

# Weekly Update on Tropical Cyclone Freddy in Malawi

## Overview

On 12th March, 2023, the Tropical Cyclone Freddy (TCF) moved into Malawi through the southmost district of Nsanje. The TCF brought along torrential rains with gusty winds and mudslides that caused serious humanitarian crisis in Nsanje, Chikwawa, Phalombe, Mulanje, Thyolo, Chiradzulu, Mwanza, Neno, Blantyre Zomba, Machinga, Balaka and Mangochi districts.

According to the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) rapid assessment reports for 15th March, 2023, cumulatively TCF has claimed 326 lives, injured 796 people and displaced 183,159 people across all the affected districts. At least 201 are reportedly missing. Public infrastructure such as schools, health facilities and main roads are damaged in all the affected districts.

Meanwhile, DoDMA, humanitarian partners and councils continue to facilitate the provision of relief assistance to affected and displaced households, with search and rescue operations led by the Malawi Defence Force, the Malawi Police Service, the Department of Marine, the Malawi Red Cross Society, and communities.

DoDMA has so far indicated that urgent needs include: Shelter: tarpaulin (4 x 6 m) family tents/big tents, plastic sheet, blankets, sleeping mats, Protection: clothes lighting lamps, dignity kits, Health: mosquito nets, mobile clinic services. Non-Food items: plates, cups, pots WASH: mobile toilets, water treatment chemicals, soap, buckets. Food Security: Maize/maize flour, corn soya blend, cooking oil, pulses (beans, peas etc), soya pieces, dry fish/ kapenta, sugar and salt.

Government has since released K1.6 billion towards response, complemented by support from humanitarian agencies, corporate world and private sector. Meanwhile, the Department of Climate Change and Metrological Services has reported that Cyclone Freddy has completely dispersed.



# ActionAid Malawi Preparedness and Response



Part of disaster preparedness exercise in Phalombe and Nsanje Local Rights Programmes

## 1. Supporting women, youth, government structures and people living poverty in preparedness

ActionAid Malawi response in emergencies is rooted in its humanitarian signature that focuses on shifting the power to the affected local communities, promoting women and youth leadership and accountability.

ActionAid Malawi's emergency response starts with preparedness planning. Thus, in December, 2022 ActionAid Malawi supported the development of disaster preparedness in Nsanje and Phalombe districts, targeting women farmers, Youth Activista, Area Civil Protection Committee, Village Civil Protection Committee and women forum members.

## 2. Raising Awareness on Early Warning

Prior to TCF, the trained communities, led by Kuchene Women Forum in Nsanje Local Rights Programmes and Chigwirizano Women Movement in Phalombe Local Rights Programme conducted early warning interventions targeting a total of 200 households in Phalombe and 240 households in Nsanje living in disaster prone areas. This worked for communities that managed to move uplands. Others were also trained in response and rescue operations and are now supporting the evacuation exercise in the two LRPs.

## 3. Conducting rapid assessment and participating in evacuation exercise

Currently ActionAid Malawi three partners; two in Phalombe and one in Nsanje are conducting rapid assessment exercises. These involve interacting with affected women and youth in camps to understand their needs and appreciate social protection issues. The exercise has since helped to identify critical urgent needs such as food, shelter and clothing and dignity issues in most of the camps.

ActionAid Malawi on 15th March released K6 million to support with some urgent needs for worst affected women and girls, and conduct social protection sensitizations among the displaced persons in the camps in Traditional Authority Malemia

## 4. Resource Mobilisation to support relief and resilience interventions

ActionAid Malawi has mobilized support from within the country programme and International Humanitarian Action and Response Team. The cash support amounting to K70 million will be distributed to 1400 worst affected women and child-headed households in both Phalombe and Nsanje in week beginning 19th March, 2023.

Furthermore, ActionAid Malawi has launched a fundraising appeal targeting traditional donors, the corporate world and the private sector to enable the organisation to effectively respond to emergencies and invest in resilience in the two LRPs.

## 5. Collaboration and partnership enhancement

Through all the interventions, ActionAid Malawi work closely with relevant government institutions, the Department of Disaster Management Affairs at a national level, the District Civil Protection Committee, District Civil Society Organisations on disasters, and the district level and Area and Village Civil Protection Committees at a community level within the realm of humanitarian signature.

ActionAid Malawi has also been working with Global Secretariate in raising the global attention on the devastating impact of the TCF in Malawi.