

Press Release

Lilongwe, 14 March 2023



UN MALAWI CALLS FOR URGENT ACTION TO SUPPORT PEOPLE AFFECTED BY THE TROPICAL CYCLONE FREDDY

(Lilongwe, 14 March 2023) In the wake of the declaration of a State of Disaster in the Southern Region by the President of the Republic of Malawi, Lazarus Chakwera, the United Nations in Malawi is calling for urgent coordinated support for the people impacted by the destruction caused by Tropical Cyclone Freddy.

The longest-lasting tropical cyclone on record, according to the World Meteorological Organisation, Freddy has left a trail of destruction and continues to cause extensive damage and loss of lives from torrential rains and strong winds in ten Districts, namely Nsanje, Chikwawa, Mulanje, Thyolo, Phalombe, Chiradzulu, Mwanza, Blantyre, Zomba and Neno.

Over the past three days, Cyclone Freddy has affected over 16,000 people, killed some 100 people and injured dozens more overstretching the health sector that is already overwhelmed by the worst Cholera outbreak in two decades.

The United Nations commends the Government of Malawi for its leadership of preparedness and response measures and calls upon partners to step up efforts to assist people in the Southern Malawi Districts affected by Tropical Cyclone Freddy.

Tropical Cyclone Freddy has created an unprecedented crisis in Malawi.

The UN has been rapidly mobilising support to address immediate needs pending a multi-sectoral assessment. Technical and financial support provided by the United Nations to establish an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) has been critical in strengthening humanitarian coordination among Government, NGO and development partners. Furthermore, several UN Agencies have deployed personnel to the affected areas to support coordination of response and assessment efforts in information management and logistics.

UN is providing critical logistical support, including transportation for search and rescue operations as well as to ferry humanitarian workers, equipment and supplies to communities that have been cut off by flooding and landslides, as well as medical supplies and equipment to improve water and sanitation infrastructure to address immediate health needs, including preventing the spread of Cholera.

Protection of the most vulnerable populations and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse remain central to the work of the UN, including in humanitarian response. To this end, UN Agencies are providing food and non-food items such as shelter materials, tents and dignity kits to displaced people.

The UN stands with the people of Malawi and encourages national authorities, civil society, the private sector, political parties, the media, traditional leaders, and religious leaders to ensure that at all times the rights and dignity of affected populations are respected.

Ms. Rebecca Adda-Dontoh
United Nations Resident Coordinator in Malawi

Currently, 24 agencies and specialized organizations of the United Nations are active in Malawi. Through its work, the UN is contributing to ensuring a better life for the people of Malawi.

For more information, contact: Associate Communications Officer in the UN Resident Coordinator's Office, Bennet Phunyanya on bennet.phunyanya@one.un.org or +265884307026