

Briefing Note – 10 March 2016

MALAWI

Displacement from Mozambique



Need for international assistance	Not required	Low	Moderate	Significant	Major
Expected impact	Very low	Low	Moderate	Significant	Major

Crisis overview

Armed clashes between the Mozambican army and opposition party Renamo have prompted over 11,000 people to flee to Kapise, Mwanza district, Malawi, since mid-December. Conditions in the camp are harsh: it is overcrowded, there is very limited sanitation infrastructure, and no educational facilities. Major needs include access to water and sanitation, and shelter construction. The camp is located in a hard-to-reach area, and rains have severely damaged the only accessible road.



Key findings

Anticipated scope and scale Over 11,000 people have fled Mozambique to Malawi. Nearly 5,000 arrived in the last two weeks. They are staying in harsh conditions in the Kapise camp, Mwanza district. Up to 30,000 Mozambicans can be expected to arrive by April if the current flow continues.

Priorities for humanitarian intervention **WASH:** Construction of sanitation infrastructure, access to water and vector control are a priority. There is a high risk of cholera and malaria outbreaks in the camp.

Shelter: Overcrowding is a major concern and new shelters need to be built.

Health: To respond to potential cholera and malaria outbreaks

Humanitarian constraints Rain has badly damaged the only accessible road to the camp. If it continues raining the camp may become completely inaccessible.

Limitations Limited information available on the humanitarian situation among inhabitants of Kapise village. No detailed data on the food insecurity and malnutrition in Mwanze district.

Crisis impact

Following violent clashes between the Mozambican army and the opposition party Renamo, over 11,000 people have fled to Malawi, including 5,000 in the last two weeks (Nyasa Times 08/03/2016; IBT 07/03/2016). The majority are staying in Kapise refugee camp, Mwanze district, which was established at the end of 2015. Women, older people, and children make up two-thirds of the refugees, including hundreds of unaccompanied children (Inter Press Service 25/02/2016; MSF 18/01/2016; VOA 11/02/2016). They come mainly from Tete province.

Conditions in the camp are very harsh: it is overcrowded, sanitation infrastructure and education facilities are almost non-existent (Inter Press Service 25/02/2016). Kapise village numbers only around 150 families, and there are fears of tensions between the host and refugee populations due to already scarce food and water resources (MSF 17/02/2016). The refugee influx is expected to increase, as armed clashes have intensified in Mozambique.

WASH: The average water supply in Kapise camp is 8L/person/day. People wait 2.5 hours on average to fill their jerrycans. The camp has only 14 latrines: 550 are required according to humanitarian standards (Inter Press Service 25/02/2016; MSF 17/02/2016). Access to water may provoke tensions between the host and refugee population (Inter Press Service 25/02/2016).

Shelter and NFIs: Trees around the village are being cut down as the refugees need wood to build shelters. Overcrowding is a major concern (MSF 18/01/2016; HRW 22/02/2016). The majority of shelters are made of foraged wood and grass. Stoves are used for cooking (MSF 17/02/2016).

Health: A malaria outbreak is likely as the camp is located between two large swamps and the refugees do not possess mosquito nets. Half of the medical consultations in the camp are due to malaria (MSF 18/01/2016). There is a risk of a cholera outbreak in the camp as the neighbouring Blantyre district has been reporting cases. The total number of cases in Malawi since mid-December 2015 has reached over 900, including 14 deaths (case fatality rate is 1.54%). The last week of February recorded the highest number of new cases: 71 (Red Cross 24/01/2016; UNICEF 02/03/2016).

Protection: Kapise refugee camp is only 300m from the Mozambican border. Refugees fear cross-border attacks by the Mozambican army, due to rumours that Renamo fighters have infiltrated the refugee flow (Inter Press Service 25/02/2016; News Ghana 07/03/2016).

Food: WFP distributes food rations in the camp, but assistance will be cut by mid-April if no additional funding is provided (UNHCR 18/02/2016). The main harvest will not start until April (FEWSNET 01/03/2016).

Vulnerable groups affected

Hundreds of unaccompanied children have been identified among the new arrivals in Kapise. Women, children, and older people account for two-thirds of all the arrivals (Inter Press Service 25/02/2016; MSF 18/01/2016).

Humanitarian constraints

Kapise refugee camp is in a hard-to-reach area. The rainy season, which occurs between October and April, has made the only accessible road almost impassable, and trucks get stuck in mud. Bridges are almost submerged. If rains continue as the weather forecast expects, access may be completely cut (MSF 17/02/2016; BBC Weather 10/03/2016).

Aggravating factors

Seasonal information

The rainy season will last until the end of April, negatively impacting road conditions (FEWSNET 01/03/2016).

Food crisis

Malawi is facing the worst food crisis in a decade due to the combined effects of drought and floods. 2.8 million people are food insecure, including 900,000 in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) food security outcomes. The refugee influx is putting further pressure on the food security situation in the country. The price of maize is between 85–155% higher than in the last year, and is not expected to decrease until September (ECHO 04/03/2016; FEWSNET 01/03/2016).

Contextual information

Drivers of the current conflict

Renamo (Mozambique National Resistance) refused to accept the results of the 2014 presidential and legislative elections, which Frelimo (the Mozambique Liberation Front) won, and tensions have been mounting since then (Al Jazeera 23/01/2016). Armed attacks have been reported since September 2015 (All Africa 08/03/2016; ICG 01/03/2016).

In October 2015, the Mozambican army began military operations to disarm Renamo in Tete province (ICG 01/03/2016; The Africa Report 30/08/2013). The first arrivals of Mozambican refugees in Malawi were reported in the same month.

In December 2015, Renamo's leader Afonso Dhlakama announced that he would, by March 2016, take over six of Mozambique's 11 provinces, in which he believes Renamo won the elections (Al Jazeera 23/01/2016). These are Manica, Sofala, Tete, Zambezia, Nampula and Niassa (IBT 01/03/2016). Since then, Renamo has engaged in attacks against civilian vehicles on major roads in the centre of the country (All Africa 04/03/2016).

On 20 January, Renamo's Secretary General was wounded in an attack, and his bodyguard killed (All Africa 27/01/2016). In February, armed clashes were reported in Sofala province, resulting in several dead and injured. Renamo fighters raided the town of Maringue, Sofala, and burned several houses (IBT 01/03/2016). Clashes have been reported in Manica and Tete provinces (IBT 07/03/2016). Government forces and Renamo are accused of attacking civilians and ill-treatment (Inter Press Service 25/02/2016; Nyasa Times 08/03/2016; HRW 22/02/2016).

On 8 March, Renamo refused peace talks with the government, demanding the presence of international mediators, which the government refuses (All Africa 08/03/2016).

Past displacement

Some 25,000 mostly long-term refugees and asylum seekers are in Malawi, mostly from DRC, Burundi, and Rwanda. They live in Dzaleka camp in Dowa district in central Malawi, or among host communities. Food rations in Dzaleka camp have been halved since October 2015 as resources to assist refugees are limited (UNHCR 18/02/2016).

No IDPs or refugees are reported in the conflict-affected areas in Mozambique.

History of conflict and relevant stakeholders

The civil war between Renamo and Frelimo lasted from 1977 to 1992. The war left over 100,000 dead and more than 1,000,000 displaced. A peace agreement was signed in 1992 (IBT 01/03/2016; BBC 14/01/2016; Encyclopaedia Britannica 2016). In 2013, Renamo launched a low-level insurgency in the countryside, after Renamo's leader revoked the 1992 peace agreement, on the grounds of economic inequalities in the country and the political marginalisation of Renamo. The 2013 insurgency left dozens of people dead. The government initiated peace talks immediately (The Jamestown Foundation 26/06/2014). Renamo withdrew from the talks in October 2015.

Renamo (Mozambique National Resistance) is Mozambique's main opposition party. Its armed wing consists of several hundred fighters (IHS 04/05/2015). It was initially formed by Rhodesians, who were hoping to keep newly independent Mozambique from supporting black fighters trying to topple the white Rhodesian government. Later, the South African government supported Renamo. In Mozambique, Renamo disrupted the nation's

economy and infrastructure by cutting railways and power lines (IBT 01/03/2016; Encyclopaedia Britannica 2016).

Mozambique Liberation Front (Frelimo) fought for and contributed to Mozambique's independence from Portugal and has been the governing party since 1975. Its ideology is Marxist-Leninist. National armed forces are loyal to Frelimo (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2016). Zimbabwean, Zambian, and Tanzanian troops supported Frelimo in the civil war (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2016).

International and neighbouring countries' relationship to the conflict

Renamo is allegedly recruiting young unemployed people living in the border areas of Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwean government has already contacted Frelimo, asking it to protect Zimbabwean youth from being recruited (New Zimbabwe 03/03/2016).

Key characteristics of host population and area

Demographic profile:

0–14 years: 47% (male 4,176,000/female 4,219,000)

15–24 years: 20% (male 1,820,000/female 1,841,000)

25–54 years: 27% (male 2,412,000/female 2,457,000)

55–64 years: 3% (male 262,000/female 288,000)

65 years and over: 3% (male 214,000/female 270,000) (CIA Factbook 2015).

84% of the population is rural (FAOSTAT 2015).

Food: 2.8 million people are in need of food assistance. In Mwanza, 22,200 people are food insecure (DoDMA & UNRCO 15/12/2015).

Nutrition: At the end of January, 4,466 children suffering from severe acute malnutrition (SAM), and 16,477 children from moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) were reported (Nutrition Cluster 01/02/2016). In total, since the beginning of 2015, 35,235 SAM and 86,486 MAM were recorded (DoDMA & UNRCO 15/12/2015). Mwaza district reports particularly high rates of malnutrition: 47% of children are chronically malnourished (The Nation 08/09/2015).

Health: Infant mortality rate: 43/1,000 (World Bank 2015); Under-five mortality rate: 64/1,000 (World Bank 2015); Maternal mortality ratio: 635 per 100,000 live births (World Bank 2015).

WASH: 47% of the urban population, and 40% of the rural population have access to improved sources of drinking water (CIA Factbook 2015).

Lighting and cooking Over 95% of both the urban and rural population uses solid fuels. 7.2% of the population uses charcoal for cooking, and 1.2% electricity (Cleancookstoves 2016).

Literacy 66% (73% male, 59% female) (CIA Factbook 2015).

Response capacity

Local and national response capacity

Food assistance to address the needs of the ongoing crisis is underfunded, and will be interrupted by mid-April if any additional funding is not provided (FEWSNET 01/03/2016).

The village chiefs and district authorities in Mwanze have allocated additional land to accommodate new arrivals in Kapise (UNHCR 18/02/2016). The government is considering re-opening Luwani refugee camp in Mwanza to accommodate over 1,000 Mozambican refugees. The camp hosted Mozambican refugees in the 1980s and 1990s. The camp was officially closed in November 2015, when last refugees were repatriated to Kapise camp (Star Africa 09/03/2016; UNHCR 15/01/2016; The Times 11/01/2016).

International response capacity

MSF has a permanent presence in Mwanza district (MSF 17/02/2016; The Times 02/03/2016). UNHCR and WFP are also present (UNHCR 18/02/2016).

Information gaps and needs

- Only limited information on the humanitarian conditions of inhabitants of the Kapise village is available.
- There are no detailed data on the food insecurity and malnutrition in Mwanze district.

Lessons learned

- Over 1 million refugees fled the civil war in Mozambique to seek refuge in Malawi between 1977 and 1992. The influx caused a near-collapse of the Malawian health system, and healthcare for Malawians and refugees alike degraded significantly (Pennsylvania State University 1998).
- Many Mozambican refugees integrated easily into Malawian villages in the late 1980s thanks to similar ethnic identities (The American Refugee Committee 2001).
- A large proportion of the food aid distributed during a food security crisis in Malawi in the early 1990s went to Mozambican refugees. Only later did food assistance reach local households (Feinstein International Center 06/2011).
- A programme to develop skills in Dzaleka refugee camp has proved successful, giving refugees an opportunity to gain employment with organisations working in the camp. The programme also engages the host community (UNHCR 08/12/2012).