



# Government of Malawi Humanitarian Update

Issue No.1

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## 1. Introduction

The Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) is delighted to share with you an information management initiative to coordinate and communicate information from a variety of key stakeholders. The humanitarian update will feature information regarding humanitarian issues of concern in the country. The first issues will focus on the flood situation.

This update will be coming out weekly on Tuesdays.

## 2. Focus on Floods

Since the start of the rainy season various parts of the country have experienced a range of disasters. The disasters have ranged from strong winds to heavy rains which have in some cases resulted in flooding. These have led to damage of crops, household property and infrastructure.

Starting from October 2007 to 4<sup>th</sup> January 2008; 1,704 households in 11 districts have been affected. The hectares of crop fields reported flooded are 1,360.

## Current situation

District	No. of households affected	Type of Disaster
Chikwawa	933	floods
Nsanje	400	floods
Phalombe	321	Rainstorm
Mwanza	60	Rainstorm
Mangochi	127	Rainstorm
Machinga	104	Rainstorm
Mzimba	956	heavy rains
Mchinji	20	heavy rains
Blantyre	116	heavy rains
Balaka	26	Hailstorm
Ntcheu	571	floods

The figures in the table above represent households that have either lost crops, houses, or property. There have also been 3 deaths have been reported in Chikwawa. As of 22-01-08 the area of crop fields flooded was 1,674.7 hectares.

Additional reports have been received regarding flooding in T/A Mlolo's area in Nsanje but no figures have been submitted yet as assessments were still underway by 22-01-08.

## Government response

The Government through the DoDMA and Ministry of Health has carried out a number of impacts and needs assessments in collaboration with development partners. In order to meet some of the immediate needs established during assessments, the DoDMA has provided the various relief items. The items provided so far are: foodstuffs comprising: maize/ maize flour, salt, peas; utensils: plastic cups, plastic plates, jerry cans and rolls of plastic sheets.

In October, the DoDMA advised about 5,000 households in T/A Nyachikadza in Nsanje to relocate to higher ground. By 18-01-08 about 1,300 households had relocated to 2 T/As namely: Ndamera and Malemia. It has been reported however, that there is a problem of shortage of construction materials for shelters being experienced by these people. Temporary and appropriate shelter materials such as, family tents are, therefore, required. These households are also in need of food supplies as well as long-term livelihood support programmes.

## Other responses

### National

Additional assistance to flood affected households has also been provided by Press Trust which contributed 16.65 metric tones of maize.

The Malawi Red Cross Society is concentrating on providing shelter. Volunteers on the ground are working with District Commissioners. 3 tents have been pitched in Chikwawa in Chapananga area and 2 in Nsanje. Plastic sheets have also been distributed in T/A Chowe's area in Mangochi.

### International

UNRCO/FAO hired a Flood Contingency Planning and Response Consultant to assist with issues including the finalization of the Inter-Agency Flood Contingency Plan and to support the Flood Technical Working Group, which includes UN agencies, the IFRC, MRCS and DoDMA.

The United Nations submitted a proposal to UNOCHA seeking funding for flood preparedness. This proposal is now being used as part of a wider sub-regional preparedness response proposal.

FAO received a request from DoDMA to provide seeds to approximately 2,600 flood affected households in Nkhata Bay, Mzimba, Lilongwe and Dedza Districts, whose crops were damaged as a result of flooding. FAO is following up with the Ministry of Agriculture and DoDMA.

UNDP in collaboration with DoDMA have conducted flood contingency plan review workshops in 4 of the most flood prone districts namely: Nsanje, Chikwawa, Mangochi and Karonga. UNDP is also supporting DoDMA with coordination and information development activities.

UNICEF has pre-positioned survival kits. However, they are insufficient for the anticipated needs.

## 3. Other information

Cholera is a major recurrent threat in Malawi. Heavy rains and floods disrupt and contaminate water sources. The Ministry of Health supported by UNICEF and WHO are currently involved in an assessment of the cholera situation in the south of the country. As at 13<sup>th</sup> of January 2008, a total of 518 cholera cases with 6 deaths had been reported.

## 4. Contacts

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

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