

Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM)

March 2026 | Metuge District, Cabo Delgado, Mozambique

CONTEXT

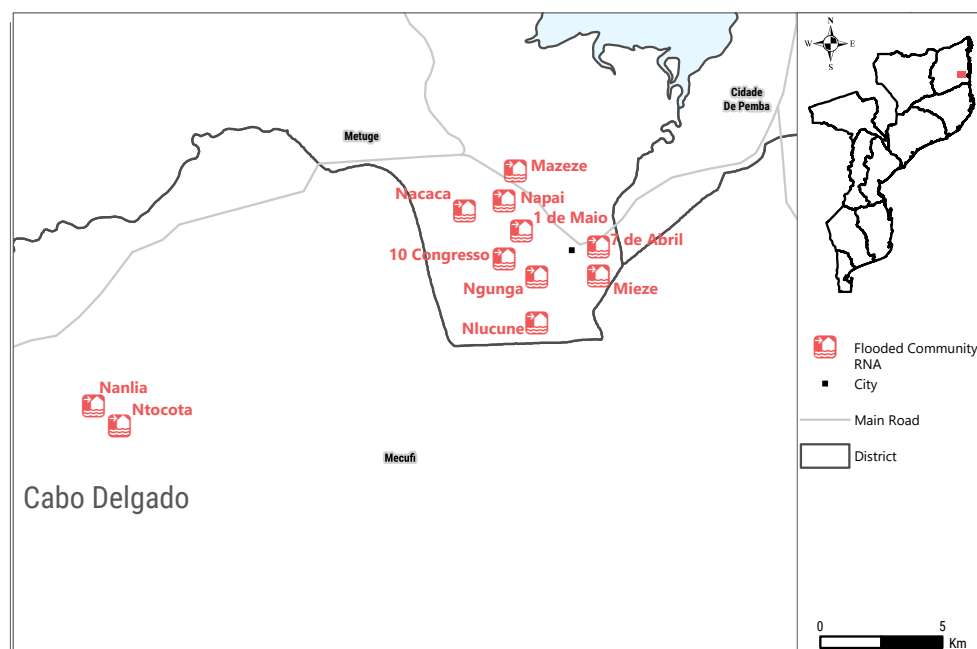
BETWEEN 13 AND 17 OF MARCH 2026, heavy rainfall in Metuge District (Cabo Delgado) caused widespread flooding that damaged key infrastructure - including roads, bridges, water sources, crops and housing - across multiple communities. Many affected families initially sheltered in schools or with relatives/neighbours, while some reportedly returned to damaged homes despite poor living conditions, increasing vulnerability to illness. Flooding also raised concerns about contamination of drinking water sources due to floodwater mixing with existing water points.¹

In response, the Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) teams of Save the Children and the Norwegian Refugee Council conducted 181 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) in late March 2026 across the communities of **1 de Maio, 10 Congresso, 7 de Abril, Mazeze, Mieze, Nacaca, Nanlia, Napai, Ngunga, Nlucune and Ntocota** in Metuge District (see Map 1). This brief presents the main findings of the assessment. Findings are indicative of priority needs in the assessed locations; further details are provided in the Methodology and Limitations section at the end of the document.

5,725

Number of affected households across Metuge District.²

Map 1: Flood affected communities in Metuge District of Cabo Delgado



TOP 3 PRIORITY NEEDS

as reported by Key Informants (KIs) in assessed communities

 Shelter


92% of KIs

Shelter emerged as the **most urgent priority** across assessed communities, driven by widespread flood-related **housing damage** and the **limited availability of safe alternatives**.

 Food

86% of KIs

Food was the **second most frequently reported priority need**. KIs described a combination of **reduced purchasing power** and disruption to **household production**.

 Food security & agriculture

86% of KIs

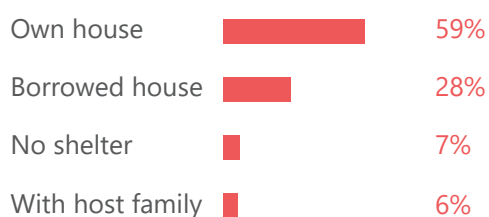
Food security and agriculture were also reported as a **priority**, linking the destruction of *machambas* to both **immediate livelihood losses** and longer-term **threats to household food supply**.

SHELTER & NFIs

Shelter was the most urgent need across assessed communities, cited by 92% of key informants (KIs). While NFIs were less frequently reported as a standalone priority (8%), **clothing/apparel** (19%) was also commonly mentioned, suggesting losses of basic personal items. KIs also reported notable displacement dynamics: many **households were said to be living away from their usual dwellings** (46% reported “yes, some” and 33% “yes, many”). However, many affected households were reportedly still **staying in damaged homes or relying on relatives/borrowed accommodation**, indicating limited shelter alternatives. Most KIs (65%) expected **households to remain where they are currently staying** over the next two weeks.

Reported shelter issues were primarily driven by major roof/wall damage requiring repair materials and **homes destroyed or uninhabitable**, with fewer KIs citing a lack of shelter materials. Accordingly, the **most needed items reported were tarpaulins/plastic sheeting** (75%), **repair kits** (rope/nails/tools) (66%), and **corrugated iron sheets** (65%). These findings align with initial local estimates of 1,101 houses totally damaged and 4,078 partially damaged across affected localities in Metuge Sede and Mizee administrative posts.³

Current living arrangements, by % of KIs*



Main shelter-related problems, by % of KIs*



FOOD SECURITY & LIVELIHOODS

Food was the second most urgent need across assessed communities, cited by 86% of key informants (KIs), with a further **31% highlighting food security and agriculture**, reflecting concerns that extend beyond immediate consumption to livelihood recovery. Nearly all KIs (98%) reported that **households are currently experiencing difficulties accessing food**, indicating widespread pressure on food access following the floods. Reported **barriers point to a combined economic and production shock** - driven primarily by reduced purchasing power alongside farm destruction - while some KIs also noted limited access to adequate food. Consistent with this, households were described as relying on a mix of **own production, market purchase and exchange-based coping strategies**.

Livelihoods remain largely subsistence-farming based (81%), with additional **reliance on small business** (49%) and daily work (28%) - activities highly sensitive to flood-related losses and local economic disruption. Team leader observations further suggested that food access constraints were more severe in communities without nearby markets, particularly in more isolated locations such as Tratara.

Main barriers to food access, by % of KIs*



Main sources of food, by % of KIs*



*select multiple, the total value may exceed 100%

EDUCATION

85% of KIs reported that **school supplies** are an urgent education need

Education was identified as a priority need by 25% of key informants (KIs). Reported needs centred on practical **barriers to school participation**, led by **school supplies** (85%), alongside support to **re-enrol children who are not currently attending** (47%) and **ID/documentation for registration** (24%) - suggesting both material gaps and administrative constraints for affected households. These findings align with the *Instituto Nacional de Gestão e Redução do Risco de Desastres* (INGD) reporting that **flooding impacted 12 schools across Metuge District**, affecting **22,844 students district-wide**.⁴ Field observations also highlighted a specific operational constraint in Bandar, where **one school reportedly lacks an on-site water source** and relies on neighbouring households for water - an important issue given World Food Programme (WFP) -supported **school meals that require water for food preparation**.

WATER, SANITATION & HYGIENE (WASH)

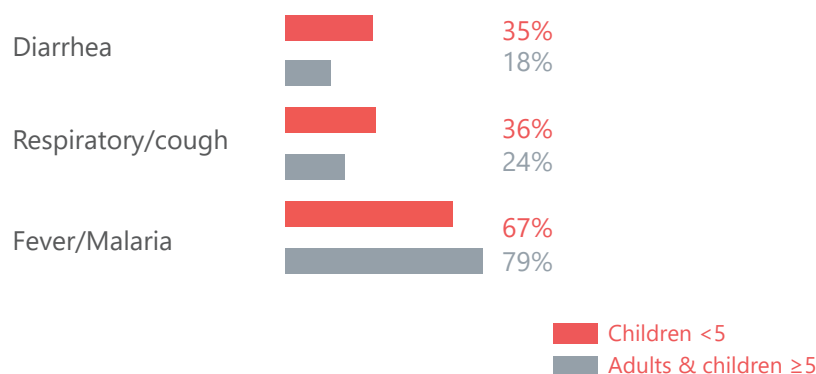
43% of KIs reported that **latrines/toilets are very damaged or destroyed**

WASH was identified as a priority need by 15% of key informants (KIs), but reported indicators point to **significant WASH risks**. While 43% of KIs reported that roughly **a quarter of affected households have very limited access to clean water** for drinking, cooking and hygiene, sanitation concerns appear more acute and widespread. KIs most commonly reported that **latrines/toilets are shared by too many people** (48%), **very damaged or destroyed** (43%), and **not functioning** (42%). Field observations reinforce these findings, noting **limited potable water points**, some reliance on temporary rivers, and **widespread sanitation degradation**, with latrines destroyed or filled with floodwater and a small share of open defecation.

HEALTH & NUTRITION

Health was identified as a priority need by 5% of key informants (KIs). Most KIs reported **no recent illness among adults and children over five** (62%) or **among children under five** (60%) in the two weeks prior to data collection. However, among KIs who did report illness, **fever/malaria** and **respiratory symptoms** were most commonly mentioned, alongside **diarrhoeal illness**, suggesting ongoing health risks for a subset of households. In terms of service availability, a **local health post reportedly exists but is not yet operational**; communities instead reported relying on a **mobile health brigade** from neighboring cities, which visits on Thursdays.

Three most common illnesses among communities reporting the presence of any illness in the 2 weeks prior to data collection, by age group, by % of KIs*



*select multiple, the total value may exceed 100%

PROTECTION

46%

of KIs reported **disputes over land access** as the most common driver of

Protection was not identified as a top three priority by the assessed KIs, but **several concerns** were still reported. While 12% of KIs indicated no protection issues, **theft/looting** (32%), **armed conflict and violence** (22%), and **tensions between communities** (19%) were the most commonly cited risks. Social tensions were primarily attributed to **disputes over access to land** (46%) and **disputes over services or humanitarian assistance** (35%). At the same time, community leaders generally described **relations between IDPs, returnees and host communities as stable**, noting that long-standing displaced households are largely integrated - suggesting that tensions are less about identity groups and more linked to resource pressure.

ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED POPULATIONS

Key informants indicated a clear **preference for in-kind assistance** as the most useful modality for affected households (56%), followed by **cash assistance** (32%). This suggests that, in the current context, affected communities may prioritise **immediate material support** to address urgent gaps, while cash programming may still be relevant where markets are accessible and able to supply basic goods. Community leaders reportedly highlighted **shelter/latrines/water as immediate needs**, especially for **host community households** who did not receive IOM support.

Preferred modalities of assistance, by % of KIs

In-kind		56%
Cash		32%
Services		7%

METHODOLOGICAL OVERVIEW & LIMITATIONS

The Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) teams of Norwegian Refugee Council and Save the Children conducted 181 structured, face-to-face key informant interviews (KIs) in flood-affected communities of Metuge District (Cabo Delgado) between 23 and 29 March 2026. The assessment covered affected locations linked to Metuge Sede and Mize administrative posts. The survey was deployed via KoBo Collect and used the Area of Knowledge (AoK) approach, purposively selecting key informants (e.g., community leaders, local authorities and service providers) based on their knowledge of the shock and priority needs. KIs were complemented by a semi-structured team leader observation grid, with support from shelter and WASH specialists where available. This qualitative component helped contextualize the impact of the shock, triangulate key findings, and provide detailed insights into access constraints, shelter conditions, WASH infrastructure, and the availability and quality of essential services such as markets, schools, and health facilities.

The scope of the RNA is limited by the rapid response requirements of the RRM and the need to operate within the resources available from partners. Furthermore, access constraints and poor road conditions during the rainy season limited full geographic coverage of some planned areas. Therefore, the findings of the RNA are indicative rather than representative. Additionally, the questionnaire was designed to prioritize only the most essential indicators for each sector, which constrains the depth of the data collected. While the survey captures general living conditions across households, it does not explore differences between individual members or intra-household dynamics, including power relations related to gender, age, or disability. Please refer to the [Terms of Reference](#) and the [Dataset and Analysis](#) for more details.

Endnotes

- 1 RRM Mozambique. RRM_NRC_Metu_18032026. March 2026 (for access, please contact NRC Emergency Response Manager, Issufo Muhamade, at issufo.muhamade@nrc.no)
- 2 Republic of Mozambique National Institute for Disaster Management (INGD). [Dashboard on the Impact of Floods February 13-17, 2026](#) (Cabo Delgado Province / Metuge District). Supported by UNICEF. Accessed [01 April 2026]; dashboard last updated Apr 01 2026.
- 3 RRM_NRC_Metu_18032026.
- 4 ING D). [Dashboard on the Impact of Floods February 13-17, 2026](#) (Cabo Delgado Province / Metuge District).

ABOUT THE RRM

The Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) in Northern Mozambique, composed of two consortia—one led by Solidarités International with Action Contre la Faim, A Fundação para o Desenvolvimento da Comunidade, Acted, and IMPACT, and the other led by the Norwegian Refugee Council with Ayuda en Acción—provides emergency assistance to populations affected by conflict, epidemics, or located in newly accessible areas.

For more up-to-date information on RRM alerts and interventions, please use the link below to access the RRM Dashboard:

[RRM Dashboard](#)

ABOUT REACH

REACH Initiative facilitates the development of information tools and products that enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery and development contexts. The methodologies used by REACH include primary data collection and in-depth analysis, and all activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. REACH is a joint initiative of IMPACT Initiatives, ACTED and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research - Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT).

COOPERATING



FUNDED

