# Mozambique

**WFP RAM** | Food security analysis

## Cabo Delgado Food Security and Nutrition bulletin – 1st quarter of 2024

## Lean Season Assessment in Cabo Delgado (February 2024)

### Background

The conflict in northern provinces of Mozambique remains the main driver of acute food insecurity and malnutrition, exacerbating inequalities and affecting income generating opportunities in the region. In the first quarter of the year armed insurgency has intensified, resulting in increased humanitarian access challenges, as the second largest wave of IDPs ever recorded. According to a FEWS NET food security update in February 2024, Cabo Delgado province is in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) as areas previously classified as Stressed (IPC Phase 2) have recently experienced violent events and insecurity.

Since the beginning of January, covering essential needs became more expensive because the Mozambican Tax Authority (AT) started charging Value Added Tax (VAT) on basic needs such as sugar, cooking oil, and soap. For example, until the end of December 2023 a kg of sugar was sold at 1.11-1.26 USD and from January the price recorded was in the range 1.42-1.74 USD, presenting an increase between 20% and 38%. Overall, the purchasing power of households who rely on food purchased from local markets has depleted drastically compared to the beginning of 2023 due to higher prices of staple food caused by then protracted conflict and below-average harvest in the previous agricultural season.

### Highlights

- High vulnerability persists: Overall food insecurity levels in both displaced and non-displaced people during the lean season period remain high and present significant increase compared to the last post-harvest assessment conducted in August 2023. The average, not weighted, **prevalence of food insecurity in the province of Cabo Delgado is 66%, almost 30% higher than in the last post-harvest season (37%).**

- **Displaced households in the districts of Mocimboa Da Praia, Mueda, Namuno, Chiure and Balama present very preoccupying levels of food insecurity, all with prevalence above 85%.** Very alarming prevalence of poor and borderline food consumption were observed in Balama, Mocimba da Praia and Namuno, where more than 20% of displaced households reported extremely low food consumption.

- High use of food consumption related coping strategies: **45% of the households in Cabo Delgado are resorting in more than one negative food related coping strategy to satisfy food needs**, between them going to bed without eating or adults skipping meals to allow children to eat. Also In this dimension displaced households appear more vulnerable as they present more alarming use of negative coping strategies compared to resident households, In particular in Macomia, Metuge, Namuno, Mecufi and Mocimboa da Praia.

- Alarming use of livelihood related coping strategies: **59% of interviewed households reported using crisis and emergency coping strategies to satisfy immediate food needs for their families**, depleting their assets and hampering their capacity to cope with future shocks.

## Methodology

The Lean Season Assessment was conducted jointly by the Secretariado Técnico de Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional (SETSAN), the Serviço Provincial das Actividade Econômicas (SPAE) and the World Food Programme (WFP).

Data was collected through a face-to-face assessment between the 5th and 21st of February, initially planned to cover all districts of Cabo Delgado. **The sample was designed for the assessment to be representative of IDP/returnees the resident population groups in all districts**. 304 households per district were assessed, equally distributed between the two population groups. 105 surveys were discarded from the total set of 5,168 collected because of poor data quality, leaving the final counting of surveys on which this analysis is based in 5,070.

During data collection, the insecurity situation in the province deteriorated with the registration of new attacks by insurgents in Quissanga, Macomia, Ibo and other southern districts. **Data collection in Quissanga was highly impacted by the insecure situation and access issues, the district was at the end excluded from the scope of this exercise.**

In order to estimate the levels of food insecurity of IDP and resident people in Cabo Delgado during the lean season period, this analysis was conducted using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, including field surveys at household level, observations, analysis of demographic and economic data, among others. The food insecurity framework used to report prevalence of food insecurity is the **Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicator of Food Insecurity (CARI).** The CARI is a harmonized WFP method used to analyse primary data from a single household food security survey and to classify individual households according to their level of food security

## For further information

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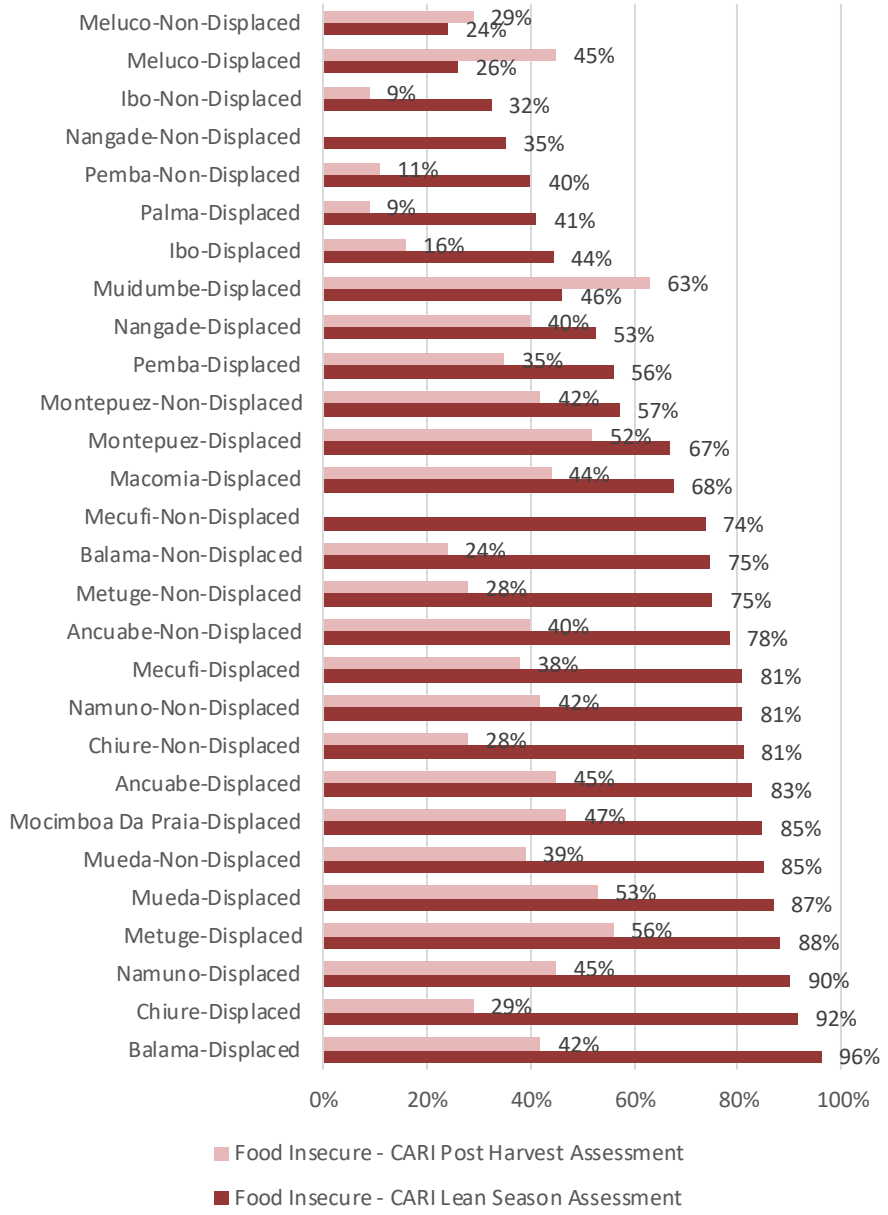
## Food insecurity according to the CARI

Overall food insecurity levels in both displaced and non-displaced people during the lean season period remain high and present significant increase compared to the last post-harvest assessment conducted in August 2023. The average, not weighted, **prevalence of food insecurity in the province of Cabo Delgado is 66%, almost 30% higher than values observed last August (37%)**. IDP households are levels of food insecurity 8% higher than resident households, 69% (displaced HHs) vs 61% (resident HHs).
Higher vulnerability of displaced households correlates with more challenges they face to get access to land and other income generation opportunities, as well as more limited food stocks and higher reliance on food and livelihood-based cooping strategies to meet their food needs.

**Displaced households in the districts of Mocimboa Da Praia, Mueda, Namuno, Chiure and Balama present very preoccupying levels of food insecurity, all with food insecurity prevalence above 85%.**
The districts of Chiure, Namuno, Ancuabe, Metuge and Balama present the highest prevalence of food insecurity among resident HHs, between 75% and 81%. It is important to highlight that it was not possible to assess food insecurity among non-displaced HHs in Mocimboa Da Praia because few of them were found during the assessment.

The highest deterioration of food insecurity in the lean season period among displaced households was observed in the districts of Mocimboa da Praia, Mecufi, Namuno, Balama and Chiure, presenting respectively an increase of food insecurity in this period of 38%, 43%, 45%, 54% and 63%.
This is probably attributable to the higher number of recent displacements in some of these areas, in particular in Mocimboa da Praia, and reduction of WFP food assistance in others.

Chiure and Balama present also the highest deterioration of food insecurity among non–displaced people in Cabo Delgado, both above 50% increase.



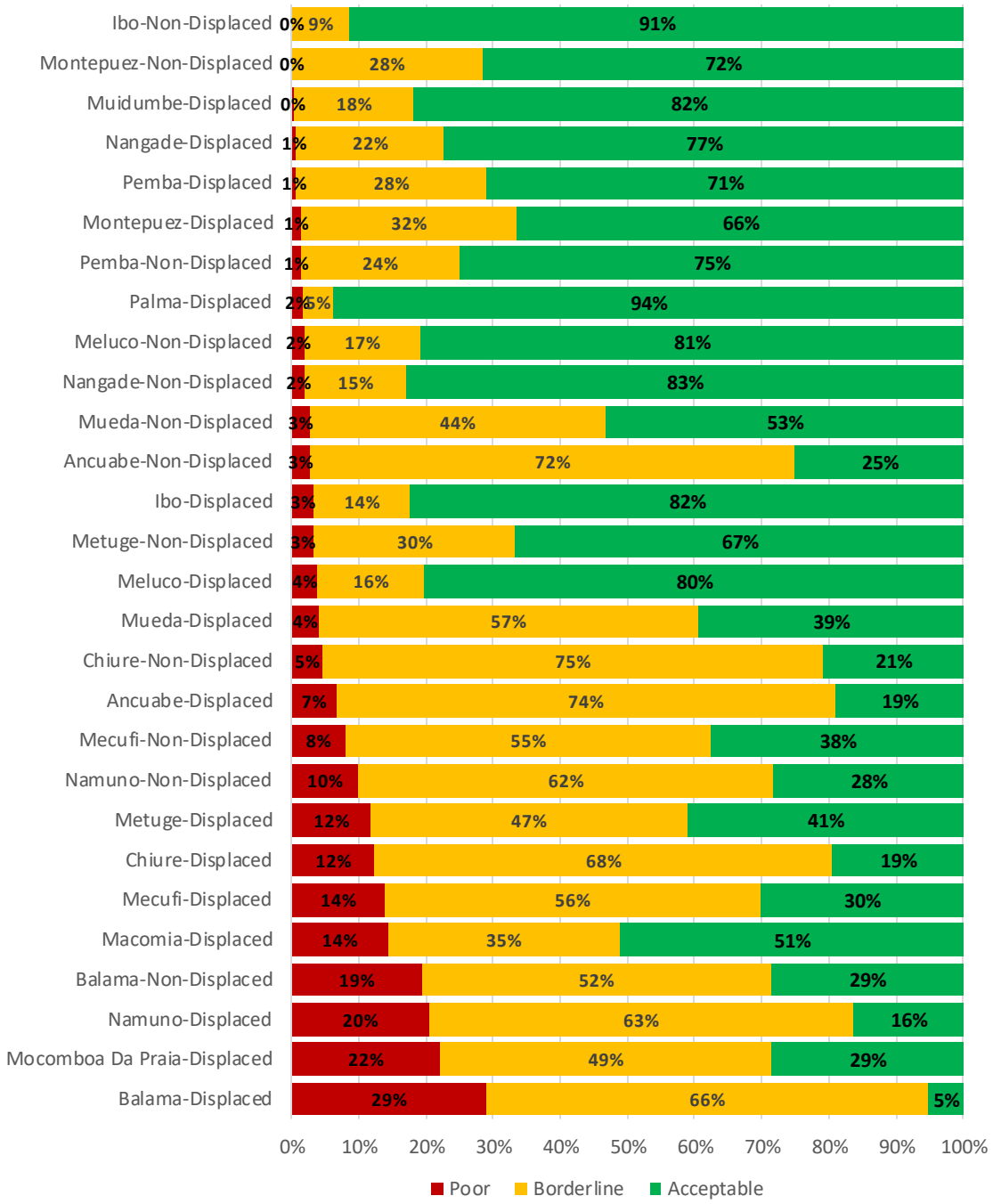
## Food Consumption Score

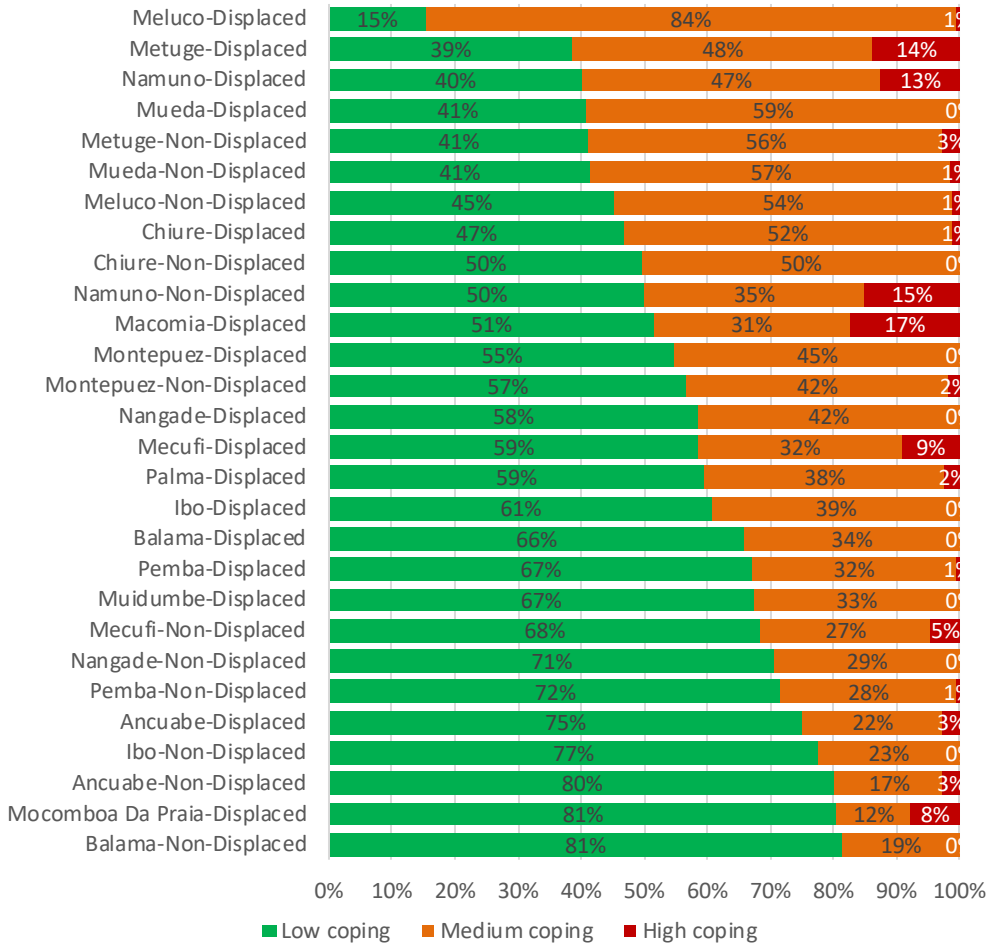
This assessment highlights that **in the province of Cabo Delgado 48% of the population presents insufficient levels of food consumption** during the lean season. 8% of the interviewed households reported very poor food consumption, which is probably hampering their food security and nutrition status.

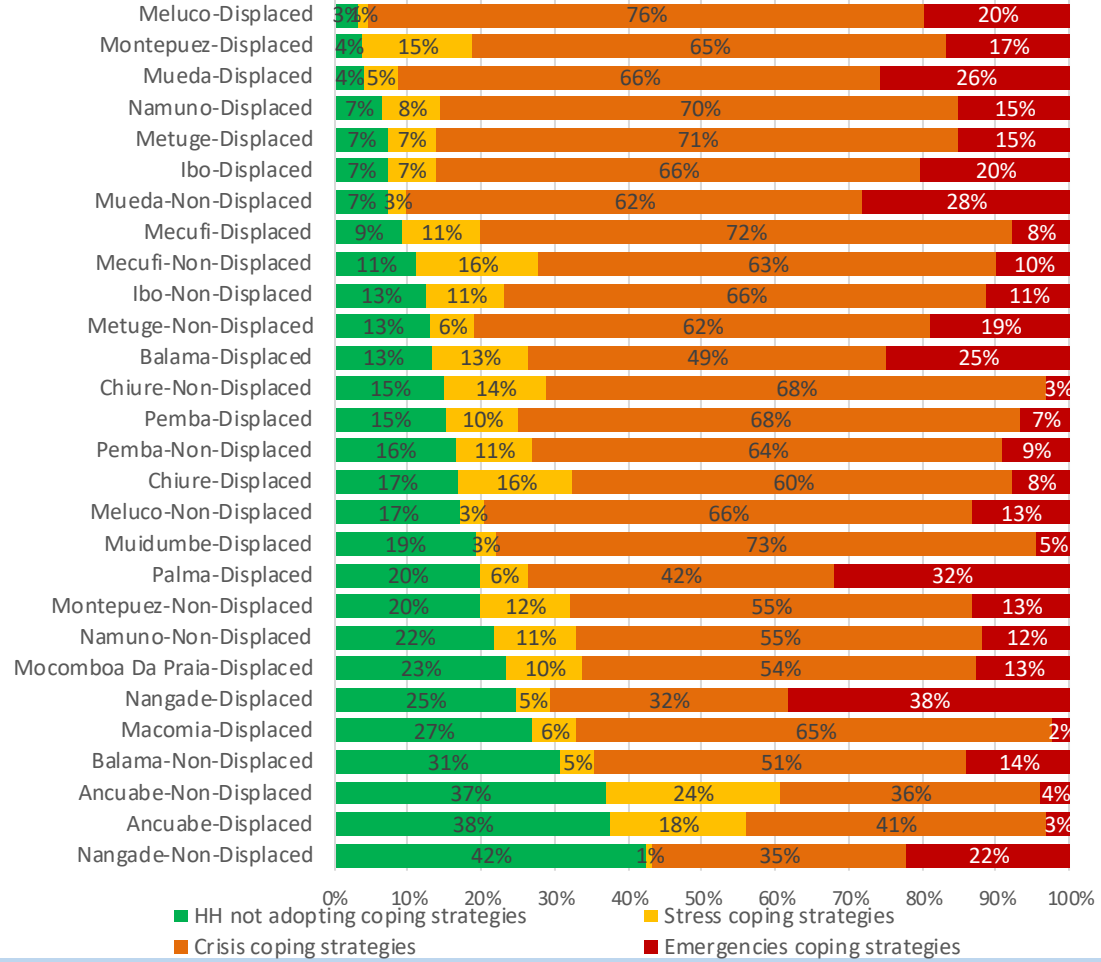
**In the majority of the districts, displaced households show an higher prevalence of borderline and poor food consumption**, this difference is particularly evident in the districts of Balama and Namuno, where displaced HHs present 10% more poor food consumption than non-displaced HHs, and in Mecufi where this difference is 6%.

**Very alarming prevalence of poor and borderline food consumption were observed in Balama, Mocimba da Praia and Namuno, where more than 20% of displaced households reported very low food intake**. Considering the districts where food consumption could be assessed also within the resident population, Balama and Namuno present the highest prevalence of poor food consumption ( 19% and 10% ) and unacceptable food consumption (poor + borderline), respectively at 71% and 72%.

Households in the districts of Palma and Ibo, situated in privileged coastal areas, present less influence of the negative agricultural period on food consumption. The diet of these communities is profoundly influenced by the availability of fresh and varied seafood. Direct access to fresh, locally caught fish not only enriches the diet of these populations, but also contributes to the diversification and nutritional balance of their daily meals.






## Food consumption-based Coping Strategies

Almost half of the households in Cabo Delgado (45%) are resorting in more than one negative food related coping strategy to satisfy food needs, between them going to bed without eating or adults skipping meals to allow children to eat.

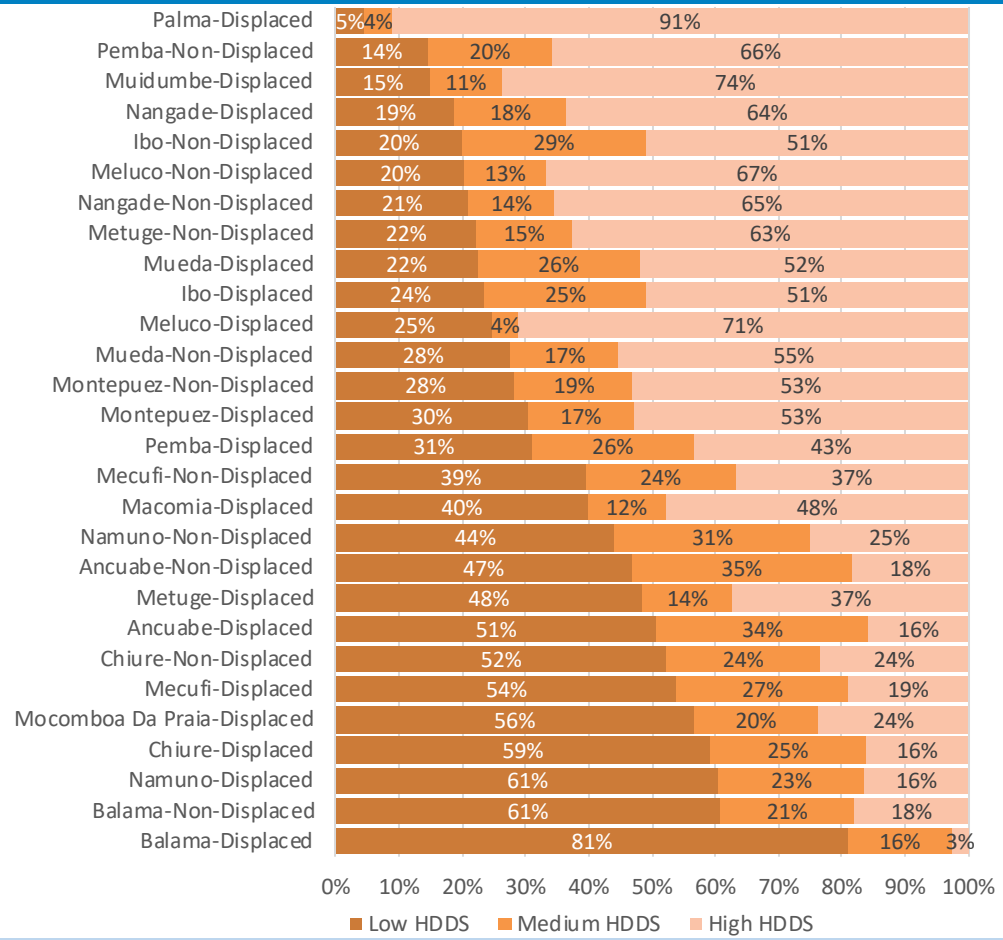
In this dimension displaced households appear also more vulnerable as they present more alarming use of negative coping strategies compared to resident households. In particular higher proportion of displaced households in Macomia, Metuge, Namuno, Mecufi and Mocimboa da Praia have to frequently resort in negative food related coping strategies, respectively 17%, 14% , 13% and 8%. This will probably contribute to a further deterioration of their food security and nutritional status in the medium and long term.

## Livelihoods-based Coping Strategies

The graph above shows the prevalence of HHs adopting livelihood related coping strategies, between them removing children from school, selling productive assets, borrow food or money etc.

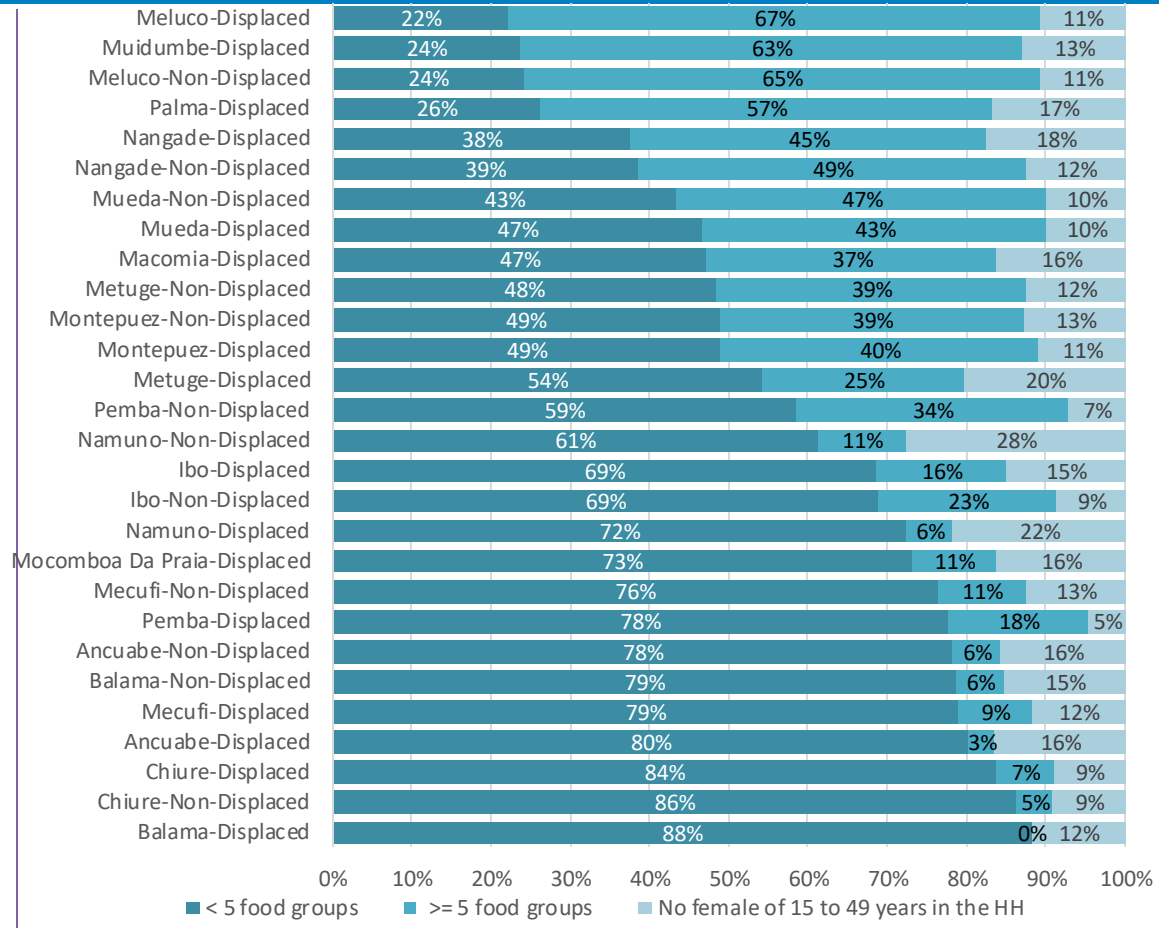
59% of interviewed head of households reported using regularly crisis and emergency coping strategies to satisfy immediate food needs for their families, depleting their assets and hampering their capacity to cope with future shocks.

Following a similar trend of food related coping strategies, IDP HHs present also higher adoption of livelihood related coping strategies than resident households during the lean season, particularly in Nangade and Balama.



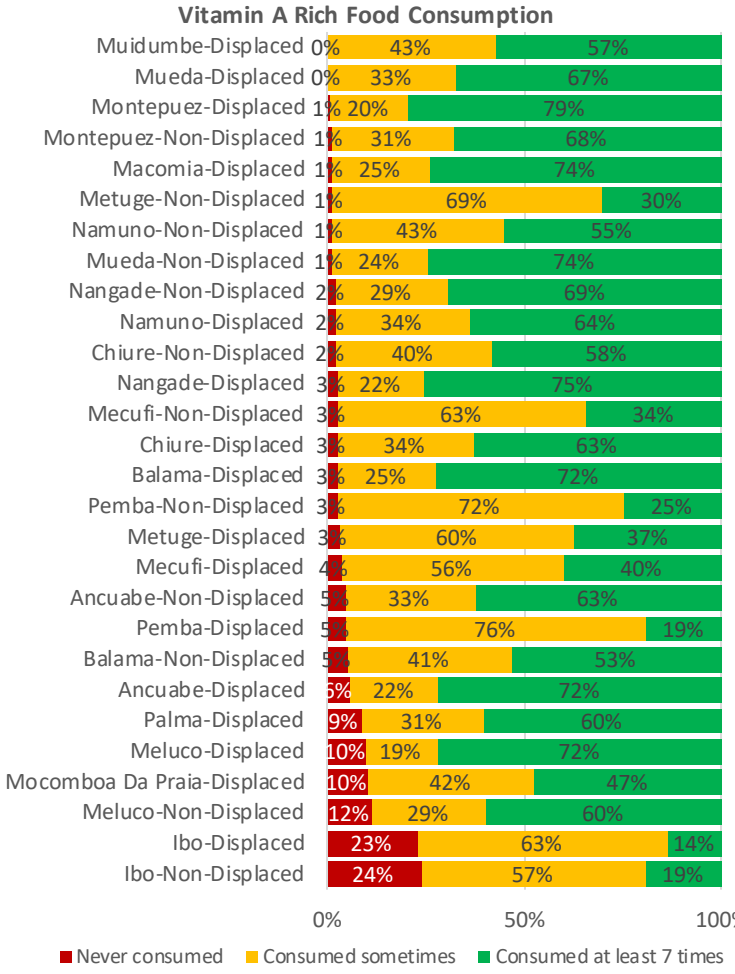

## Household Dietary Diversity

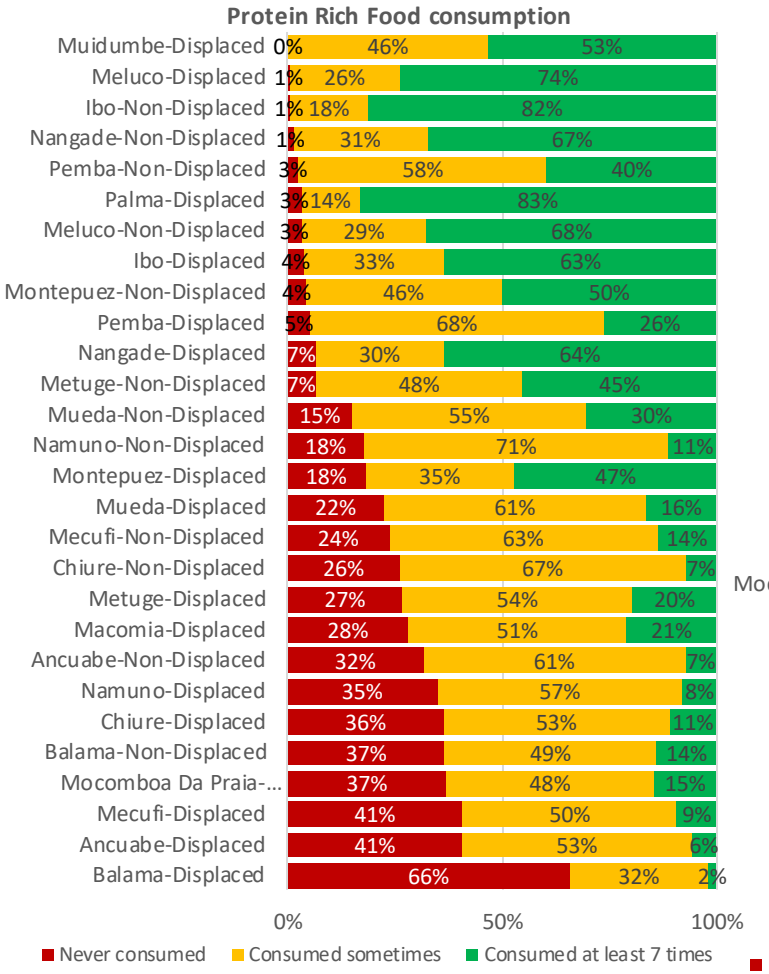
High Household Dietary Diversity (HDDS) was prevalent in the majority of interviewed households, both displace and non-displaced, but in some districts both population groups exhibit less dietary diversity, necessitating targeted nutritional interventions. Particularly concerning are Balama (81%), Namuno (61%), Chiure (59%) and Mocimboa Da Praia (56), where displaced households present the highest percentage of Low Dietary Diversity. Worsening of this indicator outcomes during the lean season is evident. During the post-harvest season in fact Low Dietary Diversity was minimal across all districts, while during the lean season it was found that, excluding Palma standing out with 91% of high HDDS, in all districts there is at least 20% of households reporting Low Dietary Diversity.

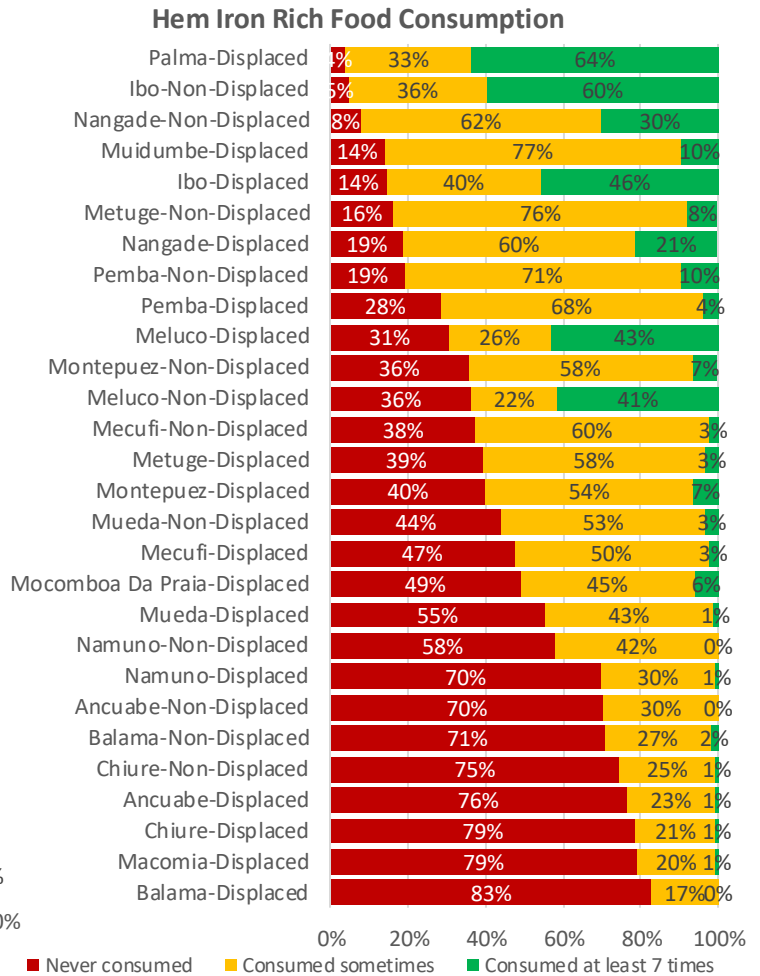



## Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women (MDD-W)

This indicator measures the proportion of women in 15-49 years of age who consumed food items from at least five out of the ten defined food groups the previous day or night. Both displaced and non-displaced households exhibit challenges in ensuring minimum dietary diversity for women. A significant proportion of displaced women in most of the districts reported consuming less than 5 food groups, with Balama (88%), Chiure (84%) and , Ancuabe (80%) showing the highest percentages. The same behaviour is observed in non-displaced HHs, with Chiure (86%), Balama (79%) and Ancuabe (78%) presenting the highest rates and posing significant nutritional challenges. This trend highlights the increased vulnerability of women in both displaced and non-displaced HHs to nutritional deficiencies and the need for targeted nutritional support programs focusing specifically on women.



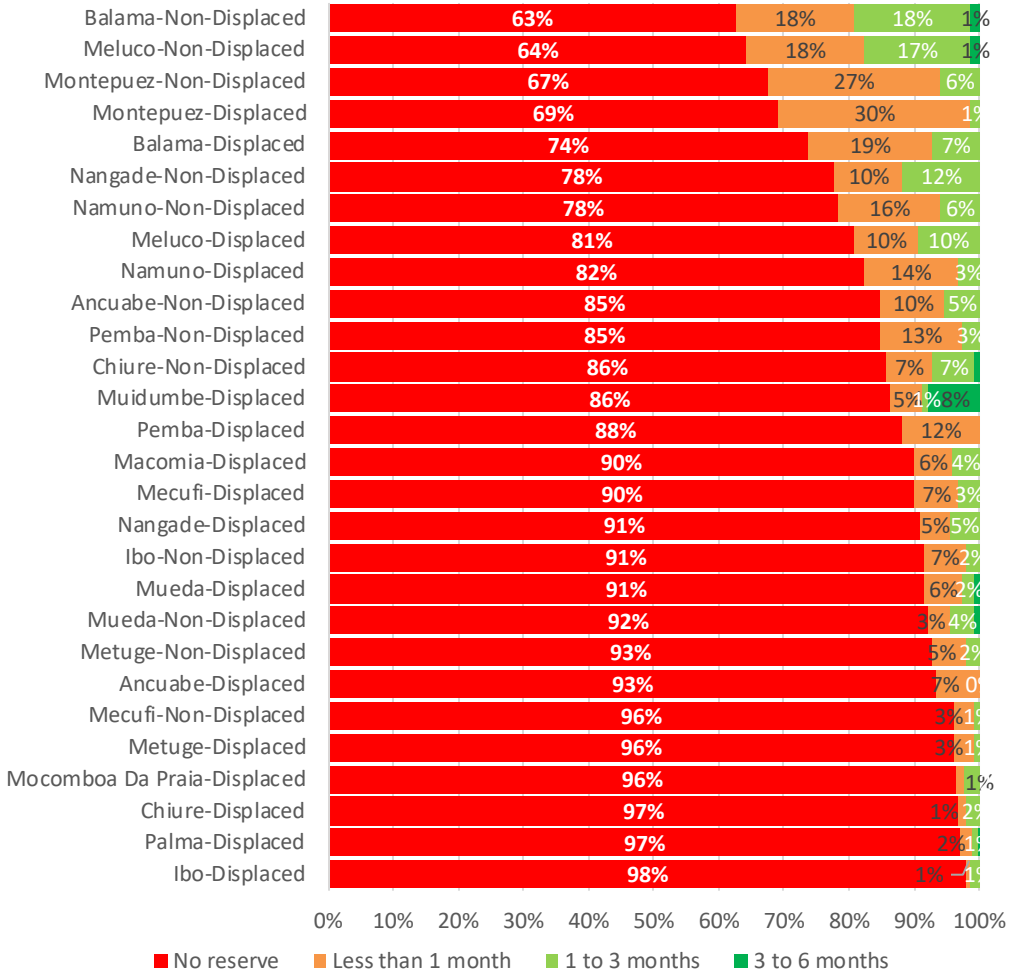



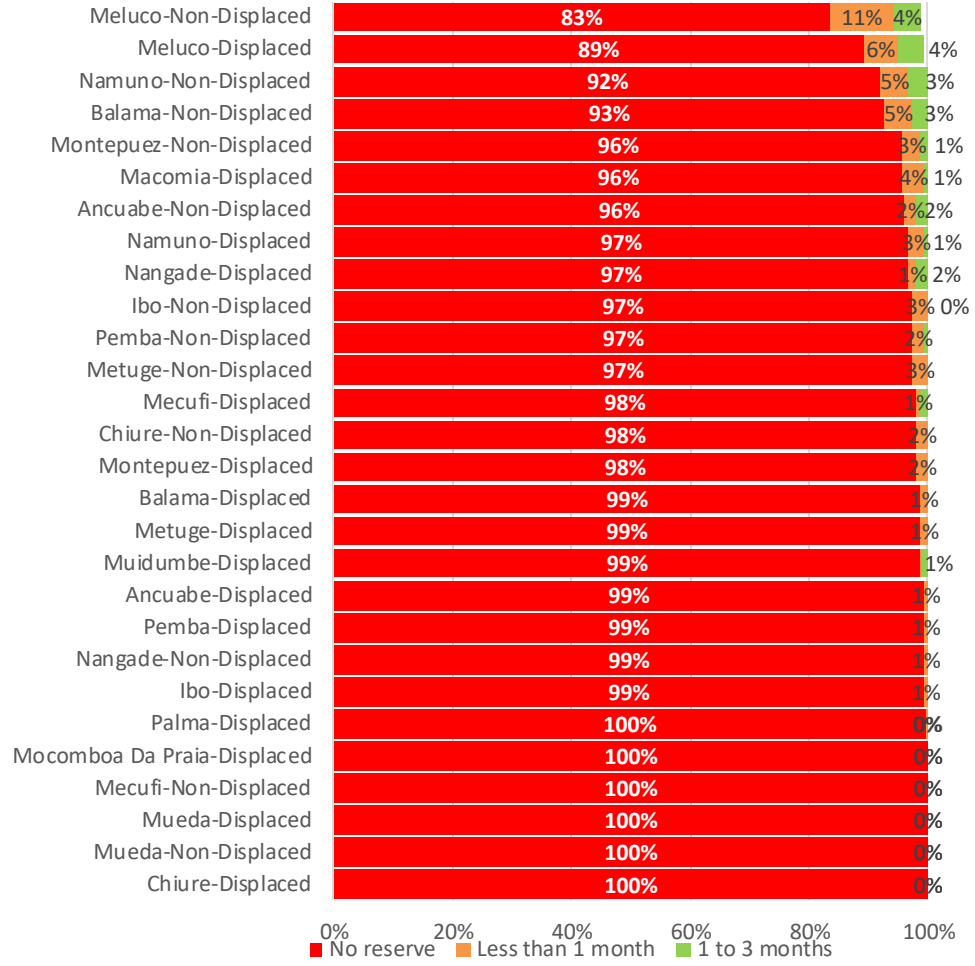

## Nutritious Food Consumption Status (FCS-N)

The FCS-N helps understanding households nutritional health. This assessment highlights poor consumption of food groups rich in protein and hem iron across most of the province of Cabo Delgado as well as medium consumption of vitamin A-rich foods. Non-displaced and displaced HHs present overall similar food consumption habits in most districts covered by this assessment. Ibo, Meluco and Mocimboa da Praia present the lowest frequency in consumption of vitamin A rich food, while in Muidumbe, Mueda and Montepuez the majority of households reported consuming vitamin A at least 7 or more times per week.

Consumption of protein-rich foods was found varying considerably across the province, displaced households in most districts present much lover consumption rates than non-displaced households, in Namuno, Chiure, Balama, Mocimboa da Praia, Mecufi and Ancuabe more than one third of interviewed households reported having never consumed protein rich food in the last week showing very concerning levels of proteins intake.

This assessment confirm findings of the post-harvest food security and nutrition assessment regarding consumption of hem iron rich food. More than half of the population of Cabo Delgado, both displaced and non-displaced households have reported never consuming or only sporadically consuming this type of food, highlighting the importance of expanding nutrition-specific interventions in these areas.



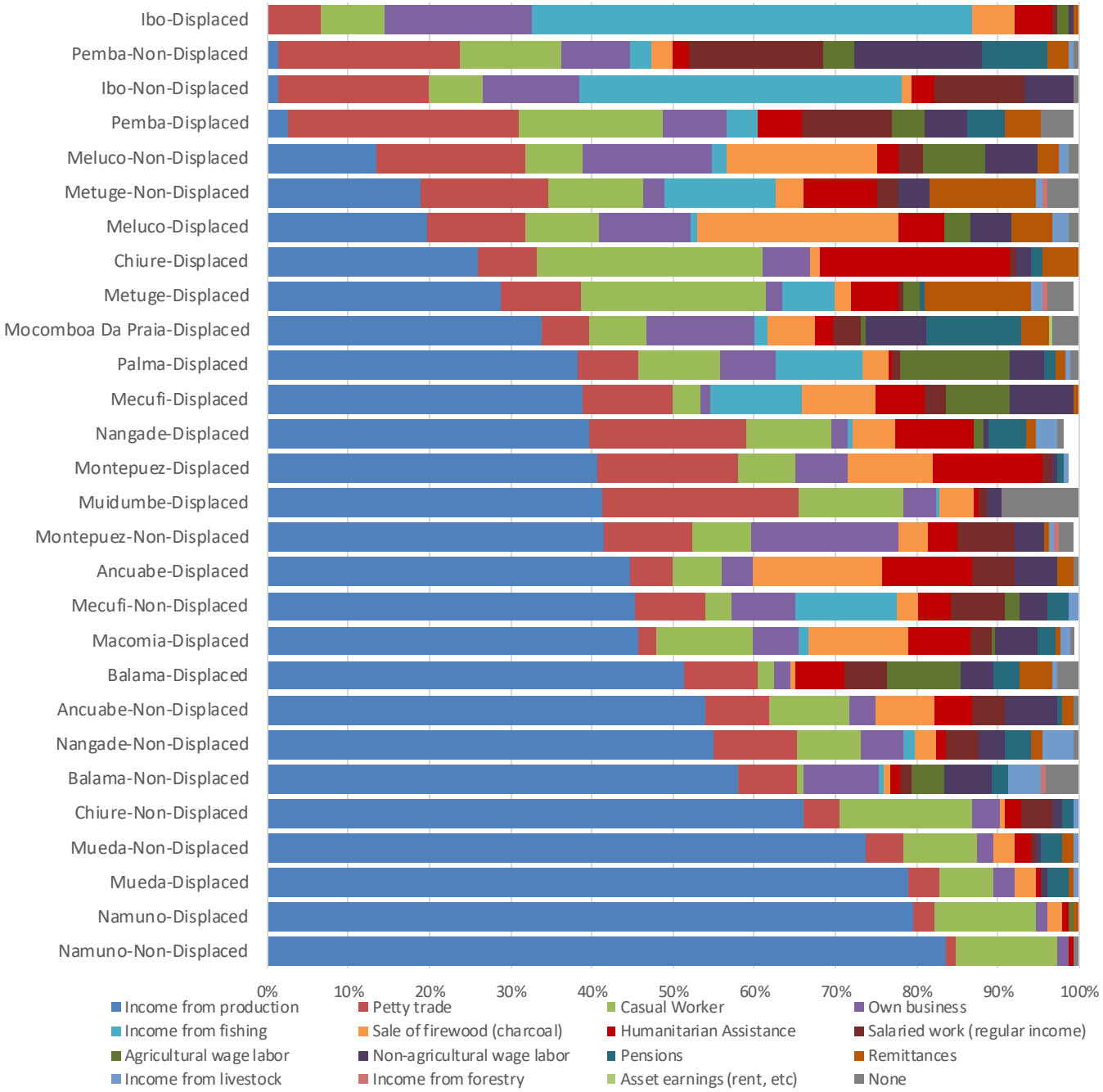

## Cereals Reserve

It is evident that the vast majority of households in Cabo Delgado didn't have any cereals reserve when interviewed in February. This results is astonishing when compared with cereal reserves observed last august. In fact during the post-harvest assessment conducted last august two thirds of households reported having reserved for 3 or more months, which means most of the HHs have had to deplete their food stock to satisfy food needs.

## Pulses/Nuts Reserve

Similar findings were observed when looing at households' pulses and nuts reserves. Very few or none households in both population groups reported having reserves for more than 1 month, indicating important food gaps for one of the main staple food. Overall 96% of households in Mozambique didn't have any pulses or nuts reserve in February. Here also a significant deterioration compared with the post-harvest assessment was observed.

There is a critical need to implement strategic food reserve programs that focus on both immediate relief and the development of sustainable practices for maintaining long-term food reserves. This can include the distribution of seed kits for beans and nuts, support for local agricultural initiatives to bolster resilience against food insecurity. The food reserves don't last because they are consumed even before the lean season, due to their small quantity, and because the productivity and yield of corn in the country is still very low, which would require the introduction of short-cycle crops with high yields.




## Primary Source of Income

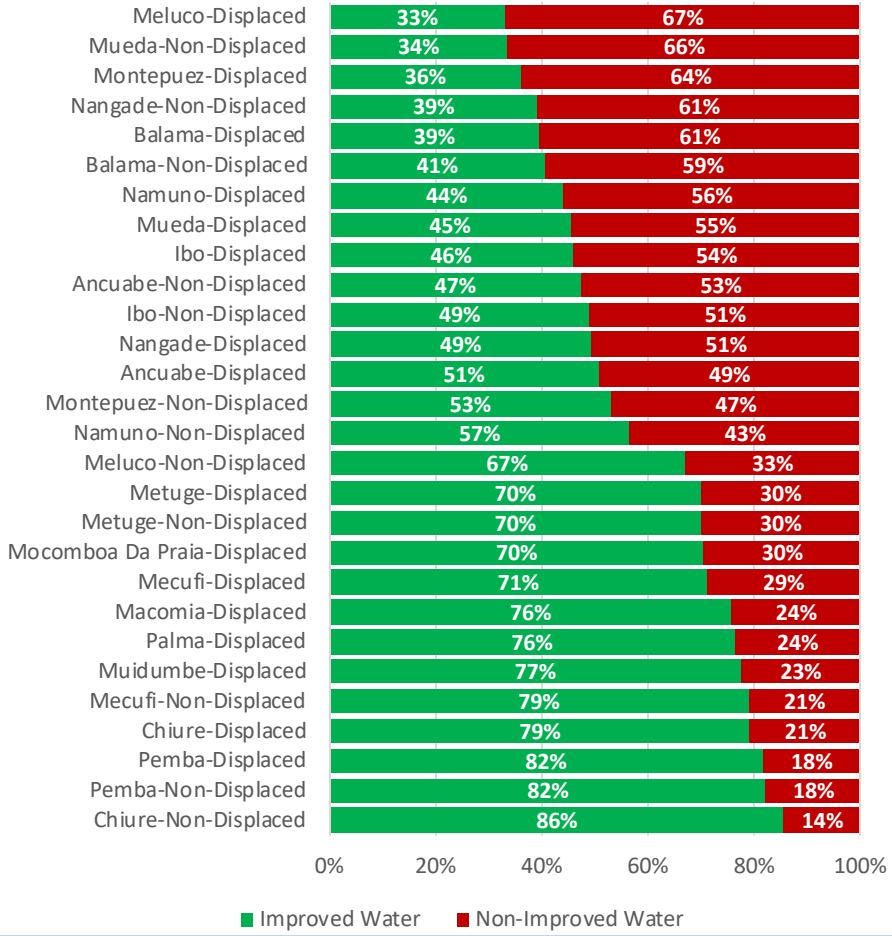
The main income-generating activities in Cabo Delgado province showed a diverse range of livelihood options inn the different districts . In Pemba a significant number of non-displaced HHs are involved in labour activities including petty trade (22%), non-agricultural wage labour (16%), regular salaried work (16%), and other casual work (13%). Other notable income sources varie by district, such as fishing, selling firewood or charcoal. The highest number of households not engaging in any income-generating activity and not receiving humanitarian assistance was recorded in Muidumbe, where 10% of displaced household don't have any livelihood.

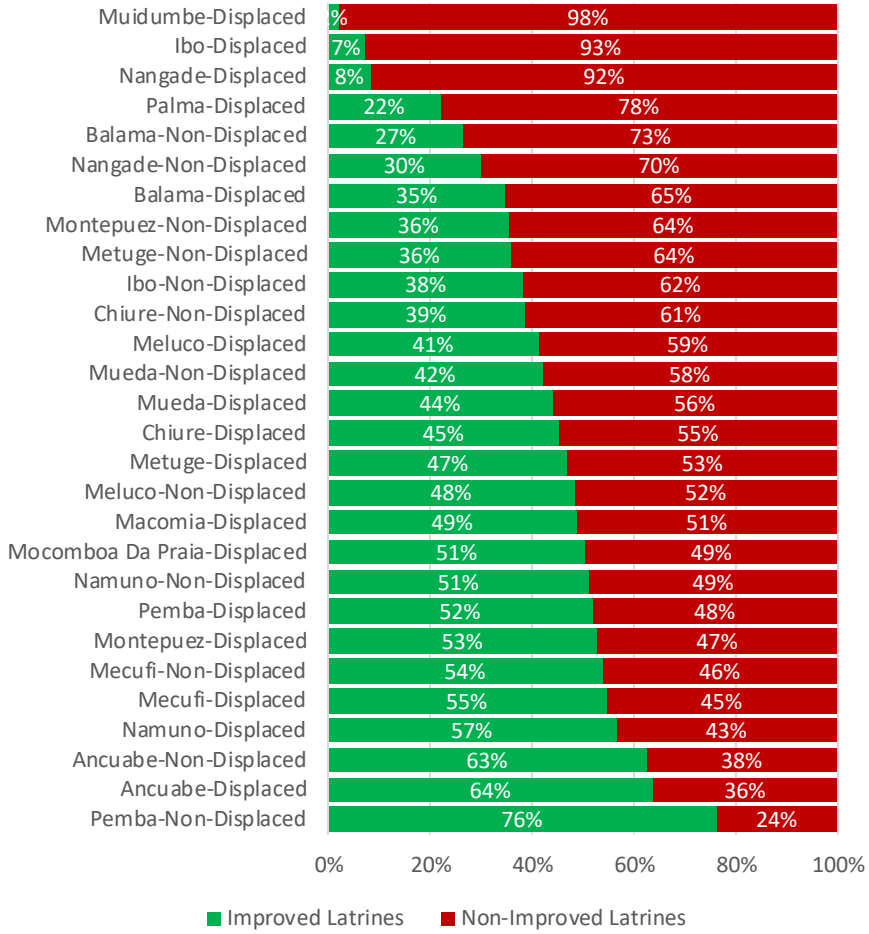
In IDP HHs, reported income-generating activities align with the displacement status, these include in fact casual work, and support from friends, relatives, or UN/NGO. This group often relies more on humanitarian assistance, whether in the form of food, cash for work, or other NGO/charity support, reflecting the challenges faced in maintaining stable income sources due to displacement.

Subsistence farming and fishing remaines a significant source of income in both non-displaced and displaced HHs, with IDP HHs presenting lower rates due to lower access to land and productive assets. Displaced HHs in Namuno (80%), Mueda (79%) and Balama (51%) reported the highest percentage of agricultural production as main source of income.

There is a need for humanitarian efforts to focus on creating diverse livelihood opportunities for both population groups, including vocational traininsg, microenterprise support, and facilitating access to markets. This should aim to reduce reliance on assistance and create more sustainable income sources.

# WASH




## Drinking Water

Approximately half of the population in Cabo Delgado doesn't have access to improved drinking water, access varies considerably across different districts while overall displaced and non-displaced HHs present the same level of access.

IDP households with serious issues in accessing improved drinking water are located in the districts of Meluco (67%), Montepuez (64%), Balama (61%), Namuno (56%) and Mueda (55%). While non-displaced households struggling the most are in Mueda (66%), Nangade (61%), Balama (59%) and Ancuabe (53%).

These disparities highlight the urgent need for targeted interventions to improve water infrastructure and access.

## Sanitation

Access to sanitation facilities also varies considerably across the province, with some districts reporting the majority of displaced and non-displaced households without improved toilet facilities, while others like Pemba and Ancuabe not showing particular issues. Overall, almost 60% of interviewed households in Cabo Delgado reported not having access to improved latrines. IDP households in Muidumbe, Ibo, Nangade and Palma are being affected more than others by this issue. While non-displaced households in Balama, Nangade seems being the most impacted. This scenario suggests urgent need for targeted initiatives aimed at improving sanitation infrastructure and promoting hygiene practices, particularly in areas heavily impacted by displacement and inadequate resources.