

## FLOODS THREATEN 285,000 ALONG THE ZAMBEZI RIVER VALLEY

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## 1. FLOOD EMERGENCY

National disaster management authorities in Mozambique are evacuating river communities along the Zambezi River valley in an effort to mitigate the impact of impending floods on these populations. It is estimated that 285,000 people in eleven low lying districts surrounding the Zambezi River in the Provinces of Manica, Sofala, Tete and Zambezia could be affected. Of these, approximately 142,000 will require assistance including food and basic services such as health, water and environmental sanitation and hygiene, education and protection.

In Mozambique, localised flooding is common during the southern Africa rainy season from October to March. The 2006/2007 season, however, has brought more rainfall and subsequent flooding than is usual at this stage of the season. The high level of rainfall in Mozambique, compounded by persistent heavy rains in neighboring countries Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi, has led to high water levels in the Zambezi river and its tributaries, as well as in the Cahora Bassa Dam Reservoir. As a result, the national water authorities have had to gradually increase the flow of water from the Cahora Bassa dam, from about 2,500 cubic metres per second on 24 January to 8,400 cubic metres per second on 11 February 2007.

While discharges from the Cahora Bassa Dam have been reduced to 3,600 cubic meters per second as of 20 February, the threat of floods is still present especially in the downstream districts of the Zambezi River Valley. The Cahora Bassa Dam is still receiving approximately 10,000 cubic meters of water per second due to precipitation in neighboring countries. Zambian water authorities are warning that the Kariba Dam may have to increase its discharge to manage the amount of rainfall, which will inevitably affect the levels of water downstream on the Zambezi River into Mozambique. There are about six weeks remaining in the rainy season, where heavy rains can exacerbate the flooding situation in already affected areas of the country. Furthermore, Mozambique is now bracing for the arrival of Cyclone Favio which is due to make landfall near the City of Beira, in Sofala Province, by 22 February.

In combination, these factors are contributing to rising water levels which threaten close to 285,000 people in river communities along the Zambezi. In an effort to mitigate the impact of the floods, the National Institute of Disaster Management (INGC) declared a preparedness 'Red Alert' and has begun implementing its Contingency Plan for the Zambezi River Valley, notably in:

- Zumbo, Magoé and Mutarara in Tete province;
- Tambara and Guro districts in Manica province;
- Chemba, Caia and Marromeu districts in Sofala province; and
- Chinde, Mopeia and Morrumbala districts in Zambezia province.

The populations evacuated and displaced due to the threat of floods are being accommodated in temporary centres established as part of the emergency response and in resettlement centres established during the floods in 2001. As of 20 February, the INGC estimates that approximately 120,791 people have been displaced due to the floods. An estimated 70,925 people are currently in the accommodation centres and 49,866 in the resettlement centres.

## 2. SITUATION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Preliminary assessment reports from counterparts, partners and UNICEF staff in the field indicate that some displaced populations do not yet have access to relief assistance, adequate shelter and basic services. This is mainly due to the logistical challenges posed in reaching flooded areas which may only be accessible by air or boat.

It is estimated that more than half of the flood affected population are children.

Preliminary assessments by government counterparts, NGO partners and UN staff indicate that populations in some affected areas still do not have access to safe water or sanitation. Priority needs identified include essential supplies such as water tanks, jerry cans, buckets, water treatment plants, temporary latrines and hygiene education materials. Under these conditions, the potential for the emergence water borne diseases is very high – especially the potential for a cholera outbreak – as the disease is already endemic in many of the affected areas.

In terms of Health and Nutrition, preliminary assessments show that most accommodation centres have been established close to existing health posts. The Ministry of Health, UNICEF and other partners are in the process of establishing temporary facilities in the centres to address basic health needs of the displaced. To date, the most common illnesses detected are conjunctivitis, diarrhea and malaria. A majority of the displaced population are accommodated in areas within the vicinity of health posts and primary health care facilities that are supported by the Ministry of Health and UNICEF through regular programmes. Both the existing health posts and the temporary accommodation centre facilities have been mandated to conduct activities such as routine outreach primary health care, food and micronutrient supplementation and health and nutrition education as required. Health staff who have been trained in cholera prevention and treatment, as well as supplementary feeding by UNICEF-supported programmes have been redeployed to affected areas. While malnutrition has currently not been identified as a major problem, the nutritional status of children and women could deteriorate if populations are displaced for an extended period of time.

Access to education has been severely disrupted as a result of the floods. Many schools have been flooded or rendered inaccessible by flood waters. Displaced children have lost learning materials provided at the beginning of the school year which began on 29 January; schools in affected areas have also lost teaching materials. Existing schools near accommodation centre are attempting to absorb displaced children, but often lack adequate classroom space, learning and teacher materials to meet the educational needs of both flood affected children and children from the host community. Efforts are being made within some accommodation centres to maintain an educational environment, in some cases organizing learning activities under trees.

Preliminary assessments are also highlighting that basic protection structures are being put in place within accommodation centres, including police staff early trained through UNICEF programmes on the prevention of and response to domestic violence involving women or children. Ongoing registration processes at accommodation centres has points to the high number of orphaned and vulnerable children and their caregivers sheltered in these facilities -- at least 30,000 vulnerable children and their caregivers require basic household goods such as cooking utensils, blankets and clothing. Approximately 50% of accommodation centre populations are children with limited access to learning spaces and organized recreational activities. The protective environment of flood affected areas is further aggravated by unconfirmed reports that flood waters are exposing landmines left from the Mozambican War of Independence and Civil War.

In the best case scenario, flood waters could recede in approximately two to three weeks. During this time, the 120,800 displaced will still require assistance and access to basic services. The current challenge is compounded by the fact that displaced populations continue to grow, placing more demands on existing accommodation centres, and stretching national capacity to meet basic needs as new centres are established. It is likely that with the decrease in water levels, many families will opt to stay in the accommodation centres until the situation stabilizes in the recovery and rehabilitation phase following the floods.

### 3. UNICEF RESPONSE: ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS

UNICEF is supporting the efforts of the Government of Mozambique to respond to the flood situation in the districts around the Zambezi River Valley as a member of the Mozambique IASC Humanitarian Country Team and through the implementation of the Cluster Approach Framework. UNICEF has assumed the role of Cluster convenor in the areas of Nutrition and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene and co-convenor with the Save the Children Alliance in the areas of Education and Protection. UNICEF is also an active participant in the Health, Logistics, Shelter and Telecommunications Clusters.

#### The Cluster Approach in Mozambique

Cluster for emergency response	Cluster lead	Cluster participants
Logistics	WFP	UNICEF, UNDP, IOM, IFRC, NGOs
Food Security	WFP/FAO	IRD, SCA, World Vision, World Relief
Telecommunications	WFP	UNICEF
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	UNICEF	Oxfam, Samaritans Purse, MSF-L, IRD, FHI
Nutrition	UNICEF	SCA, WHO, FAO, WFP, CARE, World Vision, FHI, World Relief,

		Samaritans Purse
Health	WHO	Medicus Mundi, World Vision, UNFPA, UNICEF
Education	UNICEF / Save the Children Alliance	World Vision, CONCERN, UNESCO, Africare, Samaritans Purse, Instituto da Comunicação Social
Protection	UNICEF / Save the Children Alliance	World Vision, UNFPA, Africare, Handicap International, Samaritans Purse, WFP, Action Aid, Concern, Halo Trust, ASADEC, ASVIMO
Shelter	IFRC, Red Cross Mozambique	Habitat, German Agro Action, Samaritans Purse, UNICEF
Early Recovery	UNDP	All Partners

Throughout the regular country programme efforts, UNICEF has been working with the National Disaster Management Institute of the Government of Mozambique to strengthen preparedness and contingency planning capacity in face of the persistent threats posed by natural disasters in the country. UNICEF has been addressing chronic vulnerability and humanitarian conditions resulting from the threats of natural disasters -- including floods, drought and cyclones -- in partnership with the line ministries of the Government of Mozambique, and other private sector, bilateral and multilateral stakeholders. Current emergency response efforts are firmly founded in these preparedness, contingency planning and vulnerability reduction efforts mainstreamed into the UNICEF Mozambique Country Programme.

Since the declaration of the Red Alert, initiating the evacuations of river communities, UNICEF, cluster partners, line-ministries and the INGC began mobilizing resources and supplies already pre-positioned at national, provincial and district levels as part of preparedness planning efforts in the regular country programme. In light of the growing scope of the flood emergency and the number of people projected to be evacuated or displaced, additional resources and supplies were ordered to meet the needs of all the affected. Technical and coordination assistance is also being provided to national, provincial and district authorities to support emergency response efforts.

To date, UNICEF has supported the procurement and delivery of supplies and related programme activities amounting to over US \$1,020,000. Supplies that have been provided include:

- **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene**, tarpaulin to build shelters and latrines, jerry cans, buckets, water purification materials and mobile purification equipment, water bladders, water tanks and tankers;
- **Health and Nutrition**, insecticide treated mosquito bed nets, BP5 and Corn Soya Blend, hygiene promotion, cholera and malaria prevention information education communication materials;
- **Education**, school kits, learners' kits and teachers kits, as well as tents for the creation of temporary learning spaces in accommodation centres.
- **Protection**, recreational materials and emergency basic packages for the most vulnerable children and their care givers.

UNICEF Mozambique has 44 staff members working full time on the emergency response - in operational bases in Caia (Sofala Province), Mutarara (Tete Province) and Mopeia (Zambezia Province), as well as in Maputo. A Situation Centre has been established in the UNICEF Country Office to ensure timely information sharing and coordination within the organization, with Government counterparts, UN agencies and non-governmental counterparts.

Notable UNICEF initiatives being carried out in the first phase of the emergency response to the flood situation include:

- In collaboration with the INGC, line ministries and Cluster partners, **preliminary needs assessments** have carried out in affected areas and accommodation centres to evaluate the status and determine the basic needs of evacuated and displaced populations, especially children and women.

- A **multi-sector needs assessment** is currently underway in affected areas to determine medium-term emergency response needs following the immediate response. The assessment is being carried out with the INGC, line ministries, UN agencies including UNICEF and non-governmental partners.
- Community theatre groups and mobile video units are being supported to raise awareness in flood affected areas and accommodation centres on **cholera prevention, good hygiene practices and HIV/AIDS**. UNICEF is also working with Radio Mozambique to ensure that radio spots on hygiene promotion are broadcast in all affected areas.
- **Cholera prevention** measures are being supported in affected areas to avoid a cholera outbreak, including the distribution of information education communication materials and training for community activists. UNICEF is also working with Health authorities to ensure **cholera treatment** services are available in the event of an outbreak in affected districts.
- **Malaria prevention** initiatives are being coordinated with district and provincial health authorities, including the spraying of accommodation centres and the distribution of insecticide treated nets. Social mobilization efforts are also ongoing on the use of malaria nets at household and camp level.
- Health authority capacity is being strengthened to **monitor nutritional status** of displaced women and children. The Nutrition Rehabilitation Programme, carried out with the Ministry of Health and WFP, is being extended to cover the needs of malnourished children in accommodation centres with **supplementary feeding**. Those children identified to be in need of immediate supplementation are being supported by UNICEF, Ministry of Health and non-governmental partners through the repositioning of available stocks of high protein biscuits and corn soya blend.
- Health authorities are also being supported in identifying the needs of health facilities for drugs and medical equipment. In liaison with national and provincial authorities, health staff are being identified and deployed to the affected regions to **provide facility based and outreach primary health care** services.
- UNICEF and partners are working on ensuring that camps in remote areas benefit from outreach and community based health care workers and community volunteers, known as *activistas*.
- Provincial and district water authorities are being supported to ensure displaced populations have **access to clean water and adequate sanitation** facilities, facilitating the transport of water and sanitation supplies, as well as the deployment of government staff to assist affected areas.
- Education authorities at national and local levels are being supported to assess and **restart learning activities**, especially through the provision of tents, school, learners and teachers kits, in accommodation centres and host community schools.
- Support is being provided to the Ministry of Interior to ensure that **police trained on protection and gender** issues are deployed to accommodation centres. Efforts to train accommodation centre staff and community leaders on **protection from violence, exploitation and abuse** and **enhancing the psycho-social environment for children** are on-going with Protection Cluster partners.
- The Ministry of Women and Social Action, UNICEF and other Protection Cluster partners are working to **identify and support orphaned and vulnerable children** in accommodation centres. Emergency kits are being provided to assist orphaned and vulnerable children and their caregivers; recreational kits are also being furnished to accommodation centres to encourage the creation of a **stronger psycho-social child friendly environment** for displaced children.
- **Mine risk education** materials have been sourced from UNICEF Angola and will be distributed as a preparedness measure, in response to reports that flood waters may have disinterred landmines in the affected areas. NGO partners are being supported to assess the veracity of reports and the risk to flood affected areas.

As a member of the Mozambique Humanitarian Country Team, UNICEF has participated in a CERF request for US \$13,520,800 to help fund the initial phase of response to the Zambezi River Valley flood emergency. On behalf of Cluster members, UNICEF is the appealing agency for the Education, Nutrition, Protection and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene components of the CERF. UNICEF is also a requesting agency, with WHO and UNFPA, in the Health component of the CERF. In total, UNICEF can receive up to US \$3,223,000 from the CERF to replenish the preliminary response activities that have been undertaken by UNICEF and various Cluster Partners. UNICEF will be responsible for overseeing disbursement of resources to the Cluster partners, and for coordination of the ongoing interagency response by a large number of partners in the areas of nutrition, water and sanitation, protection and education.

The humanitarian requirements of Mozambique in response to the ongoing floods will likely be compounded by the needs emerging from a probable emergency response to Cyclone Favio. The Humanitarian community is likely to continue to require sustained and accelerated support in addressing both short-term as well as medium and longer term relief and recovery needs of an increasing population in the country.

#### 4. APPEAL REQUIREMENTS AND RECEIPTS

Only US \$285,000 has been pledged so far against the UNICEF Mozambique 2007 Humanitarian Action Report, that also took into preparedness and response needs during the October-March peak flood and cholera season. The un-earmarked funds from the US Fund for UNICEF, expected in the next 24 hours, will be allocated to the various programme sectors to meet the ongoing immediate needs along the Zambezi River Basin, and also in preparedness for the initial response that will be required in the aftermath of Cyclone Favio.

It is anticipated that urgent sectoral requirements in the coming period will allow UNICEF to continue the above outlined activities in the various programme sectors, and for an increasing number of displaced:

**Table 1: Funds Received / Required against the 2007 Humanitarian Action Report**

Appeal Sector	Requirements by Sector	Funds Received* (US\$)	Unmet requirements* (US\$)	Unfunded
Health and Nutrition	\$2,140,000	0	\$2,140,000	100%
Water and Environmental Sanitation	\$1,765,500	0	\$1,765,500	100%
Education	\$802,500	0	\$802,500	100%
Child Protection	\$181,900	0	\$181,900	100%
Emergency Coordination	\$321,000	0	\$321,000	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,210,900</b>	<b>\$285,000</b>	<b>\$4,925,900</b>	<b>95%</b>

\* US\$ 285,000 has been received by the US Fund for UNICEF, currently being allocated

**Table 2: Funds received against the 2007 Humanitarian Action Report by Donor**

Donor	Sector	Funds Received (US\$)
US Fund for UNICEF	Being allocated	\$285,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$285,000</b>

## 5. IMPACT OF UNDER-FUNDING AND CURRENT PRIORITIES

The UNICEF Mozambique 2007 Humanitarian Action Report focuses on strengthening partnerships and coordination for emergency preparedness and response to address the chronic vulnerabilities exacerbated by natural disasters and humanitarian conditions in the country. Though water levels in the 2007 floods were higher than in the 2001 floods in the same area, effective national preparedness, contingency planning and response in the current emergency has helped to mitigate the impact of floods and minimize human losses as compared to the 2001 flood emergency.

The success of the response to the current flood emergency can be attributed to substantial efforts made in strengthening the capacity of national disaster management authorities, the emergency preparedness and response capacity of line-ministry counterparts, and in building partnerships with national and international humanitarian actors for disaster preparedness and response.

The current flood emergency highlights the need to continue enhancing the capacity of national disaster management authorities and line ministries to prepare for and respond to the natural disasters that Mozambique most affront on a yearly basis. It also underscores the importance of strengthening coordination and partnerships within the Mozambique Humanitarian Country Team and the Cluster Approach Framework to better support the efforts of the Government of Mozambique in facing the challenges posed by natural disasters and the resulting chronic vulnerability in the country. The momentum generated by the current emergency needs to be capitalized on to strengthen collaboration, coordination and partnerships between the Government of Mozambique and the Humanitarian Country Team for future emergency preparedness and disaster mitigation and response efforts.

Details of the Mozambique emergency programme can be obtained from:

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