

Emergency appeal operation update

Malawi: Food Insecurity

Emergency Appeal n° MDRMW012	
Date of issue: 26 October 2015	Expected end date: March 2016
Operation manager (responsible for this EPoA): Hung Ha Nguyen, Disaster Preparedness Delegate, IFRC, Southern Africa	Point of contact (name and title): Hastings Kandaya; Programmes Director; Malawi Red Cross Society
Operation start date: 17 September 2015	Expected timeframe: 6 months
Appeal budget: CHF 749,268	
Total number of people affected: 2.8 million	Number of people to be assisted: 10,000 individuals (2,000 HH)
Host National Society presence Malawi Red Crescent Society, 17 Staff and 350 volunteers actively engage on Emergency response in four districts of Chikwawa, Nsanje, Blantyre and Phalombe.	
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners actively involved in the operation: Danish Red Cross, Netherlands Red Cross, Finnish Red Cross, Belgian Red Cross, Swiss Red Cross, Icelandic Red Cross, ICRC, IFRC SARO	
Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation: The Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DODMA) is coordinating the disaster response activities at country level, WFP, Goal Malawi, Oxfam, Christian Aid, Irish Aid, Save the Children, World Vision, Norwegian Church Aid, COOPI, UNICEF are all active in Malawi.	

Appeal History:

- This [Emergency Appeal](#) was launched on 17 September 2015 for CHF **749,268** to enable the IFRC to support the Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) to respond to the food security needs of 10,000 drought and flood-affected beneficiaries for six months. The strategy entails the immediate provision of food assistance (carried out through cash transfer programming) and strengthening community resilience in two southern districts of Nsanje and Phalombe to allow vulnerable households to meet their basic food needs.
- Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF): CHF 74,900 was initially allocated from the Federation's DREF to support the national society to start up the operations by meeting immediate needs of affected people.
- IFRC, on behalf of Malawi Red Cross would like to extend thanks to Finnish Red Cross and the Netherland Red Cross (from Netherlands Government) for their support and is appealing to various donors to support this Emergency Appeal to enable Malawi RC meet the needs of vulnerable people in affected communities.
- [Operations update no. 1](#) was issued on 5 October.
- This update provides information regarding the first 39 days of the operation since the launch.

Summary: Malawi, typically a self-sufficient maize producer, has suffered poor crop performance this year due to a late and erratic start to the rainy season, followed by damage from severe flooding in the southern half of the country, and periods of prolonged dry spells across most of the country for the latter half of the season. According to the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) report of July 2015 it is estimated that maize production has reduced by 30% from last year. The national consumption requirement for 2015/16 is 3,000,000 MT of maize. The estimated maize deficit is 223,723 MT.

The prolonged dry spells and floods not only affected maize production but other crops such as ground nuts have also been affected, and harvests are down by 21 percent, rice 13 percent cotton and tobacco cash crop production is also down by 31% and 5% respectively. This will leave more than 2.8 million people in Malawi food insecure for a period of between three to 8 months, October 2015 – March 2016. 25 out of the 28 districts in Malawi have been affected. Of the 2.8 million people affected 886,204 are living in the hard hit flooded districts and 1,947,008 are in districts affected by poor rainfall. An estimated 20 to 40 percent of Malawi's population are in need of humanitarian assistance to help them cope with this acute food shortage.

The national market assessment conducted by WFP in July 2015 indicates that 40 percent of markets have the capacity to support cash interventions, whilst 60 percent of markets will not and therefore would benefit from in-kind/food distribution interventions. The peak price of maize on the markets during the lean period (October – March) will depend on the Government response to the crisis and levels of maize imported. National average maize prices were already 61 percent above the three-year average at a period when prices are normally at their lowest. Price projections, based on month-to-month price trends, estimate that average national maize prices will likely be about 50 percent above the three-year average between July and September, possibly rising to levels that are 55 percent above the three-year average between October and December. During the July-December period, prices for alternative food commodities, particularly cereals, pulses, and cassava, will likely be about 20-50 percent above average prices.

Immediate intervention: the MRCS will assist 10,000 people: (2,000 households) that are food insecure in the Nsanje and Phalombe Districts through:

- A monthly cash transfer of CHF43 per household per month over 5 months. The transfer will be sufficient to meet the immediate food needs of a household of 5. The cash transfer value has been calculated based on the current prices of a standard food basket (50kg bag of maize, 5kg beans, 2 litres cooking oil).
- The operation will use mobile money transfers, working in partnership with the mobile provider Airtel Malawi who has extensive experience in implementing humanitarian cash transfers. Free Sim cards will be provided and Airtel will train staff and volunteers in the registration and transfer systems. Airtel will also be required to conduct information dissemination sessions with beneficiaries to build and transfer knowledge on the use of mobile money platforms. In addition to these sessions they will be requested to produce factsheets/FAQs on mobile money transfer in local languages to be distributed to beneficiaries. Airtel is also negotiating price reductions on handsets from a provider to be given to those beneficiaries who do not have existing handsets.

Medium-term intervention: within the planned beneficiary figure of 10,000 people (2,000 households), the National Society will support 1,000 households with the following medium-term interventions:

- Support to agricultural production through the provision of agricultural inputs (hybrid seeds of maize, groundnuts and beans and top and base fertilizers for crop season (March 2016) distributed in October/November 2015
- Provision of agricultural training to 100 lead farmers with each lead farmer being responsible for cascading knowledge and skills to 10 follower farmers.
- Integrating nutrition training and dissemination of nutrition education in agricultural training

[<click here to view the contact details >](#)

Coordination and partnerships

Malawi Red Cross conducted stakeholders meetings with WFP at their Head Office in Lilongwe, Nsanje and Phalombe District Executive Committees in the week beginning 12 October 2015. The District Executive Committee (DEC) is composed of technical departments in government, the Red Cross as well as humanitarian agencies including Goal Malawi, WFP, Concern, CARE and MSF among others. The meetings served as inception meetings where Malawi Red Cross shared their plans, modalities of the transfers as well as emphasising the need for coordination with other agencies to avoid overlapping and double targeting of beneficiaries. In addition to the coordination meetings, bi-lateral meetings were also held with Goal Malawi in Nsanje and the Ministry of Gender in Phalombe district to share detailed plans as the two organisations are implementing Cash Transfer Programmes in the respective districts.

Goal Malawi and CARE are implementing food assistance operations in Nsanje district with Goal using Cash Transfer and CARE doing direct food distributions. In Phalombe district Adventist Relief Services (ADRA) is also implementing food assistance activities using direct food distributions. MRCS will coordinate with these agencies in the selection and registration of beneficiaries to ensure no overlapping.

To ensure a consistent supply of food commodities the MRCS and IFRC have also held meetings and discussions with the Agricultural Development Marketing and Research Cooperation (ADMARC) the agency mandated by government to source and distribute cereal and pulses in the country. The visits to the ADMARC depots show that the agency has capacity to meet increased cereal and pulses demand which will also help control the risk of inflation. ADMARC are selling maize at 110 Malawi Kwacha per Kg with beans selling at 430 Malawi Kwacha per Kg. In Phalombe district ADMARC has 13 depots each with a capacity to sell 5,000kgs of maize per day.

MRCS receives technical support from in-country Partner National Societies (PNS) including Danish, Finnish and Icelandic Red Cross. Monthly coordination meetings are held with PNSs where programme updates are shared. The SARO provides technical support to MRCS on the on-going operation and in September the Acting Regional Representative was in Malawi to support the implementation of the Emergency Appeal.

Operational implementation

Overview

CHF 74,900 was released from the DREF to start the operation. Additional support has been received from the Finish Red Cross and the Netherlands Red Cross. Surge support from the IFRC Disaster Management Unit has been provided to the Malawi Red Cross to support in the start-up of the operation particularly the Cash Transfer System, beneficiary selection and training of National Society program staff. The IFRC is recruiting an Operations Manager who will provide technical support to the operation. Project staff who will be based in the two targeted districts have been recruited. 15 National Society staff will be trained in Cash Transfer Programming (CTP) week beginning 26 October 2015 with the training being facilitated by the IFRC. The objective of the training is to build staff capacity in the implementation of the CTP activities under the operation. The CTP training will also be cascaded to volunteers.

However through the surge support and the initiation of the mobile money company engagement and market capacity activities that are on-going the National Society staff are being capacitated in Cash Transfer Programming. They are now aware of the CTP Standard Operating Procedures and the Cash in Emergencies Toolkit which they are using in assessing markets, stakeholder sensitisation and mobile company engagement. Two bids/proposals have been received from two Mobile Money Operators in Malawi and a committee has been established to review the proposals and recommend a company that will be contracted to support the cash Transfer activities.

Coordination meetings with stakeholders has resulted in the identification of operating areas in Nsanje where MRCS will share operating space with Goal Malawi in the two communities recommended for Cash interventions. Hence, Malawi Red Cross will target a total of 1,000 households in Tengani (350) and Ngabu (650) Traditional Authorities (TAs). In Phalombe the DEC recommended that the interventions target Kaduya and Nkhumba TAs.

Through the DEC meetings recommended that members of the food assistance sub-committees in the two districts second staff to support MRCS in the selection and registration processes for transparency and to ensure risks of overlapping are managed. MRCS will also work with Goal Malawi in the selection of Goal Malawi project beneficiaries. Beneficiaries were selected and verified during the week starting 19 October and the data capturing is on-going.

Market monitoring has been on-going to check cereal and other food items availability in the local market. The commodities are available in the two targeted districts and the average food basket is 18,000 Malawi Kwacha. Weekly price monitoring reports will be provided by the field level staff to track price changes.

Food security, Nutrition and Livelihoods		
Outcome 1: Immediate food needs of 10,000 beneficiaries (2,000 households) are met over a period of six months		
Output	Activities planned	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2,000 households (10,000 beneficiaries) receive cash in order to purchase food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information for authorities – awareness sessions in district assemblies 	100%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeting process, identification and registration 	70%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey verification 	0%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training on beneficiary identification, registration, rapid assessment and field data collection and analysis 	60%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination with Ministry of Health for development of a referral system for malnourished people 	10%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of CTP and payment process 	60%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operational training to staff and volunteers on CTP and monitoring on the utilization and adequacy of transfers to meet 	40%

	household food needs	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Validation of beneficiary lists and establishment of an accountability mechanism (including beneficiary communication and feedback systems) 	40%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cash distributions 	0%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobile providers input into training of volunteers in mobile phone registration, provision of free Sim cards, reduced price handset provision to beneficiaries with no existing phone 	0%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring Malnutrition indicators 	0%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination with Ministry of Health for monitoring of referral malnutrition cases 	0%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training and capacity building in CTP among the staff and volunteers 	0%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of CTP preparedness plan for future operations 	0%
Outcome 2: Livelihoods of 1,000 households are reinforced to build community resilience in targeted regions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate agricultural inputs (seeds and fertilisers) are distributed to 1,000 farmers (5,000 people) in rural areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment to identify most vulnerable households that have capacity to work and have available land for planting 	20%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct specific needs assessment via Ministry of Agriculture to identify most appropriate items to be distributed depending on the market availability and period 	0%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment to establish capacity of local traders to provide proposed seeds and fertilizers 	0%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize procurement of seeds and fertilizers for 1,000 farmers 	0%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training of 100 lead farmers in agricultural production and nutrition 	0%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cascading of agricultural production and nutrition training 	0%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct distributions of seeds and fertilizers with volunteers 	0%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring and evaluation of the activities 	0%
Quality programming / Areas common to all sectors (assessments, monitoring and evaluation)		
Outcome 3: The management of the operation is informed by a comprehensive assessment, monitoring and evaluation system		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial needs assessments are updated following consultation with beneficiaries and stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management of the implementation team 	20%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination and engagement with key stakeholders, partners and operational agencies 	60%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint monitoring of operations 	0%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation of the impact of assistance delivered 	0%

Contact Information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the **Code of Conduct** for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief and the **Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (Sphere)** in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. The IFRC's vision is to inspire, **encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities** by National Societies, with a view to **preventing and alleviating human suffering**, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:



Save lives,
protect livelihoods,
and strengthen recovery
from disaster and crises.



Enable **healthy**
and **safe** living.



Promote **social inclusion**
and a culture of
non-violence and **peace**.
