



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOR FLOOD RESILIENCE IN MOZAMBIQUE

IMPACT BRIEF ON THE FLOOD RESILIENCE PROGRAM

2021 - 2024

The [Mozambique Red Cross](#) (Cruz Vermelha de Moçambique – CVM) was founded in 1981 and is currently active across all 11 provinces with a network of 111 Red Cross branches and more than 6,800 volunteers. With the aim of strengthening community resilience and reducing the impact of floods, the Mozambique Red Cross, together with the [International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies](#) (IFRC), formed part of the [Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance](#) (the Alliance).

Alongside tropical cyclones, floods represent a significant risk in Mozambique, affecting lowland, highland and urban areas throughout the country every year. In 2019, Tropical Cyclones Idai and Kenneth caused widespread flooding and landslides that led to loss of life, homes and livelihoods. In 2020, a team of Alliance partners including ISET-International, IFRC, Practical Action and the Zurich Insurance Group, in collaboration with the Mozambique Red Cross Society and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), undertook a Post Event Review Capability (PERC) to capture the lessons from the response and recovery to these extreme events.

Between 2021 and 2024, the Mozambique Red Cross implemented the Flood Resilience Program targeting

vulnerable communities in the city of Beira and the rural municipality of Buzi, in the Sofala Province. In the coastal part of the Sofala Province, floods, cyclones, erosion, and sea-level rise are recurrent and serious risks. This area was one of the hardest hit by Tropical Cyclones Idai and Kenneth and while the recurring impact of disasters throughout the lifetime of the program was a very challenging context for strengthening sustainable flood resilience, it also highlighted the great need for empowering families and communities to be aware of risk and take collective action to reduce it.

By leveraging the Flood Resilience Measurement for Communities (FRMC) framework, the program engaged deeply with local populations, integrating their insights into both local actions and national plans and dialogues.



Families and communities are more aware of risk and have the capacity to prepare and respond to floods.

Community and household preparedness was strengthened by a number of interventions that aimed to increase awareness of risk and enhance local capacities.

- **Community Based Health and First Aid trainings** empowered individuals to provide basic treatment of injuries and illnesses and support the day-to-day health of their families.
- **Risk awareness** was increased via **door-to-door visits** and **dissemination of audio messages** through local radio stations and locally via loudspeakers.

- Formation and strengthening of **School-based Risk and Disaster Management Committees** in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and National Institute of Disaster Management (INGD).
- Formation, training and equipping of **Local Disaster Risk Management Committees** and the implementation of flood drills. Together with INGD, the committees were integrated into the wider civil protection system. These committees participated in local disaster planning.

+50,000

lives improved

New mindsets and behaviours, and improved infrastructure that has a sustained positive impact on people's lives.

+220,000

indirect reach

Estimated population that benefits from large scale awareness raising campaigns and the flow-on effects of community interventions.



Resilience building activities carried out in peri-urban and rural communities and with local and national actors.



Community early warning infrastructure is functioning and environmental management is prioritised for greater flood resilience.

CVM took action in Beira and Buzi to enhance both the physical and natural capitals.

- CVM led the installation of six flood **Early Warning Systems** that had been previously damaged or destroyed. These devices monitor the river levels and trigger audio alerts for the population.
- Participatory **canal cleaning activities** were carried out in each community on an annual basis to clear accumulated waste and vegetation and increase drainage capacity.
- CVM coordinated with the Municipality of Beira and the Government of the District of Buzi in the **restoration of mangroves** to support flood mitigation and the installation of **Ecopoints** to enhance waste management.

And now we're doing some major cleaning. That's so that when the neighbourhood is flooded, the water will flow more through the canals we're making.

Gracinda, community member, Buzi



A story from the community

Alberto José lives in a rural community in the district of Buzi, alongside the coast of central Mozambique. He has participated in the canal cleaning activities facilitated by the project and reflects upon the importance of this action for greater flood resilience:

“Well, it’s very important because we’ve been suffering from disasters for a long time and, for example, ... [we have] issues with the drainage canals, which are clogged, for example some ditches have people living there, and the other ditches are also clogged.”

“We’re cleaning the ditches. This is very important for the community ... So, for example, you can walk around now, there are many ditches that have been cleaned. From here, for example, about 300 metres away you can see that there are clean ditches.”

INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING

Community flood resilience work led by CVM was introduced for the first time in the Sofala province, representing an **important shift** from the delivery of immediate humanitarian assistance to the provision of longer-term recovery and resilience support for communities at high risk of flooding. The **capacity of CVM staff and volunteers** was strengthened through trainings in resilience measurement, disaster risk reduction, climate change actions, first aid and awareness raising activities.

The Program contributed to **strengthening the working relationship between CVM and governmental** agencies, such as National Institute of Disaster Management (INGD) and the National Meteorological Institute (INAM), at the provincial level in Sofala as well as nationally.

The **compounding impact of recurring disasters** was one of the most challenging aspects of implementing the program. As a result, the program developed a crisis modifier that allowed for the rerouting of funds to address local needs in the target communities. This crisis modifier took into account the dynamic needs of the community, ensuring that disaster preparedness, response, and recovery form part of a resilience-building pathway.

Other external factors that impacted the implementation of the Program included the **Covid-19 pandemic, political instability, and insecurity**. Finally, it was necessary to introduce new procurement and monitoring mechanisms to ensure the financial implementation of the program as well as continuously brief and provide trainings to new staff members.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The successful development of the Flood Resilience Program in Mozambique over the last 3 years has marked a pivotal improvement in community resilience. However, as climate risks continue to grow it is important that our approaches remain dynamic and innovative; leveraging the lessons learned from previous experiences.



Ensure people are at the core of resilience-building actions.

- Directly engage families in door-to-door activities.
- Prioritize the translation of key messages to local languages.
- Engage key community actors, such as teachers, to inspire wider participation.
- Consider availability and readiness of community members that are still recovering from disaster.



Build resilience in diverse ways with an eye on sustainability.

- Implement diverse interventions that target resilience from different angles.
- Link Local Disaster Risk Management Committees to local authorities for ongoing training and collaboration.
- Ensure equipment and infrastructure is accompanied by maintenance training with local authorities.



Understand community resilience strengths and gaps.

- Undertake participatory resilience measurement to clearly identify strengths and gaps.
- Leverage knowledge generated through analyses of past extreme events.
- Balance resilience measurement processes with resilience building interventions within the program timeline.



Explore mechanisms for program continuity and adaptability.

- Integrate a crisis modifier into program planning to provide flexibility in the case of disaster during the program lifetime.
- Take steady and incremental steps to build a working culture of risk management, anticipatory action, and adaptive management responsive to changing operational circumstances.
- Monitor program progress and risks regularly.



The Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance is a multi-sectoral partnership focusing on finding practical ways to help communities in developed and developing countries strengthen their resilience to flood risk.
Find out more: www.floodresilience.net



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