



FAO requires
USD 21.5 million



to assist
1 125 000 people,

of whom 75 000 people in Cabo Delgado



1.7 million people facing
acute food insecurity at crisis or
worse levels*



6.1% increase in food prices
(June 2020), which has continued
to follow an inflating trend since
the onset of the pandemic in
February



+80% of the population
depends on agriculture for their
livelihoods



+60% of positive COVID-19 cases
in Cabo Delgado and Nampula

*Source: Mozambique IPC Technical
Working Group, Acute Food Insecurity
Analysis (October 2019–February 2020
projection), July 2019



Impact of COVID-19 on food security and agriculture

Prior to the World Health Organization's (WHO's) declaration of COVID-19 as a pandemic in March 2020, 1.6 million people in Mozambique were already estimated to be facing acute food insecurity at crisis or worse levels (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification [IPC] Phase 3 and above), most of whom face daily climate change and conflict-related risks. COVID-19 could further escalate these figures, with likely rises in humanitarian needs and food insecurity as a consequence of both the pandemic itself and efforts to contain its impact. The country is directly exposed to the effects of COVID-19 on people's lives and wellbeing, aggravated by a weak and overburdened health system and high levels of malnutrition. There are also serious indirect impacts on livelihoods, through disruptions to food supply chains and access to food, basic services and humanitarian assistance.

Although, essential COVID-19 related prevention and containment measures have not had an impact on the harvest for the main agricultural season (March to June 2020), border restrictions have reduced food imports (e.g. rice), particularly from South Africa. Furthermore, despite maize prices decreasing in central and northern markets from April onwards, they remained 10-13 percent more expensive (compared with those during the same period last year) in southern regions due to the reduced harvest in such areas. The harvest has contributed towards a dramatic decrease in the number of households with inadequate food consumption while buffering the impact of restrictions on food security, however, 32.6 percent of the population has reported adopting negative coping mechanisms, mainly spending savings, while more than a quarter report facing challenges in accessing markets.

In parts of Mozambique that are still recovering from two cyclones and recent drought and floods, any further disruption to food production and value chains could be catastrophic. More specifically, the Southern Region (currently affected by drought), Central Region (affected by Cyclone Idai last year), Cabo Delgado in the north (affected by Cyclone Kenneth, floods, conflict and internal displacement), and low-income urban/peri-urban populations across the country will be disproportionately affected by the pandemic. Cabo Delgado is also the province that has been most affected by COVID-19, followed by Nampula. Compounding the situation, due to the ongoing conflict in the area, more people have become displaced and are moving from Cabo Delgado to Nampula – a trend that is expected to continue over the coming months.

Moreover, provinces in a Crisis (IPC Phase 3) level of severe acute food insecurity are of particular concern. Overall, the most vulnerable groups are (i) smallholder farmers living in southern provinces (Gaza and Inhambane); (ii) internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host communities affected by conflict in Cabo

Delgado Province; (iii) post-cyclone Idai IDPs and host communities in Sofala Province; and (iv) populations depending on livelihoods that have been directly impacted by essential health-related restrictions across urban and rural areas (wage labourers, petty traders, etc.).

Likely evolution of the impacts of COVID-19 on food security

Movement restrictions to disrupt the food supply chain. Already vulnerable populations will be left to face a growing reality of even further constrained access to food due to shortages, high prices and curtailed incomes, resulting in their reduced purchasing power. Labour shortages could further disrupt the food supply chain, while informal workers will be hard hit by job and income losses as well as reduced remittances. On the supply side for instance, disruptions are expected in the transportation of inputs, with logistics challenges due to restrictions and quarantine measures. Cross-border trade flows and procurement processes could be disturbed, and limited labour availability and access to farmland could impede agricultural cycles and the production and distribution of agricultural-based products. Moreover, livestock supply chains are expected to be hit and vulnerable fishing communities are likely to face challenges in accessing markets.

These secondary impacts posed by the COVID-19 pandemic are of particular concern for the upcoming agricultural season. If farmers do not have access to land or the financial means to purchase required agricultural inputs, harvest, production and food security during the next season will be consequently affected. Such a scenario would seriously affect those most at risk, such as informal labourers, vulnerable urban/peri-urban populations, IDPs and others that rely heavily on markets to meet their needs. Reduced or lost wages, unstable prices, and limited availability of essential food items would have grave

implications for food security and nutrition among these groups. Furthermore, the impact of price rises and consequent social implications is of serious concern for Mozambique, given the sensitivity of local markets to regional and global price movements as well as high dependency on food imports.

Number of people in severe acute food insecurity to increase despite a good harvest. Although a seasonal improvement in food security has materialized with the 2020 harvest, this is expected to be short lived. The combined impacts of the pandemic could deepen the already high exposure of acutely food-insecure populations and threaten recent development gains in Mozambique. Households may resort to negative coping mechanisms that will have lasting effects on their lives and livelihoods, such as eating fewer meals, not being able to cover healthcare expenses, education fees or other basic necessities, and selling productive assets. The situation is of added concern for migrants, IDPs and refugees, who are already highly vulnerable, particularly cyclone and conflict-affected populations.

Existing gender and other inequalities to be amplified and intensified. Women are likely to face economic, health, unpaid labour and gender-based violence related consequences; there is a risk of reversing the limited achievements made in women's rights and economic empowerment in recent years. It is therefore crucial to include women and their organizations at the heart of the response to COVID-19.

Anticipatory actions and response

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations' (FAO's) immediate priority is to ensure the continuity of essential operations and contribute to mitigating the pandemic's impact on vulnerable people, by maintaining the provision of critical humanitarian assistance to save lives and livelihoods where there are already high levels of need, while also meeting new needs emerging from the effects of COVID-19.

Special consideration will be given to high-risk groups such as:

- subsistence and small-scale producers (farmers, livestock keepers and fisherfolk), particularly women;
- labourers along the rural-urban food value chain; and
- displaced populations and populations affected by natural disasters and conflict.

Within the framework of FAO's Corporate COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme, the proposed actions have been identified to meet the urgent short-term needs of the most vulnerable food-insecure populations and protect their assets. It also represents FAO's contribution to the United Nations Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19. Time-sensitive assistance will ensure farmers and fisherfolk can continue critical production, while animal health interventions to safeguard livestock and cash-based interventions will be expanded where possible. Standard operating procedures for COVID-19 in line with government measures have been developed and shared with all FAO partners. Meanwhile, consultation and coordination activities with other United Nations (UN) agencies are ongoing in order to combine logistics channels for the delivery of assistance and limited exposure of staff and beneficiaries.

1) Partnerships and coordination

FAO will support local organizations, community groups and other actors on the ground, who are on the frontline and play a crucial role in maintaining supply lines, in providing assistance and disseminating messages that are vital to contain the spread of COVID-19, such as the importance of physical distancing, hand washing and other hygienic practices, wherever feasible.

To ensure timely and effective implementation of activities, strong relationships will be forged with line ministries as well as provincial and district authorities,

local community-based organizations and national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with long-established presence in the field. FAO will advocate for the maintenance of critical food supply chains, livelihoods support and consistent health messaging related to COVID-19.

The Global Food Security Cluster (gFSC), co-led by FAO and the World Food Programme (WFP), will continue to work directly with partners and stakeholders, while closely monitoring the latest information on COVID-19 and its impacts on food security. This includes advocating for joint analyses, impact assessments on agricultural value chains and price monitoring. The gFSC and the Food Security Cluster at national level will be calling for additional short-term food assistance to areas already affected by COVID-19, including urban and peri-urban areas and enhanced support to agricultural production and livelihoods.

2) National data and analysis on food security

Given the unprecedented nature of the crisis, creating a better understanding of the potential impacts of COVID-19 on food security is of paramount importance and urgency. In light of this, FAO is contributing to data analyses to inform programming, in close collaboration with the Government (through the Technical Secretariat for Food Security and Nutrition) and key partners such as the Famine Early Warning System Network, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), WFP and NGOs.

Based on ongoing efforts by resource partners and food security actors, FAO intends to support and complement national initiatives, contributing to risk analyses and surveillance systems to capture the potential impacts of COVID-19 on agricultural production, food security and livelihoods. In this regard, FAO will continue working with partners and providing technical and financial support to national systems to produce information in a timely manner.

3) Availability of and access to food for the most food-insecure populations

One of the immediate priorities is to ensure that ongoing critical humanitarian assistance to vulnerable groups is not hindered and is adapted to potential

COVID-19 impacts. For FAO, this means preserving and protecting the agricultural livelihoods and food security of vulnerable populations, and safeguarding and promoting food production as well as value chains and related livelihoods systems. Interventions will be combined, to the extent possible, with the national social protection programme, supported by other UN agencies and resource partners. Building on experience, FAO will also encourage the use of e-voucher systems, which will also contribute to safeguarding local markets through agrodealers while ensuring availability of agricultural and livelihood inputs.

4) Continuity of the food supply chain for the most vulnerable populations

In Mozambique, FAO will aim to maintain and support the continuous functioning of food supply chains, focusing

on vulnerable smallholder farmers, people involved in the food industry, and areas critical to the food supply for vulnerable peri-urban areas.

5) Protection of actors at risk of virus transmission along the food supply chain

In close coordination with national authorities and WHO, FAO will raise the awareness of actors along the food supply chain on food safety and health regulations. This will be implemented in collaboration with the District Agricultural Services, using a network of extension agents and local partners to ensure that they follow prevention and containment measures to reduce exposure to COVID-19 transmission.

Funding



FAO requires
USD 21.5 million

- **USD 20 million** under the Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19
- **USD 1.5 million** under the Humanitarian Response Plan for Cabo Delgado for 2020

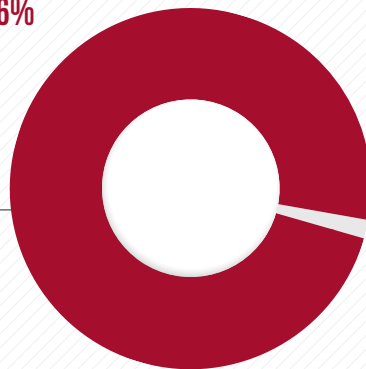


to assist
1 125 000 people,
of whom 75 000 people in
Cabo Delgado

FUNDING GAP

USD 21.2 million

98.6%



1.4%

RECEIVED

USD 300 000
(through CERF)

Resource partners

the Governments of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), and the World Bank through the Government of Mozambique

Coordination and partnerships

Coordination and partnerships are strongly harnessed with key line ministries as well as provincial and district authorities, local community-based organizations and national and international NGOs. Furthermore, FAO is actively working with other UN agencies including WFP, UNICEF and WHO, and participating in the different coordination Food Security and Agriculture Fora in Mozambique.

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