

This report was issued by the Regional Office for Southern & Eastern Africa (ROSEA). It covers the period from 27 January to 2 February 2011. The next report will be issued on or around 09 February 2011.

I. HIGHLIGHTS / KEY PRIORITIES

- New localized floods have been experienced in Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Lesotho and Madagascar;
- Strong downpours flooded northwestern Madagascar, while heavy rains in the drought affected south may have damaged crops; and
- Discharge from the Cahora Bassa will increase on 4 February from 4200 to 6400m³/s, which could lead to flooding downstream.
- River levels at Katima Mulilo in Namibia's Caprivi Strip are more than twice the level for this year.
- A map of the impacts is included.

II. Regional Situation Overview

While rainfall eased last week in parts of southern Africa, heavy rains continued in central Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Madagascar, western Botswana and northern Namibia. Southern Madagascar, which has been experiencing drought, and northwestern Angola also received substantial rainfall. Rainfall was below average across parts of southern and northern Mozambique, Tanzania and parts of southern Angola.

Likely scenarios

This week, heavy rains are expected to continue over northern Mozambique and parts of Angola. From 8 to 15 February 2011, heavy rains are likely along the coast of Madagascar, northern Mozambique, Malawi, southern Tanzania, eastern Zambia and southwestern Angola.

River levels will continue to swell increasing the risk of flooding throughout the region.

III. Namibia and Botswana

On 1 February 2011, the Namibian Water Authority opened the gates of the Hardap and Naute dams in southern Namibia, adding to flows in Fish River, which feeds into the Orange River along the country's border with South Africa.

River levels in the north remained stable.

Water levels at Katima Mulilo in the Caprivi Strip have increased 4 meters last week to 4.33 meters this week on 1 February 2011, as compared to the normal level of 1.57 meters for this time of year.

In Botswana, water levels in the Okavango River continue to rise. River levels at Mohembo on the northern border are about 34 cm higher than at the same time last year, and are expected to continue rising. The District Disaster Management Committee is closely monitoring the situation.

Heavy rains in communities in southeastern and eastern Botswana also caused localized flooding, affecting more than 63 households. In Tutume–Malelejwe and Tshwaane, 541 households may be

evacuated to Dukwi and other surrounding areas.

In the capital city, Gaborone, the neighborhoods of Ledumang, Bontleng, White City, Babusi Ward, Old Naledi and Block 9 also experienced flooding. The city council provided support to clear the drainage system to allow the water to recede faster.

Preparedness and response measures

In Namibia, flood preparedness in the Oshana region is ongoing and local authorities are closely monitoring the situation. One relocation centre has been opened to accommodate several households. In addition, several flood barriers have been newly constructed to divert flash flood waters from informal settlements. OCHA is facilitating a mission lead by the UN Resident Coordinator's office to discuss levels of preparedness with local authorities in the Oshana, Omusati, Oshana and Oshikoto regions.

In Botswana, the situation is currently stable; the government continues to closely monitor the situation.

IV. Angola

More than 400 families have been displaced following heavy rains in Luakano, on the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo, and in Ganda in western Angola.

While the Cunene River is expected to continue to rise over the next two weeks, flooding downstream is not likely due to dam controls. The Ruacana dam floodgates on the Angolan-Namibian border were recently opened to control the Cunene river levels.

Preparedness and response measures

The UN Disaster Management Team will convene a meeting this week to discuss preparedness measures for floods and how to strengthen interaction with national authorities and institutions for response activities. A meeting with the National Civil Protection Service is also planned this week to obtain information and data on affected areas and populations.

V. Zambia and Zimbabwe

In Zimbabwe, the Save River dam levels have increased from 2.1% to 91.5% since 17 January 2011. Water levels in this southern eastern river are still increasing, although the rate of increase has slowed. Populations living in the flood prone middle Save are on high alert as the danger of flooding still remains.

In the north, the Sanyati River continues to swell, with above average flows for this time of month.

Rising water levels in the Musengezi River have increased the likelihood of flooding in Muzarabani. However, the river levels are still far below the emergency threshold levels.

The Gweru River in central Zimbabwe burst its banks, threatening residents in Senga. The risk of flash flooding is high. Five cholera cases have been reported, three of which are confirmed.

The district of Gokwe North in northwestern Zimbabwe has been cut off after bridges were swept away. Authorities are airlifting communications equipment to the location to facilitate communication.

Just outside Harare, in Zvimba district, unconfirmed reports of cholera are being investigated.

Flows in the Zambezi River continue to rise, including upstream at the Katima Mulilo station (in Namibia's Caprivi region). The Kariba Dam is at 68.7% capacity, significantly above normal for this time of year. To keep its levels in check, the Kariba dam will increase its discharge from 4200 to 7100m³/s.

Zambia has experienced continued rainfall throughout much of the country, but with little immediate adverse affects thus far. Some of Lusaka's urban areas have been flooded, but mostly in areas that are not populated. The cholera situation is under control, with only a few cases being reported.

Preparedness and response measures

On 26 January 2001, the UN Disaster Management Team (UNDMT) met to review consolidated data on potential flooding in the region and to discuss preparedness and response measures. The government has been implementing its contingency plan through the various sectoral task forces, pre-positioned food items in eight provinces, and rehabilitated infrastructure in some areas. The DMT will hold further discussions with the Disaster Management Mitigation Unit (DMMU) to organize a high level disaster management coordination forum on the flooding situation in the country. Humanitarian agencies and partners will intensify their preparedness activities in areas affected. WFP will provide the list of affected areas, while partners including Oxfam GB, Concern and Save the Children will provide information on the impact of rainfalls in the Western and southern Provinces respectively. Activities to prevent cholera are also being undertaken.

VII. Mozambique

Due to continuous moderate to heavy rainfall, the Maputo, Limpopo, Incomati, Save, Pungoe, Zambezi and Buzi River basins all remain still above alert level. Floods in Gaza province have affected a total of 6,155 families, or 30,732 people. Some 18,430 ha of agriculture land is affected in Maputo, Gaza and Inhambane provinces.

From 4 February, the Cahora Bassa will increase from 4200 to 6400m³/s, creating a potentially critical rise in water levels.

Due to the rainfall forecast, cholera cases may rise. From 26-31 January 2011, 547 cases have been reported, with 2 deaths, putting the case fatality rate at 0.4%. Those provinces affected include Manica (Chimoio, Guro and Sussungenda districts), Nampula (Monampo and Nacora districts) and Cado Delgado (Pemba city, Ancaube, Chiure, Montuez, Chiure and Metude districts). Cabo Delgado remains the most affected.

Preparedness and response measures

Following the declaration of an institutional Red Alert on 25 January 2011, daily meetings have been held at the Central Emergency Operations Centre (CENOE), with focal points from line ministries, Government institutions and humanitarian partners to provide updates on the emergency situation and ongoing response in areas affected by localised flooding. The Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) clusters have been integrated into the Government operational sectors to more effectively address the needs of affected populations. These sectors are working in close coordination with the provincial and district Emergency Operational Centres (COEs).

IFRC allocated 345,207 Swiss francs (approximately US\$367,646) from its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Mozambique Red Cross in delivering immediate assistance to some 20,000 people (4,000 households) in the sectors of NFI/Shelter and WATSAN in response to floods and cholera.

VIII. South Africa

A flood wave peak of approximately 8.75 metres is forecast to arrive at Noordoweiver near the border with Namibia. Communities have been alerted.

Current estimates put the death toll from storms, lightning and floods at 91 people. A total of 13,043 houses have been damaged and 321 injured. Public infrastructure -- including roads, bridges, schools, clinics and churches -- have also been damaged.

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A consolidation of initial assessments estimates flood related damages of approximately US\$240 million.

Preparedness and response measures

The Government and local partners are providing food, shelter and blankets to affected families.

The Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs' National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC) will lead an inter departmental team of government officials from various departments to assess the general impact caused by the recent floods in different parts of the country.

IFRC allocated 236,780 Swiss francs (approximately US\$252,131) from its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the national society in delivering immediate assistance to some 8,870 beneficiaries.

IIX. Lesotho

In Lesotho, heavy rains have claimed the lives of 30 people and 4,000 livestock. More than 30 houses have collapsed in the affected villages, and almost 50 % of the roads have been destroyed, rendering health centres and schools inaccessible.

The main pump distributing water in Maseru has also been destroyed, which has interrupted water supply. At least 500 cases of diarrhoea have been reported.

More than 60% of the fields planted with mainly maize, beans, sorghum and potatoes and 40% of garden crops have been destroyed by hailstorms and heavy rains.

Rapid assessments are being conducted throughout the country to inform the government on the immediate interventions to be implemented. The National Red Cross Society is assisting those affected with temporary shelter.

WFP's operations have also been hampered by the heavy rains. A total 101 out of 429 schools in its school feeding programme could not be reached, affecting 13,920 students. Four health centres in Thaba Tseka are inaccessible leaving 1,123 patients (pregnant mothers and children under 2 years) without their food rations. The country office is working on alternative measures to reach these beneficiaries.

IX. Madagascar

Large parts of Madagascar particularly the northwestern, south and southwestern regions have been experiencing heavy rainfall and many urban areas are now threatened by flooding. In Mahajanga, 770 houses were flooded and 2,256 people displaced, 242 of which are sheltering at communal sites while another 2, 014 are staying with relatives, according to the Malagasy Red Cross. One child died in the flooding.

People from the city of Amboasary in southern Madagascar are preparing for evacuation. In addition, after a protracted drought, crop fields in the south have now been flooded. It is too early to estimate the severity of the damage.

Preparedness and response measures

The Executive Secretary of the national disaster authority (BNGRC) and the Minister of Public Works are on mission in the south to monitor repairs to the dam eroded during the last flood season. Repairs will be done through 'Cash for Work' activities funded by the FID (Intervention Fund for Development). The BNGRC has also activated its Operational Centre.

X. Malawi

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Since the start of the season, various districts have reported incidences of storm damage to houses and crops. To date, a total of 4,299 households, in 22 districts, have reported damages to their houses due to the strong winds associated with storms. All affected households have been assisted by the Department for Disaster Management. A total of 669 ha of crops have been affected by the storms. The country is yet to start registering cases of flooding. Communities along flood prone areas were sensitized on this year's rainfall forecast and are being regularly updated on rainfall forecasts.

XI. Swaziland

Nothing to report.

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Sources: Namibia Hydrological Service, Zambezi River Authority (ZRA), Zambia Meteorological Department (ZMD), Zambia Department of Water Affairs (DWA), Zambia Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit, SADC Secretariat, SADC Climate Service Centre, Angola National Directorate of Water Resources (DNRH), Southern African Regional Climate Outlook Forum (SARCOF), Angola National Institute of Meteorology and Geophysics (INAMET), South Africa Department of Cooperative Government and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA), South Africa Department of Water Affairs (DWA), South African Weather Services (SAWS), Mozambique National Water Directorate, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) of the United States of America, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of the United States of America, relevant United Nations Country Teams, FEWS NET Country Offices, World Food Programme (WFP) Country Offices, Food and Agriculture (FAO) Country Offices, SADC HYCOS.