

Mozambique

Cyclone CHIDO

Flash Update

19 December 2024

Destructed houses in Cabo Delgado. © UNHCR/ Mozambique

Key Figures

As of 19 December 2024



181,554
persons impacted
by the cyclone



75%
of impacted persons are
women and children



36,207
destroyed or damaged
homes

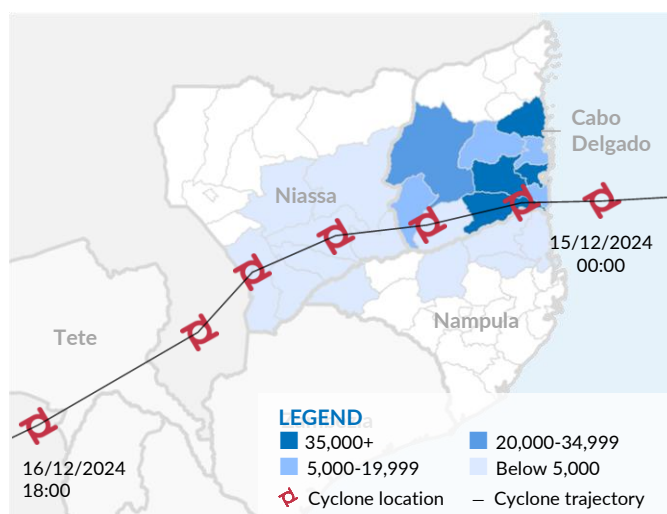
Source: National Institute for Natural Disaster, Mozambique Protection Cluster

Background

Tropical Cyclone Chido struck northern Mozambique over the weekend, bringing torrential rains and powerful winds that devastated communities in Cabo Delgado, Nampula, and Niassa provinces. The storm destroyed homes and public infrastructure, displaced thousands, and severely damaged roads and communication networks, hampering relief efforts in areas that were already hosting approximately 300,000 forcibly displaced persons by conflict.

While the full extent of the damage remains unclear, the National Institute for Disaster Management (INGD) estimates a total of 181,554 people impacted, as of 17 December 2024. More than 36,000 houses were completely or partially destroyed. In some villages, very few houses remain standing. Years of conflict, forced displacement, and economic hardship have left communities in the region increasingly vulnerable. For many displaced families, the cyclone has caused renewed hardship, washing away what little they had managed to rebuild.

IDP Population in Districts Affected by Cyclone Chido in Northern Mozambique



Source: IOM Mobility Tracking Assessment (Northern Mozambique) Round 21 (July 2024), UNOSAT Population Exposure Analysis - CHIDO (December 2024)

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Impact and Urgent Protection Needs



People with specific needs

People with disabilities, older people, and other vulnerable groups face immense challenges and need tailored support.



Mental health and psychosocial support

High levels of psychological distress are identified among the displaced population.



Gender-based violence (GBV) / Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA)

GBV, including risk of intimate partner violence, is exacerbated by the living conditions. In accommodation centers, gender-segregated toilets and sleeping arrangements are needed to prevent risks. Affected people, especially youth, face risks of all kinds of exploitation.



Civil documentation

A significant number of individuals have lost their civil documents (ID cards and birth certificates), hindering access to basic services and increasing vulnerabilities.



Emergency relief items

Thousands of displaced individuals, both within accommodation centers and in affected communities, face critical shortages of essential items.

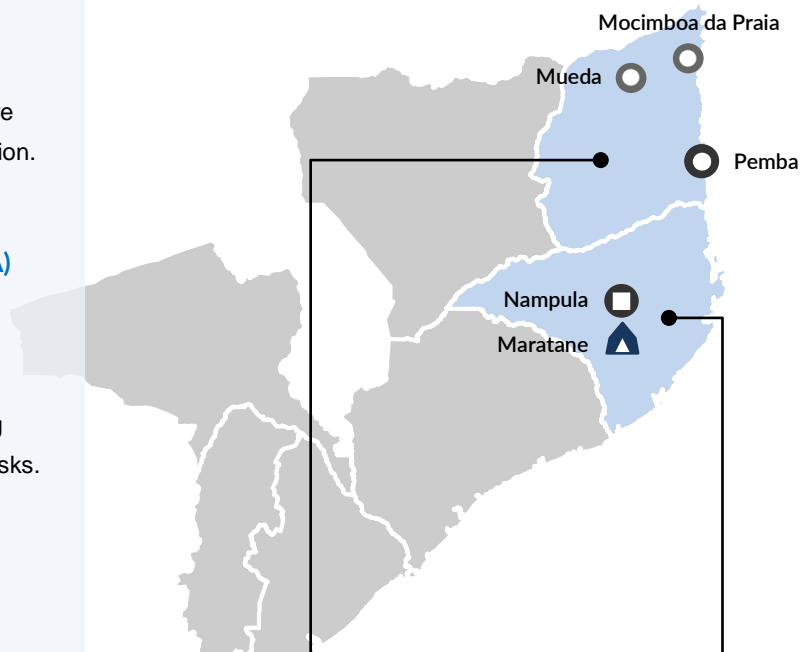


Shelters

Many of the shelters previously occupied by already displaced families were partially damaged or completely destroyed.

UNHCR PRESENCE

- Sub-Office
- Field Office
- Field Unit
- ▲ Formal settlement



Cabo Delgado

Cabo Delgado hosts the majority of the affected population. In Mecufi and Nangolo districts, the damage infrastructure in the area is near total, with 100% of homes destroyed and very few structures still standing. In many affected districts, there are no active accommodation centres to support the displaced population.

Nampula

Significant rainfall and strong winds have affected the area, damaging infrastructure and affecting 46,000 persons, with more than 9,000 houses damaged or destroyed. Some districts remain without power and accessibility has been hindered due to damaged roads.

Anita Amada (left) fled her village in Cabo Delgado's Mecufi district with her elderly mother when the cyclone struck. Prioritizing her mother's mobility needs, Anita made the decision to leave all their belongings behind. Now, they have found temporary refuge in an accommodation center, where Anita sleeps on a simple capulana spread on the hard floor. With only her mother and sister for support, Anita faces immense challenges after losing their home, possessions, and means of livelihood. Their urgent needs include bedding, food, clothing, and medical care for her mother. In the long term, support in restoring their home and livelihood will be vital for their recovery.





UNHCR staff assisting a victim of Cyclone Chido in Mecufi, Cabo Delgado. © UNHCR/ Mozambique

UNHCR Response

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is committed to supporting affected communities in Mozambique. Within the first 48 hours, using the existing resources, UNHCR provided emergency relief to nearly 3,000 affected individuals, including already forcibly displaced persons in Cabo Delgado and Nampula, working closely with governments and humanitarian partners. UNHCR Mozambique is in urgent need of additional resources to be able to increase support to the affected communities.



PREPAREDNESS

Prior to the storm, UNHCR and partners pre-positioned emergency relief items and supported the Government to widely share disaster preparedness messages in all the provinces impacted through TV, radio, WhatsApp and hotline.



PROTECTION COORDINATION

UNHCR, through the Protection Cluster, is coordinating vital protection services, including with the government, deploying an Emergency Protection Unit for urgent needs, and ensuring inclusivity and efficiency with a reporting system to ensure no-one is left behind.



SITE COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT

UNHCR received 2,600 individuals at the primary accommodation center in Pemba, Cabo Delgado, working closely with the government and community leaders, and ensuring that essential protection safeguards are in place on the premises.



EMERGENCY RELIEF DISTRIBUTION

UNHCR reached over 1,300 with core relief items, particularly women and children, and preparing to distribute more. The distributed kits included essential items such as blankets, sleeping mats, mosquito nets, and emergency shelter supplies.



GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION

UNHCR ensured gender-segregated sleeping arrangements to prevent gender-based violence (GBV) in the accommodation center. UNHCR also conducted awareness-raising sessions on GBV and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) and provided group counseling.



PEOPLE WITH SPECIFIC NEEDS

UNHCR identified vulnerable individuals, including the elderly and persons with disabilities, for specialized services, and provided mental health and psychosocial services.

Challenges

- Vulnerable groups, including the elderly, the sick, and individuals with chronic conditions such as hypertension, face major difficulties accessing medication. Families, including those with newborns, are spending nights in harsh weather conditions without adequate shelter or resources to rent accommodations.
- Unstable conditions in affected areas pose further challenges, including non-state armed group attacks in Cabo Delgado. With ongoing uncertainty and rapidly depleting resources, thousands more individuals are expected to require urgent assistance shortly.
- Cyclone Chido may signal the start of an intense and destructive rainy season, which has historically brought cyclones and severe flooding to the region. Displaced communities and their hosts, already struggling to recover, now face increased risks of further displacement and loss, highlighting once again that climate impacts continue hitting the most vulnerable the hardest.