



# Gender Based Violence Response

## Cabo Delgado, northern Mozambique

**Gender Based Violence (GBV) is an alarming concern in Cabo Delgado.** Women and girls are at particular risk of multiple forms of GBV before, during and after displacement.

UNHCR works with displaced and host communities, partners, and local authorities **to respond to and prevent GBV in northern Mozambique.**

There is an **urgent need for additional funding** to enhance crucial GBV prevention and response activities in Cabo Delgado.

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

January – October 2021

**43,000** displaced people in vulnerable locations accessed specialized GBV services

**21,000** people reached by GBV prevention and response awareness campaigns

**6** mobile safe spaces providing integrated GBV, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) services

**100%** of GBV survivors who approach UNHCR supported with psychosocial counselling

**500** partner and government staff and community volunteers trained on GBV prevention and response

**48** GBV service providers trained on GBV Case Management including government services

**6** GBV referral pathways linking survivors to services established

**152** trained GBV community volunteers providing awareness and referrals to GBV services



UNHCR and CUAMM conduct discussions with women and girls to prevent early marriages in Ngalane IDP site, Cabo Delgado. © UNHCR/Martim Gray Pereira

Girls are at increasing risk of early marriage given their vulnerability and exposure to harmful traditional practices. UNHCR and partner Doctors with Africa CUAMM are working together in Chiure, Metuge and Montepuez districts to empower girls and families to prevent early marriage and foster healthy and supportive options for girls' futures.

*"I don't want my daughter to get married before she finishes her studies.*

*Girls of her age should be at school and not marrying older men, which can expose them to several risks, including health and violence."*

- a mother active in early marriage prevention

To prevent early marriages, UNHCR and CUAMM work closely together with girls, local authorities, community and religious leaders to disseminate key messages through community outreach volunteers, and girl led awareness channels to end this harmful practice.

## Overview

**Gender Based Violence (GBV) is a major concern amid Cabo Delgado’s humanitarian and protection crisis.** Displaced women and girls are at risk of multiple forms of gender-based violence including sexual violence, and abduction, intimate partner violence, and spiralling rates of early marriage.

**IDP sites and host community locations lack basic safety and assistance,** leaving women and girls, many of whom have experienced conflict related GBV, **exposed to ongoing risks of GBV.** Sexual violence whilst collecting water and firewood, sexual and physical assault in homes due to inadequate shelter, and fear of sexual violence due to lack of lighting at night are some of the GBV risks identified by UNHCR through GBV Safety Audits among IDPs and the host community.

**Sexual exploitation is a major risk,** in particular in urban areas due to lack of assistance and highly vulnerable groups such as single-women headed households, women and girls with disabilities, adolescent girls and sex workers are at particular risk. Women and girls are often sexually exploited as they cannot fulfil their basic needs such as food and hygiene items. **Women and girls have been kidnapped and sexually assaulted by Non-State Armed Group** militants and are exposed to GBV during their abduction. Following their release or escape, they are perceived as part of the armed groups and face discrimination within the community. Survivors of GBV perpetrated by armed groups are at ongoing risk and require immediate protection, mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS), health and reintegration assistance.

**Adolescent girls are at heightened risk of GBV and have been identified as the most vulnerable group.** Risks of GBV towards girls are escalating, including harmful traditional practises such as early marriage, sexual abuse and exploitation of girls, abduction, and high rates of early pregnancy. Girls feel they are not sufficiently included in humanitarian programmes, unrepresented in decision making, and lack access to services, activities and safe spaces adapted to their specific protection needs.

## UNHCR’s GBV Strategy

UNHCR’s GBV **strategy for Cabo Delgado aims at reducing the risk of GBV in displaced and host communities,** and that all **GBV survivors have adequate and timely access to quality services.** The strategy includes:

1. Working with agencies providing various support services, displaced persons, host communities, and local authorities to **respond to GBV through improving access to quality and holistic GBV services** for survivors, which includes the provision of GBV case management, including integrated mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS) through GBV mobile services run by UNHCR and partner Doctors with Africa CUAMM to ensure access by survivors in vulnerable communities.
2. Implementing **toolkits, curriculum, and communication materials** that help **prevent GBV through addressing gender inequality, discrimination and unequal power relations** with men, women, boys and girls. The activities include awareness-raising led by GBV community volunteers including targeted messages for adolescent girls, men and boys’ survivors of violence, and will be scaled-up to structured life-skills programmes with girls and women’s economic empowerment programing for a joint GBV-Livelihoods approach.



**UNHCR and partners work together with Protection Focal Points, activists, and members of displaced and host communities to disseminate prevention & response GBV/Sexual Exploitation and Abuse messages, and support GBV survivors and refer them to services.**

Credit: ©UNHCR/Martim Gray Pereira

- 3. Identifying GBV risks across all sectors and areas of work and develop capacities that ensure prompt action is taken to mitigate these risks.** This includes conducting GBV Safety Audits to identify GBV risks and mitigate them through community-based and sector level responses. UNHCR is also providing training to mainstream GBV across different humanitarian sectors.
- 4. Conducting GBV assessments and protection monitoring to ensure that GBV gaps and risks, including sexual exploitation and abuse, are identified, and progress is tracked to inform advocacy and programming.**
- 5. Building the capacity of government and NGO stakeholders to ensure they have the knowledge and skills needed to promote gender equality and to prevent, mitigate, and respond to GBV.** GBV capacity-building focuses on a GBV case management coaching program, and a GBV learning package focusing on enhancing UNHCR, partners and government community volunteers and leader's capacity to conduct GBV community engagement and support survivor disclosure.

## Gaps and Challenges

- Despite the overwhelming GBV needs identified, due to limited funding for GBV activities, essential GBV services lack capacity to respond to the emergency needs of GBV survivors.** UNHCR leads the provision of GBV case management and provides safe spaces in areas with vulnerable IDP populations as part of its efforts to engage IDPs broader health, legal, safety and psychosocial support services, however funding is urgently required so that more survivors can access crucial services.
- To complement existing community awareness, **more technical structured approaches to GBV prevention are required**, especially funding for programmes targeting adolescent girls' life-skills, engagement of men and boys to address harmful gender norms, and women's economic empowerment.
- There is limited GBV technical capacity on the ground impacting both the quality and capacity of GBV response programs as well as the GBV mainstreaming across the humanitarian response.** UNHCR is providing GBV mainstreaming capacity building and technical support across humanitarian programmes to address GBV risks, urgent funding is required to scale up this vital support.
- Longer term capacity-building and support for GBV services, in particular government social services, is required to provide access to quality services for GBV survivors more sustainably.** UNHCR needs additional resources to provide GBV capacity building support to provide more regular support to more actors in the response.

## Financial Information

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### UNHCR is also grateful for unearmarked donor contributions

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**Empowering women and girls is essential to ensure sustainable development in Northern Mozambique**

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