



Cyclone Idai in Southern Africa: A Medical Humanitarian Emergency

March 2019

Doctors Without Borders / Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) Southern Africa

Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) is responding to the medical needs in the aftermath of **Cyclone Idai**. It hit a number of countries in our region—including **Malawi, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe**. In addition to assessing the damage, MSF teams are working to access people in need and get medical supplies and water and sanitation support to those in some of the most affected areas.



Assist us to provide vital medical care for those in need right now

MSF's Response to Cyclone Idai

MOZAMBIQUE (1 of 3)

Context

Tropical cyclone Idai hit the coastal town of Beira with winds of up to 200kms an hour and heavy rain on 14 March 2019. Cyclone Idai has wreaked extreme devastation along the central coastline of Sofala, Zambézia and Inhambane provinces. 90 % of the area around Beira has been destroyed.

- Beira hospital has sustained severe damage to its operating theatre and several of the wards, and all 17 health centres have lost their roofs with additional damage.
- To date, 84 deaths and at least 1500 injured have been reported between Beira, Dondo and Chimoio cities; however a state broadcast earlier today confirms the situation may be even more serious with 1000 dead.
- Main roads leading into Beira have been cut off.
- Buildings have been submerged and severely damaged and all business has been shut down.
- There is no power in Beira and surrounding areas.
- Nearly all communication lines have been destroyed, which is making assessment of the human toll and scale of disaster extremely difficult.

MSF's Response to Cyclone Idai

MOZAMBIQUE (2 of 3)

Challenges faced in our response

- MSF's project activities in Munhava health centre, Beira hospital and surrounding community have stopped.
- After several worrying days without news due to damaged communication lines, all MSF staff and have been accounted for, despite a few injuries reported.
- MSF's Beira office has been damaged, while the warehouse facilities remains intact.

Current resource deployment

- MSF's medical coordinator arrived in Beira Monday night and is making an initial assessment.
- 3 Emergency-pool staff arrive in Beira today, to be joined by 3 returning MSF staff to conduct a larger assessment on the extent of the damage and needs.

Assessment

- The main concern will be to ensure continuity of care and referrals at the health centres.
- We expect that water and sanitation will be important alongside some initial medical response but we need to remain flexible to identify and respond to the greatest needs that are not being met by other actors/organisations.

MSF's Response to Cyclone Idai

MOZAMBIQUE (3 of 3)

- There is a lot to be alarmed about and there will clearly be a need for a huge emergency response.
- More MSF emergency teams are being deployed and en-route in the coming 24 hours
- We can state categorically that there are huge needs for food, clean water, shelter: we have received reports that there are around 2 or 3 days reserves of untreated water available for the city of Beira (population = 500 000), after that we enter the risks associated with unclean water.
- This is not only the city of Beira affected but the plain around the city too. The plains are very deeply flooded leaving people clinging to treetops or roofs
- MSF is already preparing first large cargo of disaster-relief survival essentials (plastic sheeting for emergency shelter and hygiene kits etc.)

MSF's Response to Cyclone Idai

ZIMBABWE (1 of 1)

Context

Cyclone Idai hit Chimanimani, a small district of approximately 30,000 people in Manicaland province late Friday 15 March, after passing through Mozambique.

- Several roads leading into Chimanimani have been cut off.
- The only access into Chimanimani is by helicopter
- Airlifts were intended to take place to a nearby stabilisation centre but efforts are being hampered by difficult weather conditions.

Challenges faced in our response

- An MSF team that has travelled from Mutare has been unable to access Chimanimani due to destroyed bridges and access roads.

Current resource deployment

- An MSF team has been trying to access Chimanimani with supplies and medical materials
- MSF's focus will remain on providing needed medical support and is now providing services through stabilization centres approximately 20 km from Chimanimani.

Assessment

- Water and sanitation components and outreach clinics to be initiated based on assessment findings

MSF's Response to Cyclone Idai

MALAWI (1 of 2)

Context

Extremely heavy rains in lower Shire River districts of Chikwawa and Nsanje, compounded by further rains from last week's Cyclone Idai has caused severe flooding including in 14 of Nsanje's 28 districts. Official figures confirm 56 deaths, 577 injured and 3 missing.

- Rivers have broken their banks leaving many houses fully submerged
- Around 11,000 households displaced in Nsanje.

Challenges faced in our response

- MSF is now focussing its support to the Makhanga area in Nsanje's East Bank, one of the worst affected areas which is only reachable by boat or helicopter

MSF's Response to Cyclone Idai

MALAWI (2 of 2)

Current resource deployment

- An MSF emergency intervention has been launched with a focus on Makhanga area in the worst affected East Bank of Nsanje
- An MSF emergency team comprised of Emergency-Pool staff along with Malawi project staff is now supporting Makhanga health centre
- MSF is supporting Makhanga health centre with:
 1. Supplies, cleaning, and human resources.
 2. Assisting in strengthening surveillance and referral systems.
 3. Outreach clinics and health promotion activities in the evacuation centres.

Assessment

- Given the concerns around outbreaks of water borne diseases, MSF teams are preparing a water and sanitation intervention with a focus on the cleaning of the affected boreholes and on setting up latrines and showers
- Distributions of non-food item kits are being planned to affected households



The first cost estimation of our intervention in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi is **R5 million.**

[Your financial support is vital to contributing to saving lives in this humanitarian crises.](#)



MSF Southern Africa has dedicated a funding mechanism geared at raising funds for each country's need. Therefore, [should you wish to donate towards this emergency](#), you are able to select which project/country your donation should be directed towards.



With R 300,000 you can give MSF the ability to provide emergency medical care to 10,000 people who have lost everything

Healthcare systems crumble when a natural disaster strikes. Left without access to medical care, these emergency health kits are the answer. One full kit can carry enough medical supplies to treat 10,000 people for three months. Designed to provide the best patient care with limited medical staff, the kits are filled with basic supplies like oral and topical medicines, bandages and essential surgical tools.

[Give this gift to help our medical teams respond quickly to save lives.](#)



Kindly note: should Doctors Without Borders (MSF) reach their country-specific funding target, and/or reduce or alter the emergency response as a result of the assessments made, any surplus funds generated will be redirected to country's operational envelope – meaning that MSF operations within the respective country will be able to utilise these funds in their ongoing operations.

Your financial support is needed

We urgently need you to assist us provide vital and urgent medical care for those in need right now

Here is how you can donate

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Bank Name: Nedbank

Bank account: 1944209425

Branch code: 194405

Branch name: Parktown

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To cope with the needs being assessed, we need you on-board, once again!
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