



## **Migration Profile**

### **MOZAMBIQUE**

#### **A. Executive summary**

Mozambique is a South-eastern African country, surrounded by the Mozambique Channel and located between South Africa and Tanzania. Mozambique is a poor, sparsely populated country with high fertility and mortality rates and a rapidly growing youthful population (45% are younger than 15). It is a country largely dependent on its landlocked neighbours that need access to the sea. The Portuguese colonisation until 1975, the large-scale emigration, the economic dependence on South Africa, a severe drought, and a prolonged civil war hindered the country's development up to the mid-1990s.

Mozambique has always had a very large migration abroad; however, internal and rural movements into urban areas have started to rise. For over a century, Mozambicans, mainly from the southern region, have been moving to South Africa looking for jobs. Moreover, between 1979 and 1992, roughly 1.7 million Mozambicans moved to Malawi, South Africa, and other neighbouring countries fleeing from civil war.

Since 2017, extremists have been active in Northern Mozambique and started their operations in October 2017 with attacks in the Mocimboa da Praia district, striking civilians and security services in the northern province of Cabo Delgado.

Mozambique also hosts a large number of Internally Displaced Persons, due to violence in the northern provinces, as well as its exposure to natural hazards including severe droughts, devastating cyclones, and floods occurred in the central and southern provinces.

Mozambique is home to a relatively small community of refugees and asylum-seekers (just over 27,000), mainly coming from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi.

Mozambique is a country of destination, transit and origin for people involved in different migration movements, especially arriving from the East and Horn of Africa. Most migrants come from Ethiopia and Somalia, and although some seek asylum in Mozambique, many try to move onward to South Africa. Emigration of well educated and skilled Mozambicans is quite common and often results in a brain drain.

Mozambique is a Tier 2 Country, which does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking, but it is making significant efforts to do so. Specifically, the government tries raising awareness among vulnerable populations, educating more nationwide front-line responders, and prosecuting all reported trafficking cases.

## **B. Country Profile**

### **I. Basic Information**

Mozambique is located in Southern Africa bordered by Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Eswatini, South Africa, and the Indian Ocean separating it from the Comoros, Mayotte, and Madagascar islands. The capital and largest national city is Maputo, with 1.1 million people in the metropolitan area, while the largest suburb, Matola, houses 1.7 million of the country's 30 million inhabitants.

It is the 36th largest country by area (799,380 sq. km.) in the world. Approximately 99% of the population comes from indigenous ethnic groups, including the Makua (the largest tribe - over 4 million), Sena (second largest - over 1.7 million), Tsonga, Makonde, Shangaan, Shona, Ndaou, Yao, Nguni, Chokwe and Maravi. Most of the population is Christian (59.8% including Roman Catholic 27.2%, Zionist Christian 15.6%, Evangelical/Pentecostal 15.3% and Anglican 1.7%), followed by Muslim (18.9%), unaffiliated (13.9%), unspecified (2.5%) and others (4.8%). Mozambique is prone to severe droughts, devastating cyclones, and floods causing internal displacement in addition to movements determined by conflicts and violence.

### **II. International and Internal Migrants**

Mozambique is the main country of origin of immigrants residing in the Southern Africa region, with 921,513 people abroad (12%). While historically there was a large number of migrants moving from Mozambique to South Africa to work in mines and in commercial farms, more recently internal labour migration has been on the rise as the country opens up to mining and energy companies. Additionally, with Mozambique's economy rapidly improving, migration flows into the country, especially in the centre and north, are increasing, as migrants come to be employed in mines or use the country as an entry point in order to reach South Africa. The top five countries of origin are Zimbabwe (approximately 100,000), Malawi (60,000), Angola (40,000), Kenya (25,000), and South Africa (20,000).

By mid-year 2020, the total number of international migrants was 338,900, while emigrants were 640,200. The migration trend over a five-year period until 2019 showed a minimal change, with slightly more emigrants than immigrants, with a net migration of -25,000. In 2020 approximately 52.1% of immigrants were female, 26.8% were 19 years old and younger, and 3.2 % were 65 years or older.

The rise in internal migration to urban and coastal areas is also causing negative environmental consequences, such as desertification, soil erosion, deforestation, water pollution from artisanal mining, pollution of surface and coastal waters, and the increased threat to wildlife preservation (including elephant poaching).

The Mozambique-South Africa migration channel is the eighth most used way among the top 20 migration corridors involving African countries.

### **III. Emigration and Skilled Migration**

Mozambique is affected by regular flows of cross border workers moving from and to neighbouring countries, primarily South Africa. After many years of emigration, especially among high skilled workers, the abundance of resources and the economic growth Mozambique is recently experiencing are now attracting many foreign workers into the country.

During and since the end of the civil war (ended in 1992), many Mozambicans decided to leave their country in pursuit of better financial opportunities outside their homeland. However, emigration depleted the local economy of skilled professionals in main social and industrial areas, including healthcare, education, and engineering sectors. In accordance with the World Bank estimates from 2010, approximately 11.7 million Mozambicans emigrated, and most were highly educated. For instance just in 2000, the emigration rate of tertiary-educated Mozambicans was 45.1%.

In Mozambique, there is a high percentage of adult illiteracy (45%), which is more attested in rural areas and among women. In addition, the intergenerational cycle of poverty and the slowing of long-term economic growth are exacerbated by the numbers of highly educated Mozambicans leaving the country. A 2017 IOM study showed that the economic success of labour migration is more beneficial to children's schooling than unsuccessful migration or non-migration.

The top destination country for Mozambican emigrants is South Africa, but other significant countries include Malawi, Tanzania, Portugal, Eswatini, the United Kingdom, Germany, the United States, and Spain. Although Mozambicans continue to relocate abroad, the country's macroeconomic stability and its substantial growth have created more opportunities for the diaspora to be economically engaged in their home country.

To strengthen the support and engagement of the Mozambican diaspora in the social, economic and cultural development of the country, and limit the brain drain, in 2014 the government launched a Strategy for Diaspora Engagement in National Development. Then in September 2015, IOM Mozambique and the National Institute for Mozambican Communities in the Diaspora (INACE) received funding from the IOM Development Fund (IDF) to further involve the Mozambican diaspora in their country's development process.

According to the Mozambique's National Migration Service (SENAMI), the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic in Southern Africa in early 2020 forced the return of over 14,000 Mozambican immigrants from South Africa over the Lebombo/Ressano Garcia border within a span of a few days.

#### **IV. Forced Migrants (internally displaced people, asylum seekers, refugees, and climate displaced people)**

As of January 31, 2021 Mozambique hosted approximately 27,193 refugees and asylum-seekers, 33% of whom lived in the Maratane settlement within the Nampula province, with the remaining 67% residing in urban areas especially Maputo and Nampula City. These refugees and asylum seekers were mainly from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (32.1%), Burundi (28.2%), Rwanda (12.3%) and Somalia (12.1%), with the remaining 15.2% from other countries. There were approximately 242,000 IDPs in Mozambique as of

December 31, 2019: 110,000 IDPs were victims of conflict and violence, while the other 132,000 were affected by natural disasters.

In March 2019, Southern Africa experienced two consecutive cyclones, namely Idai and Kenneth, which left a series of destruction in Mozambique. Cyclone Idai, which also hit central Mozambique, leaving the country in shambles. By April 2019, the cyclones had claimed almost 600 lives and displaced more than 130,000 people in Mozambique alone. By August 2019, UNICEF reported that there were 2.5 million people in need of humanitarian aid, 223,947 houses were destroyed, and 160,927 people displaced. In January 2021, another 100,000 people were displaced due to Cyclone Eloise.

In addition to natural disasters, as of December 2020, according to official estimates more than 530,000 people were displaced in Cabo Delgado, Nampula, Zambezia and Niassa provinces because of violence and conflicts. These numbers are set to grow as armed groups have increased significantly in Palma, Nangade and the Macomia districts and are launching daily violent attacks. Because of this, many people have been forced to move multiple times, and the condition of those affected by the conflict is rapidly worsening. Many affected families have sought refuge in the safer southern districts of the Cabo Delgado province, where currently around 90% have been sheltered by host communities. Currently, Cabo Delgado offers protection to more than half million civilians on the run. However, access to agricultural land has been prevented, and there are clear signs that this crisis could spread beyond the national borders. In Cabo Delgado, access to some areas like Nangade, Mocimboa da Praia, Muidumbe, Macomia, Meluco and Quissanga remains limited due to violence, insecurity and the rainy season, with certain communities being cut off from basic services for months.

The violence in northern Mozambique has forced people to flee their places carrying with them only a few possessions; most of them have no identification and/or civil documents, which further increases their vulnerability. Women and girls have been abducted, forced into marriages, in some cases raped, or subjected to other forms of sexual violence. The displaced population remains significantly vulnerable to gender-based violence. People have arrived at Paquitequete beach, in Pemba district, mainly from Macomia, Quissanga and Ibo island. The number of displaced people who arrived in this area between mid-October and mid-November 2020 was almost 14,500. Hundreds lived on the beach in precarious conditions and clean drinking water was the most urgent need, according to a UNHCR assessment. People also face a lack of hygiene and sanitation as well as overcrowding.

## **V. Victims of Human Trafficking**

Compared with 10 investigations in 2018, in 2019 the government prosecuted 13 potential trafficking cases, finding 8 of them to be real violations. These cases involved 22 Mozambican male and female victims who were sexually abused and exploited in forced labour in different locations, ranging from rural areas in southern Mozambique to Maputo. The 2018 number of traffickers, involved in the 8 cases mentioned earlier, was not reported by the government.

Traffickers lure people, especially women and girls from rural areas, from neighbouring countries to cities in Mozambique or South Africa with promises of employment or

education, and then exploit them in domestic servitude and sex trafficking. These girls are then placed in bars, roadside clubs, overnight stopping points, and restaurants along the southern transport corridor connecting Maputo to Eswatini and South Africa. Child sex trafficking is a growing concern in the cities of Maputo, Beira, Chimoio, Tete, and Nacala, which have highly mobile populations and a significant number of truck drivers. Additionally, the growth in the mining industry is leading to an increased demand for sexual entertainment in cities like Tete and Cabo Delgado, and this could potentially contribute to an increase in sex trafficking. Overall, from 2014 to 2016 the Government of Mozambique conducted investigations on 142 suspected cases of human trafficking.

Traffickers also exploit Mozambican adults and girls abroad, especially in Angola, Italy, and Portugal. Trafficking networks typically involve Mozambican or South African smugglers; however, some South Asian traffickers have been quite active by moving undocumented South Asian migrants throughout the African continent, using especially the Mozambican corridor.

## **VI. National Legal Framework**

The national legal framework for refugee protection in Mozambique was established by the Act No. 21/1991 on December 31, 1991 known as the Refugee Act, and the ensuing Decree 33/2007, regarding the regulation on the determination of refugee status. The former provides for the refugee definitions in line with the provisions of the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1969 Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa (OAU Convention). Prior to the 1991 Act there was the Mozambique 1986 Directive providing General Principles to be Observed According to Refugee Status. Aside from Refugee Legislation there is the Nationality Act 2 of 1982 and the immigration legislation in the form of the National Assembly Law 5 of 1993, which governs and 'establishes juridical regime for foreign citizens namely, norms of entry, residence and departure from the country, rights, duties and privileges while in the country'.

Mozambique has ratified but made significant reservations to the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees Convention. Despite these reservations, UNHCR is satisfied that Mozambique generally maintains a generous asylum policy through the adoption of practical arrangements, which grant asylum-seekers and refugees rights similar to those of its nationals. Therefore, these limitations have had so far little impact on the actual treatment of refugees and asylum-seekers. The only restriction is the limitation of the right of refugees and asylum-seekers to freedom of movement and choice of residence, based upon a Ministerial Instruction, issued in 2001 and implemented in 2003, banning refugees from residing in the Maputo capital.

Mozambique has ratified the 1969 OAU Convention, governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa, and the 1967 additional Protocol of the Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, and the 2009 African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention). However, Mozambique is not a party to either the 1954 or the 1961 Statelessness Convention.

One of the major challenges which the government faces is the screening of new asylum-seekers at the borders by the Immigration Service. Given capacity and resource

constraints, Border Guards and Immigration Services are encountering great difficulties in managing the rise in mixed migratory movements in a manner which is protection sensitive. Mozambique's borders are widespread, with more than 55 border posts and a 3,500 km coastline to attend to. Hence, handling migration flows requires a large amount of material and human resources from the government, to ensure an effective border control that warrants respect and adherence to human rights and refugee laws, as well as protection principles.

The government of Mozambique has some legislation to counteract human trafficking, like the 2008 Law on Preventing and Combating the Trafficking of People that criminalized sex trafficking and labour trafficking and prescribed penalties of 16 to 20 years of imprisonment.

## **VII. Main Actors**

### *The State*

The main Mozambican agency in charge of handling migration issues is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation (MINEC). The subordinate and supervised institution of MINEC in charge of dealing with migration is the National Refugee Support Institute (INAR). The main responsibilities of the INAR Provincial Delegations are to welcome, protect and give humanitarian assistance to refugees and asylum seekers. Aside from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MINEC), there are a number of other governmental ministries and institutions dealing with migrants and migration matters, including the Ministries of Interior (MINT), Labour (MITRAB), Health (MISAU), State Administration (MAE), and the General Prosecutor's Office (PGR), and coordination entities including the National AIDS Council (CNCS), the National Institute for Disaster Management (INGC), and various municipalities and provincial offices.

### *The Catholic Church*

The Episcopal Commission for migrants, refugees and displaced people is called CEMIRDE and is an agency within the Episcopal Conference of Mozambique. CEMIRDE assists migrants and groups facing conditions of vulnerability and protects their human rights. The fight against and prevention of trafficking in human beings, organs and body parts is one of CEMIRDE's main focuses. It also conducts research and carries out workshops, events and awareness campaigns targeting government actors, non-governmental organisations and faith-based agencies.

The Congregation of the Scalabrinian Sisters coordinates the CEMIRDE office and specifically has a community of 3 missionary sisters ministering at the border between Mozambique and South Africa, in Ressano Garcia.

The Scalabrinian Fathers are also present with a community in the Nampula province and assist more than 18,000 refugees in the Maratane Camp and in Nampula City within the same Province. The Scalabrinian missionaries have developed projects aimed at promoting coexistence within the Maratane Camp, among the various ethnic groups of refugees and the local population. Also, they have been working in this refugee camp since 2008 on a project to combat malnutrition. Today, they have developed four distinct areas of ministry: the fight

against malnutrition, an agricultural project, a recreational project and the provision of support for women victims of violence.

Caritas Mozambique, established in 1977, historically helped refugees from Zimbabwe and local people to relieve their pain and suffering, mainly caused by civil war. After assisting these war victims, Caritas focused its efforts on other areas including providing assistance to populations (especially many IDPs) in the event of emergencies like drought, floods and cyclones. Caritas Mozambique has also become an interlocutor with the government for the implementation of social and support programmes for people affected by natural disasters. Additionally, Caritas has been assisting and supporting people fleeing the insurgency in Cabo Delgado. For instance, in October and November 2020 Caritas Pemba worked to help the tens of thousands of refugees stranded on the beach in Pemba city. Since their arrival, Manuel José Nota, the diocesan Caritas director in Pemba, said that Caritas took care of the hygienic conditions in the area, distributing food and supporting health services, as well as renting trucks to bring people to neighbouring districts. Other diocesan Caritas, like Caritas Nampula, Caritas Nacala and Caritas Lichinga made efforts to address the needs of people displaced by the conflict in Cabo Delgado, ranging from emergency assistance programmes to others services, targeting especially vulnerable groups such as women, children and the elderly.

### *International Organisations*

International organisations working on initiatives related to migrants in Mozambique involve UNHCR, IOM Mozambique, UNICEF, UNV Mozambique, UN Women and Pathfinder International.

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) Mozambique runs a broad variety of programmes, including emergency response, refugee resettlement, repatriation and family reunification, migration and development, and counter-trafficking. Other IOM activities include the promotion of the international migration law, policy debate and guidance, the protection of migrants' rights, migration health and the gender dimension of migration.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) provides technical assistance to the Government of Mozambique to ensure that registration and refugee status determination (RSD) procedures are performed in accordance with international standards. The UNHCR's assistance for displaced populations, in partnership with the Mozambique Government, includes shelter materials, core relief items such as tarpaulins, sleeping mats, blankets, kitchen sets, buckets, jerry cans and solar lamps. In addition to essential protection services, gender-based violence risk mitigation and response activities, UNHCR is also making efforts to ensure the integration of displaced families into host communities.

In 2021, some key priorities for UNHCR were: supporting the government with the backlog for assessing refugee status, with documentation for asylum seekers and refugees and with activities for child safety; identifying persons at increased risk of assault and violence based on gender and/or sexual harassment, and offer specific assistance to those identified; facilitating the peaceful co-existence of local and displaced populations through mutually beneficial ventures; improving access to education for refugee and asylum seeker children, both urban and camp-based, which included access to secondary and tertiary education;

access to citizenship for refugees and children seeking asylum born in the country and assisting recognized naturalized refugees.

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