

# Threat analysis

June 2019

Mozambique has been hit by a large-scale emergency. Aid agencies are responding, and have to balance duty of care for staff with reaching beneficiaries in need. The devastation caused by recent cyclones in Mozambique is changing the operating environment for aid agencies from a relatively low-risk context to a much more fluid situation.

This report provides information for aid agencies responding to recent cyclones in Mozambique to help them understand the operational threat context and to assist them to improve their security risk management and access strategies. Well-implemented **security risk management** enables aid agencies to access communities and implement programmes while keeping staff members safe and protecting their well-being. Many aid organisations still fail to appreciate the full extent of their duty of care obligations to staff and subcontractors, and the implications of these obligations for security risk management. Policies that were once considered good enough can no longer be regarded as adequate today.

An aid organisation-focused threat analysis is not the same as a general security risk profile for a country. Aid agencies have a distinct relationship with the local population whom they serve and from where they recruit employees and local implementing partners. This affects the risks faced by both aid agency staff and local employees, as well as the agency's mission mandate and capacity. There is an increasing consensus that aid agencies' own security incident data is fundamental to understanding the threat context in a particular country. Such data is the cornerstone of more effective risk management policies and practices.

The process of gathering and verifying incident data is complex, takes time and requires cross-referencing from as many sources as possible. The information presented in the report therefore comes from three main types of sources – aid agencies, local news media and social media – and is part of a trial to identify efficient ways of collecting and sharing security context information in a sudden-onset emergency.

The second page provides analysis of trends in verified safety, security and access incidents reported by **nine Aid in Danger partner agencies** over the past four years to highlight typical security-related incidents reported from Mozambique. Get this data on [HDX](#).

The third page shows key findings based on **local news and social media monitoring** carried out by **Standby Task Force** from 21 to 31 March 2019 and from 3 to 19 May, which highlight the changing security context, in particular when it is driven by community fears and frustrations. Detailed information on individual incidents is available [here](#).

## MOZAMBIQUE SECURITY THREAT OVERVIEW



Petty crime



Road traffic accidents (RTAs)



Accusations and rumours



Government action



Attacks on civilians

The nature of the commonly reported security incidents highlights that Mozambique is generally not a high-risk security environment. However, emergencies can change the environment, particularly when fear and rumour spread. The misappropriation of aid can also affect access in Mozambique. The recent attacks on civilians in the Cabo Delgado region highlight the risk to local staff and local partners who are civilians as well as aid workers.

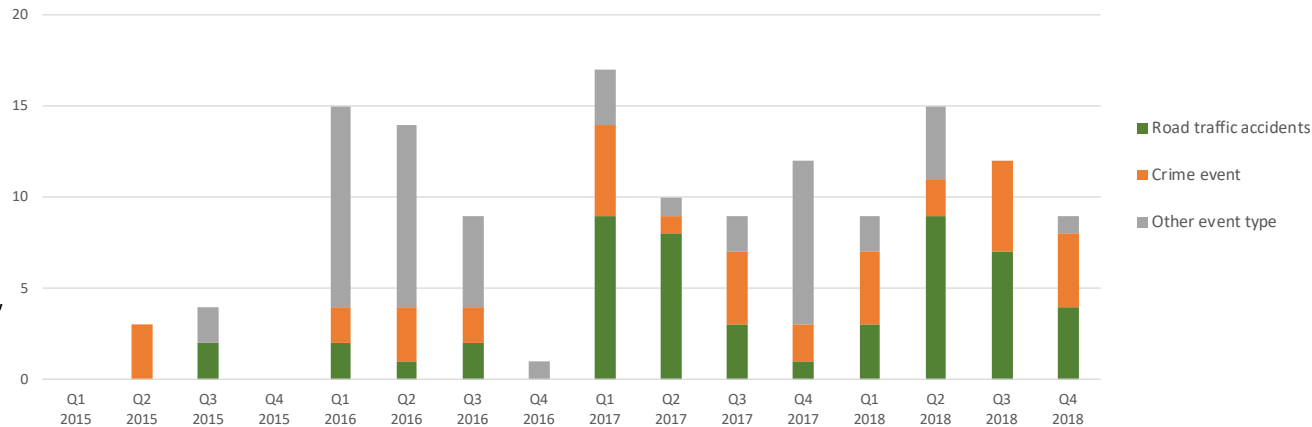
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## VERIFIED SAFETY, SECURITY AND ACCESS INCIDENTS

Set out below is an analysis of trends in verified safety, security and access incidents reported by nine **Aid in Danger** partner agencies over the past four years to highlight typical security-related incidents reported from Mozambique. Get this data on **HDX**.

### REPORTED INCIDENTS

This graph shows the number of reported incidents by event type per quarter between 2015 and 2018.



KEY FIGURES	
<b>139</b> Reported incidents, 2015-2018	<b>5</b> Aid workers killed since 2000

- The number of reported security incidents has slowly risen between 2015 and 2018. This is partly a reflection of the rising number of aid agencies that share data and partly of a greater general awareness that it is important to record and report all security incidents.
- Criminally motivated incidents and road traffic accidents were the most frequently reported types of events.
- Violence perpetrated against civilians by militants – possibly connected to Ansar al-Sunna, al-Shabaab or RENAMO – in the first half of 2016 and in Q4 2017 affected aid agencies' ability to operate, with frequent episodes of programme suspensions and restrictions on staff movements.

### COMMON SECURITY THREATS

- Petty crime, including thefts from aid offices, staff members' residences and aid vehicles.

Deaths and injuries sustained in road traffic accidents (RTAs). 40% of reported RTA incidents caused aid worker fatalities and injuries. Dangerous driving practices, flash flooding and poor infrastructure were all contributing factors to the reported RTAs.

### SECURITY THREATS DURING EMERGENCIES

- Communicable diseases and related rumours can pose a significant security threat to aid agencies. In 2009, locals lynched three aid workers during a cholera response after they were accused of poisoning wells while disinfecting water sources.
- Government action is a concern. At the end of March 2019 unspecified NGOs claimed that the government's slow response to their requests for permission to operate in the country has resulted in the delivery of aid supplies being delayed.
- Attacks on civilians in aid recipient communities in the Cabo Delgado region are a further security threat as motives and targets of the militants are not well understood.

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## LOCAL NEWS AND SOCIAL MEDIA MONITORING

Below are key findings based on local news and social media monitoring carried out by **Standby Task Force** from 21 to 31 March 2019 and from 3 to 19 May. Detailed information on individual incidents is available [here](#).

### ACCUSATIONS AND RUMOURS

#### Mozambique

- There are widespread reports of local community leaders who are responsible for distributing aid to victims demanding sex from poor women in return for food.
- Fake donation campaigns are circulating on WhatsApp; donations of food and generators are being diverted from or not delivered to beneficiaries.
- Some staff of international aid agencies delivering food supplies have been accused of being spies who are gathering intelligence.
- The Mozambique government is struggling to organise response efforts and has at times instructed aid agencies to stop work.
- Rumours are circulating that cholera treatment centres are not curing but spreading the disease, which can cause panic and mobilise mobs. Any cholera-related interventions require a carefully thought through communications strategy, and information management remains important throughout the intervention.

#### Surrounding countries

- Malawi: Area development committee leaders in Zomba district, Southern Region, are creating false beneficiaries.
- Zimbabwe: Government and ZANU-PF officials have been accused of distributing aid on partisan lines and appropriating aid.

### ACTUAL AND ATTEMPTED LOOTING OF AID RELIEF, BY LOCATION

- Cabo Delgado province: Nicate village (early May).
- Sofala province: Beira city (21 and 22 March); Vaz neighbourhood, Beira city (22 March); Matacuane neighbourhood, Beira city (20 March).

### OBSTRUCTIONS TO AID DELIVERY, BY LOCATION

- Sofala province: Beira city, Buzi and Nhamatanda districts.

### VIOLENCE AGAINST CIVILIANS

- Since October 2017 over 110 attacks have been reported, with more than 295 civilian and military deaths. Following nearly a month of quiet, a number of villages in northern Cabo Delgado province were attacked in May. Available analysis suggests that these attacks may have been intended to interfere with the voter registration process. If this is the case, then any link between aid delivery and voter registration may make aid delivery a target.
- There is no consensus about the key drivers of extremism in the region, including the linkages among local, regional and international extremist networks.
- Although the identity of the militants who have attacked civilians has not yet been conclusively established, some observers believe that they belong to Ansar al-Sunna. Experts struggle to identify whom this group comprises and its objectives, recruitment base and sources of funding. According to some reports, the insurgent group has established two makeshift mosques in the Nanduadue neighbourhood of the port of Mocimboa da Praia in northern Mozambique. There are also rumours that the group has training camps in Mocimboa da Praia district and in Kibiti in Tanzania.
- The insurgents' motives are not known, but state and secular institutions may be the main targets. [Read more >>>](#). Looting aid supplies is not believed to be the motive for the attacks, because nothing was stolen.
- The context of the cyclone may decrease or intensify the conflict between government forces and the insurgents, depending on whether the Mozambique military are seen as a credible ally to the population in the disaster-struck areas or feared for human rights abuses or the misappropriation of aid. [Read more >>>](#)