

# What next for cyclone-hit Mozambique?

May 2 2019, by Gregory Walton

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Mozambique needs a lot of help to restore its agricultural sector, the head of development agency ADPP says

Mozambique is reeling after an unprecedented two cyclones swept ashore within six weeks, wreaking havoc and leaving hundreds dead and tens of thousands displaced.

As relief efforts continue, Birgit Holm, director of the Mozambican non-governmental development organisation ADPP, discusses the impoverished southern African country's next steps on the road to recovery following Cyclones Idai and Kenneth:

## **What impact did the cyclones have?**

"They have had a very big impact, obviously." Though the first storm was much bigger than the second, "that didn't make the second one any better," said Holm, who has almost four decades of experience in Mozambique with ADPP.

"We have a situation in several provinces where schools have been destroyed and health clinics have been destroyed—bridges, roads too. In general these two cyclones have destroyed a lot, affecting more than two million people in all.

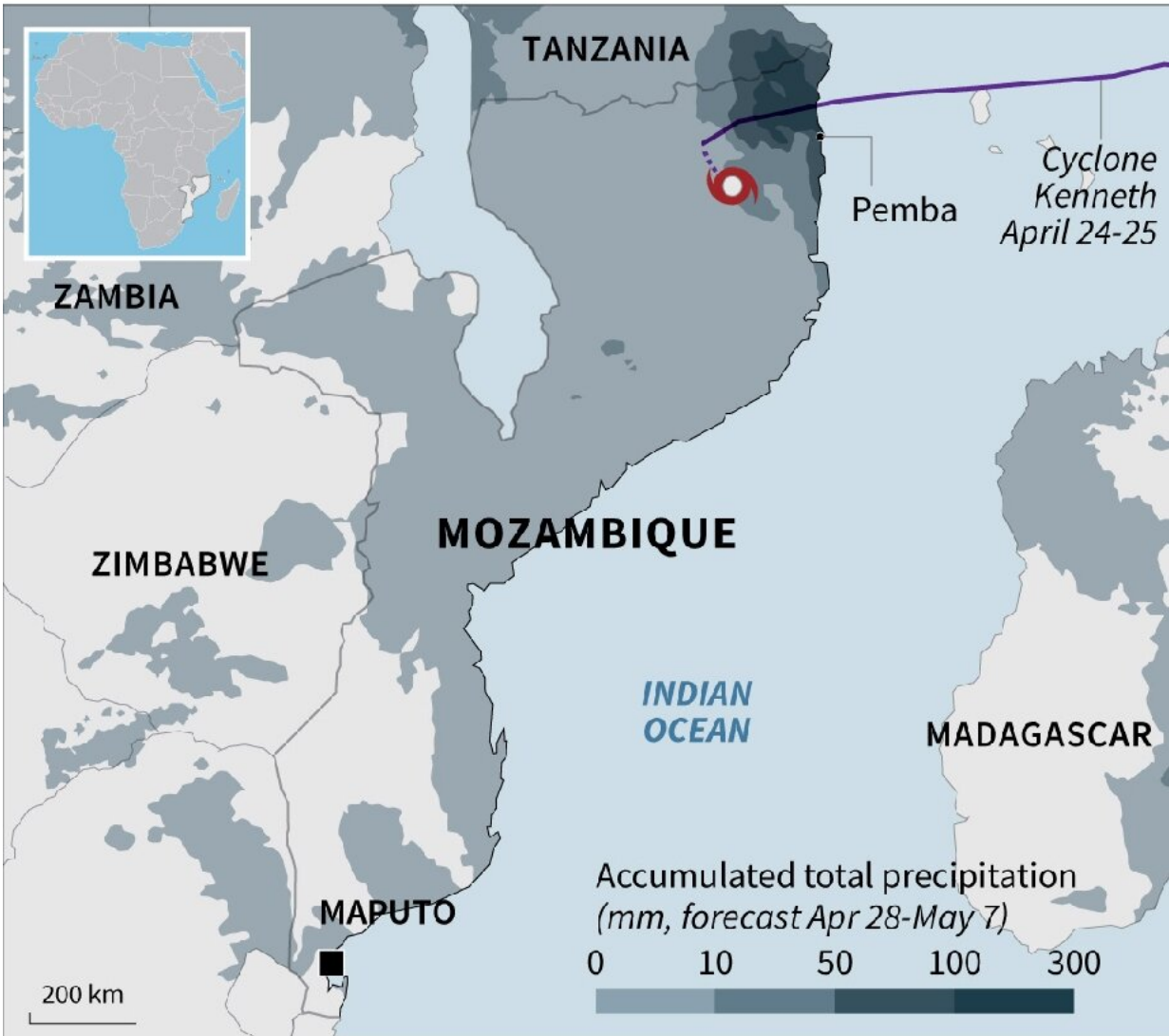
"It sets back Mozambique, already a country which is very poor and with many different problems, so this has just been disastrous."

## **What needs to be done?**

"The big need is for those with some means and some funding to go in and rehabilitate all the infrastructure that was destroyed. Because so many people also lost their homes and livelihoods, (but) it's not only a question of infrastructure," said Holm.

# Flooding in Mozambique

Dozens of people killed and thousands of homes destroyed in the devastation that followed Cyclone Kenneth



The path of Cyclone Kenneth and accumulated total precipitation forecast

"It's also about giving input to the people—a lot of it will be agricultural

inputs because a great number of the population are working in agriculture. That part really needs a lot of emphasis so they can get tools and seeds."

## What does the future hold?

"In the future, this (kind of weather) is going to increase. I don't think anybody is in any doubt about that," said Holm.

"The fact that the two cyclones came within six weeks, it's never happened—ever. And the size of these cyclones and the fact they were so big because of the very [high temperatures](#) in the sea, that is not going to be different in the future. It's going to be worse.

"We need to look into how buildings can be reinforced and built to be more resilient. How small-scale farmers can learn to use new techniques, whether it's (to mitigate) droughts or floods.

For several years in Mozambique, "we've had drought in the south, and people are suffering from that. Then we have floods in the centre and the north. So all these things have to be thought of in a different way from before.





Mozambique homes must be reinforced and farmers must learn how to mitigate droughts and floods, an aid expert says

"There has been years and years of work about mitigating climate change—but it just has to be even more than before... so the population can be prepared for these situations in the future."

## **Will the cyclone 'spotlight' help Mozambique?**

"It always helps, but you do fear it's just there in the short period of the emergency and then it goes away again," Holm told AFP.

"What I hope, and what I hear from some organisations who have come

to the country but never had a presence here before, is that some are thinking about continuing and doing longer-term (projects).

"The government is saying this will take at least five years to rehabilitate and get back to where we were—and where we were was not that high a level. So it's really needed and I hope that the organisations and institutions that have these means will start looking at giving Mozambique the help they need. And not only loans—we don't need more loans."

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