

Alert

Malawi

Severe Drought Response

Geneva, 23 August 2016

1. Brief description of the emergency and impact

In 2015 and 2016, Malawi experienced the El Niño weather phenomenon, manifested by poor distribution of rainfall and prolonged dry conditions, which resulted in delayed planting and poor crop development. The Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) report of June 2016 showed that a minimum of 6.5 million people (39% of Malawi's population) will not be able to meet their annual food requirements during the 2016/17 consumption period, in 24 of the Malawi's 28 Districts. This protracted drought was combined with floods in some areas of Malawi, which have also increased the risk of water-borne disease outbreaks.

The most critically affected Districts are the following: Balaka, Chikwawa, Kasungu, Nkhota-kota, Dedza, Dowa, Mchinji, Mulanje, Nsanje, Phalombe, Thyolo, Mangochi, Neno, Ntcheu, Salima, Mzimba, Rumphu, Ntchisi, Chiradzulu, Machinga, Mwanza, Blantyre, Lilongwe and Zomba.

2. Why is an ACT response needed?

The affected populations will not be able to meet all their food requirement needs, even with the use of coping strategies. Saving lives and building long term resilience will therefore be critical in this situation to build capacity for these populations so they can stand on their own in the future. While the national and international response through government, UN and non-governmental channels will in some way help to meet the demands, there are important gaps that still will not be covered, hence the need for ACT members to respond to complement national and international response measures.

3. National and international response

On 12th of April 2016, His Excellency President of Malawi Professor Arthur Peter Mutharika, declared the ongoing severe drought a national disaster requiring external support. The government has since allocated USD 48,630,137 for maize purchases in the 2016/17 Budget. In addition, the World Food Programme (WFP) has launched a Joint Emergency Food Assistance Programme (JEFAP) to assist vulnerable households with relief food items. However, the magnitude of the problem will require other agencies to complement government and WFP efforts. The government has also called upon well-wishers to assist the people in Malawi, especially those in the worst affected areas.

4. ACT Alliance response

The ACT Forum in Malawi is planning to respond to the crisis by issuing an ACT Appeal. ACT members the Churches Action in Relief and Development (CARD) and the Evangelical Lutheran Development

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The ACT Alliance secretariat is certified with the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership's 2010 HAP Standard for accountability and quality management.

Service (ELDS) will be implementing the appeal, due to their presence in the affected areas and their technical expertise in humanitarian response and long-term resilience programming.

5. Planned activities

Priority needs to be addressed are Food distribution and cash transfer, WASH interventions, enhanced Food Security through improved agricultural practices and Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction to 3000 vulnerable households in the three Districts (Chikwawa, Nsanje and Balaka).

6. Constraints

The main challenge is funding for implementation of the humanitarian response programme.

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