



1. FOCUS ON FLOODS

An increase in rains has led to additional reports of flooding in some areas. Nsanje and Chikwawa reported an increase in numbers of affected households. In addition, Zomba became the latest district to report on floods with a figure of 657 households losing their household effects. In T/A Mlolo in Nsanje a further 1,302 households were reported to have had their houses destroyed while Chikwawa reported a figure of 3,000 displaced households under T.A Makhuwira. The total hectares reported flooded has risen to 10,080. As of 04 February 2008, the total number of 27,758 households had been reported as having had either lost crops or had their houses destroyed.

The DoDMA, with the help of Malawi Defence Forces vehicles, managed to access flood affected people in T.A. Mlolo’s area. The PS/Commissioner for Disaster Management Affairs and the Army Commander of the Malawi Defence Forces flew over the flooded areas in Nsanje and Chikwawa on 31st January 2008.

The number of Mozambican households displaced by floods has also risen from 454 to 560. The Ministry of Home Affairs and Internal Security has been in contact with UNHCR to request collaboration in responding to the situation.

The Zambezi River Authority issued a press release on Feb. 4 regarding the opening of one spillway gate of Kariba Dam on Feb. 11, 2008, due to high water levels in the Zambezi River. Since this could have an impact on the Shire River back-flow, the Government of Malawi has been informed and more information can be sought from the Director of Water Resources in the Ministry of Irrigation and Water Development.

In terms of cholera, and according to the Ministry of Health, during the week of 28th January – 3rd February, 2008, 72 cases with 4 deaths have been reported from Nsanje, Chikwawa, Blantyre, Balaka, Thyolo, and Mulanje. Cumulatively 714 cholera cases and 13 deaths have been reported from 5th November 2007 up to 3rd February, 2008."

2. METEOROLOGICAL UPDATE

According to the Malawi Meteorological Services Special 5 – Day Forecast of 4th – 8th February 2008, Congo Air is confined to the Northern region while the Inter – Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) is expected to be established over the Southern Region. This might result in scattered to widespread rains over many parts of the country. These rains might be heavy at times and could likely cause flooding of low lying areas.

For more information please see www.metmalawi.com.

CURRENT SITUATION (cumulative)¹

District	No. of households affected	Type of Disaster
Balaka	288	Floods
Blantyre	1076	Heavy storm
Chikwawa	5,678	Floods
Chitipa	94	Hailstorm
Karonga	9	Floods
Lilongwe	197	Hailstorm
Machinga	104	Floods
Mchinji	19	Heavy rains
Mzimba	955	Heavy rains
Nkhatabay	308	Cyclone
Nsanje	16,341	Floods
Ntcheu	575	Floods
Phalombe	1,457	Rainstorm
Zomba	657	Heavy Rains
TOTAL	Households affected	27,758
	Households with damaged houses	9,851
	Hectares affected	10,080

¹ The figures in the table above represent households that have either lost crops, houses, or property.



3. RESPONSES

GOVERNMENT

The PS/Commissioner held a press conference on 30th January 2008, where the media were updated on the current flood situation. The media were further informed that if the situation deteriorates the DoDMA would require external assistance.

A Humanitarian Response Committee meeting was held on the 31st January 2008. Members were updated on the weather forecast by the Malawi Meteorological Services, the flood situation by DoDMA, as well as updates on the Inter-Agency Flood Contingency Plan for Malawi, the UN/OCHA Southern African Region Preparedness and Response Plan, and the IFRC Emergency Appeal.

On 1st February a National Disaster Preparedness and Relief Committee (NDPRC) emergency meeting was held. Among the issues discussed featuring high was the flood situation in Nsanje and Chikwawa. Members were asked to respond according to their respective sectors. Priority sectors identified included: water and sanitation, relief food, repair and maintenance of roads and bridges to enhance accessibility, shelter, drugs and health facilities.

His Excellency the President of the Republic of Malawi, Dr Bingu Wa Mutharika visited flood affected households both in Nsanje and Chikwawa on 3rd February. Besides assuring the people of government support in their plight, he urged them to take heed of warnings over the need to move upland.

DoDMA, with help of Malawi Defence Force personnel and vehicles, will start providing relief assistance to flood affected households in difficult to access areas especially along the Shire River's east bank.

OTHER RESPONSES

National

Currently GOAL Malawi, Action Aid and World Vision are in the process of mobilising resources for response operations. GOAL Malawi has already

distributed 280 survival kits to relocated households in Nsanje.

International

WFP, IFRC and DFID are currently visiting flood affected areas in the southern region.

The UN Resident Coordinator's Office has received the consolidated draft of the Southern African Region Preparedness and Response Plan which will be released for donor consideration on 11th February in Johannesburg.

4. MEETINGS

During the NDPRC meeting of 1st February it was recommended that another meeting to determine a strategic response to the flood situation should be held on the 8th February 2008. UN and donor agencies would be invited to this meeting.

5. CONTACTS

Ministries, Departments, UN agencies, Red Cross, NGOs and other partners are invited to submit information to or request further clarification from:

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