

MOZAMBIQUE

Tropical Cyclone Gombe

KEY FIGURES

488,000

PEOPLE AFFECTED

105,000

HOUSES DAMAGED
OR DESTROYED

143,000

CHILDREN WITHOUT
ACCESS TO EDUCATION

69

HEALTH CENTRES
DESTROYED

NATIONAL REPOSE CAPACITY

Instituto Nacional
de Gestão e Redução
do Riscos de Desastre

Instituto Nacional
de Meteorologia

Loca NGOs
(Cruz Vermelha
de Moçambique)

INTERNATIONAL REPOSE CAPACITY

INGOs
(WaterAid, Protection Cluster)

UN system
(WFP, UNICEF, OCHA,
UNFPA, IOM)

CRISIS IMPACT OVERVIEW

- On 11 March 2022, Tropical Cyclone Gombe made landfall in Nampula province, northern Mozambique. It had wind speeds up to 190 km/h and brought rainfall of up to 200mm over 24 hours, causing flooding in Nampula and Zambezia provinces (OCHA 14/03/2022). By 18 March, the cyclone had weakened (WFP 15/03/2022). In January, Tropical Storm Ana already hit Mozambique (including Nampula province), displacing around 45,000 people and destroying more than 2,000 houses (OCHA 14/03/2022 and 14/02/2022).
- As at 22 March 2022, the cyclone had affected over 488,000 people and displaced around 23,400, including 61 people killed and 82 injured (OCHA 22/03/2022). These numbers are preliminary, and several assessments are still underway. The number of those affected will likely increase to 580,000 in five provinces: Manica, Nampula, Tete, Sofala, and Zambezia (WFP 15/03/2022).
- The cyclone destroyed more than 1,450 classrooms in 469 schools and 69 health centres. It completely or partially destroyed 105,000 houses, displacing people to 52 shelters and two resettlement site (OCHA 22/03/2022; ECHO 15/03/2022).
- The main needs are livelihood and education. The cyclone has destroyed more than 91,100 hectares of crops and disrupted access to education for more than 143,900 children (WFP 23/03/2022; OCHA 18/03/2022).

ANTICIPATED SCOPE AND SCALE

- Since 18 March 2022, there have been heavy rains in the north of the country. The Mozambique National Institute of Meteorology forecasts more rainfall for several more days (INAM accessed 22/03/2022; e-Global 21/03/2022; RTP Noticias 22/03/2022). In Maganja da Costa, Namacurra, and Nicoadala districts (Zambezia province), 36,500 people live in zones likely to experience further flooding (UNOSAT 17/03/2022).
- Although Tropical Cyclone Gombe has lost intensity, the number of people affected will likely increase further to more than 500,000. Conditions in the Indian Ocean are favourable for the formation of new tropical storms that might eventually hit Mozambique. On average, 1.6 cyclones make landfall every season in the country (Matyas 07/04/2014). There have already been three in 2022, with the possibility of others coming, indicating a more active season than usual (WFP 15/03/2022; NOAA accessed 15/03/2022).

HUMANITARIAN CONSTRAINTS

- As at 22 March 2022, the cyclone had destroyed at least 1,000 km of roads (OCHA 22/03/2022; INGD 18/03/2022). Four of the nine most affected districts in Nampula (Angoche, Larde, Moma, and Mongicual) were still inaccessible by 23 March (OCHA 23/03/2022). Cutoff communities cannot seek humanitarian assistance themselves until access is restored (OCHA 18/03/2022; SAPO 13/03/2022; DW 14/03/2022).
- The cyclone has damaged more than 2,700 electricity poles. There is no power in 13 districts of Nampula and Zambezia, causing a breakdown of communications (OCHA 18/03/2022; OCHA 23/03/2022). The situation makes it difficult to collect information and access affected communities (DW 14/03/2022).
- Due to the rains and the destruction of roads, northern Mozambique is only accessible by air, increasing transport costs and the speed of the humanitarian response (OCHA 23/03/2022).

SECTORAL NEEDS

Livelihoods and food security

An increase in food insecurity in the provinces affected by Tropical Cyclone Gombe can be expected. About 14,000,000 people in Mozambique (just under half of the population) experience some level of food insecurity (IPC accessed 16/03/2022). This number was already projected to grow with the impact of Tropical Storm Ana, which destroyed 37,930 hectares of crops between January–February 2022. The destruction worsened food insecurity in Cabo Delgado, Nampula, Tete, and Zambezia provinces (FEWS NET 31/01/2022 and 01/03/2022). As at 22 March 2022, Tropical Cyclone Gombe had destroyed more than 91,100 hectares of crop fields (WFP 22/03/2022). Nampula province has the highest malnutrition rate in the country (AGRA 06/2017). Given the impact of the storms, the Mozambican Government projects a food shortage in the next two to five months, which would further limit access to food (WFP 22/03/2022).

Since the northern provinces of Mozambique have the highest agricultural production in the country, the damage caused by Tropical Cyclone Gombe will likely result in reduced livelihoods for the population (WFP 18/03/2022). 80% of the labour force in Mozambique works in agriculture (USAID accessed 22/03/2022). Agriculture is the main source of income and food for most of the rural population (IFAD accessed 15/03/2022). Nampula and Zambezia represent 40% of farming production in Mozambique. Only 2.1% of people in Nampula receive a salary in their jobs (the rest have incomes dependent on daily production), and the province has the lowest average income in the country.

Education

As at 22 March 2022, Tropical Cyclone Gombe had destroyed 1,450 classrooms (469 schools), affecting the education of 143,904 children (WFP 22/03/2022; OCHA 18/03/2022). The Mozambique National Institute for Disaster Management and Reduction (INGD) projects that the cyclone affected 7,100 classrooms (OCHA 14/03/2022). In Nampula, Tete, and Zambezia provinces, Tropical Storm Ana had previously damaged more than 2,450 classrooms, disrupting learning for more than 298,000 students (OCHA 01/02/2022; ACAPS 04/02/2022 accessed 15/03/2022). Since 2020, more than 1,500,000 students in Mozambique have lost access to schools because of temporary closures and a lack of internet connection (Mozambique Education Cluster 22/09/2021).

Given such damage, 2022 will be the third year children in northern Mozambique will have intermittent access to education. Less than half of children complete primary school in the country (USAID accessed 23/03/2022). Such a long disruption of access to education could further aggravate these problems.

Health

The storm disrupted already strained healthcare services in the affected provinces. As at 22 March 2022, Tropical Cyclone Gombe had damaged or destroyed 69 health facilities (WFP 22/03/2022). INGD projects that floods damaged 679 health facilities (OCHA 14/03/2022). Mozambique has only 5.1 doctors and 25 nurses per 100,000 inhabitants – much lower than the WHO recommendation of 250 per 100,000 inhabitants (Mozambique Ministry of Health accessed 15/03/2022; PAHO 12/05/2015). Nampula, Tete, and Zambezia have fewer doctors per inhabitant than the rest of the country.

Because of stagnant floodwaters and crowded shelters with few sanitation facilities, there have been diarrhoea, malaria, and COVID-19 outbreaks during previous tropical storms (IFRC 09/03/2022). Mozambique has endemic diseases, such as malaria (33.8% incidence), HIV (13.2%), and tuberculosis (368 cases per 100,000 inhabitants) (WB accessed 15/03/2022; IFRC 09/03/2022). While data on health impacts is not yet available, past experience and damage to health centres suggest that healthcare services will be needed both for outbreaks that may occur and to treat pre-existing conditions.

AGGRAVATING FACTORS

Violence in Cabo Delgado

Since 2017, the armed group Al-Shabaab has been launching attacks against civilians in Cabo Delgado. The attacks are still continuing (ACAPS accessed 22/03/2022; Europa Press 07/03/2022). Although violence has been concentrated in Cabo Delgado (which the cyclone did not directly affect), Nampula hosts the second-highest number of people displaced by this violence. In January 2022, at least 77,000 displaced people were in Nampula (OCHA 17/11/2021).

In 2021, IDPs in Nampula reported needs for shelter, water and food access, and health assistance (IOM 07/06/2021). Resources for the care of the displaced population are scarce (DW 03/09/2020; CIP 02/04/2021). A new wave of displacements by the cyclone would increase the need for humanitarian assistance, while the current capacities are already stretched to the limit by those displaced by violence (OCHA 01/09/2021; Plan International 09/02/2022).

Al-Shabaab has recruited children and youth in Nampula because of demographic similarities (in terms of religion and ethnicity) with Cabo Delgado (TNH 08/03/2022). With the disruption of education services and reduced income from livelihoods, children and adolescents may be at increased risk of recruitment by armed groups.

Rainy season and cyclones

The 2022 rainy season in Mozambique is having a higher intensity than in other years. While Tropical Cyclone Gombe produced 200mm of rainfall in 24 hours, the post-cyclone rains in Zambezia produced 172.5mm in 24 hours (e-Global 21/03/2022). Mozambique's rainy season usually lasts until the end of April, meaning more rains are likely until April 2022 (USAID 10/2012). As at 22 March 2022, several districts in the north of the country, which the cyclone already affected, suffered further flooding from seasonal rains, restricting accessibility (e-Global 21/03/2022; RTP Notícias 22/03/2022).

During the rainy season, overflowing rivers also create the risk of crocodile attacks. In 2022, five people have died from getting attacked by crocodiles, which entered the villages through overflowing rivers (Observador 22/03/2022).

The cyclone season in the Indian Ocean is not over, and new tropical storms are projected until the end of April (WFP 18/03/2022). Higher than expected seasonal rains and the possibility of new cyclones near Mozambique may increase the number of people affected and decrease the chances of recovery in the short term.