

Adaptive social protection in Mozambique: Improvements in emergency response¹

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Mozambique is the third African country most exposed to climate events—58 per cent of the country's population and 37 per cent of its gross domestic product (GDP) are exposed to two or more natural hazards. In this scenario, the role of social protection is extremely relevant, since households covered by social protection systems have greater capacity and resilience to deal with extreme events, including, for example, faster recovery of productive assets, maintenance of basic consumption levels during crises and continuous investment in human capital after a shock occurs.

In this context, Mozambique possesses a relatively advanced legal and institutional framework for emergency response. Three strategic documents can be highlighted that align the area's priorities: the II National Strategy for Basic Social Security (ENSSB II 2016-2024), the 2013-2025 National Strategy for Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation and the 2017–2030 Master Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction. All of these documents mention the improvement in calamity response through social protection programmes aimed at improving household resilience against emergencies and climate change; or even highlight the importance of strengthening linkages and synergies among government institutions involved in emergency response, especially the National Institute for Disaster Management and Risk Reduction (INGD), the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Action (MGCAS) and the National Social Action Institute (INAS-IP). Both play important roles in implementing programmes and responses for people affected by hazards.

Some concrete examples and lessons learned on the use of adaptive social protection programmes against the occurrence of external shocks in the past years stand out: the crisis caused by the fuel subsidies reform in 2016; the response to the El Niño drought in 2017/2018; the Idai and Kenneth cyclones post-emergency assistance in 2019; and the response to the COVID-19 crisis which started in 2020. The Post-Emergency Direct Social Support Programme (PASD-PE) has gained strength and a better structure since 2017, after its use for drought response, significantly widening cooperation between the social action field and INGD through sharing of data regarding beneficiaries and affected households. Moreover, beneficiaries started being registered in the PASD-PE through the Beneficiary Identification System (SIB), a computerised tool with better developed digital resources. Regarding payments, PASD-PE

Lean Season marked the first experience with outsourcing of payments when the government partnered with financial service providers, such as banks and mobile wallet payment companies, to carry out money transfers.

In 2019, PASD-PE was adapted to respond to rapid-onset shocks as a response to the Idai cyclone in Sofala and Manica provinces. Some activities worth highlighting include: (i) the inclusion of households that already benefit from social protection into emergency responses, allowing for faster action to assist vulnerable and affected households; (ii) the sharing of beneficiary data between INGD and INAS-IP, (iii) starting to use the digital payment application (OPA), developed together with the World Bank, for INAS-IP's money transfers. Moreover, PASD-PE Idai marked the first digital payment pilot using mobile wallets (M-PESA), in partnership with World Food Programme (WFP). Finally, in 2020, the COVID-19 Social Protection Response Plan marked a large-scale a PASD-PE expansion to reach around 1.6 million households. The Government of Mozambique's response featured a more significant interinstitutional collaboration, primarily between MGCAS, the Ministry of Economy and Finance and the National Social Security Institute, mostly in the prioritisation of geographic areas, including urban and peri-urban areas most affected by the pandemic and identifying informal workers so that they can receive the emergency relief benefit.

Some of the most relevant lessons learned from adaptive social protection in Mozambique include: the evolution of programme implementation tools and means, mainly PASD-PE, which has better targeting methods and established registration and payment means; enhanced institutional arrangements for increasing coverage of shock-responsive programmes; and better use of different financing sources, mainly contingency funds, such as the Contingency Emergency Response Component (CERC).

Reference:

Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Action, World Food Programme, and World Bank. 2021. Dialogue on Social Resilience Report. 2nd Edition. Maputo: Government of Mozambique, 12-13.

Note:

1. This One Pager is part of a series of publications on shock-responsive social protection in Mozambique, developed with support from the WFP and financed by the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO).