



ILLNESSES DO NOT KNOW BORDERS

CARE is acting quickly and collectively for COVID-19 prevention in the most vulnerable places around the world.



COVID-19 Crisis in Mozambique

Focus on prevention and response – with women and girls at the center

Background

CARE began its work in Mozambique in 1984 delivering emergency and large-scale humanitarian assistance to communities affected by the protracted civil war. Since the end of the war in 1992, CARE has been providing assistance in health, water and sanitation. CARE has a long experience of delivering emergency, large-scale humanitarian assistance to communities affected by health crises and pandemics like cholera and HIV, helping combat the spread of the diseases.

Recently, in response to Cyclones Idai and Kenneth, CARE distributed hygiene kits that have helped promote hygiene and sanitation within communities whose access to clean and safe water supply has been seriously impacted by recent disasters. These kits included water containers, hand soap, water purifying products, sanitary napkins and were complemented by the provision of training on hygiene practices and promotion for community volunteers, students and teachers, as well as the rehabilitation of water and sanitation facilities.

As part of any emergency response, CARE prioritizes women and girls, as they are the most impacted and vulnerable in times of crisis, struggling more than ever to cope with the situation. In the last year, CARE's water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programming reached over 60,000 people in Mozambique and existing programs will be scaled-up and incorporate new messaging to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The COVID-19 pandemic is placing Mozambique under an unprecedented strain, as over 1.5 million people are still struggling to recover from the devastation of two major cyclones in 2019, drought continues to hit the southern part of country, and violence in Cabo Delgado has displaced over 150,000 people. Beyond the immediate public health crisis, COVID-19 has plunged the global economy into crisis, with the informal economy -and particularly women- hard-hit. In countries such as Mozambique, where 9 out of 10 workers are employed in the informal economy, the consequences could be devastating.



CARE's WASH programming activities include providing hygiene kits and appropriate latrine facilities. In addition, CARE is providing training on hygiene practices and promotion for community volunteers, students and teachers.

CARE's Response

Objective: CARE's COVID-19 strategy rests upon the delivery of life-saving prevention and response activities to the most vulnerable societal groups and populations in countries in which we work. Simultaneously, CARE will apply a resilience approach to build future capacities at community, household and individual levels to prevent the re-emergence and spread of the disease.

Disease outbreaks affect women and girls differently, and perhaps more severely, than they would affect men and boys. This is also true for more at-risk and vulnerable, marginalized groups. The impacts of COVID-19 with the compounding complexities of development or humanitarian contexts are likely to have disproportionate effects on women and girls, as well as at-risk and vulnerable groups whilst exacerbating pre-existing gender and intersectional inequalities.¹ During lockdowns and restrictions on movements, female-headed households are likely more exposed to lack of food, loss of income/employment opportunities and as a result of spike in sexual exploitation and abuse.

CARE Mozambique is scaling up its **WASH and Gender/GBV interventions** to address the COVID-19 pandemic, incorporating key mitigation activities into existing and new development and humanitarian programming. CARE is promoting the adoption of essential hygiene practices through community engagement as well as distributing soap, disinfectant (where appropriate) and hand washing equipment (hand washing stations etc). With mounting evidence that issues of child abuse and GBV are on the increase around the world as a consequence of the pandemic, CARE Mozambique is also scaling up its GBV awareness, prevention and response activities.

The geographical focus of these activities are the urban and peri-urban areas of Cabo Delgado and Sofala provinces (including resettlement sites established post Idai and Kenneth) and rural Inhambane. CARE will provide reliable information (working with trusted partners, through mass information campaigns, in coordination with national government messaging/materials) on the current situation with regards to infection rates to counter negative impacts of misinformation and rumors.

Beyond the immediate health crisis, short- and medium- term impacts are expected on food systems and food and nutrition security (FSN). CARE will be supporting vulnerable populations by promoting food production e.g. distribution of tools and seeds for small-scale agricultural production), which will help to improve access to fresh food and healthy diets.

CARE and partner staff are safeguarding the communities they serve from risk or exposing them to harm, by applying a "Do No Harm" principle and incorporating WHO guidelines for avoiding the spread of COVID-19.



"The most important thing I received today is the soap bar. We ran out of it at home and didn't have money to buy a new one. I have four siblings but live with my sister, brother and his wife. I never really knew my parents because they passed away when I was small. They were sick. We lost our home during the cyclone last year, it collapsed. We were forced to move into a plastic tent but have just started rebuilding our home. says Luisa Marcos Joan, 16.

¹ https://www.care-international.org/files/files/Global_RGA_COVID_RDM_3_31_20_FINAL.pdf