

Protection in emergencies is critical and lifesaving

- Northern Mozambique continues to be a Protection crisis.** IDPs face increased exposure to protection risks in the course of flight and once displaced. These include : family separation; sexual and gender-based violence including in IDP camps or camp-like settings; child recruitment; sexual harassment or harassment by armed actors; abduction; risk of harm from mines and unexploded ordinances; and discrimination. Specifically in Cabo Delgado, displaced populations have been subjected to physical assault, abductions, murders, discrimination, gender-based violence, forced recruitment, family separation and sexual harassment as well as harassment by armed forces. Women and children are at heightened risk of gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, and hampered children’s access to education. Other serious protection concerns include early and forced marriage. The crisis has had devastating consequences for the psychosocial health of people impacted.
- Protection is Lifesaving.** Protection spans, remedies, mitigates and averts direct loss of life and harm to people within a short time. It also protects their dignity and avoids long term harmful impact on the affected population. Where no action is swiftly taken on protection issues, affected populations are at significant higher risk of death, trauma and serious injuries than when there is a protection intervention. Protection is a lifesaving activity particularly for persons with specific protection needs, who, due to their vulnerabilities, may not be able to reach and seek intervention, and therefore should be identified. Please see below more granular information on specific protection activities and an explanation on why each protection activity is lifesaving.
- Centrality of Protection.** Protection is the heartbeat of any emergency operation, even outside the cluster system, as it addresses the most salient vulnerability issues. CERF recognizes that protection is one of the main purposes and intended outcomes of humanitarian action. Hence, the protection of all persons affected and at-risk informs humanitarian decision-making and response. Protection response is therefore paramount, and the role of protection actors in supporting other clusters in mainstreaming and advocating for protection principles is crucial. Protection needs to be central to the IDP response since protection risks are the driver of displacement, pervasive during displacement, and a primary impediment to durable solutions.

Protection activity	Protection needs identified in Cabo Delgado	Why this protection activity is lifesaving:
<p>Life-saving protection support and referral mechanisms</p>	<p>There is a high need to support the identification of persons with protection needs and survivors of violence. This includes referrals to lifesaving essential service providers with a special focus on marginalized and vulnerable persons. Confidential, survivor-centered services to address GBV are essential. Services needed also include security, case management, psychosocial, family tracing, legal support, civil documentation, provision of assistive devices, registration of unaccompanied children, emergency care arrangements.</p>	<p>Specialized services are needed to connect survivors of violations with assistance. When programmes are not established, not only do survivors not receive lifesaving assistance, but the risks they face will continue as no measures will be put in place to prevent them. Support for effectively accessing services and ensuring referred survivors can live in security is essential and lifesaving.</p> <p>More granular explanations on protection services can be found below.</p>

Protection in emergencies is critical and lifesaving

<p>Family tracing</p>	<p>Displaced families expressed the need to be supported with family tracing and reunification (FTR) efforts: unaccompanied children have been identified, women have become head of households, and men do not know their families' whereabouts.</p>	<p>Family separation exposes separated women and unaccompanied children to abuse, disappearance, exploitation, recruitment, among others. The first hours following the displacement are essential to family tracing efforts, which can in turn prevent long term impact and violations towards those separated. Lack of civil documentation and lack of communication means complicate the tracing of family members.</p>
<p>Civil documentation</p>	<p>The lack of civil documentation has been identified as a priority to enhance family reunification, reduce the risks of child marriage, prevent the risks of harassment, physical violence, and arbitrary detention by armed forces. Women without civil documentation are particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse, harassment, discrimination, and other forms of gender-based violence.</p>	<p>Access to civil documentation not only helps preventing violence, and abuse, including exploitation, arbitrary detention, child marriage, child recruitment, sexual exploitation and abuse, rape or even death, but it also enables affected population to access essential lifesaving services and humanitarian assistance.</p>
<p>Legal services</p>	<p>Unverified cases of arbitrary detention, forced disappearances, gender-based violence have been identified in Cabo Delgado. There is a need to support measures to ensure access to justice, remedies and reparations.</p>	<p>Legal services are particularly relevant in conflict affected areas. They enable victims to secure justice, hold perpetrators accountable and safeguard victims from further harm. Access to justice seek to reduce the risk of crimes, abuses and violations from occurring, and their potential harmful effects on individuals and society. Legal services are crucial to protect human rights in a context where forced displacement and conflict increases the occurrence of protection risks, violations, and abuses.</p>
<p>Gender-Based Violence</p>	<p>Below are some of the risks that have been identified in Cabo Delgado that need to be addressed through lifesaving response and preventive measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sexual abuse related to the delivery of humanitarian aid. ○ Displaced women and girls unable to meet their basic needs resort to survival sex in exchange for goods or food. ○ Adolescent girls engaged in forced marriages in displaced communities as coping mechanism. 	<p>In an emergency context and as a first priority, there is a need to support health service providers with relevant supplies (clinical management of rape, health services for cases of domestic violence needing urgent medical attention) and ensure a range of appropriate psychosocial interventions are in place and accessible.</p> <p>Identifying high-risk areas and factors driving GBV in the emergency is critical to saving lives and strengthen/set up prevention strategies.</p>

Protection in emergencies is critical and lifesaving

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conflict related sexual violence perpetrated by state and non-state armed groups. ○ Increase risk of sexual violence while displaced. <p>Increased domestic violence cases among displaced and host communities in times of crisis.</p>	<p>Access of survivors of gender-based violence to secure and appropriate reporting, safe spaces and safe shelters, follow up and protection, including to police (particularly women police) or other security personnel is lifesaving.</p>
Inclusion of persons with disabilities	<p>Displaced persons with disabilities have been identified as particularly vulnerable as they are more dependant on their close network (family and community) to access rights. Their vulnerability is further compounded for those who left their assistive devices behind when fleeing or separated from their caregivers. The inclusion of children, men and women with disabilities, through the provision of assistive devices and rehabilitation services enhances their independence and restores their dignity.</p>	<p>As a protection mechanism to restore dignity and prevent abuse, coercion and other forms of violence, there is a high need to identify and refer persons with disabilities and older people to specialized services to enable the provision of community-based rehabilitation services and provision of assistive devices. This prevents violations, which can include exploitation or rape, towards this vulnerable populational group.</p>
Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS)	<p>Displaced populations reported cases of high trauma as some of them have witnessed deeply distressing and disturbing events. Thus, there is a high demand for psychological first aid services among the displaced people, as well as group psychosocial activities, especially those who have been exposed to conflict and displacement, suffered incidents by NSAGs, family separation, GBV violations as well as persons with disabilities and older people. This includes the need of strengthening psychosocial support (PSS) programming and nonspecialized Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services (MHPSS).</p>	<p>The psychological and social impacts of the crisis are acute and risk undermining the long-term mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of affected people. On average, people in crisis situations suffer from mental health conditions for much longer because of the ongoing stress and frequent lack of support. Providing support to give a sense of normality, stability and structure to affected children, men and women can reduce the risk that short-term distress leads to longer term mental health issues. Psychosocial support may reduce the risk of adolescents joining or being used by armed forces and armed groups by facilitating non-violent alternatives for community service. The provision of psychosocial support can relieve stress that might otherwise be turned into violence against children and women.</p>
Community-Based Protection	<p>Women and Girls Safe Spaces and Child Friendly Spaces are a particularly important community-based protection mechanisms to serve as a safe entry point for case management and enable access to MHPSS services, stay safe from potential abuse and reach out for life-saving support when required by affected populations. The empowerment of</p>	<p>In practice, the community is the first responder to humanitarian issues. The investment in community mechanisms that support resilience, identification, prevention, mitigation and response to violations, and local response to issues decreases protection risks and provides avenue for response. Inclusion of vulnerable groups is</p>

Protection in emergencies is critical and lifesaving

	Network Community outreach volunteers who monitor protection risks in their communities, disseminate key protection messages and refer vulnerable individuals to life-saving services is particularly needed in a context of break of social tissues and protective environment.	essential in community networks. Community-based groups also serve as a bridge between humanitarian response and affected communities. They enable timely referrals to life-saving essential services.
Protection Monitoring	Aims at understanding protection needs, risks, and trends, providing the evidence base for advocacy, informing protection programming, and facilitating the identification of persons in need of protection services for assistance through ongoing programs and referral to services.	Protection monitoring enables the identification of high-risk areas and factors driving abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence against children, men and women in the emergency. It supports advocacy aimed at strengthening/setting up prevention strategies.
Life-saving provision of information to affected populations	Especially on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and protection risk reduction, IDPs need accessible Information, Education and Communication materials in local languages with key messages on community's rights education, prevention and mitigation of protection risks, available protection services (including civil documentation, MHPSS, youth engagement, people with disabilities and older persons). The establishment of help desks and feedback mechanisms that are inclusive and accessible to different needs is also a priority.	The provision of protection-related and life-saving information to affected people prevent, stop, and remedy violations of rights and exposure to life-threatening situations.
Housing, land and property	Lack of due diligence conducted by the authorities before land allocation or site construction has been identified in Cabo Delgado. Affected populations are also relocated to IDP sites without a community consultation on their intentions and without the provision of relevant information about their available choices and living conditions in the sites. This enables community tensions, forced evictions and other forms of disposessions.	Due diligence is conducted to avoid creating or exacerbating existing conflicts. HLP is essential to address the humanitarian impact of forced evictions, land and resource grabs or other forms of dispossession.
Protection Advocacy	The respect of humanitarian and protection principles by the authorities has been identified as a high priority, especially in the following areas: Promotion of freedom of movement of IDPs, support to the authorities on the freedom of IDPs to reside in the areas of their choice (in order to prevent	Advocating for duty bearers to take the necessary action to ensure the protection of people in conflict and crisis is a critical part of protection work. In terms of funding, protection activities are lifesaving, yet inadequately resourced. With needs increasing and funding decreasing, additional resources are critical to mitigate risks faced by people.

Protection in emergencies is critical and lifesaving

	involuntary relocation or induced premature returns), removal of military personnel near affected communities, etc.	
Protection Mainstreaming	Protection mainstreaming activities are needed to support other Clusters in the incorporation of protection principles and promoting meaningful access, safety and dignity in humanitarian aid, including through the revision of their operational plans, assessment tools and joint assessments of the response. The Protection Cluster has already identified a series of concerns in other sectors and shared “Protection Mainstreaming reports” to relevant Clusters.	Inter-agency, multisectoral protection analysis ensures protection remains central to the humanitarian response and ensures meaningful access, safety and dignity to humanitarian aid.

Feedback: Aline Fautsch – fautsch@unhcr.org, Protection Cluster Coordinator for Cabo Delgado, or reach out to us through: mozmaprocluster@unhcr.org.