

Mozambique

Operational Update

January-March 2026

Laura fled violence in Cabo Delgado with her family and found shelter at Mercia's home, one of more than 90,000 people displaced by renewed conflict in northern Mozambique. With little space and few resources, the two families share meals, chores and daily life, "When we cook, we share. When they cook, they share with us," says Laura. © UNHCR/Charity Nzomo



Population Figures



661,532

Internally Displaced Persons (IDP)*

- Conflict-related: 444,601
- Climate-related: 230,661



721,691

Returns to district of origin, many of them with specific needs



24,117

Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Source: IOM/DTM Mobility Tracking Assessment round 23 (February 2026), UNHCR registration as of March 2026

*Some individuals are counted under both conflict- and climate-related categories.

KEY RESULTS (January-March 2026)



4,719

persons **obtained identity documents**, enabling access to services and enhancing freedom of movement.



3,189

persons were reached by community protection focal points, enabling them to **understand their rights and access protection services**.



6,993

persons were supported and empowered to **prevent and respond to gender-based violence**.

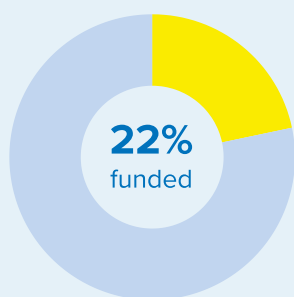


5,497

persons **received essential items** to help meet their basic needs, including blankets, mosquito net and hygiene supplies.

FUNDING

As of March 2026



■ Funded
■ Funding gap

UNHCR appealed for **USD 61.3 million** for its 2026 programme, of which **USD 48.0 million** is still required to continue supporting forcibly displaced populations.

OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

Since 2017, around 1.3 million people have been displaced internally due to the ongoing conflict in northern Mozambique where non-state armed groups (NSAGs) carry out repeated attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure. Since April 2025, the humanitarian situation in northern Mozambique deteriorated at an alarming pace, spreading into new districts in Cabo Delgado, and into Nampula Province, resulting in 300,000 newly displaced people in the second half of 2025 alone, and continuing to shape the humanitarian situation into the first quarter of 2026. While some families have since returned to their districts of origin, the security situation remains fragile, with continued NSAG activity sustaining the risk of further displacement. Beyond direct physical violence and attacks against civilians, NSAGs have increasingly resorted to the destruction of civilian livelihoods and the extraction of resources from affected communities, through looting, extortion and the disruption of economic activities. This economic dimension of the conflict compounds existing vulnerabilities and undermines the ability of families and communities to rebuild self-reliance.

Mozambique remains one of the world’s most climate-vulnerable countries, with around 230,000 people displaced due to climate-related events. Over a million people were affected during the 2024-2025 cyclone season, where many of the hardest-hit areas were already hosting large numbers of IDPs uprooted by conflict. The first quarter of 2026 brought further climate shocks, as severe flooding, triggered by heavy rains beginning in late December 2025, affected over 700,000 people, destroying homes, livelihoods, and critical infrastructure across the southern and central provinces, primarily in Gaza. The climate crisis continues to strain local capacities

and deepen protection risks for displacement-affected communities.

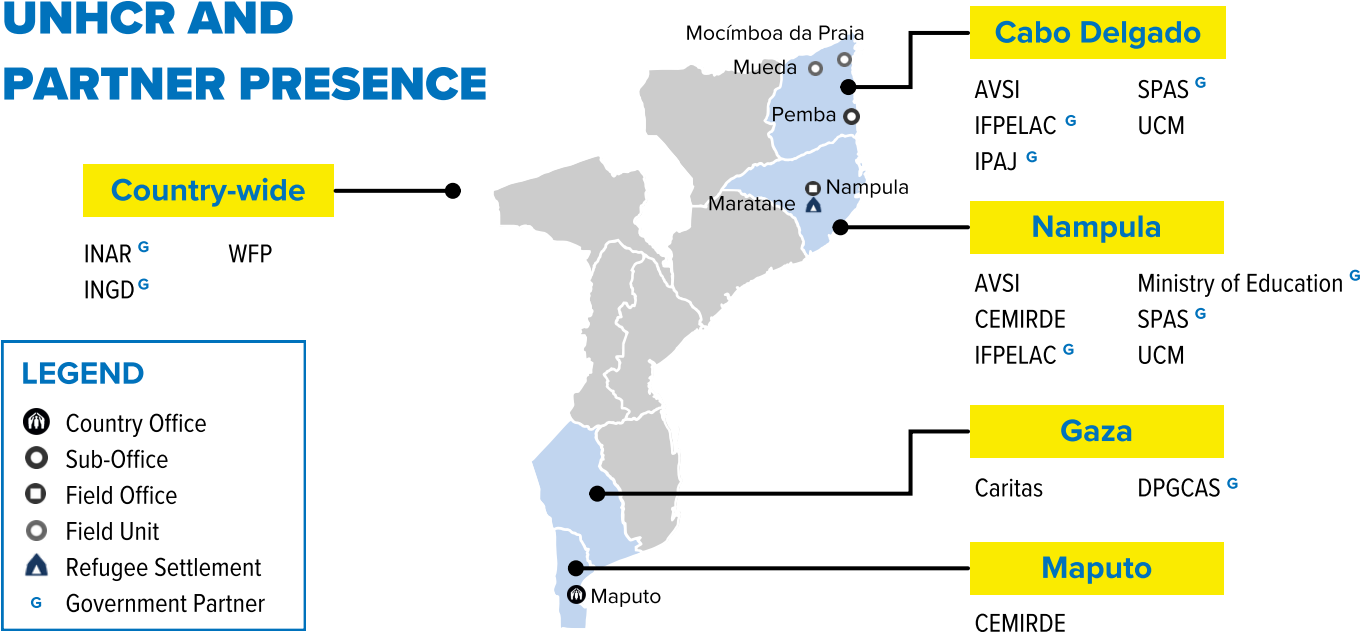
Mozambique also continues to host approximately 26,000 refugees and asylum seekers primarily from Central and Eastern African countries, many of whom have lived in protracted displacement for over a decade.

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 Protection and solutions data and analysis:** Deliver comprehensive, accurate and actionable protection and solutions data and analysis to inform evidence-based advocacy, policy and programming.
- 2 Operational protection and solutions response:** Prevent and respond to urgent and protracted protection needs, as well as support pathways to solutions.
- 3 Support to national systems:** Support the Government to enhance access to national services for forcibly displaced people as well as to assess, prevent and provide quality responses to protection needs.
- 4 Inclusion, development and solutions:** Play a catalytic role to advance durable solutions for forcibly displaced people by building partnerships, ensuring protection considerations are fully integrated in solutions analysis, programming, planning and advocacy efforts of others.

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

UNHCR AND PARTNER PRESENCE



Note: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE (As of March 2026)

Since the early stage of the flood emergency, which affected over 700,000 people and displaced roughly half of them, UNHCR has supported the National Institute for Disaster Management (INGD) and the Directorate for Social Action (DPGCAS) to prevent protection risks by protection early warning messages, lead the protection response and address the severe protection risks generated by the floods, while coordinating the other protection actors on the ground as Protection Cluster lead. With rapid deployment to the hardest-hit areas, particularly Gaza Province, the response focused on identifying protection risks, mobilizing partners and delivering targeted protection assistance.

UNHCR deployed a dedicated, specialized team to Xai-Xai and Chókwe districts, one of the most heavily affected areas, covering all three of the province's largest accommodation centres. Through rapid protection assessments in accommodation centres, UNHCR identified protection risks and needs, and fed these findings into inter-agency coordination forums to inform and guide the response.

Protection coordination

The UNHCR-led Protection Cluster ensured coordination and complementarity among protection actors on the ground, systematically updating interagency forums and Government counterparts on emerging protection concerns and identified needs. The Protection Cluster also shared Protection Checklist and an Accountability to Affected People (AAP) Checklist with accommodation centre administrators to strengthen protection standards, accountability, and service delivery in emergency settings.

Protection awareness-raising sessions

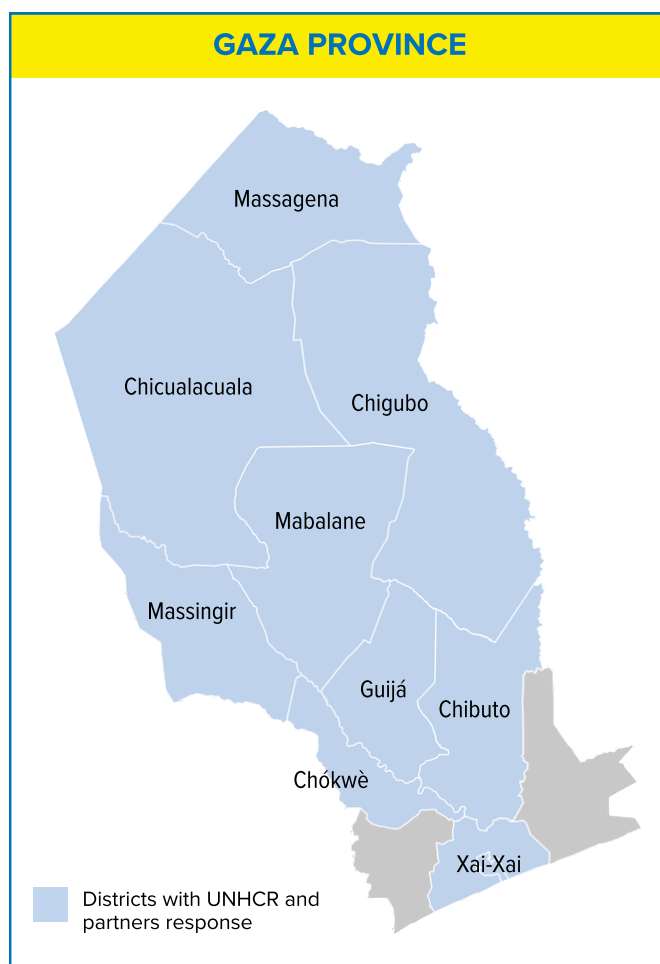
UNHCR, in coordination with INGD and partners, conducted awareness-raising sessions on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and gender-based violence (GBV), and disseminated related information and communication materials.

Core Relief Items (CRI)

UNHCR supported approximately 4,000 individuals through the provision of core relief items in Massingir District, one of the hardest-hit areas, which had already been affected by prolonged drought before severe flooding caused widespread devastation.

Persons with specific needs

In return areas, UNHCR and DPGCAS registered returnees with specific needs for referrals to specialized services and further case management, and provided psychological first aid, protection counselling and information on available services.



UNHCR staff conducting a group awareness session on gender-based violence (GBV) in Centro da Escola Anexa, Xai-Xai district. © UNHCR/ Joaquim Ngoca



OPERATIONAL UPDATE

Women from a safe space in Pemba display handmade crafts during an event, showcasing products developed through livelihoods and economic empowerment activities supported by UNHCR. © UNHCR/ Isadora Zoni

1. Protection and Solutions

Civil Documentation and Legal Aid

Civil documentation

Civil documentation is a critical protection tool for forcibly displaced persons, enabling access to essential services such as healthcare, social security, banking, formal employment, and education, while enhancing freedom of movement and reducing protection risks. However, documentation is often lost, destroyed or left behind during displacement. Between January and March, UNHCR, in partnership with the Catholic University of Mozambique (UCM), supported the Government in issuing 4,719 civil documents—including birth certificates and ID cards—to displaced individuals across Cabo Delgado and Nampula.

Legal aid

Legal aid is a key component of a comprehensive protection response, enabling displaced people to access justice and assert their rights. UNHCR integrates legal support within its broader protection strategy by providing awareness-raising sessions, legal counselling, and representation on key issues such as housing, land, and property (HLP) rights, gender-based violence (GBV), child protection, and labour rights. Between January and March, UNHCR and its partners supported more than 2,000 individuals in Cabo Delgado with access to legal assistance, including on HLP matters, through mobile legal caravans, bringing legal services closer to vulnerable communities and helping to restore access to basic rights.

Japan Partnership Grant Aid Project

In March, UNHCR and the Government of Japan officially launched a 34-month project aimed at strengthening civil documentation and legal aid systems in Cabo Delgado. The project will support the rehabilitation and construction of 27 civil identification and legal aid service points, alongside capacity-building for government officials, with the aim of assisting more than 100,000 individuals across Cabo Delgado access civil documentation through mobile caravans and providing legal aid services to 45,000 individuals. The signing ceremony, attended by the Japanese Ambassador, government counterparts and local media, highlighted the continued partnership between UNHCR and Japan in advancing protection and durable solutions in northern Mozambique.

Photo: UNHCR and Japan signed a partnership to assist displaced families in Cabo Delgado. ©UNHCR/ Youngjun Jung



Community-Based Protection

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. Between January and March, UNHCR reached more than 3,000 individuals across Cabo Delgado and Nampula through protection awareness campaigns and door-to-door outreach. Delivered through trained community-based protection focal points, the outreach strengthened awareness of rights and available services, while supporting the early identification of protection risks, referrals and assistance to the most vulnerable within affected communities.

Persons with specific needs

Between January and March, UNHCR and partners provided targeted assistance to more than 1,700 persons with specific needs across Cabo Delgado, Nampula and Gaza. Support included functional assessments, provision of assistive devices, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), rehabilitation services and referrals to specialised medical care for functional limitations. Through these interventions, UNHCR and partners strengthened community protection, improved access to essential services and ensured timely support for the most vulnerable.

GBV and PSEA

GBV survivor care and empowerment

UNHCR supports survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) through holistic care tailored to individual needs and facilitating access to economic empowerment opportunities. Between January and March, UNHCR and its partners reached 1,534 individuals through empowerment programmes in safe spaces across Nampula and Cabo Delgado, providing confidential environments for case management and psychosocial support for GBV survivors and persons at risk. These efforts were further strengthened by the opening of the new safe spaces in Alua Velha, Erati and Nivale/Minwa in Memba districts in Nampula Provinces, expanding access to survivor-centred services to areas affected by violence.

Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS)

Addressing the emotional, psychological and social impacts of GBV is a key component of survivor recovery. Between January and March, UNHCR continued specialized mental health and psychosocial

support for GBV survivors and individuals at risk across Cabo Delgado and Nampula. Particularly, in March, UNHCR and its partners assisted 324 individuals to cope with trauma, restore a sense of safety, and improve overall well-being, contributing to longer-term recovery and resilience.

GBV awareness-raising activities

UNHCR strengthens the prevention of and response to gender-based violence through awareness-raising and the promotion of gender equality. Between January and March, UNHCR intensified awareness-raising on GBV risks and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) across Nampula and Cabo Delgado, reaching approximately 7,000 people and enhancing community knowledge on prevention and response. In addition, 128 protection focal points were trained on GBV prevention and PSEA, strengthening local capacity for risk identification and safe referral pathways.



UNHCR and partners conducted a PSEA training for community activists in Namapa and Memba, Nampula province. © UNHCR

Protection Cluster

Strengthening government-led protection in flood response

During the flood emergency response, the Protection Cluster supported the Government in leading the protection response. As part of these efforts, the Protection Cluster provided targeted training for government social protection teams on emergency case management and protection standards. The Cluster also developed Terms of Reference for co-coordination with the Provincial Department of Gender, Children, and Social Action (DPGCAS), establishing an institutional framework to mainstream protection priorities into government-led response efforts.

Core Relief Item and Case-Based Assistance

Core relief items (CRIs)

UNHCR and CARITAS continued targeted protection support to flood-affected populations through the provision of CRIs to vulnerable households identified through protection assessments, including individuals at heightened risk who may otherwise be excluded from broader blanket assistance. In March, 665 families in Massingir district, Gaza Province — one of the areas most severely affected by the floods — received assistance, complementing ongoing protection interventions and helping address urgent needs linked to recurrent climate-related shocks. Across flood-affected areas, UNHCR has supported a cumulative total of 3,944 individuals with CRIs in 2026.

Cash-based assistance (CBI)

UNHCR provides cash-based assistance where markets and services are accessible. In January, UNHCR assisted 1,553 Mozambican refugees who had voluntarily repatriated from Zimbabwe with financial support to help meet urgent reintegration needs. Returnees received cash grants to cover local transportation costs and vouchers for the purchase of reintegration materials, including for housing, livelihoods and education. These targeted interventions enabled returnees to meet their immediate needs in a dignified manner while supporting their reintegration process.



UNHCR distributed Core Relief Items in Zulo and Chitare, Massingir district, the communities hit by severe drought and recent floods.

© UNHCR

Data and Analysis

Protection Monitoring

UNHCR's Protection Monitoring engages affected communities to assess protection needs and risks and identify trends, providing a key evidence base that informs programming, supports the broader humanitarian response, and strengthens advocacy efforts. In March, 172 households in Cabo Delgado and Nampula were interviewed, representing the views of more than 1,000 individuals, including internally displaced people, returnees to their districts of origin and members of host communities.

Durable Solutions

Voluntary repatriation

Voluntary repatriation—the free and voluntary return to one's country of origin in safety and dignity—is a key durable solution enabling refugees to rebuild their lives. UNHCR, in coordination with the National Institute for Refugee Support (INAR) and Provincial Social Action Services (SPAS), continued awareness-raising, information sharing and registration for voluntary repatriation. In March, approximately 1,000 refugees and asylum seekers residing in Maratane settlement were reached through community-based awareness raising sessions on voluntary return and reintegration. In 2026, a total of 57 Burundian refugees have so far been supported to return to their country of origin.

Advancing localization of national framework for durable solutions for IDPs

In February, the UNHCR co-led Solutions Working Group held its fifth plenary in Pemba, convening 65 partners from Government, humanitarian and development actors, and the private sector. The meeting reviewed progress on contextualization of the Government-led national framework for durable solutions for IDPs (PEGDI) at provincial level, and initiated discussion on the 2026 workplan to further align with national planning processes. This represents continued progress toward operationalizing durable solutions through strengthened multi-sector coordination and Government ownership.

2. Livelihoods and self-reliance

Technical and Vocational Education (TVET)

UNHCR supports displaced persons in bridging the gap between education and employment, enabling them to support their families and contribute to host communities. Between January and March, 150 individuals across Cabo Delgado and Nampula, including IDPs, youth at risk, and women-headed households from host communities, enrolled in technical and vocational education and training programmes at the Institute of Professional Training and Labour Studies Alberto Cassimo (IFPELAC). Funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented in partnership with the German Development Agency (GIZ), this initiative is aligned with industry and labour market needs and equips participants with market-relevant skills to enhance employability and self-reliance.

3. Health

UNHCR supports the inclusion of displaced persons in national public health programmes. As of March 2026, primary health care services for refugees, asylum seekers and host community members remain operational at Maratane Health Centre, ensuring continued access to essential health services.

4. Education

Enhancing digital learning spaces

In collaboration with Vodafone, UNHCR has expanded computer-assisted learning opportunities for students from forcibly displaced families across Cabo Delgado and Nampula. In February, UNHCR and the Mogovolas District Government inaugurated the new Instant Network School (INS) Centre at Nanhupo Rio Secondary School in Mogovolas, Nampula. These efforts were further strengthened through the handover of six INS centres in Pemba, Cabo Delgado, to the Government in March. As of March 2026, INS programmes are operational across 28 schools in Cabo Delgado and Nampula, expanding access to digital learning for both displaced and host community learners.

Scholarship support for higher education

Higher education enables refugee youth to become change-makers and contribute to solutions within their communities. The Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI) scholarship programme, funded by the Government of Germany and administered by UNHCR, offers qualified refugee students the opportunity to pursue an undergraduate degree in their country of asylum or origin. As of March 2026, 43 refugee students are currently supported through DAFI scholarships.

Governor Valige Tauabo of Cabo Delgado addresses students during a visit to an INS classroom in Pemba, where learners use tablets and digital tools. © UNHCR/ Isadora Zoni



LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION

UNHCR exercises leadership and coordination responsibilities in areas related to displaced population, in line with its mandated accountabilities. In 2026, 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



Briefing note

Severe floods displace nearly 400,000 in Mozambique, heightening protection risks



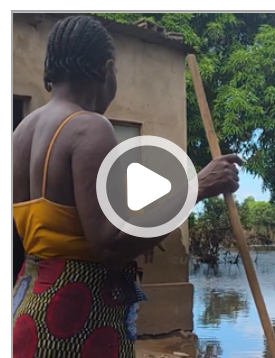
Country

UNHCR Mozambique
Flooding in Central and Southern Regions: Impact and Critical Needs



Social media

Video: Families in Mozambique are being forced to flee once again.



Social media

Video: Flood survivors need support to rebuild

UNHCR is grateful for the generous support of donors who have contributed to UNHCR Mozambique in 2026



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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