

Executive summary

This report is part of a ProVention Consortium five-country¹ review of lessons learned from recovery after major natural disasters analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of recovery assistance from governments, donors, and civil society after the disasters occurred. Mozambique offers an example of a post-conflict country faced with major natural disasters. It also offers an example of recovery in an extremely poor and primarily subsistence livelihood population, but in a country favored by donors and receiving substantial amounts of both relief and recovery assistance. The review provides an overview of the recovery processes and highlights livelihoods and agriculture.

As part of the review, a Mozambican agency, the Associação de Nutrição e Segurança Alimentar (ANSA) carried out a community survey in three locations to assess the impact of recovery on communities, their livelihoods, and the roles played by local government and agencies.

Background to natural disasters in Mozambique

The World Bank notes that natural disasters, along with the social and economic impact of HIV/AIDS, are one of the main risks to the achievement of Mozambique's poverty reduction strategy. From 1965 to 1998, there were twelve major floods, nine major droughts and four major cyclone disasters. Following the end of the civil war in 1992, the government of Mozambique, the Mozambique Red Cross, national Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), and international agencies moved away from the war-time relief mode. Development rather than emergency response became the priority. Agencies scaled down disaster response capacities that had become financially unsustainable. In 1999, a new national Government policy on disaster management was promulgated that created the National Disaster Management Institute (Instituto Nacional de Gestão de Calamidades (INGC) with an emphasis on coordination rather than delivery.

Mozambique is one of the poorest countries in the world, listed 170th out of 173 in the UN Human Development Index. Sixty-nine percent of the population lives below the established poverty line of US\$ 0.40 per day. A 17-year civil war and an extended period of attack and destabilization by South Africa in defense of the *apartheid* system resulted in at least one million deaths and devastated many parts of the country and its infrastructure. Over one third of the population was displaced at some point, and 1.7 million lived as refugees in neighboring countries. Following a peace agreement in 1992, elections were held in 1994 and the UN supervised the return of refugees, internally displaced people, and the demobilization of 92,000 ex-combatants.

Since the war ended, the country has maintained a high growth rate averaging 8 percent, partly due to the catching up process once land was accessible, as well as the development of substantial reconstruction projects, and mega projects such as the Mozal aluminum plant. Mozambique has received continuous high levels of international donor support and has a substantial dependency on foreign assistance, with more than 50 percent of public spending and about two thirds of public investment coming from external sources. A significant factor bearing on the response to and recovery from the floods of 2000 and 2001 has been Mozambique's positive relationship with its donors. The Government's Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty (PARPA) envisages reducing the proportion of GDP spent on priority social areas during 2004 and 2005.

In February 2000, Mozambique and its neighboring countries were battered by a succession of tropical storms. Heavy and persistent rain across Southern Africa resulted (for the first recorded time) in the simultaneous flooding of all of the major river systems that flow into the sea through Mozambique. Seven

¹ The five countries reviewed are: Bangladesh, Honduras, India, Mozambique, and Turkey.

hundred people died, 650,000 were displaced, and 4.5 million were affected, which equals about a quarter of Mozambique's population. A massive national and international relief operation avoided greater loss of life with 16,500 people rescued by helicopter and aircraft, and over 29,000 rescued by boats.

The 2001 floods mainly affected the central provinces of Mozambique and were caused by prolonged and intensive rains at the end of 2000 and in early 2001. About 500,000 people were affected, of which 223,000 were displaced. Agencies were better prepared to respond to the 2001 floods because the systems and contacts established in 2000 were in place.

Policy

Mozambique's recovery from the 2000 and 2001 floods took place in the context of the country's wider reconstruction and development following the end of the war in 1992. The 1999 National Policy on Disaster Management marked a shift from a reactive to a proactive approach to disaster management aimed at developing a culture of prevention. The national policy mainly concentrates on disaster response and preparedness as opposed to prevention and mitigation. The INGC's role in post-disaster recovery involves mobilizing resources and ensuring linkages between the emergency and rehabilitation phases and keeping the ministerial level Coordinating Council for Disaster Management (CCGC) informed of rehabilitation activities. National disaster risk management policy has yet to have the legal backing of a national disaster management plan. A draft plan is in the pipeline but awaits parliamentary approval. As a result, the INGC lacks a legal framework for action.

Prior to the 2000 floods many agencies had allowed disaster management and mitigation to drop out of their strategy and planning documents. The floods resulted in an updating of their strategy documents and a renewed commitment to disaster preparedness, response, and mitigation. However, there is little specific coverage in these policies for recovery strategies.

The government of Mozambique's objectives and strategies for recovery after both the 2000 and 2001 floods were similar. They aimed to move as quickly as possible from the relief mode to a recovery agenda. Recovery was seen by the government as an opportunity to move parts of the country forward, acting as an engine for development. Recovery should not merely restore the previous level of development but promote activities that will lead to reducing the vulnerability of the population and infrastructure to future disasters. In general, recovery took place in line with and in support of national reconstruction and development policies.

Systems

The overall assessments of recovery needs were made rapidly after the floods by the World Bank and the government in order to shift from emergency relief towards preparing for a donor conference. More detailed assessments for program planning purposes were undertaken by a wide range of ministries and agencies at national and local levels. It is not possible to generalize about these assessments, but there is a sense that beneficiary participation in assessment and program design was not always given a high priority. Recovery responses were generally managed and coordinated by the line ministries with the oversight of the CCGC.

Most post-flood recovery was undertaken within the framework of existing development programs. On a practical level, as the community survey found, this meant that reconstruction could be facilitated using standard ministry drawings and specifications for schools, health posts/centers, and hospitals.

The rate of implementation of reconstruction was a cause of concern to the government. It attributed delays in implementing recovery programs to donor requirements for such things as tendering, drawing up project documents, and developing budget mechanisms. It certainly seems that some donors have yet to institute systems that could facilitate the rapid implementation of recovery programs. The speed of recovery implementation has also been related to capacity and bureaucracy within the government. A number of agencies, including the World Bank, used a reprogramming or reallocation approach to facilitate their speed of response.

The community survey in three of the flood-affected areas found that coordination between the local authorities and external agencies was seen as one of the positive aspects of the post-emergency period by all key informants. However, its success depended on the philosophies of the external agencies and their commitment to coordination measures and not necessarily the organizational ability of the local government.

The community survey found that beneficiaries were often poorly informed about recovery plans and activities. Nobody in the communities visited was aware of the full recovery picture. This lack of information led to a sense of powerlessness and dependency. There was a general lack of transparency in the government and among NGOs about budgets, funding, and planning. Community participation in recovery remained rudimentary and generally consisted of providing labor, participation in committees, and compliance with a set of rules decided by external agents.

Resources

The International Reconstruction Conference held in Rome on May 3-4, 2000 was the key mechanism for raising funds for Mozambique's post-flood recovery. It was highly successful, raising pledges over the appeal's total of US\$449.5 million. There were a number of reasons for the extraordinarily high level of donor response, including the pre-existing level of donor support and commitment to Mozambique and the credibility of the appeal document. The government's rapid post-conference follow up and quick signing of legally binding agreements with the donors to firm up their pledges was also important.

In the appeal, the government stressed its commitment to maintain macroeconomic stability. Recovery expenditure was included in an additional government budget, which was separate from the main budget, to avoid imbalances with ongoing programs. The government aimed to make the impact of recovery income and expenditure on the national budget neutral. The negative economic impacts of the floods were offset by the positive response to the donor's conference. By 2001 the country had returned to high annual levels of GDP growth, and the economic impact of the 2000 and 2001 disasters was not seen as a major economic factor in the medium-term.

The World Bank issued a Flood Emergency Recovery project loan of US\$30 million after the 2000 floods to help Mozambique maintain its macroeconomic stability by supporting a higher level of imports necessary for relief and recovery activities. According to the World Bank's assessment, supported by the government, the loan achieved its main objective of helping to stabilize the economy after the floods.

In spite of growing concern about levels of corruption in Mozambique, there do not appear to have been any major diversions of recovery funds, and generally donors have been satisfied with the use of funds.

Impact and livelihoods

The community survey found that a very positive feature of Mozambique's recovery work has been the rehabilitation and reconstruction of damaged infrastructure. The funding available through the recovery programs made it possible not only to repair or replace existing infrastructure, usually to higher standards, but also to build new facilities where none existed before.

Agencies have shown mixed sensitivity to livelihoods in recovery programs. The community survey found that agriculturally-based rural communities with low levels of capital investment or agricultural inputs were generally well served by livelihood strategies that were restored rapidly after the floods.

The government and agencies generally avoided the issue of asset depletion involving larger capital items such as cattle and fisheries equipment. This has meant that some rural communities are significantly more vulnerable than they were before the floods. Asset replacement was generally carried out through associations and not to individual households. It is not clear whether the associations will continue to exist in the long-term or were merely convenient distribution mechanisms. Several successful examples of cash grants for rehabilitation were identified including a major USAID project that distributed US\$9.7 million to the female heads of 106,000 rural families.

The community survey found that post-emergency training and capacity building was minimal, with very few organizations working with the communities to identify existing skills for re-skilling, marketing opportunities, or alternative income sources.

After the 2000 floods, over 40,000 families were resettled to less flood-prone areas. This program raised a number of issues, including the distance some communities found themselves from their land. In some situations, there was tension with host communities. There is a need for further study of the impact of the resettlement program.

The community survey found that the provision of housing during the recovery period was one of the most positive interventions for affected populations, although standards, methods, and levels of assistance varied widely.

The recognition of the position of women by external agencies during recovery appears to have led to some changes in gender relations with, for example, more active participation by women in community groups. Using good practice, implementing agencies insisted that housing and land be registered so that women's rights were recognized. This was an important first step towards increasing women's habitational security.

Recovery plans also included provision for improving disaster response and mitigation. However at the district level, there has been little real capacity building to support contingency planning and preparedness, to build on positive experiences of coordination in the recovery phase.

Conclusions and lessons learned

Remarkably few evaluations have been done of the recovery period, so it is not possible to make a definitive judgment on the effectiveness and impact of the recovery processes after the 2000 floods. However, Mozambique's recovery from the 2000 floods broadly appears to have been effective and generally well handled. The 2000 floods in Mozambique demonstrated clearly that it is possible to make an impact and carry out extensive recovery activities when the disaster is high profile and the amount of money donated to the affected populations is large.

Recovery programs provided an opportunity for investments in upgraded services and infrastructure. Evidence from the community survey illustrated many ways in which some affected populations have been assisted, albeit somewhat passively, to resume their livelihoods. On the negative side, asset depletion has been neglected in the post-emergency period. Increased social capital was the most important positive aspect for affected populations. There are indications that some of the new social structures created - associations, community committees and resettlement areas - will strengthen the safety net for future disasters, but it is too early to state categorically that this will be a lasting effect of the post-emergency interventions.

Breaking the isolation of the rural communities through the provision of roads and bridges may be judged at a later date to be the single most important, long-term achievement of the recovery interventions. The importance of infrastructure construction and rehabilitation should not be underestimated when preparing contingency plans and developing a set of interventions to be considered post-emergency.

In terms of Mozambique's development of its disaster preparedness and mitigation plan, much will depend on the level of commitment given to it by the government and by donors. The importance of this area is shown when a devastating disaster (of the kind experienced in 2000) occurs, but institutional memories can be short and other priorities may dominate, particularly in economic and political areas. It is also a question of whether disaster management issues can be maintained as priorities when government budgets are likely to be under increasing pressure.

Recommendations

1. There were a number of positive aspects of the 2000 and 2001 flood recovery programs, as well as some things that could be improved. Based on this experience, the INGC working with and through the Disaster Management Technical Council should develop good practice guidelines and codes for recovery work that can, in the future, inform contingency planning as well as disaster recovery work. These could include:
 - Good practice in terms of intensive labor-based infrastructure works for disaster mitigation
 - Where possible, the use of local rather than international contractors in reconstruction programs
 - Developing good practice in gender equality approaches
 - Developing good practice in relation to the recovery of complex livelihoods
 - Appropriate seeds and tools policies
 - Cash compensation schemes, building on the experience of the USAID resettlement grant scheme
 - Land tenure issues in relation to resettlement
 - Standards for housing
2. The ProVention Consortium should encourage governments, international and national agencies, and donors to increase levels of accountability and transparency through broader use of independent reviews and evaluations of recovery work. Future recovery programs after major national disasters should be the subject of system-wide evaluations, including donor performance, in order to learn lessons and increase accountability.
3. Increased evaluative work, as suggested above, should be used to strengthen civil society by enhancing Mozambican capacity for independent research and analysis.
4. Given the sensitivities and complexities associated with resettlement, it is important that a thorough and independent participatory evaluation is undertaken of the resettlement program so that lessons can be learned for the future.
5. Government, donors, and agencies should ensure that all major development programs include, as appropriate, disaster preparedness, mitigation, and contingency elements.
6. There should be an increased emphasis by government, donors, and agencies on building capacity for disaster management at the district level. This will involve more sharing of information on budgets and planning.
7. Donors should ensure that reallocations and reprogramming arrangements are tracked and evaluated.