



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





## Acknowledgements

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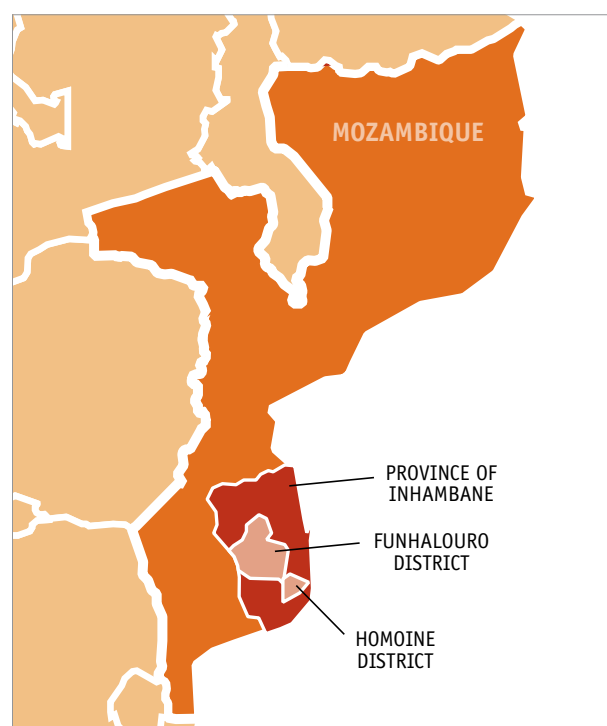
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# EFFECTS OF THE DROUGHT: AN OVERVIEW

In Mozambique the current El Niño induced drought, the worst in 35 years,<sup>1</sup> has led to significant changes in dietary diversity and consumption patterns particularly among women and adolescent girls. During the onset of the drought, 91.9% of the female-headed households did not have adequate food provisions generated in the 4-month agricultural season to meet household consumption needs beyond 11 months. As such, up to 80% of households in the drought zone were forced to only consume two meals per day and 6% of households consume food only once per day.<sup>2</sup> In response to the drought households have reported a reduction in the number of meals per day down to one for the very poor and poor households. The very poor, poor and middle income households increase wild food consumption well beyond the level consumed in normal years. From September 2016 onwards, at least 62,915 children are expected to be acutely malnourished (within the next 6 months) in the 6 drought-affected provinces of Mozambique.<sup>4</sup>

For many women under the age of twenty, the current drought is the first catastrophic event in which they must provide food and income for themselves and their children. Within the drought-affected communities, most of the younger adolescent mothers interviewed were



unable to identify short, medium or long-term strategies to address their basic needs. These women were fully focused on meeting consumption shortfalls within an immediate 24-hour window and had no contingencies in place to address longer-term shortfalls.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Southern African Regional Interagency Standing Committee (RIASCO), October 2016

<sup>2</sup> CARE, PROSAN Baseline Report, 2015

<sup>3</sup> CARE, El Niño Resilience Study, 2016

<sup>4</sup> FewsNET, MOZAMBIQUE Food Security Outlook October 2016 to May 2017

Prior to the drought, women spent up to 2 hours per day collecting water for household consumption. The extended nature of the drought has meant women have had to spend in excess of 6 hours searching for and transporting water to their homes. 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 risk of confrontations with wild animals and gender-based violence.

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 so that many women have now resorted to using other, harsher, plant matter or packed sand to catch their menstrual blood. Time requirements for water collection have also reduced the amount of water they are transporting home and limited the amount of water available for personal hygiene. This has forced many women to bath in close proximity to the water points and away from private spaces.<sup>5</sup>

## PROFILE OF MOZAMBIQUE

Mozambique is the third most-at-risk African country to climate change and related impacts including cyclones, floods and droughts. These disasters cause substantial loss of life, crop damage and destruction of crucial infrastructure, as has been documented in Mozambique's climate action plan submitted to the UN climate change convention.<sup>6</sup> They also routinely disrupt social services and consistent participation in educational programs.<sup>7</sup> As almost 95% of rural households in the country practice low productivity rain-fed agriculture many communities experience seasonal food insecurity and nutrition shortfalls during non-harvest seasons.<sup>8</sup>

The current 2015/2016 drought is affecting more than 1.4 million<sup>9</sup> people who have few household-level reserves built up.<sup>10</sup> Following the Red Alert declaration by the Government of Mozambique on April 12, 2016 a UN funding appeal of US\$204.3 million was issued to cover emergency needs of affected communities. As of August 31, 2016 a 62% funding gap remained between requested and received funds.<sup>11</sup>

## PROFILE OF INHAMBANE

Inhambane province, located in the southern half of the country, is home to almost 1.4 million Mozambicans (5.9%<sup>12</sup> of the total population of Mozambique) living predominately in dispersed rural households generating small levels of income and household food stores from the production of maize, cowpea, peanuts, cassava, sesame, sorghum, pigeon peas and jugo beans.<sup>13</sup>

Across the province, 45% of its residents are under the age of 18 and over 56% of the population is female. Historically, this province has been characterized by high annual migration of men in search of work in neighboring South Africa. Across the province 29% of residents are living in severe poverty while 21.6% are considered destitute. 22.2% of residents are vulnerable to poverty triggered by economic downturns or extreme weather such as the current drought. While overall trends indicate a reduction in absolute poverty in the province the impact of changing weather cycles, coupled with migration disruptions, has the potential to erode development gains made in the areas of health, education and overall living standards.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>5</sup> CARE, Gender Study, October 2016

<sup>6</sup> UNFPA, 2012

<sup>7</sup> Mozambique's Intended Nationally Determined Contribution, 2015 [http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/INDC/Published%20Documents/Mozambique/1/MOZ\\_INDC\\_Final\\_Version.pdf](http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/INDC/Published%20Documents/Mozambique/1/MOZ_INDC_Final_Version.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> UNICEF, Situation of Children in Mozambique 2014

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> SETSAN, July 2016.

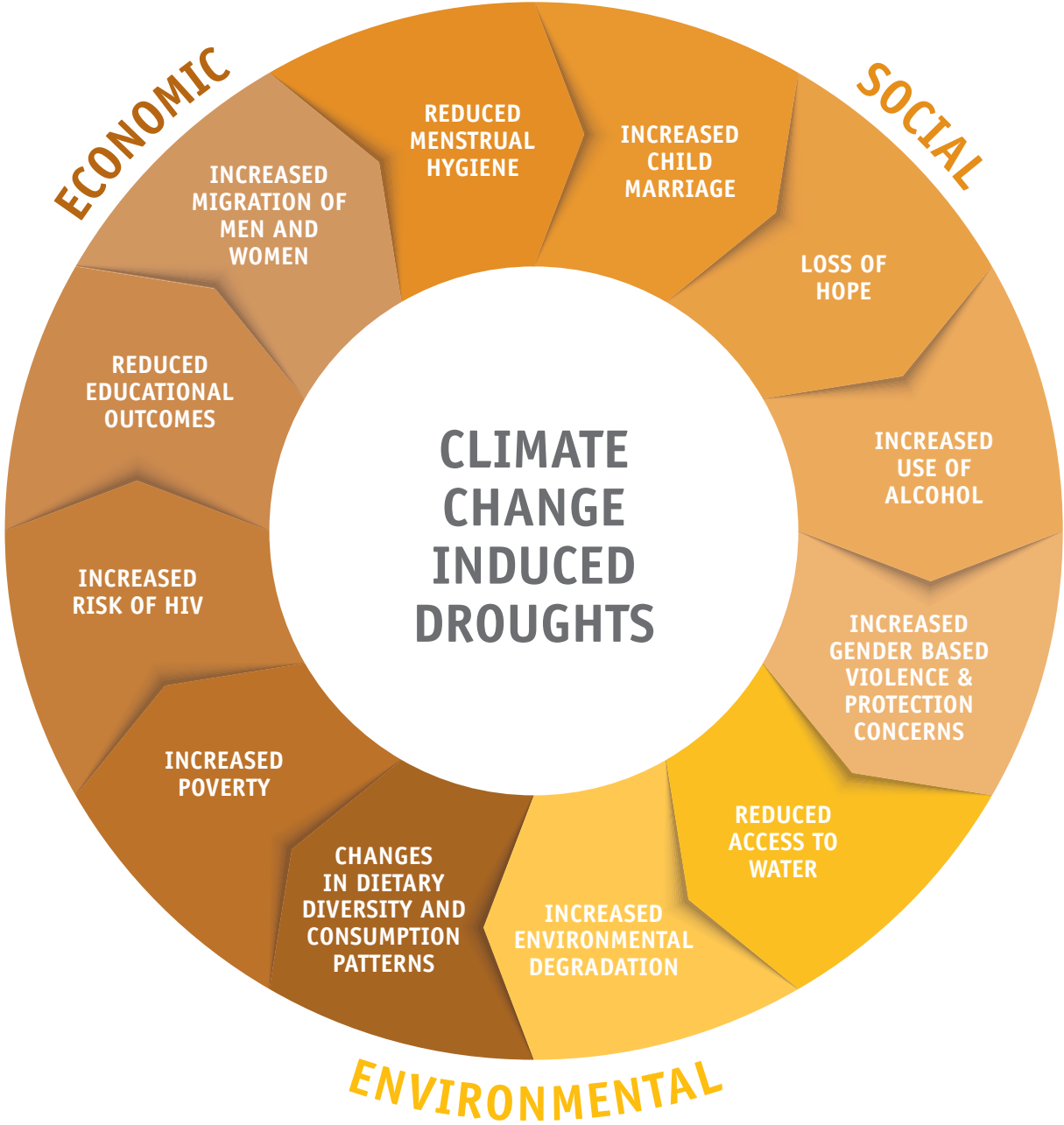
<sup>11</sup> It is expected that by March 2017 up to 2.3 million Mozambicans may be directly affected by the drought. SETSAN, July 2016

<sup>12</sup> UNRCO, August 31, 2016

<sup>13</sup> OPHI Country Briefing, June 2016

<sup>14</sup> CARE, PROSAN Baseline Report for Funhalouro and Homoine, January 30, 2015.

The current drought in Mozambique has a disproportionate impact on women and girls. 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. Women and girls experience vulnerability different to men. During times of crisis women’s access to, or control over, critical resources worsens, and can lead to exclusion from claiming basic services and rights. As a result women’s and girl’s vulnerability can increase and under-mine their ability to cope with the impacts of droughts and other disasters:



Prior to the drought, 52% of girls in the province of Inhambane married before the age of 18 years.<sup>15</sup> As of 2015, there were 631,000 child brides in the country and prior to the onset of the drought it was expected that by 2020 Mozambique would have 732,000 child brides, many aged below 15 years. Only 11% of these married girls had access to contraceptives and few had strategies to delay pregnancies, continue schooling

or control larger household assets. With the onset of the drought, many families have used child marriage as a coping mechanism to raise income (through payment of a bride price) or to reduce the number of dependents per household. This increase in child marriage has left many girls at risk of sexual and physical abuse, poor nutrition and increased chance of maternal neonatal death.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> OPHI Country Briefing, June 2016 and Regional Child Protection Rapid Assessment for Southern Africa: El Niño Response, July 2016

<sup>16</sup> CARE, El Niño Resilience Study, 2016

No official data is currently available on the specific impact this El Niño 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 substantial concerns. Many key informants believe the 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.

To cope with the seasonal nature of production in Inhambane, many 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.<sup>17</sup>

Across the drought zone there has been a growing drop-out of girls (and some boys) from formal schooling to take up household-related workloads including water collection and foraging for wild fruits and other bush foods. Most girls interviewed were no longer attending school due to work commitments and unplanned pregnancies.

As the crisis has intensified many girls have been exposed to sexual and gender-based violence. In 2003, the median age for first sexual intercourse for girls was 16, however with this drought significant anecdotal evidence suggests that the age of sexual debut has lowered to 11 or 12 years. During the study, women and girls talked of older men befriending girls aged 11 to 13 as they went about water collection activities. They stated that after

several weeks of engagement the men were luring the young girls away for a few days of unprotected sex. The girls are then returning with money or food stocks and resuming household tasks. However, many months later these young women are discovering they are pregnant but cannot identify their sexual partners and are often stigmatized by the community and family members as they cannot be culturally cleansed through marriage.

Prior to the drought only 17.5% of households were deemed as having an increased capacity to adapt to climate change and of these only 21.2% had at least three strategies to manage the effects.<sup>18</sup> More commonly used strategies by affected communities have been seasonal migration, harvesting of wood and production of charcoal. In this current drought many households have also taken up the production and sale of local beers to generate income. Other families talked of adding locally brewed beer to the diet of their children to minimize hunger symptoms. Both existing and new strategies discussed have environmental and social costs. They have led to breakdowns in family structures, compromised health and increased rates of domestic violence, specifically against women and girls.

In the following pages both the positive and negative coping mechanisms being adopted by women and girls during the 2015/2016 drought are presented. Stories are used to tangibly illustrate the issues of concern for various women and girls along with the resource mechanisms they have opted to tap.



<sup>17</sup> UNICEF, Plan & World Vision, Regional Child Protection Assessment for Southern Africa, July 2016

<sup>18</sup> Prosan : Baseline Report for Funhalouro and Homoine Districts (Inhambane), 2015

Woman collecting water from puddle during drought in Inhambane in 2015.  
© CARE / Marc Nosbach



# BARELY HOLDING ON: WOMEN'S COPING MECHANISMS

## Environmental effects

Some women and girls are resorting to maladaptive coping mechanisms, including charcoal production, wood harvesting, reed cutting and clearing of large forest or water zones; while others are able to engage in adaptive activities such as constructing water harvesting devices or using conservation agriculture practices (Valeti's story).

## Food & Income shortfalls

Increased migration of men, women and unaccompanied minors.

Increased risk taking with many women and girls forced to engage in sex for food or money, marry early or be exposed to increased violence from stressed spouses (see story of Nera).

Many young women have lost hope and have a reduced ability to move beyond crisis mode and identify alternative income sources to meet household needs (see story of Evone).

## Water Shortfalls

Increased school drop out as girls must allocate more time to search for and transport water for household consumption.

Reduced access to water for consumption and personal hygiene.



## NERA: Brewing Beer To Meet Basic Needs

Nera Matwasa is a 67-year-old woman with a large extended family living in the district of Funhalouro. She was married young and delivered the first of two children within one year of starting menstruation. She did not attend school, as no schools were available within walking distance of her father or later husband's home.

In a typical year, as a rural women, she spends her day engaging in small-scale agricultural production and a substantial amount of time collecting water for her household.

During this drought her traditional roles have altered. As she is not able to plant and tend to her fields she spends more time searching for bush fruits to supplement the aid given to her.<sup>19</sup> She also spends a lot more time looking for and collecting water supplies for her household. She generally gets water from nearby natural springs as the boreholes are too far from her home. However, with the drought, she now has to go to more natural springs to get sufficient supply and must wait for longer for the surface water to replenish after partial collection. The water at these springs is murky and is also used by wild and domestic animals for drinking.

In the past, during times of low production, she has sold excess food stores to cover income shortfalls. However, since this drought has continued into

additional production cycles she has used up all her agricultural reserves. Nera believes that although she has been provided support in the form of food assistance, the duration of this drought has made her family more vulnerable. During this drought she says she has had to take up brewing of a local beer to generate additional household income.

To produce the beer, she collects wild plants from which she can extract sugary syrup. She then turns this syrup into a low quality cheap local beer, popular with men. The beer nets her a profit of at least US\$0.60 per month. Over time she is able to save some income from this low cost beer to buy sugar. She uses this sugar to produce a higher quality beer that can generate over US\$2 profit per month after covering expenses.

Nera states she would prefer not to produce this alcohol, as it causes a lot of problems for other women who are beaten by their drunken spouses. However, the duration and harshness of this drought has meant she has no alternative income source. Nera hopes that in the future greater priority will be given to water so she no longer has to tap surface water springs also used by animals. She likewise hopes that with the onset of the rains, she will no longer need to produce beer to offset costs and instead can re-focus on other income sources including agriculture.



<sup>19</sup> See text box entitled: US\$43 Monthly Food Basket for clarity on emergency food distribution



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## EVONE: No back-up plan, no knowledge

Evone is a 23-year-old women living in a rural compound within the district of Funhalouro. She was married at 14 and has no children. She briefly attended primary school but dropped out because of inconsistent attendance due to the time needed to complete her household duties. Additionally, she stated teachers were often absent, making it difficult to learn.

Within this current drought she has few routine responsibilities. Previously, she undertook agricultural production on her husband's land, cleaned her compound and sold small items for additional income. She stated she would buy household goods with the money generated from the surplus in her agriculture production and would then resell these household products at a small profit to other women in her immediate community. With this drought she has no viable agricultural outputs and therefore cannot buy small household goods to sell on, to generate additional income. She says she is now totally reliant on the monthly food basket distributed by COSACA.<sup>20</sup> Daily she worries about how to find supplementary food stocks and generate income to cover the cost of non-food items. She is greatly concerned that the

drought will continue into the next planting season and has no backup plan in place should emergency food distributions cease. As she does not recall past droughts she cannot identify any resilience strategies that have worked which could help her cope with the current crisis. She has also not found other women to guide or mentor her through the current crisis.

### US\$43 MONTHLY FOOD BASKET

- 25kg of rice (valued at US\$17)
- 20-25 kg of maize meal (valued at US\$17)
- 2kg of sugar (value: US\$2)
- 1kg salt (value: US\$0.20)
- 1kg of beans (value: US\$1.60)
- 1kg of peanuts (value: US\$1.70)
- 2L of Oil (value: US\$3)
- 2 packets of pasta (value: US\$0.50)

*(Cash vouchers provided by CARE under the COSACA emergency program)*

<sup>20</sup> COSACA is the name adopted for the collective efforts of CONCERN, Oxfam, Save the Children and CARE working together in consortium in Mozambique. As part of the drought response, COSACA provides cash vouchers to eligible households. The value of the voucher is adjusted to meet stipulated food basket requirements. Families purchase food from commercial traders.



# WOMEN TOGETHER: FINDING WAYS THROUGH THE DROUGHT

Many women are empowering themselves and others to cope with the drought by identifying mechanisms to better influence the control of key resources, including water, and to address evolving social norms. This adaptability has crossed into the areas of informal savings and loans mechanisms, water management, outreach and the sharing of critical information. There is also a high interest among women to identify ways to diversify their agricultural production to include drought tolerant crops that can be grown beyond the current 4-month agrarian season.

## Environmental impacts

Women and girls effectively supported to develop coping mechanisms that minimize negative environmental impacts while meeting critical income and food requirements at household level.

## Food & Income shortfalls

Adoption of alternative income sources including using village savings and loans mechanisms to start small businesses (see story of Valeti).

Practicing conservation agriculture technologies that help women to plant a range of drought tolerant crops and resume cultivating cashew groves (see story of Filomena).

## Water Shortfalls

Participation in the management of water resources to ensure access and sustain resource.

## VALETI: Diversifying Income Streams

Valeti is a grandmother living rurally in Funhalouro. A year ago she joined one of CARE's village saving and loan associations (VSLA) as a strategy to save money and access credit. She is not sure how much she has deposited with the savings group but recently she borrowed US\$13 from the group to start a small food business. Her motivation for starting this enterprise was to generate income for her struggling household. She said others in her community have borrowed to repair their homes, but she felt during this difficult time that she needed to borrow money to generate sufficient income to cover her household expenses.

Valeti's food business is composed of selling maize meal fried balls and maize meal milk from her home and at food distribution fairs within her area. At a recent food fair set up by CARE, Valeti was present and sold maize meal balls and maize meal milk to community members receiving food assistance.

"For this week of food fairs I spent US\$8 on buying supplies. I expect to sell daily almost US\$11 of food products. This will give me up to US\$3 in profit. With the US\$3 in daily profits I will pay US\$1.50 per week to my village savings and loan group. I will then use US\$0.75 to cover household expenses and reinvest US\$0.75 into my business."<sup>21</sup>

Valeti's approach is to "start small and slowly grow the business". When interviewed she was able to see the importance of alternative income streams to ensure she did not become dependent on emergency food distributions should the drought continue. Despite only starting her business one month ago, she was already seeing substantial benefits to meeting her family needs and anticipated with careful planning that this activity could become a permanent earning strategy, even after the resumption of the rains. Valeti was not able to articulate why others were not taking up alternative income streams like her.

Valeti's story clearly demonstrates the turn around potential for vulnerable women is high when given mechanisms to access credit and support. Like

many older women, Valeti was able to draw on past resilience mechanisms and local knowledge to identify a potential business opportunity as well as optimal locations to sell her goods. As a result, she was no longer in crisis mode and was able to more effectively meet her family's food and income needs without receiving a monthly emergency food assistance basket.

### VILLAGE SAVING AND LOAN ASSOCIATIONS (VSLA)

*Group members have access to the following products:*

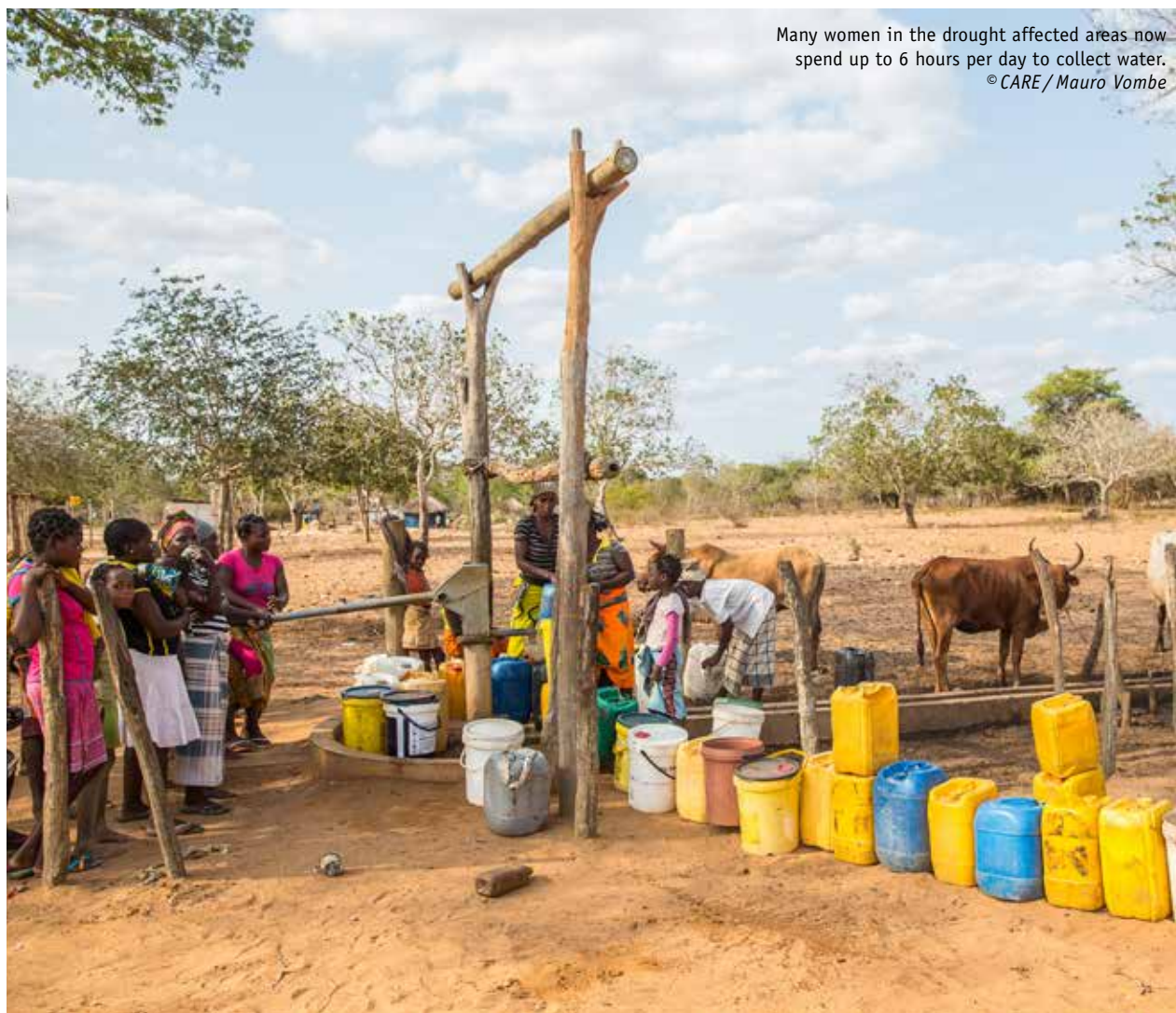
**SAVINGS:** Members of VSLA groups make regular savings and receive a return on their investment at the end of the group cycle that ranges between 30% and 100%. Members are able to save on a flexible schedule and in whatever amount they wish, since these terms are agreed within the group.

**LOANS:** Members are able to borrow with minimal administration, as only peer approval is required for loans. Loans are typically \$10 to \$20, a level that is too small for formal financial institutions to administer cost-effectively. The group sets the interest rates for borrowing, typically around 10% per month. All profits from the interest paid stay within the group.

**INSURANCE:** Groups can choose to set up an insurance fund, often known as a Social Fund. Members contribute regularly to the fund and are allowed to draw from it during emergencies. These insurance plans offer participating members interest-free or low interest loans with flexible repayment schedules.

<sup>21</sup> Across the week of sales at the food fair in Funhalouro Valeti made in excess of US\$3 profit per day or US\$15 for the week. Where possible she hopes to generate in excess of US\$60 in additional income per month. When asked, she indicated she would still allocate the profit as agreed with her savings group.

Many women in the drought affected areas now spend up to 6 hours per day to collect water.  
© CARE / Mauro Vombe



## FLORA: Actively Engaging in the Control of Water

Flora is a 32-year-old married women with basic literacy skills. Within her community a new well was installed in August 2016 under the CARE emergency response program designed to address critical water shortages in the districts of Funhalouro and Homoine. As part of the process of installation, her community formed a water committee to manage and maintain this critical resource. Flora was selected by the community to act as secretary and is one of four members responsible for opening and closing the water point at designated times. This water committee has both male and female members but women, who hold prime responsibility for household-level water collection, fill most positions.

The committee meets regularly to identify problems and generate solutions. She talked about an upcoming meeting with the whole catchment

community to talk about the pump and discuss critical issues including managing extraction of water by people not in the catchment zone and controlling the influx of unsupervised or poorly supervised domestic animals including cattle. Following the community-wide meeting she anticipated that the water committee would meet to generate solutions to issues raised and develop an information sharing system on agreed decisions.

She was extremely happy about the new well and had seen a drastic reduction in the time she needed daily to fetch water. Given the close proximity of the well to her home, she no longer needed to allocate large amounts of time to seeking and carrying large quantities of water a long distance, thereby reducing the physical burden on her body.

## AURANTONE AND HER FRIENDS: Women Filling Knowledge Gaps and Mentoring to Young Mothers

Aurantone, Teresa and Flishmina are three women aged between 27 and 44 who are helping others manage during this current crisis. With at least grade 7 primary education, these three women have provided support to others for the past 12 months following various levels of training by CARE's partners on gender, community mobilization and HIV prevention.

Aurantone, a single mother of one 7-year old child, has chosen to help others by imparting knowledge on how to prevent the transmission of HIV. Teresa, a widow with three children aged between 11 and 21, was motivated to help other women when she attended a gender training in which she learnt that women could do and decide on as many things as men. Flishmina, married with her four children aged 4 to 16, has not been given any specific training but strives to help other women find resilience strategies that minimize the risks they take, especially in times of crisis. These three women routinely work with adolescent girls to increase their knowledge about sex and marriage. They use a staged approach to inform and empower the girls and emphasize the importance of schooling and delaying sex and pregnancy for as long as possible.

They strongly believe the current drought has had a drastic impact on younger adolescent girls (aged 11-14). They have seen an increase in girls dropping out of school to collect water, search for wild fruits and look for ways to generate income for their households. They talked about an increasing trend of girls (with little or no knowledge) engaging in sex in exchange for food, money or school grades. As a result, many young women in their communities had unexpectedly



fallen pregnant and were concerned about their disease exposure risk.

These women believed it is critical that more support be given to these girls to educate them on risks and provide them technical training to increase their income earning potential in sustainable areas. They suggested that role models should be identified in each community who could support these girls at times of crisis and keep them motivated to remain in school and minimize their at-risk behavior. The women said, "With the mothers so stressed with finding food and water, they do not take care of the girls as they should". As such these three volunteers believed community members needed to advise vulnerable young women and fill a critical gap in support mechanisms for young women.

**Follow the stories written by our volunteers:**  
<https://care.exposure.co/this-is-what-people-eat-now>

In Mozambique CARE is piloting alternative early childhood development (ECD) models to complement the current pre-school based approach. With our partners we are currently testing, refining and documenting the impact of the Masungukate approach.

Masungukates are volunteers in their communities. In CARE workshops they learn about hygiene, maternal health, nutrition, and child development. They visit families in their villages on a weekly basis to pass on their knowledge. They ensure caregivers know how their children aged 0 to 5 achieve better cognitive, physical, emotional and language development.

As part of the drought response, CARE has trained the Masungukate to identify children who are malnourished and ensure referrals to health facilities. The volunteers in this story are using the approach to support young adolescent mothers whose children are particularly at risk of developmental delays and poor nutritional outcomes.

## FILOMENA: A Grandmother Adapting to Seasonal Shortfalls

“I am Filomena Lamu, 67 years old from a rural village in the district of Homoine in Inhambane Province, Mozambique. Three years ago, I was a struggling widow trying to generate sufficient income from cassava production and the collecting and selling of small firewood bundles to meet the needs of my family. As a grandmother and primary caregiver to two small children aged four and seven, I struggled to meet their basic food needs and could only provide basic thatch shelter for my family.<sup>22</sup>

My daughter, the mother of my grandchildren, migrated to Maputo leaving the children in my care. She has not returned to see them and not sent promised remittances to cover costs associated with their care.



I was fortunate to participate in a community meeting in which CARE and local leaders explained the process of cashew production. On my small land holding I had non-producing cashew trees and was unaware they could generate either food or income for my family. Initially my interest in cashew production was to see if it would generate additional food stocks for the children or provide me with alternative income during the season where cassava production was not possible.

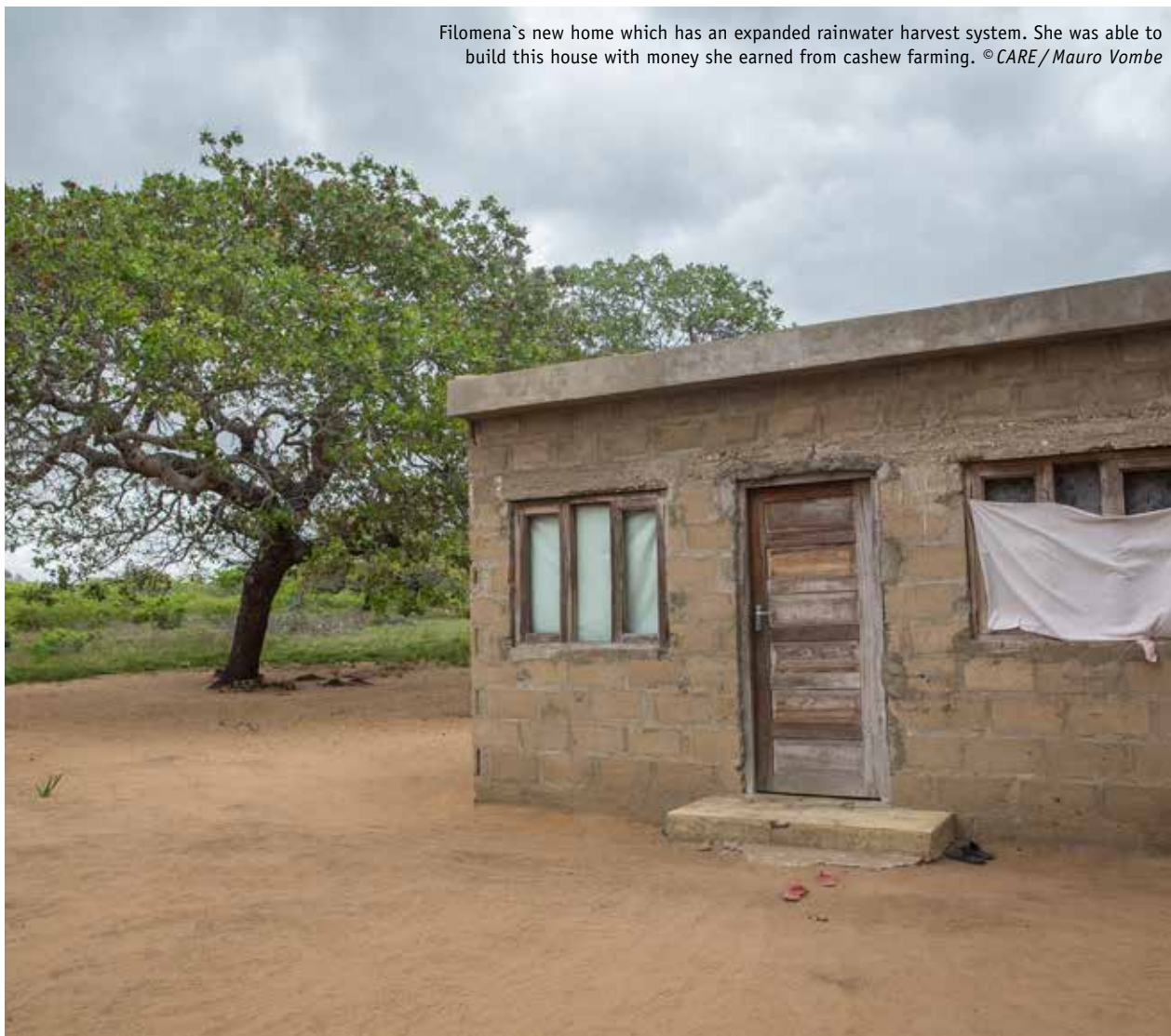
At the same time as I learned about cashew production, I also joined a local village savings and loan group. This group helps women like me save funds and borrow money once savings reach a pre-agreed level. Using borrowed funds from my group I was able to cover costs associated with making my cashew trees productive. Initially my trees generated up to 25kg of raw nuts that I could then eat or sell to commercial vendors for US\$0.40 per kilogram and generate US\$10 extra income for my household per productive season. Over time, my neighbors and I pooled our nuts and began processing nuts directly before sale. By processing the nuts and selling them jointly we were able to generate a price of US\$4 per kilogram. This increased price per kg has allowed me to earn at least US\$100 per productive cycle.<sup>23</sup> This increased income has allowed me to do many things in the past year.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>22</sup> 18% of children in Mozambique do not reside with biological parents (UNICEF, Situation of Children in Mozambique, 2014)

<sup>23</sup> US\$100 was based on the average sale of 25 kg of processed nuts.

<sup>24</sup> 54% of Mozambique's population live below the poverty line and US\$0.24 per day. (UNICEF, 2014) A 25kg harvest valued at US\$100 will generate US\$3.20 per day for a family.

Filomena's new home which has an expanded rainwater harvest system. She was able to build this house with money she earned from cashew farming. © CARE/Mauro Vombe



Today I have built a new brick house with a corrugated iron roof that can harvest water for use by my family. This harvested water I initially collected in a small stone basin. I am now building a deep-water storage tank that will allow my family to minimize how often we need to collect water from the nearby well. Currently we spend up to three hours fetching water for the family to cover the shortfall not harvested from my roof. While the borehole is near we often have to wait up to two hours until it is our turn for water collection. My new water tank should fill in five days of good rain and give my family much needed water stores and substantially reduce the time we must allocate to water collection.

The extra funds generated from the cashew production have meant I no longer need to generate income from firewood selling and I have been able to ensure my grandchildren remain in school. I have also been able to deposit US\$2.70 every two weeks in my village savings and loan group. With this

extra deposit of savings I will have a larger reserve I can draw on during hard times to ensure we have adequate food and shelter and the children can continue to attend school.”

Filomena's story illustrates that by combining access to community level credit sources, enhanced drought-resistant cropping and learning on alternative income streams (such as cashew production) female-headed households can generate critical food stores and substantial household income. This food and income security ensures female-headed households can look to strengthen shelter and minimize time needed to collect water for household consumption. Additionally, it gives women an avenue to control and dispose of key productive assets at opportune times. Traditionally men own large assets such as land and cattle. Alternative income sources, such as cashew production, provide women like Filomena with clear income they can control and manage directly.



## CARE IS PROMOTING CROPPING COMBINATIONS

**REDUCE FOOD INSECURITY, ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE, MINIMIZE WORK LOADS AND GENERATE INCOME IN HOSTILE ENVIRONMENTS**

### REVITALISING STAGNANT CASHEW GROVES:

Farmers are being supported with technical knowledge on how to revitalize non-productive cashew groves with minimal investment. Additionally technical and equipment support is being given to build post harvest processing systems that can dramatically increase income generated from harvests.

### PROMOTING CROPPING COMBINATIONS:

CARE is promoting mixed cropping combinations (such as canavalia, disease resistant cassava, cowpeas or lablab beans or maize, lablab beans and cowpeas) which, when planted together, provide growers with high calorie crops with optimal protein levels that are drought resistant and can improve soil quality. Key to this cropping combination is the ability of certain crops (cowpeas) to germinate quickly and provide a food source earlier while reducing the time allocation women need to give to weeding.

### SUMMARY OF KEY BENEFITS

- Reduction in women's workload related to weeding by up to 60%
- Increase family food stocks and reduce length of food insecurity a problem critical to many female-headed households
- Enhanced protein rich foods (cowpeas: 25% protein content)
- Increased income generating potential for highly valued cash crops in Asian markets
- Provide shade and/or organic composting matter to enrich the soil
- Allow for increased water penetration due to root depth of key crops

*Source: Roland Bunch, Report on Farmer Field Schools & Conservation Agriculture, April 2016*



Female small-holder farmer using cropping combinations.  
© CARE/Glyn Riley



# WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

## RECOMMENDATIONS

To further support women like Filomena, Valeti, Evone and Nera, greater effort must be made by state and non-state actors including with enhanced international support, to address skill shortfalls, protection concerns, educational outcomes and critical infrastructure and knowledge gaps. CARE International in Mozambique in both the short and longer term recommends:

- Transitioning existing food assistance programs to a cash transfer model that allows household members (particularly women) to utilize funds to cover shortfalls in both consumption and household needs;
- Enhancing existing monitoring systems utilized by state and non-state actors to tangibly measure and document the impact of climate change on vulnerable communities. Data should be consistently disaggregated by age and gender;
- Supporting communities and especially women to identify and pursue adaptation strategies that positively respond to climate change and weather events. Where possible this support should include the identification of women practicing optimal adaptation strategies who can then mentor other young women;
- Adaptations of short-term humanitarian programming to more effectively focus on the specific needs and issues faced by women and girls;
- Ensuring protection initiatives are enhanced to address gender based violence while providing targeted programming on sexual education for both girls and boys;
- Greater outreach activities for producers on drought-resistant crops that provide optimal nutritional content and income sources during low agrarian cycles;
- Enhancing knowledge transfer to caregivers (both women and men) on good nutrition and child-rearing practices;
- Ensure that children and pregnant or lactating women are screened for severe and moderate acute malnutrition and referred to treatment facilities when needed for nutritional rehabilitation;
- Enabling women to harness their diversified income-earning potential, and engaging men and boys to support this process, so that women are able to do so, even in areas that may have been traditionally controlled by male relatives;
- Provide greater support to non-traditional caregivers (grandparents) who are raising children of migrating family members;
- Exploring pro-poor climate risk insurance options as a means to support VSL approaches for community resilience;
- Continued investment in health and educational programs to provide critical care and optimal learning environments for children and women;
- Provision of permanent access to safe water. Rehabilitation as needed and upgraded when possible with a focus on maximizing the use of perennial sources. Construction of new water systems should be considered when technically feasible and when other sources of water are not available. Supporting households to build and manage individual or collective rain water harvesting and storage systems;
- Improvement of WASH conditions in institutions (schools and health sites). Provide a minimum WASH package in institutions through the construction/rehabilitation of WASH infrastructure, hygiene education and the reinforcement of management systems.

Drought, food and water shortages bring an increased risk of sexual and gender-based violence, as women and children have to travel ever increasing distances in search of water. © CARE/Johanna Mitscherlich



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## ADDITIONAL MEETINGS

1. UNICEF Representatives of Protection, WASH and Education Departments
2. UNFPA, Mozambique
3. Save the Children
4. World Vision
5. Provincial representatives from the departments of Agriculture; Protection, Women & Children and INGC
6. District and sub district government and community representatives



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