

RESPONDING TO SANITATION NEEDS

Improved sanitation is one of the most pressing needs during a displacement crisis, and it is essential to prevent different diseases, promote good health and hygiene while encouraging development in the communities. According to the reports by WASH Cluster, as of February 2022, 73% of the surveyed households in Cabo Delgado province do not have a household latrine. The lack of household latrines has led to cholera outbreaks and transmission of other water-borne diseases in the province and increases the risk of Gender-Based Violence (GBV). The use of communal latrines generates challenges in the community on their use and maintenance. Household latrines allow the population to have better living conditions, improve their hygiene and overall health, and provide greater privacy to women and children.

IOM WASH aims to provide life-saving, long-term and sustainable access to sanitation, whilst promoting improved hygiene practices. IOM and its partners constructed individual bath units and latrines in several relocation sites, such as Saul Host Community and Extension, where families displaced because of insecurity in Quissanga and Palma districts, in some cases even multiple times, have been recently relocated from a transitional site.



Vasia and two of her children stand by their newly constructed household latrine. © IOM 2022

The allocation of plots by IOM Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) teams, in collaboration with the Mozambican government, provides space for families to have a shelter unit, a latrine and a bath unit. Families were trained by artisans to build their own latrines, thus gaining vocational skills and sanitation knowledge. The latrines and bath units have been built using local materials easily accessible to the community. In addition, the intervention has been complemented by hygiene sessions on how to perform an appropriate maintenance and keep hygienic conditions.

The improvement of the conditions has been much appreciated by families, such as the family of Vasia Assara, displaced from Quissanga district and now residing in Saul with her husband and 6 children. She arrived in Metuge district at the beginning of 2020 and was relocated in the transitional site of Cuaia, where communal latrines were used. In Saul, where IOM has built emergency shelters for the relocation of 170 families from Cuaia temporary site, Vasia and her family were provided with their own shelter and family latrine. **"The family's privacy, as well as our hygiene, has increased thanks to having our own latrine, as we can take care of it and clean it, keep it safe"**, said Vasia. Family latrines also decrease the risk of GBV, decrease the number of unaccompanied children around sanitation facilities, and enable women and girls of menstruating age to manage their periods safely and with dignity. **"Now I can have privacy and be safe when I have my period. Before I didn't, and I had to hide it"** shared Vasia.

RESPONDING TO WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH) AND HEALTH

Even when water and sanitation services are available in the community, hygiene promotion is essential to improve the overall health of individuals and communities. In northern Mozambique there are a range of endemic diseases related to the lack of WASH services, and lack of improved hygiene practices. Cholera and other diarrheal diseases are among the main causes of child mortality, especially in conditions where children are malnourished. Therefore, prevention and preparedness through hygiene promotion in coordination with the partners and the government is imperative.

In this context, IOM teams are increasing their efforts through different community engagement mechanisms with the aim of promoting hygiene in resettlement and transitional sites, providing communities with the necessary information to improve their hygiene practices and promote behavioural change. The approaches used for these hygiene promotion activities, carried out in the district of Metuge, Cabo Delgado, are door-to-door household visits, theatre performances and painting murals in schools showcasing hygiene awareness messages. The activities were very well received by the neighbours of Metuge, who engaged with the theatre performances and had fun while learning, which benefits mental health.

Denis is a resident of Saul and Unidade Host Community, Metuge, where he works as an IOM activist, after arriving in April 2020 with his family from Quissanga, fleeing from insecurity. In Saul, Denis was part of the team that carried out awareness raising and theatre activities.



Denis and Denis and his nephew in one of the communal areas of Saul Extension. © IOM 2022

"The community was very receptive and I, as a resident of the neighborhood, have seen a positive change in the community that shows they have internalized the messages."

Having received specific training, among his daily tasks as an activist, Denis visits families and teaches them about personal hygiene proper handwashing with soap, appropriate latrine and bath units use and maintenance as well as how to build tippy taps (simple handwashing devices) with local materials easily available for the community.

Under the project "Strengthening IOM's COVID-19 life-saving response in humanitarian settings", funded by the German government, IOM and its partners implement activities to support people affected by insecurity in northern Mozambique to access essential health and WASH services and COVID-19, ensuring a better quality of life and well-being.



A theatre company formed by 11 young people from Ibo Island present youths performs interactive theatre shows to promote hygiene, health and social issues in thirteen sites in Metuge district, Cabo Delgado. © IOM 2022