**Assessment Report – Malawi Flooding**

**March, 2019**

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| **I. Introduction** A Tropical Cyclone formed in the Mozambique Channel and drifted to Malawi on 5 March causing heavy rains accompanied by strong winds. The heavy and persistent rain led to severe flooding across some districts in southern Malawi. More than 739,800 people have been affected, including more than 75,900 displaced, with 56 deaths and 577 injuries recorded according to the Government. Fourteen districts have been impacted. While Machinga and Zomba districts have been most affected, accounting for more than 50,000 affected people per district[[1]](#endnote-1)., Nsanje (18,000 households), Chikwawa (16,000 households) and Phalombe (TBC people) recorded the highest number of displaced persons. Nsanje district recorded the 17,400 or 3,867 households IDPs. Phalombe recorded 22,848 households (102,816 people) affected and 1,228households (5,526) people displaced. In 2015, Malawi was also affected by floods which close to 147,000 people were in IDP centres with an estimated 26,000 IDPs located outside centres/in hard to reach areas. The same districts, Nsanje, Chikwawa, Phalombe and Zomba were the most affected.With agriculture being the main source of livelihood for rural population in the country, the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee conducted an assessment in July 2018 which projected that 3,306,405 people (% of the population) falling in IPC Phase 3 or worse and would require humanitarian assistance from 2 to 6 months duration during the 2018/2019 consumption year. The heavy rains and floods have likely impacted agricultural activities, as fields are inundated and recently planted crops have been destroyed. Post-flood assessments will indicate the impact on people’s livelihoods. However, as agricultural production accounted for one-third of Malawi’s GDP in 2017 and about 80% of its export revenue, it is likely that the potential loss of harvest, will impact their livelihoods in the medium and long-term. In Nsanje, the heavy rains and floods occurred in areas where there is already a dire food insecurity situation. Approximately, 37% of the population in the Extension Planning Area did not have food from own production which was lower as compared to 2019’s average of 45%) as crops were swept away.  |

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| **II. Assessment Objective**The objective of the assessment was to validate and determine the scope of the crisis and to identify the main and immediate needs of the affected population.Two teams conducted assessment and verification in Phalombe and Nsanje districts.The following partners participated in the assessment:* Government (Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DODMA) and Nsanje and Phalombe District Councils)
* UN Agencies:- UN Resident Coordinator’s Office, UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, FAO, IOM, UN Women
* NGOs: Save The Children, Goal, , MSF, World Vision, ADRA, CRS, MRCS, CWW, CADECOM, Christian Aid, ADRA,
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| **III. Assessment Methodology**The assessment focused on Phalombe and Nsanje districts as these were indicated as the worst affected by the floods at the time the mission was being constituted. Accessible sites were physically assessed with the Nsanje team travelled to one of the most affected areas in Mlolo by boat. Interviews were conducted with the following:* Camp committees
* Key community leaders
* School authorities
* Agricultural Extension Planning Officer
* Community volunteers
* Household sampling

Additionally, focus group discussions were conducted with the affected communities. Separate discussions were held with women and girls to discuss specific protection issues. For inaccessible sites, information was collected via the District Commissioners Office. The assessment for Nsanje covered all eight areas that had not been initially assessed. A total of 16 out of 24 sites were visited in Nsanje while all 30 sites were visited in Phalombe. sites were visited in Phalombe.Sites visited

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| *District* | *Sites Visited* | *Number of camps in District* |
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| Nsanje | 16 | 24 |
| Phalombe | 30 | 30 |

In Nsanje, the assessment was carried out by four teams where each team has approximately 10 people from the various sectors. In Phalombe, the assessment was carried out by three teams with 12members each.  |

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|  **Situation Analysis** |

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| **IV. Damage** For all the areas visited, the damage included the following: * Partial and compete structural damage to houses and public buildings. Most of the damaged houses were made of clay bricks.
* Submerged houses, public buildings.
* Damaged roads and bridges (impassable routes).
* Destroyed or inundated crops.
* Flooded rivers cutting of communities and road access
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| **V. Status of Populations living in Affected Areas** ***Total displaced households: 16,866******Total displaced individuals: 75,900***

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| 15,563,749Total Population (General Census 2018) | 7,657,864People living in the 14 affected districts (General Census 2018) | 739,800Total population affected countrywide(DoDMA) |
| 1,610,576 Total population living in 3 most affected southern districts |
| Estimated number of people in need of humanitarian assistance as of 13 March 2019 (DoDMA and inter-agency assessments)  |
| 17,401IDPs in centres(Inter-agency and DoDMA est.) | 2,050IDPs outside centres/in host communities  | 3,991Flood displaced Mozambicans in Malawi  |

***Nsanje*****Population of the district: 238,100****Number of households affected: 18,000****Number of people affected: 81,000****Number of households displaced: 3,867****Estimated number of individuals displaced: 17,401**Following the heavy rains in Nsanje and upper district of Nsanje, the district experienced flooding in all 9 Traditional Authorities (TAs). The most affected TAs are Mlolo, Mbenje, Tengani, Malemia, Chimombo, Ndamera and Nyachikadza. VCPC registered a huge number of houses collapsed due to moisture and will require support to reconstruct once the rains stop. During the floods, water passed through dwelling houses soaking maize grain stocks and flour kept by households thereby damaging it and causing food unavailability at household level.The floods affected 12,759 Ha of crops belonging to 37,817 Farm Families (FFs) in all five Extension Planning Areas (EPAs). A total of 4,611 Ha of maize, 1,391 Ha of Rice, 3,094 Ha of Millet and 1,781 Ha of Sorghum were damaged. The damage ranged from moderate to severe. Some crops were submerged completely causing total crop loss. Livestock such as poultry, ducks, goats drowned or were washed away by the floods. A total of 2,721 goats, 84 pigs, 11,497 chickens, 1,816 ducks and 55 guinea fowls were washed away or died due to floods. Floods also affected infrastructure including livestock kraals and irrigation schemes.The displaced households are grouped in 24 sites with the majority of sites located in schools (19 out of the 24 sites). In some areas, in Mlolo, it was reported and observed that people had returned to their homes. Although the had begun rebuilding, most households were living and sleeting in the open as houses had been completely destroyed. Of concern however is the fact that, in most areas visited, there was limited demographic breakdown and key groups including children under five as well as pregnant and lactating women were not registered. Efforts were made by assessments teams to follow-up with the camp focal point to obtain this important information. ***Phalombe*****Population of the district:** **350,000****Number of households displaced:** **22,848****Number of people affected:102,816****Number of households displaced: 1,228****Estimated number of individuals displaced: 5,526**Similar to the situation in Nsanje, in most areas visited, it was noted that children were not registered, although key interviewees indicated that registration was still on-going. A total of 30 **sites** (mainly schools and churches) are being used as shelter by displaced. Livelihoods of the displaced households were significantly disrupted. ***Impacts by sector*** ***Shelter:*** In all the assessed sites assessed in Nsanje, the displaced populations in Traditional Authorities Tengane, Mlolo and Mbenje are camped in schools and using school classrooms for shelter as well as other school facilities including water and sanitation. Although the assessment captured the number of people in IDP sites, there are however some communities who were displaced but living close to their homes and in the process of rebuilding and constructing temporary shelter. As a result the number of those displaced and in IDP sites is low as most preferred to return to their homes and salvage material to either start rebuilding or building temporary shelters. During the assessment, those households living close to their homes were living and sleeping in the open. ***Education:*** Some schools closed as they were affected by floods. In other schools, no learning is ongoing as rooms were inundated. In these schools, displaced communities are making use of the school infrastructure including shelter (use of classrooms, water and sanitation) to accommodate IDPs. In other locations, learning is progressing normally as IDPs were removed from the schools and encouraged to return to their homes to begin rebuilding. Other schools are only accommodating people at night.**WASH:** With a generally low sanitation coverage in the affected districts and with the collapse of most toilets (in Mlilo), most IDPs are sheltered in schools. While facilities have latrines and handwashing facilities, these are not designed to accommodate the additional number of persons occupying the school. As a result, some sites reported of open defecation. All communities are accessing safe water in school boreholes. In Nsanje, IDP sites were assisted with chlorine by Government and NGO partners.**Livelihoods and Agriculture**: After two consecutive bad production years, the 2017’s harvest saw a much-needed return to normalcy (3.5 million tons of maize produced[[2]](#endnote-2)). However, the 2018 maize production was estimated to drop (by 22%) to 2.7 million tones, from 3,5 million. This was largely due to prolonged dry spells and fall army worm infestation. During the floods, water passed through dwelling houses soaking maize grain stocks and flour kept by households thereby damaging it and causing food unavailability at household level.Crop destruction will have a negative impact on the food availability post-disaster unless replanting is done. Although markets are functioning and food stocks are available, commodity prices increased significantly by close to 100%. **Health:** In all areas assessed, health facilities remained generally unaffected, and most communities including the displaced populations are still able to access the facilities. This is however except for Nsanje (Makanga) where some health facilities were inundated and submerged in water. During the assessment, it was observed that both Phalombe and Nsanje had significant poos of stagnant waters. The poor sanitation conditions in the sites and the presence of these stagnant pools water provides conducive environment of mosquito breeding that might increase incidences of malaria and also lead to other waterborne diseases such as cholera or diarrhoea. **Protection:** As highlighted, Populations are not disaggregated by age-groups. At the time of the assessment however, there were no protection incidents reported. Most displaced are accommodated in schools and using classrooms as shelter which is gender -separated although most sites did not have inadequate lighting. Three sites in southern Nsanje received close to 900 displaced individuals from Mozambique requiring assistance. **Communication**: Community networks (mobile phone networks) are generally unaffected. |

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| **VI. Key findings/issues identified**Key findings identified are the following:* There is need to ensure that when data is recorded, it is disaggregated (men, women, children, PLW and other vulnerable groups with special needs). This is important for further planning.
* Some of the beneficiaries y figures are inflated and do not reflect the realities on the ground
* Some households have had their structures completely destroyed but opted to return to their plots to begin rebuilding.
* While assistance is in-coming, there is uneven distribution of relief items in Nsanje.

There are varying approached being used by school/education authorities in responding the influx of IDPs in schools* There is inadequate information on assistance being provided and activities being carried out to address the needs of the affected.
* An influx of people coming to IDP sites in Malawi from Mozambique. With the occurrence of Cyclone Idai, it is likely that figures will increase.
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| **VII. Current response**The Malawian government, through the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) under the Ministry of Homeland Security is leading the response with the support of humanitarian actors in the country. Humanitarian response and rapid needs assessments are underway, and the Government has appealed for support in terms of provision of emergency relief items, including tents, food and NFIs. In Nsanje, the Malawi Defence Force is delivering supplies by air to affected areas in T/A Mlolo which remains inaccessible except by boat and helicopter. Food (Maize meal, soya pieces, oil and salt) and non-food items (chlorine, blankets and household utensils) have been distributed. In Phalombe, government and partners have delivered food and NFIs to selected camps. Response is ongoing but inadequate.As of 14th March, 2019, the in-country sectors/clusters have been activated: Agriculture;Food Security; Health; Nutrition; Water and Sanitation; Transport, Logistics and Communication; Emergency Shelter and Camp Management; Coordination, Communication and Assessment; Early Recovery and Protection; and Education. DoDMA has established a hotline for the general public to report on disasters. Yoneco, a community radio station based in Zomba has also opened its hotline to complement the reporting. *Interventions to date[[3]](#endnote-3)****Nsanje**** DoDMA: Food (Maize flour, Salt, soya pieces, rice), NFIs (Plastic plates, plastic sheets, blankets and buckets)
* Malawi Red Cross Society: Food (maize flour, cooking oil, salt, sugar, soya pieces), NFIs (family tents, plates, cups buckets), hygene (soap)
* Goal Malawi: Tarpaulin, plastic pails, tapped buckets, plastic sheets, HTC / Chlorine (Kg), full house toilet, transport service for mobile clinics
* Iris Africa – Bangula: Boat services for assessment & mobile clinics,
* MSF: Mobile Clinics in Makhanga T/A Mlolo and other camps, Fuel for boats
* Care Malawi: Fuel – Diesel
* Action Aid Malawi: Provision of transport for Assessment
* Agricane Malawi: Water bowser (litres)
* National Malaria Programme: 22,000 mosquito nets

**Phalombe*** DoDMA: Provision of 2,400 (50kg) bags of maize, 500(15kg) bags of rice, 200 (50kg) bags of rice, 200 kg of salt, 400 blankets, 200 pails, 800 and 200(10 m) plastic sheets
* MRCS: 10 plastic buckets with taps, 10 plastic buckets without taps, 10 rolls of plastic sheets, 150 kg maize flour, 5 bales of sugar and 5 bales of salt, 50 packets of sanitary pads, 360 tablets of soap and 25 litres of cooking oil
* Indian Community in Malawi: 400 (10 kg) maize flour, 400 (3 kg) packets of rice, 400 packets of candles, 400 (2 litres) of cooking oil, 400 blankest, 400 blacksheet rolls, 400 (40 litre) basins, 400 small plates, 400 large plates, 400 plastic cups, 400 big spoons, 800 pairs of trousers.
* National
* The Ministry of Health, National Malaria Control Programme plans to distribute 22,000 mosquito nets which are urgently needed.
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| **VIII. Humanitarian Access**At the time of the assessment, 3 sites sites on the east side of Shire River in Nsanje district are only reachable by helicopter and boat. A helipad positioned in Bangula is being used by the Malawi Defence Force for delivery of relief items. Additionally, UNICEF and WFP partners provided boats for movement to locations on the eastern side of Shire River.  |

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| **IX. Coverage and gaps**So far, there is minimal response efforts and inadequate supplies for the affected community. There are considerable gaps in most sectors as well as limited information on assistance being provided. A concerted effort is being made to ensure that all ongoing assistance is captured in order to clearly confirm the gap.  |

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| **X. Strategic humanitarian priorities****Urgent shelter and NFI requirements for 23,000 people**With close to 20,000 people in displacement centres including people who have erected temporary shelter in their original locations to restore their lives, there is need to provide temporary shelter for those households whose homes have been completely destroyed. Most affected households lost all their belongings. There is an urgent need to provide Mosquito nets, kitchen utensils, buckets, lighting materials and blankets. In addition, there is need to support in the repair or reconstruction of damaged and destroyed structures, taking into account building guidelines and standards for resilience and future shocks. **There is an immediate need to provide food assistance to 5,905 households in affected communities**Immediate food needs need to be urgently addressed to prevent rapid deterioration in nutritional status, health and well-being of the worst-affected people with precipitating factors such as a possible increase in water-borne disease and limited access to safe water. Early restoration of food security should include support to livelihoods and agricultural production, by re-planting fields for those communities that can use this window of opportunity and/or residual moisture**Restoration of WASH, education, health, nutrition and other basic services, and management of displacement including protection**For the 23,000 people displaced people in Nsanje and Phalombe and camped in the schools and not able to return home, there is need to scale up the water and sanitation components through the increase of sanitation facilities and provision of water treatment for the potentially contaminated water sources. Alternative options need to be considered for those accommodated in schools to limit interruption of the learning system. The lack of adequate safe water and food pose risk of disease outbreak that will affect utilization of food. Of note is the impact on children under 5. Nutrition screening remains a key activity to avoid acute malnutrition. **Recovery of livelihoods**With 80% per cent of sampled communities reporting farming as their primary source of income, the most urgent needs are to distribute seeds. Communities confirmed that there still is a window for re-plant using residual moisture in which they will still be able to harvest. Additionally, seeds and implements will be required for the winter planting season. **Protection concerns** remain a priority across all sectors for all districts. Although no serious cases of abuse have been reported among the affected populations, there still remains a significant risk of the same for women and children mainly due to poor lighting in the temporary shelters. Two persons with albinism located in T/A Jenala and Chiwalo are at high risk. ***Priorities for Nsanje and Phalombe Districts*****Shelter:** The main identified need was shelter to avoid disruption of learners and possibly re-open those schools that have been closed to accommodate IDPs. In Nsanje, shelter is required for 20,000 IDPs in Nsanje and 5,526 IDPs in Phalombe. **Food:** While some food assistance was provided by government, MRCS and other partners, it is insufficient and needs to be scaled up. It must however be noted that due to the lack of demographic breakdown, it is impossible to determine the specific food requirements. It is also noted that the lean season assistance is currently ongoing and some of the displaced populations are also benefiting from the ongoing cash transfer programme. **NFIs:** Households reported having lost all belongings kitchen utensils, clothing and blankets- items urgently required. Government, Malawi Red Cross and Concern World Wide distributed NFIs distributed some NFIs but these are inadequate. **Camp management:** there are camp managers in most sites. However, support is urgently required to ensure proper registration and identification of needs. There is also need for support to get disaggregated data. **WASH:** As most displaced populations and school children are accessing water from school facilities, there is urgent need to ensure that the water is safe (and treated). In Nsanje, Agricane is currently supplying water three times a day to one camp but this is insufficient considering the numbers. Government and MSF distributed water treatment supplies in form of chlorine to the affected population in Nsanje districts but are however insufficient given the needs. Additionally, there is need to scale up access to sanitation to ensure basic humanitarian standards and prevent illness. There is not sanitation support that as been provided for Phalombe.**Health**As the majority of the displaced population are made of women and youth of reproductive age, there is need for distribution of reproductive health kits.**Education**: While commendable efforts were to avoid disruption of school sessions by the IDPs, schools in T/A Mlolo (Nsanje) were particularly affected by the floods deterring learners from attending school. At the time of the visit, some of the schools were closed and accommodating IDPs. |

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| **XI. Sector Analysis and Recommendations****Shelter situation*** Most IDPs are sheltered in collective settings causing privacy and protection issues.
* Some households who have returned are living and sleeping in the open generally putting their lives at risk.
* Shelter is urgently required to reduce protection concerns and ensure basic humanitarian standards.
* Most areas have shelter materials locally available and local knowledge of construction exists.
* Major lack of NFI assistance including mosquito nets, kitchen, hygiene and sleeping kits. The majority of IDPs at the camps lost everything and at current return to area of origin to salvage is impossible.

**Camp Management, Shelter, NFIs*** Site management is mostly done on a self-management by the IDPs. However figures available on the number of people displace and in the camps varies. Additionally, the data needs to be broken down by age, gender and vulnerabilities to allow for better planning.
* No NGOs are in any locations supporting the camp management process.
* Considerable reports of opportunistic people onsite (non-IDPs) taking advantage of assistance thereby inflating the numbers.
* A significant number are partial IDPs who return to their homes during the day and go to the schools either to be included in potential discussion for assistance or at night to sleep
* Nsanje camps are hosting 887 Mozambican households who are currently stretching the already inadequate response supplies.

**Registration and need identification*** Lack of data on confirmed numbers of displaced persons as registration as numbers reported do not align with the information provided.
* There is a combination of people displaced in IDP camps and those who returned to their homes in host families in surrounding areas as well as affected persons back at area of origin and expected arrivals in coming days.

**Types and situation of sites** * Most sites are located in schools, therefore a standardized approach and alternative schooling options are needed. Erection of tents in the said schools is an urgent need.
* Alternative sites to be identified to allow schools to function normally
* Some sites remain inaccessible by road and government is making an effort to deliver supplies by air.
* There is an influx of people also fleeing floods in Mozambique. With the reported tropical cyclone likely to hit Mozambique in the next few days, this influx is expected to increase.

**Food access*** Food distribution is insufficient maybe based on lack of complete registration. Specific nutritional needs given the high numbers of under 5yr, pregnant and lactating women.
* Food distribution is taken care of by camp committees with minimal storage capacity on site.
* In Nsanje, all crops were destroyed for a significant number of IDPs.
* Local markets are accessible and stocked. Food prices however increased by close to 100%.for some staple food (50kg bag of maize is selling at MK20,000 and mostly from Mozambique). Purchasing power of IDPs is non-existing at present.

**WASH*** Most sites have 1 borehole used by both the IDPs and the school which is insufficient. Although the latrines are gender-segregated (men and women), access to sanitation is also inadequate as both IDPs and school children (in the case of open schools) are sharing the same facilities. All sites seem to have women/men division and appointed committees for maintenance.
* Water borne diseases are yet to be reported although the risk remains high given the amount of stagnant water bodies.

**Health*** Most sites are within reach of health centres and have community care workers. Clinics closest to
* Malaria is prevalent and stagnating water at most camps and host communities exacerbate the risk of malaria. Mosquito nets are needed for every household as the majority of households do not have any.

**Protection*** No reports of GBV yet and no major incidents reported during displacement and upon arrival.
* Most committees have established security sub committees.
* No frictions observed between IDPs population and host communities yet. Tas highlighted, in most instances, school authorities are welcoming.

**Education*** Alternative sites are required to avoid disruption of schools particularly in Mlolo.

**Livelihoods/early recovery*** Primary livelihoods at area of origin were mainly crop production. Communities requested seed to take advantage of the window of opportunity to replant given the moisture still in the ground. Additionally, there is need to distributed seeds and implements for the winter farming season.
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| **XII. Key Assessment Recommendations*** Urgent scale-up of response in sites in key sectors of food, shelter, WASH, nutrition, agriculture, health and protection,
* Need to have disaggregated data that will allow for proper planning.
* In places where markets are functional, market-based response modalities are strongly recommended
* Better coordination of response operations at district council.
* With the completion of the rapid assessments, in-depth sectoral assessments should be conducted to effectively quantify the recovery needs including providing technical recommendations.
* Capacity development is required to address the gathering of statistics at community level, especially with regards to the disaggregation of data by age, sex and other relevant categories.
* Protection services to be strengthened. Special protection arrangement should be made for two persons with albinism living in camps in Phalombe.
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1. Figures to be verified by an inter-agency assessment [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. See attached Resource Matrices for support provided by government and partners [↑](#endnote-ref-3)