

# THE DANISH EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND

## ALERT NOTE

### Section A: Basic information

Organisation:	<i>Ulandshjælp Fra Folk til Folk - Humana People to People (UFF-Humana)</i>
Title of alert:	<b>Rapid response to heavy rains and large-scale flooding in Malawi</b>
Type of crisis:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>rapid onset humanitarian crisis (please fill out section B)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>slow onset humanitarian crisis (please fill out section C)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>spike in protracted humanitarian crisis (please fill out section D)</i>

### Section B: Rapid onset humanitarian crisis:

#### **b.1 Where is the crisis? Describe the areas affected.**

The identified crisis is unfolding in Malawi, where heavy rain and an extended wet spell are currently affecting most parts of the country. According to the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA), the main districts affected so far are: Blantyre City, Blantyre District, Chikwawa, Chiradzulu, Dedza, Karonga, Lilongwe District, Machinga, Mangochi, Mchinji, Mulanje, Mwanza, Neno, Phalombe, Zomba City, and Zomba District. The situation is particularly severe in southern and low-lying districts, where saturated soils and rising river levels have led to significant flooding. At the same time, continued rainfall is expected in the lakeshore areas of Salima, Mangochi, Nkhotakota districts, and in 13 southern districts of Malawi, indicating a high risk of further deterioration. The intervention will target Chikwawa, Machinga, and Phalombe, where humanitarian needs remain largely unmet.

#### **b.2 What is the nature of the crisis?**

The crisis is driven by persistent heavy rainfall associated with low-pressure systems and north-easterly winds. These conditions have resulted in flooding and localized landslides, destroying homes, crops, and livestock, as well as loss of human life. Rising water levels have also rendered roads and bridges impassable, disrupting access to essential services, including healthcare and agricultural support. Livelihood activities have been significantly affected, particularly for rural households dependent on subsistence farming.

#### **b.3 What information do you have about the situation? What is the source of that information?**

We gather information from both international and national official sources, closely monitoring ongoing updates. UFF-Humana local partner, DAPP Malawi, receives regular communications from the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) and is an active member of the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG), chaired by DoDMA and co-chaired by the World Food Programme. DAPP Malawi also participates in all coordination meetings organized by DoDMA and the Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services (DCCMS) to receive updates and early warnings. In addition, they are in continuous communication with local stakeholders through an ICCG WhatsApp group, where real-time information is shared by the Commissioner for Disaster Management Affairs. DAPP Malawi also has access to direct, real-time local information through its established presence across the three targeted districts, where it is implementing community-based health interventions.

According to DoDMA, 9,598 households have been affected so far, including 128 displaced households. 13 deaths and 35 injuries have been reported, and 12 evacuation camps have been established across six councils. In Chikwawa, 1,565 households are affected, with three camps in TA Maseya. In Machinga, 1,471 households are affected while in Phalombe, 1,112 individuals are displaced and sheltered at Malambwe Evacuation Centre in TA Nkhulambe.

The Government of Malawi and the World Food Programme (WFP) are currently the only actors responding to the emergency, primarily providing food assistance in Zomba district. However,

significant gaps remain in other affected areas, highlighting the need for additional actors to support the response, as officially requested by DoDMA. Coordination mechanisms are already in place, and WFP has expressed its availability to support other organisations with warehousing and transport for food delivery. (Links to relevant sources attached)

**b.3.1. Describe as specific as possible when the crisis has started.**

The current crisis in Malawi began in mid-March 2026, following a period of intensified rainfall across the country. On 14th March 2026, the Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services (DCCMS) issued an alert warning of heavy rains expected to affect most parts of Malawi, particularly the southern, central, and lakeshore regions. Subsequently, on 15th March 2026, the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) officially issued an Activation Notice triggering Tier 1 forecast-informed readiness under the National Anticipatory Action Framework. This activation followed updated forecasts from DCCMS indicating that rainfall thresholds for flood risk had been met. In response, a series of coordination and update meetings have been convened by DCCMS and DoDMA, leading to the activation of national clusters and preparedness measures, particularly in flood-prone districts. On 20 March 2026, ECHO issued an Emergency Flash highlighting the flooding in Malawi, confirming the severity of the crisis and the need for urgent humanitarian response. (Official documentation attached)

**b.3.2. How could DERF grants make a difference for the crisis affected population?**

Urgent and targeted assistance is required to meet the immediate needs of flood-affected populations. The partners are appealing for a rapid response in Chikwawa, Machinga, and Phalombe districts, where significant gaps persist and access constraints continue to limit the delivery of life-saving assistance. The intervention will target approximately 4,148 households across the three districts. Many affected households have been displaced and have lost access to basic necessities. Immediate support is required in the form of food items, blankets, kitchen utensils, and emergency shelter materials. This assistance will address urgent survival needs and help restore a minimum level of safety and dignity for affected populations.

The project will also support early recovery interventions aimed at preventing further deterioration of food security. Flood-affected households have lost crops and productive assets, severely compromising their food security. The intervention will support the rapid restoration of household food production by providing short-cycle, climate-resilient inputs such as sweet potato vines and vegetable seeds, along with small livestock support.

In addition, the project will support the installation of three automated riverline gauges in the Mwanza and Ruo rivers. These rivers significantly influence flooding patterns in the affected districts. Currently, the Department of Water Resources relies on manual data transmission, which delays early warning alerts. The proposed system will provide real-time water level data, strengthening early warning capacity and reducing communities' exposure to further flood risks during the ongoing rainy season.

DERF support is critical to address existing gaps, alleviate suffering, and ensure that vulnerable communities receive timely and life-saving assistance.