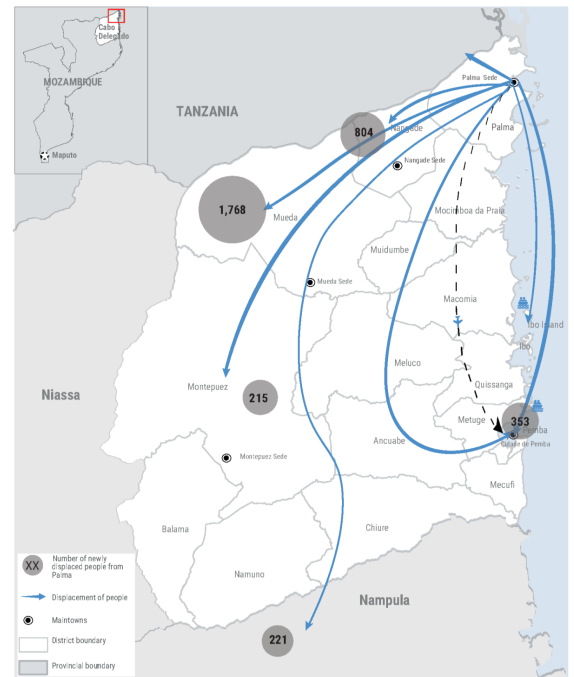


FLASH UPDATE (31 Mar 2021)

MOZAMBIQUE – ATTACKS IN PALMA DISTRICT Flash Update No.2

HIGHLIGHTS

- More than 3,300 people fleeing the violence in Palma have arrived in Nangade, Mueda, Montepuez and Pemba districts, while thousands of others are believed to be on their way by foot, boat and bus to safer locations.
- Humanitarians on the ground report that displaced people are arriving to their destinations exhausted, traumatized, injured and in need of urgent medical attention and psychosocial support.
- Many people reported seeing their family members killed and said they had to hide in the bushes for days, without food or water, to evade the armed attackers.
- Several families were separated during the fighting and/or while fleeing and there are a number of unaccompanied children arriving at various locations.
- Humanitarian partners continue to rapidly mobilize personnel and resources to support displaced people at the arrival points. Funding, however, is extremely low.



SITUATION OVERVIEW

The situation in Palma reportedly remains tense, with sporadic fighting and clashes still being reported, almost a week after the attack that killed dozens of people and forced thousands to flee towards several districts across Cabo Delgado Province.

Some 3,361 people displaced from Palma—three-quarters of them women and children— have arrived in Nangade, Mueda, Montepuez and Pemba districts, according to the [International Organization for Migration \(IOM\)](#). The [United Nations Humanitarian Air Service \(UNHAS\)](#), operated by the World Food Programme (WFP), has evacuated more than 280 of the most vulnerable people from Palma since the attacks began on 24 March.

The number of people displaced by the violence is, however, believed to be much higher and will continue to increase over the coming days. Thousands of people are thought to be hiding in the bush, making their way by foot to safer areas, which may take many days. There are also reports of people attempting to cross the border into Tanzania, according to [UNHCR](#), and a group arriving in Pemba told UNHCR staff about their initial attempts to seek safety across the border, which were thwarted by the difficult river crossing.

Displaced people are arriving to safer locations exhausted, traumatized, injured and in need of urgent medical attention. Many have reported seeing their family members killed and said they had to hide in the bushes for days, without food or water, to evade the armed men who attacked their communities. The highest number of people (1,768) have arrived in Mueda, which is nearly 180 kilometres from Palma Town; most of them by foot. Several families were separated when they fled Palma and a number of unaccompanied children have arrived in Cabo Delgado’s capital, Pemba, without relatives or loved ones.



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MOZAMBIQUE

MOZAMBIQUE – ATTACKS IN PALMA DISTRICT Flash Update No.2

Last updated: 31 Mar 2021

The recent escalation of violence in Palma District comes on top of an already dire humanitarian situation in Cabo Delgado Province. By the end of 2020, nearly 670,000 people were internally displaced due to the conflict in Cabo Delgado, including more than 43,600 who had sought shelter in Palma. The vast majority—90 per cent—of displaced people in Cabo Delgado and neighbouring provinces are being hosted by the communities in which they have arrived, who have shown incredible solidarity since the conflict began.

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

Humanitarian partners, in coordination with the Government, continue to rapidly mobilize personnel and resources to support displaced people who are arriving into other districts after fleeing Palma.

Today, a transit area for displaced people was established by the Government at the Pemba Sports Complex to accommodate people arriving in Cabo Delgado's capital. According to the authorities, priority will be given to those without relatives or friends with whom they could find shelter.

WFP is providing emergency food assistance while UNHCR and UNICEF are supporting the identification and referral of vulnerable people. [Save the Children](#) has deployed a team of child protection and water and sanitation experts to Pemba port and airport, to support arrivals fleeing the violence. [UNHCR](#) staff are also present at the local port and the airport and are referring vulnerable people—including older women and unaccompanied children—for immediate assistance and services. Together, [UNHCR and Save the Children](#) managed to house all unaccompanied children and single mothers with temporary host families in Pemba on 29 March, preventing them from sleeping at the airport after the evacuation.

[IOM](#) is preparing wheelchairs and crutches for the injured, distributing emergency medical supplies including masks, water buckets, water purifying tablets and soap to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and cholera, and is preparing basic shelter and household items for distribution. IOM has also provided psychosocial counselling and protection assistance to hundreds of displaced people at the arrival points. Camp Coordination and Camp Management teams are working with the Government of Mozambique to ensure that populations that come to temporary sites or relocation sites have access to services and protection.

HUMANITARIAN FUNDING

The humanitarian community in Mozambique was already stretched prior to the Palma attacks, having responded to multiple climate emergencies, on top of the conflict in Cabo Delgado, in the first months of 2021. Yet, the [humanitarian appeal](#) for the Cabo Delgado crisis is currently just [1 per cent funded](#). More resources are immediately required to meet the needs of people fleeing violence in Palma.

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