

### KEY FIGURES


**2,045**

displaced persons hosted in Mecula village


**1,054**

persons recently displaced due to attacks by NSAG in Lichingue and Chimene

**305** HHs forced to flee

**991**

persons recently displaced due to attacks by NSAG in Naulala and Macalange

**309** HHs forced to flee


584 men



559 women


442 girls  
460 boys

**2**

Persons dead

**1**

Person injured

### CASUALTIES

**7**

6 Children missing  
1 Adult missing

## URGENT PROTECTION NEEDS



Family Separation



Loss of civil documentation



Physical and Mental Health Needs



Violence induced displacement



Urgent need of multi-sectoral protection integrated humanitarian support for those affected

## INCIDENT HIGHLIGHTS

- 200 IDPs (70HH) from Naulala neighborhood fled to Mecula due to NSAG attack (25 November)
- Women, children and elderly flee their village (Macalange) when IDPs from Naulala passed by. The entire village was then burned by NSAG men armed with machetes and guns (03 December)
- An additional 1,054 persons affected due to attacks by NSAG in Lichingue and Chimene villages. Reportedly, casualties include one elderly woman burnt inside her house and a man shot and beheaded (08 December)
- 1,054 persons (newly) arrived in Mecula from Naulala, Lichingue and Chimene. 2,045 total displaced

### 1 25 November 2021 (Naulala)

On 25 November, it was reported by IDPs that non-state armed group (NSAG) attacked two neighbourhoods of the Naulala Village, prompting them to flee to the bush and reach Mecula (70km southern), Gomba (67km up north) and Mapanda (not identified). Mecula was reached three days later by the arrivals of the first group of IDPs. During the focus group discussions (FGD) with IDP men, they mentioned that "early in the morning armed men invaded their village and started shooting and burning houses." One mentioned that the NSAG even showed in which direction to run while threatening the IDPs before starting to loot the belongings of the villagers and their homes. Reportedly, five children went missing after fleeing together with an adult.



Lichingue village two days after the attacks  
Photo: UNHCR

The IDPs from Naulala hosted in the school at that moment was about 70 households (around 200 individuals). The IDPs reported no deaths, nonetheless they reported the disappearance of five small children that fled together and a female adult with her small child. Until the writing of this report, they have not received any news from them.

## 2 03 December 2021 (Macalange)

The IDPs passed through Macalange as they fled towards Mecula, around 20km north. Their appearance triggered the Macalange population of women, children, and elderly to flee for fear of a potential incoming attack. According to the IDPs, the men stayed behind. On 3 December, the NSAG reportedly attacked Macalange, opening fire on the civilian population, burning houses and chasing after them into the woods. A day later, some men returned to the village and found nothing but ashes. Homes destroyed and property looted by 20-25 men belonging to the NSAG, according to the IDPs. According to an IDP woman who was abducted and released after less than two hours, she counted 14 men mainly with machetes and some with guns. The IDPs reported that their subsistence farming fields (machambas) remained untouched. However, the IDPs reported that the seeds were destroyed when their houses caught fire, which means they are unable to participate in the upcoming planting season. A population of 220 households, around 788 individuals arrived in Mecula and were hosted in the EPC 16 de junho primary school. The IDPs reported no deaths, although a child had parts of her body burnt by the flames and is receiving health care at the Mecula health centre.



Lichingue village two days after the attacks  
 Photo: UNHCR

## 3 08 December 2021 (Lichingue and Semene)

According to IDPs, NSAG attacked Lichingue and Chimene villages (located 7km and 15km, respectively, south from Mecula). Attacks happened right after telephone networks went down. NSAG opened fire against the houses which triggered the population to flee immediately. According to the IDPs, their homes were subsequently burned down by the NSAG. The entire population of Lichingue, approximately 989 individuals, were displaced. The majority fled to Mecula.

Figures are not known from Chimene (a.k.a Nampequesso), but the town suffered a similar attack. According to the IDPs, the NSAG came from the north pushing IDPs to flee to the bushes with some fleeing towards Mbatamila (where the Niassa Reserve HQ is located) to seek refuge, others managed to find their way to Mecula during the night. According to the first figures gathered, more than 600 individuals arrived in Mecula. Other hundreds fled southern to the Lugenda River to a village called Mussoma. According to information provided by authorities, the number of people who fled to that village from other villages in the surrounding area could be higher than 1,000 individuals. Those who arrived in Mecula were put in the same primary school where others from Naulala and Macalange are/were staying. Two persons were reported dead in these attacks according to the IDPs. In Lichingue, an elderly female, who could not walk, was reportedly burnt inside her house, whilst her grandchildren managed to escape. In Chimene, a young man was reportedly shot and then beheaded.

## 4 10 December 2021 (New arrivals)

As of 10 December, according to the authorities, approximately 1,054 people had arrived in the EPC Primary School in Mecula (16 de Junho). The location is currently over-crowded and the IDPs from the first attacks coming from Naulala and Macalange, who had received tents, were asked to relocate to another Mecula neighborhood (bairro 1, a.k.a. Iutando). According to the information provided by the authorities, all the 119 tents were going to be taken from the school and pitched on the new relocation site during the 10 and 11 December. The IDPs who remained in the school were those who did not have tents plus the newly arrived IDPs from Lichingue and Chimene. In total, 2,045 individuals are being hosted in the Mecula village. South of Lichingue in the direction of the Lugenda River, before crossing the bridge, villagers from Chimene and all the other small villages (Mutemba 1, Mutemba 2, Zongole, Bairro 11, Chilange, Musoma) have also fled their houses in fear of further attacks, reaching the Mussoma village. According to the information provided by the INGD Niassa Delegate, around 1,404 persons sought safety in Mussoma.



## PROTECTION RESPONSE

Based on the request from the INGD of Niassa, on 3 December for UNHCR to provide assistance to a total of 160 households of IDPs in Mecula, UNHCR conducted a field mission to distribute core relief items and do protection monitoring and consultations in the location from 7 to 9 December. As a result of the mission, UNHCR distributed core relief items while ensuring protection mainstreaming, in addition to collecting basic information on the protection environment and raising awareness on PSEA. Due to attacks of non-state armed group (NSAG) in the region on 8 December, it was requested for the team on mission to put on hold the return to Marrupa because of restricted movements on the road between Mecula and Marrupa. The objectives of the mission were: a) to explore opportunities to strengthen cooperation with local service providers, including the Government, the Police and Protection partners; b) Provide core relief items (CRIs) to affected population, and c) inform various stakeholders of the humanitarian and protection needs in the province.

### Coordination



Mecula Administration Building  
Photo: UNHCR









The UNHCR team met the Mecula District Administrator jointly with the Permanent Secretary and the District Planning and Infrastructure Service (SDPI) Director (focal point for the IDP response). Discussions touched upon the overall protection situation in the region, IDP population figures, the CRI distribution criteria, the major protection needs identified by the GoM, and the safety and security situation in the zone. In the meeting, UNHCR also advocated for vulnerable population to be prioritized, humanitarian access to the displaced and basic messaging on PSEA. According to the Administrator, the Mecula District authorities, together with the Government of Niassa, have identified - until that moment - Mecula as the site to host the Niassa IDPs, clarifying that they would prefer the IDPs from Niassa not to be mixed with the IDPs from Cabo Delgado.

According to the Administrator, the Mecula village, together with the Government of Niassa, have identified - until that moment - Mecula as the site to host the Niassa IDPs, clarifying that they would not be mingling with the IDPs placed in the Marrupa relocation site, because they were survivors of the violence of Cabo Delgado, and not an internal violence in Niassa.

**PSEA.** The team ensured that IDPs understand that humanitarian assistance is free of charge and does not require anything in return such as favours including sexual favours coming from humanitarian workers, government or local leaders as a prerequisite to receiving CRIs. In cases where there is information or rumours of potential sexual exploitation, IDPs can directly field their complaints via Linha Verde 1458 and Linha Fala Criança 116.

**Protection.** UNHCR facilitated a focus group discussion to better understand the attacks by NSAG and potential protection risks as a result. Through consultations, UNHCR was able to understand the protection needs of the IDPs and their host community, including prioritization of the most vulnerable.

### Immediate Protection Assistance: Core Relief Items (CRI) Distribution

			
330 sleeping mats	330 mosquito nets	165 kitchen sets	330 blankets
			
165 buckets 14 liter	165 jerry cans 10 liter	165 plastic tarpaulins	165 solar lamps

**165**  
total CRI's distributed

**675**  
individuals benefitted from CRI's





Top: Linha Verde awareness session

Bottom: IDP population of Naulala and Macalange listening to the Linha Verde awareness session.



Photo: UNHCR

## URGENT NEEDS AND ASSISTANCE

SECTOR	Identified Needs	Assistance received	Assistance needed
 <b>PROTECTION</b>	<p>Due to the violence of NSAG, which burnt houses, opened fire on civilians and even killing two individuals, the IDP population arrived extremely frightened and traumatised. The Mecula local population is also impacted by the uncertainty of the security situation in the district. Families have lost their houses and all their belongings and they now need to restart.</p>	<p>Safety and security were prioritized by authorities to guarantee IDPs wellbeing. The family unit concept was mainstreamed during reception and registration exercises, being reassessed during UNHCR CRI distribution. During distribution, special attention was paid to the most vulnerable individuals. Information on the nature of the humanitarian assistance and PSEA were provided.</p>	<p>Support accessing civil documentation for IDP who have lost them; mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) for those having survived violence and suffering violence; community-based protection to be organized in new IDP sites; referral systems to be put in place to identify urgent protection needs; scale up of protection actors especially case management for GBV and child protection. Health care and dignity kits for women – in particular – survivors of GBV. For IDP HHs who lost their family members during the incident, it is urgently needed to provide assistance for family reunification.</p>
 <b>SHELTER</b>	<p>Tents and Shelter/CRI kits for the IDPs in Mecula and potentially for the IDPs in Mussoma are a must. There is no opportunity for the people to collect new grass to build their roofs and with the rainy season approaching and the population remaining sleeping in the open (roofless), this raises serious concerns to their health and wellbeing while displaced.</p>	<p>According to local authorities and the IDPs, the family tents provided were not enough for the first two IDP populations that arrived in the EPC 16 de Junho. 119 tents were provided whilst the number of families was steady but still increasing, revolving around 309 households.</p>	<p>Immediate provision of plastic sheets to ensure protection of IDP HHs from the weather elements and/or other risks while securing materials to build their own houses. Additional family tents are needed both for existing and new IDPs on site.</p>
 <b>WASH</b>	<p>Latrines are needed in Mecula, both in the school and in the new relocation site. The presence of the IDP population will stretch the provision of water to locals, therefore, new water points should be considered. Hygiene kits should also be considered during distribution as UNHCR heard from IDPs that they lacked soap to shower and wash their clothes.</p>	<p>IDPs were assisted with soap for hygiene. Four latrines were built in the school and eight slabs were provided by the authorities to increase the response. Existing water points, one in each site, are the ones supporting the needs of IDPs and local population.</p>	<p>Installation of gender segregated latrines in both the existing and new relocation site to decongest the current latrines. Installation of additional water points in both existing and new relocation site to cater additional IDP HHs.</p>
 <b>FOOD SECURITY</b>	<p>Food is needed in great number and to last longer, to assist a population of IDPs that is still growing. Rough calculation shows that the number of IDPs in Mecula is greater than 1,700 individuals. As aforementioned, in Mussoma the number of IDPs could reach 3,000 individuals. This data is still to be confirmed, but none of them can return to their places of origin until safety is guaranteed.</p>	<p>IDPs received food from INGD on 1 December, planned to last for 15 days. Emergency food assistance was provided to families, regardless of their size. They received 10kg of maize meal, 5kg of rice, 1.5kg of beans and 1 soap bar. On 8 December, during the CRI distribution, IDPs were already complaining that the food received had ran out and they did not know what to feed their families.</p>	<p>Provision of continuing food assistance whilst displaced. Apart from that, the population have mentioned that seeds such as corn, rice, beans (nhemba type, Black-eyed pea), peanuts and sesame were crucial, as they have already prepared their fields to plant for self-consumption and commerce. Mecula district mainly relies on their production and that in 2022 great famine will affect the entire district if they and others do not plant during this season.</p>

### UNHCR PROTECTION MONITORING

The UNHCR Protection Monitoring aims to provide a starting point for information and analysis of the situation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and to provide humanitarian agencies, policy makers and other stakeholders concerning conditions of forced displacement or solutions. The number of people affected and displaced may change over time due to the fluidity of the situation and continuous movement of IDPs. To the extent possible the terminology used in this report reflects the UN Guiding Principles of Internal Displacement and other sources of international law and practice. The sources of information comes from the IDPs themselves, local population, local authorities, key community leaders and other partners that UNHCR coordinates with in the course of the monitoring. Updates will be provided soon as new information or development happens. UNHCR in due diligence verifies data and information before these are reflected in the report. Any feedback is welcome.

#### Feedback:

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