MOZAMBIQUE SITUATION POST-ELECTION VIOLENCE

17 January 2024

Asylum seekers from Mozambique recently relocated to the emergency Nyamithuthu Settlement. UNHCR and partners are supporting the Government of Malawi to provide assistance and ensure new arrivals have access to essential services. ©UNHCR/ Gloria Nyang'iye

HIGHLIGHTS

- On 15 January, **Daniel Chapo was inaugurated as the 5th President of the Republic of Mozambique.** While various protests, including a three-day national strike between the 13 and 15 January, were organized to coincide with the inauguration week, the situation was largely quiet amidst a heavy security presence in key urban centres such as Maputo and Nampula. These protests were typically met with a strong police response, with protestors reportedly being dispersed with teargas and gunfire.
- On 14 January, **Tropical Cyclone Dikeledi made landfall in Mozambique, impacting large swathes of Nampula Province**. According to the Mozambique National Institute for Disaster Risk Management and Reduction (INGD), at least 39,000 people have been affected by the cyclone. This comes on the back of December's devastating Cyclone Chido, which affected an estimated 450,000 in Nampula and Cabo Delgado provinces.
- **The ongoing response to those affected by the two cyclones continues to be hampered by humanitarian access constraints**, with the authorities blocking all access to cyclone-affected districts in Nampula Province on security grounds. Amidst a challenging operating environment, humanitarian partners, including UNHCR, continue to support the Government to respond to those in Cabo Delgado affected by Cyclone Chido.
- **As of 16 January, host governments, with support from UNHCR, have verified close to 8,000 new arrivals from Mozambique to Malawi and Eswatini.** As of 16 January, UNHCR and the Malawi Department of Refugees have completed the registration of 6,862 individuals, the vast majority of whom

arrived in the Nsanje District. Also, as of 14 January, at least 1,104 individuals arrived in Eswatini. While arrivals to Malawi and Eswatini continue to be reported, the scale of daily cross-border movements appears to have declined, with no significant influxes recorded over the last week.

Country	Total number of new arrivals from Mozambique	Number of new arrivals since last update (10 January 2024)
Malawi	6,862	+2,646
Eswatini	1,104	+40
Lesotho	3	-
Zimbabwe	4	+4
TOTAL	**7,973**	**+2,690**

MOZAMBIQUE

Security and Political Developments

- On 15 January, **Daniel Chapo was sworn in as the 5th President of the Republic of Mozambique.** In his inauguration speech, Chapo acknowledged the ongoing post-election unrest, paying tribute to victims. Despite many rivals and key opposition figures- including the opposition Podemos presidential candidate and leader of the protest movement, Venâncio Mondlane - boycotting the ceremony, Chapo extended an olive branch to opponents, leaving the door open for dialogue, including with Mondlane himself.
- While unrest and violence have continued over the last week, coinciding with the presidential inauguration and Mondlane's three-day national strike between 13 and 15 January, **the situation has remained relatively quiet amidst a heavy security presence across key urban centres such as Maputo and Nampula**. In the build-up to the inauguration, the capital Maputo was reportedly largely deserted, with shops closed and key roads- particularly those around the parliament building- blocked/ barricaded. Inauguration day protests were met by a heavy police response, reportedly resulting in the deaths of at least eight people (5 in Maputo and 3 in Nampula). In Maputo, a few hundred protesters near the inauguration site were dispersed by gunfire and tear gas.
- **The situation in Mozambique remains extremely uncertain.** While unrest and violence have decreased since the end of December, Mondlane has vowed to continue his struggle, announcing on 15 January a new set of measures for his 'first 100 days in office'. Against this backdrop, the situation remains highly volatile; any escalation would particularly impact northern areas of Mozambique, which are already contending with high levels of humanitarian need resulting from two devastating cyclones and the ongoing conflict in Cabo Delgado.

Needs & Response

- Over the last week, **the National Institute for Refugees (INAR) finalized the registration of approximately 1,000 refugees and asylum seekers** who relocated from Nampula City to the nearby Maratane settlement over the last week of December due to an escalation of violence and unrest. UNHCR is currently reviewing the registration list, with information on this population's profile, status and needs to be shared in the next update. Following verification, those registered will be provided with Core Relief Items (CRIs) and food.
- With the violence and unrest resulting in the loss of many families' livelihoods, UNHCR and partners will also prioritize immediate support to help people recover and reestablish their self-reliance, including through entrepreneurial support, the launch of new livelihood initiatives and the provision of psychosocial support.

Cyclone Chido and Dikeledi Impact & Response

- On 13 January, **Tropical Cyclone Dikeledi made landfall in Mozambique**, passing over Mossuril District in coastal Nampula Province, before sweeping southwards through Mozambique island as well as Monapo, Mogincual, Liupo, Angoche and Larde districts where the tropical storm took an eastward turn,

gathering strength as it returned to the Indian Ocean. Sustained winds of 150 km per hour were recorded, with gusts up to 180 km per hour, while over 200mm of rain reportedly fell in a 24-hour period. The impact of the cyclone was concentrated in Nampula province, with the districts of Nacala-a-Vehla, Nacala Ports, Muecate, Angoche, Mossuril, Mozambique island, Memba, Moma, Nampula and Larde particularly affected.

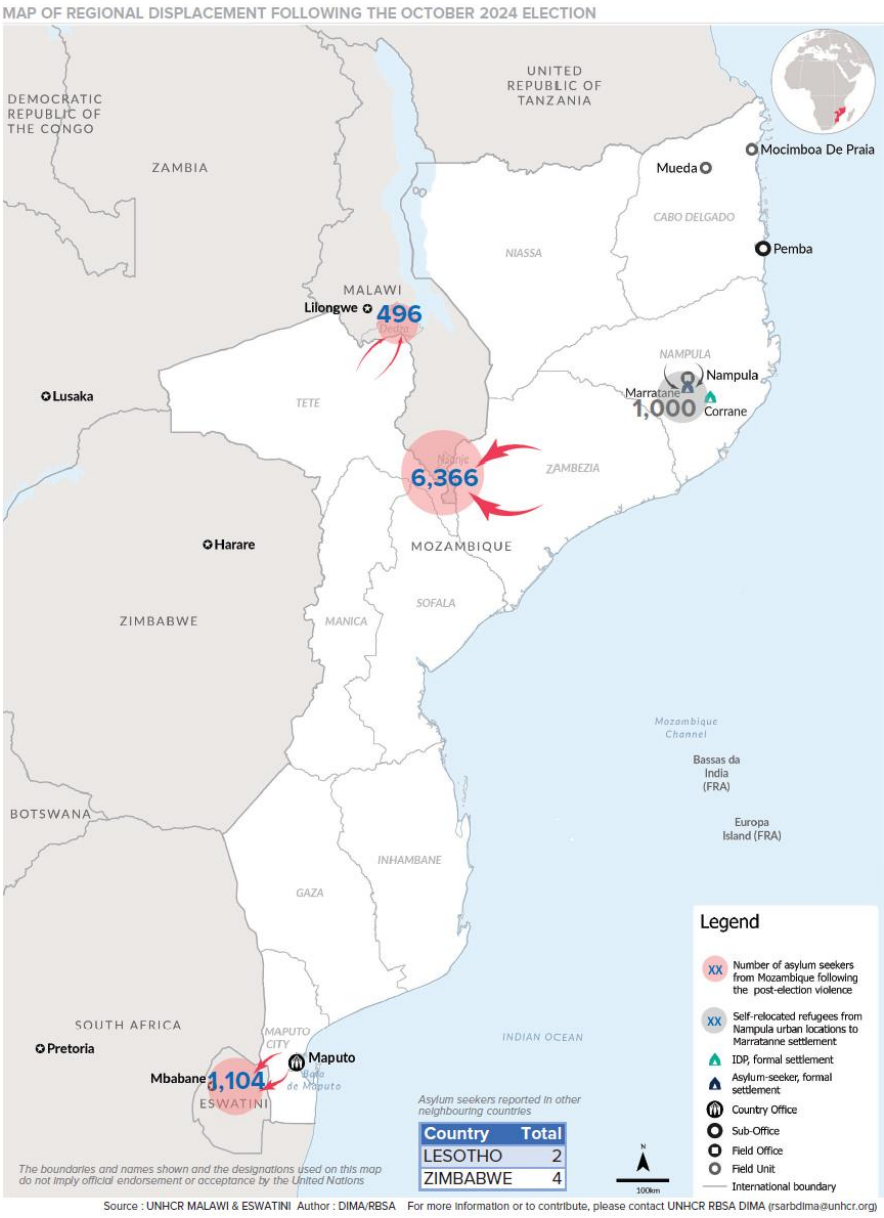
- **According to the Mozambique National Institute for Disaster Risk Management and Reduction (INGD), at least 39,000 people have been affected by the cyclone,** with five fatalities recorded. This is on top of the over 450,000 people affected and 120 fatalities recorded as a result of December's Cyclone Chido. Ahead of the cyclone making landfall, the INGD activated the Anticipatory Action (AA) protocols in Nampula areas, which were projected to be hardest hit. As part of this, four accommodation/ evacuation centres were activated, with three still operational and hosting 722 individuals as of 16 January. Although not as destructive as cyclone Chido, initial reports from INGD have relayed significant damage, including 6,089 partially destroyed houses, 2,903 destroyed houses, 35 destroyed schools and 3 destroyed hospitals. Several roads have also been rendered impassible, further complicating efforts to reach affected areas.
- The President of INGD, the Governor of Nampula province, and their respective multi-sectoral response teams have deployed to affected areas, including Mossuril and Mozambique Island, to assess the cyclones' impact and coordinate response efforts. **As with districts in northern Nampula most affected by cyclone Chido, humanitarian access to districts in Nampula province most affected by cyclone Dikeledi has also not been granted to all humanitarian actors.** UNOCHA has deployed a team to Nampula to negotiate humanitarian access to cyclone-affected areas in the province.
- **Despite the challenging operational environment, UNHCR and partners continue to respond to communities affected by December's Cyclone Chido in Cabo Delgado province**. In the aftermath of Chido, sustained on-the-ground presence has been established through the extension of protection services, which are providing mental health, psychosocial and case management support to those affected by the cyclone. This includes dedicated support for survivors of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), with at least 6 women and girls safe spaces established by UNFPA (4) and UNHCR (2). Alongside this, UNICEF and its NGO partner, Street Child Consortium, have been operating mobile child-friendly safe spaces in the Mecufi District in Cabo Delgado. UNHCR also continues to enhance community-based protection, empowering community structures- including among IDPs- to assist vulnerable individuals, while raising awareness on key protection issues such as prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. Further information on protection priorities and responses to cyclone-affected populations can be found in the latest Protection Update on the situation of the population affected by forced displacement and Cyclone Chido in northern Mozambique. Over the coming week, there are plans to distribute 500 CRI kits benefiting over 2,400 individuals in Metuge District, and a further 700 dignity kits in Mecufi and Chiure districts.

Coordination & Partnerships

- The overall humanitarian response in the country continues to be coordinated under the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) cluster system framework. At the local level, Area Humanitarian Country Teams (AHCTs) are coordinating the response, ensuring the engagement of key local responders. For the refugee response in Nampula and Maputo, coordination is led by the government under the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM), with support from UNHCR.
- Regular meetings continue to be convened between international humanitarian organizations and INGD to discuss the cyclone response, critical priorities and challenges in responding to affected populations. Most recently, a meeting took place on 14 January, after Cyclone Dikeledi made landfall, to assess the impact of the cyclone and identify needs and the response priorities among affected communities.

MALAWI

Population Movements & Registration



- As of 16 January, **Malawi's Department for Refugees, with the support of UNHCR, had completed the registration of 6,862 individuals (3,419 households)** in the Nsanje and Dedza Districts of Malawi. This represents a 2,646 increase in asylum seekers over the past week. Most of these asylum seekers are new arrivals over the reporting period, along with others who had arrived earlier but had previously not been registered.
- Of these, **6,366 individuals (3,327 households) are in the Nsanje District, approximately 300 km south of the capital, Lilongwe, while a further 496 individuals (182 households) are in the Dedza District, about 50 km south of Lilongwe**. Those in Nsanje mainly originate from the Morrumbala District of Zambezia province in Mozambique and are being hosted either in the newly established Nyamithuthu Settlement or one of five collective centres ahead of eventual relocation to the settlement. In contrast, those seeking asylum in Dedza District, mainly originate from Tete province and are being hosted by relatives in the border area, have rented houses or have sought temporary accommodation in rest houses/ lodgings in nearby trading centres. According to some reports, some of those who arrived in Dedza District by car have begun returning to Mozambique.
- Since 5 January, **the Nsanje District Council- with the support of the Malawi Defence Forces (MDF) and the Department of Disaster Management Affairs- have been relocating new arrivals in the Nsanje District to the rapidly prepared Nyamithuthu settlemen**t. The authorities maintain that the transfer of new arrivals to Nyamithuthu is essential in coordinating the provision of assistance and basic services- with the existing collective centres dispersed over a wide area- and to empty the two schools serving as collective centres, ahead of the school year, which commenced on 6 January. As of 16 January, 1,868 new arrivals have been relocated, up from 1,703 as of last week. The slow progress in relocating the population- with relocation paused in recent days- is primarily due to delays in preparing the Nyamithuthu site itself (see CCCM section). As such, the majority of new arrivals continue to be sheltered in overcrowded and under-resourced collective centres, with over half of those awaiting relocating hosted

in the Tengani Evacuation Centre, which serves as a transit point for screening and registering all new arrivals ahead of relocation to Nyamithuthu.

- Consistent with previous trends, **the majority of those registered—4,182 (61 per cent)—are women, while there continues to be a sizeable portion of the population—1,145 (17 per cent)—with specific needs**, including 476 elderly persons, 254 at-risk women, 228 single parents, 114 individuals with serious medical conditions, 80 at-risk children, 12 unaccompanied/ separated children and 45 persons with disabilities.

Needs & Response

- Partners, in coordination with local authorities and the Government of Malawi, have scaled up the response to new arrivals, particularly in the Nyamithuthu settlement. Progress has been made in preparing the site to receive the population, including through site clearance and the installation of basic infrastructure. In addition, steps have been taken to establish or expand the provision of health and education services to new arrivals, particularly within the settlement. At the same time, gaps in the provision of basic assistance — including food — persist, and living conditions, particularly for those in collective centres, remain challenging.

Protection

- In the buildup to the Mozambique presidential inauguration on 15 January, Malawi's police and immigration authorities stepped up their presence at crossing points with Mozambique in heightened anticipation of possible large-scale cross-border movements should there be an escalation in violence and unrest in Mozambique. At the time of writing, these border patrols have not observed any significant increase in the number of persons seeking asylum in Malawi.
- New arrivals continue to face considerable protection risks both during their journey to Malawi and upon arrival. Most people have reported undertaking an arduous journey, most often by foot, to reach Malawi, presenting significant risks for the most vulnerable groups, including the elderly, persons with serious medical illnesses and persons with disabilities.
- Steps have been taken to establish a more safe and secure environment within the Nyamithuthu settlement. An initial 20 solar-powered lights have been installed by MSF and the Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS), with plans to install a further 10. In addition, a community patrol forum comprising 10 persons from the settlement and an additional 20 from the host community has been established to conduct patrols within the site. There has also been progress in developing child-friendly spaces within the settlement, with several large tents erected to support early childhood development and children's recreational activities. UNICEF is also installing a playground and has donated recreational and learning kits.
- Despite steps to enhance security within the Nyamithuthu settlement, the community patrols lack both the training and equipment to conduct nighttime patrols, leading to gaps in security at night. Sector-focused community committees are still being established, impeding efforts to engage the community in the response. Over the coming week, there are plans to begin to form these committees, including a Gender-Based Violence (GBV) committee comprising asylum seekers from Mozambique alongside host communities.

Food Security

- The provision of food continues to be a critical gap. New arrivals have expressed concern about the insufficient and inconsistent supply of food, including those with chronic medical conditions who have, in some cases, reported being unable to adhere to their medication regimen due to lack of food. Some continue to go back and forth to Mozambique to gather supplies and, in some cases, set up small shops at the collective centres. The lack of food poses significant protection risks for the population, potentially increasing recourse to harmful and exploitative coping strategies such as survival sex and child labour, while also contributing to increased tensions with the host community. The Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) has overseen the delivery of food to the Nyamithuthu settlement and Tengani Transit Centre only, with each person receiving approximately 2.5 kilograms of flour and 500 grams of beans. There have also been ad hoc donations of supplies, including from the host community,

with community preschools donating fifty 25-kilogram bags of porridge flour to children at the collective centres.

- To address the gap, WFP plans to distribute a food top-up with cash from next week, based on the list of asylum seekers provided by UNHCR. Furthermore, the Catholic Development Commission in Malawi (CADECOM) has also committed to providing 400 households with 10 kilograms of maize flour each over the coming period.

CCCM/ Shelter & NFI

- There continues to be a lack of shelter and space as well as insufficient basic infrastructure in the five collective centres, with overcrowding reported as a particular challenge in the Tengani Transit Centre. Many people are residing in open areas.
- To support efforts to expedite relocation, on 15 January, the NGO Welthungerhilfe (WHH), with the support of UNHCR, began site clearance. This is essential in creating more useable land within the site both for pitching tents and installing basic infrastructure, including water and sanitation facilities. So far, 190 of the 500 tents provided by UNHCR in December have been erected at the Nyamithuthu settlement,

WASH

- Sustainable water supply is a critical need at the Nyamithuthu settlement. The nationwide fuel shortage, logistical costs and high risk of water wastage have ultimately contributed to the unsustainability of water trucking.
- There continues to be an acute lack of water or sanitation in the collective centres, with, for instance, only one borehole covering over 2,000 people at the Tengani Evacuation Centre. There are three taps in the surrounding area, which require payment to the local Water Users Association. People are therefore resorting to using the nearby Shire River for water provision and sanitary needs, presenting considerable health risks- including contamination of water sources- and protection risks for women and girls who do not have access to private, segregated or proximate WASH facilities.
- While sanitation infrastructure at the Nyamithuthu settlement remains insufficient, 39 latrines have been installed over the reporting period (up from zero as of last week), with a further 20 under construction; 8 bathrooms are functional, with another 10 under construction. Construction of additional WASH infrastructure is pending the completion of ongoing site clearance and excavation operations.
- Water provision is the most critical challenge. The initial 2-week commitment of Oxfam and UNICEF to support water trucking concludes on 18 January, with consultations ongoing among partners to ensure the continuation of trucking operations beyond then. Given the unsustainability of water trucking operations, partners are also working on sustainable options, including rehabilitating boreholes, installing solar reticulation systems and extending piped water supply systems.

Health & Nutrition

- The health situation among new arrivals is a concern, particularly for those with chronic or preexisting conditions who are unable to access the treatment they need. This includes those with tuberculosis and HIV. At least 19 cases of malnutrition have been recorded among children at the Nyamithuthu site. These children and 40 pregnant women have been enrolled in a supplementary feeding programme. While limited mobile health services- mainly outreach activities- are being conducted in the camp, primary healthcare coverage, as well as health referral capacities/access to secondary and tertiary healthcare, remain limited. It is reported that the nearest primary healthcare to Nyamithuthu settlement is struggling to cope with the additional caseload. Some children are reportedly also unvaccinated, increasing vulnerability to measles and other communicable diseases, particularly in their densely populated living conditions.
- The Ministry of Health (MoH) supported Health Surveillance Assistants (HSAs) from the Nyamithuthu catchment area are providing some support- predominantly through outreach and awareness-raising activities- in the Nyamithuthu settlement. These services comprise under-5s clinics, community health sensitizations and hygiene promotion.
- There remains a critical need to scale up HSAs and mobile health clinics to support asylum seekers by providing additional resources to cover transportation costs and the allowances of the HSA staff. While

asylum seekers can, in theory, access treatment in primary health centres in surrounding areas, in reality, they struggle to do so given that they lack health passports, and most centres are already operating well beyond capacity.

Education

- As of 16 January, the Nsanje District Education Department has identified 781 school-going children, of whom 193 require primary education.
- Discussions are ongoing with the Nsanje District Education Department to explore options to access schooling, including the feasibility of inclusion in local schools.

Coordination & Partnerships

- The Nsanje District Council- under the leadership of the District Commissioner- has convened an emergency coordination committee to oversee the provision of assistance near new arrivals. This committee takes a multi-stakeholder and whole-of-government approach, comprising local and international humanitarian organizations engaged in the response- including UNHCR, the MRCS UNICEF, Oxfam, and MSF- alongside government departments, including the Department for Refugees, Malawi Immigration, the Malawi Defense Forces (MDF) and the local health authorities. A meeting was convened on 14 January to update on developments across sectors, identify priorities and address challenges. UNHCR has briefed UN partners on developments during two recent UN Country Team meetings.

ESWATINI

Population Movements & Registration

- As of 14 January, **at least 1,104 individuals have arrived in Eswatini and are being sheltered at the critically overcrowded Malindza Refugee Reception Centre (MRRC)**, up from 1,064 as of 10 January. The daily number of new arrivals has further declined over the most recent reporting period, from a peak of 399 on 29 December. As previously reported, the actual number of new arrivals may be much higher, with many likely to have travelled onwards to urban areas undetected. In line with existing trends, those seeking refuge in Eswatini are predominantly refugees and asylum seekers in Mozambique- mostly from Burundi and Rwanda- with only 3 per cent (32 individuals) of arrivals being Mozambicans.
- **The Government of Eswatini, with support from UNHCR, continues the process of formally registering new arrivals** to the MRRC, with 734 individuals registered under UNHCR's web-based registration system as of 14 January.

Needs & Response

- The situation at the MRRC remains extremely challenging. As previously reported, the current population at the MRRC is almost five times the designated maximum capacity of 250 individuals. This has contributed to extreme overcrowding, putting pressure on the centre's basic infrastructure, especially water and sanitation.

Protection

- Basic protection safeguards within the MRRC continue to be lacking, exposing the population to potential protection risks. Specific issues include the inadequate perimeter fence, poor access control to the centre and substandard lighting.
- Over the reporting period, a protection screening tool was deployed at the MRRC and two points of entry (Mhlumeni and Lomahasa).
- Outside the MRRC, on 11 January, the Lubombo regional administration organized a community sensitization campaign to hear and address possible concerns regarding the increased number of new

arrivals from Mozambique seeking safety in Eswatini. The outreach was very well received, with a further session convened on 14 January.

Food Security

- There continue to be gaps in food provision within the MRRC, with the current response comprising two cooked meals per day (breakfast and lunch only).
- To cover gaps and improve nutrition, WFP has indicated that it can supply additional food commodities to cover 1,045 individuals over a three-month period. UNHCR is also exploring options to provide short-term feeding support, ahead of a potential transition to multi-purpose cash grants.

Health

- In the last week, the Government of Eswatini has partially activated a Public Health Emergency Operation Centre (PHEOC) Level 1 at the MRRC. This serves as a hub for better coordinating the preparation, response and recovery for public health emergencies.
- The Ministry of Health supported the health team in conducting a health risk assessment and initiating risk communication among new arrivals. This was supplemented by a health awareness session for new arrivals, also facilitated by the MoH, which covered hygiene, mental health and infection prevention and control.
- Regarding health services, all new arrivals can access a local health clinic staffed by 4 nurses, which provides basic care and referral services (with an ambulance on-site) to the MRRC population and host community from surrounding areas.

WASH

- The WASH situation at the MRRC- particularly with regard to sanitation- remains extremely concerning. A lack of appropriate latrine facilities and gaps in desludging capacity have contributed to open defecation. At the same time, showers and drainage facilities are blocked, leading to the build-up of stagnant water that presents a public health risk. Water supply also remains insufficient, falling below the minimum standard of 15 litres per person per day.
- To improve the sanitation situation, UNICEF has committed to establish six pit latrines out of the 14 required, in addition to the 4 permanent latrines on site (NB that while the government has installed 12 mobile latrines, these are underutilized by the community due to the previously mentioned challenge in desludging them).
- Two 5,000-liter water tanks were also installed.

Shelter

- The shelter situation at the MRRC also remains challenging. To address the overcrowding at the MRRC, large tents were erected to shelter about 100 men. However, strong winds and rain have damaged these tents, which have to be repeatedly reconstructed and repaired. Some people who drove to Eswatini are sheltering in their cars.
- UNHCR and partners are continuing to explore options for improving the shelter situation, including through the provision of more sustainable shelters and decongesting the MRRC by, for instance, supporting new arrivals with multipurpose cash to secure housing, education and employment in Eswatini.

Coordination & Partnerships

- The National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), in close coordination with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA), has overseen the response to new arrivals at the MRRC, with weekly coordination meetings co-led by NDAMA and MoHA. In addition, at a more operational level, an Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) comprising UN agencies, NGOs, development partners, and government counterparts is overseeing the day-to-day multi-sectoral response.

- On 14 January, the UNCT met to identify and consolidate the total support UN agencies can provide to the Government of Eswatini in response to the new arrivals, which will be communicated to the Prime Minister's Office next week.

CONTINGENCY PLANNING

- In the last 10 days, multiple countries have initiated or updated contingency plans to respond to potential increases in cross-border movements from Mozambique should the situation deteriorate. Between 8-10 January, UNHCR and partners participated in meetings organized by the Governments of South Africa and Zimbabwe to identify planning scenarios and develop contingencies. The Governments of Eswatini, Lesotho and Tanzania are also all developing contingency plans in collaboration with partners.

Contacts – Tina Ghelli – Head of External Engagement, Regional Bureau for Southern Africa (ghelli@unhcr.org); Timothy Young - External Relations Officer, Regional Bureau for the East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes (young@unhcr.org)