



Purpose: Present timely evidence to inform UNHCR's future operational planning and strategy in the Mozambique

Evaluation type: Country Strategy Evaluation

Methods: Mixed methods evaluation

Implemented: Jan – Oct 2023

Scope: 2020-2022 covering all of Mozambique.

Commissioned by: Evaluation Office

1. Evaluation Context

Mozambique is cyclically and intensively affected by climate events characterized by tropical cyclones, floods and droughts that cause loss of life, displacement, extensive damage to infrastructure and disruption of socio-economic activities. This was worsened by the conflict crisis since 2017 that was described by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) as being first and foremost a protection crisis.

The number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) increased from 180,500 in 2019 to 1.4 million in 2022. The HCT reported that the conflict in Cabo Delgado Province had generated a grave protection crisis, with human rights violations experienced by IDPs in northern Mozambique.

UNHCR's focused on meeting humanitarian needs, inclusion in national systems, self-reliance, and solutions. This was with the objective of enhancing protection, alleviating urgent needs, and establishing longer-term recovery from fragility and conflict. There was also focus on mainstreaming protection across the Humanitarian Development Peace (HDP) nexus and advocating with GoM and key partners to improve protection, seek solutions and advance resilience for IDPs, refugees and asylum seekers and communities that host them.

The approach was guided by multistakeholder and responsibility-sharing principles, fostering increased collaboration between humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding actors. Through the inter-agency response, UNHCR worked on strengthening the GoM's capacity for crisis preparedness and response. There was also focus on supporting GoM in meeting the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) commitments of enhancing refugee self-reliance, and the commitment to assist Mozambique with local integration.

2. Key Findings

UNHCR was strategic, agile, and responsive but faced some challenges in articulating its role within the inter-agency response.

The country operation went through significant transformations, enhanced its technical, advocacy and operational capacities to respond to the needs and evolving context in Mozambique more effectively.

This contributed to improved protection and capacities of GoM and partners, strengthened legal and policy framework, advanced solutions, and resilience for IDPs, refugees, asylum seekers and communities that host them.

UNHCR became a more strategic partner in the Humanitarian Development Peace (HDP) Nexus but needs to adapt its tools and approaches to be more suitable for development programming.

UNHCR became a more strategic and active partner in the HDP Nexus. It expanded its role and development partnerships making notable investments in national and local implementing partnerships in the HDP Nexus space.

UNHCR was still in initial stages of outlining and communicating its value proposition within the HDP Nexus. Its competencies and knowledge – gained from working within the humanitarian, protection, and solutions space and with refugees – positioned it well to contribute to a meaningful transition from emergency responses toward more sustainable interventions within the HDP Nexus. UNHCR played a catalytic role, attracting and mobilizing some development actors and funding, but there were important partnership and resource mobilization opportunities that were missed.

UNHCR enhanced its presence and reach but needed a more clearly defined exit strategy.

The scale-up of the operation's emergency capacity increased physical presence in field locations and allowed more people that UNHCR serves to be reached. Needs, however, continued to outstretch available financial and human resources capacities to address the situation sustainably.

The approach to internal displacement was guided by multistakeholder and responsibility-sharing principles - aimed at fostering increased collaboration. The ability to strengthen partners capacity and respond to multiple crises and emergency scale-ups was a major achievement.

However, scaling up for the conflict-induced IDP response did not involve an exit plan as the emergency phase needs evolved. This was in part due to the continued need to respond to cyclical emergencies.

Partnerships were strengthened but more dedicated effort is required to strengthen localization.

UNHCR's partnership strategy focused on building up a large operational capacity and reinforcing localization. This was through establishing agreements, capacity building of government bodies and local NGOs while building its own (UNHCR) capacity to gradually rely less on international NGOs.

However, localization objectives were not achieved as there were increased reliance and financial allocations to International NGOs and reduced allocations to the government. More commitment and capacity building are required to achieve the localization objectives.

3. Conclusions

Extensive efforts were put into ensuring that protection was addressed within the wider interagency response but there were challenges in ensuring that protection considerations were well integrated at the HCT level. Despite the challenges, UNHCR remained proactive in leveraging its coordination role to expand protection for displaced populations.

UNHCR needs to clearly document and communicate an exit strategy (within the inter-agency response) based on scenario planning and linked to solutions in line with the Policy on UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement.

There is still a need to further adapt UNHCR's tools and approaches further and more systematically align to development contexts and programming in the context of HDP Nexus.

UNHCR's partner capacities are largely sufficient for sustaining results and achieving current objectives although more localization and development partners would be needed given the expanding opportunities for engagement in the HDP Nexus.

3. Recommendations

At the strategic level

1. Protection mainstreaming. UNHCR should support the members of the HCT in the roll-out and implementation of the newly published HCT protection strategy and continue to build the capacity of key government actors on protection and protection mainstreaming.

2. Responsible disengagement and exit strategy in IDP responses. In close collaboration with GoM and key stakeholders, UNHCR should document and communicate an exit strategy that will support responsible disengagement objectives in the IDP responses. This should have a clear focus on localization and strengthening the national structures and systems towards durable solutions.

At the Operational Level

3. Adapting approaches to the HDP nexus. UNHCR should further adapt its tools and processes to be more appropriate for the HDP Nexus.

At the Organizational Level

4. Leveraging resources available within Mozambique. With support from the Regional Bureau for Southern Africa (RBSA), develop a multi-year resource mobilization plan that will further leverage funding opportunities available for Mozambique primarily in the HDP Nexus space.

5. Staffing review. To align more effectively with the new Multi-Year Strategy and given the evolving context and needs of the people that UNHCR serves, the country operation (with support from RBSA) should undertake periodic staff reviews (every 2-3 years) including mapping out required skill sets and competencies.

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