

FACTSHEET

Hope dries up? Women and Girls coping with Drought and Climate Change in Mozambique



NUMBER OF PEOPLE LIVING IN HOMOINE & FUNHALOURO

178,455 people



HOUSE ECONOMY ANALYSIS

Conducted in the interior of Gaza and Inhambane Provinces in February 2016.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

12 GROUPS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS with a total of 75 PARTICIPANTS in October 2016 in Homoine & Funhalouro

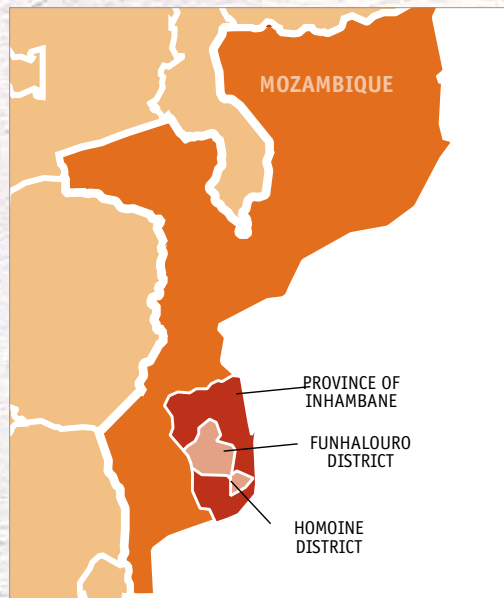
HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

- 45% are under the age of 18.
- 56% of the population is female.
- Before the drought 29% of the population were living in severe poverty. With the drought income is dropping.
- Migration to urban centers is increasing.
- 43% of the population require urgent food assistance.

Sources: FewsNET, MOZAMBIQUE Food Security Outlook October 2016 to May 2017. Livelihood Zone MZ22.

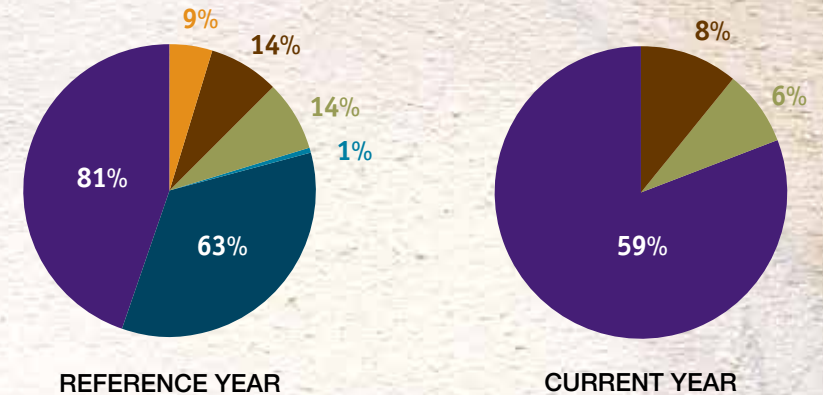


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KEY HOUSEHOLD NEEDS

The graphs below demonstrate, for very poor households, the comparison between total food income met during a normal (reference) year, and during the current drought years.* As a result, more than half of the families do not have enough to eat. The drought has had a very significant and critical impact on the poorest households.



- food aid/safety nets
- casual labour
- pre-harvest labour
- livestock sales
- crop sales
- crops
- milk production
- charcoal & beer sales

*In order to calculate the total food income, the graphs assume that all available income during the year is dedicated to purchasing kilocalories from staple food.

Source: COSACA Household Economy Analysis, February 2016

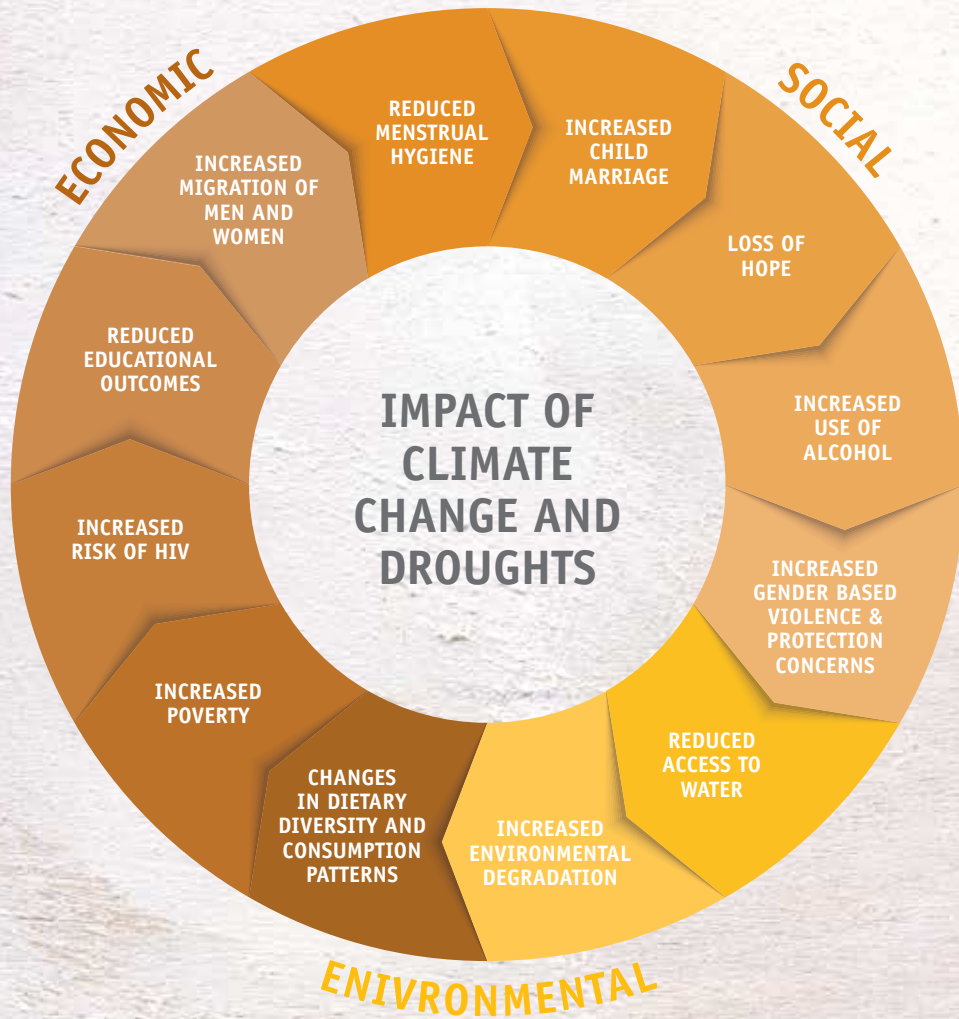


GIRLS, WOMEN & FEMALE HEADED HOUSEHOLDS

Unequal power relations, gender inequalities and discrimination mean that women and girls are often hardest hit during a crisis and will take longer to recover.



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KEY COPING STRATEGIES FOR POOR HOUSEHOLDS

Households respond to droughts and other disasters in various ways that help to minimize the negative effects on their lives and livelihoods. The following practices represent the main coping strategies:

INCOME-ORIENTED COPING STRATEGIES

The poor and the very poor try to increase self-employment activities like the sale of charcoal.

FOOD-ORIENTED COPING STRATEGIES

Reduction in the number of meals consumed per day down to one for the very poor and poor. The very poor, poor and middle increase wild food consumption well beyond the level consumed in normal years.

EXPENDITURE-ORIENTED COPING STRATEGIES

All wealth groups shift expenditure from non-food purchases like clothes, transport, telephone and alcoholic drinks to staple food purchases. The overwhelming majority of the poor and very poor groups reported that they drop expenditure on non food items by almost 100%.

NON-FOOD/INCOME COPING STRATEGIES

Households in the first place seek medical assistance from the relevant government and non-governmental actors, but also purchase medicines and veterinary drugs on the market, the more so when there is no assistance.

Source: HEA



WOMEN AND GIRLS ARE FACING SIGNIFICANT THREATS:

REDUCED ACCESS TO WATER



Women and girls are now spending up to six hours per day in search of water, three times as much as prior to the drought. As a result, younger girls and adolescents are being pulled from school to assist their parents or other family members with searching for and transporting water. In areas with no nearby boreholes or traditional wells, women are collecting water from natural springs, also used by animals. During the water collection activities, girls are facing increased risks of confrontations with wild animals and gender-based violence.

MIGRATION



To cope with the seasonal nature of production in Inhambane, men have traditionally migrated in search of seasonal work on farms and mines in South Africa. However, in this drought cycle many men have not returned to their household at the close of seasonal work nor sent remittances to cover household expenses. There is also a new trend for women to migrate, leaving behind children in the care of grandparents. When asked, 70% of men and women state their migration is due to lack of food, drought conditions or lack of water.

PSYCHOSOCIAL



The situation is particularly hard for teenage girls who lack the experience and knowledge to come up with strategies to protect themselves and their children from hunger. They are fully focused on surviving and have no contingency plans in place. The drought already has a very negative impact on the psychological wellbeing of young women.

MENSTRUAL HYGIENE



Access to sanitary supplies for menstrual hygiene has also become a challenge.

The traditionally used absorbent plant material is now scarcer, and as food and cash reserves in households have dwindled women's ability to purchase menstrual rags has been problematic. Many women have now resorted to using other, harsher, plant matter or packed sand to catch their menstrual blood.

FOOD



More than 90% of female-headed households cannot cover their daily food needs as harvests have completely failed. Up to 80% of the families are reducing their meals to only one or two daily rations. Many families have to survive on wild fruits and leaves they collect in the bush. From September 2016 onwards, at least 62,915 children are expected to be acutely malnourished within the next 6 months.

INCREASED CHILD MARRIAGE



Prior to the drought, more than 50% of girls in the province of Inhambane married before the age of 18 years. With the drought CARE is now seeing an increase in child marriage, with families aiming to reduce the number of dependents in the family or cover expenses through the payment of a bride price.

ALCOHOL



Prior to the drought, use of alcohol by men and women in the district of Funhalouro, Inhambane was widespread and increased vulnerability of poor households as it undermines the productive capacity and **increases the risk of Gender Based Violence and HIV.**

Women interviewed for this study openly talked of increasing brewing activities to generate income. Others indicated beer was being given to children to offset hunger.

PROTECTION



Ever since food has become painfully scarce in Mozambique, many girls are increasingly exposed to sexual and gender-based violence. **Girls as young as 11 or 12 years have been lured away from water collection points by older men in exchange for food stocks or money.** Some of the girls discovered later that they are pregnant and are consequently stigmatized by the community and family. Other risks include continued sexual and physical abuse, poor nutrition and increased chance of maternal death.



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ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION



Especially women increasingly engage in charcoal production. Women and girls clear reed beds and forests to generate income. **Many families affected by the drought survived through eating wild fruits and berries due to the lack of other food.** However, in some areas they have now depleted the resources.

HIV/AIDS



1/3 of all people with HIV/AIDS live in Southern Africa.

Many people living with HIV/AIDS have increased difficulty to access treatment. Furthermore, infection rates in HIV-endemic rural areas **increase by around 11% with every drought, especially as women have to resort to engaging in survival sex.**

LIMITATIONS:

No official data is currently available on the specific impact this El Nino induced drought has had on the lives of women and girls. However anecdotal information collected from key partners including government actors, UN agencies as well as from a field visit to affected districts during the week of October 17-21, 2016 raises concerns that substantial inroads made to address key gender related issues such as early marriage, school attendance and delayed pregnancy have been lost as a result of this drought.