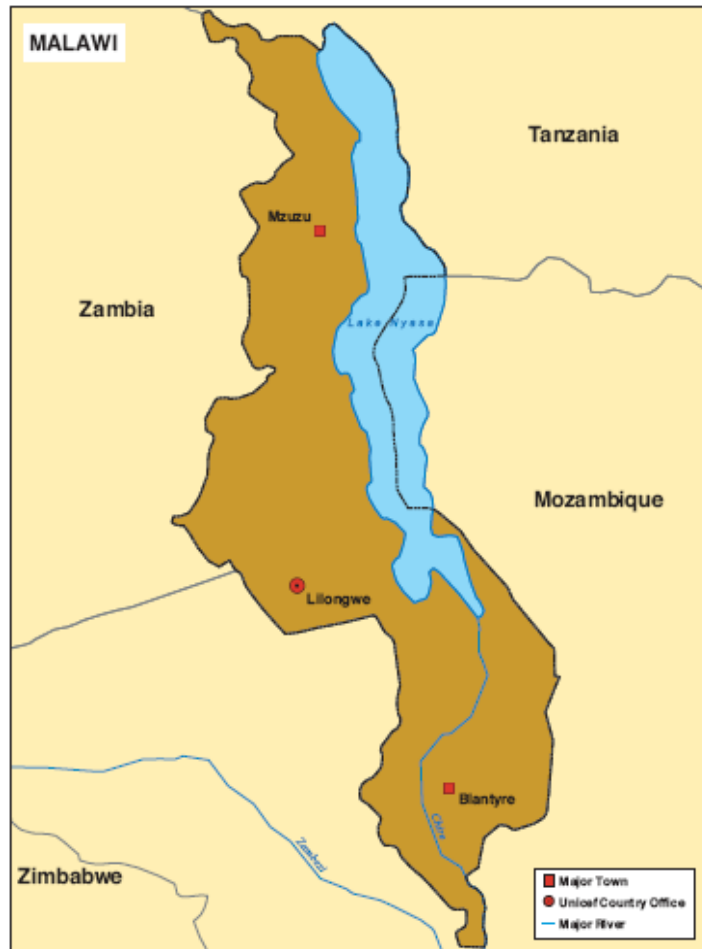


MALAWI FLOODS

UNICEF RESPONDS TO THE NEEDS OF AFFECTED CHILDREN AND WOMEN IN THE AREAS OF HEALTH AND NUTRITION, WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE, EDUCATION, AND HIV/AIDS



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations

1. CRITICAL ISSUES FOR CHILDREN

Over one million people are in risk of food insecurity and floods up until the next harvest in April 2008 and consequently women and children under five will become more exposed to malnutrition and infections as well as to abuse and exploitation. Underlying a situation of food shortage are two mutually reinforcing causes of insecurity, namely a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS and chronic poverty, which need to be addressed in tandem with food aid. Approximately 200,000 women and children under five will be in need of humanitarian assistance in 2008.

Recent weather forecasts by the Southern Africa Regional Climate Outlook Forum, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Global Forecasting Centre for Southern Africa all indicate an enhanced likelihood of flooding in Malawi up until March 2008. The first cases of flooding in the country for this rainy season were reported in mid-November 2007 with an estimated 1,310 affected households in Chikwawa, Nsanje, Phalombe, Machinga, Mwanza, Mangochi and Mzimba districts. In the first week of January 2008, three district areas reported flooding. These include Mzimba district in the northern region, Dedza district in the central region and Chiradzulu district in the southern region. Preliminary reports from these districts indicate that the floods have affected crop fields and 49 houses have collapsed due to heavy rainfalls and storms. District officials are currently conducting assessment on the actual damages and details will be available in the coming days and the UN stands ready to assist.

Floods have already displaced many in neighboring Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Zambia and the main commercial corridor from central Mozambique to landlocked Malawi has been cut and is causing delays in the transportation of food and fuel destined to Malawi, resulting in shortage of petrol.

Cholera remains a major threat in rural and peri-urban areas in Malawi with recurrent outbreaks during the rainy season from November to April and is particularly a major risk factor in flood situations because of the possible and immediate break down of water and sanitation facilities. Food shortages and malnutrition have a direct effect on individual susceptibility to diseases and thus the level of a possible epidemic will be directly related to people's access to food and safe water. So far 434 cholera cases and 5 deaths have been reported in Mulanje, Blantyre, Chikwawa, Thyolo, Chiradzulu, Nsanje and Nkhotakota districts since the current outbreak that started on the 5th of November 2007.

The last cholera season 2006/2007 ended on the week of June 17, with a total of 309 cases, 6 deaths in 12 districts countrywide and within a period of eleven months (August 2006 to June 2007). This season seems to be of major concern as more cases have already been reported within a period of two months only.

The National Food and Nutrition Surveillance system have registered deterioration in the food security and nutrition situation the last months in areas identified vulnerable by the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC). Results of an MVAC survey conducted in November 2007 indicate that more than 500,000 people will not be able to meet their food requirements until the next harvest in April 2008.

The MVAC also showed a significant raise of all nutrition indicators in the three identified livelihood zones. The Southern region continues to have the worst nutrition situation with a raise of the Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rate for children under 5 from 2.7% in June 2007 to 6.1% in November 2007.

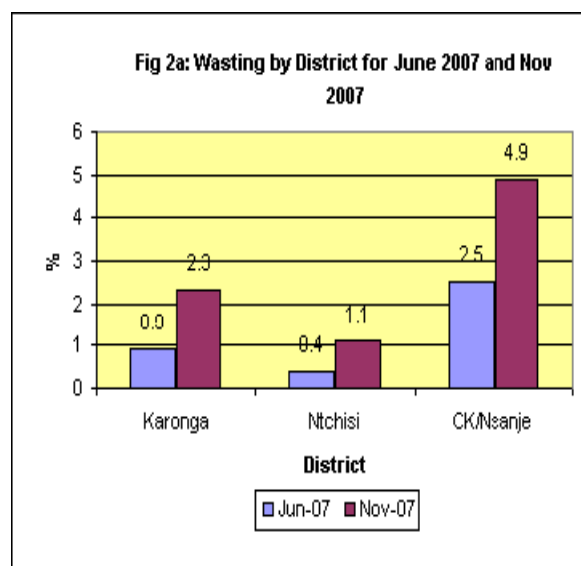
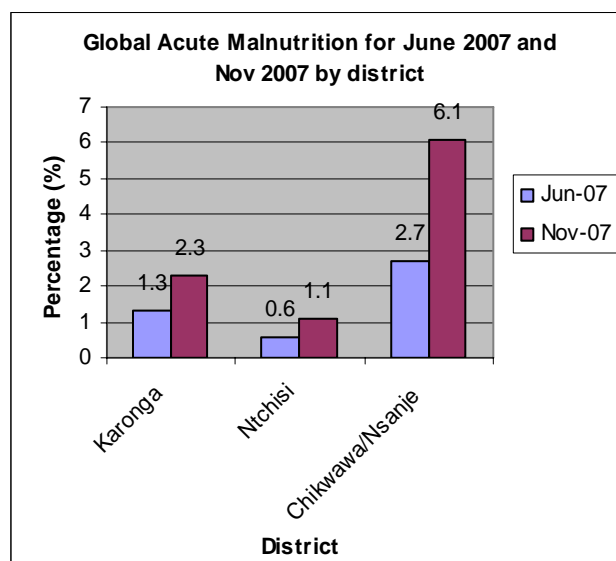
Seven cases of oedema were registered in Chikwawa/Nsanje livelihood zone and the situation is likely to worsen as those districts are also highly flood prone. One underlying factor of the deterioration of the nutrition situation in those districts is the increase disease burden associated to floods (cholera, malaria, respiratory infections, etc..). The wasting rates in November 2007 were 2.0, 1.1, and 9.4

Table1: Number of people whose food security status should be watched throughout the year by districts

Affected District	Population on 'Watch'
Balaka	16,100
Chikwawa	177,400
Karonga	62,600
Machinga	12,500
Mulanje	35,500
Mzimba	120,000
Nsanje	83,900
Ntchisi	11,200
Grand Total	519,200

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security

percent in the Northern, Central and Southern region respectively. New admissions of severely malnourished children under five to 92 out of the 95 Nutrition Rehabilitation Units (NRUs) that are supported by UNICEF were 858 for the month of October 2007. The numbers are expected to increase the coming months reaching a peak in February 2008.



2. UNICEF'S EMERGENCY RESPONSE

In line with the Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies, UNICEF is ensuring prevention, preparedness and response to the Malawi humanitarian crisis through interventions in the areas of Health and Nutrition; Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, Basic Education, Child Protection and HIV/AIDS. Internal resources are already being used to face the ongoing crisis at this stage.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

- Treatment of severely malnourished children:** UNICEF is supporting all the 95 Nutrition Rehabilitation Units in the country through technical assistance; training and provision of specialized nutrition supplies. All 95 Nutrition Rehabilitation Units (NRU) regularly receive adequate quantities of essential supplies (including F-100 and F-75) to cover their needs. Support is also provided to scale up Community Based Therapeutic Care (CTC), which currently is in 21 out of the 28 district. The support from UNICEF involves training of health workers in the remaining 7 districts and provision of drugs the ready to use therapeutic food is provided by Clinton Hunter Foundation through Ministry of Health. In 2007 a total of 31,380 severely malnourished children under 5s were treated through CTCs and 17,818 in NRUs in 21 districts. A total of 100,939 children and 44,457 pregnant and lactating with moderate acute malnutrition were provided with supplementary feeding. Due to flooding this year it is anticipated that the case load for both therapeutic and supplementary feeding will go up by 30-35% of the above mentioned 2007 admission figures.
- Micronutrient supplementation:** Child Health Days took place from 10 to 14 December 2007 in all 28 districts. On this occasion, a total 1.8 million de-worming tablets for anaemia control were distributed to children under five and two million Vitamin A capsules distributed to under five children and post natal women (within two months after delivery). The coverage for Vitamin A and de-worming for children under 5 is expected to be more than 86 percent. This is expected to strengthen the immunity of children against disease outbreaks during this critical period of potential flooding and food insecurity. Malawi does not yet have a policy on use of multiple micronutrients in emergency. Support will be required to pilot distribution of multiple micronutrients to children under 5s, pregnant and lactating women in the flood affected district.

- **Supplementary feeding:** WFP and UNICEF have increased the number of moderately malnourished children and pregnant and lactating women receiving supplementary feeding. A total of 30,000 moderately malnourished children under 5, and 18,500 pregnant and lactating women are currently reached through supplementary feeding at Nutrition Rehabilitation Units, Health Centres, Community-based Therapeutic Care Centres and Community-based Child Care Centres. UNICEF support includes active case identification at community level, provision of registers, guidelines, anthropometric equipment and training of health workers.
- **Nutrition Assessment:** A nutrition assessment was carried out with the support of UNICEF in June 2007 in the three livelihood zones of Lake-Chilwa-Phalombe Plain, Rumphu-Mzimba Plain and Lilongwe-Kasungu Plain. The survey covered a total of Five Expanded Programming Areas (EPA) which were food insecure based on vulnerability assessment. This way, UNICEF and partners established the nutrition situation in these livelihood zones during this post harvest period.
- **Nutrition Surveillance:** A nutrition and food security surveillance system exists since 2003 and now covers all districts in Malawi. The system collects information on nutrition status and household food security every month from 5 sentinel points per district. A monthly surveillance bulletin is produced. The system was initially implemented with technical support from Action Against Hunger. The surveillance system is currently being handed over to Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture with support from UNICEF. Support is required to ensure adequate capacity development of government to ensure the surveillance system is not interrupted.
- **Infant and Young Child feeding:** The rates of exclusively breastfeeding have increase from 4% in 1990 to 56.4% in 2006 (MICS). A policy on Infant and Young child feeding in Malawi exists. The policy recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life followed by continued breastfeeding with adequate complementary foods for up to 2 years and beyond. This becomes even more crucial in emergencies situations. Infant feeding counselling in the context of HIV is provided through PMTCT sites.
- **Control of measles, malaria and other disease outbreaks:** In addition to the regular Extended Programme for Immunization, the Annual Net Re-treatment Campaign took place on 10 – 14 of December 2007 in all the 28 districts targeting 3.5 million Malawians. Various medical supplies such as Oral Rehydration salt, Ringer lactate and cannula of various sizes were also distributed to cholera affected districts.

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

- **Prevention of cholera and other water-borne diseases:** As a member of the National Cholera Task Force, UNICEF is involved in all activities of preparedness and response to cholera in twelve districts. 50 tins of 50 kg chlorine were distributed to the twelve districts facing cholera in 2007. About 6,000 people were assisted with house-to-house chlorination of drinking water. 20,000 vials of simple H₂S testing kits were procured and distributed to all 12 affected districts to be used for testing of drinking water at household level. The annual National Cholera was launched by the Minister of Health on 20 December 2007 and UNICEF is supporting its implementation. For the first time, the November National Child Health Days included sanitation and hygiene promotion activities. Hygiene promotion, in particular hand washing with soap, was supported nationwide and demonstration on the construction of improved sanitation facilities took place in 12 cholera prone districts.
- **Provision of basic water and sanitation survival kits:** In order to contribute to the improvement of the health status of floods affected households, UNICEF Malawi provides family survival kits including among other items jerry cans for drinking water handling, water purification products, insecticide treated mosquito nets, blankets, tarpaulins and soap. Health Surveillance Assistants disseminates key hygiene messages and safety instructions on the use of water purification products to beneficiaries.

EDUCATION

- The school feeding programme continues to benefit approximately 410,000 children in 482 primary schools in food insecure districts. While WFP provides the food, UNICEF supports the programme with the provision of eating and kitchen utensils, construction of kitchen and storage rooms, learning materials and provision of safe water and sanitation.
- UNICEF rehabilitated 4 schools accommodating 3500 school children and supported 17,326 school children in 24 schools affected by floods with school-in-a box kits and large tents. The ownership of the Sentinel Site Surveillance project has been undertaken by the Ministry of Education and it is being integrated into one Ministry owned monitoring and evaluation system.
- UNICEF Malawi also maintains in the central warehouse in Lilongwe a stock of eleven large tents of 72 square meters each and 350 "school-in-a-box" kits of schooling materials for 28,000 pupils. Eleven large tents have been pre-positioned in flood prone areas.

CHILD PROTECTION

- In response to the high incidence of sexual abuse and to build on and extend the scope of the Zero-tolerance Campaign UNICEF has supported the Ministry of Women and Child Development to launch a "Stop Child Abuse" campaign in 2007. The Campaign targets Policy makers, service providers and the community to prevent child abuse protect children from abuse and rehabilitate child victims of abuse.
- The "Stop Child Abuse" campaign aims to mobilize leadership and commitment at all levels with a view to prevent and respond to violence, exploitation and abuse against children - including trafficking, child labour and harmful traditional practices. The campaign also targets children who are uniquely vulnerable to these abuses, such as when living without parental care and those in conflict with the law.
- Child protection activities are also being intensified in school to prevent abuse and exploitation of children. As part of this effort, UNICEF, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, produced and distributed 1.6 million copies of A Trolley Full of Rights (TFR) book and these were distributed to all children in schools and teachers were oriented on its use. The TFR books are meant to increase children's awareness on their rights. Currently UNICEF is supporting the printing of Information Education and Communication (IEC) material in relation to the Stop Child Abuse campaign that will be distributed nationally.
- UNICEF continues to provide support to community-based organizations working with street children and closely monitor their situation. Efforts are also being made to monitor the situation of children in conflict with the law and provide them with legal assistance

HIV/AIDS

- Significant efforts are being made to scale up prevention, care and support programmes in the area of HIV/AIDS using regular and other resources under the regular programme. As one of the "champion countries" for the Global Campaign on Children and AIDS, UNICEF Malawi is stepping up efforts to increase the visibility of children affected by HIV/AIDS and mobilize resources and commitment at all levels. UNICEF will be using its regular resources to support planned HIV/AIDS activities.

COORDINATION

Malawi has adapted the new framework of the IASC Cluster Approach and leadership to respond more efficiently to humanitarian crisis for timely, adequate and predictable humanitarian action and collective ability to efficiently respond to the needs. UNICEF in collaboration with other UN agencies is currently providing support to the Government of Malawi at central and district level in order to strengthen the response capacity for floods. UNICEF is responsible for providing leadership in Nutrition, Water and

Sanitation and Child Protection and support to Health in collaboration with WHO. Nine highly flood-prone districts have been earmarked for rapid response by engaging four NGOs to strategically respond to the incidence of flood occurrence. The NGOs will be required to work hand in hand with district officials. The District Commissioner will be required to endorse the proposal and define a working agreement with the NGO. Capacity building activities have been conducted for district based response officials on Emergency Contingency planning. Some emergency response contingency stocks have also been provided to the Department of Disaster Management Affairs facilitating District Assembly Rapid emergency response. The Malawi Red Cross Society will be responsible for overall shelter and distribution of tarpaulins to target community needs at household level where as UNICEF stocks will respond to institutional needs such as schools and clinics.

Coordination with donors is primarily ensured under the leadership of the Government of Malawi (GoM) in various structures that have been put in place to ensure consensus on the humanitarian response in which UNICEF also participates, e.g. the Food and Nutrition Security Joint Task Force. Under the Food and Nutrition Joint Task Force, the UNICEF Representative is co-chairing the Nutrition Development Partners' Group together with the Principal Secretary from the Department of Nutrition and HIV/AIDS in the Office of the President. The NDPG is supported by technical working groups in which all implementers participate actively. Since the nature of the current humanitarian crisis requires a multifaceted response beyond the single mandate of a UN agency, UNICEF interacts closely with those of other UN agencies, especially the ones of WFP, UNDP, FAO, WHO and UNAIDS through the UN Disaster Management Technical Working Group. UNICEF responds to the emergency through an established network of NGO implementing partners and in close cooperation with the GoM.

3. ESTIMATED FUNDING REQUIREMENTS FOR PLANNED ACTION FROM JAN-MAY 2008

The response to the current floods and nutritional crisis is within the framework of a long-term response to the chronic vulnerability of Malawi to recurrent natural disaster. Our resources mobilization strategy to support the country office programme takes into account this particular context and integrates support for emergency preparedness and response activities. The UN Country Team has recently submitted CERF application requesting US\$ 5,519,700 on behalf of UNICEF and WFP. UNICEF has already committed internal resources to the emergency response and is requesting an additional US\$ 2,487,750 to meet the immediate and medium-term needs of children and women throughout the affected areas for the coming five months.

Table 2: Estimated funding requirements from January to May 2008*

SECTORS	US \$
Health and nutrition	900,000
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	720,000
Education	145,000
Child Protection	200000
Programme Communication, Coordination and Logistics	360,000
Total**	2,487,750

*Funds received against this appeal will be used to respond to both the immediate and the medium-term needs of children and women as outlined above. If UNICEF should receive funds in excess of the medium-term funding requirements for this emergency, UNICEF will use these funds to support other, under-funded emergencies.

** The total includes a maximum recovery rate of 7%. The actual recovery rate on contributions will be calculated in accordance with UNICEF's Executive Board Decision 2006/7 dated 9 June 2006.

Details of the Malawi emergency programme can be obtained from:

Aida Girma UNICEF Representative Lilongwe Tel: + 265 1 770 849 Fax: + 265 1 773 162 Email: agirma@unicef.org	Esther Vigneau UNICEF EMOPS Geneva Tel: + 41 22 909 5612 Fax: + 41 22 909 5902 E-mail: evigneau@unicef.org	Gary Stahl UNICEF PFO New York Tel: + 1-212 326 7009 Fax: + 1-212 326 7165 Email : gstahl@unicef.org
--	--	--