



Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator

Press Release

Urgent call for assistance to flood victims

Harare, 07 March 2017 – As a result of heavy flooding induced by Cyclone Dineo, to date 251 people have been reported dead, over 2000 people displaced, livelihoods disrupted, and infrastructure including roads, bridges, schools, and water sources sustained heavy damages, mainly across the southern parts of Zimbabwe.

In response, the Government of Zimbabwe has declared national disaster and set up a Cabinet Committee on Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Management chaired by the Minister of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing.

To further enhance coordination at local level, the Government has also reinforced sub national civil protection structures led by Provincial and District Administrators. The national coordination mechanisms have managed to rescue people to safety and deliver emergency relief supply. These efforts have been joined by a number of humanitarian partners including the United Nations.

Chaired by Hon. Saviour Kasukuwere, Minister of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing a multi-stakeholder meeting was held on 6 March 2017 in Harare bringing together Government Ministers, Heads of UN Agencies, development partners, representatives of national and international NGOs, and African Development Bank.

The meeting was a culmination of a series of consultative meetings held to coordinate rescue and relocation efforts and appeal from Government for international support and a follow up to a joint Government, UN and NGOs field visit undertaken to affected areas on 3 March 2017.

Updating stakeholders on his recent field visit to the affected communities, the UN Resident Coordinator, Mr. Bishow Parajuli said, “sadly the districts that are affected by the flooding are the same areas that have been hard hit by the drought in the past two years.”

Districts that have been mostly affected by the floods are: Chiredzi, Kanyemba, Lupane, Mwenezi, Mberengwa, Insiza, and Tsholotsho. Full damage assessments are yet to be carried as most of the areas remain inaccessible due to flooding.

Noting the existing humanitarian coordination and response structures that were established to address the drought that gripped the country for the past two years, Mr. Parajuli called on the stakeholders “to align existing sectoral mechanisms to take stock of and coordinate ongoing responses to the flooding crisis, and also further identify gaps in their respective sectors.”

Under the concept of “build back better,” the stakeholders agreed for a multi-sectoral response based on a comprehensive multi-sectoral needs assessment, covering the following sectors:

infrastructure; shelter; WASH; education; health; food security and agriculture; protection; and, early recovery which is taking place in a number of the affected districts.

The UN Resident Coordinator called on the humanitarian and development partners to calibrate their support by aligning and scaling-up their support to the flood affected communities.

UN agencies, NGOs and the Red Cross Movement in response to the Government's appeal have been on the ground providing temporary shelter; water, hygiene and sanitation; non-food items; education materials; medicine and nutrition supplements to internally displaced people. Huge gaps remain and lifesaving relief assistance such as tents, blankets, and water, sanitation and hygiene supply is urgently required as the humanitarian community work together to prepare a comprehensive response plan.

The UN Resident Coordinator underlined that all the relief efforts to the flooding crisis should ensure gender mainstreaming and adhere to humanitarian principles and establish clear linkage to ongoing recovery, resilience building and long-term development programmes.

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