



Do you know our suffering?

2 Timothy 3:10–12

MOZAMBIQUE

Population: 35,632,000

Capital: Maputo

Form of government: Semi-presidential representative democratic republic

Head of state: President Daniel Chapo

Religions: Christians (56%), Ethnic religionists (26%), Muslims (17%)

Gina A. Zurlo, ed. World Christian Database (Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed August 2026).

Growing terrorist threat

Since October 2017, northern Mozambique has experienced attacks by an Islamist armed group called Ahlu Sunnah wal Jama'ah (ASWJ), linked to ISIS and known as the Islamic State of Mozambique. What began as an attack on three police stations in Mocímboa da Praia, in Cabo Delgado province, has escalated into attacks against civilians, villages, churches, and schools. The province borders Tanzania, separated only by the Rovuma River. Rich in natural resources such as natural gas, rubies, graphite, gold and other minerals, it remains one of the poorest regions in Mozambique. Despite this wealth, many local communities lack access to employment, and schools and clinics are scarce.

The insurgency is based on a jihadist ideology, but it is not simply a religious war: many Muslims are also victims of violence, kidnappings, and forced displacement. At least 6,632 people have died since 2017, 2,772 of them civilians, and around 1.5 million have been forced to flee their homes. In the last year alone, hundreds of thousands more fled as the violence spread to a new province, Nampula.

Impact on Christians

Mozambique's constitution guarantees freedom of religion or belief, but in Cabo Delgado these rights are being violated in practice. Attacks by radical Islamists have cost the lives of many Christians. Believers have been beheaded, their churches burned, and their homes destroyed. Temples have been attacked and razed since the beginning of the conflict, and militants have demanded the removal of Christian symbols. Christians are now fleeing their homes simply to avoid being targeted.

- In the early morning of 3 August 2025, in the village of Naphela, Chiúre district (Cabo Delgado province), a youth pastor from an Assemblies of God church witnessed ASWJ militants kidnap nine of his relatives, aged between 9 and 35. Two others, aged 12 and 55, remain missing. He has not heard from any of them since and remains deeply distressed.
- On the night of 1-2 August 2025, in the village of Marera, Chiúre district (Cabo Delgado province), 15 Christians from the same family were escaping towards the main road when ASWJ militants ambushed them at the edge of the village. They were tied up and beheaded. Several belonged to the Church of Christ, who's building the militants had set on fire on 30 July two days earlier.
- In the early morning of 25 July 2025, Islamist militants launched an attack in Ndonhani, Chiúre district (Cabo Delgado province). They set fire to several houses and the local police station, and beheaded a 51-year-old man, a member of the ADI (Reformed) Church. The man had been in hiding due to the constant insecurity in the area. Believing the situation was calm, he went out around 4:00 a.m. in search of food. He was captured, dragged outside, and brutally murdered. His body remained visible on the road throughout the day, causing great distress among the residents.

In August 2026, Islamic State militants were still active and expanding in rural areas of northern Mozambique. That same month, the Islamic State of Mozambique kidnapped dozens of civilians.

Violence against women and girls

Gender-based violence has intensified as the conflict in the north has spread. Women and girls, including Christians, are at risk of rape, sexual assault, kidnapping, and forced marriage at the hands of armed groups, and some are victims of trafficking. Child marriage has also reportedly increased, driven in part by school closures. Across the region, services for survivors of gender-based violence are scarce. Christian women and girls face the same risks, exacerbated by displacement and the loss of the church communities that once supported them.

An unpublished report by the United Nations titled “Voices from Mozambique,” based on interviews in 2024 with more than 100 people in seven districts of Cabo Delgado, found that sexual violence has increased dramatically since the start of the fighting. It documents abuses committed by insurgents, members of Mozambique’s own armed forces, and personnel linked to the TotalEnergies-led gas project.

The humanitarian crisis

Humanitarian needs in Mozambique have increased dramatically as the conflict in Cabo Delgado has intensified. Communities face severe food insecurity and limited access to healthcare and education, as well as heightened protection risks, particularly for women and children.

In 2026, 1.7 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance, and by mid-year, approximately 506,000 remained displaced across the three northern provinces. Insecurity, mandatory military escorts, road blockades, and closed airstrips severely hamper

There is hope!

Despite significant challenges, churches and Christian organizations in Mozambique continue to serve those in need with compassion and hope. The Evangelical Association of Mozambique supports families displaced by violence by helping them resettle and rebuild their lives. It also coordinates disaster relief efforts and fosters unity and cooperation among Christian churches and ministries across the country.

WE PRAY

- For an end to the violence. Pray that the attacks by Islamist armed groups in northern Mozambique will cease and that peace will return to Cabo Delgado, Nampula, and the surrounding regions.
- For Christians who have been attacked, threatened, displaced, or forced to flee their homes. Ask God to strengthen those who remain faithful to Christ despite fear and danger. And pray for comfort and healing for those who have lost family and homes.
- For protection from rape, sexual violence, kidnapping, trafficking, and forced marriage. Ask God to protect Christian women and girls and to provide safe places and compassionate care for those who have experienced abuse.
- For wise and just leadership that will address both the insecurity and the deep poverty and lack of opportunity that have left communities vulnerable. Pray that Mozambique's abundant natural resources will benefit local communities rather than contribute to further exploitation and conflict.
- That churches across Mozambique will remain places of prayer, compassion, protection, and practical support for those affected by the conflict. Ask God to give Christians courage to be witnesses to Christ even in the midst of suffering.
- That members and leaders of the armed groups will turn away from violence and that God will intervene to bring an end to their attacks. Pray also for those responsible for abuses to be brought to justice.