



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

Mozambique

Fostering Urban Resilience through Preparedness Activities in Southern Africa

CONTEXT

In Mozambique, January is known as the peak of the lean season as food prices increase while farmers await the harvest. This is also a period known as the cyclone season in one of the countries most affected by extreme weather events in the world.

Since 2007, ten tropical cyclones have hit Mozambique and the effects of these are expected to worsen as the climate crisis continues to drive more frequent and intense floods, storms, and droughts. Cyclone Freddy, hitting the city of Quelimane (one of the cities included in the project), has been a stark reminder of how urban preparedness is a strategic priority to reduce the overall vulnerability of the Mozambican population.

Nearly 80% of the urbanites live in informal settlements or bairros, located in hazard-prone areas with little or no access to basic services. Together, extreme natural threats and the high level of vulnerability in cities and towns are demanding from the disaster risk management (DRM), humanitarian and social protection sectors a renewed approach to urban preparedness and response, allowing a wider space for collaboration with local governments and municipalities.

URBAN MOZAMBIQUE

At a glance

34.4%

of the total population (31.6 million people) is urban,¹ with this number projected to exceed 50% by 2050²

77.6%

of the urban population lives in slums and informal settlements³

9.1M

people in Mozambique are food insecure

~60%

of the population lives in coastal areas in the major urban zones⁴

3/4

of the urban population depends on subsistence agriculture or casual labour⁵

90%

of all the Covid-19 cases in Mozambique occurred in urban areas⁶



Funded by the European Union



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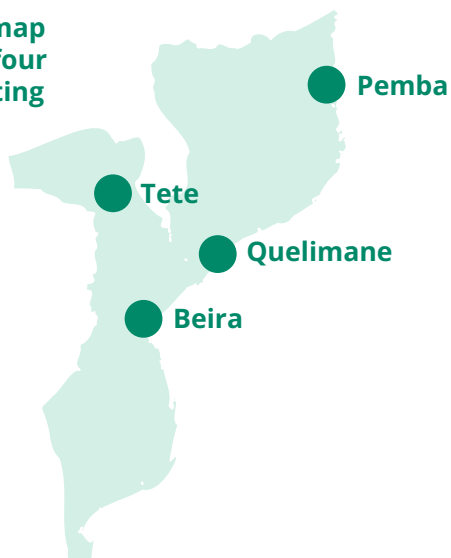
In 2023, Mozambique started taking concrete steps towards formulating a National Urban Policy (NUP), following a decade-long process initiated by the Ministry of State Administration with the support of UN-Habitat. This is the right time to define multi-dimensional urban vulnerability and to position WFP within the process, to support the design of an 'umbrella' guidance that may address issues such as food security, urban-rural linkages, social protection, disaster risk reduction, and many more.

THE REGIONAL URBAN PREPAREDNESS PROJECT IN MOZAMBIQUE

WFP is implementing the Regional Urban Preparedness Project in Mozambique in partnership with the National Institute for Disaster Management (*INGD - Instituto Nacional de Gestão e Redução do Risco de Desastres*), the National Institute for Social Action (*INAS - Instituto Nacional da Acção Social*) and the Municipalities Resilience Directorates, such as the one of Pemba. The project intends to fill three substantial knowledge gaps in the DRM and humanitarian sectors in terms of *who* is vulnerable in urban areas and *why*, *what* are their essential needs, and *who* should be involved in preparedness and response. The project has provided partners, national institutions, and local governments with a set of tools to better prepare for responding to shocks in urban areas.

Urban vulnerability assessments were conducted in the cities of Beira, Pemba, Tete, and Quelimane following a step-by-step participatory process with local governments, social protection and DRM authorities, academia, and community-based organisations. This approach allowed identifying gaps in coordination at the national and local level, as well as each community's experience with cash-based programmes and their preferences.

Country map with the four participating cities



FINDINGS #1

Emergency coordination. The National Institute for Disaster Risk Management and Reduction (INGD) leads DRM activities, including coordination of all technical working groups and relevant line ministries. At the municipal level—in an effort to contain the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic and increase the leadership and capacity of municipalities to respond to emergencies—the INGD developed a manual to establish the Municipal Disaster Management Technical Council (CTGDM) and the Municipal Emergency Operations Centre (COEM). INGD Technical staff have been instructed to support municipalities in setting up these structures, though focused efforts and finances are still needed to finalise this task.

The National Institute of Social Action (INAS) and the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Action (MGCAS) supervise social protection programmes, which have become increasingly relevant for national disaster response. The INGD and INAS work together to link humanitarian assistance to respond to shocks.

The Mozambique Vulnerability Assessment Committee, known as the Technical Secretariat for Food Security and Nutrition, coordinates the preparation of food security and nutrition vulnerability assessments together

with the Institute of Statistics, which is responsible for delivering the Family Budget/Income Survey and other socio-economic metrics. The development of more regular urban assessments and localised information was identified as a key action toward improving urban preparedness and response.



FINDINGS #2

Urban vulnerability dynamics. Vulnerability mapping exercises and focus group discussions were conducted with more than 330 stakeholders in the four cities, two-thirds of whom were community members. Geographical points of interest and vulnerable areas were identified for each of the participating neighbourhoods, which were subsequently digitised.

The vulnerability hotspots mapping aimed at linking vulnerability to people's exposure to multi-hazards and other living conditions characteristics, in order to better describe the spatial dimension of inequality. This approach builds on multi-dimensional poverty analysis already in use within the national Family Budget/Income Survey (IOF).

Women, girls, persons with disabilities, older persons, children, and female-headed households are some of the groups facing greater risks in security and access to resources during a crisis. For example, Cyclone Idai made landfall in the city of Beira (home to 553,825 people)⁷ back in 2019; displacement, interruptions to basic services, overcrowding, and unsanitary conditions led to an increase in protection risks for these populations.

The Local Disaster Management Committees play a fundamental role in generating greater community involvement in emergency preparedness and response, serving as the link between the community and urban authorities and DRM government structures. Local Committees are established at the request of the Municipality and the District with the involvement of the local structures, the community leaders and Chefes do Bairro.

During the project consultations, it was raised that there is a need for greater involvement of at-risk categories such as women and people with disabilities within the Local Committees in all planning and implementation of emergency preparedness and responses, especially in the registration for assistance. Participants also pinpointed that support tends to be generalised in emergency situations, and many who do not need it end up benefitting from the limited support provided. The participation of women in the leadership of Local Committees is seen as something that may guarantee a more equitable distribution. Focus group discussions carried out with community members helped with the identification of traits of household vulnerability with the characteristics perceived to contribute the most to vulnerability, including demographic and socio-economic factors.

WHO ARE THE MOST VULNERABLE?

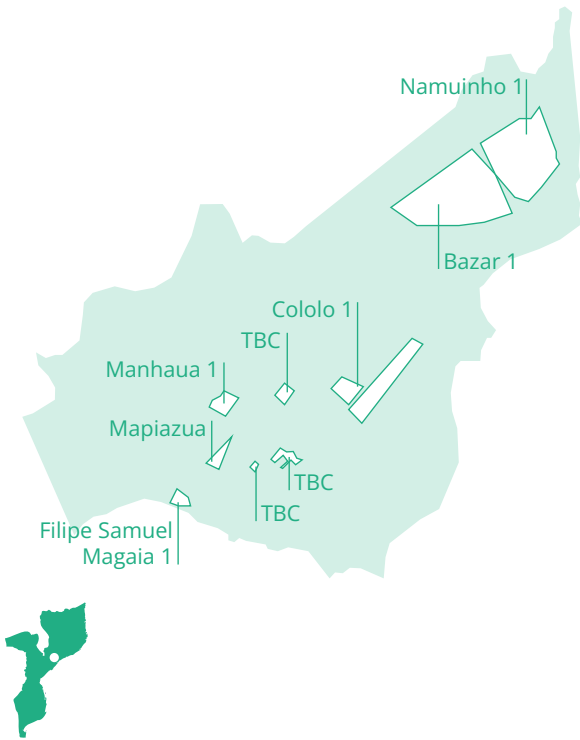
Dimensions of urban vulnerability in Mozambique

	EXTREMELY VULNERABLE						VULNERABLE
DEMOGRAPHICS	Child-headed households	Elderly household heads (65 and above)	Households headed by single women	Households headed by a disabled person	Households headed by a chronically ill head	Households with at least six children	Households with less than 5 members
LIVELIHOOD	Begging	Waste pickers	Sex work	Household members not working	Casual jobs		Small informal business
HEALTH	Poor access to medical care services	Disabled household members	No access to family planning methods				Chronically ill household members
EDUCATION	Children not attending school because of lack of school supplies	Children have poor educational outcomes					Children attend school till 7 th grade (free education up to this level)
WASH	No tap water, source water from wells or rivers	No latrines	Lack basic hygiene products (soap, toothbrush)				Use community latrines Source water from the tap
ASSETS & FOOD STOCKS	No food stocks	No productive assets					Low food stocks Few productive assets
HOUSING	Shacks made of tin, metal, sticks, plastic, canvas, mud, or other traditional material	No electricity	Use wood or sawdust to cook	Houses in remote areas			Improved houses made of bricks, however without solid foundations No electricity

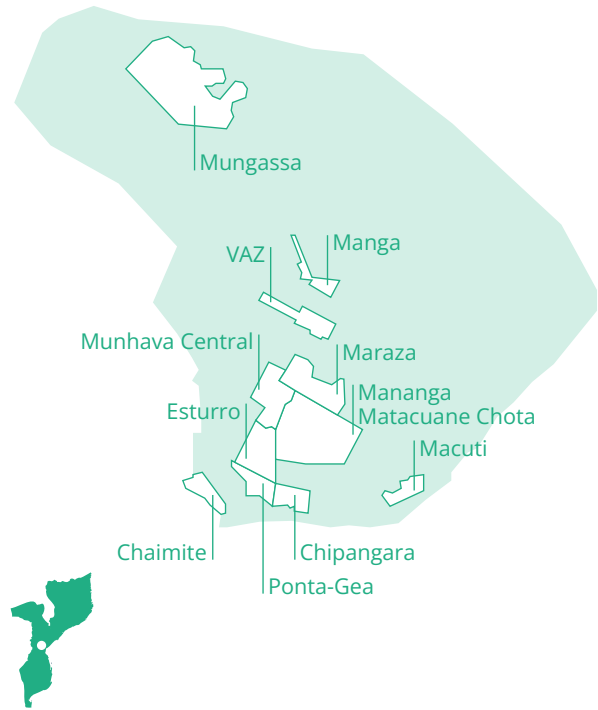
WHERE ARE THE MOST VULNERABLE?

Urban vulnerability hotspots in Beira / Pemba / Quelimane / Tete

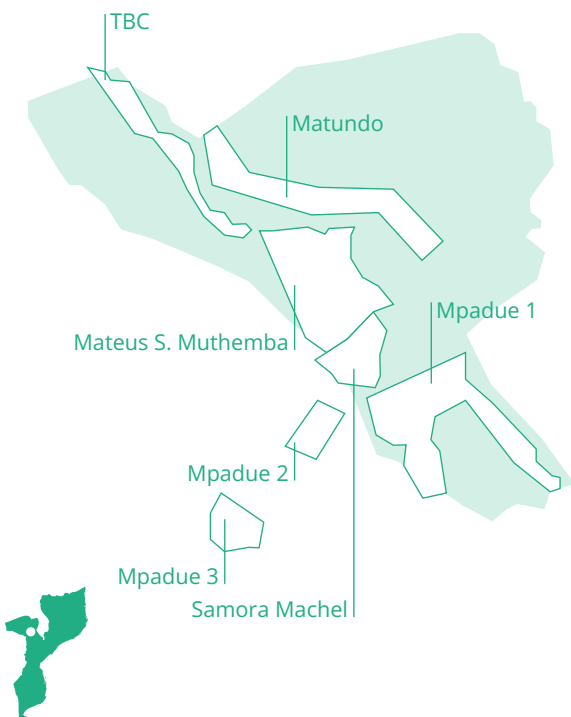
Quelimane



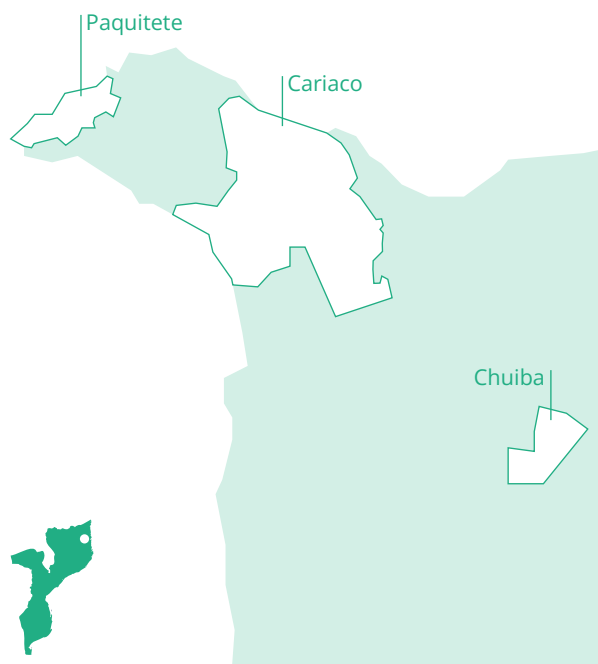
Beira



Tete



Pemba



FINDINGS #3

Cash-based responses in urban areas. The Covid-19 pandemic has drawn greater attention to the urban poor and how the dynamics of urban vulnerability can compromise livelihoods and push people further into poverty. The Government of Mozambique, with the support of development partners such as The World Bank, UNICEF, and the International Labour Organisation, is now working to expand the social safety net coverage to urban and peri-urban areas. In 2021, WFP worked in partnership with INAS to assist vulnerable households in urban settings impacted by Covid-19—reaching nearly 240,000 households.

Through the project, an urban Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB)⁸ was determined, tailored to the essential needs and costs associated with urban living with respect to housing, healthcare, transport, energy, etc. In Mozambique, the transfer value of cash-based programmes—i.e., the net monetary amount that is transferred to recipients to help them meet their needs—is not fixed by government decree, allowing for more regular updates and anticipation of shocks, moving beyond a simple response. In addition, the e-INAS (the management support system launched in 2019) allows enrolling recipients into one single registry, making rapid additions, and using more innovative payment technologies as well as data protection measures.

Going forward, the current urban registry will need re-verification based on updated vulnerability criteria that may confirm the people registered are indeed



The average monthly MEB for an urban household in Mozambique to be able to meet food and other essential needs is calculated at **USD\$ 740**, with an MEB per person of **USD\$ 148**.

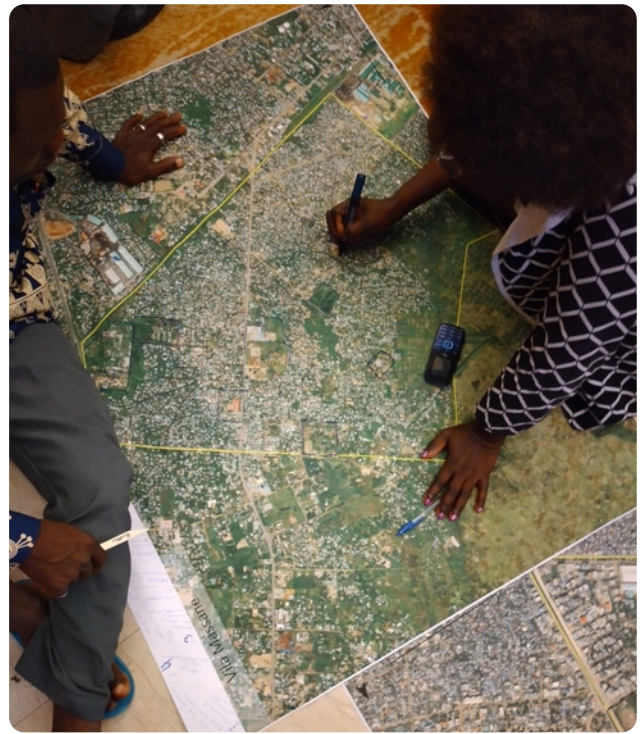
The average (food and non-food) gap is set **at 42%**, being the percentage of the basket that vulnerable households cannot meet. The project has identified a theoretical Transfer Value (e.g., purely resulting from the mixed method analysis) for an urban response in Mozambique to be corresponding to this percentage, equivalent to **USD\$ 62 per person**. This is consistently higher than **the 2,500 MT (USD\$ 40) per household** paid by the government through the shock responsive social protection assistance.

the ones most in need. The urban dataset produced in occasion of the INGD-INAS post-Covid-19 response was compiled by community leaders and directly delivered to the district governments without further validation.



WAY FORWARD

Following the analyses, WFP has identified three entry points to advance capacity strengthening towards better urban preparedness and response in Mozambique. First, supporting the INGD in the reactivation or establishment of the Municipal Disaster Management Technical Council (CTGDM) and the Municipal Emergency Operations Centre (COEM), while also focusing on a better involvement of civil society and the private sector in disaster preparedness, prevention, and response actions, including involvement of women in leading local structures/committees. Second, support with expanding the e-INAS to urban areas, including the registration of dwellers living within the vulnerability hotspots identified and leveraging the system's strengths to enable more rapid and comprehensive targeting. And third, supporting the government in establishing a transfer value reflecting the analysis of urban vulnerability and more adequate to cover the urbanites' essential needs.



COUNTRY-LED OPPORTUNITY UNDER THE THEME OF SOCIAL PROTECTION

The INAS and INGD, supported by The World Bank and other partners, have implemented one of the most ambitious and agile social safety net response plans in the region to alleviate the economic impact of Covid-19 on poor and vulnerable families directly dependent on the informal sector.

To date, the plan has directly benefited more than 1.5 million affected urban families thanks to the use of an adaptive component of the social protection programme, the Post Emergency Direct Cash Transfers Programme, created to deal with covariate shocks⁹ such as droughts, floods, and cyclones.



ABOUT THE PROJECT

WFP is implementing a Regional Urban Preparedness Project in **Lesotho, Madagascar, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe**, focusing activities in 12 urban areas. Funded by the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO), the project, titled “Fostering Community Resilience through Preparedness Activities in Southern Africa,” aims to build a common understanding on the specific characteristics of urban vulnerability and essential needs, and provide partners, local governments, and national institutions a set of tools to better prepare for responding to shocks in urban areas.

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For more info on the project

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Photo page 2: UNCDF/Arete/Karel Prinsloo
Photos page 3: WFP/Ana Hombre
Photo page 6: ILRI/Mann

Endnotes

- 1 INE, 2022
- 2 UNDESA
- 3 World Bank, 2018
- 4 UN-Habitat, 2020
- 5 UN-Habitat, 2020
- 6 MoH, 2022
- 7 Census, 2017
- 8 A minimum expenditure basket (MEB) is defined as what a household requires in order to meet their essential needs, on a regular or seasonal basis, and its cost.
- 9 Covariate shocks are defined as unexpected adverse events that affect areas or populations widely, having a much broader coverage than idiosyncratic shocks.

