The 2013/2014 Southern Africa Flood Season

Countries affected throughout the region

The month of May is usually considered the end of the rainfall - and flood - season in Southern Africa. Normal rainfall was received over much of the region, with the important exception of northern Angola, which received about 25 per cent less than average. Observed rainfall patterns were largely in line with the forecasts of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Climate Services Centre. Nine tropical cyclones were recorded during the season, compared to the seasonal average of ten, of which three made landfall: Amara, Deliwe and Hellen.

Summary of Southern Africa Flood Season 2013/2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>No. of people affected by floods/storms</th>
<th>No. of deaths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Madagascar</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>85,555</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malawi</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>30,165</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comoros</td>
<td>22,541</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>16,245</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>7,282</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seychelles</td>
<td>4,435</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namibia</td>
<td>±800</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swaziland</td>
<td>±500</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botswana</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mauritius</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>±383,261</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OCHA, UNRCo, IFRC, media, respective governments.

1 Tanzania has two rainfall seasons: the Masika rains which fall from March to end of June; and the Msimu rains which fall from mid-February to the end of May. Also, the western coast of Southern Africa receives winter rainfall, in comparison to the rest of the region, which receives summer rainfall.
In Zimbabwe, the food situation at the flood relocation camp remains precarious. No distributions have been undertaken for May due to unavailability of resources.

Severe weather events caused flooding in several Southern African countries. In early February, thousands of households in Zimbabwe were either displaced or evacuated when water levels in the Tokwe Mukorsi dam rose rapidly; and in early March widespread flooding and severe infrastructure damage was caused by above average rainfall over the north-eastern provinces of South Africa. Arguably the most significant weather event of the season was Tropical Cyclone Hellen - one of the most powerful storms ever recorded in the Mozambique Channel. Hellen caused significant (although not as severe as expected) damage in northern Mozambique, the island of Anjouan in the Comoros, and north-west Madagascar in late March.

15,625 people displaced by flooding remain in dire need in Zimbabwe.

Due to above-average rainfall across Masvingo Province between mid-January and early February 2014, river levels in the catchment area of the Tokwe Mukorsi Dam rose rapidly, causing widespread flooding which prompted the declaration of a State of Disaster and the issuing of a Government Appeal. The appeal estimated that 20,000 people are at a high risk of flooding in the basin area upstream from the dam. While there were initial fears of the dam bursting (which would have placed an additional 40,000 people at risk), repairs to the dam were quickly undertaken and water levels soon started to drop as the rains let up. An estimated 1,056 ha of food crops were submerged by the floods, leading to a loss of 718 tons of potential harvest, thereby compromising food and nutrition security until the next harvest in 2015.

As part of the dam construction project, a phased relocation plan, which included compensation, had intended to resettle a total of 6,393 households (about 32,000 people) and their 18,764 cattle as follows:

- Phase 1: 1,247 households from areas at risk to 660 m above sea level by October 2013;
- Phase 2: 1,878 households who would be affected when the dam was expected to fill up in October 2014; and
- Phase 3: 3,268 households in the buffer zone, who should be removed to protect the dam by October 2015.

However, it was not foreseen that river levels would rise so quickly, as Masvingo is a generally dry area, and at the start of the floods in early February 2014 only 611 households had been relocated.

As a result, 3,125 households (15,625 people), which included the remainder of phase 1, all households falling under phase 2 and some of those from phase 3, were relocated by Government to a designated resettlement camp at the Chingwizi section of Nuanetsi ranch about 120 km away. Those moved were either affected or deemed at risk. Humanitarian partners provided emergency support during the relocation, and continue to do so at the relocation site in Chingwizi.

Major challenges remain at the relocation site. Efforts to decongest the camp by moving people to a permanent resettlement site have met resistance from the community. Only 376 families had relocated to the permanent site by 15 May as most await compensation - Government owes more than 2,000 households an estimated $9 million. Most recently the Government has said it plans to give affected families promissory notes pledging to compensate them for assets lost and the amount owed while funds are being sought.
Extensive rainfall over Dar es Salaam, Tanzania’s largest city, starting on 11 April 2014 caused flooding in all of the city’s districts, affecting an estimated 20,000 people, with 19 deaths.

The food situation at Chingwizi remains precarious, with barely enough stocks received for May. This is of particular concern as the disaster declaration came to an end on 9 May, meaning that attention and resources may shift from the emergency before needs are fully met. No distributions have been done for May due to unavailability of resources. This is concerning as vulnerable people living at the camp, among them children, pregnant women and nursing mothers, are at risk of malnutrition and other deficiencies if the situation does not improve. Funding is urgently required to enable partners to meet the food needs at the camp. Government has calculated monthly food requirements at 156 tons of cereal and 29 tons of pulses at a cost of $276,563 per month. Thus, while humanitarian assistance continues, critical issues include the need for early recovery and livelihoods support to enable the community to resume their lives with minimum dependence on aid.

Floods cause millions of dollars in damage in South Africa

During much of March the north-eastern parts of South Africa experienced heavy rainfall, which led to extensive flooding and landslides. At least 25 deaths were reported by the South African Government, with over 7,000 people affected, including 3,525 people displaced. The provinces of Limpopo, Mpumalanga, North West, Gauteng and Kwa-Zulu Natal were the hardest hit. The cost of damage caused by floods in Mpumalanga alone is estimated at R525 million (US$52.5 million).

In support of the Government response, and after carrying out the initial needs assessment in the affected areas, the South African Red Cross Society (SARCS) deployed disaster response teams to distribute emergency relief items from the province, pre-positioned stocks, and items donated by local stakeholders.

Tanzania hit by heavy rains

On 21 January, heavy rains caused flash floods in the Dumila/Dakawa area in Tanzania’s Morogoro region, which displaced over 10,000 people and destroyed or damaged houses, roads, bridges, public buildings and crops.

In mid-April, extensive rainfall over Dar es Salaam, Tanzania’s largest city, caused flooding in all of the city’s districts, affecting an estimated 20,000 people, with 19 deaths. The floods also caused damage to transport infrastructure and affected people had to relocate to churches and schools. The Tanzanian Red Cross Society distributed non-food items including blankets and mattresses, to those affected, and deployed 40 volunteers and three staff members to provide first aid/ambulance services; as well as to participate in the search and rescue operations coordinated by the Government through the Fire and Rescue brigade. By 23 April, the flooding in Dar es Salaam had receded and most residents were able to return home. Other regions affected include Rorrya District in Mara where 300 houses were damaged due to heavy rains and strong winds. The southern region of Mbeya was also hit by flooding during the weekend of 19 April, and at least three people died in Kyela District.

10,000 people affected by pre-Hellen system in northern Mozambique

In northern Mozambique, the weather system that would eventually become Tropical Cyclone Hellen caused heavy rains between 23 and 27 March, affecting an estimated 1,929 households (9,645 people) in Cabo Delgado Province and isolating a number of
In total, 85,555 people (17,111 households) were affected by floods during the rainfall season in Mozambique.

areas. Most affected households moved in with host families, and only the most vulnerable households – around 170 in total - were placed in accommodation centres. The National Institute of Disaster Management (INGC) requested and received in-country support from the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) for the provision of 400 tents for immediate shelter for families whose houses were completely destroyed; and 100 tons of food to cover the needs of those affected (including host families) for a period of 1 month. INGC also started to establish relocation communities to encourage people to leave the flood plains, for which it requested 600 shelter kits.

In total, 85,555 people (17,111 households) were affected by floods during the rainfall season in Mozambique, with 17 deaths, 76 people injured, 1,906 houses totally destroyed and 6,454 houses damaged.

Tropical Cyclone Hellen displace thousands in the Comoros

Comoros had already experienced days of heavy rains by the time Tropical Cyclone Hellen passed 100 km south of the island chain from 27 to 29 March. A total of 18 villages on Anjouan Island were hit by the subsequent floods, with 1,234 households (a total of 6,788 people) directly affected. On Moheli Island, 24 villages hit were by rains and winds and 457 households (2,723 people) recorded damage to or destruction of their homes and crops.

Furthermore, the rains brought by Hellen followed a 4.8 magnitude earthquake which hit Anjouan on 12 March 2014, greatly increasing the risk of landslides and necessitating the evacuation of an additional 3,030 people to 3 makeshift camps, where about 1,550 people in one camp remained for one month until 05 May, when they returned home without incident.

In addition, damage to a road effectively isolated four villages (Harembo, Hajoho, Handrouva and Jimlime) with a total population of 10,000 people for a period of one month. The health facility for these villages was functional but experienced a shortage of medical supplies and the school was not operational due to inaccessibility of the area.

The Government of Comoros declared a regional emergency on 02 April. Subsequently, the Directorate General of the Civil Protection (DGSC) led the response with the assistance of partners. An Emergency Cash Grant of US$61,200 was provided by OCHA to address the most pressing needs. USAID also provided $50,000 to UNICEF for education and water and sanitation activities; while the Indian Ocean Platform for Regional Intervention (PIROI –French Red Cross), together with the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), contributed $102,000 through a Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) application to provide basic necessities to those in the camp and to prevent diseases related to water and sanitation.
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A lessons learned exercise was held following the response, which included the following recommendations:

- preposition emergency supplies in preparation for the flood and cyclone season;
- update emergency response plans; and
- appoint and train national officials in information management.

**Madagascar spared the worst of Tropical Cyclone Hellen**

Hellen was still a Category 4 (Very Intense) Tropical Cyclone just hours before it made landfall over north-west Madagascar on 31 March - reaching one-minute sustained wind speeds of 250 km/h - but weakened rapidly and hit the island as a lesser Category 1 Tropical Cyclone. It continued to weaken as it crossed a section of coastal area and exited back into the Mozambique Channel on 01 April. Twelve people died when their boat capsized, and in total 2,141 people were affected, 1,736 displaced and 437 houses destroyed. Furthermore, over 3,900 ha of rice fields were submerged, and damage to infrastructure reported.

In response, the Food Security Cluster through the National Bureau of Disaster Management (BNGRC) made available around two tons of food for distribution to those displaced. WFP dispatched one ton of high energy biscuits to support 2,222 children and 35 tons of foodstuffs to support 2,500 people. The Shelter Cluster provided plastic sheeting to 2,000 households and shelter kits to 1,066 households. The Education Cluster through UNICEF provided 11 tents for use as temporary classrooms. The Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Cluster ensured the distribution of potable water to 7,000 households and disinfected 45 flooded water points. Furthermore, the Health Cluster through the Ministry of Health mobilized pre-positioned medical supplies for 1,000 people and, together with UNFPA, 135 health reproduction kits. All these operations were supported by the Coordination and Logistics Cluster. The Madagascar Humanitarian Country Team received a US$70,000 Emergency Cash Grant from OCHA to support logistics.

According to a rapid food security assessment following the impact of Tropical Storm Hellen in early April, a total of 24,405 households were affected and require agricultural assistance, of which 3,380 people were directly affected by the cyclone and of which around 14,000 households, classified as living in a critical food insecurity situation, will require food security assistance. WFP is planning to provide food assistance, Intervention Development Fund will conduct Cash for Work operations, and FAO is planning to provide seeds (for which additional funding is needed). However, the absence of partners in the field to ensure and monitor operations remains a problem.

**A number of other countries also affected by flooding**

In Botswana, flash floods hit a number of villages in the Central District, including Dukwi Refugee Camp in February. Five people drowned in Angola when the Cavaco River flooded. In Zambia, days of heavy rains destroyed houses in Mazabuka, leaving 20,000 people homeless. In Mauritius, the passing of Tropical Cyclone Amara in late December 2013 cased significant infrastructure damage. A cumulative total of 15,000 households have been affected by flooding and heavy rains in Malawi during the 2013/2014 rain/flood season.
At least ten rivers overflowed in Swaziland in March, killing 8 people, damaging roads and bridges, and causing the temporary closure of schools.

Season. While this is a very high figure, in-country resources, including those of humanitarian partners, were sufficient to respond to each flooding incident.

In northern Namibia, heavy rainfall in the Zambezi Region (previously the Caprivi Region) during March affected the constituencies of Sibbinda and Linyanti, which forced hundreds of people from their homes. At least ten rivers overflowed in Swaziland in March, killing 8 people, damaging roads and bridges, and causing the temporary closure of schools. In Seychelles, an estimated 4,000 people were affected by heavy rains and floods in January.
Situation Overview
During the 2013/2014 rainfall season (October 2013 - May 2014), severe weather events caused flooding in several Southern African countries, with almost all affected by some level of flooding. Nine tropical cyclones were recorded during the season, compared to the seasonal average of ten, of which three made landfall: Hellen, Amara and Deliwe. A total of 383,256 people were affected and 117 deaths reported. 195,000 USD was issued in the form of OCHA emergency cash grants to assist in response activities.

15 Countries Affected
195,000 USD Cash Grants Issued

Affected Population per country

- Angola: 5
- Mauritius: 332
- Botswana: 410
- Swaziland: 500
- Namibia: 800
- Seychelles: 4,435
- South Africa: 7,282
- Zimbabwe: 16,245
- Zambia: 20,000
- Comoros: 22,541
- Tanzania: 30,165
- Malawi: 75,000
- Mozambique: 85,555
- Madagascar: 120,000
- Namibia: 62,900
- Comoros: 62,100
- OCHA Emergency Cash Grants Issued (USD)

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

Please note that flood areas are mapped at district level where possible, however some data for selected countries was provided at regional level only. (Normal flood season for southern Africa runs from October to May).