

World Watch Research

Mozambique: Background Information

September 2024



OpenDoors

Serving persecuted **Christians** worldwide

Open Doors International / World Watch Research

September 2024

© Open Doors International

Open Doors Sverige
sweden@od.org | 019-31 05 00 | www.open-doors.se

Contents

Copyright and sources	1
Map of country	2
Recent history	3
Political and legal landscape	4
Religious landscape	6
Economic landscape.....	7
Social and cultural landscape.....	9
Technological landscape	10
Security situation	11
Christian origins	12
Church spectrum today.....	13
Further useful reports.....	13
External Links	14

Copyright and sources

World Watch Research has divided up the previously named Full Country Dossier into two separate documents:

- Background country information (published annually in summer)
- Persecution dynamics (published annually in January).

These documents are the property of World Watch Research (WWR), the research department of Open Doors International. They include data and analysis based around Open Doors World Watch List (WWL) and statistical information on world religions, Christian denominations and people groups prepared by the World Christian Database (WCD). Highlighted links in the text can be found written out in full at the end of each document under the heading “External links”. These documents may be used and distributed free of charge, but please always acknowledge the source as: © Open Doors International.

Map of country



Mozambique: Population (UN estimate for 2024)	Christians	Chr%
34,858,000	19,973,000	57.3

Zurlo G A and Johnson T M, eds., *World Christian Database*, Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed May 2024

Recent history

After almost five centuries as a Portuguese colony, Mozambique became independent in 1975. There followed large-scale emigration, economic dependence on South Africa, a severe drought and a prolonged civil war, which all served to hinder the country's development until the mid-1990s.

The ruling Front for the Liberation of Mozambique party (FRELIMO) formally abandoned Marxism in 1989, and a new constitution the following year provided for multi-party elections and a free market economy. A UN-negotiated peace agreement between FRELIMO and rebel Mozambique National Resistance (RENAMO) forces ended the fighting in 1992. In 2004, Mozambique underwent a delicate transition as Joaquim Chissano stepped down after 18 years in office as president. His elected successor, Armando Guebuza, served two terms and then passed executive power to Filipe Nyusi in 2015.

Long considered to be a post-conflict success story, Mozambique currently finds itself in a period of uncertainty, with past political progress and current economic opportunities threatened by unresolved tensions. After a period of post-war reconstruction, the country enjoyed steady and solid economic progress. GDP growth averaged between 7 and 8 percent for the past decade, and the discovery of significant reserves of coal and gas has driven robust foreign investment. Yet beneath strong [economic growth](#) and political progress marked by five consecutive multi-party elections, problems such as poverty, inequality, corruption, and political violence persist (World Politics Review, 21 January 2016).

Economic prosperity has been undermined since the return of political instability and violence in 2012. That year, renewed tensions between RENAMO and the ruling Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) called into question the political progress made since 1992, worrying investors and tarnishing the country's image as a post-war success story. RENAMO's residual armed forces have intermittently engaged in a low-level insurgency since 2012, although a late December 2016 ceasefire held throughout 2017. [Fighting erupted again](#) in 2019 when FRELIMO remained in power after disputed election results (All Africa, 20 April 2020).

Meanwhile, violent Islamic militants have been attacking the civilian population in the northern part of the country. Christians are heavily affected and have been fleeing from their homes to avoid being targeted by jihadists. At the same time coalition forces from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and Rwanda (together with advisors from other nations) have had success in pushing the jihadists back. On the other hand, the the impact of jihadists is expanding to the south despite the success achieved by the government and its allies.

According to Freedom House's [Freedom in the World Index 2023 Mozambique](#):

- "The Islamist insurgency in Cabo Delgado Province remained ongoing during the year [2022], displacing hundreds of thousands of people. However, despite continued conflict, a relative improvement in security allowed an increasing number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to

return to their place of origin by year's end."

In its Mozambique profile (accessed 2 February 2024), [International Crisis Group](#) highlights the seriousness of the situation since violent Islamic militants took up arms in 2017:

- "The conflict threatens national stability, just as Mozambique is fulfilling a peace deal with the country's main opposition group in the center of Mozambique, and risks becoming a new frontier for global jihad to exploit."

In September 2023, the village of Naquitengue in Cabo Delgado province witnessed a horrific massacre where at least 11 Christians were executed after being separated from Muslims by jihadists. These persistent attacks have exacerbated the displacement crisis, with over 1 million people already uprooted from their homes due to ongoing conflict since 2017.

In 2024, Mozambique has continued to grapple with significant security and humanitarian challenges, particularly in the northern regions. The Islamic State-affiliated militants intensified their attacks, targeting Christian communities. In January 2024, a series of coordinated assaults in the Mocímboa da Praia district led to the deaths of ten Christians and the destruction of over 200 homes, including a church. This violence was part of a broader campaign named "Kill Them Wherever You Find Them," which was explicitly aimed at Christians and announced by the group's spokesperson, Abu Hudhayfah Al-Ansar.

The country is now gearing up for general elections in October 2024.

Political and legal landscape

Mozambique has gone through tumultuous times. After independence in 1975, the Mozambique National Resistance (Resistência Nacional Moçambicana; RENAMO) was created. "Internal conflict raged throughout Mozambique from the late 1970s until 1992. Throughout this period FRELIMO remained Mozambique's sole political party. Multi-party elections began in 1994 but FRELIMO and RENAMO continue to be the major parties, alongside a handful of others. Universal suffrage was guaranteed by the 1990 Constitution. By the early 21st century, [women](#) had begun to serve in significant numbers in the Assembly of the Republic and on the Council of Ministers, and in 2004 Luisa Diogo was named prime minister - the first woman to hold the post in Mozambique" (Britannica, last accessed 20 January 2023).

In May 2018, parliament made steps towards greater decentralization by approving constitutional reforms allowing the indirect election of provincial governors, district administrators and mayors. In October 2019, presidential, legislative, and provincial elections were held across the country, which was the country's sixth successive general election since the introduction of multiparty elections in 1994. FRELIMO won the presidency and the national parliament. FRELIMO also secured a majority in all 10 provinces, thus electing governors for each province.

In the October 2019 presidential election, incumbent President Nyusi won with a [landslide](#) victory (France24, 27 October 2019) but opposition RENAMO rejected the result and called for [rerun](#) accusing the "government of using violence and intimidation on election day" (Al-Jazeera, 19 October 2019). However, the country's top court [dismissed](#) this (Reuters, 15 November 2019).

[Freedom House](#), which rated Mozambique as 'partly free' (with a score of 44/100 points) in its 2024 Freedom Index, summarizes the country's state of affairs in the last three decades in its Global Freedom Index 2024 Mozambique report as follows:

- "The ruling party's unbroken incumbency before and since the first multiparty elections in 1994 has allowed it to establish significant control over state institutions. The opposition has disputed the results of recent elections, and its armed wing fought a low-level conflict against government forces that persisted until a truce was signed in 2016. Hundreds of thousands of people have since been internally displaced due to an ongoing Islamist insurgency. Mozambique also struggles with corruption, and journalists who report on it and other sensitive issues risk violent attacks."

[Africa Intelligence](#) reported in May 2023 that Frelimo "has no plans to share power".

As Human Rights Watch ([HRW 2024, Mozambique country chapter](#)) and [Freedom House's Freedom in the World 2024 Mozambique report](#) pointed out, Mozambique's legal and political landscape in 2024 remains characterized by significant challenges, including entrenched political dominance by the ruling party FRELIMO, pervasive corruption and ongoing security issues. FRELIMO has maintained a strong grip on power since the country's first multiparty elections in 1994. This control has led to significant manipulation of electoral outcomes. The October 2023 local elections were marked by widespread allegations of fraud, voter intimidation, and violence, particularly targeting the opposition party RENAMO. Despite these issues, FRELIMO claimed victories in the majority of municipalities, reinforcing its political dominance. These reports add that corruption continues to undermine governance and the rule of law in Mozambique. The judiciary is heavily influenced by the executive branch, which hampers the enforcement of anti-corruption measures. High-profile corruption cases, such as the "hidden debts" scandal involving former finance minister Manuel Chang, highlight the challenges in holding powerful individuals accountable. Although Mozambique has a legal framework to combat corruption, enforcement remains weak due to entrenched patronage networks and political interference.

The security situation in northern Mozambique, particularly in Cabo Delgado province, remains precarious due to the ongoing Islamist insurgency. Joint military efforts by Mozambican, Rwandan and Southern African Development Community (SADC) forces have led to some improvements in security, allowing some internally displaced persons (IDPs) to return to their homes. However, attacks by insurgents have persisted, causing further displacement and exacerbating humanitarian challenges. Many IDPs live in precarious conditions, struggling to access basic services and rebuild their lives.

Furthermore, as Freedom House noted, Mozambique was placed on the "grey list" by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) in June 2023, due to deficiencies in its anti-money-laundering and counterterrorism financing policies. This designation complicates Mozambique's efforts to attract foreign investment and engage in international financial transactions, posing additional challenges to its economic stability and development.

Overall, Mozambique's legal and political environment in 2024 is marked by entrenched political control by FRELIMO, pervasive corruption, ongoing security issues in the north, and significant economic hurdles. These factors collectively hinder the country's progress towards greater political stability and sustainable development.

Gender perspective

Women remain particularly vulnerable within Mozambique’s political and legal system. The [2004 Family Law \(Article 7\)](#) is the overarching legal framework for marriage and provides for equal rights for both women and men to enter marriage and file for divorce. Many women in informal or de facto unions however, have uncertain legal rights. The practice of ‘widow purification’ (*pita-kufa*) continues, whereby widows are forced to have sex with a relative of her deceased husband’s family ([BMC International Health and Human Rights 18/1, September 2018](#)), as does the practice of land and property-grabbing from widows. The minimum legal age for marriage is set at 18, although marriages can occur from the age of 16 with the consent of the court, parent or guardian (Family Law, 2004, Art. 19). Mozambique has one of the highest child marriage rates in the world, with 53% of girls marrying by the age of 18 ([Girls Not Brides Mozambique](#), accessed 21 August 2024). The Law on Domestic Violence Perpetrated Against Women Act, introduced in 2009, was an important step in providing protection for victims, particularly as it specifically addressed marital rape. Effectively implementing legislation in practice, however, remains an ongoing issue ([Jetha et al, BMC Public Health 21/1, April 2021](#)).

Religious landscape

Mozambique: Religious context	Number of adherents	%
Christians	19,973,000	57.3
Muslim	6,220,000	17.8
Hindu	57,900	0.2
Buddhist	3,800	0.0
Ethnic religionist	8,443,000	24.2
Jewish	200	0.0
Bahai	4,400	0.0
Atheist	25,800	0.1
Agnostic	122,000	0.3
Other	8,200	0.0
<i>OTHER includes Chinese folk, New religionist, Sikh, Spiritist, Taoist, Confucianist, Jain, Shintoist, Zoroastrian.</i>		

Zurlo G A and Johnson T M, eds., *World Christian Database*, Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed May 2024

The South Asian immigrant population and the northern provinces are predominantly Muslim, particularly along the coast, while some areas of the northern interior have a stronger concentration

of Christian communities. Christians are more numerous in the southern and central regions, but Muslims also live in these areas.

Mozambique has a fast growing Evangelical population, but many small churches that have split off from mainstream denominations have fused African indigenous beliefs and practices within a Christian framework. (Some Muslim communities also continue to perform indigenous rituals.) Reports show that the government of Mozambique is [concerned about](#) the emergence of such smaller churches and has been planning for some time to put stricter regulations in place (Club of Mozambique, 30 May 2019).

The US State Department's comments in the [2010 International Religious Freedom Report](#) are still valid today:

- "Muslim journalists reported that the distinction between Sunni and Shi'a was not particularly important for many local Muslims, and Muslims were much more likely to identify themselves by the local religious leader they follow than as Sunni or Shi'a. There were significant differences between the practices of Muslims of African origin and those of South Asian background. In addition African Muslim clerics have increasingly sought training in Egypt, Kuwait, South Africa, and Saudi Arabia, returning with a more fundamental approach than the local traditional, Sufi-inspired Swahili Islam particularly common in the north."

As reported by the US State Department ([IRFR 2023 Mozambique](#)):

- Religious leaders played a significant role in the October municipal elections by sending representatives to polling sites as observers and issuing statements advocating for free and fair voting, accurate tabulation of results, and judicial review of legal challenges.
- Anglican Bishop Carlos Matsinhe, serving as the chair of the National Elections Commission, led a commission with representatives from Frelimo, Renamo, and civil society organizations. Following the elections, the Anglican Council of Mozambique issued a pastoral letter criticizing election management failings and interference by individuals without an official role in the electoral process.

Economic landscape

Mozambique's development and economic strength are constrained by social considerations including pervasive poverty and limited access to basic services such as education and health care, and access to roads and electricity.

According to the [African Development Bank's Mozambique Economic Outlook](#) (accessed 21 August 2024):

- **Economic growth:** Mozambique's economy experienced significant growth in 2023, with real GDP increasing by an estimated 5.0%, up from 4.2% in 2022. This growth was primarily driven by the maturation of liquefied natural gas processing in the Coral South Field, along with strong performance in the extractive and service sectors on the supply side, and robust private consumption on the demand side. Tight monetary policy and lower local food and transport prices helped reduce inflation from 10.3% in 2022 to an estimated 7.1% in 2023.

- **Poverty:** Despite the positive economic growth, poverty remains a major issue in Mozambique, with an estimated 74.5% of the population, or about 24 million people, living in poverty in 2023. This high poverty rate underscores the challenges of achieving inclusive growth, as recent economic gains have not significantly improved employment rates, which fell from 75.6% in 2019 to 73.6% in 2020.
- **Debt:** Mozambique continues to face significant debt challenges. Although the fiscal deficit improved from 5.1% of GDP in 2022 to about 2.8% in 2023 due to cuts in public spending and higher domestic revenue collection, the country remains in debt distress. However, on a forward-looking basis, Mozambique's debt is assessed as sustainable. The country's international reserves dropped from 3.1 months of import cover in 2022 to 2.2 months in 2023 due to currency depreciation, and asset quality remains low, with nonperforming loans at 9.1% of gross loans in September 2023.
- **Current Account Deficit:** The current account deficit in Mozambique saw a significant improvement, decreasing from 34.2% of GDP in 2022 to an estimated 11.1% in 2023. This improvement was driven by increased exports and declining imports. Foreign direct investment and external borrowings were the main sources of financing the current account deficit.
- **Outlook and risks:** Real GDP in Mozambique is projected to grow by an average of 5.2% between 2024 and 2025, supported by continued expansion in the extractives sector, particularly gas production, and agriculture on the supply side, as well as private consumption and foreign direct investments on the demand side. However, several headwinds could impact this outlook, including climate change, a potential slowdown in reform implementation due to the general election in October 2024, and ongoing global supply chain disruptions stemming from Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The fiscal deficit is expected to widen to 3.4% of GDP in 2024 before narrowing to 1.3% in 2025 as fiscal consolidation measures take effect and revenue collection improves. Inflation is projected to fall to an average of 4.8% between 2024 and 2025. However, the current account deficit is expected to increase to 38.1% of GDP in 2024 and 43.0% in 2025 due to rising imports.

As per Heritage Foundation's [2024 Index of Economic Freedom](#), Mozambique's economic freedom score for 2023 was 52.5, showing a 1.2-point improvement compared to the previous year, ranking it 134th in the Index. While it stands 28th among Sub-Saharan African countries, its overall score is still below the world and regional averages. The report by the Foundation adds that the country has made efforts to enact regulatory and investment reforms, leading to growth in private-sector economic activity. However, privatization of state-owned enterprises has faced delays. Mozambique still grapples with institutional shortcomings that hinder long-term economic development. Ineffectiveness in the legal framework and susceptibility to corruption and political interference continue to be challenges in the judicial system.

According to Heritage Foundation's [2023 Index of Economic Freedom](#), Mozambique's economic freedom score was 50.7, ranking it 141st out of 184 countries and 34th out of 47 in Sub-Saharan Africa. This score decreased by 1.8 points from the previous year, positioning Mozambique's economy in the "mostly unfree" category. Despite attempts at economic reforms, the country faces significant institutional and fiscal challenges, including corruption and political influence in judicial enforcement, an inefficient regulatory environment, and a high public debt burden of 95.5% of GDP. The regulatory

inefficiencies hinder private-sector growth, although the country has made some progress in tax burden and monetary freedom.

Gender perspective

Women are typically more economically vulnerable than men in Mozambique. Whilst Articles 66 and 213 of the Civil Code allow for equal inheritance rights for both genders, customary practices commonly deny women and girls their due inheritance. The female labor force participation rate is high, with 73.9% of women in the workplace, compared to 80.1% of men ([UNDP Human Development Report Mozambique](#), data updates as of 13 March 2024). However, women have more limited access to formal financial inclusion instruments than men and are more likely to be working in the informal sector ([LSE blog, 12 March 2018](#)).

Social and cultural landscape

According to [UNDP Human Development Report Mozambique](#) (data updates as of 13 March 2024) and [World Factbook Mozambique](#) (accessed 21 August 2024):

- **Main ethnic groups:** 99% of Mozambicans are descended from indigenous tribes (Makhuwa, Tsonga, Lomwe, Sena, Chokwe, Manyika, and Sau), Mestizo 0.8%, other 0.2% (includes European, Indian, Pakistani, Chinese) (2017 est.)
- **Main languages:** Makhuwa 26.1%, Portuguese (official) 16.6%, Tsonga 8.6%, Nyanja 8.1%, Sena 7.1%, Lomwe 7.1%, Chuwabo 4.7%, Ndau 3.8%, Tswa 3.8%, other Mozambican languages 11.8%, other 0.5%, unspecified 1.8% (2017 est.). English is also spoken in major cities such as Maputo and Beira.
- **Median age:** 17 years
- **Urban population:** 38.2% of total population (2022 est.)
- **Expected years of schooling:** 10 years
- **Literacy rate, adult (def. 15 years and older can read and write):** 60.7%
- **Employment to population ratio (15 years and older):** 75.6%
- **Unemployment, total (% of labor force):** 3.2% (UNDP 2020 est.)
- **Unemployment, youth (15-24 years of age):** 6.9% (UNDP 2020 est.)

Refugees/IDPs

According to [UNHCR, Operational Data Portal Mozambique](#) (accessed 21 August 2024):

- At the end of May 2024, there were a total of 24,007 refugees and asylum seekers in Mozambique, with the largest groups originating from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (39.5%), Burundi (35.1%), and Rwanda (14.3%).
- At the end of May 2024, there were 582,764 IDPs in North Mozambique caused by conflict and 126,305 IDPs in Central Mozambique caused by natural disasters.

According to [UNDP Human Development Report Mozambique](#) (data updates as of 13 March 2024):

- **Human Development Index:** Mozambique ranked 181st out of 189 countries with a value of 0.456.
- **Average life expectancy at birth:** 60.9 years

- **Gender Development Index (GDI):** 0.912 (world: 0.943)
- **Gender inequality index (GII):** 0.523 (world: 0.436). Mozambique ranks 127th out of 162 countries.

According to [Moody's Analytics](#), People & Society, Demographic profile (accessed 2 February 2024):

- "Mozambique is a poor, sparsely populated country with high fertility and mortality rates. About 45% of the population is younger than 15. Mozambique's high poverty rate is caused by natural disasters, disease, high population growth, low agricultural productivity, and unequal distribution of wealth. The country's birth rate is among the world's highest, averaging more than 5 children per woman (and higher in rural areas) for at least the last three decades. The sustained high level of fertility reflects gender inequality, low contraceptive use, early marriages and childbearing, and a lack of education, particularly among women."

Gender perspective

As noted in a [2019 CEDAW report](#), discriminatory gender stereotypes and harmful practices persist in Mozambique, including polygamy, child marriage, female genital mutilation and accusations of witchcraft against women. The report further highlights the widespread impunity for such practices and the lack of convictions in cases of child marriage. Stark regional differences in the rates of child marriage across Mozambique suggest that sociocultural factors play a significant role; rates are highest in Northern and Central regions. Within the context of the COVID-19 crisis, the rate of child marriages reportedly increased, driven partly by the closure of schools ([UNICEF, Child marriage in COVID-19 contexts, 2021, p.1](#)). Lockdowns also served to exacerbate gender-based violence and domestic violence ([Club of Mozambique, 2 September 2020](#)). To try and combat child marriage, traditional leaders – widely understood to be the guardians of social practices and norms – have been invited to work alongside government and social organizations through a joint forum ([Club of Mozambique, 29 March 2021](#)).

Technological landscape

According to [DataReportal Digital 2024: Mozambique](#) (23 February 2024) / survey date - January 2024:

- **Internet usage:** Mozambique had 7.96 million internet users at the beginning of 2024, reflecting an internet penetration rate of 23.2%. These figures reveal that 26.41 million people in Mozambique did *not* use the internet at the start of 2024, suggesting that 76.8 percent of the population remained offline at the beginning of the year.
- **Social media usage:** In January 2024, there were 3.20 million social media users in Mozambique, equating to 9.3% of the total population. 41.3% of Mozambique's social media users were female, while 58.7% were male.
- **Active cellular mobile connections:** The country had 18.91 million active cellular mobile connections in early 2024, which is equivalent to 55.0% of the total population.

The [GSMA Mobile Gender Gap Report \(2020\)](#) shows that Mozambique has a gender gap of 17% in relation to mobile phone ownership, and a gender gap of 39% in relation to mobile Internet users. Mozambique was (along with six other Sub-Saharan African countries) in the ten countries that

reported the largest gains in women's cell phone use on [Georgetown's Women, Peace and Security Index \(2019/20, p.35\)](#).

Due to the fact that Mozambique experienced both a war for independence and civil war in the not too distant past, it is not surprising to see the country not having advanced technology and infrastructure. The communication infrastructure is however developing significantly.

Security situation

From October 2017 onwards, there have been recurrent attacks in the north by Islamic militants who have killed many Christians and burned down Christian homes. In addition, the radical Islamic group *al-Sunnah wa Jama'ah* (ASWJ) has called for the removal of Christian symbols and has attacked houses belonging to Christians in some parts of Cabo Delgado province.

[International Crisis Group](#) noted in its Mozambique updates (accessed 21 August 2024):

- **Insurgency in Cabo Delgado:** Mozambique's northern province, Cabo Delgado, remains embroiled in conflict, largely due to the presence of the Islamic State-affiliated group, Ahlu Sunna wal-Jama'a (ISM). Despite efforts from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and other foreign military forces, the insurgency has not been fully eradicated. While the SADC mission, which began in 2021, has reclaimed significant territory and reduced insurgent numbers from 3,000 to around 300, recent upticks in attacks suggest militants are regrouping. South Africa plans to extend its military presence in the region, while Rwanda is set to increase its troop deployment, indicating a continued reliance on foreign military intervention.
- **Foreign Military Presence and Withdrawal:** SADC's mandate expired on 15 July 2024, leading to the withdrawal of troops. South Africa, however, will maintain its forces in the region until at least December, and Rwanda will bolster its troops to 4,500. The departure of the SADC mission raises concerns about a potential security vacuum that the insurgents might exploit. The effectiveness of the post-SADC security arrangements between Mozambique, South Africa and Tanzania remains uncertain.
- **Upcoming presidential and legislative elections:** Mozambique is scheduled to hold presidential and legislative elections on 9 October 2024. The electoral process faces significant challenges, including potential disruptions from insurgent attacks, inadequate preparation, and funding shortages for the electoral commission. There are concerns about election credibility, with the ruling FRELIMO party likely to employ aggressive tactics to secure victory. Potential election-related violence and post-election instability are major risks, especially in opposition strongholds.
- **International and regional dynamics:** The future of foreign military intervention in Mozambique is uncertain, with regional and international actors playing critical roles. Rwanda's involvement, backed by EU funding, has been pivotal, but its long-term objectives, including economic interests, remain under scrutiny. The withdrawal of SADC forces and the upcoming elections add layers of complexity to Mozambique's security and political landscape.

Gender perspective

According to a report by World Vision in 2020, sexual violence against children has become a serious problem in Mozambique, with 99% of rape cases affecting girls ([Club of Mozambique, 25 November](#)

[2020](#)). This rise has been linked to increasing unemployment of parents and guardians, displacement, and attacks by militias. As reported by Amnesty international, the jihadists abduct both boys and girls, to become soldiers and wives respectively, or for the purpose of sexual assault ([AI News, 2 March 2021](#)). Gender-based violence has also increased within Mozambique's fragile context; women and girls are broadly understood to be the demographic most disproportionately affected by conflict ([Georgetown, 2019/20, p.52](#); [Africa Renewal, 24 February 2021](#)). In 2019, reports indicated that community leaders of displaced populations coerced women into exchanging sex for aid ([HRW, 25 April 2019](#)).

[Amnesty International's Report 2021/22](#) (pp. 261-262) stated:

- "Violence against women and girls remained rampant, with few measures taken to hold perpetrators accountable: revelations emerged in June that the wardens of the Ndlavela Women's Prison in Maputo province had created an elaborate scheme for sexual abuse and exploitation of prisoners for years; in March, a man brutally killed his wife with an iron bar, alleging she had been drinking beer with a male neighbor; in April, a man beat his wife to death because he suspected she had had an affair; in July, a man tied up his wife, poured petrol on her and set fire to her because he suspected her of infidelity; in September, a school janitor sexually assaulted a 16-year-old girl on her way to school, after threatening her with physical violence; in August, a human resources manager at a primary school was found sexually assaulting a 14-year-old schoolgirl with autism. The police dismissed the case, but appeal by the girl's family to the district Public Prosecutor ended up in getting the case assigned to the investigative police unit."

No such cases were mentioned in [AI's Report 2022/23](#) (pp.261-263).

Christian origins

Christianity was introduced to Mozambique by Roman Catholic Dominicans in 1506. Jesuit and Augustinian monks later helped the Dominicans in establishing the Roman Catholic Church in Mozambique. In 1881 Protestant Christianity came to the country through missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. As a result of the Berlin Treaty of 1885, the authorities became more open to admitting non-Catholic missionary personnel. In 1889, Bishop William Taylor of the Methodist Episcopal Church moved to the country.

Church spectrum today

Mozambique: Church networks	Christians	%
Orthodox	5,000	0.0
Catholic	8,201,000	41.1
Protestant	5,085,000	25.5
Independent	5,676,000	28.4
Unaffiliated	1,246,000	6.2
Doubly-affiliated Christians	-241,000	-1.2
Total	19,972,000	100.0
<i>(Any deviation from the total number of Christians stated above is due to the rounding of decimals)</i>		
Evangelical movement	4,821,000	24.1
Pentecostal-Charismatic	6,887,000	34.5

Zurlo G A and Johnson T M, eds., *World Christian Database*, Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed May 2024

Orthodox: Eastern (Chalcedonian), Oriental (Pre-Chalcedonian, Non-Chalcedonian, Monophysite), Nestorian (Assyrian), and non-historical Orthodox. **Roman Catholics:** All Christians in communion with the Church of Rome. **Protestants:** Christians in churches originating in or in communion with the Western world's 16th-century Protestant Reformation. Includes Anglicans, Lutherans and Baptists (any of whom may be Charismatic) and denominational Pentecostals, but not Independent traditions such as Independent Baptists nor independent Charismatics. **Independents:** Christians who do not identify with the major Christian traditions (Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Protestant). **Unaffiliated Christians:** Persons professing publicly to be Christians but who are not affiliated to churches. **Doubly-affiliated Christians:** Persons affiliated to or claimed by 2 denominations at once. **Evangelical movement:** Churches, denominations, and individuals who identify themselves as evangelicals by membership in denominations linked to evangelical alliances (e.g., World Evangelical Alliance) or by self-identification in polls. **Pentecostal-Charismatic:** Church members involved in renewal in the Holy Spirit, sometimes known collectively as "Renewalists".

According to the US State Department ([IRFR 2023 Mozambique](#)), there are Roman Catholic, Evangelical/Pentecostal and Anglican congregations (in descending order of denominational size) in the country.

Further useful reports

A selection of in-depth reports and smaller articles are available on the Research & Reports pages of the Open Doors website:

- <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/>.

These are also available on the Open Doors Analytical website (password: freedom):

- <https://opendoorsanalytical.org/?s=Mozambique>
- <https://opendoorsanalytical.org/reports/>
- [Mozambique Islamic militancy – July 2020.](#)

External Links

- Recent history: economic growth - <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/17725/political-tensions-threaten-mozambique-s-tenuous-peace>
- Recent history: Fighting - <https://allafrica.com/stories/201405170059.html>
- Recent history: erupted again - <https://allafrica.com/stories/201405170059.html>
- Recent history: Freedom in the World Index 2023 Mozambique - <https://freedomhouse.org/country/mozambique/freedom-world/2023>
- Recent history: International Crisis Group - <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/east-and-southern-africa/mozambique>
- Political and legal landscape: women - <https://www.britannica.com/place/Mozambique/Political-process>
- Political and legal landscape: landslide - <https://www.france24.com/en/20191027-mozambique-s-president-nyusi-wins-second-term-opposition-rejects-results>
- Political and legal landscape: rerun - <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/10/mozambique-opposition-rejects-election-results-191019135525946.html>
- Political and legal landscape: dismissed - <https://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFKBN1XP0WD-OZATP>
- Political and legal landscape: Freedom House - <https://freedomhouse.org/country/mozambique/freedom-world/2024>
- Political and legal landscape: Africa Intelligence - <https://www.africaintelligence.com/southern-africa-and-islands/2023/05/31/frelimo-gets-ready-for-2024-elections,109978897-art>
- Political and legal landscape: HRW 2024, Mozambique country chapter - <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2024/country-chapters/mozambique>
- Political and legal landscape: Freedom House's Freedom in the World 2024 Mozambique report - <https://freedomhouse.org/country/mozambique/freedom-world/2024>
- Political and legal landscape: 2004 Family Law (Article 7) - <https://learningpartnership.org/resource/family-law-mozambique-document-portuguese>
- Political and legal landscape: BMC International Health and Human Rights 18/1, September 2018) - https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327783638_HIV_prevention_Mapping_Mozambican_people%27s_views_on_the_acceptability_of_the_widow%27s_sexual_cleansing_ritual_called_pita-kufa
- Political and legal landscape: Girls Not Brides Mozambique - <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/learning-resources/child-marriage-atlas/regions-and-countries/mozambique/>
- Political and legal landscape: Jetha et al, BMC Public Health 21/1, April 2021 - <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33888119/>
- Religious landscape description: concerned about - <https://clubofmozambique.com/news/mozambique-government-seeking-to-put-religious-world-in-order/>
- Religious landscape description: 2010 International Religious Freedom Report - <https://2009-2017.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2010/148708.htm>
- Religious landscape description: (IRFR 2023 Mozambique): - <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-report-on-international-religious-freedom/mozambique/>
- Economic landscape: African Development Bank's Mozambique Economic Outlook - <https://www.afdb.org/en/countries/southern-africa/mozambique/mozambique-economic-outlook>
- Economic landscape: 2024 Index of Economic Freedom - <https://www.heritage.org/index/country/mozambique>
- Economic landscape: 2023 Index of Economic Freedom, - <https://www.heritage.org/index/pages/country-pages/mozambique>
- Economic landscape: UNDP Human Development Report Mozambique - <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/specific-country-data#/countries/MOZ>
- Economic landscape: LSE blog, 12 March 2018 - <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/africaatlse/2018/03/12/womens-financial-inclusion-5-reasons-why-it-matters-for-mozambique/>
- Social and cultural landscape: UNDP Human Development Report Mozambique - <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/specific-country-data#/countries/MOZ>
- Social and cultural landscape: World Factbook Mozambique - <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/mozambique/>
- Social and cultural landscape: UNHCR, Operational Data Portal Mozambique - <https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/moz>

- Social and cultural landscape: UNDP Human Development Report Mozambique - <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/specific-country-data#/countries/MOZ>
- Social and cultural landscape: Moody's Analytics - <https://www.economy.com/mozambique/>
- Social and cultural landscape: 2019 CEDAW report, - https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW/C/MOZ/CO/3-5&Lang=En
- Social and cultural landscape: UNICEF, Child marriage in COVID-19 contexts, 2021, p.1 - <https://www.unicef.org/esa/media/7651/file/Child-Marriage-in-COVID-19-contexts.pdf>
- Social and cultural landscape: Club of Mozambique, 2 September 2020 - <https://clubofmozambique.com/news/mozambique-responds-to-gender-based-violence-in-the-context-of-covid-19-170471/>
- Social and cultural landscape: Club of Mozambique, 29 March 2021 - <https://clubofmozambique.com/news/mozambique-traditional-leaders-urged-to-take-the-lead-on-ending-child-marriage-188069/>
- Technological landscape: Datareportal Digital 2024: Mozambique - <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2024-mozambique>
- Technological landscape: Data Reportal: - <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2024-mozambique>
- Technological landscape: GSMA Mobile Gender Gap Report (2020) - <https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/GSMA-The-Mobile-Gender-Gap-Report-2020.pdf>
- Technological landscape: Georgetown's Women, Peace and Security Index (2019/20, p.35 - <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/WPS-Index-2019-20-Report.pdf>
- Security situation: International Crisis Group - <https://www.crisisgroup.org/burundi-colombia-mozambique-pakistan/horizon-june-november-2024>
- Security situation: Club of Mozambique, 25 November 2020 - <https://clubofmozambique.com/news/sexual-assault-against-children-on-the-rise-in-mozambique-178231/>
- Security situation: AI News, 2 March 2021 - <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/03/mozambique-civilians-killed-as-war-crimes-committed-by-armed-group-government-forces-and-private-military-contractors-new-report/>
- Security situation: Georgetown, 2019/20, p.52 - <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/WPS-Index-2019-20-Report.pdf>
- Security situation: Africa Renewal, 24 February 2021 - <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/march-2021/turning-tide-women-and-girls-caught-mozambique%E2%80%99s-cabo-delgado-crisis>
- Security situation: HRW, 25 April 2019 - <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/04/25/mozambique-cyclone-victims-forced-trade-sex-food>
- Security situation: Amnesty International's Report 2021/22 - <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/pol10/4870/2022/en/>
- Security situation: AI's Report 2022/23 - <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/pol10/5670/2023/en/>
- Further useful reports: Mozambique Islamic militancy – July 2020 - <https://opendoorsanalytical.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Mozambique-Islamic-militancy-WWR-July-2020.pdf>