

Returns Strategy for Mozambique

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Overview

This strategy concerns support for cyclone and flooding affected households and individuals as they leave accommodation centres, and return to damaged or destroyed homes. This strategy forms part of a larger strategy for recovery and reconstruction, but does not include the relocation of households and individuals to new plots.

This strategy recognises that returning is a bridging process, with support from a number of humanitarian sectors necessary for both the departure from the accommodation centres, and the re-establishment of shelter, access to basic services, and livelihoods, in the areas of return. This strategy considers that the support necessary for returns should be holistic, and should also include the humanitarian needs of those who may have remained non-displaced in the return neighbourhoods, as well as the communities which have hosted the displaced. Assistance to returnees should not preclude provision of assistance to those who remain in displacement as well as host and impacted communities. This strategy is intended for all cyclone-affected provinces in Mozambique.

This Strategy aims to provide a common roadmap to strengthen protection responses to the displacement and will form the basis for the elaboration of a national strategy and operational plans on durables solutions and recovery tailored to national specificities and contexts.

Guiding Principles

The primary responsibility for protection and assistance of IDPs rests with the Government of Mozambique. The United Nations, IFRC, INGOs, national NGOs and other response actors will seek to support of the relevant Government authorities in the return process initiated by the Government. Where necessary, the humanitarian actors will also advocate for immediate and longer-term actions to ensure that the rights and livelihoods of IDPs are upheld and linkages are established between relief, recovery and long-term development. The efforts of the government as well as humanitarian community responding to the Cyclone IDAI in Mozambique should be guided by the relevant provisions of the country laws and at the same time, they are also guided by the internationally recognized and endorsed "Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement" that serves as an international standard, based upon existing international humanitarian laws and was approved by Member States and United Nations intergovernmental mechanisms, the principles identify the rights and guarantees relevant to the protection of and assistance to IDPs in all phases of displacement, ensuring that established conditions, as well as provision of support from the international community, should allow IDPs to return voluntarily,

in safety and with dignity, to their homes or places of habitual residence, or to resettle voluntarily in another part of the country.

Objectives

- To safeguard the health, security, privacy and dignity women and men, boys and girls affected by Cyclone Idai in preparation for, during, and after the departure from accommodation centres, with particular attention to vulnerable persons with specific needs.
- To support durable solutions to displacement by allowing safe, dignified and sustainable returns.
- To promote early self-recovery through a participatory neighbourhood/settlements approach that integrates the support of all humanitarian sectors, and benefits returnees and communities currently residing in return areas on an equal footing.

Institutional framework

The establishment of a Provincial Return Task Force will provide the government and the humanitarian community with a mutually agreed framework for ensuring a safe, sustainable, voluntarily, informed and dignified return strategy/policy for IDP's to their areas of origin (or alternative locations of their choice) in an equitable, coherent, and consistent manner.

Baseline data

There are 52,745 individuals (12,019 households) across 41 assessed displacement sites in Beira, Dondo and Nhamatanda. The majority of the displacement sites that were assessed were collective centres. 22 of the displacement sites are schools, 7 are community centres.

In 32 of the 41 sites, the majority of IDPs want to return to their place of origin, considering also that in 24 sites, the majority of individuals reported that they were displaced from Cidade da Beira. In 10 sites the majority of IDPs are from Nhamatanda while in 7 most individuals are from Dondo.¹

These intentions should be considered for the support, to prioritize an informed, safe and dignified return. For instance, according to the *DTM, Mozambique Cyclone Idai Site Assessment Round 2, April 2019*, as of 12th April 2019, 9 sites have signaled through intentions surveys that the majority of the population are willing to return, and have signaled that they expect to return home within one to two months. Nevertheless, a holistic approach for all sites must be implemented, and earlier support to other of the 41 sites should not be precluded, including

¹ All quotes in this section from *DTM, Mozambique Cyclone Idai Site Assessment Round 2, April 2019*

following DTM reports. A more in-depth intentions survey will be completed by 16th April for Beira city, and 18th April for the remaining four districts. This in-depth survey will provide not only necessary further information on intentions, but also importantly on locations of origin, in order to ensure full support during the entire returns process, and details of support required, in terms of shelter and other relief items, transportation, information and community engagement.

The subsequent report, with full details and analysis will be made available to all actors by 19th April.

Return and intentions monitoring and data collection

Any return process should, preferably, be preceded by registration of the IDPs willing to return. Furthermore, a return intention survey should be mainstreamed into registration and other activities. Data on area of return should be provided in advance to the returnees- Existing assessment should enable this as well as organized go and see visits.

Scenarios and Constraints

Whilst a positive scenario would see well-supported households returning without barrier to their communities of origin, returns may be delayed by lack of access to humanitarian support in the areas of return, unacceptable exposure to future natural disasters (high-risk flood areas, or areas of high exposure to cyclone winds), or delays in re-establishment of livelihoods may also delay departure from accommodation centres, and threaten the sustainability of the returns. Caution must be taken in whether to support the return of households to hazard-prone areas, and this may be dependent upon the viability of neighbourhood-level risk-mitigation measures.

Inability to re-access land previously tenured through customary or non-written agreement may delay return, as may any social cohesion issues between the returning and those who were never displaced. Even more vulnerable is the situation of displaced populations who were previously renting accommodation and as such did not own any house/land where to return to. Such challenges may also result in households returning to their general neighbourhoods of origin, but unable to return to their original plots. In no case should the returns process be undertaken in such a way that those who have not yet left the centre have reduced access to support. Accommodation centres with populations from multiple different locations of origin/return may need more time to organise support for the entire return process, than in cases where an entire accommodation centre population are all returning to the same location. However, prolonged delays in completing the process of leaving the accommodation centres may result in further influxes into the centres of new populations, drawn by the possibility of the 'pull factors' of humanitarian support, and the emerging informal economies often seen in long-term centres.

Timeline

Voluntary returns should be supported in a timely manner, in order to minimise the risk of accommodation centres evolving into prolonged existences. Nevertheless, departure from each accommodation centre will continue to need a minimum number of days preparation, in order to ensure safe, dignified and well-supported movement, and generally will be guided by procedures checklists. This minimum timeframe will need to be extended by at least 48 hours, if households are returning to locations of origin in other cities, at a distance from the accommodation centres. Re-establishment in the locations of origins is a much longer process: In recognition of the timeline outlined in the INGC Resettlement Plan between the 15th of April and the 31st of May, the humanitarian community may be able to cope with departures from the 41 sites undertaken within two months, but initial-phase support after return, in locations of origin, may be expected to last at least six months for some sectors.

The key steps to the departure process, which must be observed in all cases, are:

BEFORE

1. Undertake by all concerned actors, communications with the (a) the population in the centre, (b) the host population, (c) the population in the return areas. Communications should include the aspirations, intentions of the affected population and that they are informed and engaged in the whole process of the movement, but should also be able to communicate to them all planned activities, the planned timetable for departure and for arrival in the return area, and roles and responsibilities, and focal points. Communications must continue as appropriate throughout the entire process
2. Ensure the proper registration of the population that will be returned to ensure accountability and allow clear baseline for assistance
3. Mobilize transport, water and other practical materials.
4. Identify vulnerable cases and ensure appropriate assistance for them throughout the movement process

DURING

5. Prepare and Provide appropriate assistance package to the affected population
6. Ensure that distribution site is prepared in such a way to ensure that the distribution can be conducted in a safe and dignified manner

AFTER

7. Assist and Monitor the movement (mobile first aid team etc) particularly those with vulnerabilities
8. Receive the population in the most orderly manner possible in the return location

Support for Different Populations, Different Needs

Whilst the primary focus of this strategy is those who are returning from accommodation centres, all actors are encouraged to include in their programming those who were not displaced from the locations of origin/return but nevertheless were negatively affected by the cyclone, and those who have hosted families in those neighbourhoods. The overall integrated objectives should be the same regardless of the type of population, as what will change is the method to reach them and or the specific activity to accomplish any of those objectives. For the communities which had hosted the accommodation centres, rehabilitation of the buildings used, and environmental recovery activities may come under consideration.

Programming Common to All Sectors

To the degree possible, support which is multi-sectoral in nature will be sought. This may include 'one-stop-shop' approached to community information and training centres, combined packages of in-kind materials assistance, multi-sectoral approaches to assessment, registration and monitoring, and a multi-sectoral approach to engagement with community representatives in the programme design and implementation.

On modalities for integrated assistance, in the first instance agencies may first support returnees and affected host community members to meet immediate critical needs predominantly through service provision and in-kind distribution of goods. However, agencies will consider more sustainable market-based interventions, for the provision of integrated food, WASH, Health, Shelter and possibly Education support, where possible.

CCCM

CCCM works with the Working Group on relocation / movement in order to assist the Government with orderly, voluntary and informed relocation and/or returns. CCCM, through the working group ensures that preparations and activities before, during and after the returns are in place prior to the movement. This includes consultation with the community, ensuring that return areas are conducive for return, affected communities are informed of their entitlements and access to basic services is available.

Education

The focus will be to ensure that schools are made clean and secure for returning children to restart school again. Temporary supply kits are available to priority schools as well as tarpaulin for temporary rehabilitation. Partners will also provide psychosocial support/training for teachers to address psychosocial wellbeing and identification of children at risk and activate referral mechanisms. Support will be provided to assess the structural integrity of most affected schools and decide about rehabilitation priorities.

Food Security/Livelihoods

The Food Security and Livelihoods strategy will be designed following a two-pronged approach: 1) supporting the basic needs of most affected populations until their sources of income can be restored and strengthened, while 2) supporting the restoration of livelihoods and income sources in urban, peri-urban and rural areas. This strategy will be closely articulated and reinforcing other sectors of intervention, in particular Shelter and Wash. Intervention methodologies may include:

- Provision of food and basic needs assistance to support returnees
- Provision of household agricultural and fishery livelihoods
- Skills trainings
- Vocational trainings
- Short-term employment around shelter repairs/construction and sanitation
- Support to Small and Medium Enterprises
- Support to women saving groups
- Technical assistance

Food Security actors will make the necessary adjustments in their food assistance plans to assist returnees in their communities of origin. Food delivery will be integrated as part of the returns package. Coordination is required to ensure the return packages are timely provided at the settlement areas upon the arrival of the returnees.

Health and Nutrition

The health sector will support the access to health care to all the member of the community and, especially promote a prevention strategy that needs to include the following interventions:

1. Community health approach: focused in set up first aid and information points when can be possible to provide ORS, information about relevant health topics such malaria-cholera prevention, family planning, etc., initial management and referral if needed
2. Ensure health access according to Sphere standards and support the Primary health care
3. Promote community resilience with community psychological support.

The priority will be to ensure that people get access to essential health services, via provision of BP5 for HIV-positive pregnant women and lactating mothers, Immunization services through focused integrated mobile health brigades including via child health day, screening of malnutrition, reinforced Integrated community case management of malaria, diarrhea, pneumonia and HIV. Reinforcement of support to Health system, including connexion to water. Essential health supplies such as bednets will be provided via the health system or massive campaigns.

Shelter

The Shelter sector will promote positive environmental, social and economical impacts by seeking to use an appropriate palette of interventions, considering the different contexts (rural,

peri-urban, urban), to support households' own housing repairs, the incremental construction and upgrading of core housing, and where needed integrating HLP support to secure long term ownership. Providing access to key construction materials and technical information will be combined with community mobilisation to ensure construction-labour support for most vulnerable households. Technical training will focus on the improved use of known locally available materials and techniques, as part of a 'build-back-safer' approach including mitigation measures at larger scale, based in turn on hazard vulnerability risk assessments, and analysis of previous housing damage causes.

A neighbourhoods approach will promote the integration of projects for public and communal spaces as well as individual housing, underpinned by community engagement approaches such as the Participatory Approach for Safe Shelter Awareness. Engagement with local markets will be sought to the degree possible and appropriate.

Protection

The protection strategy for returns is guided by three paramount principles:

1. Centrality of protection. Protection of the IDPs and affected individuals is central across all intervention sectors, before, during and in particular after return.
2. Build on established structures. Protection actors aim at strengthening capacity of existing mechanisms at central and provincial/local government as well as community levels without creating parallel structures, which would be unsustainable over time.
3. Economic recovery. Sustainable protection requires access to livelihoods and self-reliance opportunities for returnees and host communities.

In line with such principles, the protection approach and activities for the returns will be implemented along the following priority lines of action:

- Keep up to date information on the perspectives of return of the different groups through intention surveys and structured dialogues to better understand their perspectives and priorities with regard to return
- Collect information on the situation through monitoring and profiling in return areas, to be shared with various actors working in different sectors for a better response.
- Mapping out the profiles of spontaneous returnees, including motives behind their choices, protection and assistance needs, potential risks and mitigation measures
- Provide adequate/tailored assistance to persons with specific needs to facilitate a sustainable return decision.
- Set mechanisms with national authorities to ensure, through sensitization and effective involvement of local authorities housing, land and property rights to IDPs and returning populations.

- Strengthen prevention and response mechanisms on sexual and gender-based violence and child protection systems and safeguard their best interests during the reintegration process. In particular:
 - Supporting return will be child-centred, and include supporting/establishing community based child protection mechanisms and referral mechanism to relevant authorities, including meaningful participation of children and youth in the process.
- Establish a feedback mechanisms and Community awareness and advocacy in PSEA and referral mechanism.

WASH

For WASH a two pronged approach will be offered : 1) hygiene kits distrution + certeza + hygiene promotion during return process and then or in parallel rehabilitation of water points and disinfection of wells, as a medium-term action, household latrines promotion through a recovery/adapted CLTS approach, and the rehabilitation of WASH facilities in health posts and schools.

As part of the integrated approach, the WASH sector will support with access to safe water through treatments in community points and household water treatment (HHWT) interventions. This will happen in parallel with building local capacity with community volunteers to promote good use of water treatment methods and carry out hygiene messages. Any water intervention will need to come hand in hand with a sanitation approach of low-cost latrine for rural and urban areas. For local construction of latrines and potentially protection or repair of water sources, the preferred option for materials acquisition is through vouchers or other modalities that provide choice to the family, with attention paid to protection and disability inclusion concerns as well as construction of high-water level resistant latrines. To ensure a holistic approach, WASH and shelter will be integrated to ensure each home includes one latrine. Hygiene promotion will also be provided alongside.

Community Engagement and Accountability

Using the Community existing structures , as an example of the neighbourhoods "Bairros" leadership and committees, community engagement approaches will be scaled up to ensure community participation in the resettlement process and in the planning of support to communities towards building resilient communities, with focus on a participatory selection process of the most vulnerable. We will support and enable community-to-community engagement, connectivity and community leadership as the most sustainable solution for people in dire circumstances. Ultimately, we need to ensure that people are knowledgeable, skilled, connected and bring about the changes needed to address risks and underlying

vulnerabilities and rapidly build back their lives, with the support of existing community based organizations effective mechanisms to establish and monitor the entire return process .

The CE Working Group will coordinate actions and mobilize actors to ensure:

- That the regular means of communication of people returning home is restored – internet and mobile connectivity, radios, etc.
- That regular community perception surveys are undertaken and an active encouragement of a returns and recovery phase that that are designed around people's priorities
- That feedback mechanisms take into account people's preferred communication channels and language and that their feedback reaches the decision makers with a feedback loop.
- That people are engaged in decision making processes and have the means to do so.
- That special provision is made to make sure people are not exploited by aid workers in their return as they will experience increased vulnerability at this time. Good systems need to be in place for reporting of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Linkages to Long-term Resilience

All activities will link with the resumption of basic social services and the effective presence of the State, the provision of livelihoods opportunities, promoting self-reliance and decreasing dependency of humanitarian aid and the capacity to assess risk reduction and promote resilience in areas of return.
