Mecufi
©UNHCR/ Nilton Mungamba

1. PROTECTION AND SOLUTIONS

Civil Documentation / Legal Aid / HLP

Civil documentation

Civil documentation is critical protection tool for forcibly displaced persons, enabling access to essential services such as healthcare, social security, banking, formal employment, and school. It also enhances freedom of movement and reduces protection risks. However, documentation is often lost or left behind during displacement. Unsurprisingly, it ranks as the top protection need among IDPs according to UNHCR's protection monitoring. As of March, UNHCR, in partnership with the Catholic University of Mozambique (UCM), supported the Government to issue 4,658 civil documents, including birth certificates and ID cards, to displaced individuals.

Legal aid

Legal aid is a vital component of a comprehensive protection response, ensuring that displaced people can access justice and assert their rights. UNHCR integrates legal support into its broader protection strategy by providing awareness raising, legal counseling, and representation on key issues such as housing, land, and property (HLP) rights, gender-based violence (GBV), child protection, and labour rights. As of March, UNHCR supported 700 individuals in Cabo Delgado with legal aid.

Housing, land and property (HLP)

UNHCR co-leads the Housing, Land, and Property (HLP) Area of Responsibility (AoR) in Mozambique. In March, UNHCR addressed planning processes in 12 pilot locations affected by the cyclones that hit the country this season. The focus was on advancing territorial planning, integrating legal aid, and supporting land demarcation. During the HLP AoR meeting in February, UNHCR also promoted the use of digital tools to strengthen HLP-related protection for internally displaced persons in Cabo Delgado.

Community-Based Protection / Social Cohesion

Protection awareness

Protection awareness sessions are a cornerstone of UNHCR's community-based protection approach, empowering forcibly displaced people with knowledge of their rights and tools to access vital support. From January to March, UNHCR reached approximately 5,000 individuals in Mecufi, Chiúre, and Metuge through targeted sessions focused on preventing gender-based violence (GBV), strengthening understanding of referral pathways, and promoting community-based reporting mechanisms.

Protection assistance

In collaboration with trained community volunteers, UNHCR and its partners conduct door-to-door visits to identify persons with specific needs, assess immediate protection risks, and facilitate access to essential protection services. In January, UNHCR facilitated the delivery of essential protection services through coordinated outreach in Ngalane, Metuge as part of Cyclone Chido response. In addition, trained protection desk staff strengthened referral pathways and improved early identification of persons with specific needs, ensuring timely, confidential, and appropriate responses to protection concerns on the ground.

GBV/MHPSS/PSEA

GBV survivor care and empowerment

UNHCR provides safe, confidential spaces where survivors of GBV receive holistic care tailored to their individual needs, alongside opportunities to participate in economic empowerment. In early 2025, UNHCR and its partners reached 776 individuals across Cabo Delgado and Nampula through activities in safe spaces, ensuring access to critical protection services, psychosocial support, and economic empowerment programs. These centers serve as a vital pathway to self-reliance, equipping survivors with life skills and economic opportunities to help break the cycle of violence and rebuild their future.

Dignity kit distribution

In partnership with Helpcode and in coordination with the Provincial Directorate of Gender, Children, and Social Action (DPGCAS), UNHCR distributed 1,000 dignity kits to women and adolescent girls across Cabo Delgado, including the areas most affected by Cyclone Chido. The kits included essential hygiene items such as sanitary pads, buckets, and capulanas (traditional cloth) designed to support the dignity and well-being of recipients.

GBV awareness-raising activities

UNHCR enhances GBV prevention and risk mitigation by raising awareness and promoting gender equality within communities. Between January and March, UNHCR reached 4,788 individuals through awareness-raising sessions in cyclone-affected and displacement areas. Targeted messaging was delivered in areas at high risk due to post-cyclone impacts, such as Mecufi, Chiúre, and Pemba.



On 27 March, UNHCR met with the **Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)**'s **peacebuilding mission** in Maputo to discuss strategies for peacebuilding and conflict prevention in northern Mozambique, where both parties emphasized the vital role of young people as agents of peace. Following Maputo, the mission visited Pemba where UNHCR facilitated discussions with forcibly displaced young people to hear directly from them about their experiences, needs, and perspectives on peacebuilding, recognizing that youth are central to fostering social cohesion and reconciliation.

Advocating for gender equality and GBV prevention

In March, UNHCR actively participated in Women's Month events, amplifying crucial messages on gender equality and GBV prevention. At the provincial launch of Women's Month in Cabo Delgado, UNHCR joined provincial authorities, including Provincial Directorate of Gender, Child, and Social Affairs (DPGCAS), in reaffirming the commitment to end GBV and expand opportunities for women and girls. During an exhibition fair, UNHCR showcased GBV awareness materials and crafts created by survivors in Palma and Pemba, engaging over 150 participants. Later in the month, UNHCR also participated in International Women's Day celebrations, bringing together community members and leaders to discuss challenges faced by women, share stories of resilience, and highlight the available support services for GBV survivors.

Protection Cluster

Mozambique protection analysis

In February, the UNHCR-led Protection Cluster released an update to the [Mozambique Protection Analysis](#), outlining the severe protection risks identified throughout 2024. The report notes a marked increase in protection incidents during 2023 and 2024. Key findings emphasize the urgent need to enhance civilian protection, expand communication with communities on protection risk reduction and prevention, and strengthen systems for monitoring and reporting protection incidents.

Rapid protection assessment

From 14-16 March, the Protection Cluster conducted a rapid protection assessment in Nampula Province following the impact of Cyclone Jude. The findings indicated that the cyclone exacerbated the vulnerabilities of communities already affected by previous climate-related shocks. The assessment highlighted that vulnerable populations - such as women-headed households, children, the elderly, and people with disabilities – are among those most in need of urgent support. More detailed findings can be found [here](#).

Analysis on kidnapping incidents in Cabo Delgado

The Protection cluster completed an analysis of reported kidnapping incidents by non-state armed groups (NSAG) in Cabo Delgado between January 2024 and February 2025. The data reveals approximately 163 abductions across multiple districts, with a notable increase in incidents during late 2024 and early 2025.



Showcasing GBV awareness materials during the celebration of International Women's Day 2025 in Pemba. ©UNHCR

The motivations behind these abductions appear to vary by gender and age. Men are primarily targeted for strategic reasons, including forced labour, while women and children are often targeted for practical and ideological purposes such as cooking. These patterns not only highlight the systematic exploitation of vulnerable populations but also contribute to the weakening of local economies and the erosion of social cohesion.

Durable Solutions

Community consultations across Cabo Delgado

In partnership with National Institute of Disaster Risk Management (INGD) and local authorities, UNHCR has officially launched the 2025 Community Consultations under the Internal Displacement Solutions Fund (IDSF) project. The collaborative initiative is designed to strengthen government involvement in data collection and validation processes, ensuring that the needs, challenges, and intentions of displaced populations are accurately informing and reflected in future policy and solutions planning. Trained data collectors from UNHCR will be deployed across all districts in Cabo Delgado to gather essential data for the IDSF survey on solutions and protection monitoring.

2. LIVELIHOODS, COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SELF RELIANCE

Technical and vocational education training (TVET)

UNHCR supports displaced persons in bridging the gap between education and employment, empowering them to support their families and contribute to host communities. As of March, UNHCR is supporting the Government to provide Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programs to 196 individuals at the Institute of Professional Training and Labour Studies Alberto Cassimo (IFPELAC), with courses in catering, carpentry, masonry, plumbing, and electrical work. Funded by the German Government and implemented in partnership with the German Development Cooperation (GIZ), this initiative aligns with industry and labour market needs, equipping participants with valuable, marketable skills.

Entrepreneurship programme

To promote economic independence and entrepreneurial skills, UNHCR launched a training program in March 2025, targeting youth in urban areas of Pemba. In partnership with SEPPA Foundation and supported by the German Development Agency (GIZ), the initiative engaged 113 young people, including 64 IDPs, from neighbourhoods such as Josina Machel, Paquitequete, Chuiba, and Eduardo Mondlane. The program focuses on business development, financial literacy and market engagement- empowering youth to build long-term self-reliance and economic resilience.

3. SHELTER, CAMP COORDINATION, AND CORE RELIEF ITEMS

Infrastructure support

Cyclone Chido caused significant damages to infrastructure including educational facilities, disrupting the learning of thousands of students. In response to these urgent needs, UNHCR provided 50 plastic rolls of sheeting to 20 cyclone-affected schools in Metuge District. This intervention enabled over 2,500 students to resume their education in safer, more secure environments. The plastic sheeting also served as interim protection for learning spaces and community gathering areas that were damaged by the storm.

Core relief items (CRI)

Core relief items are essential, life-sustaining supplies, crucial for the safety and well-being of displaced populations who often leave their belongings behind when forced to flee. These items—such as blankets, sleeping mats, mosquito nets, kitchen sets, jerry cans buckets, and solar lights—help restore a sense of dignity, especially in displaced contexts where basic necessities are scarce and unaffordable. By the end of March, UNHCR assisted over 7,000 IDPs in Cabo Delgado and Nampula with CRIs, addressing their immediate needs arising from displacement and recurrent climate events.

4. EDUCATION

Launching a digital learning space

In collaboration with Vodafone Foundation, UNHCR has established the first computer-assisted learning setup for IDP students in Pemba. On 14 March, UNHCR, alongside government leaders and other UN agencies, launched the Instant Network Schools (INS) initiative, expanding digital education for displaced and host communities. The launch underscored the importance of collaborative efforts to provide inclusive, quality education for all children, particularly those displaced by conflict. Additionally, UNHCR facilitated the delivery of 150 school desks to Pemba as part of the INS project, enhancing educational infrastructure for students in the region.



Instant Network School launch ceremony in Alto Gingone Primary School, Cabo Delgado. ©UNHCR/ Isadora Zoni



REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

Celebration of the International Women's Day
2025 in Maratane Refugee Settlement
©UNHCR/ Rumbani Msiska

1. PROTECTION AND SOLUTIONS

Civil Documentation

ID card distribution

Recognizing the vital role of legal identification in accessing essential services and protection, UNHCR continues to work closely with government authorities to ensure refugees and asylum seekers obtain valid legal status in Mozambique. In the first quarter of 2025, 1,681 individuals received ID cards, enabling them to access their rights and services with greater security and dignity.

Community Engagement

Focus group discussion with refugees

In February, UNHCR held focus group discussions (FGD) with urban refugees and asylum seekers who took refuge in Maratane Refugee Settlement. The sessions provided valuable insights into the daily challenges faced by displaced individuals, including severe food insecurity, limited access to education, and psychosocial distress. Participants from the FGDs recommended initiatives such as vocational training, access to land for farming, and more structured dialogues between new arrivals and long-term residents to promote integration and build trust.

GBV / MHPSS / PSEA

GBV survivor care and empowerment

UNHCR provides safe, confidential spaces where survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) receive holistic care tailored to their individual needs. In Nampula, 450 refugees were reached through activities in safe spaces, ensuring access to critical protection services, psychosocial support, and economic empowerment programs.

PSEA and GBV awareness campaigns

UNHCR continued its prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) and gender-based violence (GBV) awareness campaigns in the refugee settlement, distributing information materials and maintaining confidential reporting channels. UNHCR, alongside humanitarian partners, disseminated protection hotline information and promoted safe and dignified access to support services. These collective efforts reinforced UNHCR's commitment to safeguarding the rights of women and girls in displacement settings.

Advocating for gender equality and women's inclusion

On 8 March, UNHCR, together with other UN agencies, German Corporation for International Cooperation GmbH (GIZ), and civil society and non-governmental organizations joined the Government of Mozambique in Nampula for a dialogue to commemorate International Women's Day. During the event, UNHCR advocated for the greater inclusion of refugee women in national services and policymaking, while highlighting the need for greater access to opportunities and essential services for all displaced women.



Commemoration of the International Women's Day in Nampula city which brought together UNHCR, UN agencies, GIZ, civil society organizations, and other NGOs ©ActionAid / Paulo Da Graca

Durable Solutions

Local integration initiative

Local integration remains a key component of UNHCR's durable solutions, particularly in situations where repatriation is not feasible. As part of its local integration efforts, UNHCR participated in the launch of the Naburi Plan in January—a development initiative for Naburi area surrounding Maratane Refugee Settlement, aligned with the Government's pledge at the 2023 Global Refugee Forum. Aiming to promote the economic and spatial integration of Maratane Refugee settlement, UNHCR has been engaging with the National Refugee Support Agency (INAR), UN-Habitat, and local authorities to support the development of Naburi area, confirming coordinated farmland allocation for both refugees and host community members. Its launch set the foundation for more inclusive settlement planning and strengthened social cohesion between displaced and host community populations.

2. LIVELIHOODS, COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SELF RELIANCE

Women's economic empowerment

In February, UNHCR, in collaboration with the Provincial Social Action Services (SPAS), launched a tailoring training programme under the Occupational Therapy initiative, designed to economically empower refugee women in Maratane Refugee Settlement. The program equipped participants with practical skills to enhance their self-reliance and expand access to income-generating opportunities.

Promoting economic inclusion

In March, refugee women participated in the Expo Mulheres 2025 in Nampula City. 20 beneficiaries from Maratane Refugee Settlement and the host community showcased their agricultural and artisanal products, including vegetables, poultry, handmade soap, and traditional cloth (capulana), with support from Livaningo. A dedicated training day focused on entrepreneurship and access to credit, attended by 24 women, further bolstered their economic empowerment. The event served as a platform for networking and creating market linkages.

3. SHELTER, CAMP COORDINATION AND CORE RELIEF ITEMS

Core relief items (CRI)

UNHCR's core relief items (CRI) response plays a crucial role in the basic dignity and protection of displaced people. By the end of March, UNHCR distributed CRI kits, including blankets, sleeping mats, mosquito nets, kitchen sets, solar lamps, and plastic sheeting, to approximately 1,415 individuals, including refugees in Maratane Refugee Settlement, ensuring the most vulnerable had access to the basic necessities required to meet their immediate needs.



Field assessment in Maratane refugee Settlement following Cyclone Jude. ©UNHCR/ Rumbani Msiska

4. HEALTH

Cholera outbreak response

In February, health actors responded to the declaration of a cholera outbreak in Nampula Province. As cases surged to 2,134 in surrounding districts by March, preventive actions in Maratane Refugee Settlement were rapidly scaled up. Community volunteers played a crucial role, intensifying community sensitization efforts and promoting safe water practices across the settlement, effectively protecting Maratane from the cholera outbreak.

Food and hygiene supplies distribution

Access to proper hygiene and nutrition is essential for preventing the spread of diseases and promoting overall well-being. As of March 2025, refugees and asylum seekers in Maratane Refugee Settlement were provided with soap (UNHCR) and food assistance (World Food Programme). Additionally, 2,181 women and girls of reproductive age were provided with soap and sanitary napkins, while 257 hygiene parcels were distributed as part of the Cyclone Jude response.

5. EDUCATION

Scholarship to access higher education

Higher education allows refugee youth to become change-makers who can take the lead in identifying solutions to the challenges that affect them and their communities. The DAFI (Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative) scholarship programme, funded by the Government of Germany and administered by UNHCR, offers qualified refugee and returnee students the possibility to earn an undergraduate degree in their country of asylum or home country. As of March 2025, UNHCR in Mozambique is supporting 48 students through this programme—33 in Nampula and 15 in Maputo.



REINFORCING PROTECTION THROUGH CLIMATE ACTION FOR FORCIBLY DISPLACED PERSONS

Inter-agency teams assess the impact of Cyclone Jude in Namialo, Nampula province
©UNHCR/ Rumbani Msiska

Mozambique is at the forefront of a crisis driven by conflict and climate shocks. Cyclical extreme weather events—such as cyclones, floods, and droughts—exacerbate existing protection risks and creates new ones, including gender-based violence, family separation, and loss of civil documentation. These climate events disproportionately affect displaced communities, further hindering their efforts to find safety, stability, and recover. As one of the countries most impacted by the climate crisis, Mozambique exemplifies the growing intersection of climate change and displacement, where the combined effects of conflict and environmental shocks create overlapping vulnerabilities for those already in crisis. For more details on UNHCR's climate action approach see the: [Focus Area Strategic Plan for Climate Action 2024-2030 | UNHCR](#).

Cyclone response

Over the past four months, Mozambique has been struck by three tropical cyclones - Chido in December 2024, Dikeledi in mid-January, and Jude in early March affected hundreds of thousands of people and severely damaging or destroying infrastructure and essential services. Cabo Delgado and Nampula provinces were the hardest hit – with many of the impacted districts also hosting large numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) who had already been uprooted by the ongoing conflict. In response to the cyclones, UNHCR rapidly deployed assessment teams and coordinated the protection response, while also providing mental health and psycho-social support, supporting case management for gender-based violence survivors and distributing core relief items and hygiene kits. In collaboration with partners and other humanitarian actors, UNHCR established protection desks across various locations, to provide immediate protection services and facilitate the referral of cases to local authorities and partners.

Climate-resilient livelihood

UNHCR has promoted climate-resilient agriculture and horticulture in Chiure District, Cabo Delgado, through a partnership with AVSI. During the first quarter of 2025, 450 beneficiaries, including 267 internally displaced persons (IDPs), were organized into agricultural committees to support sustainable food production and environmental stewardship in the face of shifting climate conditions, empowering communities to build resilience and adapt to the challenges posed by climate change.

Raising environmental awareness

In March, UNHCR and partners marked World Water Day with a community event in Maratane Refugee Settlement, focusing on environmental conservation and the sustainable use of water resources. The Governor of Nampula, alongside UNHCR leadership, highlighted the importance of forest protection and equitable access to water. These messages aimed to promote long-term environmental awareness in displacement-affected areas.

LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION

UNHCR exercises leadership and coordination responsibilities in areas related to displaced population, in line with its mandated accountabilities. In 2025, UNHCR continues to bring together diverse humanitarian and government actors to ensure a coordinated protection response for forcibly displaced people.

National level

- Protection Cluster
- Community Engagement and Accountability to Affected Populations Working Group
- Solutions Working Group

Nampula

- Protection Working Group

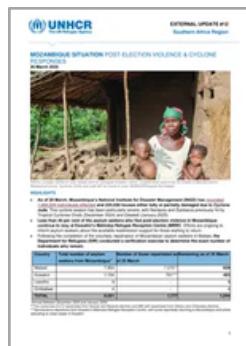
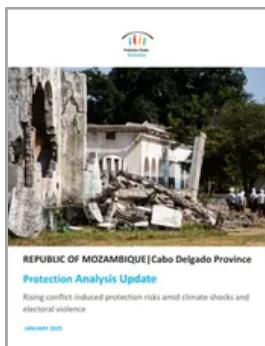
Cabo Delgado

- Protection Cluster
- Housing, Land, and Property Area of Responsibility
- Community Engagement and Accountability to Affected Populations Working Group
- Disability Working Group
- Solutions Working Group

LEGEND

- (Co-)Coordinate
- (Co-)Chair

PUBLICATIONS AND UPDATES



Country:
Response to Cyclones
Chido and Dikeledi:
Critical Needs

**Protection
Cluster:**
Protection Analysis
Update

Social media:
UNHCR Representative in
Mozambique shares his
journey to Cabo Delgado

Regional:
Southern Africa
Region External
Update #12

UNHCR is grateful for the generous support of donors who have contributed to
UNHCR Mozambique and to UNHCR programmes globally in 2025



and the support of the following private sector partners



For more information,

Contact: UNHCR Mozambique External Engagement Unit: mozmaextrels@unhcr.org

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