

Mozambique

Mozambique, on the east coast of Southern Africa, is economically very vulnerable to climate variability: about 75 per cent of its population depends on rain-fed agriculture. Due to climate change, however, annual rainfall is expected to drop significantly, increasing the frequency and severity of droughts. At the same time the country is likely to suffer more (severe) floods. For rainfall is expected to occur less often, yet might be far more intense. An expected sea-level rise will worsen things further: it will cause severe drainage problems for many of the country's rivers, draining into the Indian Ocean.

At present, Mozambique already experiences regular cyclones, droughts and floods. There is a loss of human lives, crops and property, food insecurity, disease and displacement of people. In the face of climate change, however, there is also growing recognition the country needs to adapt, and produce or copy strategies for reducing the impacts.

The Red Cross is one of Mozambique's pioneers in developing community-based activities related to climate change and risk reduction. In 2005 it initiated a programme supported by the Netherlands Red Cross in which sensitization is key. Informing and educating vulnerable communities in the disaster-prone province of Gaza, but also targeting its own staff and volunteers, the Red Cross raises awareness of the realities of climate change. It motivates farmers, for example, to think about and prepare for ever less predictable rainfall patterns, as these influence planting and choice of crop. Internally, the programme will strengthen Red Cross institutionally, equipping it to anticipate, prepare for and respond to climate risks and integrate the climate dimension into other existing programmes.

The Climate Centre's contribution

Since the Mozambique Red Cross is a pioneer in a country where the issue of climate change is new to many, the Climate Centre has especially helped in obtaining climate change knowledge and best practice from other countries. It helped the National Society build up contacts with national researchers and universities to ensure scientific support, and it prepared a visit by the Netherlands Red Cross to Mozambique to support the National Society in developing a draft document for its project Disaster Preparedness and Climate Change.

When a Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment was conducted in Gaza in July, the Climate Centre contributed to its set up. The Centre advised on designing awareness tools such as audio-visual materials and activities to integrate climate change into existing programmes on health and water and sanitation, for example.

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Donor	Netherlands Red Cross (from its national Disaster Preparedness Fund)
Partner organization	Mozambique Red Cross