

Alert

Mozambique & Malawi

Flooding

Geneva, January 23, 2012

1. Brief description of the emergency and impact

Mozambique

On 15 January 2012, tropical storm "Dando" hit Mozambique. This is the first storm to hit the southern part of Mozambique (*Gaza/Maputo*) since tropical storm "Domoina" in 1984. The emergency alert in the country has been raised to orange level, meaning that multiple agencies are preparing for a potential emergency response. However the Technical Council of Disaster Management (CTGC) is considering issuing a red alert. In their situation report number 1, of 20 January 2012, the UN Office of the Resident Coordinator in Maputo, reports that tropical storm Dando "caused flooding and damage to houses and schools in the provinces of Maputo, Gaza and Inhambane in Southern Mozambique."

CTGC which is made up of staff from the government of Mozambique and members of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) are currently meeting daily to share information and consider reports from the affected areas.

According to information shared in the coordination meetings and the ACT member assessments; in Maputo province 247 houses were flooded, 2 houses destroyed, and 1235 people affected. In Gaza province 4 deaths were recorded, 2640 houses partially destroyed, 116 houses completely destroyed, 1014 houses flooded, 169 classrooms damaged, including 5 health centres, 214 toilets and 6 worship houses.

Malawi

According to meteorological weather forecasts in Malawi, a storm in Mozambique which seems to have changed course is having flooding effects on Malawi. Heavy rains have been continuous in parts of Mulanje, Blantyre, Chiradzulu and Thyolo in the southern region of Malawi. This has caused increased water flows to Nsanje and Chikwawa resulting in swelling up of streams and flooding downstream. This coupled with heavy rains experienced in traditional authority Mbenje in Nsanje district since 19 January, Phokera community has been affected. On the evening of Friday 20 January, 83 houses were reported to have collapsed as result of rains and the number is forecasted to increase. The affected households have sought refuge from relatives while others have sought refuge from the nearby primary school. The affected households are in a difficult situation though figures are yet to be established.

The main tarmac road passing through the area (Bangula-Nsanje Road) was nearly washed away such that a concrete bridge in the vicinity has been lowered down and dislodged due to river flooding.

2. Why is an ACT response needed?

An ACT response is needed in the two countries to provide immediate assistance to alleviate the suffering of the peoples affected by the flooding.

3. National and international response

In Mozambique ACT member staff in affected areas are collecting data in the field. One of the issues raised in the Humanitarian Country Team meeting held on the 18th of January was that of poor data collection on the part of government. As a result CEDES, an ACT member, is presently dedicating itself to data collection in coordination with other actors at local level. At the moment ACT members in Mozambique are preparing a request for rapid response funds. The response shall be coordinated through the ACT Forum.

ACT members are participating regularly in the national coordination meetings including UN clusters meetings.

In Malawi, the ACT member CARD will be placing an officer in Nsanje district to keep the ACT forum abreast of the situation.

4. ACT Alliance response

In Mozambique, the ACT forum has been attending emergency coordination meetings led by National Institute of Disaster Management = Instituto Nacional de Gestão de Calamidades (INGC). Members are also attending other cluster preparedness meetings with different partners like the UN agencies and other NGOs. ACT members are monitoring the situation in the affected areas and conducting needs assessments through their staff in the field.

In Malawi an emergency tele-conference meeting of the ACT forum steering committee is planned to take place today (23rd January, 2012) to reflect on the situation and possibly commission a rapid assessment through the technical committee of ACT Malawi Forum. If the storm continues, people displaced and affected will need to be accommodated and assisted with immediate needs such as plastic sheets, poles and other essentials.

5. Planned activities

In Mozambique ACT members plan to immediately distribute shelter materials, blankets, kitchen kits, mosquito's nets, health and sanitation, awareness on disasters and carry out the necessary assessment missions. The Malawi forum is planning to commission a rapid assessment. Depending on the situation, the Malawi Forum will consider to apply to the ACT rapid response fund.

6. Constraints

In Mozambique financial resources are a major hurdle at the moment. The forum will be discussing issues of accessibility to some of the areas. Assessments are on ongoing and more updates are being received through the national coordinating mechanisms and staff in the field.

In Malawi the ACT forum does not have adequate stocks at hand hence the need for financial support to respond. Fuel scarcity in Malawi is an issue likely to hamper preparedness, assessment and response if the situation deteriorates.

Any funding indication or pledge should be communicated to Jean-Daniel Birmele, ACT Chief Finance Officer (jbi@actalliance.org)

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