



# Gender Based Violence Response

## Cabo Delgado, Northern Mozambique

**Gender Based Violence (GBV) is an alarming concern in Cabo Delgado.** Women and girls are at risk of multiple forms of GBV before, during and after displacement.

UNHCR works with displaced and host communities, partners, and local authorities **to respond to and prevent GBV in Northern Mozambique.**

During the **16 days of Activism Against GBV**, UNHCR and partners **reached over 750 people** with multiple GBV awareness raising activities.

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

January – December 2021

 **43,702** forcibly displaced people can access GBV services established by UNHCR and partners

 **50,109** people reached by GBV prevention and response awareness campaigns

 **6** mobile safe spaces providing integrated GBV, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) services

 **100%** of GBV survivors who approach UNHCR supported with psychosocial counselling

 **623** partner and government staff and community volunteers trained on GBV prevention and response

 **48** service providers trained on GBV Case Management including government services

 **7** GBV referral pathways linking survivors to services established

 **183** trained community volunteers providing awareness and referrals to GBV services



Displaced girl with a baby in Ngalane IDP site, Metuge District, Cabo Delgado  
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UNHCR and the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) conducted an online presentation of the [GBV research report in Cabo Delgado](#) to 80 key stakeholders including donors, policy makers, regional and global coordination mechanisms, and GBV experts.

*"It is crucial to scale up GBV prevention and response activities in the humanitarian response in Cabo Delgado by all actors and stakeholders considering the concerning findings of this study which reveal that most women and girls in northern Mozambique are exposed to multiple forms of violence",* Said UNHCR GBV Officer Colleen Roberts during the report presentation.

The study, funded by Safe from the Start, focuses on the GBV context and response in Cabo Delgado, outlining gaps, challenges, lessons learnt, key barriers in accessing GBV services, and recommendations.

## Overview

**GBV is a major protection concern amid Cabo Delgado’s humanitarian crisis.** Displaced women and girls are at risk of multiple forms of gender-based violence including sexual violence, abduction, intimate partner violence, and spiralling rates of early marriage.

**IDP sites and host community locations lack basic safety and assistance,** leaving women and girls, many of whom have experienced conflict related GBV, **exposed to ongoing risks of GBV.** Sexual violence whilst collecting water and firewood, sexual and physical assault in homes due to inadequate shelter, and fear of sexual violence due to lack of lighting at night are some of the GBV risks identified by UNHCR through GBV Safety Audits among IDPs and the host community.

**Adolescent girls are at heightened risk of GBV and have been identified as the most vulnerable group.** Risks of GBV towards girls are escalating, including harmful traditional practises such as early marriage, sexual abuse and exploitation of girls, abduction, and high rates of early pregnancy. Yet, girls feel they are not sufficiently included in humanitarian programmes, unrepresented in decision making, and lack access to services, activities and safe spaces adapted to their specific protection needs.

**Sexual exploitation is a risk,** particularly in urban areas due to lack of assistance. Highly vulnerable groups such as single women head of households, women and girls with disabilities, adolescent girls and sex workers are at particular risk. Women and girls are often sexually exploited as they cannot fulfil their basic needs such as food and hygiene items. **Women and girls have been kidnapped and sexually assaulted by Non-State Armed Groups** and are exposed to GBV during their abduction. Following their release or escape, they are perceived as part of the NSAGs and face discrimination within the community. Survivors of GBV perpetrated by armed groups are at ongoing risk and require immediate protection, mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS), health and reintegration assistance.

## UNHCR’s GBV Strategy

UNHCR’s GBV **strategy for Cabo Delgado aims at reducing the risk of GBV for displaced and host communities,** and that all **survivors have adequate and timely access to quality services.** It includes:

1. Working with agencies providing support services, displaced persons, host communities, and local authorities to **respond to GBV through improving access to quality and holistic GBV services** for survivors, which includes the provision of case management, including specialized mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS) through GBV mobile services run by UNHCR and partner Doctors with Africa CUAMM to ensure access by survivors in vulnerable communities.
2. Implementing **toolkits, curriculum, and communication materials** that help **prevent GBV through addressing gender inequality, discrimination and unequal power relations** with men, women, boys, and girls. The activities include awareness-raising led by community volunteers including targeted messages for adolescent girls, men and boys’ survivors of violence, and is scaling-up to structured life-skills programmes with girls and women’s economic empowerment programing for a joint GBV-Livelihood’s approach.



**UNHCR and partners work together with Protection Focal Points, activists, and members of displaced and host communities to raise awareness on prevention & response GBV/Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, and to support GBV survivors and refer them to services.**

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3. **Identifying GBV risks across all sectors and areas of work and develop capacities that ensure prompt action is taken to mitigate these risks.** This includes conducting Safety Audits to identify GBV risks and mitigate them through community-based and sector level responses. UNHCR is providing training to mainstream GBV across different humanitarian sectors.
4. **Conducting GBV assessments and protection monitoring to ensure that GBV gaps and risks, including sexual exploitation and abuse, are identified, and progress is tracked to inform advocacy and programming.** This includes a comprehensive assessment on response needs and gaps conducted in partnership with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.
5. **Develop government and NGO stakeholders' capacity to ensure they have the knowledge and skills needed to promote gender equality and to prevent, mitigate, and respond to GBV.** Training focuses on a GBV case management coaching program, and a learning package focusing on enhancing UNHCR, partners and government community volunteers and leader's capacity to conduct GBV community engagement and support survivor disclosure.

## Gaps and Challenges

- 🕒 **Despite the overwhelming GBV needs identified, due to limited funding for GBV activities, essential services lack capacity to respond to the emergency needs of GBV survivors.** UNHCR is leading on the provision of GBV case management in safe spaces in locations with high and vulnerable IDP populations as an entry point for the provision of broader health, legal, safety and psychosocial support services, however funding is required so that more survivors can access crucial services.
- 🕒 To complement existing community awareness, **more technical structured approaches to GBV prevention are required**, especially funding for those that target adolescent girls' life-skills, engagement of men and boys to address harmful gender norms, and women's economic empowerment.
- 🕒 **There is limited technical capacity on the ground impacting both the quality and capacity of GBV response programs as well as the GBV mainstreaming across the humanitarian response.** UNHCR is providing GBV mainstreaming capacity building and technical support across humanitarian programmes to address GBV risks.
- 🕒 **Longer term capacity-building and support for GBV services, in particular government social services, is required to provide access to quality services for survivors more sustainably.** UNHCR needs additional resources to provide GBV capacity building support to provide more regular support to more actors in the response.

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**Empowering women and girls is key to ensure sustainable development in Northern Mozambique**

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