

PARTICIPANT RESOURCE

Case Study

The people in the conflict affected areas of Cabo Delgado, a northern province of Mozambique, continue to face widespread insecurity and ongoing military operations, damaged infrastructure, tattered local economies, loss of livelihoods, human rights violations, including forced recruitment, kidnapping, and conflict-related sexual violence. There are 384,316 children who have been displaced since the beginning of the conflict. They make up around 51% of the displaced population in Cabo Delgado. (UNICEF, 2022). They are one of the most vulnerable groups among the affected population. 3,218 children are fleeing the conflict alone. (IOM, February 2022). This can increase their exposure to serious protection issues. Existing services have limited capacity to deliver necessary services for unaccompanied and separated children (UNHCR, 2022).

In areas of displacement, school closures due to conflict (Relief Web, 2022) and overall limited availability of secondary education (Save the Children, 2021) are leaving IDP children out of school. This may contribute to exposure to risks. On-going attacks on schools (ACLED Curated Data: Africa, July 2022) are a grave violation of children's rights and increase the possibility of injuries and maiming. Save the Children reported a rapid increase in the number of child marriages in Cabo Delgado. Although prohibited by Mozambican law, this is common practice in Cabo Delgado. Data from 2017 shows that the Province had the highest rate of child marriage in Mozambique at the time. (Instituto Nacional de Estatística and UNICEF, 2021). This is in part the result of (i) limited access to education and (ii) the lack of a sustainable durable solution in a protracted crisis setting.

The loss of civil documentation and birth certificates (Save the Children, 2021) may further expose children to protection risks such as child marriage. Economic hardship can also be linked to increasing protection incidents reported in Cabo Delgado, such as the increase of children married (as reported in risk 2). The prospect of a reduction in the overall assistance of food items, combined with lack of economic integration sets a dangerous trend in which the overall vulnerable profile of the displaced population in Cabo Delgado (composed of around 80% of women and children) is placed in a situation of increased risk. Human Rights Watch reported that hundreds of children have been kidnapped by NSAG and trained in combat in locations across Cabo Delgado. There are unverified reports of girls who have been abducted and forced to marry members of the non-state armed groups. The protection cluster, including child protection, gender-based violence partners, and PSEA network, has been working with other clusters to ensure that protection is central to the response. In this connection, the Protection Cluster has worked with the Community Engagement and Accountability to Affected Population Working Group (CE/AAP WG) to ensure that IDPs with specific needs are identified, meaningfully consulted as well as prioritized by the humanitarian response. The Protection Cluster and its partners have also been working to ensure strengthening of local systems and provide trainings to authorities at the district, provincial and national level.

www.globalprotectioncluster.org/sites/default/files/2022-11/20221114_pc_prot_analysis_cd_final_cleared_gpc_1.pdf

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