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# Emergency appeal operation update

## Malawi: Food Insecurity

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

<b>Emergency Appeal n°</b> MDRMW012	<b>Operation start date:</b> 17 September 2015
<b>Date of Issue:</b> 18 April 2016	<b>Expected end date:</b> 30 June 2016
<b>Operation manager (responsible for this EPoA):</b> Hung Ha Nguyen, Disaster Preparedness Delegate, IFRC, Southern Africa	<b>Point of contact (name and title):</b> Hastings Kandaya; Programmes Director; Malawi Red Cross Society
<b>Appeal budget:</b> CHF 749,268	<b>Expected timeframe:</b> 9 months
<b>Total number of people affected:</b> 2.8 million	<b>Number of people to be assisted:</b> 10,000 individuals (2,000 HH)
<b>Host National Society presence</b> Malawi Red Crescent Society, 17 Staff and 350 volunteers actively engage on Emergency response in four districts of Chikwawa, Nsanje, Blantyre and Phalombe.	
<b>Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners actively involved in the operation:</b> Danish Red Cross, Netherlands Red Cross, Finnish Red Cross, Belgian Red Cross, Swiss Red Cross, Icelandic Red Cross, ICRC, IFRC Southern Africa Country Cluster Office (SACCO).	
<b>Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation:</b> 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.	

**This Operations Update covers the request for a timeframe extension of three months to finish planned activities and review the operations to adapt to the worsening food security situation in Malawi.**

## Appeal History

- This [Emergency Appeal](#) was launched on 17 September 2015 for **CHF 749,268 Swiss francs** 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 entailed 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 appealed to various donors to support this Emergency Appeal to enable Malawi RC meet the needs of vulnerable people in affected communities. Support was received from Canadian RC (CHF 25,000), Japanese RC (CHF 24,700), Finnish RC (CHF 32,748), Monaco RC (CHF 5,397), the Netherlands RC (CHF 108,406) and Swiss Red Cross (CHF 357,700) respectively.
- [Operations Update n° 1](#) was issued on 5 October 2015.
- [Operations Update n° 2](#) was issued on 26 October 2015.
- The current **Operations Update n° 3**, issued on 18 April 2016, follows a change of strategy explained below.

**Summary:** Malawi, typically a self-sufficient maize producer, suffered poor crop performance this year (2016) 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 parts of the country for the latter half of the season. The Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) report of July 2015 indicated that maize production reduced by 30% from last year. The national consumption requirement for 2015/16 was reported to

be 3,000,000 MT of maize. The estimated maize deficit was therefore reported to be 223,723 MT.

The prolonged dry spells and floods not only affect maize production but other crops such as ground nuts whose harvests were down by 21%, rice 13% cotton and tobacco cash crop reduction was also down by 31% and 5% respectively. This left 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 were affected. Of the 2.8 million people affected 886,204 were living in the hard hit flood-affected districts and 1,947,008 were in districts affected by poor rainfall. An estimated 20% to 40% of Malawi's population were at that time reported to be in need of humanitarian assistance to help them cope with the acute food shortage.

The national market assessment conducted by WFP in July 2015 indicated that 40% of markets had the capacity to support cash interventions, whilst 60% of markets did 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) was dependant on the government response to the crisis and levels of maize imported. National average maize prices were already at 61% above the three-year average at a period when prices were normally at their lowest. Price projections, based on month-to-month price trends, estimated that average national maize prices would likely be about 50% above the three-year average between July and September, possibly rising to levels that were 55% above the three-year average between October and December. During the July-December period, prices for alternative food commodities, particularly cereals, pulses, and cassava, would likely be about 20-50% above average prices.

The national Market Assessment (July 2015) indicated that:

- The national average maize market price was MK 117/kg, which was above the MK105 for 2014/15 and MK102 for 2013/14 consumption season.
- For the 2015/16 lean season, projected maximum maize prices of MK 250/kg was expected compared to maximum prices of MK 200/kg obtained in the past two marketing seasons. This was largely due to high demand against low supply.

On 12 April 2016, the President of Malawi declared a state of national disaster as a result of prolonged dry spells during 2015/2016 season. The declaration referred to reports from the Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services which indicated that cumulative rainfall performance from October, 2015 to end March, 2016 had been below average in most parts of the Southern and Central Regions of the country. Average to above average rainfall amounts were only received in the Northern Region of the country.

This resulted in a sharp decline in maize production rendering 2.8 million people in 25 districts food insecure. While the government, with support from development partners and other stakeholders, has been responding to the 2.8 million food insecure people, the country has experienced yet another severe prolonged dry spell during the 2015/2016 growing season due to the strong El Niño.

Most of the affected districts are the same districts that were affected by the 2015 floods later on by the prolonged dry spells. The second round Agricultural Production Estimates Survey which the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development undertook between mid-February and March this year, estimates maize production for the season at 2,431,313 metric tons (MT), representing 12.4% decline in production as compared to the 2014/2015 final round estimate of 2,776,277 MT.

In responding to the declaration, MRCS is conducting further studies in those districts and working on detailed plan of intervention to further assist affected in accessing to food and livelihoods. It is unclear the next level operation scope at this stage but will be reflected in revised emergency appeal in the coming days.

**Immediate intervention:** 10,000 beneficiaries (2,000 households) receive food assistance over 5 months through cash transfer (direct cash or vouchers) in Nsanje and Phalombe Districts:

- A total of MWK 818,150 (Nsanje MWK 420,075 and Phalombe MWK 398,075) was distributed to 2,000 households for a period of 5 months (November 2015 to March 2016). At the end of March, each household had received a total of MWK 84,015 in Nsanje and 79,615 in Phalombe. The transfer was sufficient to meet the immediate food needs of a household of 5. The cash transfer value was calculated based on the prices of a standard food basket (50kg bag of maize, 5kg beans, 2 litres cooking oil).
- 15 NS staff including the Director of Finance, Head of PMER and Field Level staff were trained on CTP.
- The training was facilitated by IFRC to provide a general introduction to cash transfer programming (CTP) as a tool in emergency response.
- 2,000 households were identified, targeted, registered and their names validated through a community based targeting criteria

- Through the bidding process, one service provider was identified to facilitate the cash transfer exercise for five months. The operation used mobile money transfer, working in partnership with the mobile service provider (Airtel Malawi) who had extensive experience in implementing humanitarian cash transfers. Free sim cards were provided and Airtel trained staff and volunteers in the registration and transfer systems. Airtel also conducted information dissemination sessions with beneficiaries to build and transfer knowledge on the use of mobile money platforms. Factsheets/FAQs on mobile money transfer were also distributed to beneficiaries.
- 2,000 mobile phones were procured and distributed to 2,000 households in order to ease the process of monthly cash transfers
- Four district civil protection committee (DCPC) meetings were held at district level during the month of October – November 2015 and January – February 2016. Issues related to implementation of cash transfers were highlighted including market prices, feedback and complains from the community.
- The CTP operation adopted an existing community structure feedback complain mechanism through group village heads (GVHs), chiefs, district civil protection committee (DCPC) members and Red Cross volunteers.

## Coordination and partnerships

Malawi Red Cross (MRCS) conducted stakeholders meetings with WFP at their Head Office in Lilongwe, Nsanje and Phalombe and 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. The objectives of the bi-lateral meetings were to share detailed plans as the two organisations were implementing Cash Transfer Programmes in the respective districts. MRCS also held a bi-lateral meeting in Phalombe district with the Ministry of Gender who were implementing a Social Cash Transfer programme in the same district that was being targeted by the National Societies.

Goal Malawi and CARE implemented food assistance operations in Nsanje district, Goal using Cash Transfers and CARE doing direct food distributions. In Phalombe district Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) was also implementing food assistance activities using direct food distributions. MRCS coordinated 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 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 showed that the agency had capacity to meet increased cereal and pulses demand which will also help control the risk of inflation. ADMARC were selling cereal at 110 Malawi Kwacha per kilo with beans selling at 430 Malawi Kwacha per kilo. In Phalombe district ADMARC had 13 depots each with a capacity to sell 5,000kg of maize per day.

MRCS received technical support from in-country Partner National Societies (PNS) including Danish, Swiss Red Cross, Finnish and Icelandic Red Cross. Monthly coordination meetings were held with PNSs where programme updates were shared. The SACCO provided technical support to MRCS on the on-going operation and in November 2015 and January 2016, 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 was received from the Canadian RC (CHF 25,000), the Japanese RC (CHF 24,700), the Finnish RC (CHF 32,748), the Monaco RC (CHF 5,397), the Netherlands RC (CHF 108,406) and the Swiss Red Cross (CHF 357,700). Surge Support was provided to the Malawi Red Cross to support in the start-up of the operation particularly the Cash Transfer System and beneficiary selection. The IFRC recruited an Operations manager to provide technical support to the operation. The National Society started the recruitment process followed by a cash transfer programming

training with support from the IFRC to capacitate the staff in the implementation of the CTP activities under the operation. The CTP training was cascaded to volunteers at the divisional levels.

However through the Surge Support and the initiation of the Mobile Money Company engagement and Market capacity activities, the National Society Staff were capacitated in Cash Transfer Programming. They are now aware of the Cash Transfer Programming Standard Operating Procedures and the Cash in Emergencies Toolkit which they are using in assessing markets, stakeholder sensitisation and mobile company engagement.

Coordination meetings with stakeholders resulted in the identification of operating areas in Nsanje where MRCS shared operating space with Goal Malawi in the two communities recommended for Cash interventions. Hence, MRCS targeted a total of 2,000 households in Tengani (350) and Ngabu (650) Traditional Authorities (TA) and in Phalombe Districts, Kaduya (672) and Mkumba (328) Traditional Authorities. MRCS refined the beneficiary selection criteria using data and information collected from other agencies.

Through the DEC meetings, it was recommended that members of the Food Assistance Sub-committees in the two districts second a staff to support MRCS in the selection and registration processes for transparency and to ensure risks of overlapping are managed. MRCS also worked with Goal Malawi in the selection of Goal Malawi project beneficiaries.

<b>Food security, Nutrition and Livelihoods</b>		
<b>Outcome 1: Immediate food needs of 10,000 beneficiaries (2,000 households) are met over a period of six months</b>		
<b>Output</b>	<b>Activities planned</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2,000 households (10,000 beneficiaries) receive cash in order to purchase food</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information for authorities – awareness sessions in district assemblies</li> </ul>	100%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeting process, identification and registration</li> </ul>	100%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey verification</li> </ul>	100%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training on beneficiary identification, registration, rapid assessment and field data collection and analysis</li> </ul>	100%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordination with Ministry of Health for development of a referral system for malnourished people</li> </ul>	10%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of CTP and payment process</li> </ul>	100%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operational training to staff and volunteers on CTP and monitoring on the utilization and adequacy of transfers to meet household food needs</li> </ul>	100%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Validation of beneficiary lists and establishment of an accountability mechanism (including beneficiary communication and feedback systems)</li> </ul>	100%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cash distributions</li> </ul>	100%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>	100%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring Malnutrition indicators</li> </ul>	0%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordination with Ministry of Health for monitoring of referral malnutrition cases</li> </ul>	0%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training and capacity building in CTP among the staff and volunteers</li> </ul>	100%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of CTP preparedness plan for future operations</li> </ul>	0%	
<b>Outcome 2: Livelihoods of 1,000 households are reinforced to build community resilience in targeted regions</b>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appropriate agricultural inputs (seeds and fertilisers) are distributed to 1,000 farmers (5,000 people) in rural areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment to identify most vulnerable households that have capacity to work and have available land for planting</li> </ul>	100%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct specific needs assessment via Ministry of Agriculture to identify most appropriate items to be distributed depending on the market availability and period</li> </ul>	100%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment to establish capacity of local traders to provide proposed seeds and fertilizers</li> </ul>	0%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organize procurement of seeds and fertilizers for 1,000 farmers</li> </ul>	0%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training of 100 lead farmers in agricultural production and nutrition</li> </ul>	0%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cascading of agricultural production and nutrition training</li> </ul>	0%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct distributions of seeds and fertilizers with volunteers</li> </ul>	0%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring and evaluation of the activities</li> </ul>	0%
<b>Quality programming / Areas common to all sectors (assessments, monitoring and evaluation)</b>		
<b>Outcome 3: The management of the operation is informed by a comprehensive assessment, monitoring and evaluation system</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial needs assessments are updated following consultation with beneficiaries and stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Management of the implementation team</li> </ul>	100%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordination and engagement with key stakeholders, partners and operational agencies</li> </ul>	100%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint monitoring of operations</li> </ul>	100%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation of the impact of assistance delivered</li> </ul>	100%

## 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.

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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**.

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