

EIGHT MONTHS AFTER IDAI: CHRONOLOGY OF DISPLACEMENT, HUMANITARIAN NEEDS AND CHALLENGES GOING FORWARD IN MOZAMBIQUE

SNAPSHOT REPORT
NOVEMBER 2019





AIM OF THE REPORT

This report provides a snapshot of the data available and key humanitarian challenges eight months after the passage of Cyclone Idai in Mozambique between 4 - 15 March 2019.

It shows the patterns and impacts of displacement in the eight months after the passage of Cyclone Idai in Mozambique from the initial emergency response phase to a longer-term recovery phase. An overview is given of the trends of internal displacement between March and November, the main humanitarian needs reported by internally displaced people (IDPs), living conditions in affected areas, and the challenges going forward and prospects for durable solutions.¹

This is important as the country moves forward in recovery and risk reduction efforts to mitigate the effects of future disasters with the upcoming arrival of the rain and cyclone season.

ABOUT THE DATA

IOM DTM data is collected in collaboration with the Government's National Disaster Management Institute (INGC) across the four provinces most affected by Cyclone Idai: Manica, Sofala, Tete and Zambezia. A network of 50 enumerators collects data in sites and localities through key informant interviews on a regular basis.

DTM implements three component activities:

- 1) Daily Monitoring: Rapid daily assessments of IDP population numbers (individuals & households) at accommodation centres and resettlement sites.
- 2) Multi-Sectoral Location Assessment: Multi-sector assessment at resettlement sites providing in-depth information on mobility, needs, and vulnerabilities.
- 3) Baseline Locality Assessment: Multi-sector assessment of affected localities to determine the number of affected populations and returnees along with basic shelter and access to service information.

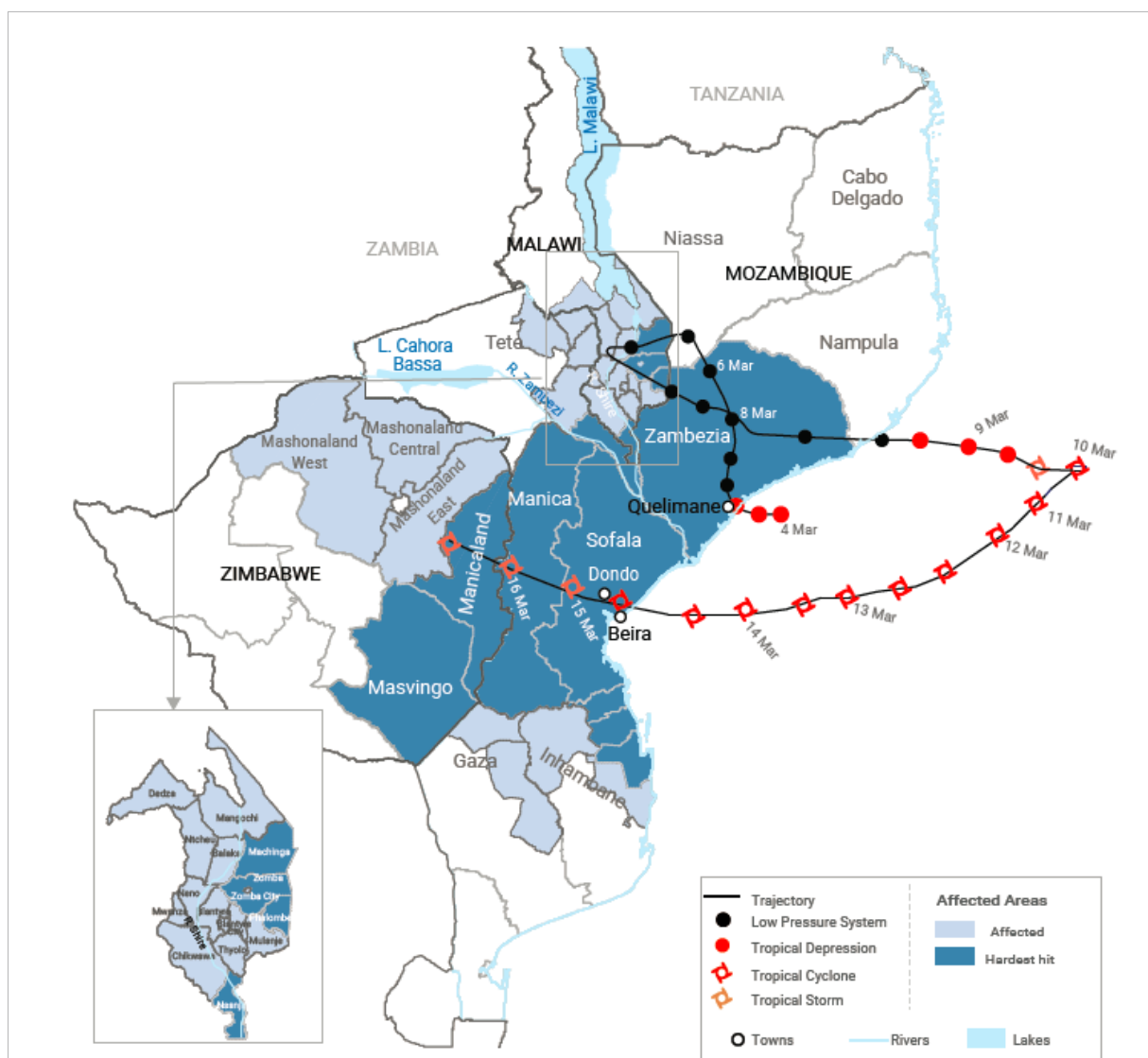
¹ The requirements for durable solutions are outlined in the IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons. See: <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/other/iasc-framework-durable-solutions-internally-displaced-persons>

SECTION 1 - Background

Between 4 - 15 March 2019, Mozambique was affected by the passage of Tropical Cyclone Idai. With a death toll of 602 people in Mozambique and hundreds of thousands of displaced people in Mozambique, Malawi, Zimbabwe and Madagascar, it is considered one of the most damaging and deadliest tropical cyclones ever recorded in the South West Indian Ocean basin.²

The cyclone made two landfalls in Mozambique, at varying levels of intensity. It first arrived as a tropical depression on the 4th of March, bringing heavy rains for a week to Zambezia province, before looping back into the South West Indian Ocean basin, where it quickly picked up in intensity, reaching Tropical Cyclone status on the 11th of March.

At 23:30 UTC on the 14th of March, Cyclone Idai made a second landfall in Mozambique as a category 2 cyclone, arriving close to Beira city in central Sofala province. On the 15th of March at 00:00 UTC, its centre was located approximately 25 km north-west of the centre of Beira. It reached maximum sustained winds of up to 167 km/h and an estimated storm surge of 2.5m.³ Throughout the next day, it passed through Sofala and Manica provinces, bringing strong winds and rain before reaching eastern Zimbabwe on the 16th of March (See Map 1).



This map is for illustration purposes only, names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM, UN or IDMC

Map 1: Cyclone Idai trajectory and flooded areas. Source: OCHA

² IOM, [Mozambique Cyclone Idai Response](#), 8 April 2019

³ Copernicus, [Beira Mozambique Flood Situation as of 16/03/2019](#), 16 March 2019

Tropical storms and cyclones are common in Mozambique, which experiences an average of 1.5 tropical cyclones a year.⁴ However, most cyclones do not reach the scale of destruction of Idai, with the only comparable disaster in recent years being widespread flooding associated with Cyclone Eline in 2000.⁵ The intensity of the storm was rare, and this, combined with the high amount of cumulated precipitation over the cyclone's lifespan meant people living in low quality housing were particularly at risk.⁶ Although early warning systems were in place in some areas, the unpredictability of the event did not always allow this to reach communities at risk and there is limited data on how many people evacuated prior to the cyclone's landfall.⁷

The four central provinces of Sofala, Manica, Tete and Zambezia were the worst affected by the disaster (**See Map 1**). Low lying areas in Sofala and Manica provinces near the major Buzi and Zambezi rivers suffered the most damage as the drastic increase in precipitation caused rivers to overflow, destroying homes and crops. In the city of Beira, which is largely below sea level, the cyclone contributed to significant housing damage, particularly in communities with poorly built housing.

People fled their homes as entire neighbourhoods became water-logged, flying debris caused destruction and walls collapsed. While many people were able to stay in their damaged homes and rebuilt their roofs with recovered material, others went to stay in accommodation centres, collective shelters held in public spaces and buildings.

SECTION 2 - Chronology of Internal Displacement: A Time Series Analysis Across Different Site Types

This section examines how the numbers of IDPs in the four central provinces of Sofala, Manica, Tete and Zambezia evolved over time, from the early stages of emergency disaster response in March to the mid and longer-term recovery phase in the months that followed.

To better understand the disaster response and long-term impact of displacement, it focuses specifically on how the numbers of IDPs changed over time in two different types of sites: accommodation centres and resettlement sites.

Box 1: Definitions

Definition of an accommodation centre



A location which people are using as a collective shelter after a disaster or an emergency, on a temporary basis. These are set up in public spaces and buildings and can be planned (held in locations designated by the government), or spontaneous (formed by IDPs themselves). Humanitarian aid in accommodation centres was provided by humanitarian organisations in partnership with the Government's National Disaster Management Institute (INGC).

Definition of a resettlement site



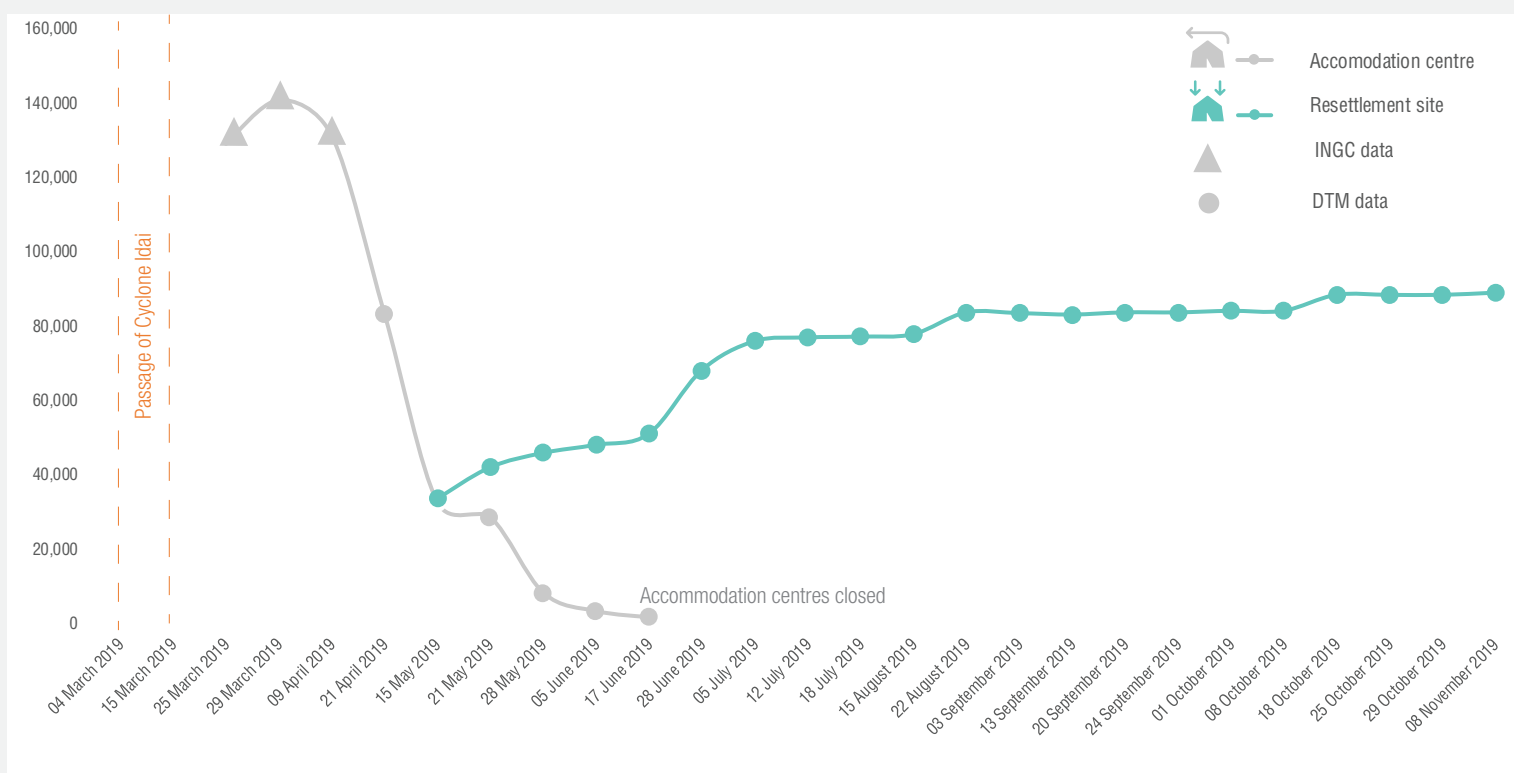
Planned sites in areas designated by the INGC as less prone to disasters, and suitable for people from areas at risk to live in long-term. Plots of land are attributed to households for housing and agriculture and basic services (health and education) are provided. These are supported by humanitarian organisations in partnership with the INGC.

4 JBA Risk Management, [Cyclone Idai causes extensive flooding across Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe](#), 2019

5 The Conversation, [Why the Indian Ocean is spawning strong and deadly tropical cyclones](#), 8 May 2019

6 Nature, [Why Cyclone Idai is one of the Southern Hemisphere's most devastating storms](#), 26 March 2019

7 WMO, [Mozambique cyclones are "wake-up call," says WMO](#), 29 May 2019



Graph 1: Number of IDPs staying in accommodation centres versus resettlement sites. Source: INGC/IOM Situation reports 25/03-09/04, IOM DTM daily updates 21/04/2019 – 08/11/2019. (Updates without full coverage of sites have been excluded from this analysis.)

The **Graph 1** timeline shows the evolution of IDP numbers over time. Immediately after the arrival of the cyclone on the evening of the 14th to 15th of March, people who were not able to stay in their damaged homes or with family and friends sought shelter in accommodation centres.

Box 2: Challenges of collecting time series data on IDPs in disaster contexts

In the immediate aftermath of the disaster, it was difficult to conduct comprehensive assessments on the number of IDPs in certain flooded and impacted areas due to access and logistical constraints. In Graph 1, the first estimate for the number of IDPs in accommodation centres first appears 10 days after the disaster, on the 25th of March.

Even after the initial emergency phases, transport and logistical challenges can make accessing certain sites difficult, affecting the total coverage of sites that are surveyed and thus the number of IDPs.

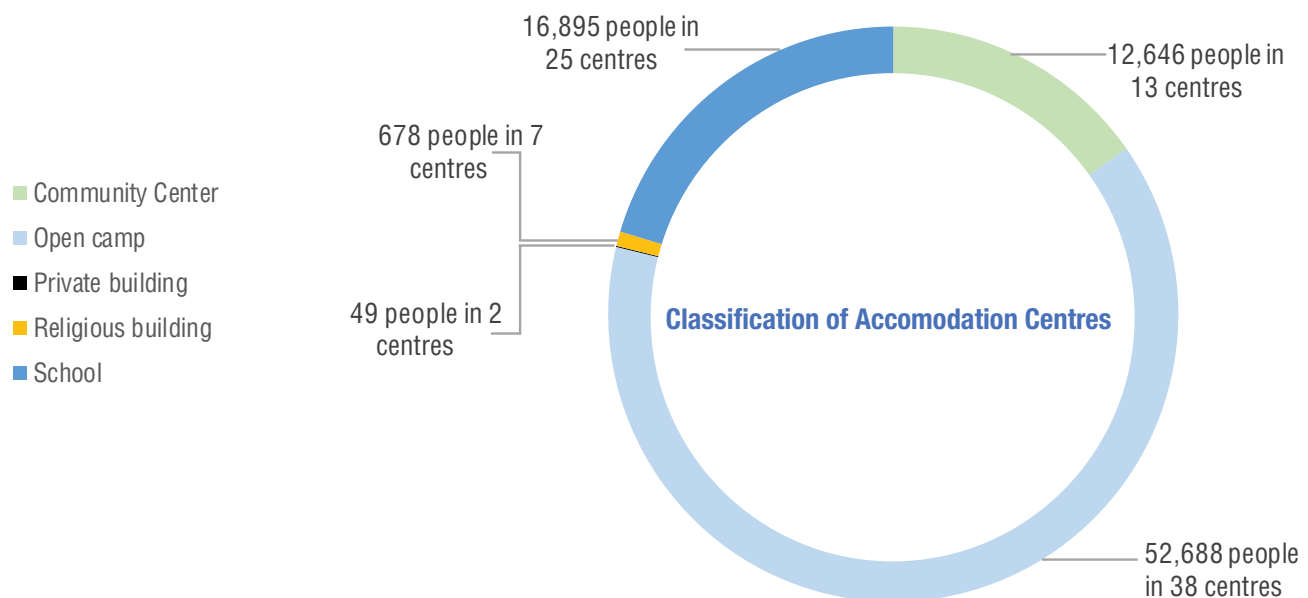
In Graph 1, only assessments with the full coverage of sites are considered. Some weeks without full coverage of sites have been excluded from the analysis, explaining some of the variations in the graph.

Although it is difficult to obtain accurate figures in the first weeks after the cyclone, preliminary estimates from the National Disaster Management Institute (INGC), showed that as of the 25th of March, a total of 128,941 IDPs had sought shelter in 143 accommodation centres in the four central provinces of Sofala, Manica, Tete and Zambezia. This number increased as more accommodation centres were opened to respond to the large numbers of people requiring shelter and other kinds of humanitarian assistance. By the 29th of March, 161 accommodation centres had opened, hosting a total of 140,784 IDPs.



Photo 1: Collection of water from water point at temporary accommodation site Samora Machel in Beira city, Sofala province, where over 400 people were sheltered. Source: IOM Mozambique

After this peak number of IDPs recorded by the INGC, the number of IDPs started decreasing as people started returning to their communities and rebuilding their homes. As of 9 April, 131,136 people were being hosted in 136 accommodation centres. At the same time IOM DTM started tracking the number of people in accommodation centres through its daily update mechanism. As of 21 April a total of 82,956 people were identified in 85 accommodation centres in the four central provinces. The majority were held in open camp settings, with schools being another common setting (**See graph 2**).



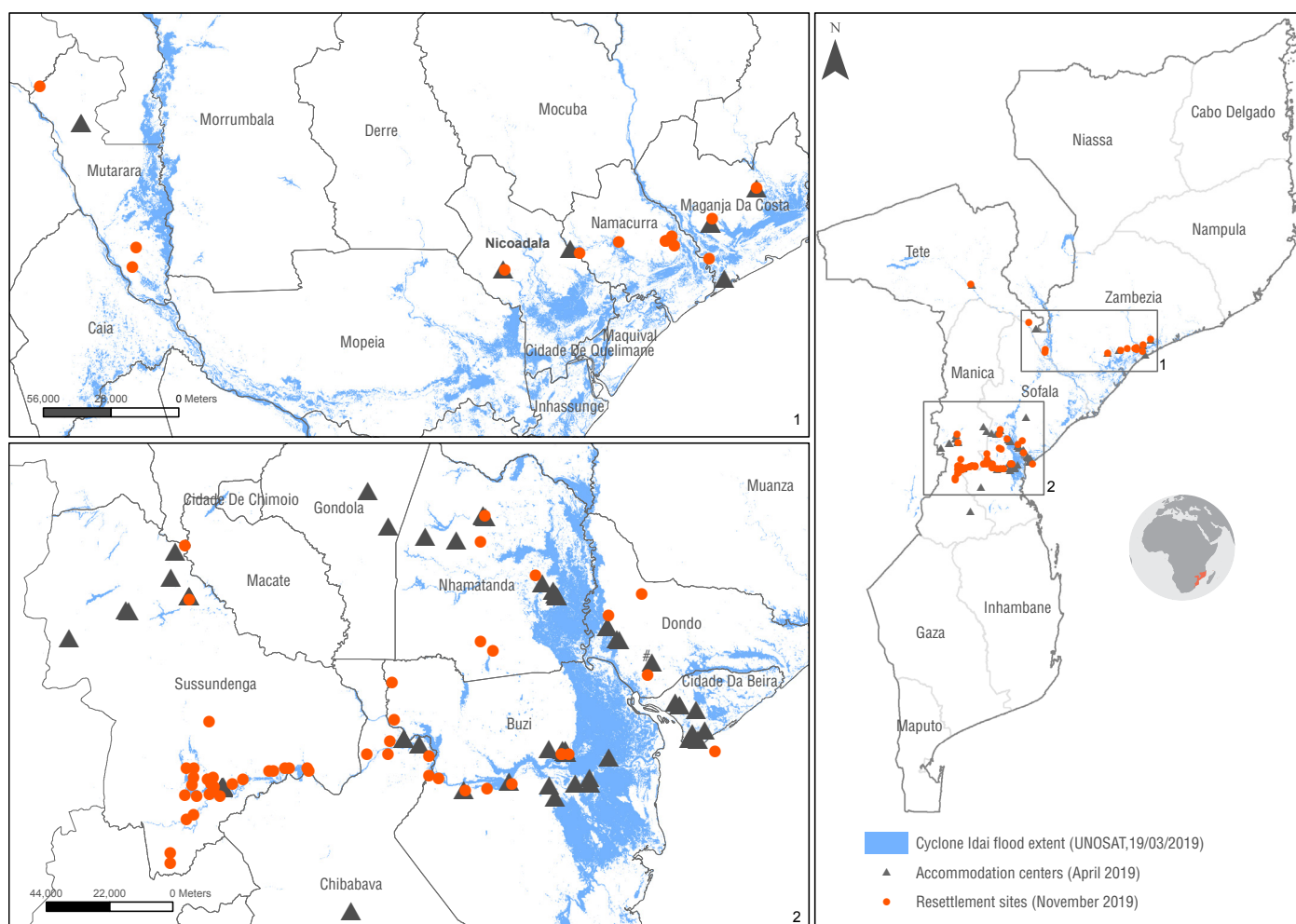
Graph 2: Classifications of accommodation centres as of 21 April. Source: IOM DTM Mozambique

2.1 - Movement of IDPs from Accommodation Centres to Resettlement Sites

By mid-June, all accommodation centres had closed, as IDPs were encouraged to move to the resettlement sites, areas deemed more suitable for long term residence identified by the Government of Mozambique. In addition, accommodation centres hosted in public centres such as schools or religious buildings needed to close in order to resume their usual activities.

IOM DTM started tracking IDPs in resettlement sites in late April. By the 15th of May, a total of 33,505 IDPs were staying in 32 resettlement sites in the four provinces of Manica, Sofala, Tete and Zambezia. This number increased over time as more resettlement sites were opened and people were relocated, reaching 88,960 IDPs in 66 sites by the 8th of November.

Some people who had not initially moved to accommodation centres in the aftermath of the disaster but who were living in flooded areas with host communities also moved to the resettlement sites. This also explains why the population in the resettlement sites increases over time.



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Map 2: Locations of accommodation centres versus resettlement sites, and proximity to flooded areas.

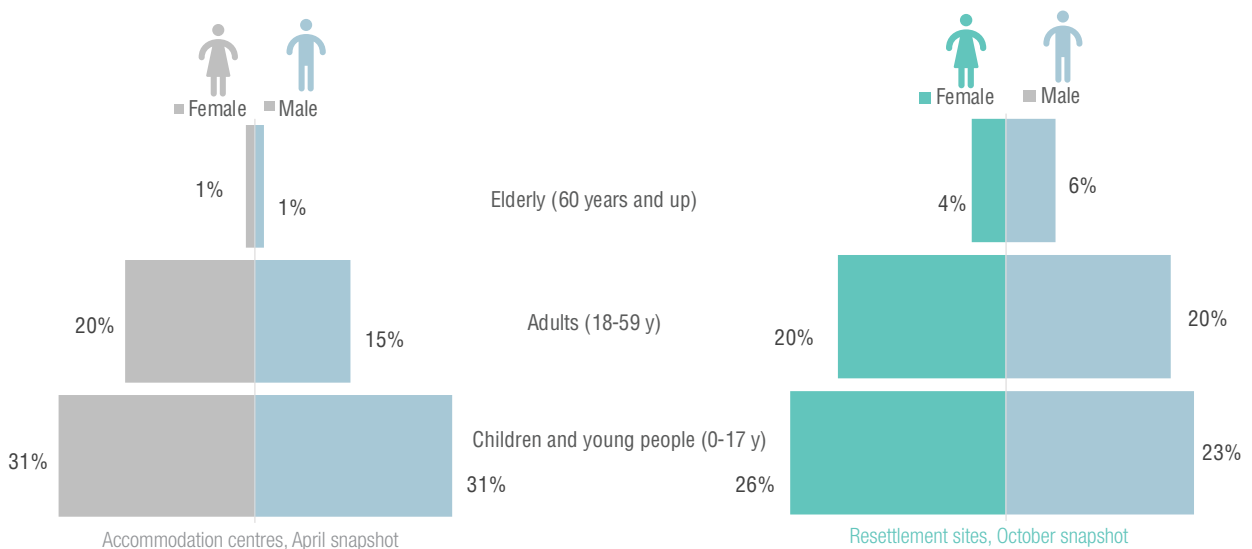
Source: IOM DTM (accommodation and resettlement locations), UNOSAT (flood extent).

Map 2 shows the location of accommodation centres in comparison to the resettlement sites. While the accommodation centres were mostly located in areas where humanitarian aid could be centralised, such as the city of Beira or near the town of Buzi, resettlement sites tended to be located in more rural areas, some distance away from flooded areas in zones deemed more suitable for habitation. In a few cases, sites that had been intended as accommodation centres were transformed into resettlement sites, so the locations overlap in the map.



Photo 2: A resettlement site in Dondo, Sofala province. Different shelter types can be observed in the photo, ranging from a tent, to homes made from local materials. Source: IDMC

2.2 - Demographic Profiles of People in Accommodation Centres and Resettlement Sites



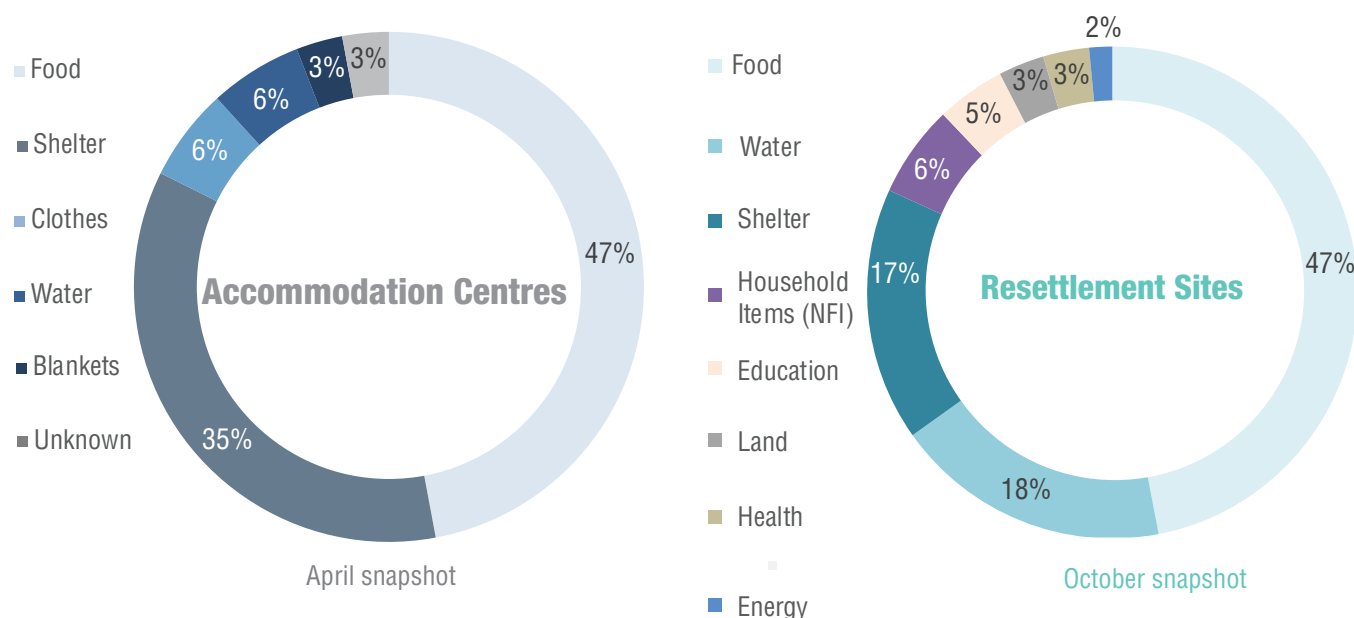
Graph 3: Demographic profiles for people staying in accommodation centres versus resettlement sites. Source: IOM DTM multisectoral location assessments, April and October 2019 snapshots

Graph 3 shows estimated demographic profiles for people staying in accommodation centres as compared to resettlement sites. Estimates collected for the accommodation centres in April showed that most of the people staying in these sites were children and young people, with comparatively fewer adults and elderly people. There also appears to have been comparatively fewer adult men. Anecdotal information suggests that this could be because adult men were more likely to stay behind and guard their damaged property, while other family members requiring assistance went to the accommodation centres.

Estimates for people staying in resettlement sites in October show very similar trends, with the vast majority of people falling in the category of children and young people. However, it can be noted that the shortfall of adult men reduces slightly, while the proportion of elderly people (above 60) increases to a limited extent. There are fewer male children and young people under 18 than females (See Graph 3.)

It is important that humanitarian response is tailored to the specific needs of these groups, in particular towards the large proportion of children and young IDPs, who make up the majority of people in the resettlement sites. This has implications for the provisions of services, especially in the areas of health and education.

2.3 - Snapshot of Humanitarian Needs: Evolution Over Time



Graph 4: Areas stated as number one humanitarian need in accommodation centres versus resettlement sites. Source: IOM DTM multisectoral location assessments, April and October 2019 snapshots

Graph 4 shows the difference in main humanitarian needs of IDPs staying in the accommodation centres versus the resettlement sites. Needs stated by key informants in April for the accommodation centres are compared with those stated in October for the resettlement sites.

When people were staying in the accommodation centres, food and shelter were the most commonly given main humanitarian needs. Water, blankets and clothes were also main concerns, although to a more limited extent.

The needs changed slightly over time as IDPs moved into the resettlement sites. Thus, food and shelter were still given as the top humanitarian needs, but water availability and quality become more of an issue. In addition, other needs appeared such as non-food items, education, health, land and energy, indicating the longer-term challenges that people face.

Overall, the data shows that humanitarian needs were high for both groups, even once IDPs had moved to longer term living arrangements after the initial phase of the disaster.

SECTION 3 - Outside of Accommodation and Resettlement Sites

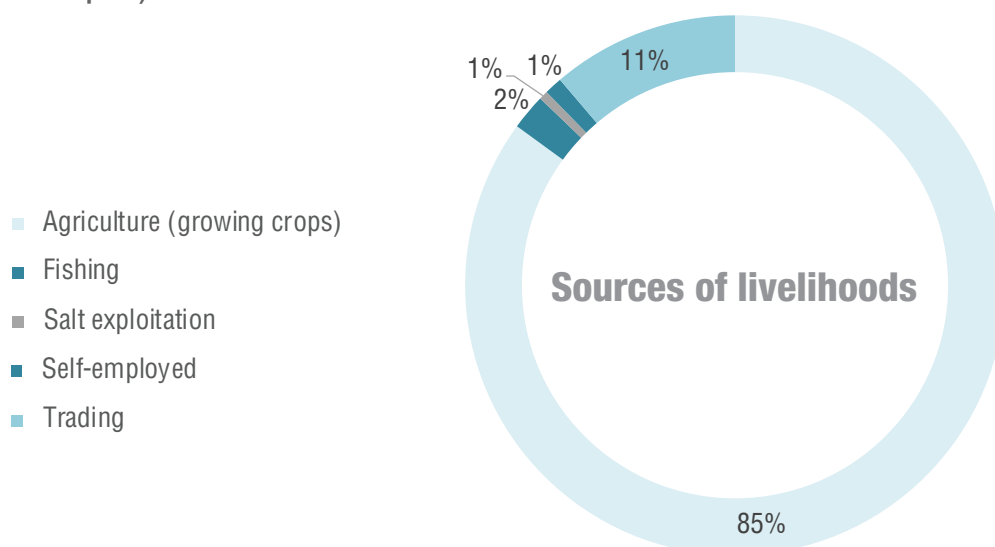
The situation of people in both accommodation and resettlement sites only tell one part of the story. In order to better understand the full impact of the cyclone, progress towards recovery and prospects for durable solutions, it is important to understand the situation of people in affected areas outside of the sites.

While the majority of people from these areas may not have left their communities after the cyclone, they face significant vulnerabilities that can impact their ability to recover and their resilience towards future disasters. In addition, the situation in these communities influences internal displacement trends as they are locations which people may have left from or are returning to after having sought shelter elsewhere.



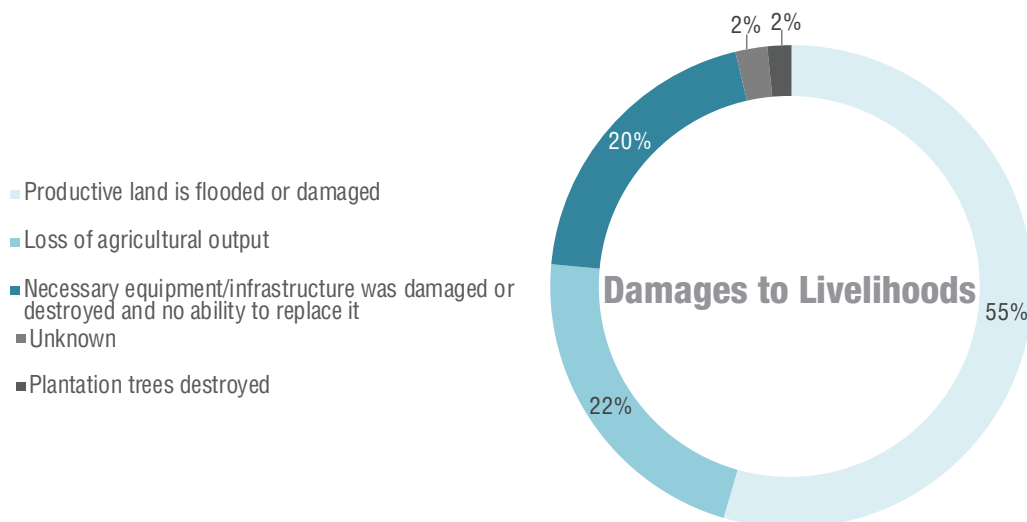
Photo 3: Local resident rebuilds his damaged house in Nhagueira, Sofala province. Source: IOM Mozambique

Baseline assessments were conducted by IOM DTM with the INGC in affected areas at the localidade level, the lowest administrative level in the country, to determine current humanitarian needs and displacement trends in affected areas. In all of the areas surveyed, in 122 rural localidades and 65 urban localidades, the vast majority of people, or about 85%, work in agriculture (See Graph 6).



Graph 6: Sources of livelihoods for people in cyclone affected areas. Source: IOM DTM Baseline assessment October

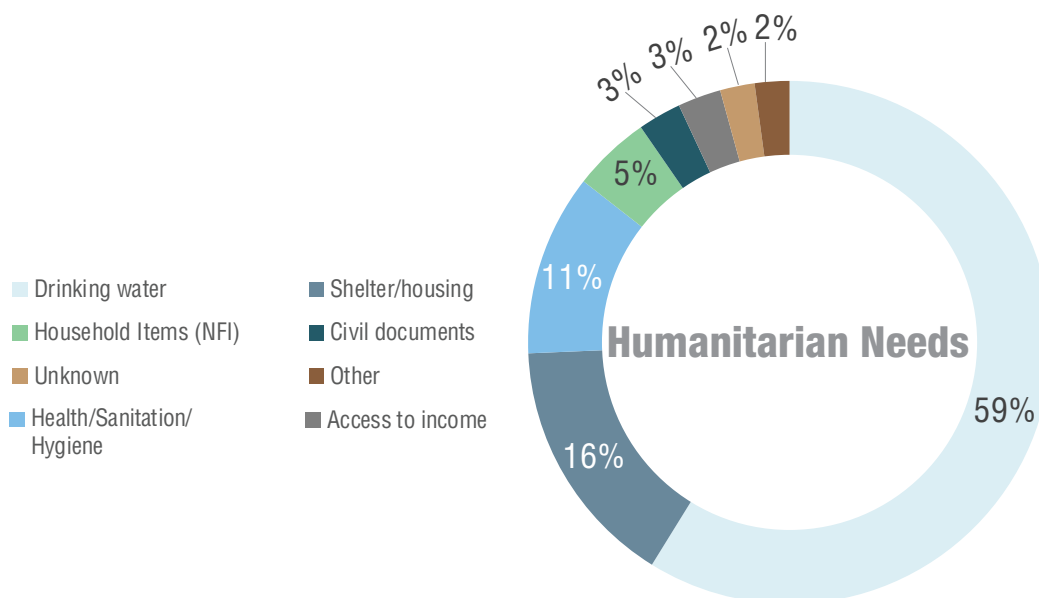
Out of these districts, an overwhelming majority, almost 98%, had experienced some form of damage to their livelihoods. The main damage reported included loss of productive land because it was damaged or flooded, a decrease in crop production, and a loss of necessary equipment or infrastructure for agriculture (See Graph 7).



Graph 7: Damages to livelihoods for people in cyclone affected areas. Source: IOM DTM Baseline assessment October

Housing damage was also extremely widespread, and although there are no comprehensive figures available to estimate the total number of houses damaged or destroyed due to the large scale of the disaster, housing repair and reconstruction was necessary in the vast majority of localidades. Communities often rebuilt homes themselves, with a total of 174 out of 187 localidades reporting that people did this using recovered materials to repair roofs and walls. Shelter kits were distributed in 60 out of 187 localidades to support this effort.

The impact of the cyclone on livelihoods, housing and living conditions can be seen when looking at the primary humanitarian needs reported in affected areas (see Graph 8). As of October 2019, the first humanitarian need most commonly cited as a priority was the availability of drinking water. Other needs such as shelter and health, sanitation and hygiene featured in the second and third place, showing that these basic needs are still a concern for the population, despite many months having passed since the cyclone.



Graph 8: Areas stated as number one humanitarian need. Source: IOM DTM Baseline assessment October

Aside from the affected population, the baseline assessments also provided estimates on population movements within the localidades. This includes the number of people who have left the locality and the number of people who have returned. As of the 18 October, 12,724 people were identified as having left their localidad of origin. A total of 19,501 IDPs were also identified as having returned to their localidades of origin. These people may have come back after staying with host families in other localidades or in accommodation centres that have since closed.

In addition, the high levels of housing damage in the localidades means that many people may not be staying in their own

homes in the localidades. Due to the high levels of humanitarian needs in many of these communities after the cyclone, it is unlikely that these people have reached durable solutions.

SECTION 4 - Conclusions and Challenges Going Forward

This snapshot report shows the patterns and impacts of displacement in the eight months after the passage of Cyclone Idai in Mozambique. Firstly, a chronology of displacement is made as the disaster response progressed from the initial emergency response phases to a longer-term recovery phase. Next, a comparison is made between the number of IDPs, demographic profiles, and humanitarian needs in accommodation centres that were set up in the immediate aftermath of the disaster, with resettlement sites that were opened at a later stage and designed to be more long-term. Finally, the report looks at the situation outside of sites, in affected communities that suffered significant losses in terms of housing and livelihoods. This helps to understand the level of recovery after the cyclone, prospects for durable solutions and the level of preparedness for future disasters.

While relocating displaced people from high risk areas to lower risk areas is a significant step in terms of disaster risk reduction and preventing future displacement, the data suggests recovery after the cyclone in these sites is not yet complete. Humanitarian needs remained high over time and people have raised concerns about their ability to meet basic requirements such as food, water and shelter, many months after the passage of the cyclone.

Concerns about the ability to meet basic needs is one of the reasons why only 11% of respondents from the site assessment in October answered that they expected people to stay in resettlement sites permanently. Continued support will be needed to improve living conditions and support communities in these locations, through improved access to livelihoods, shelter, access to markets, food, protection and health. All of these factors have implications on the ability of people to reach durable solutions and an end to displacement, as well as reducing the risk of secondary displacement with upcoming disasters.

Baseline analyses conducted in affected areas also provided valuable information for understanding the impact of the cyclone, recovery conditions as well as displacement risk in the four central provinces of Sofala, Manica, Tete and Zambezia. The areas affected were disproportionately rural, with agriculture the main source of livelihoods. The damages reported were linked to this, with flooding and damage in fields, and loss of agricultural output, major concerns.

In these areas, recovery is a lengthy process. A baseline assessment conducted in October showed that even eight months after the cyclone, access to drinking water, shelter, and sanitation, health and hygiene remained key concerns for the population. This has strong implications for the IDPs who have returned to their localidades of origin, who will face difficulties in rebuilding their lives to the standard it was prior to the cyclone.

Overall, this research shows the challenges in recovery in both resettlement sites and affected areas eight months after the cyclone. This is a concern from a durable solutions standpoint and regarding preparedness for future disasters, including the upcoming cyclone and rainy season.

In order for durable solutions to be possible, consistent and long-term investment will be needed both within and outside of resettlement sites. Support will be needed for all population groups, including IDPs in resettlement sites, affected people and returned IDPs, and will need to take into consideration the needs of key demographic groups such as children and young people, who make up the majority of IDPs.

Aside from a continued and comprehensive humanitarian response, this will require the full involvement of development and disaster risk reduction actors in collaboration with the Government of Mozambique, in order to reduce the baseline vulnerability of the population and ensure that the country is able to build back better and reduce future risk.

