



**Leave no one behind:
Ensure the needs of women and girls are prioritized at the Beira Conference 2019**

Inclusion in disaster recovery and reconstruction is a key condition for the people's resilience. A more inclusive recovery fosters equal rights and opportunities, dignity and diversity, guaranteeing that nobody from a community is left out because of their age, gender, disability or other factors linked to ethnicity, religion, geography, economic status, political affiliation, health issues, or other life circumstances.

World Bank¹

Of the estimated 750,000 people requiring immediate help in the wake of Cyclone Idai,² around 53% of those in need are women³. Their vulnerabilities are both extensive and multi-sectoral, yet funding to address these needs falls far short.

Throughout the assessments made in the Post Disaster Needs Analysis (PDNA), the distinct and acute vulnerabilities of women and girls are highlighted in every chapter – yet the appeal for stand-alone programming to address these needs makes up just 0.17% of the overall appeal. This figure falls far short of the IASC recommendations on gender in emergencies⁴.

The Beira Conference provides a critical opportunity to invest in transformative change so that women and girls are not left behind. The funding to the UN humanitarian appeal and the response at large remains far below target – leaving some of the communities in the most vulnerable situations without the support they need to rebuild their lives. Therefore, this next phase of the response is not just about rebuilding infrastructure, but about targeting funding to help people lift themselves out of crisis, to truly ensure no one is left behind.

Closing persistent gender gaps is not only the right thing to do, but is the smart thing to do, as it is vital to boosting sustainable growth and ending poverty⁵. At the Beira Conference, donors have an opportunity to make a significant and lasting difference as Mozambique strives to recover post Cyclones Idai and Kenneth, by targeting funds towards programming for women, girls and their families that promotes a more equal and prosperous society.

COSACA calls on donors to meet the \$5 million target for gender – and exceed this floor - to support women and girls to reestablish their lives, move out of poverty and escape growing inequality.

In order to ensure marginalised women and girls are not left behind:

- Donors must commit to fully funding the gender appeal of the PDNA at a minimum, and invest in wider opportunities for stand-alone gender programming in the response, utilizing the skills of local partners and women's rights organisations.
- The humanitarian and development community must ensure a strong commitment to gender mainstreaming across the response in adherence to the IASC Guiding principles of Gender in Emergencies and IASC GBV Guidelines.
- Donors, UN and the Humanitarian community must ensure that basic needs of women and girls – particularly in resettlement sites and rural communities – are covered. This includes immediate food assistance, water and sanitation, and protection interventions.

- Donors should prioritise income generating activities for women to protect them and their families from future food insecurity, and reduce drivers of gender inequality.
- Donors should fund a range of age-appropriate, gender-responsive education interventions that prioritize positive learning outcomes so that girls and boys at all levels attain literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional skills.
- The Government of Mozambique must ensure that when dealing with issues of land rights, documentation and legal protection, administrative bodies prioritise assistance to women and girls – particularly female headed households.
- The Government of Mozambique and all actors involved in the response should proactively engage women and girls in the planning, design, implementation and evaluation of early warning and climate mitigation/response strategies.

Among the most vulnerable

“I have no family, no husband to look after us. We need a place to stay. I’ve got nothing now. There is nothing left.”

Madelema, a single mother looking for assistance in Buzi

Even prior to the disaster, women faced inequality in Mozambique, a nation that ranks in the bottom 20 countries on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index⁶. A combination of pre-existing social and economic factors contribute to this heightened marginalization, including illiteracy (23% and 71% for urban and rural areas, respectively), high rates of teen pregnancy and maternal mortality, and gender based violence (GBV). The PDNA has found that pre-cyclone Idai, one third of Mozambican women had been victims of violence at some time since the age of 15, of which 12% of women report surviving sexual acts under force⁷. In addition, many women impacted by Idai now struggle with livelihood access being far from their land and networks while waiting to restart their lives. In Sofala province 67% of displaced women report not participating in any paid activities⁸ deepening existing poverty and vulnerability. Elderly and disabled women face additional risks and vulnerabilities.

The last census data (2017) for the region revealed that 37% of households are headed up by a female. Recovery can be especially precarious for female headed households (FHH) who carry the double burden of child rearing and generating income. **63% of female headed households are reported to be living in poverty⁹, putting them in jeopardy of increased inequality and falling deeper into crisis after Idai.**

Women and girls facing malnutrition and insecurity

“All we can do is wait for donations and little food to eat.”

Female respondent in COSACA Focus Group Discussion

In the wake of Cyclones Idai and Kenneth many women do not know where their next meal will come from. They remain completely reliant on food handouts because they have lost either their land or ability to earn. 76% of female headed households are reliant on subsistence farming to sustain their families¹⁰. Those who are able to continue in agriculture, many of whom wish to live in resettlement sites while continuing to farm land in their original community, face an uphill battle of reestablishing their livelihoods and repairing or building their homes¹¹. These women have sustained significant crop loss, damaged land, lost access to savings groups and have inadequate seed supplies to prepare for the Sept/Oct harvest. **Due to these realities, the autumn crop will be minimal so FHH will not have enough to sell, only to help feed the household.** Female farmers with whom COSACA spoke asked for agriculture tools and seeds to

plant as soon as possible so they can feed their families and afford to keep their children, especially girls, in school¹².

Basic needs remain unmet

“We have nothing and nowhere to go. The cyclone destroyed our homes. Presently, I am staying in a makeshift shelter with 16 people including my three children. It is not a good way to live.”

Victoria, from a rural community visited by COSACA teams.

For those who have been resettled onto new land to begin to rebuild their lives, food remains an immediate need¹³. FHH in resettlement areas need continued and enhanced food distributions while they prepare their lands for farming and harvest. The expected rise of food costs and reduction in food availability will significantly impact these FHH¹⁴ who already experience food insecurity and lack of money with which to purchase food supplies. **Without revenue through livelihoods or regular access to food, women and girls will go hungry, will not be able to mitigate inequalities as FFH post-crisis, and will be reliant on humanitarian assistance for basic needs¹⁵.**

Some of the basic necessities that help women and girls begin to work their way back to managing everyday life still remain a high need. COSACA focus groups and assessments have found that women and girls are walking long distances for clean water and doing so multiple times a day because they only have one container as kitchen utensils, buckets and jerry cans were lost in the floods. Lack of basic hygienic assistance in the form of menstrual hygiene pads, undergarments and supplies of soap continue to limit women and girls’ ability to move ahead post-cyclone in relative dignity.

Urgent need for protection

“If we come across men, the men can run after the women to do anything to them [such as rape?].... Yes, rape”

Woman from a COSACA focus group discussion

In focus group discussions with women impacted by Cyclones Idai and Kenneth COSACA has found a multitude of shared protection concerns – from those concerned for their safety in new resettlement sites, to those at risk of exploitation and GBV through to lack of self-sufficiency, changes within community support structures and increased social tensions.

Increases in GBV against women and girls compounds their existing vulnerabilities. Women and girls are likely to face higher GBV rates in the next six months due to being exposed to distant and unsafe conditions post-Idai, such as having to walk long distances to collect water and use shared latrines¹⁶. **Additionally, UNFPA estimates that at least 7,000 child-bearing age women could be subjected to rape in that same time period because of these insecure environments¹⁷.** Such violations are not theoretical. GBV abuses against displaced women have already been reported and made public.

Power imbalances between girls and women and men in positions of status and/or with access to relief goods are a breeding ground for abuse. Sexual exploitation of women in exchange for food or other basic supplies has been reported in relocation sites¹⁸. Domestic violence has increased in some families as a result of increased tensions and needs. Impunity for these perpetrators is yet another reflection on the lack of prioritization of the needs and interests of women and girls in the response. Rates of early marriage

(already high before the cyclones) are likely to increase given lack of opportunities and access to school for girls.

In accommodation and resettlement sites, poor lighting has contributed to women feeling unsafe when using latrines after dark, so they avoid using them at night exacerbating risks of open-defecation, lower consumption of water and food and other unsafe coping mechanisms.

Girls unable to fulfil their potential

"I feel sad and at a loss of what to do. I don't know what happened to my school because I haven't been back since the cyclone."

Isabel, aged 13, living in an accommodation centre in Beira

A World Bank study found that every year of secondary school education is correlated with an 18 percent increase in a girl's future earning power. Evidence shows that children who are out of school for prolonged periods of time after a disaster are less likely to ever return to the classroom. In Mozambique, although enrolment rates were almost balanced prior to Idai, girls' enrolment rate was slightly lower (49.1%). A Ministry of Education survey carried out before Cyclone Idai found that during emergencies, it is a common coping mechanism for families to pull girls out of school to support with domestic tasks and/or income generating activities¹⁹. When out of school, girls are exposed to additional protection risks such as early marriage, and sexual and gender-based violence. This might result in girls facing the risk of becoming a 'lost generation' in times of disasters.

Both drought and floods have negatively impacted girls' well-being and their access to education in Mozambique. The Ministry of Education (MINEDH, 2015) study found that 70% of girls stated teachers use sex as a condition for grade promotion²⁰. This demonstrates that gender inequality is pre-existing and could be compounded during this crisis. **Cyclone Idai damaged thousands of classrooms, affecting more than 335,000 girls and boys**²¹. In addition, many children have been resettled away from their homes and schools. COSACA has been informed of significantly reduced enrolment rates for both girls and boys based on conversations with District Education, Justice and Technology Service (SDEJT) Offices.

Not only is education a right in and of itself, but access to safe, inclusive, gender responsive and quality education has been shown to be one of the most transformative investments we can make to promote gender equality, unlock economic opportunities for all, and advance peace and security. The crisis situation post Cyclones Idai and Kenneth presents a risk to adolescent girls of increased early marriage, early pregnancies and infection from HIV, leading to an increase in school drop-outs.

Barriers to securing rights in the future

"I am scared our land will be occupied by others so even if we don't have a house to stay in, I am thinking of sending some of our family members back to our village to protect our land."

Woman from an accommodation site in Buzi, during an FGD.

Despite the Government of Mozambique's Land Law of 1997 providing a platform for women to access rights to land outside of patronage, in reality in Idai affected provinces, men are far more likely to be registered as possessing land rights under the Direito do Uso e Aproveitamento da Terra (DUAT) system than women. In Sofala 26% of DUAT holders are women, in Manica the rate is 24%, in Tete women are 25% of those with DUAT, and in Zambezia women represent 26% of holders²². **When families have**

obtained DUAT, 73% of female family members are not listed on the award paperwork, resulting in vulnerability regarding land tenure²³.

FHH and widows who have been displaced from the land they occupy are less able to protect their land and assets than men. Male led households with land that have relocated post-Idai are able to protect property from being taken by sending the adult man to monitor the land while women and children stay in resettlement/relocation sites²⁴. This has also been the practice in previous flooding in 2001, 2007 and 2015. This option is often not available to FFHs, so their ability to shield their land tenure is undermined²⁵. Compounding this situation is that many people lost identification documents and other legal instruments in the crisis, making these women even more vulnerable to encroachment of their land rights²⁶.

Conclusion

“This is the first time we have been asked about what our needs are for resettlement”

COSACA focus group discussion with women in Pemba

Men, women, boys, girls and marginalized groups have different resilience to disasters by the nature of their work and livelihood patterns, unequal education and skill levels, large divergences in levels of asset ownership and access to resources, different levels of voice and participation in public life, and different assumptions of household responsibilities. These factors in ‘normal’ times can have a greater impact when disasters strike. It is clearly not sufficient to increase household and community resilience if this further shifts the balance of decision-making power and resources towards the male head of household or wealthier community members, thereby increasing inequalities of women, girls, and boys and potential for conflict.

Alongside the many challenges displacement creates, the changed circumstances provide opportunities for positive change. However, if interventions are not planned with gender dynamics in mind, the needs of those most under threat may not be adequately met, and opportunities to support positive change may be lost. To ensure that no one is left behind, resilience measures must be specifically designed to be sensitive to gender and vulnerable groups, placing women at the center of relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction, otherwise such measures are highly likely to reproduce and reinforce systematic inequalities.

¹ <https://www.gfdrr.org/en/WRC4>

² Mozambique Cyclone Idai Post Disaster Needs Assessment, 2019

³ Mozambique Cyclone Idai Post Disaster Needs Assessment, 2019

⁴ https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2018-iasc_gender_handbook_for_humanitarian_action_eng_0.pdf

⁵ World Bank 2015

⁶ UNDP Human Development Reports, 2015, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/GII>.

⁷ Mozambique Cyclone Idai Post Disaster Needs Assessment, 2019

⁸ Care Rapid Gender Analysis Cyclone Idai Response Sofala Province, Mozambique, April 2019

⁹ Mozambique Cyclone Idai Post Disaster Needs Assessment, 2019

¹⁰ Mozambique Cyclone Idai Post Disaster Needs Assessment, 2019

¹¹ Mozambique Cyclone Idai Post Disaster Needs Assessment, 2019

¹² COSACA women focus group discussions, May 2019

¹³ COSACA women focus group discussions, May 2019

¹⁴ Mozambique Cyclone Idai Post Disaster Needs Assessment, 2019

¹⁵ Mozambique Cyclone Idai Post Disaster Needs Assessment, 2019

¹⁶ Mozambique Cyclone Idai Post Disaster Needs Assessment, 2019

¹⁷ UNFPA estimate, 2019

¹⁸ Al Jazeera, Mozambique cyclone victims ‘forced to trade sex for aid’, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/04/mozambique-cyclone-victims-forced-trade-sex-food-190425160159439.html>, 25 April 2019.

¹⁹ http://www.mined.gov.mz/DN/DIPLAC/Documents/Brochura_Marco2018.PDF

²⁰ <http://www.mined.gov.mz/>

²¹ https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/moz_education_cluster_draft_factsheet.pdf

²² Mozambique Cyclone Idai Post Disaster Needs Assessment, 2019

²³ Mozambique Cyclone Idai Post Disaster Needs Assessment, 2019

²⁴ Mozambique Cyclone Idai Post Disaster Needs Assessment, 2019

²⁵ Mozambique Cyclone Idai Post Disaster Needs Assessment, 2019

²⁶ Mozambique Cyclone Idai Post Disaster Needs Assessment, 2019