Highlights

As of 4 February, 193,558 households (more than 871,001 people) have been affected by the Tropical Storm Ana related floods and heavy winds, with over 22,000 displaced and seeking temporary shelter in about 123 displacement sites. Chikwawa is the most affected district constituting 43 per cent of the affected population and 45 per cent of the displaced population.

Access to the affected areas remains a significant challenge because many roads and bridges are still in a bad condition.

In the five worst hit districts of Chikwawa, Mangochi, Mulanje, Nsanje and Phalombe, 70 primary schools were affected of which 35 schools are hosting Internally Displaced People (IDPs), 30 suffered infrastructural damages and five lost teaching and learning materials affecting approximately 108,776 learners.

There are concerns that in 160 health facilities, COVID-19 vaccine doses and other routine vaccines have been lost because of failure to monitor temperature, as cold chain remote temperature monitoring devices were damaged.

The United Nations will launch a joint appeal in the coming weeks and UNICEF will be part of the process. In the meantime, to respond quickly, based on the first rapid needs assessment UNICEF needs are an estimated **US$ 3.2 million** to meet the immediate and medium-term needs of children and women in the affected areas for the first 3 months.
Situation Overview

As of 4 February, 193,558 households (more than 871,001 people) are reported to have been affected by the Tropical Storm Ana induced floods and storms, with over 22,300 displaced and seeking temporary shelter in about 123 displacement sites. Thirty-seven deaths have been reported while 20 people are missing, and 158 people have sustained injuries of various degrees.

Chikwawa and Nsanje which were initially inaccessible by road but are now accessible following temporary rehabilitation of the sections that were completely cut off. However, access to some of the affected areas remains a big challenge as many of the roads are still in bad condition.

Cold chain remote temperature monitoring devices in 160 health facilities were damaged and are not able send temperature readings to the centre. This has raised worries that the affected districts could have lost substantial amounts of COVID-19 vaccine doses and other routine vaccines. Access to medical care is limited because of damaged roads and bridges among other challenges. The Ministry of Health, UNICEF and other health partners will conduct a comprehensive assessment in the week beginning 6 February to get more detailed data on the damage to health infrastructure, equipment, essential drugs, and vaccines now that there is some level of access to affected areas. There are also concerns that due to the impact of the floods, COVID-19 preventive measures like wearing masks and washing hands may not be properly followed by communities including testing and contact tracing. There is a risk of an upsurge in COVID-19 cases due to exposure in the crowded displacement sites.

Under the Department of Disaster Management Affairs leadership, a rapid interagency assessment has been on the ground ascertaining the extent of damage and immediate needs. Some clusters are also concurrently undertaking more detailed sector specific assessment to acquire more detailed information for their specific sectors.

Initial findings from the assessments have revealed that in the five worst hit districts of Chikwawa, Mangochi, Mulanje, Phalombe and Nsanje 70 primary schools were affected of which 35 schools are hosting (Internally Displaced People) (IDPs), 31 suffered infrastructural damages, and five lost all their teaching and learning materials damaged affecting approximately 108, 776 learners (55, 835 girls and 52,
941 boys). Also, Early Childhood Development (ECD) learners whose parents are in the IDP sites are not accessing any ECD services.

Programme response by UNICEF and partners

Humanitarian Strategy

UNICEF is providing immediate lifesaving support and assistance to populations affected while also investing in resilience-building interventions. This support focuses on people in displacement sites in four worst affected districts (Chikwawa, Mulanje, Nsanje and Phalombe). UNICEF is delivering services through multi-sectoral responses in child protection, education, health, nutrition, social protection, and WASH, supported by community engagement activities in the four targeted districts but with minimal support to the rest of districts. UNICEF also supported the rescue mission using a boat operating mainly in the Nsanje district. The boat will also be used to deliver supplies to areas that cannot be reached by other means of transport. UNICEF is delivering the interventions through line ministries as well as implementing partners.

Humanitarian leadership and coordination

The Government of Malawi is leading the humanitarian response, through the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA), with support from humanitarian partners, including NGOs, the UN and donor agencies. UNICEF actively participates in the Humanitarian Country Team and the inter-cluster coordination fora, which lead to cross-sectoral coordination of humanitarian programmes in the country. UNICEF is the co-lead agency for the Child Protection, Education, Nutrition, and WASH clusters, while also playing a key role in the Health cluster.

Interagency planning process is underway through the clusters including production of a report for the interagency rapid assessment, preparation of a response plan based on which a flash appeal will be produced.

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

WASH

Although there are no figures yet of the damaged WASH infrastructure, indications are that the situation is dire and that people desperately need safe water for drinking and other household use as well as sanitation and hygiene facilities. They also urgently need soap, water treatment chemicals, buckets for water collection and hand washing and other water and hygiene materials to prevent water-borne disease outbreaks such as cholera.

UNICEF has been supporting the assessment of WASH needs in districts affected by Tropical Storm Ana and now the WASH response plan is under development. UNICEF has provided WASH supplies including chlorine for water treatment, portable latrines, laundry and bathing soap, water quality testing kits and plastic sheeting for construction of temporary latrines at community level and reusable sanitary pads. The supplies include items prepositioned in December 2021 in districts that were identified as flood prone in the national contingency plan, supplies delivered less than a week before Tropical Ana Storm occurred and supplies delivered during the response period. These supplies will reach an estimated population of 88,000 people including 44,880 in six highly affected districts (Chikwawa, Nsanje, Phalombe, Balaka, Mangochi and Mulanje). In addition, UNICEF supported Nsanje and Phalombe districts with eight 25-kilogramme drums of chlorine to integrate COVID-19 infection prevention and control measures (hand washing, disinfection, and water treatment) in the response to floods. These additional supplies will reach 8,820 flood affected households.

UNICEF, through partner United Purpose has provided 2,000 plastic buckets for water collection and storage to 1000 households in Mulanje.
Education

UNICEF’s first response to affected schools will be to distribute 400 boxes of assorted learning materials, 100 school-in-a-box education kits which include, 100 recreation kits, 100 ECD kits and 30 (72sqm) tents, 400 mobile chalkboards and 700 boxes of surgical masks (35,000 masks). The tents, school-in-a-box kits and the chalkboards will enable teachers to set up temporary learning spaces and facilitate resumption of learning. This will also help track the attendance of learners. The recreation kits contain assorted sports materials which will allow learners to play and create a sense of returning to normality to address the stress cause by the impact of Tropical Storm Ana and displacement of children into camps. The ECD kits will enable young children in the IDP camps to access ECD services, supported by social welfare officers.

Social Protection

Preliminary reports indicate that 193,000 people are food insecure because of the floods. UNICEF is supporting the Government to plan and coordinate the provision of multipurpose cash transfers in the aftermath of the shock.

In addition, the implementation of an ongoing food distribution programme and of regular social protection programmes including the Social Cash Transfers Programme (SCTP) is at risk of being impacted in the most affected districts. In accessibility of the affected areas for data collection will make it difficult to undertake retargeting, validation, and payment activities. SCTP passbooks, national identity cards and sim cards have been lost or damaged, thus delaying identification processes.

UNICEF is supporting the Government of Malawi to assess the extent of disruption to routine SCTP operations as well as to the ongoing food distribution so that the necessary adjustments can be made to ensure continuity of support to affected populations. The support includes the reorganization of retargeting activities in Balaka district and verification processes.

Child protection

As cluster co-lead agency, UNICEF is supporting coordination of partners at national and district level through the protection cluster coordinator for effective response to the tropical storm. In three of the affected districts (Blantyre, Machinga, Mwanza) where the protection cluster was not well established, UNICEF has supported the Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare to set up the clusters. A minimum package of services has been developed to guide district councils to comprehensively deliver services to the affected populations. Support has been provided to the Malawi Police Service for awareness on violence and referral mechanisms through community radio stations. UNICEF will be distributing recreation kits to Chikwawa, Nsanje, Phalombe, Mulanje, Zomba and Machinga for psychosocial activities through children’s corners at displacement sites.

Nutrition

Through partnership with The Story Workshop Educational Trust (SWET), UNICEF is finalizing data collection on care-group information in the most affected districts to support with messaging on Infant and Young Child Feeding in emergencies in collaboration with district nutrition coordination committees. Eight field monitors are on the ground supporting with the response in the affected districts. As co-lead agency for the nutrition cluster UNICEF is supporting nutrition cluster coordination. Key areas of work at this point include response planning and mapping of partners.
Health

Through the national malaria control programme, UNICEF has provided 14,000 long lasting insecticide treated mosquito nets that will be distributed to vulnerable women and children in six severely affected districts of Chikwawa, Nsanje, Mangochi, Mulanje, Phalombe and Balaka. In addition, UNICEF has allowed the MoH to redirect 25,000 mosquito nets and sanitizers recently received in-kind from the UNICEF Japan National Committee.

UNICEF is mobilizing additional Interagency Health Emergency Kits (IHEK) kits to top up the prepositioned consignment that has been available for use in four districts of Chikwawa, Thyolo, Neno Mangochi in case of disease outbreaks. UNICEF will provide technical and financial support to MoH to conduct a comprehensive health assessment using the WHO health assessment tool starting 7 February, to get more details on the extent of the damage.

Human Interest Stories and External Media

1. Press release issued on initial support provided by UNICEF, this was pitched to national and regional media and has been picked up by VOA and other national outlets
2. Photo assets shared with regional office and headquarters
3. Messages on social media with a combined reach of 23,6018 and 16,717 engagements. Reach
4. Stories on the impact of tropical storm Ana and UNICEF’s immediate response published on UNICEF website

   Tropical Storm Ana disrupts health services
   Children bear brunt of Tropical storm Ana

5. UNICEF branding on supplies dispatched to affected districts

Funding Overview and Partnerships

UNICEF is currently working with partners and sister agencies in the preparation of a United Nations joint appeal that will launched in the coming days. In the meantime, and to respond quickly, based on the first rapid needs assessment UNICEF needs are an estimated US $3,200,000 to meet the immediate and medium-term needs of children and women throughout the affected areas for the coming three months. Timely funding is needed to save lives, reduce suffering and restore access to services by the affected people, especially children.

Next SitRep: 11 February 2022

Annex A: Malawi tropical Storm Ana funding status by sector 3 February 2022

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