

MOZAMBIQUE

Insurgency in Cabo Delgado: Escalation in 2020

Briefing Note – 29 June 2020

Crisis Impact Overview

- A violent insurgency in Cabo Delgado province since 2017 has affected more than 600,000 people and displaced more than 200,000 across the province (USAID 17/03/2020; ECHO 03/06/2020).
- More than 700,000 people are in need of humanitarian assistance as of June 2020 (OCHA 04/06/2020).
- Conflict has escalated in 2020, with four district capitals temporarily overtaken by insurgents since March.
- The latest attack began on 28 May, when insurgents drove Mozambican forces from Macomia town. After three days of fighting, the city was recaptured by government forces. Homes, government buildings, markets, and religious sites were destroyed and at least 19 civilians were killed (ACLED 02/06/2020; ACLED 07/06/2020).
- Since March, approximately 50,000 people have fled Mocimboa da Praia and Quissanga and the 28 May attack displaced thousands in Macomia, where 30,000 IDPs were sheltering (OCHA 04/06/2020).
- A lack of shelters, limited access to food, and disease outbreaks are a concern for IDP populations.
- For background on the insurgency and constraints in Cabo Delgado, see ACAPS' Short Note from April 2020.

Key Priorities



50,000+
people displaced since March



1 in 5 people
experiencing acute food insecurity



40% of the population
without access to clean water

National Response Capacity

National Institute of Disaster Management (INGC), Mozambique Red Cross.

International Response Capacity

UN Agencies (WFP, UNICEF, WHO), INGOs, though response is uneven, with agencies concentrated in northern and eastern districts.

Anticipated Scope and Scale

- In 2020, insurgent attacks have escalated in scope and scale by targeting district capitals. Previously, attacks were limited to smaller villages.
- Most IDPs are sheltering in district capitals and most humanitarian agencies have withdrawn to the provincial capital, Pemba. The increase in attacks of capitals has raised concerns that Pemba could be attacked.
- Inadequate shelter and WASH access is likely to exacerbate an ongoing cholera outbreak and lead to further food insecurity, especially for IDPs.

Humanitarian Constraints



- Insurgent attacks and reported human rights abuses by Mozambican forces is disrupting response. Most agencies working in Macomia and Mocimboa de Praia, including Médecins Sans Frontières, have suspended activities and relocated to Pemba (MSF 05/06/2020; The New Humanitarian 28/05/2020).
- Roads and infrastructure are in poor condition (OCHA 04/06/2020).
- Access is constrained by the government, which was hesitant to allow a humanitarian response (ISS 10/01/2020; The New Humanitarian 28/05/2020).

Sectoral Needs



Shelter and NFIs

- There are few formal shelters. Most IDPs are living with relatives, in community spaces, or in makeshift shelters (OCHA 01/04/2020).
- The government began opening IDP camps in early May, housing 18,000 IDPs in Quissanga and Metuge, though reports indicate shortages of tents (Zitmar 18/05/2020; All Africa 28/05/2020).
- Mosquito nets are required due to a high prevalence of Malaria.



Food Security

- Attacks keep civilians from their livelihood activities, including 5,000 fisherman who fear attacks while working (Opais 07/06/2020).
- Farmers have abandoned their fields, resulting in food shortages and increased prices in markets (The New Humanitarian 04/12/2019).
- Macomia, Mocimboa de Praia, Muidumbe, and Quissanga are in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) food insecurity. (FEWS Net 31/05/2020).



WASH

- Approximately 40% of Cabo Delgado's population has access to potable water; this is significantly less for IDPs living in makeshift shelters (Club of Mozambique 17/06/2020).
- A cholera outbreak was declared in February in conflict-affected districts of Mocimboa da Praia, Macomia, and Ibo (MSF 05/06/2020).



Health

- Health infrastructure in Cabo Delgado is limited compared to the rest of Mozambique, with only 104 health centres for 560,000 households (WHO 24/11/2017; Knoema Atlas 2020).
- Clinics often lack electricity, water, and sanitation facilities, making them inadequate to respond to disease outbreaks (MSF 13/02/2020).
- In May, at least three health facilities were destroyed in attacks and medical staff were forced to flee (Insecurity Insight 18/06/2020).

Aggravating factors

Previous Natural Disasters: Cabo Delgado has experienced multiple climatic shocks. More than 200,000 people are still living in damaged homes or makeshift shelters since Cyclone Idai (March 2019) and Cyclone Kenneth (April 2019) (OCHA 04/06/2020). Additionally, flooding from December 2019 to February 2020 severely damaged infrastructure, shelters, and collapsed bridges along key roadways (OCHA 21/02/2020). As of June 2020, damage to infrastructure remains a challenge for humanitarian response and for IDPs living in shelters damaged by natural hazards.

Disease Outbreaks: Cabo Delgado is one of the most affected provinces in Mozambique for malaria, with a 2019 prevalence rate of 57%, an increase from 29% in 2015 (Club of Mozambique 05/03/2020). Limited access to clean water and sanitation facilities, coupled with poor hygiene practices, have led to an cholera with 960 confirmed cases and 15 deaths in Cabo Delgado as of May 2020. Cases of Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD) have been reported across the province without being confirmed as cholera (OCHA 04/06/2020; MSF 05/06/2020). Areas with the highest reported cases of cholera include severely conflict-affected districts and capitals that host the most IDPs: Ibo, Macomia, Mocimboa da Praia, and Pemba (OCHA 04/06/2020).

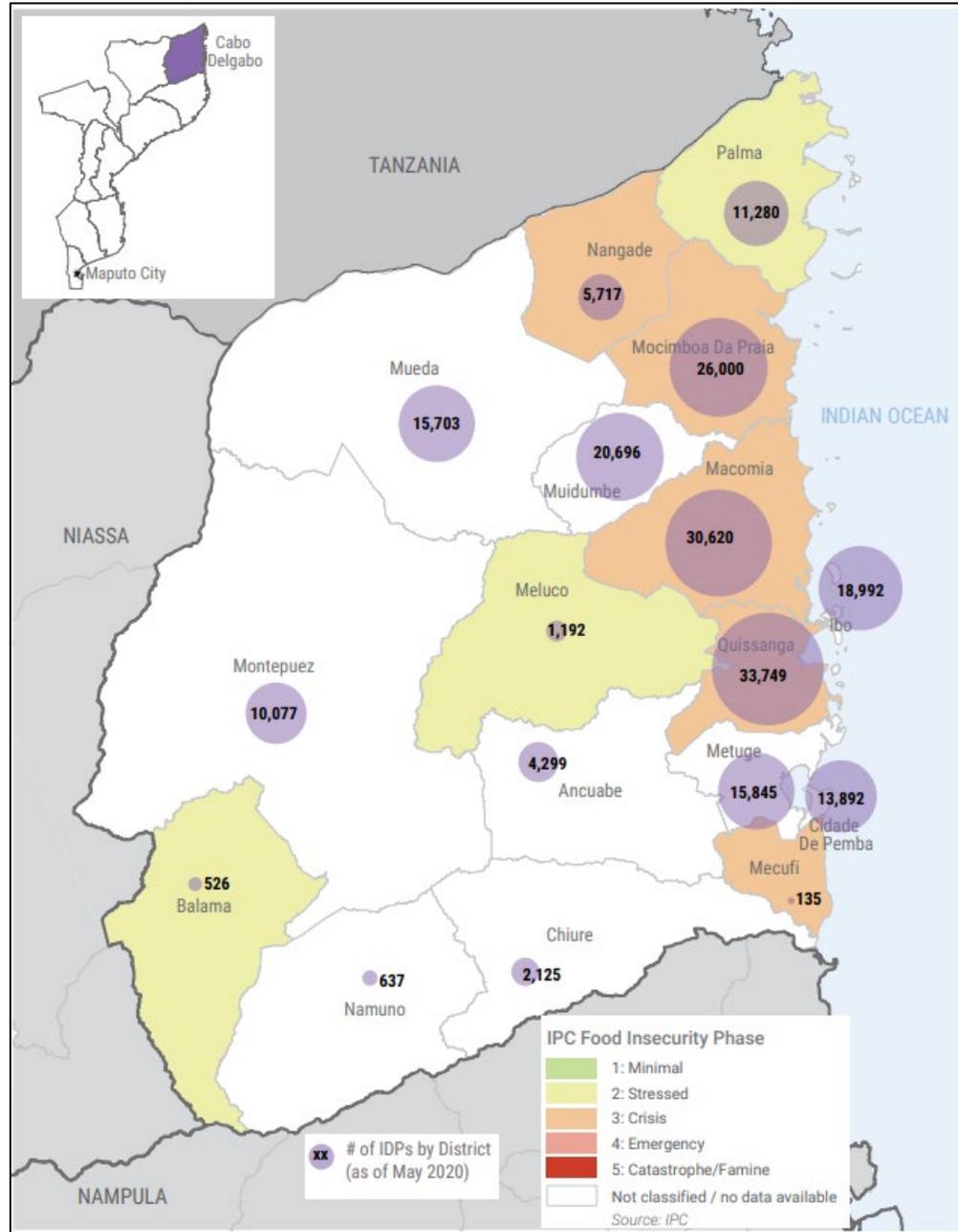
COVID-19 Outbreak

Mozambique has reported 472 cases of COVID-19 as of 10 June (UNICEF 10/06/2020). Cabo Delgado is disproportionately affected by the outbreak, with Pemba and Afungi registering nearly 50% of the overall caseload: 145 cases are reported. During the outbreak, loss of livelihoods and challenges in delivering humanitarian assistance may force vulnerable populations to resort to negative coping mechanisms, including food rationing (OCHA 04/06/2020). Poor health infrastructure in Cabo Delgado, coupled with an inability to practice social distancing or proper hygiene puts IDPs at high risk.

Limited National Response: Concerns that insurgents had infiltrated IDP populations initially made the government hesitant to allow NGOs to respond to IDPs (The New Humanitarian 28/05/2020). Though agencies have been allowed to respond as displacement numbers increase, the refusal to allow humanitarian workers into the area has delayed response and kept aid from getting to affected populations. Most humanitarian organizations have withdrawn to the provincial capital. Pemba, having suspended activities in conflict-affected areas. The increasing violence in district capitals since March is raising concerns that insurgent attacks could target Pemba, further disrupting what little response is happening in the province and increasing the scale of displacement and civilian casualties (The New Humanitarian 28/05/2020).

IDP Locations and Food Security in Cabo Delgado

Source: OCHA (04/06/2020)



Map: Cabo Delgado, Mozambique

Source: VOA (13/04/2020)

