



TROPICAL CYCLONE FREDDY RESPONSE, MALAWI

After Action Review - Report

August, 2023

Foreword

Over six months have passed since Tropical Cyclone Freddy made its landfall in Malawi. While the height of the response has passed, communities in the southern region are still recovering from the effects of this cyclone that destroyed lives and livelihoods.

The timing of this cyclone could not have been worse – in the midst of the deadliest cholera outbreak in Malawi’s history, during a national macro-economic crisis, and just before the harvest of crops essential to maintaining the country’s food security.

Despite the magnitude of the situation, I would like to commend the Government of Malawi’s leadership in the response efforts. It was truly heartening to see Malawians from all walks of life come together to assist those affected by the cyclone and see the resilience of Malawian communities in the face of a national tragedy. I’d like to recognize the support provided by UN partners, NGOs, private sector, and development partners.



It was my pleasure to spend two days with the Commissioner and representatives from affected District Councils during the National After-Action Review in Blantyre. This gave me an opportunity to hear direct feedback on our collective performance, while considering how best the UN can support preparedness and response efforts in future emergencies.

This AAR is honest, constructive, and forward-looking. With a well-coordinated and concerted effort, I believe we can collectively be better prepared in advance, deliver a more timely response when required, and ensure accountability to affected communities.

Rebecca Adda-Dontoh
UN Resident Coordinator Malawi

Tropical Cyclone Freddy was one of the worst cyclones Malawi has ever faced. It brought heavy rains, flooding, and mudslide events which caused substantive damage and losses to social, productive, and infrastructure sectors. 2,267,458 people were affected, including 659,278 displaced. We lost 679 lives, with 537 people still missing. US\$950 million is required to recover from the effects.

The Malawian Government, in collaboration with various humanitarian partners, responded quickly with rescue and relief operations and saved many lives. I am grateful to neighbouring governments, development partners, private sector entities, and individuals that provided lifesaving support. We never felt alone and value your assistance and partnership.

A new DRM Act has now passed which has expanded the Department of Disaster Management Affairs’ (DoDMA) mandate, enabling us to assist the country in better preparing for future emergencies.

This After-Action Review has highlighted our need to map new risk hazards, enhance prepositioning, scale-up search and rescue capacities including advanced evacuation support, clarify coordination structures and various standard operating procedures, improve decentralization to Districts, and improve information management.

We recognize that time is not on our side. This AAR is accompanied by an action plan which we have committed to monitoring to ensure key activities are implemented in advanced of the next Cyclone Season. We look to our friends of Malawi assist us in reducing disaster risks and mitigating their impacts more effectively and efficiently moving forward.

Charles Kalemba
DoDMA Commissioner



Image 1. AAR
Participants





Executive Summary

Tropical Cyclone Freddy (TCF) triggered heavy rainfall, intense flooding, and numerous mudslides across the southern region of Malawi between March 11th and 15th 2023, directly impacting 14 Districts and two cities. Villages were swept away, with substantial damage caused to property, residences, and crops. Tragically, there were also 2,178 injuries reported with 679 deaths and 537 people still missing.

At least 2,267,458 people were affected by TCF, of whom 659,278 people displaced to 747 sites across southern region, approximately 50% were women, 56% children and 7.2% persons with disabilities. Emergency response needs covered 11 government Clusters of Food Security, Search and Rescue, Shelter/Camp Coordination and Camp Management, Protection, WASH, Health, Nutrition, Transport and Logistics, Education, Agriculture, and Coordination. A Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) was carried out, which estimated US \$506.7 million total disaster effect on productive, social, and infrastructure sectors. The subsequent National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF) has estimated US \$950 million required to address recovery needs, of which US \$688 million is for priority interventions (US \$593 million remaining gap).

A National TCF After Action Review (AAR) event brought together all the humanitarian actors that were involved in the cyclone response operations to reflect on the successes, best practices, challenges, and gaps in humanitarian response interventions. This platform provided an opportunity and platform for various stakeholders to candidly reflect on the preparedness and response capacities, while also considering the recommendations coming out of similar events hosted by various stakeholders such as the UN, NGOs, and District Councils. The National AAR was presided over by DoDMA's Commissioner Charles Kalemba and the UN Resident Coordinator Rebecca Adda-Dontoh, while an AAR Task Team oversaw the full range planning, operational, and reporting details.

Overall Messages

Several themes emerged throughout the AAR which are relevant across all the sectors and areas of work and central to moving from reflection to action. National ownership was reasserted, with a strong governmental desire to address ongoing issues through the enactment of various aspects of the new DRM Act, shape high quality nationally owned systems, and build technical capacities. Partnerships with non-governmental and international communities will continue to assist in delivering this vision, but increased communication, consultative processes, and joint decision-making still need to be further institutionalized.

There is a strong sense of urgency to move beyond planning and onto implementation, as there is limited time before the next crisis may be upon us. Inadequate funding has constrained the level of preparedness and prepositioning possible, but resources also need to be more effectively planned for and efficiently used to maximize their potential benefit. In many cases, numerous policies, guidelines, and standard operating procedures (SOPs) already exist, but are often not well understood or operationalized when they are needed the most. Increased leadership commitment is required across ministries and organizations to embed accountability and monitor the implementation of these AAR recommendations at national and district levels.

There is a shared understanding of the direction of travel required to deliver more timely, appropriate, and dignified emergency assistance, illustrated by the sheer number of recommendations in this report. Amidst a backdrop of limited time, funding, and capacity, however, the AAR has emphasized a need to prioritize efforts by those which are critical, realistic, and achievable. With follow-up planned by an AAR Implementation Task Team, progress in achieving short-term preparedness measures will be monitored as a first concrete step towards applying the AAR's recommendations.

Thematic Recommendations

This report represents a consolidation of reflections summarized into eleven key thematic areas, with the following critical observations and areas of prioritization:

National coordination is the foundation of inter-ministerial, cross-sectoral, and multi-stakeholder disaster response and was highly scrutinized within the review. Where government staff were deployed and engaged, and existing coordination structures were utilized, key issues could be represented and escalated, enabling a timelier nationally led response. Coordination structures under the new DRM Act need to be revisited and bolstered. As a matter of urgency, the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) SOPs need to be reviewed, revised, disseminated, staffed, trained on, and implemented in full to avoid delays, confusion, and inefficiencies. DoDMA's Coordination Cluster's activities need to be resourced and prioritized, emphasizing inter-cluster and national-district coherence.

District level coordination is essential for delivery across all sectors and thematic areas, but lags in decentralization of decision-making and budgetary allocations hamper progress. Enhanced planning and coordination efforts within and between district and community-level structures, complemented with innovative capacity building approaches, are needed to empower district councils as emergency response leaders.

Enhanced preparedness and early warning systems have the potential to significantly alter the impact of climate-related events on populations. The Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services (DCCMS) commenced monitoring TCF early and issued warning messages which enabled some people to relocate to safe areas before the disaster and protect their assets. Anticipatory Actions with clear triggers and early actions for rapid disaster response need to be further prioritized, including identification of evacuation locations which can be prepared to accommodate temporary displacement. This work should be guided by the enactment of the DRM Act to keep communities safe from hazards and a National Prepositioning Strategy which identifies items, locations, and quantities needed to meet initial needs in an emergency response.

The needs assessment process was jointly conducted by government, UN, and NGO partners across all sectors, was complemented by drone and satellite imagery, and culminated in a consolidated Inter-Agency Assessment Report which informed the national response plan. In order to harmonize assessment tools, digitize data collection processes, maximize alternative assessment technologies, enhance overall assessment capacities and timeliness, and develop an SOP to guide the approach, it is recommended that a Needs Assessment Working Group be established to lead these processes.

Resource mobilization efforts to address emergency needs were widespread, with DoDMA estimating that 80% of requirements were provided by government, neighbouring nations, development partners, private sector, and individual contributions. Despite this success, it is critical to establish the DRM Fund as provided for in the DRM Act (2023) to facilitate timely funding and accountability to contributors. Response plans need to be released faster, reinforced with a monitoring and reporting framework, and complemented with additional international publicity.

Information Management (IM) supported the delivery of daily sitreps, flash updates, visualization maps of impact areas, and dashboards via an IM cell of various stakeholders inside the EOC. The Disaster Risk Management Information System (DRMIS) was used to support digital reporting processes, while DoDMA launched the Disaster Information Hub (DIH) website to enhance information sharing. Moving forward, an Information Management Working Group with dedicated IM capacity for all Clusters, led by DoDMA's Information Management Unit, with strengthened district IM data collection and reporting capacity, will be critical to ensure timely, accurate report, understanding of needs, and to inform evidenced-based decision-making.

The overall emergency response efforts have been analyzed sector-by-sector within their respective Clusters, but also overall to identify key areas needed for more timely, appropriate, and effective delivery of assistance. To swiftly mobilize human and response resources when needed, enhanced and regularized stakeholder engagement and partner mapping and stock mapping, across all sectors and districts is needed. Coordination between national and district-levels, with capacity building efforts for coordination structures within districts (particularly as linked to village and area-level structures), formalizing ways of working with the private sector, local CSOs and faith-based organizations, and other charitable and voluntary initiatives will also enhance the overall response.

Improving Malawi's Search and Rescue (SAR) capacity and accompanying emergency medical support have been highlighted during TCF due to the emergence of new hazards (mudslides) and significant loss of life. As a priority, desperate SAR initiatives should be brought under one national SAR strategy, with a collaboration framework established between key national actors (DoDMA MDF, MPS, MRCS, and MoH/health actors) which triggers and unlocks financial resources in time to ensure appropriate life-saving support can be deployed. The necessary SAR and medical trauma response equipment needs to be inventoried, maintained, and procured while building Malawi's internal capacity to carryout water-based and urban search and rescue through training and simulation exercises.

Managing population displacement and their return home or resettlement is an essential priority, as illustrated by TCF destroying or damaging approximately 260,681 houses while rendering 659,278 people displaced. Where safe evacuation sites had been preidentified, community disaster management structures (ACPCs/VCPCs) had been trained on camp coordination and management, and/or tents had been prepositioned – displaced populations benefitted. Relocating populations to safe land remain is a key priority ahead of the upcoming rainy season, with basic services urgently needed to make areas inhabitable and keep vulnerable populations safe. Preparing return package standards and SOPs on camp size and the decommissioning of IDP sites are key preparedness priorities.

Transport and logistics constraints were unprecedented throughout TCF, with more than 44 roads (16 major) and 40 bridges damaged, resulting in numerous Traditional Authorities being completely cut off and reliant on helicopter and boat deliveries of humanitarian assistance. Alongside mapping and urgent repair of this critical infrastructure, identifying and rehabilitating warehouses in disaster-prone districts need to be prioritized and prepositioned with relief supplies and fuel reserves. Maintenance of district-owned vehicles and MDF helicopters, complemented by improved last mile distribution planning, and training for airport staff, local partners, and politicians will contribute to smoother facilitation of essential deliveries.

Cross-cutting issues, including protection, accountability to affected populations (AAP) and transparency, gender, prevention of sex exploitation and abuse, as well as addressing the needs of people with disabilities and the elderly, all featured heavily as areas which can be improved moving forward. Strengthened linkages and capacities between national and district levels are required, particularly in adherence to existing policy guidance, coordinated reporting, and adaptation to emergency-specific and trauma-related needs of vulnerable populations.

Transitioning to early recovery is critical in the Malawian context, as populations desire to leave displacement camps, take advantage of residual moisture to replant lost crops, and begin rebuilding their lives ahead of the next rainy season. A camp decommissioning and relocation strategy, combined with more time-sensitive distribution of farming inputs and unconditional social cash transfers will support the transition to early recovery. While the timely undertaking of a Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) three weeks after TCF's landfall facilitated the development of a

subsequent National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF), digitization and data management of sectoral information will further ease and build confidence in these processes, support recovery fundraising, and facilitate their implementation monitoring.

Supporting implementation

The implementation of the TCF AAR is supported by a 3 Year AAR Action Plan by thematic area and a 5 Month Cyclone Preparedness Work Plan at Cluster level. The Preparedness Work Plan entailed the realistic prioritization of a small number of key activities to undertake immediately, and has been validated by Cluster stakeholders. Its implementation will be monitored through the Monitoring Plan laid out in this report by an AAR Implementation Task Team, which involves regular reporting moments in the lead up to the 2024 Cyclone Season, aimed at ensuring accountability and addressing bottlenecks.

Full implementation will only be realized through the targeted financial support of key activities. Financial requirements are set out for preparedness activities within the National 2023-24 Multi-Hazard Contingency Plan. Partners are encouraged to support implementation by using this document and accompanying plans to identify priorities, and dedicate human and financial resources towards their achievement.

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While appreciating the heroic efforts of everyone who responded to this tragedy, this review accepts that there is more that can be done to prepare and improve in the future and that learning is a continual process. The Tropical Cyclone Freddy Response After Action Review (TCF-AAR) report consolidates the reflections and recommendations of multiple stakeholders which have been shared across several events and engagements across the TCF response and recovery periods.

DoDMA would like to acknowledge the significant support provided by the United Nations in Malawi, through the Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO) and UN Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) for their leadership and technical assistance throughout the response. We would like to acknowledge the RCO, World Food Programme (WFP), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and World Health Organization (WHO) for contributing financially to the successful implementation of a national AAR event on 10-11th August 2023 in Blantyre which brought affected district representatives, ministerial sectoral leads, the UN, and civil society together.

We would also like to acknowledge the initiative and financial support provided by the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) in hosting over 150 civil society participants at the National Emergency Response Conference on 22nd June 2023 in Lilongwe. Sectoral reviews and the accompanying report have contributed to this report, as well as the OCHA facilitated a full-day Mid-Term Action Review (MAR) on 29 May 2023 which provided insight specifically from UN sector co-leads and NGOs members.

Learning would not be complete, without the active engagement of District Council members from 16 affected areas. Our gratitude is extended to the leadership in taking time to reflect internally, with specific appreciation to the Lean Season Response AAR process for also creating space for TCF reflection during the Southern LSR AAR Workshop to initiate this process. As highlighted as a best practice to replicate in the future, we also extend thanks to Concern Worldwide for financial and technical support to hold targeted district-specific multi-stakeholder AARs in Chikwawa and Nsanje districts. District deep dives at the epicenter of the response capture invaluable learning.

Finally, we thank the AAR Task Team for their crucial role in planning, guiding, facilitating, and providing necessary support to ensure the successful implementation of the programme, including preparing this report: Fyawupi Mwafongo, Annie Mapulanga, Madalitso Mwale, Ephod Kachigwada, and Zion Chimata (DoDMA), Heidi Carrubba (UNRCO), Regina Chinyanga (OCHA), Roster

Kufandiko (MRCS), Eunice Nyirenda (WFP), Monserrat Pejuan (UNICEF), and Ronald Kamwendo (iMMAP France).

List of Abbreviations

AAR	After Action Review
ACPC	Area Civil Protection Committee
ADRMC	Area Disaster Risk Management Committee
DCCMS	Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services
DCPC	District Civil Protection Committee
DDRMC	District Disaster Risk Management Committee
DoDMA	Department of Disaster Management Affairs
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
GVH	Group Village Headman
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MRCS	Malawi Red Cross Society
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
TA	Traditional Authority
TCF	Tropical Cyclone Freddy
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNOSAT	UN Satellite Centre
UNRCO	UN Resident Coordinator's Office
VCPC	Village Civil Protection Committee
VDRMC	Village Disaster Risk Management Committee
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

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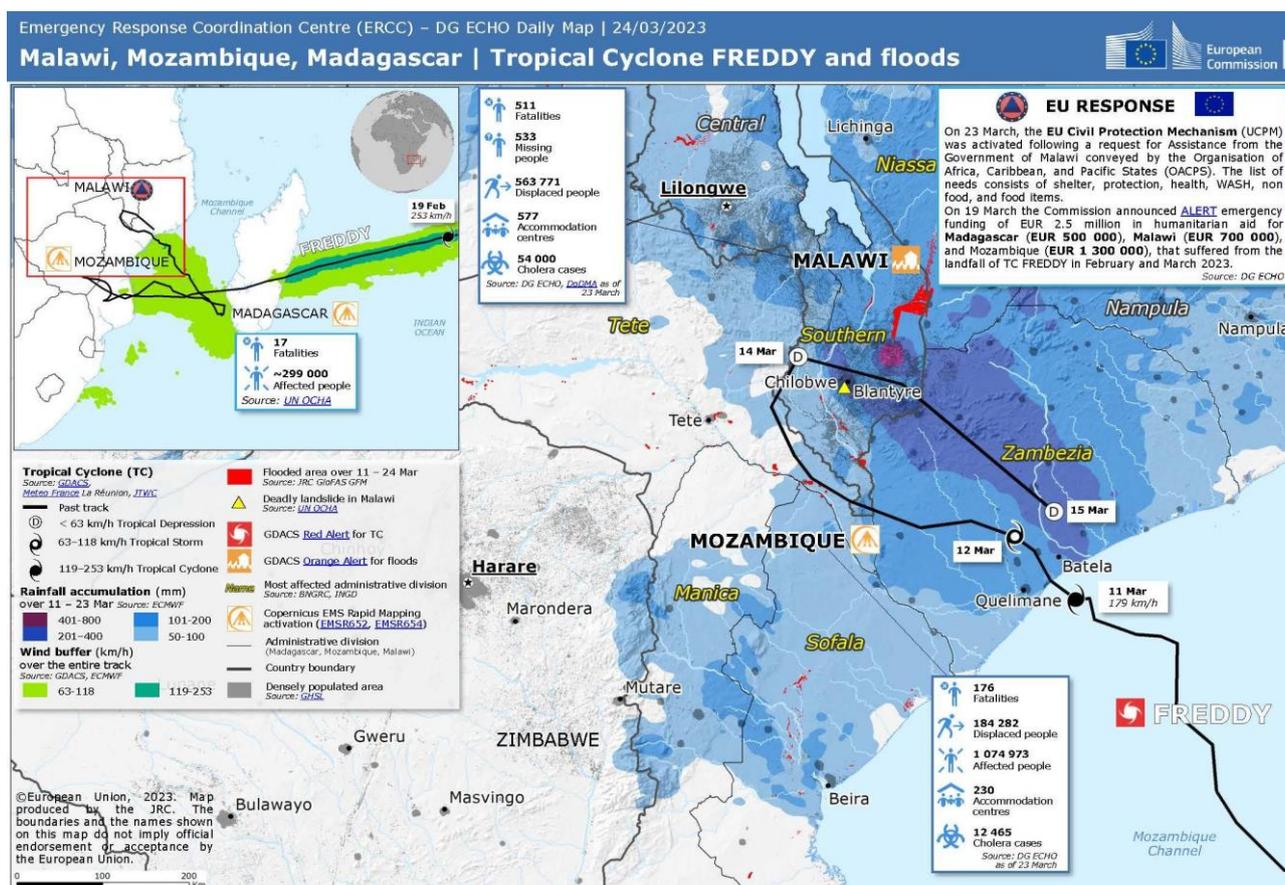
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1. Introduction

Tropical Cyclone Freddy triggered heavy rainfall across the southern region of Malawi between March 11th and 15th, 2023. The number of councils directly impacted increased to 16. The rains brought about a series of disasters in the districts of Nsanje, Chikwawa, Blantyre, Chiradzulu, and Mulanje. Particularly on March 13th, 2023, the districts of Blantyre, Phalombe, Chiradzulu, and Mulanje faced numerous mudslides and substantial debris flows from elevated terrain. These destructive events resulted in the sweeping away of villages, causing substantial damage to property, residences, and crops. Tragically, there were also injuries and loss of both human lives and livestock.

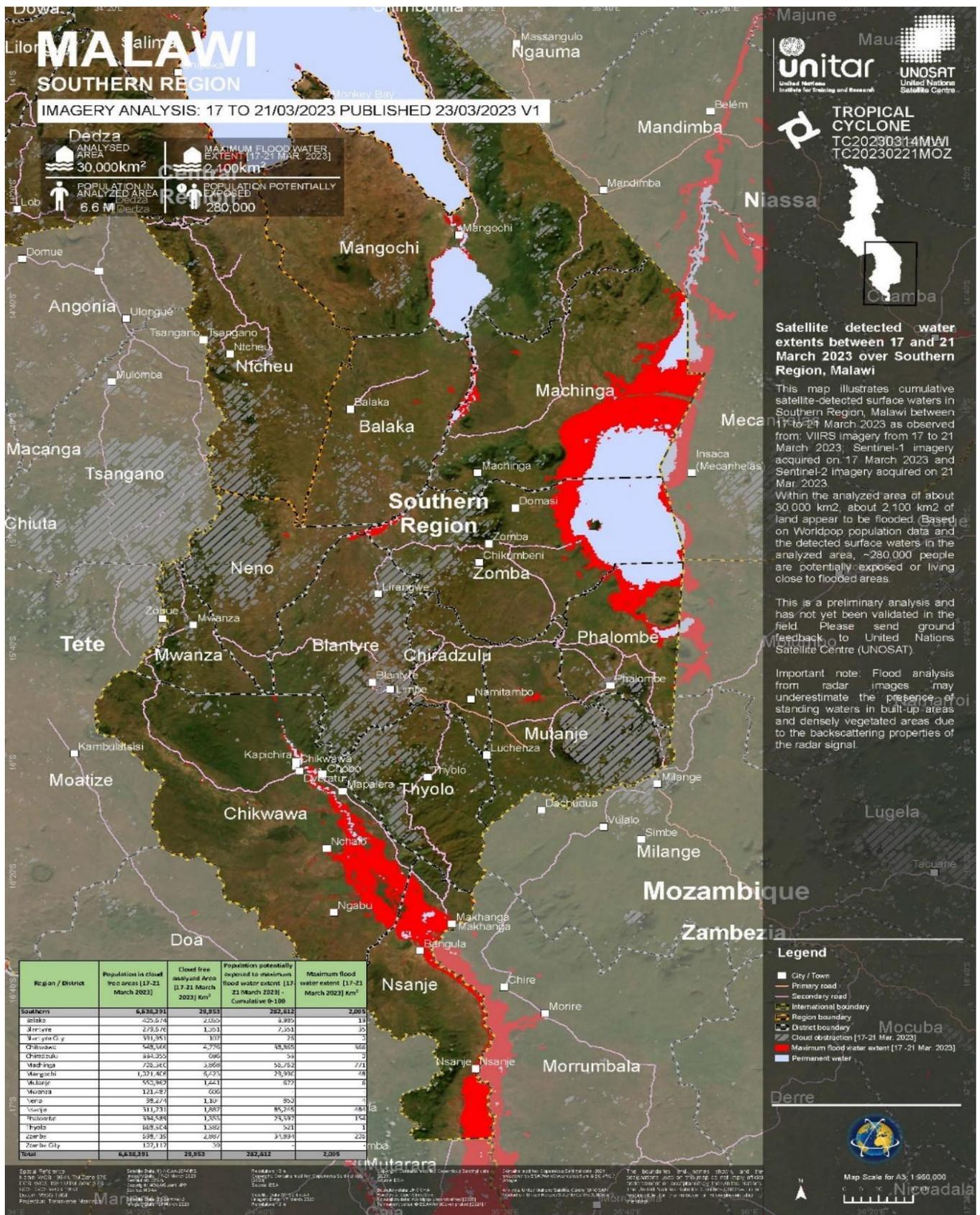
Figure 1. Displays the Trajectory of Tropical Cyclone Freddy.



In addition to the mudslides, the intense flooding that followed the heavy rainfall displaced numerous individuals and inflicted further harm upon both private and public assets. This widespread flooding affected districts including Nsanje, Chikwawa, Ntcheu, Mwanza, Neno, Thyolo, Mangochi, Balaka, Machinga, and Zomba districts, as well as Zomba City.

At least 2,267,458 (1,110,639 Male and 1,156,819 Female) people were affected, of whom 659,278 (336,252 Female and 323,026 Male) people displaced to 747 sites across the country. At least 56% of the affected were children and 7.2% were persons with disabilities. The disaster caused 679 deaths and 2,178 injuries, with 537 people missing. It also affected productive, social and infrastructure sectors including the Shelter, Agriculture, Food Security, Transport, Education, Health, and WASH.

Figure 2. Illustrates the TCF Flood Extent (UNOSAT)



In response to these situations, the Government of Malawi developed a response plan whose primary goals were to provide immediate support for survival needs and restore essential socio-economic services targeting 363,856 households translating to 1,637,352 people. Additionally, the plan sought to facilitate the affected population's transition towards early recovery. To complement Government efforts, humanitarian partners (UN, NGOs, and Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS)) revised the original Flash Appeal, which initially reflected the cholera response, to also reflect the Cyclone Freddy response. The appeal targeted 1.1 million people with life-saving assistance.

Although most people have now returned to their home communities, to try and re-establish their lives and livelihoods, as of 22 August 2023, more than 50,000 people were still residing in 20 displacement camps across 6 districts and were awaiting relocation as their areas of origin remain uninhabitable and/or are too exposed and at high risk of future floods. It is against this background that the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) planned an After-Action Review (AAR) to critically assess the TC Freddy response. The overall objective of the AAR was to offer valuable insights into both the strengths and weaknesses of the flood response, viewed from a range of perspectives. These insights are pivotal for enhancing future performance in response efforts.

The following were the specific objectives of the review:

- To assess key achievements, areas of success and challenges, as well as areas for improvement for future responses; and
- To identify lessons learned and good practices and provide recommendations and an action plan to replicate or improve for future disaster responses.

2. Methodology

The approach taken to prepare this Tropical Cyclone Freddy Response After Action Review (TCF-AAR) report has been to oversee by a AAR Task Team, led by DoDMA and supported by the UN and MRCS team members under the authority of the Coordination Cluster under DoDMA's Preparedness and Response Directorate. The AAR Task Team worked together to develop the overall review process, National AAR event agenda, and report consolidation during the report writing and validation processes.

The main DoDMA-led activities were as follows:

a) Cluster Virtual AARs (2-8th August 2023), online

- Facilitated by each Cluster Lead and Co-Lead, virtual AARs were held with their memberships, including NGOs/CSOs, to provide space for deeper sectoral reflection. Findings were captured in PowerPoint slide packs and consolidated by the Coordination Cluster (*See Annexed Cluster AARs*). Cluster AARs were also complemented by an in-person Drones AAR and virtual Cash Working Group AAR process with stakeholders.

b) National Tropical Cyclone Freddy After Action Review (10-11th August 2023), Blantyre

- Organized by DoDMA and the AAR Task Team, the event brought together 165 representatives from 16 affected districts, ministerial sectoral leads, the UN, and civil society (*see Annexed Participants List*).
- The Agenda focused on the following sessions: response reflections and overview, 11 thematic breakout sessions with plenary, cluster cyclone preparedness planning, and a mental health and well-being reflection. The discussions revolved around identifying best practices that could be expanded, addressing challenges, formulating recommendations for improvement, and preparing associated timebound action plans to support implementation.

Image 2. AAR Breakout Group Discussions (Food Security, Resource Mobilization)



c) TCF AAR Report Writing (17-19th August 2023), Salima

- The AAR Task Team consolidated documents drafted during the National TCF AAR with other AAR reports, in order to prepare the main three outputs: AAR Report, AAR 3 Year Action Plan, and 5 Month Cyclone Preparedness Work Plan.

d) TCF Cluster Preparedness Plan Reviews (24-25th August 2023), Lilongwe

- Draft 5 Month Cyclone Preparedness Plans were reviewed with the AAR Task Team by Cluster during an in-depth working session, revised, and validated with Clusters members with an understanding that their implementation progress would be monitored according to the monitoring plan laid out within this report.

e) AAR Report Dissemination (September)

- According to the monitoring plan within this report, DoDMA will disseminate this report and main findings widely to ensure wide awareness of the key recommendations and preparedness requirements to improve response in the future.

The TCF AAR report consolidates the reflections and recommendations of multiple stakeholders shared across several key events and engagements which contributed to the process as follows:

National Emergency Response Conference (22nd June 2023), Lilongwe

- Organized by the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) with over 150 civil society participants, including half day sectoral breakout sessions and summarized in an accompanying report.

TCF Mid-Term Action Review (MAR) (29th May 2023), Blantyre

- Organized by OCHA, providing insight specifically from UN sector co-leads and NGOs members, consolidated sets of recommendations by actor summarized in a report.

Cyclone Freddy EOC Activation: After Action Review

- Prepared by Raymond Misomali and Maona Ngwira, the report provides lessons learned and recommended changes to strengthen the Malawi Disaster Management System based on TCF Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) experiences.

In-depth District Stakeholder AARs (June/July 2023), Nsanje and Chikwawa

- Facilitated by Concern Worldwide, targeted district-specific multi-stakeholder AARs were held in Chikwawa and Nsanje districts with consolidated thematic and sectoral recommendation slidepacks referenced in this report.

TCF District Reflections (DATE), Liwonde

- During the 2-day 2022-2023 Lean Season Response AAR process, the Southern Region took half a day for reflection within districts on the TCF response. District PowerPoint slidepacks were reviewed and incorporated into the report.

The above full reference reports can be found within the following folder: [AAR Stakeholders](#).

The TCF AAR Report includes a 3 Year AAR Action Plan which includes a more complete list of necessary key actions to implement by thematic area, as well as a 5 Month Cyclone Preparedness Work Plan by Cluster with essential actions required ahead of the next cyclone season. Costing for most of these actions is included in DoDMA's 2023-24 Multi-Hazard Contingency Plan (forthcoming). This report also includes a Monitoring Plan to map out how the implementation of recommendations and workplans will be followed up.

3. Thematic Areas

3.1.NATIONAL-LEVEL COORDINATION



OVERVIEW

Nationwide emergency response coordination was led by the Government of Malawi through DoDMA following an Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) meeting on Thursday, 9 March 2023. All Government Clusters were activated with Leads and UN/MRCS Co-Leads requested to deploy to Blantyre.

TCF's slowing down off the coast of Mozambique on 10 and 11 March, enabled the establishment of the NEOC at 14:00 hr on 11 March by a small, advanced team, 1.5days ahead of impact. The NEOC stayed in regular contact with District Council representatives through regular virtual meetings. While heavy rains had started from Saturday, severe mudslides overnight 11 to 12th, resulted in a fully-fledged response and scaled-up staffing by Monday, 13 March. The Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) was presided over by the Commissioner for Disaster Management Affairs, Charles Kalemba, with support from DoDMA's Directors and senior officials from Malawi Defense Force (MDF) and Malawi Police.

By 14 March, several high-ranking officials traveled south, with some visiting the EOC, though most important decision-making briefings for government were held at Sanjika Presidential Palace in Blantyre. The National DRM Committee did not meet in the initial weeks of the response, but an Inter-Ministerial Task Team was established. The President carried out two tours of affected districts and launched *Operation Tigwirane Manja* engaging two former Presidents in advocacy and fundraising efforts.

By initially operating out of Blantyre, DoDMA was able to work near the impacted districts, while also remaining well-connected to decision-makers. Some DoDMA staff remained in Lilongwe to coordinate swiftly with government entities, including Treasury, Parliament, and the Ministry of Justice to ensure the timely Declaration of the State of Disaster, release of initial emergency government funding, promotion of the passing of the DRM Act, as well as coordination with foreign government and private sector donors.

SUCSESSES AND BEST PRACTICES

- Activation of the EOC ahead of TCF's landfall facilitated timely kick-off of response interventions.
- Deployment of DoDMA and Cluster staff who had received an introductory EOC training by OCHA in January 2023 and were familiar with the concept of the EOC from previous disasters.
- Dedication and collaboration of the deployed staff in the EOC
- Sponsorship of government cluster leads ensured representation and sustainability of the EOC operations.
- DCCMS provision of regular weather updates (rain, windspeed, cyclone tracking) from inside the EOC.
- The physical EOC space was a significant improvement over the previous year as it provided a conducive environment for coordination.
- Opportunities were created to reflect and learn from TCF through various stakeholder events, including some District AARs, the first civil society-led AAR, Cluster-specific virtual AARs, and a national 2-day AAR.

Table 1. National Level Coordination (Challenges and Recommendations)

Challenges	Recommendations
National Coordination structures and processes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some existing national DRM coordination structures (HCT and NDPRC) did not convene during the initial response phase, impacting their effectiveness to guide overall coordination between ministries and agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review existing DRM coordination structures, including participants, and update all based on the new 2023 DRM Act requirements. Review and ensure there are clear activation triggers for all coordination structures to ensure timely and appropriate instigation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders did not feel that the response was guided by the National Multi-Hazard Contingency Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continual efforts to improve the relevance and appropriateness of the National Multi-Hazard Contingency Plan with updated information. Socialization of the CP to all stakeholders and reference to it in times of crisis.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MOUs with key MDAs, including MDF, are out of date and not followed, leading to a confusion between actors on the roles and responsibilities of DoDMA (particularly on budgeting). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revisit MOU with MDF to clarify expectations and resource requirements for life-saving assistance. Lobby Treasury to ensure MDAs have budgetary lines for disaster risk management.
Emergency Operations Centre	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited understanding of the existing EOC SOPs by many stakeholders, led to confusion over the functions, roles, and responsibilities within the EOC and resulted in an over-reliance on a small number of DoDMA staff for a large number of important tasks, overcrowding of the EOC with the wrong representatives (low authority, weak technical capacity, overrepresentation by some organizations/Clusters), and gaps in leadership direction and oversight including delegated authority, clear tasking and response activity prioritization. Representation from some MDAs was absent and could have enhanced coordination, information sharing, and response effectiveness through physical deployment to the EOC. The National EOC in Blantyre was deactivated and moved to Lilongwe but with reduced effectiveness, while partners continued sectoral operational coordination in Blantyre resulting in a disconnect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review, revise, and implement the National EOC Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) including activation, functioning, and deactivation with consideration of oversight of charitable/volunteer organizations, private sector, and foreign government contributions. Strengthen leadership command and control functions to oversee the EOC, including clear tasking with deadlines that are tracked and reported on. Develop an EOC staffing list, including an EOC organogram (at sufficiently high grade for decision-making authority), updated regularly and inclusive of a broader set of key responding MDAs (ex. DWR, MACRA, NSO, NRB, MoFA, MoE, Roads Authority, Air Traffic Control, etc). Share EOC SOPs with all humanitarian actors, train and conduct capacity building through tabletop exercises (TTX), simulation exercises (SIMEX), and experience exchange visits with SADC/AU neighbours.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EOC did not have an established daily operating schedule, with the specific timings and duration of EOC-District virtual meetings being too long and inconvenient to also facilitate response activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standardize an EOC schedule which prioritizes the operational needs of responding Districts and organizations to carry out tasks during the day and reserve meetings early morning and evening.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meetings were often focused on verbally sharing key information (data/facts/figures), leaving less time for problem identification, and solving. ● Meetings were not documented, and information was not systematically shared with participants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of meetings, including setting clear agendas, timekeeping, note taking, facilitating problem solving over basic information sharing, and ensuring clear action points with follow-up tasks are shared and monitored. ● Key information should be submitted online via standardized templates to meet reporting needs. ● Contact and distribution lists for all Clusters, Districts, and EOC staff to be updated ahead of cyclone season and during response period.
EOC Management and Operations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of a purpose-built Regional/National EOC constrained physical meeting space and ease of information sharing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Construct and equip a purpose-built Regional/National EOC. ● In the meantime, pre-identify potential ad-hoc EOC locations in-advanced and supply with temporary/movable essential equipment, including desks, video conferencing, whiteboards, and signage.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The overall running costs of the EOC were high and not evenly shared between UN, NGO, and government agencies. ● There was no Fleet Management system in place to maximize shared usage of vehicle assets (where possible) and deployments to districts/field teams. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a budget for the ad-hoc EOC and ensure sufficient cost-sharing arrangements are in place in advanced, including in-kind contributions/arrangements for increased connectivity (ie. ETC, MARCRA, TNM). ● Deploy a dedicated UN and government fleet officer to track vehicle resources and needs and assist in mission logistics coordination.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The EOC had not considered occupational health, safety and security issues. ● EOC staff were under incredibly high levels of stress and had not sufficiently prepared or planned for staff welfare and resilience (mental health, nutrition) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engage UNDSS in the ad-hoc EOC location selection process, to assess health and safety issues and consider physical security enhancements, including participant registration/EOC IDs ● Pre-identify staff support professionals and secure necessary budget, to make services available at the EOC from the onset. ● Pre-arrange local food vendors to sell meals and refreshments within the EOC compound.
Inter-Cluster Coordination	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● After initial Cluster activation on 9/March, there were not any dedicated ICCG meetings in the first few weeks of the response to address specific inter-cluster coordination issues. ● Parallel structures emerged to compensate for these coordination gaps, but caused repetitive and confusion amongst participants (which often excluded government). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Align international humanitarian coordination structures with Malawi's coordination structures, to enhance partnership support in building a sustainable nationally-owned system. ● ICCG meetings and Cluster meetings should be held very regularly during the initial response phase, with systematic inclusion of all partners, particularly INGOs and LNGOs.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination Cluster’s activities are not fully funded and lack sufficient human resources to achieve goals, particularly as mapped out in the Contingency Plan. • New Technical Working Groups are not yet formalized within the DRM Coordination Structures, including the Emergency Telecommunications, Drones, Information Management, and Needs Assessment Working Groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As DoDMA’s key function, the Coordination Cluster’s activities should be prioritized, resourced, and supported directly while continuing to build the capacity of Cluster Leads for effective response leadership. • Consolidate overview of newly proposed Technical Working Groups, assign government leadership and integrate into all DRM processes.
<p>Reflecting, learning, and improving</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants acknowledged the challenge of implementing recommendations and historical tendency not to complete preparedness tasks ahead of the next disaster, particularly with limited preparedness budgets and weak oversight or accountability. • Preparedness activities in Contingency Plans were finalized late and not funded. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an AAR Implementation Task Team under the Coordination Cluster dedicated to following up and monitoring the progress of implementation of AAR recommendations. • AAR implementation plans are presented to senior stakeholders (NDRMC/DPs) to enhance accountability. • Feed AAR recommendations into the Contingency Planning process and fundraise for budget allocation to support implementation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth multi-stakeholder AARs were only supported and carried out in two districts (with support of Concern Worldwide in Nsanje and Chikwawa), while not all Clusters held substantive and consultative virtual AARs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectation and planning that all response Districts carry out in-depth, multi-sector, multi-stakeholder, District-led AARs, while Cluster-led sector-specific AARs as part of the overall AAR approach in the future. • NGO/CSOs to replicate 2023 positive experience by maintaining a space for independent AAR processes, coordinated with government and national processes.



OVERVIEW

Decentralization is a key feature within the Malawian context, with DoDMA responsible to devolve resources and decision-making to the local government structures, including within emergency response. With 14 districts and 2 cities impacted by TCF, District Coordination played a key factor in the response. An administrative reshuffle in mid-2022 left the majority of southern districts with a new District Commissioner (DC) – either through first-time appointments or transferred between districts – meaning that TCF would be the first time for many to oversee such a severe emergency response (challenge? leadership setups) (staff-turnover) Both DoDMA and response partners are typically setup to respond with District Councils and rural communities, though TCF hit urban Blantyre City in an unprecedented manner.

SUCCESSSES AND BEST PRACTICES

Where District Emergency Operation Centers (D-EOCs) were established in the districts of Nsanje, Chikwawa, Phalombe, and Mulanje response actors were more able to coordinate more effectively. DoDMA and partners provided D-EOC backstopping in key districts, with varying levels of success. Where District Commissioners played a visible and active leadership role, decision-making and response oversight was enhanced.

Despite widespread power failures, for the most part District Councils were able to maintain daily communication with the National EOC and participated regularly in providing district updates via Zoom calls.

Active and inclusive District Civil Protection Committees (DCPCs) were central to the local coordination efforts, particularly where they had expanded their membership to include other relevant stakeholders (ie. CSOs) and increased the frequency of meetings. Enhanced local coordination, including with experienced Cluster members, improved financial, logistical, and response mobilization.

Where local Area Civil Protection Committees (ACPC) and Village Civil Protection Committees (VCPC) were alert and activated, they played a key role in supporting early warning and evacuations, providing first line response, information gathering, camp management, and resource distribution. In many cases VCPCs, ACPCs, and DCPCs were able to effectively communicate via WhatsApp and direct phone calls.

Table 2. Challenges and Recommendations – District Coordination

Challenges	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● District Councils struggled with inadequate financial resources to support coordination, monitoring, and response activities, as emergency response funds have not been decentralized. ● Without adequate transport, district staff were heavily reliant on partner vehicle and fuel provisions to assess needs and monitor response activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● DoDMA to support DCPC members in mobilizing funds that support preparedness and early actions. ● DoDMA and local councils to advocate sufficient budgetary allocations for DRM to enable timely access to funds for response activities. ● DoDMA to lobby the Treasury to allow cities to have a budget line to finance DRM activities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Many districts did not establish EOCs and lacked a clear understanding of the SOPs, roles and responsibilities, and expectations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Revise existing District EOC SOPs and ensure contextualisation and district-level capacity building across disaster-prone districts.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High staff turnover in districts results in knowledge and capacity gaps to perform key response functions, such as needs assessments, coordination, leadership. ● EOC and cluster backstopping from national experts was only provided to selected districts, causing a gap in mentorship and technical expertise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● DoDMA to lobby with the Ministry of Local Government where significant training investments have been made in key staff in disaster-prone districts to ensure capacity is not lost. ● Ensure EOC Backstopping Plan is in place with national support pre-identified, prepared, and resourced to effectively support District EOCs during initial emergency phase. ● Consider innovative capacity building approaches for District EOCs, including Tabletop Exercises (TTX), Simulation Exercises (SIMEX), and Peer Learning/District Exchanges.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Weak coordination between some National and District-level Clusters, leading to mismatched data and understanding of requirements. ● Wide variations in effectiveness of District Clusters, with some failing to meet regularly, coordinate partners in their sector/district, or mobilize sufficient resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● DCPC to update database/mapping of partners operating in their districts (3Ws). ● Determination of CSOs/NGO co-leads by district and cluster to strengthen coordination. ● Consistent activation of Cluster and DCPC/Inter-Clusters to ensure regularized coordination before, during, and after responses.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● DCPC bypassed in key decision-making by some stakeholders, including distribution of donations and commissioning of informal camps (by GVHs), as well as not reporting updates. This led to a duplication of efforts and wasted efforts reaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Private sector, faith-based, and charitable humanitarian actors should be sensitised on disaster response protocols of passing through the DPCP with their donations and support.

<p>camps which had already had their needs met by others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some organisations with ongoing projects were not able to shift to new areas in need, resulting in some camps receiving more support than others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Partners / Donors should be sensitized to the harms of strict geographical limitations and encouraged to be more flexible.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some amount of political interference led to undue pressure on the councils and uneven allocation of support to camps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitize political actors, traditional leaders on humanitarian principles and DRM processes to increase knowledge and understanding of response. Experienced leadership/training for DCs Report sharing/evidence for clarity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak district-level information management, including regular reporting from partners operating within districts, impacts ability for Districts to coordinate the overall response effectively. 	

3.3. PREPAREDNESS AND EARLY WARNING



OVERVIEW

Prior to the TC Freddy making its landfall in the southern part of the country, multi-hazard Contingency Plans at national and district level were available. In January, DoDMA received refresher EOC management training. Since 17 February DCCMS was tracking TC Freddy development until it made its landfall on 13 March 2023. Following warning from DCCMS, DoDMA and the Department of Water Resources issued press releases on warning and the necessary preparedness measures. From 8 March, key anticipatory early actions were activated by partners such as the Malawi Red Cross Society. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was activated on 11 March with staff deploying ahead of the cyclone. Some humanitarian clusters were already activated due to other, on-going emergency responses e.g., Health, WASH for cholera and Food Security for lean season response. Civil Protection Committees played a functional role in providing early warning information to communities. Quantities of key items were prepositioned in strategic areas such as Blantyre and the Humanitarian Staging Area in Bangula. Essential items included Non-Food Items, food, fuel, drugs, protection materials, search, and rescue equipment (boats), tents as well as WASH items. In Nsanje and Chikwawa districts, funds were made available to sensitize the people on the messages from DCCMS. Key messages included informing communities to relocate to higher areas.

BEST PRACTICES AND SUCCESSES

- The Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services (DCCMS) commenced monitoring of Tropical Cyclone Freddy early and issued warning messages before the Cyclone made its landfall on 13 March.

- Government departments, agencies, humanitarian actors and the public received and used DCCMS updates regularly and acted on information provided.
- There was high belief and trust in the early warnings which enabled some people to relocate to safe areas before the disaster.
- Humanitarian projects were able to activate the community-based early warning systems, and the communities were able to act locally without budgets.
- With the new Disaster Risk Management Bill now endorsed, it will provide policies that enable better and coordinated preparedness.

Table 3. Challenges and Recommendations – Preparedness and Early Warning

Challenges	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contingency plans at national and district level remain mere documents as there is no budget attached to this process. • Actions in the Contingency Plans are not prioritized. Additionally, the usefulness of these plans has not been assessed. • Early warning triggers are not jointly agreed on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update hazard mapping and make contingency plans a multi-sectoral and functional process ensuring that they are realistic, actionable, and funded. • Jointly decide on official triggers • Mainstream DRM in programming to ensure that preparedness actions are prioritized. • Increased investment in anticipatory actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no SOPs to guide Sector/multisectoral prepositioning and stock mapping (who does what when where). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop pre-positioning strategy. • Pre-identify a standard multisectoral package and sectoral and kit for pre-positioning in identified hubs. Pre-identify appropriate pre-positioning hubs in at-risk districts aligning with evacuation routes / displacement sites.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some recipients of early warning messages did not understand the relevance of these messages in relation to their geographical locations. As a result communities were unsure of the necessary actions to take in their specific circumstances and context. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scale up utilization of various dissemination channels such as Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA) and target messages geographically with priority actions to take at local level. • Ensure communities take appropriate action upon receipt of warnings. • Continuous education across all levels on early warning messages and measures to take and projected impact of the disaster. • Use of community influencers for communication of early warning information to improve reception and action by communities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The magnitude of landslides was not expected and as a result, this component and its potential impact was not included in the early warning messages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the risk profile and risk information to enable identification and prioritization of early actions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no focal point within the different departments and agencies that have been appointed to receive weather information from DCCMS and take specific action based on information disseminated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand membership of early warning technical sub-committee • Agencies to be pro-active in receiving and disseminating information.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evacuation centers are ad-hoc, temporary, undignified, insanitary, and increase instances of violence and abuse. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design infrastructure for multipurpose use during emergency response. Plan for evacuations and evacuation routes/identify evacuation centers, in addition safe and dignified services delivery in identified sites.
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3.4. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

OVERVIEW

The Interagency (IA) Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) took place between 18 and 24 March, 2023, some 11 days after the disaster due to inaccessibility of most areas. The National Interagency assessment teams consisting of 85 members were deployed to the 7 most affected councils of Blantyre, Nsanje, Chikwawa, Phalombe, Mulanje, Zomba and Chiradzulu. The teams backstopped and supported the councils with the impact and needs assessment. The remaining affected districts of Thyolo, Machinga, Balaka, Mangochi, Neno, Mwanza and Ntcheu conducted their interagency assessment with support of the DCPCs and submitted the reports to DoDMA by 24th March, 2023. All the District IA assessment reports were presented and shared with the EOC on the 25th March, 2023. The consolidated Inter-agency assessment report was published on 31st March, 2023. The assessment report facilitated the development of cluster, agency and national response plans. Some clusters, for instance Agriculture and Health, conducted detailed cluster assessments which also informed the development of the response plans. Furthermore, a detailed Post Disaster Need Assessment (PDNA) was undertaken from 3rd to 14th April, 2023, to inform the disaster effects and recovery needs. The PDNA used the preliminary results from the interagency assessment reports, satellite imageries, cluster specific assessments and drone assessment.

Drones were relatively quickly deployed (almost within 24 hours after the emergency hit Malawi). The drone team was adequately staffed with experienced processing personnel and had equipment with relevant image capturing. Drone imagery were collected in approximately 10 districts (Blantyre, Chiradzulu, Phalombe, Mulanje, Chikwawa, Nsanje and Zomba) with different types of areas, roads, bridges, villages mapped and geospatial data processed in several different GIS/mapping products. The drone assessments were undertaken for approximately 4 days and preliminary drone imagery analysis and visualization was done on a daily basis. The preliminary drone analysis results were presented to all partners in the national EOC. Additionally, Malawi Institute of Engineers (MIE) supported with generating drone imagery insights and presented the results to EOC on 30th March, 2023.

BEST PRACTICES AND SUCCESSES

- A detailed standard inter-agency impact and needs assessment tool was available and the assessment was done jointly by an inter cluster team.

- Activation of UNOSAT by OCHA assisted in determining affected areas, people in need and prioritization of needs.
- Availability of drones for situation assessment.
- Tapping of the private sector expertise by involving Globhe for imagery collection, Swoop Aero for the delivery of medical goods and MIE for drone analysis.
- Despite the relative successes and identified best practices, some challenges were noted, and recommendations made:

Table 4. Challenges and Recommendations – Needs Assessment

Challenges	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised RNA tool for use by councils to provide impact data for the first 4 days of the disaster missed pertinent sectoral data as it underwent last-minute changes due to conflicting views on information needs. • Inconsistent data collection protocols within and across districts, and with national level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance data collection and reporting methods for a coherent and swift strategy, from GVH to national levels. • Develop SOPs for complete needs assessment process. • Harmonize sectoral information needs and tool length. • digitalization of tools where possible. • Define data validation and triangulation approaches. • Bolster stakeholders' assessment abilities (capacity building).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some clusters lacked optimal staff allocation, impacting IA team representation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a needs assessment sub-technical working group under the coordination cluster. • Evaluate overall capacity and resource gaps at district and national tiers, including for drones.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient resources to undertake needs assessment (i.e., Vehicles and fuel posed transport challenges). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximize the use of alternative assessment technologies i.e., drones, UNOSAT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay in sharing the UNOSAT imagery. • Data validation issues raised worries about inflated figures from certain teams, especially at TA/village level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For a larger disaster like Freddy's scale, there is need for: • Government to activate the UNOSAT on time. • Conduct an exhaustive PDNA and enhance capacities across the actors involved.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drones had limited flight time, hindering their utility, coupled with data processing problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement of department of Civil Aviation and air traffic control
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drones were underutilized during the disaster preparedness phase to generate baseline mapping to support analysis after the disaster (before and after analysis). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to develop SOP for drone response. Defining key drone imagery use cases, protocols and data collection purposes is essential.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate usage of drone assessment insights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness building on the drone capabilities among clusters, EOC members and decision-makers

3.5. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION, UTILIZATION AND REPORTING



OVERVIEW

To ensure the prompt delivery of assistance to the affected population, the government collaborated with humanitarian partners to formulate a three-month flood response plan, addressing immediate life-saving needs. The estimated total cost for implementing this three-month response plan, spanning from March to June 2023, amounted to MK147.8 billion. Approximately 80% of the resources required for the response plan were mobilized through the collective efforts of the government, humanitarian partners, foreign governments, organizations, the private sector, and generous individuals.

In addition to the government's initiatives, UN agencies initiated a Flash Appeal designed to complement these efforts over a three-month period. The Floods Flash Appeal aimed to assist 1.1 million people and had a total funding requirement of USD 70.6 million, with USD 13.7 million already secured, representing 20% of the needed funding.

BEST PRACTICES AND SUCCESSES

- Several elements have been singled out as best practices as below:
- Timely declaration of ‘State of Disaster’ and appeal for assistance by the government facilitated unlocking of local and external support from various foreign governments, organizations, private sector, and individuals of good will.
- The development of Tropical Cyclone Freddy Response Plan as a resource mobilization tool assisted government and partners to lobby and advocate for support and provided clear indication of the requirements and the gaps.
- The development of the Flash Appeal, DREF and other resource mobilization mechanisms complimented governments resource mobilization efforts.
- Government arrangements and facilitation of duty waiver on relief items donation from outside Malawi assisted in timely mobilization of material support.
- Internal organization funding mechanisms also facilitated resource mobilization.
- The activation of crisis modifiers and contingency funds for some development partners and projects assisted to timely provide funds to kick-start some emergency response interventions.
- Availability and pre-allocation of relief maize from Strategic Grain Reserve by government to DoDMA for the 2022/2023 season emergency response operations enabled timely mobilization and provision of food assistance.
- Regular and Joint Government/ UN engagement and presentations to donors and international community on the situation, needs and gaps also assisted in the resource mobilization drive.
- Press briefings by DoDMA on TCF updates helped.
- Availability of response plans guided utilization of the mobilized resources on prioritized needs.

Table 5. Challenges and Recommendations – Resource Mobilization

Challenges	Recommendations
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Delayed sector assessment and response plans ● Delayed finalization of a full Flash Appeal ● Lack of clear monitoring and reporting framework for the response plan ● Vertical accountability to donors but not to Government and districts. ● Delayed funding from Treasury ● Lack of international publicity in Malawi ● Non reporting by partners and some agencies on mobilized resources and their utilization affected resource mapping. ● Limited Reporting on mobilization and full utilization of information management products (5Ws) ● By-passing of laid down structures in mobilizing and channeling assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Need for timely sectoral and interagency assessments and response plans. ● Ensure timely development of Flash Appeal ● Need for clear monitoring and reporting framework to be developed during preparedness phase as well as incorporated in the response plan. ● Application of guidelines for accountability and open reporting on resources collected from the general public and cooperating partners to promote trust which increases donations for such situations. ● Expedite the establishment of the DRM Fund as provided for in the DRM Act (2023) to facilitate timely funding and resourcing of interventions. ● Enhance international publicity and awareness of the disaster. ● Need for regular coordination forums to enhance reporting. ● Guidance and application of guidelines and regulations on reporting requirements to ensure compliance by agencies.
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3.6. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT



OVERVIEW

At the onset of the National EOC, a designated Information Management (IM) cell was set up consisting of DoDMA, Academia, NGOs, OCHA and other UN Agencies. IM experts supported the data entry, validation and analysis using the impact data reporting template. IM is key in any emergencies to ensure a well-coordinated humanitarian response. The IM products included daily sitreps, flash updates, base maps and visualization maps of impact area, and dashboards. Districts (Chikwawa, Balaka and Mangochi) with Disaster Risk Management Information System (DRMIS) used the system for data reporting and generation of dashboards. The Disaster Information Hub (DIH) was used for information sharing. All the sitreps, assessment reports, response plan, donations, response tracking matrix (5Ws), PDNA and dashboard were shared using the DIH. Additionally, a google drive was used for quick sharing of daily IM products in the National EOC.

Information and data from the village/area/district level was shared using the set DRM structures and committees. Councils provided quick situation updates using a whatsapp group and daily virtual update meetings in the EOC. These updates were used for decision making in the EOC and daily production of sitreps. Data was validated using follow up calls with the councils.

Best practices and successes

- Conducting localized sectoral rapid assessments involving GVH, TA, and District CPC/DRMCs,
- Maintaining engagement from relevant sectors.
- Accessible information sharing platforms (google drive, Disaster Information Hub).
- Availability of baseline data; Administration data and Populations statistics (NSO), school database and satellite data.
- Availability of IM response reporting tools and templates; interactive 5Ws Matrix, stock mapping.
- Information and data validation, analysis and visualization; satellite imagery, information products - sitreps, reference maps, dashboards, and infographics.

Despite the relative successes and identified best practices, some challenges were noted, and recommendations made:

The key lesson and recommendation were to have dedicated IM capacity for all emergency response clusters and DoDMA, and to strengthen district capacity, particularly for data collection and reporting. The need to enhance information management in the context of humanitarian emergencies came to light in different ways during the review.

Table 6. Challenges and Recommendations –Information Management

Challenges	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information management/sharing was very limited between clusters. For instance, - inadequate updating of resource mobilization, gaps and requirements. • Limited use of data sharing platform (DIH) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scaling up of Operational Central repository for data i.e. DRMIS, DIH and link with other databases
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate cluster reporting using DoDMA templates for sitreps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DoDMA provides reporting templates to cluster leads ahead of next cyclone season. • Having daily scheduled SoPs and information submission guidelines. Ensure cluster leads conform to these.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent data reporting affecting the proper flow of information contributing to: • Information gaps/inconsistencies • Limited data analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop IM strategy including SOP to improve data collection, analysis and visualization/infographics; • Capacity Building: (DRMO) - in terms of what information to collect, tools for reporting, focal points with right capacities in place, information flow, assessment tools - templates online. • Advocate for District IM focal persons for data management and reporting to support the DRMO (see below).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of specific focal points for IM with the right capacities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish dedicated IM focal points for all clusters and districts (from Government, UN or NGOs),

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a functioning IM working group including IM from all clusters • Make availability resources for IM activities • Capacity building at VDRMC, ADRMC and DDRMC levels i.e., familiarization and testing of IM tools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of access to updated baseline datasets 	<p>IM Data Preparedness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline data - officially request for reliable NSO (population data), Survey Department (Map layers), MoH (Hospitals), Min of Education (Schools). • Database of key infrastructure i.e. power lines, telecom towers, • Risk profile/mapping/base maps for high risk areas • Mapping of evacuation centers and routes,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall response lacked response reporting and monitoring framework: • Limited response data reporting (5W matrix) • Limited Stock mapping • Limited reporting on resource mobilization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonization of reporting templates • Standardize tools for reporting and monitoring response (5W matrix)

3.7. OVERALL RESPONSE



OVERVIEW

Tropical Cyclone Freddy displaced 659,278 people to 747 sites across the country, injured 2,186, killed 679, and left 537 individuals unaccounted for. Considering the devastation caused by the floods, on 13 March 2023 the government of Malawi declared a state of emergency in the 14 districts and 2 cities in the Southern Region.

Ahead of the cyclone making a landfall, an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was established in Blantyre on 11 March. Immediately following, a total of 11 clusters were activated by government and supported by the humanitarian community.

Through the Flood Response Plan (April – June 2023), at least **1.8 million** people were reached with life-saving assistance and life-sustaining assistance including protection and nutrition services, safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene items, education, food, and livelihood assistance, including cash as well as shelter materials and non-food items.

BEST PRACTICES AND SUCCESS

- Capacities were in place ahead of the cyclone - the EOC was activated, and staff deployed to Blantyre.
- Prepositioning of resources by some Sectors –eg Food Security, Shelter – in strategic staging points
- Timely community mobilization to support with search and rescue and food and non-food items
- Use of local structures e.g. ADRMCs (ACPC) / Village Civil Protection Committees (VCPC) for information sharing
- District level EOCs activated in some districts such as Chikwawa, Nsanje, Phalombe and Mulanje

Despite the relative successes and identified best practices, some challenges were noted, and recommendations made:

Table 7. Challenges and Recommendations – Overall Response

Challenges	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More reactive response than being proactive including operationalization of preparedness plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt SoPs which guide lead-times for response (within standard 72 hours after impact)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited access to most areas due to flooding and landslides 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put in place adequate and appropriate support structures to enable timely response (e.g., helicopters to access disconnected areas, prepositioning of items in appropriate locations)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited and inappropriate resources • Inappropriate resource distribution to special needs individuals • No standardization on timeliness and quantities in terms of resources including cash transfers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen and disseminate standards and systems that enable equitable and appropriate resource distribution according to need – all affected areas and special needs individuals, adhering to sphere/minimum standards for each cluster for distribution, assistance, and cash transfers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different and delayed targeting criteria by different agencies using different modalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonize and simplify distribution/beneficiary lists. • Review registration modalities and advocate for digitalization of systems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biased geographical resource distribution (partners tended to support areas in which they had regular programmes ongoing rather than basing on need) • Restricted repurposing of funds by partners and donors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued advocacy to donors and partners for flexibility in geographical targeting and programming.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varying coordination structures at the start of the response at community level different partners supporting at their own time and space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure continued stakeholder mapping and engagement. • Capacitate the district teams to improve district level coordination.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Build capacity of volunteers and local structures e.g., ACPCs, VCPCs to better support with coordination and response ● Identify local partners and CSOs as focal points for support at local level to support coordination, response, and resource mobilization
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Communication gaps and delays due to damages on telecommunication infrastructure leading to delayed response. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop alternative communication system working with national systems (MACRA) and other complementary systems (Emergency Telecommunications Cluster)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of appropriate information at EOC for timely decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SOPs on EOC activation, functioning and deactivation to be shared with all humanitarian actors in advance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of adequate transport system for distribution of available resources ● Lack of specialized vehicles e.g., excavators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mobilize resources for additional logistical support including specialized vehicles and equipment also lobbying with the private sector.

3.8. SEARCH AND RESCUE AND MEDICAL SUPPORT



OVERVIEW

The devastating heavy rains, floods and landslides caused substantial damage and losses to social services as well as productive and infrastructure sectors. The disaster extensively washed away and submerged houses; villages, roads, bridges, power supply and other structures which are normally used as evacuation sites within different communities. There were a lot of casualties, injuries and deaths. The initial Search, Rescue and Medical Support operations were conducted by local teams primarily consisting of the host communities. These teams were thereafter joined by deployed District and National level Cluster members from Malawi Defense Force, Ministry of Health, Malawi Police Services, Marine and the Malawi Red Cross Society. The team managed to rescue people who were trapped in different places such as trees, roofs of houses and indeed those who were isolated by landslides, water bodies and floods. It further provided First Aid, medical services and referrals for severe cases.

The vastness of the areas needing Search, Rescue and Medical Support compounded by degree of road damage and eruption of new rivers underweighted the capacity of the National Search, Rescue and Medical Support teams in terms of Human Resources and equipment. This necessitated a call for international support teams which were deployed to Malawi from a number of countries and good will organizations such as: Tanzania, Zambia, South Africa and Mercy Air.

The AAR isolated best practices, challenges, recommendations to inform better planning for similar future actions.

Best practices and successes

- The cluster registered a number of key best practices and success including: -
- Different actors were aware of their roles in Search, Rescue and Medical support.
- The availability of the International and local community support.
- Availability of Humanitarian staging area as an operation hub for search & rescue.
- Prepositioning of search and rescue team including equipment and emergency medical teams.
- Training of local boat operators in Chikwawa and Nsanje funded by MRCS.
- Assignment of people to be reading watermarks and report to the authorities.
- Good coordination between search & rescue, logistic, and emergency medical services.
- Timely setting of mobile clinics at camps.
- Timely deployment of search and rescue staff (Basic Emergency Care)
- Setting of prehospital system.
- Timely prepositioning of fuel and medical supplies

Furthermore, the AAR also identified challenges and recommendations as outlined in the table below: -

Table 8. Challenges and Recommendations – Search & Rescue & Medical Supplies

Challenges	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Untimely availability of resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of triggers to facilitate timely resources mobilization and unlock funds. • Non state actors should consider increasing their financial support to Search, Rescue, Emergency and Medical Support teams
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate and inappropriate Search, Rescue, Emergency and Medical equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government should start timely transfer of emergency fund from treasury to DODMA to allow DoDMA facilitate the procurement of response equipment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Late arrival of International SAR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely activation of international requests to facilitate deployment of International SAR • Sensitize actors on how to activate International SAR requests. • Develop a formal mutual agreement within the SADC and International SAR support. • Malawi should strive to be a member of International Search and Rescue Group • Work with Ministry of Foreign Affairs to establish International Cooperation in areas of SAR

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inadequate training of Search, Rescue and Emergency Medical teams at all levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase number of officers trained in Search, Rescue and Emergency Medical Services ● Develop a strategy for SAR capacity building which clearly identify gaps and priority areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Poor information coordination at EOC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To build capacity of Search, Rescue and Emergency Medical to test the coordination mechanism through Simulation exercise. ● Ensure the presence of the SAR cluster in the EOC and put in place a system which will act on the information from SAR teams for immediate actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Poor emergency critical and operative care system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To have a proper channel of communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strengthen the emergency critical and operative care system at all levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support District Council to effectively coordinate disasters using incident management system
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Poor health infrastructure to manage trauma 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improve health infrastructure to enable effective management of trauma patients
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Poor coordination between Health and MDF to offer emergency medical services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a framework of collaboration among MDF, MPS, MRCS and Health ● Develop a Civil Protection Military Coordination mechanism which will enable DoDMA to request deployment of military services. ● Refresh DoDMA staff and stakeholders on Civil Protection Military coordination ● DoDMA should train MDF in Civil Protection coordination and Humanitarian Principles ● Ensure that SAR and Medical support teams are made available to work with international teams
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Capsizing of boats due to high water velocity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Malawi Government through relevant MDA to procure appropriate SAR equipment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of function Helicopters and EMS to support cut off communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MDF to ensure that Helicopters are in good conditions prior to rainy season

3.9. DISPLACEMENT AND RETURNS/RESETTLEMENT



OVERVIEW

The housing sector was among the highest impacted areas with about 260,681 houses damaged or destroyed rendering an estimated 2,267,458 people affected, including 659,278 displaced who were (336,252 female; 323,026 male) and 679 killed. The displaced people were hosted

in over 600 camps across the 16 Councils while others were hosted by their relatives and the host communities.

The Malawi Government through DoDMA with support from the UN Agencies, the NGO Community, the Red Cross, private sector, the Faith community, and individual families provided various Shelters, shelter materials as well as Non-Food Items to both the displaced and the affected people. Most settlements were washed away by either flooding waters or landslides while others were declared risk settlement areas. The Malawi government through different Councils facilitated voluntary resettlement in Mulanje, Phalombe, Zomba, Chiradzulu, Chikwawa and Nsanje districts.

BEST PRACTICES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Below are some of the key best practices.

- Availability of safe evacuation sites in some districts
- Continuous camp monitoring which helped the clusters to identify gaps that assisted in resource allocation.
- Developed return-home packages/shelter kits which helped to ease camp decommissioning.
- Training of community disaster structures (ACPCs and VCPCs) on camp coordination and management
- Night verification to validate displaced populations in camps helped to reduce ghost beneficiaries.
- Supported the development of relocation plans.
- Merging of camps helped in coordination and eased logistics support to the camps.
- Integration of unaccompanied/separated children into foster homes
- Prepositioning of tents in some districts.
- Development of Urban return package guideline using cash for rentals

The table below provides some of the challenges and recommendations.

Table 9. Challenges and Recommendations – Displacement and Returns/Resettlement

Challenges	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Untimely availability of multisectoral return-home package 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each Sector should identify key items for a standard multisectoral returnee package for displaced people.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of SOP to guide decommissioning of camps for IDPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop SOPs for decommissioning of IDP sites
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited resources to implement preparedness and Prepositioning activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensify resource mobilization by engaging Cluster members to support preparedness and prepositioning activities.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent participation in cluster meetings and few stable members in the cluster 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobby for more organization to start supporting Shelter interventions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of harmonized approach to response; more new partners who are not aware of cluster approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DoDMA and the District Councils should encourage organizations to work through clusters and enhance coordination systems.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delays in the acquisition of land to support growing needs of relocating communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government to continue negotiating for idle land to be allocated to displace people for resettlement.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In adequate resources to support land compensation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource mobilization for land compensation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of enforcement to people who settle and cultivate in risk and protected areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement of the DRM Act

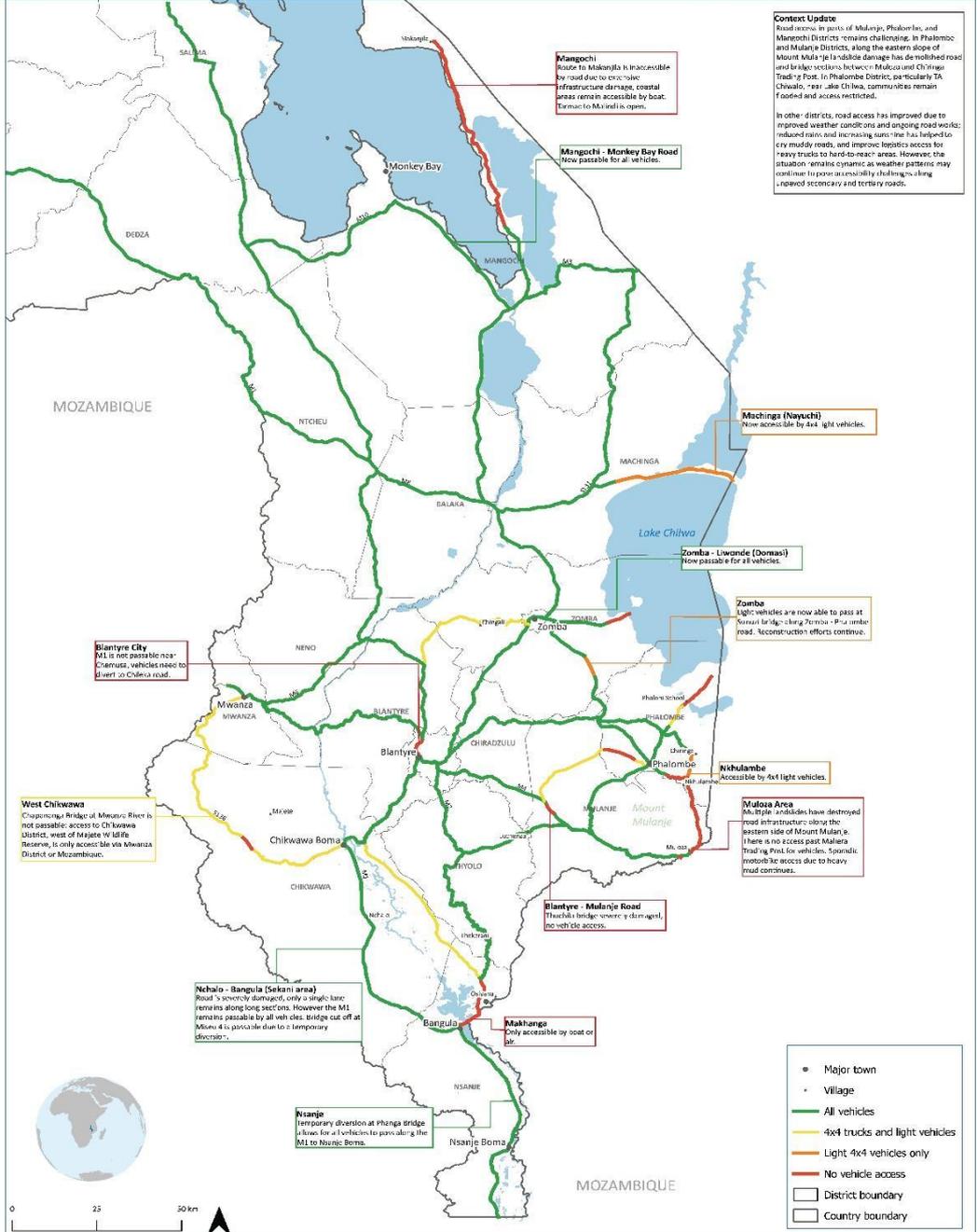
3.10. LOGISTICS AND SUPPLY CHAIN



OVERVIEW

Major roads from Blantyre were damaged by floods and landslides disrupting the delivery of essential humanitarian supplies. Access to several affected areas in Chikwawa, Mulanje, Phalombe and Zomba districts by road was impossible, with Nsanje district being completely cut off. Secondary roads throughout the region were also highly restricted, limiting the transportation of relief items within the districts. More than 44 roads were damaged, of which 16 are major roads, 17 are secondary roads, and 10 are tertiary roads. Over 40 bridges were damaged across the 16 affected councils. This led the Logistics Cluster to activate air support for humanitarian response.

Figure 3. Physical Access Constraints Map



Data Created: 17 April 2023. Contact: jessica.standford@wfp.org. Data sources: Boundaries: OCHA. Roads: ©OpenStreetMap Contributors. Road Access: WFP. Prepared by: Malawi Country Office Supply Chain Unit.

Power transmission lines (132KV and 66KV) and distribution infrastructure (poles, broken jumpers, and conductors) were also damaged. The poor road access negatively impacted the movement of supplies into the affected areas. Transport capacities needed to be increased to sustain the humanitarian supply chain. In order to facilitate easy delivery of the socio-economic services, there was a need to repair damaged roads, bridges and restore electricity supply.

Figure 4. Air Support, TCF



Due to the nature of the flooding and displacement of populations, emergency assistance such as search and rescue, medical evacuations, and delivery of critical humanitarian supplies including food, non-food items, and health supplies were expected to be provided to affected communities as soon as it was practical. Particularly in the Southern region, augmented logistics capacities were required for handling the influx of relief items and transport needs.

BEST PRACTICES AND SUCCESSES

- Conducted regular coordination meetings which helped to plan transportation, distributions, and storage of relief items.
- Availability of GPS coordinates helped effective traveling and transportation.
- Close coordination at Blantyre warehouse with Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) helped to reduce logistics complications.
- Ongoing road access mapping completed by Logistics Cluster.
- Collaboration of the MEI and the Logistics cluster
- Facilitation of duty-free imports (equipment, relief items, etc)

Challenges and recommendations

Table 10. Challenges and Recommendations – Logistics & Supply Chain

Challenges	Recommendations
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Most District Councils have inadequate warehousing or pre-positioning sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify warehouses in all disaster-prone districts for wider prepositioning of relief items. ● Support warehouse rehabilitation at district-level. ● Identify private sector actors with transport or warehouse facilities to support during disaster response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of Distribution Plans resulting in general instructions to deliver at the Council instead of the actual distribution points. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create distribution plans that specify last mile delivery locations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Capacity mapping was not well defined, there were not enough prepositioned commodities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Capacity Mapping: Map partner presence, capacities and minimum harmonized contingency stocks.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unknown road conditions that resulted in untimely delivery of relief items. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Logistics Cluster continued use and expansion of road damage mobile application, particularly under MoTPW. ● Continued involvement of engineers to assist in mapping damaged infrastructure. ● Consider having alternative transportation in areas which do not have access
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Late and/or inadequate funding/disbursement of the funds leading to delays in moving relief items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Expedite the establishment of the DRM Fund as provided for in the DRM Act (2023) to facilitate timely funding and resourcing of interventions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Capacity challenges led to delayed delivery of relief items at the airport and in the councils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Training for airport staff, DoDMA staff, districts, and local partners etc. on humanitarian logistics processes to mitigate future challenges (like issues experienced at the airport, and backlogs at the district level)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Political interference in distributions of relief items affected effectiveness of the humanitarian work (response) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sensitization engagements with politicians not to interfere in humanitarian response.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inadequate smaller trucks to reach final distribution points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support District Councils to maintain and repair damaged vehicles owned by the district and local partners. ● District Councils to submit list of local transporters to transship relief items to where large trucks cannot reach/hard to reach areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inadequate air transport to support search and rescue (SAR) teams and distribution of relief items. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintenance of the available helicopters to support air transport and SAR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Frequent virtual meetings which disrupted operations as people on the ground were glued to meetings' proceedings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clusters to coordinate and delegate amongst each other. ● Consider structuring and participation of virtual meetings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bypassing Transport and Logistics Cluster coordination and processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sensitize partners on Transport and Logistics Cluster processes and procedures. Ensure support from other Clusters to maintain proper procedure.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fuel shortage due to road cuts which delayed assessments and distribution of relief items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepositioning of immediate relief items & transport Fuel reserves: DoDMA should engage fuel providers, MDF and/or District Councils engaging local filling stations.
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3.11. CROSS CUTTING THEMES



OVERVIEW

Over 126,925 (69,809 Female, 57,116 Male) children; 234, 729 (129,101 Female, 105,628 Male) people with disabilities were affected in various ways by Tropical Cyclone Freddy. Access to protection, Early Childhood Development (ECD), Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) and other essential services (social, legal, and security) were disrupted. In addition, there was stress among the protection workforce due to increased workload. There was a need for referral pathways and complaints and feedback mechanisms for reporting cases of violence. The need for mainstreaming and addressing cross-cutting issues including protection, accountability to affected populations and transparency, gender, prevention of sex exploitation and abuse as well as people with disabilities and the elderly is key in humanitarian emergency operations. Protection of vulnerable and marginalized groups should be prioritized as rights get grossly violated by different players in emergency situations. This section highlights the best practices, challenges, and areas of improvement as well as key recommendations with regards to these cross-cutting issues in the implementation of TC Freddy humanitarian response.

BEST PRACTICES AND SUCCESSES

- Several elements have been singled out as best practices as below:
- Timely Sharing of best practices by partners during meetings ie if a partner conducted a field visit/analysis.
- Supported unaccompanied and separated children, where Cluster members worked together and shared responsibilities.
- Deployment of staff in the affected districts to support the affected population.
- The existence and activation of online protection forums; WhatsApp phones, Facebook
- Interest that was being generated by other clusters in relation to protection cluster i.e., recognition of protection issues as important issues by other clusters.

CHALLENGES, AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT AND KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

During TC Freddy emergency operations, several challenges were experienced in efforts of mainstreaming and issues of protection and accountability to affected populations and areas requiring improvement. Some key recommendations are also being put forward to improve these elements in subsequent emergency preparedness and response operations as presented in table below:

Table 11. Challenges and Recommendations – Cross Cutting Themes

Challenges	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linkage between national level and district level. Some partners could go into communities without consulting district officials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate the policy guidance (coordinate protection and social support cluster matters at district level) to cluster members.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disjoint reporting pathways at district level on protection and social support, i.e., social welfare and gender. All partners working with gender would go to gender. In Chikwawa this resulted in different sets of data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District to appoint 1 focal person on GBV, CP and GP to coordinate joint reporting. • Initiate and Implement capacity building initiative for protection partners (GBV, CP, & GP) at national, district and community structures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited technical capacity to implement protection activities in emergency responses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building of protection and social workers specifically in an emergency context.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government bureaucracy delays response and other emergency activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activate fast track mode for emergencies to ensure fast response of partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection is treated as an after-thought action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Protection Cluster should prioritize and mainstream protection issues in all clusters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback mechanism not effective and does not reach people living with disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure feedback mechanisms are inclusive of all vulnerable groups including people living with disabilities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of awareness of protection structures in provision of protection, psychosocial and recreational services and materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation of protection structures in provision of protection, psychosocial and recreational services, and materials.

3.12. TRANSITION TO EARLY RECOVERY



OVERVIEW

The devastating heavy rains and floods caused substantial damage and loss to social services, the productive and infrastructure sectors. The disaster impact was highest in the housing sector, with about 260,681 houses damaged or destroyed. The floods extensively washed away and submerged houses; swept away roads, bridges, power supply and irrigation infrastructure; damaged and washed away crops, which were at the stage of maturity. Power supply was interrupted for more than three days in Chikwawa and Nsanje districts and in some parts of Blantyre City and District.

The Malawian government, in collaboration with various humanitarian actors, responded swiftly with rescue and relief operations and saved many lives by rapidly mobilizing various forces, including to provide emergency shelters and other necessities. Various humanitarian actors provided relief and short-term recovery interventions to over 1.8 million people.

A three-month response plan was developed to provide immediate humanitarian needs to the affected people, both the displaced and in camps and those affected but not displaced. The plan also included an early recovery component whereby the affected households would be assisted to recover from the shock through rebuilding of their livelihoods.

Government instituted a Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA). The purpose of undertaking a comprehensive PDNA was to quantify the physical damages and economic losses and to estimate recovery and reconstruction costs. The assessment revealed a total disaster effect of \$506.7 million, while the total cost of recovery and reconstruction was \$680.4 million. Based on the PDNA recommendations, DoDMA, in collaboration with humanitarian actors, developed a Recovery Framework to guide recovery and reconstruction for the next 5 years.

Best Practices and Successes

- Coordinated and participatory land allocation for the TCF displaced for reconstruction of houses.
- Voluntary return and integration of the displaced households into safer host communities
- Timely undertaking and commissioning of PDNA (i.e. two weeks) to facilitate development of a recovery framework
- Robust resource mobilization efforts for recovery (construction/reconstruction of houses) by government through various initiatives (goodwill ambassadors, former presidents)
- Data collection through drones provides a clear view of the extent of disaster impact.
- Provision of cash transfers for recovery interventions, enhances economic empowerment at household level.

Table 12. Challenges and Recommendations – Transition to Early Recovery

Challenges	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decommissioning of camps combined with relocation - sites had no basic services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decommissioning strategy to be in place together with a relocation strategy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on transition to recovery not coordinated i.e camp closures not communicated to partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy, need for political will especially with duty bearers. • Decommissioning strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited involvement and engagement of the Private sector in recovery interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formalize private sector engagement in recovery interventions (i.e discount on recovery items) – Public Private Partnerships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited data management for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and affected households, good data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Government policies to enhance recovery i.e subsidies • Develop data tools for recovery planning in an efficient way and harmonize data collection tools;

management would facilitate recovery.	
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4. Conclusion/Key Messages

In conclusion, there were several themes and key messages which emerged throughout the AAR which are relevant across all the sectors and areas of work.

Perseverance. There is no time to spare and the nation cannot afford to delay in the implementation of these recommendations. While many are still reeling from the humanitarian response, recovery efforts and preparedness for the next Cyclone Season must proceed at the same time in the limited window before the next crisis is upon us.

National ownership. There is a strong governmental desire to address ongoing issues through the enactment of various aspects of the new DRM Act which will continue to shape high quality nationally owned systems. Building and sustaining national technical capacities is essential and at the core of national ownership. Partnerships with non-governmental and international communities have played a key role in supporting the government, but further reflection is needed to ensure this is institutionalized in the height of disaster responses. Humanitarian partners need to focus on accompanying national actors and avoiding establishing parallel or competing processes.

Enabling implementation. There is a shared understanding of the direction of travel required to deliver more timely, appropriate, and dignified emergency assistance, illustrated by the sheer number of recommendations in this report. In many cases best practice is understood and complemented by numerous policies, guidelines, and standard operating procedures (SOPs) that are already in place. However, these documents are often not well understood or operationalized in the complex multistakeholder environment – and require being revised, disseminated, and trained upon to enable enhanced delivery and performance.

Coordination and communication. Though understandable given the scale of TCF, the response amplified gaps in communication, coordination, and consultation processes and resulted in misunderstandings. Increased transparency, under coordination structures were laid out and adhered to, will assist in ensuring needs are met and decision-making processes are clear, trusted, and accountable. There is a need for improvement information management and sharing across all aspects of the response, which will support coordination and response efforts.

Funding. Inadequate funding has constrained the level of preparedness and prepositioning possible, but resources also need to be more effectively planned for and efficiently used to maximize their potential benefit. A DRM Fund will enable funding to be directed to areas of most need under a coherent approach across the DRM cycle.

Accountability. Amidst a backdrop of limited time, funding, and capacity, senior leadership has emphasized a need to prioritize efforts which are critical, realistic, and achievable while committing to monitoring the implementation of the AAR recommendations at national and district levels through a Monitoring Plan and AAR Implementation Task Team. Commitment is also required across ministries and organizations to embed accountability and implementation of these AAR recommendations across stakeholders.

5. Implementation and Monitoring Plan

As an observation of previous post-disaster review and reflection activities, senior leadership has acknowledged that it is critical that the implementation of key recommendations of this After-Action Review is monitored.

Three stages are set out to achieve accountability and follow up in the implementation of the recommendations:

a) Creation of validated, specific, and achievable plans

Within the existing DRM coordination structure of the Cluster System, 5month Cyclone Preparedness Plans have been prepared, technically reviewed, revised, and validated. These form the basis of the monitoring plan, for which Clusters will be held responsible for delivery.

b) Shared accountability

Under the overall coordination of DoDMA, the AAR and accompanying documents will be presented and shared with the National DRM Committee (PS-level from all relevant Ministries), the UN Country Team (Heads of UN Agencies) and Development Partners (Heads of Cooperation at in-country Missions) to ensure all relevant actors are clear of the needs, requirements, and priority efforts under implementation to over their support and guidance to their achievement.

c) Periodic Implementation Monitoring

Implementation progress of the 5m Preparedness Plans will be monitored by an *AAR Implementation Task Force*, under DoDMA's Coordination Cluster. Plans timelines will be monitored using pre-identified Milestones, with an opportunity for Clusters to provide justification of delays. Key points will be as follows:

- **End of September** – Initial review of progress via an ICCG meeting with Cluster Leads and Co-Leads under DoDMA's Director of Preparedness and Response; *Get a sense of progress and key challenges.*
- **End of October** – HCT-level progress update in preparation for National DRM Committee.
- **Early November** – High-level progress update to National DRM Committee; *Sufficient level of authority and time remaining to adjust course to ensure key measures are undertaken ahead of cyclone season → Decide if any "Delivery Labs" are required to unblock any key issues with inter-ministerial stakeholders.*
- **Early December** – HCT-level progress update to DoDMA Commissioner and UN Resident Coordinator; *Final push for critical remaining areas in last month before cyclone season.*

d) Strategic Reflection Point

At the end of this period, stakeholders will reflect on the process above and what worked and didn't work to increase implementation effectiveness. We will apply these learnings to the overall After-Action Review Action Plan (3yrs) to understand further momentum towards implementing the broader range of recommendations after the initial Cyclone Preparedness Phase.

Initial Discussion with DoDMA on Monitoring:

- Share with the Director (and internal DoDMA)
- ICCG for verification and finalisation
- Share with District Councils for review (3 days)
- Submit to RC/Commissioner – final sign-off
- HOMs/HOCs/UNCT meeting (to ensure that DPs are aware of the key recommendations)
- National DRM Committee (LS AAR, LSR, CP, TCF AAR) **Weds, 6 September 2023**

Monitoring Plan

- Utilizing templates of the existing Preparedness Plan
- Update with justifications
- September - ICCG monitoring – submission
- October - HCT monitoring – RC/Commissioner
- Early November – update to National DRM Committee
- December – HCT monitoring – RC/Commissioner (last push before Cyclone Season)

Follow-Up And Next Steps

- Share with the Director (and internal DoDMA)
- ICCG for verification and finalisation
- Share with District Councils for review (3 days)
- Submit to RC/Commissioner – final sign-off.
- HOMs/HOCs/UNCT meeting (to ensure that DPs are aware of the key recommendations)
- National DRM Committee (LS AAR, LSR, CP, TCF AAR) **Weds, 6 September 2023**

Monitoring Plan

- Utilizing templates of the existing Preparedness Plan
- Update with justifications
- September - ICCG monitoring – submission
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- December – HCT monitoring – RC/Commissioner (last push before Cyclone Season)

6. Annex

6.1. Participants of the AAR

Of the 165 participants at the National AAR event in Blantyre, 127 filled out an online registration form from which we can analyze participation as follows:

- 46 women (37%)
- 68 government officials (53%), with 39 central government and 29 district officials
- 32 UN staff, representing 8 UN Agencies
- 19 NGO / Red Cross Movement participants, representing 10 organizations.
- 65 participants from Lilongwe (50%), including central government, headquarters, and country offices, with 15 from Blantyre and the remaining 46 working in district offices.

Table 13. List of AAR participants

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	DISTRICT	ORGANIZATION NAME	ORGANISATION TYPE	POSITION	GENDER	CLUSTER(S)
Vincent	Lubani	Lilongwe	ADRA Malawi	NGO/Red Cross	Business and Partnerships Development Officer	MALE	Health Cluster
Dennis	Matekenya	Lilongwe	ADRA Malawi	NGO/Red Cross	Country Director	MALE	Coordination
Albright	Mchemba	Lilongwe	ADRA Malawi	NGO/Red Cross	Emergency Response Manager	MALE	Food security
Aninde	Migogo	Lilongwe	ADRA Malawi	NGO/Red Cross	Protection Officer	FEMALE	Protection and Social Protection
Blessings	Kantema	Balaka	Balaka District Council	District Government	DRMO - Disaster Risk Management Officer	MALE	Coordination
Elizabeth	Masanje	Blantyre City	Blantyre City Council	District Government	Parks Supervisor	FEMALE	Coordination
Cosmas	Mangoka	Blantyre District	Blantyre District Council	District Government	DRMO - Disaster Risk Management Officer	MALE	Coordination
Willard	Yobe	Blantyre District	Blantyre District Council	District Government	Lands Officer	MALE	Coordination
Dyna	Khonde	Blantyre City	Catholic Relief Services	INGO	Program Manager	FEMALE	Shelter
Humphrey	Magalasi	Chikwawa	Chikwawa District Council	District Government	DRMO - Disaster Risk Management Officer	MALE	Coordination
Henderson	Kaumi	Chiradzulu	Chiradzulu District Council	District Government	Director of Planning and Development	MALE	Coordination

Tommy	Chimpanzi	Nsanje	Concern Worldwide	INGO	Area Manager-Southern Region	MALE	Coordination
Sanna Nolsoee	Djurhuus	Lilongwe	Danish Red Cross in Malawi	NGO/Red Cross	Anticipatory Action and IM Delegate	FEMALE	Cross-Cutting
Amos	Mtonya	Blantyre City	DCCMS	Central Government	Deputy Director	MALE	Early Warning
Blessings	Muwalo	Lilongwe	Department of Nutrition	Central Government	Deputy Director	MALE	Nutrition
Andrew	Banda	Lilongwe	DoDMA	Central Government	Disaster Focal Person	MALE	Search and Rescue
Osman	Chaola	Lilongwe	DoDMA	Central Government	Chief Accountant	MALE	Coordination
Davie	Chibani	Lilongwe	DoDMA	Central Government	Resilience Officer	MALE	Food security
Peter	Chimangeni	Lilongwe	DoDMA	Central Government	Director of Resilience and Recovery	MALE	Coordination
Moses	Chimpepo	Lilongwe	DoDMA	Central Government	Director of Preparedness and Response	MALE	Coordination
Christopher	Herbert	Lilongwe	DoDMA	Central Government	Under secretary	MALE	Coordination
Ephod	Kachigwada	Lilongwe	DoDMA	Central Government	Principal Disaster Response Officer	MALE	
Charles	Kalemba	Lilongwe	DoDMA	Central Government	DoDMA Commissioner	MALE	Coordination
Ellen	Maliano	Lilongwe	DoDMA	Central Government	Procurement Officer	FEMALE	Coordination
Fidelis	Mandalazi	Lilongwe	DoDMA	Central Government	Systems Analyst (ICT Officer)	MALE	Coordination
Annie	Mapulanga	Lilongwe	DoDMA	Central Government	Principal Economist	FEMALE	Coordination
Fyawupi	Mwafongo	Lilongwe	DoDMA	Central Government	Deputy Director for Disaster Response	MALE	Coordination
Madalitso	Mwale	Lilongwe	DoDMA	Central Government	Chief Disaster Response Officer	MALE	Coordination
Hastings	Mwanjoka	Lilongwe	DoDMA	Central Government	Deputy Director Resilience	MALE	Coordination
Wezi Grace	Ndhlovu	Lilongwe	DoDMA	Central Government	Principal Systems analyst	FEMALE	Coordination
Chimwemwe	Njoloma	Lilongwe	DoDMA	Central Government	Information Management Officer	FEMALE	Information Management
Innocenciah	Phiri	Lilongwe	DoDMA	Central Government	Public relations officer	FEMALE	
Zione	Viyazyi	Lilongwe	DoDMA	Central Government	DRMO - Disaster Risk Management Officer	FEMALE	Coordination
Thomas	Moyo	Chikwawa	Eagles Relief and Development Programme	NGO/Red Cross	Project Coordinator	MALE	WASH
Bessie	Msusa	Lilongwe	Economic Planning and Development	Central Government	Chief Economist	FEMALE	Protection and Social Protection
Chrispin	Chavula	Blantyre City	Habitat for Humanity Malawi	NGO/Red Cross	Advocacy and Communication Coordinator	MALE	Shelter
Annie	Maduka	Blantyre City	Habitat for Humanity Malawi	NGO/Red Cross	Disaster Risk Reduction and Response Coordinator	FEMALE	Shelter
Enisa	Sande	Lilongwe	Habitat for Humanity Malawi	NGO/Red Cross	MEAL Coordinator	FEMALE	Shelter

Chifundo	Zulu	Lilongwe	Habitat for Humanity Malawi	NGO/Red Cross	Resource Development and Partnership Coordinator	MALE	Shelter
Javaid	Iqbal	Lilongwe	iMMAP France	Contractor	Senior Information Management Officer	MALE	Coordination
Ronald	Kamwendo	Lilongwe	iMMAP France	Contractor	Information Management Officer	MALE	Coordination
Frank	Changa	Lilongwe	Independent Consultant	Volunteer	Data Analytics	MALE	Information Management
Ray	Misomali	Lilongwe	Independent Consultant	Independent Consultant	DRM Consultant	MALE	
Innocent	Chalera	Blantyre City	International Organisation for Migration	UN	National Shelter Officer	MALE	Shelter
Gloria	Newa	Blantyre District	International Organisation for Migration	UN	National CCCM Officer	FEMALE	CCCM
Valerio	Carafa	Blantyre District	IsraAID	INGO	Emergency Operations Officer	MALE	Logistics Cluster
Nisarg	Kalaiya	Phalombe	IsraAID	INGO	Head of Mission	MALE	
Lucia	Chidalengwa	Machinga	Machinga District Council	District Government	District Commissioner	FEMALE	
Daniel	Mandala	Machinga	Machinga District Council	District Government	DRMO - Disaster Risk Management Officer	MALE	Coordination
McPherson	Mwakhwawa	Machinga	Machinga District Council	District Government	Director of Planning and Development	MALE	Coordination
Cossam	Chingancheke	Blantyre City	MACRA - Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority	Central Government	QUALITY ASSURANCE MANAGER	MALE	Information Management
Micious	Matsitsa	Blantyre City	MACRA - Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority	Central Government	Spectrum Monitoring Manager	MALE	Logistics Cluster
Emma	Ngosi	Monkey Bay	Malawi Police Service	Central Government	Marine Police In-charge	FEMALE	Search and Rescue
Happy	Chitani	Mulanje	Malawi Red Cross Society	NGO/Red Cross	District Coordinator	MALE	Shelter
Nelia	Kuchilunda	Nsanje	Malawi Red Cross Society	NGO/Red Cross	District Coordinator	FEMALE	Shelter
Wonderful	Kunje	Lilongwe	Malawi Red Cross Society	NGO/Red Cross	Data Analyst	MALE	Shelter
Francis	Kadzokoya	Mangochi	Mangochi District Council	District Government	DRMO - Disaster Risk Management Officer	MALE	Coordination
Elian	Majamanda	Mangochi	Mangochi District Council	District Government	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer	FEMALE	Coordination
Bernard	Chirwa	Lilongwe	MDF	Central Government	Pilot, Malawi Air Force	MALE	

Fostino	Gundaphiri	Lilongwe	MDF	Central Government	CEO	MALE	Security
Owen	Mlotha	Lilongwe	MDF	Central Government	Operations Officer	MALE	Security
Fainess	Mphanda	Lilongwe	MDF	Central Government	Operations Officer	MALE	Security
Watson	Pangani	Lilongwe	MDF	Central Government	Operations Officer	MALE	Security
Boyd	Mwafulirwa	Lilongwe	Ministry of Agriculture	Central Government	Chief Economist	MALE	Agriculture
Shanever	Chamba	Lilongwe	Ministry of Education	Central Government	School Health and Nutrition Officer	MALE	Education
Misheck	Mdambo	Lilongwe	Ministry of Gender Community Development and Social Welfare	Central Government	Social Worker	MALE	Protection and Social Protection
Allone	Ganizani	Lilongwe	Ministry of Health	Central Government	Health Cluster Lead	MALE	Health Cluster
Dr Yankho	Luwe	Lilongwe	Ministry of Health	Central Government	Deputy Director	FEMALE	Health Cluster
Patricia	Araru	Lilongwe	Ministry of Health	Central Government	Health Cluster Coordinator	FEMALE	Health Cluster
Benjamin	Msowoya	Lilongwe	Ministry of Homeland Security	Central Government	Search and Rescue Cluster Lead	MALE	Search and Rescue
Emily	Mzembe	Lilongwe	Ministry of Lands (Dept of Housing)	Central Government	Housing Officer	FEMALE	Shelter
Kondwani	Kondwani	Lilongwe	Ministry of Transport and Public Works	Central Government	Under Secretary	MALE	Logistics Cluster
David	Gondwe	Mulanje	Mulanje District Council	District Government	District Commissioner	MALE	Coordination
Maria	Joseph	Mulanje	Mulanje District Council	District Government	DRMO - Disaster Risk Management Officer	FEMALE	
Morson	Magombo	Mulanje	Mulanje District Council	District Government	Director of Planning and Development	MALE	Coordination
Emmanual	Sohaya	Mwanza	Mwanza District council	District Government	Director of Planning and Development	MALE	Coordination
Ivy	Cham'mudzi	Mwanza	Mwanza District council	District Government	DRMO - Disaster Risk Management Officer	FEMALE	Coordination
Martha	Sineta	Mwanza	Mwanza District Council	District Government	District Commissioner	FEMALE	Coordination
Charles	Lomoni	Neno	Neno District Council	District Government	Director of Planning and Development	MALE	Coordination
BRIGHTONE	MPHINGA	Neno	Neno District Council	District Government	DRMO - Disaster Risk Management Officer	MALE	DCPC
Dominic	Mwandira	Nsanje	Nsanje District Council	District Government	District Commissioner	MALE	
Mphatso	Nedson	Nsanje	Nsanje District Council	District Government	DRMO - Disaster Risk Management Officer	MALE	Coordination
Regina	Chinyanga	Lilongwe	OCHA	UN	Humanitarian Affairs Officer	FEMALE	Coordination
Ayub	Gitonga	Lilongwe	OCHA	UN	Information Management Officer	MALE	Coordination
Pauline	Mwaniki	Blantyre City	OCHA	UN	Humanitarian Affairs Officer	FEMALE	Coordination
Brown	Khongo	Neno	Partners In Health	NGO/Red Cross	Secondary Care Program Manager	MALE	Health Cluster

Florence	Harawa	Phalombe	Phalombe District Council	District Government	DRMO - Disaster Risk Management Officer	FEMALE	Coordination
Bakali	Maulidi	Phalombe	Phalombe District Council	District Government	Director of Administration	MALE	Coordination
Grace	Choo	Lilongwe	Public Health Institute of Malawi	Central Government	Epidemiology Officer	FEMALE	Health Cluster
Earnest	Kaphuka	Thyolo	Thyolo district council	District Government	Director of Planning and Development	MALE	Coordination
Faith	Khamula	Thyolo	Thyolo district council	District Government	DRMO - Disaster Risk Management Officer	FEMALE	Coordination
Elestina	Mmame	Thyolo	Thyolo district council	District Government	Director of Administration	FEMALE	Logistics Cluster
Rebecca	Adda-Dontoh	Lilongwe	UN RCO	UN	UN Resident Coordinator	FEMALE	Coordination
Heidi	Carrubba	Lilongwe	UN RCO	UN	Humanitarian and Resilience Adviser	FEMALE	Coordination
Lydia	Fuliwa	Lilongwe	UN RCO	UN	PSEA Specialist	FEMALE	Protection and Social Protection
Evelyn	Udedi	Lilongwe	UN RCO	UN	Health & Wellness Coordinator	FEMALE	Health Cluster
Penjani	Banda	Nsanje	UN WFP	UN	Programme Associate	MALE	
Mathias	Funsanani	Lilongwe	UN WFP	UN	Programme Policy Officer - Cash Transfers	MALE	Cash Working Group
Lazarus	Gonani	Lilongwe	UN WFP	UN	VAM Officer	MALE	Food security
Alinafe	Kamdonyo	Chikwawa	UN WFP	UN	Programme Policy Officer	FEMALE	
Richard	Kaunga	Chikwawa	UN WFP	UN	Programme Associate	MALE	Food security
Davie	Mbvundula	Blantyre City	UN WFP	UN	Supply Chain Officer	MALE	Logistics Cluster
Sandra	Mukiwa	Mulanje	UN WFP	UN	Programme Officer	FEMALE	Food security
Mbachi	Munthali	Lilongwe	UN WFP	UN	National Preparedness Officer	FEMALE	Logistics Cluster
Eunice	Nyirenda	Lilongwe	UN WFP	UN	Food Security Cluster Co-Lead	FEMALE	Food security
Paul	Turnball	Lilongwe	UN WFP	UN	Country Director and Representative	MALE	Food security
Ranjith	George	Lilongwe	UNDP	UN	Team Lead - DRMIS	MALE	Coordination
Mphanda	Kabwazi	Lilongwe	UNDP	UN	DRM Program Analyst	FEMALE	Recovery
Harriet	Adong	Blantyre City	UNFPA	UN	GBV Sub Cluster Coordinator	FEMALE	Gender
Olive	Makuwira	Nsanje	UNFPA	UN	TO Health System Strengthening/ Humanitarian	FEMALE	Health Cluster
Amilu	Chilingulo	Blantyre City	UNICEF	UN	Education Cluster Coordinator	MALE	Education
Brenda	Chimenya	Blantyre City	UNICEF	UN	WASH Cluster IM Specialist	FEMALE	WASH
Ward	Jacobs	Blantyre City	UNICEF	UN	Emergency Coordinator	MALE	Coordination
Mkuwanda	Mtimuni	Blantyre City	UNICEF	UN	Information Management Consultant	MALE	Nutrition

Ida	Munthali	Blantyre District	UNICEF	UN	Nutrition Emergency Coordinator	FEMALE	Nutrition
Martin	Nkuna	Lilongwe	UNICEF	UN	Child Protection Officer	MALE	Protection and Social Protection
Montse	Pejuan	Lilongwe	UNICEF	UN	Social Policy Specialist	FEMALE	Cash Working Group
Chirwa	Kumbukani	Lilongwe	USAID	Donor	Senior Technical Advisor	MALE	
Gertrude	Chapotera	Lilongwe	World Health Organization	UN	Country Health Emergencies Preparedness, IHR and Response Officer	FEMALE	Health Cluster
Nelly	Yatich	Lilongwe	World Health Organization	UN	EPR Flagship Coordinator/Incident Manager	FEMALE	Coordination
McNoel	Bonongwe	Chikwawa	World Vision Malawi	UN	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer	MALE	
Mark	Allan	Chikwawa	World Vision Malawi	Ingo	Project Coordinator	MALE	Food security
Burnnet	Khulumbo	Zomba City	Zomba City Assembly	District Government	Resilience and Disaster Risk Reduction Manager	MALE	Coordination
Precious	Kantsitsi	Zomba Rural	Zomba District Council	District Government	Director of Planning and Development	MALE	Coordination
Walusungu	Mwafulirwa	Zomba Rural	Zomba District Council	District Government	DRMO - Disaster Risk Management Officer	MALE	Coordination
Osman	Bwanali	Zomba Rural	Zomba District Council	District Government	DC (Representative)	MALE	Coordination

6.2. Agenda of the AAR



Department of Disaster Management Affairs

AGENDA DRAFT

TROPICAL CYCLONE FREDDY AFTER ACTION REVIEW (AAR) WORKSHOP

Thursday 10th to Friday 11th August 2023

Venue TBC, Blantyre

PURPOSE: The aim of this TCF AAR is to improve future emergency preparedness and response by reflecting on the 2023 TCF Response to identify what worked well and recommendations for areas for improvement.

OUTPUTS: Three key outputs are expected from the TCF AAR

- (i) Detailed TCF AAR Report
- (ii) AAR Action Plan (2+ yrs), annexing various cluster/theme/district AARs
- (iii) Immediate 2024 Cyclone Season Preparedness Workplan (5m priorities)

DAY 1 – 10 th August, 2023 - AGENDA		
Time	Activity	Facilitator(s)
8:00-8:30	Participants Registration	DoDMA
8:30-9:00	Opening Prayer & Participants Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All participants introduce themselves • Reflect on 1 proudest achievement/success of the response 	Director Moses
9:00-9:30	Opening Remarks by DoDMA & RCO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting the tone of openness & implementation 	DoDMA Commissioner & UN Resident Coordinator
9:30-10:00	Timeline Recollection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive recollection of key events on timelines as crisis unfolded 	RCO Heidi Carrubba
10:00-10:30	Response Summary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint presentation of key response facts and figures 	DoDMA Fyawupi & OCHA Regina <i>(Annie prep presentation)</i>
10:30-11:00	Group photo & Health Break	
11:00-11:30	What have we already learned? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight recommendations on previously completed AARs/reviews (10mins each) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ray Misomali - Independent Review 2. ADRA - NGO Review in Lilongwe OR Chikwawa District AAR 	MC: Fyawupi Ray Misomali ADRA Dr. Dennis M..
11:30-13:00 1.5hrs	Thematic Breakout Groups: Phase 1 <u>Phase 1: Reflections</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What best practices should we scale-up & repeat in the future? 2. What challenges did we face and areas for improvement? 3. Review existing thematic recommendations. 	Eunice <i>(Heidi to help)</i> Facilitation pairs (Gov + UN/NGO) + Notetaker

	4. Add new or missing recommendations to complete list. 5. Reflect: Have the recommendations addressed key listed challenges?			
Group 1: District-level Coordination How can we ensure District-level EOCs are empowered, supported, informed, and coordinated with all response efforts? Thokozire (Chikwawa DPD) Tommy (Concern) Madalitso (DoDMA) Chair & Notetaker: group decides	Group 2: National-level Coordination How can the government's incident command system be strengthened, including coordination with humanitarian actors across the response? Moses (DoDMA) Heidi (RCO)	Group 3: Cross-cutting themes How can we enhance the protection of vulnerable populations during the response and ensure accountability to affected populations? Mirrium (MoG) Lydia (RCO) MacBain (YONECO)	Group 4: Preparedness and early warning How can we improve contingency planning to ensure preparedness measures are in place in advanced? How can we ensure early warning systems translate into early actions? Fedson (DoDMA) Lucy-DCCMS Director Ray (Independent)	
Group 5: Search and rescue & medical support How can we more effectively respond to life-threatening incidents? How can we enhance coordination between civilian and military actors? Emma (MPS-Marine) Chisomo (MRCS)	Group 6: Response activities How can we deliver a more timely and effective response to those in most need? Did we utilise the resources available, including volunteers, effectively? Regina (OCHA) Ephod (DoDMA) Matthias (CWG – WFP)	Group 7: Logistics & Supply Chain - Access, transport networks, procurements Mbachi (WFP) Ellen (DoDMA)	Group 8: Resource mobilisation, utilization, and reporting How do we maximize resource mobilization across sources jointly, credibly, and accountably while ensuring accountability in utilization and reporting? Did the current resourcing model work effectively? Fyawupi (DoDMA) Pauline (OCHA)	
Group 9: Information Management How can we enhance information sharing and data management to ensure accurate and timely information is available for decision-makers and humanitarian responders? Peter (DoDMA) Ayub (OCHA) Annie (DoDMA)	Group 10: Needs Assessment How can we ensure an accurate and timely understanding of needs at various stages of the response? Lazarus & Daniel (WFP) Davie/TBC (DoDMA)	Group 11: Displacement and returns/resettlement How can we better support populations during their displacement and ensure voluntary, dignified, safe, and supported returns and resettlement? Zione (DoDMA) Emily (MoL&H) Cecilia (MRCS)	Group 12: Transitioning to recovery When and how do we effectively transition to recovery activities to ensure populations can begin rebuilding their lives? Hastings (DoDMA) Mphanda (UNDP) Bessie (PRSP)	
13:00-14:00	Lunch break			
14:00-15:00 <i>1hr</i>	Thematic Breakout Groups: Phase 2 Phase 2: Turning recommendations into an Action Plan Taking each recommendation one at a time, 1. Detail the <u>activities</u> needed to achieve the recommendation 2. Assess the length of <u>time</u> required to carryout activities (5m, 1yr, 2yr+) 3. Consider who is best placed to be <u>responsible/lead</u> each activity 4. Order the activities by <u>priority</u> (criteria: criticality, impact, difficulty level, existing funding, partner commitment, etc)		Facilitation pairs (Gov + UN/NGO) + Notetaker Same facilitators	
15:00-16:30 <i>1.5hrs</i>	Plenary Session 1: presentations of thematic recommendations 6 thematic presentations 15min per presentation (10m presentation focused on recommendations + 5m Q&A)		DD Fyawupi	
16:30-16:45	Wrap-Up and Concluding Remarks for Day 1		DoDMA & RCO	
17:00-21:00	Working dinners / evening for group facilitators & notetakers		At venue	

DAY 2 – Friday, 11 th August, 2023 - AGENDA		
Time	Activity	Facilitator(s)
8:00-8:30	Participants Registration	
8:30-9:00	Welcome and Recap of Day 1	MRCS
9:00-10:30 <i>1.5hrs</i>	Plenary Session 2 (con't): presentations of thematic recommendations 6 thematic presentations 15min per presentation (10m presentation focused on recommendations + 5m Q&A)	DD Hastings
10:30-11:00	Health Break	
11:00-11:30 <i>30mins</i>	Prioritization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants are provided with stickers and asked to vote on recommendations Responsibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cluster Leads & Co-Leads with WGs identify thematic actions to take forward 	Eunice
11:30-12:15 <i>45mins</i>	Duty of Care & Self-Care	Evelyn (RCO) & TBC (Health Cluster)
12:15-13:15	Lunch break	
13:15-13:30	Cyclone Freddy Documentary (10mins)	Chippie
13:30-16:15 <i>2hrs45min</i>	2023 Cyclone Preparedness Work Planning Focused discussions on prioritised immediate actions to be undertaken in next 5-month preparedness period before the cyclone season. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-5 immediate actions taken from both key thematic priorities and key cluster AAR recommendations to be detailed in a workplan Step 1: (1.5hrs) By Cluster / Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detail specific activities needed to achieve this recommendation/goal Set specific milestones and timelines over coming 5m period Step 2: (1hr15min) Rotating Information Exchanges between Districts & Clusters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts relate to national-level priorities and cascade actions to the district-level 	Madalitso (DoDMA) & Regina (RCO) Cluster Leads & Co-Leads and Working Groups
16:15-17:00 <i>45mins</i>	Leadership Dialogue: our collective way forward and final thoughts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity for participants to raise specific questions to senior leadership level Discuss stakeholder commitments ensure monitoring and accountability to implement preparedness workplans. 	Conversation: DoDMA Commissioner, UN Resident Coordinator
17:00	End of programme	

6.3. Links to AAR Workplans

Cluster 5 Month Workplan [Here](#)

Thematic 5 Year Workplan [Here](#)