



IOM Zimbabwe Flood Response

19 December 2007 to 10 January 2008

Issue 1, 15 January 2008

Summary

Relentless rains started Wednesday, 12th December 2007 and pounded at Zimbabwe's North-East and Eastern Districts for weeks. Severe flooding has left destruction affecting at least 8,000 people.

The heavy rains have affected Zimbabwe, Zambia and Mozambique and at least 16,000 people since they started in December 2007. In Zimbabwe, the eastern border communities to Mozambique are most affected with at least 3,000 people who have lost their homes destroyed by the floods in Muzarabani district and another estimated 5,000 people affected in Chipinge district. Households who have been dependent on monthly food aid from the World Food Programme have seen their only food stocks destroyed and have now had to depend on households within the communities who managed somehow to salvage their own stocks. In addition, crops have been washed away will have long-term repercussions in areas where they may have once had the chance for a promising harvest.

There has also been an increase in reported diseases ranging from malaria, diarrhea and skin diseases due to bad sanitation, and stagnant water. This has been compounded by people's inability to seek medical assistance as bridges have been washed away, clinics are too far and there is simply no access to many of the communities affected by the flooding. As people have lost all their belongings and have no where else to go, they have been forced to create makeshift homes whilst waiting for the floods to subside. One family was reportedly living in a house made of tree branches as their home was destroyed, while the rains continue.

Families have had to survive off the generosity of those who may be slightly more fortunate. OCHA is currently facilitating a coordinated response between UN agencies, IOM, NGOs and government including the Civil Protection Unit (CPU) to have joint assessments and assistance provided in all areas in need. The needs are still great as the rains continue and the number of people affected steadily increase as more areas are assessed and as consequences grow.

To date IOM has assisted in excess of 1000 households and distributed 652 tarpaulins, 418 blankets, 2620 mosquito nets, 7350 aquatabs and 200 NFI packs, as well as drugs and condoms. IOM continues provide assistance of non food items and is monitoring the situation carefully by participating in assessments, focusing also on areas where flooding has not yet occurred but rains are becoming excessive. Should these areas also lead to a level where human life is threatened, or otherwise require an emergency response, IOM will be ready to assist.

The following report is a more detailed reflection of the flood affected areas and IOM's response to date.

MUZARABANI

In Muzarabani District, the rains started on 12 December. When villages awoke on the 13th they found the rivers (Hoya and Musengezi) full and water gushing towards the villages from all directions. By 17 December, after almost incessant rains, houses began collapsing and some of the villagers quickly realized that they needed to seek shelter on higher grounds, whilst others were confused as to which direction to move due to the large volume of water in the area. Most villagers sought refuge at a primary school nearby; others were forced to remain near their destroyed homesteads as they could not cross the rivers to get to the primary school.

IOM identified 220 affected households in Chadereka and is providing assistance. All identifications, verifications and distributions were done with the ward level civil protection unit committee to ensure that only eligible people were being assisted. Areas such as Kairezi, Hoya and Chadereka are inaccessible by road due to flooding and damaged bridges.

IOM Assistance Provided In Muzarabani Chadereka 19-27 December

Item	Quantity	Households
Tarpaulin	412	217
Blankets	418	220
Mosquito Nets	420	212
Aqua tabs*	7350	217

*The assistance was provided with the district health professional who demonstrated the proper use.



Health

IEC material and health education material on diarrhea (500) and malaria (500) were distributed 19th December. 35 Acquatabs per family were distributed for domestic consumption of water, though continued supply will be needed, chloride of lime was also given to treat areas with possible water contamination. The local clinic staff reported an increase in the number of diarrhea cases and anti-diarrheal drugs were distributed including I.V. fluids, tablets and oral dehydration solution.

Muzarabani



Photos © IOM 2007 Left: Christmas day for a family in Muzarabani after the floods. Right: Conducive breeding ground for mosquitoes at the homestead.

CHIPINGE

In Chipinge District the floods started on the afternoon of 27th of December 2007 according to the community. The water from Save River flowed towards their homes. At around 23:00 hours people started moving out of their homes but it was too late.

The most affected areas identified by IOM are Masimbe, Maronga, Chibuwe, Tongogara Refugee Camp, Farm 25, and Gumira. According to villagers the last reported floods of the same magnitude in this area occurred in 1947.

Subsequent assessments have shown that affected people are moving towards Maronga and Chibuwe areas. Areas inaccessible due to the destruction are Masimba, Gumira, Mahenye, Chinyamukwakwa and Mabee.

Boreholes and other water sources have been destroyed or submerged and are likely contaminated.

IOM Assistance provided in Chipinge 2 – 5 January

Location	Item	Households
Gumira	tarpaulins, mosquito nets, blankets	24
Chibuwe	mosquito nets, blankets	342
Masimbe	tarpaulins, mosquito nets, blankets	275
Maronga	tarpaulins, mosquito nets, blankets	65
Total		706

Beyond this, 1,200 mosquito nets were donated to Tongogara Refugee camp and on 10 January IOM distributed an additional 1000 mosquito nets, 200 NFI packs and 240 tarpaulins across affected areas in Chipinge.

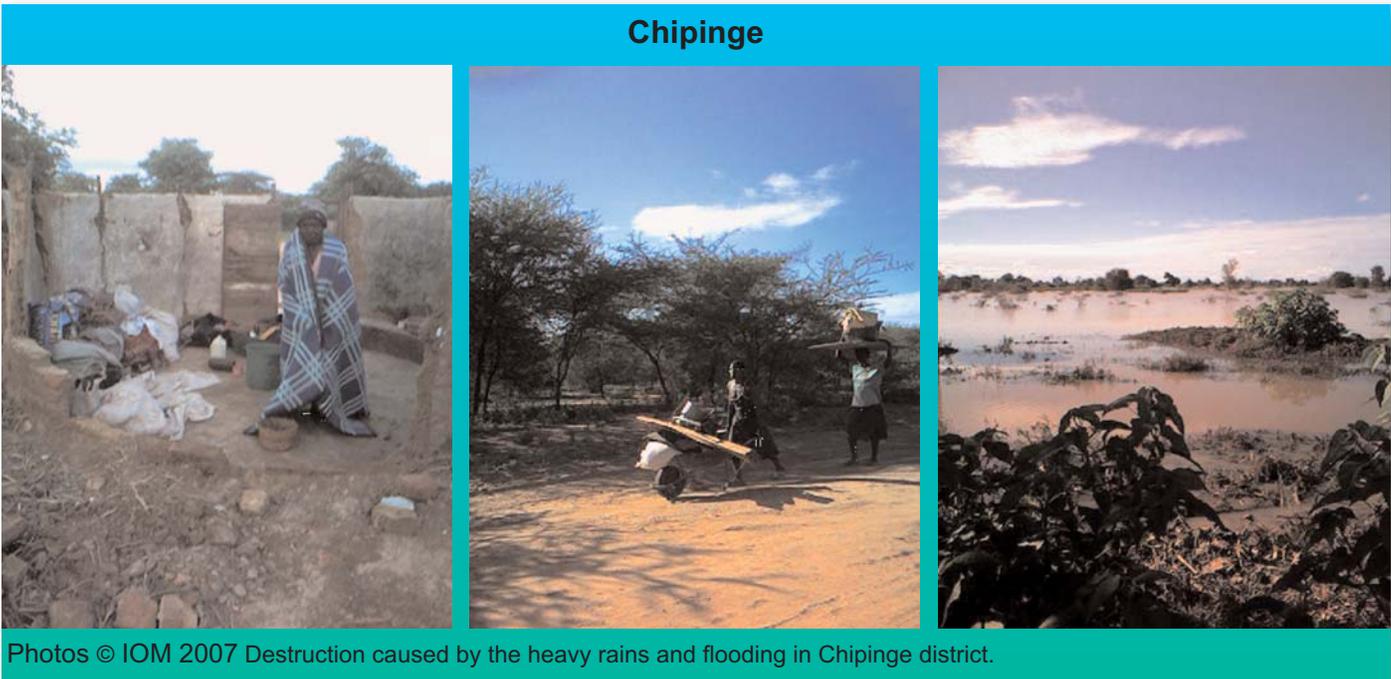
Health

At the Tongogara Refugee Camp water seeped through the toilets and houses and including the clinic. Malaria, acute respiratory infection and skin diseases especially among women and children are being reported. However, the situation was said to be under control as they have adequate drugs with support from MSF (Doctors without Borders).

The major challenges at Farm 25 are provision of safe water supply and sanitation as the toilet collapsed and water sources are contaminated. No diseases have been reported thus far.

The Chibwe clinic is manned by two nurses. Assessments showed that diarrhea and malaria cases have increased. Cases reported as from the 27th of December 2007, include: Under 5 years - 40 cases of malaria, 10 cases of diarrhea; Above 5 years - 137 cases of malaria, 16 cases of diarrhea. According to these figures malaria has exceeded their threshold of 50 per week. Other diseases which have been reported are sand-worms, skin diseases and septic sores. In view of this, IOM assisted in providing drugs to the clinic. In Masimbe 2500 condoms were distributed.

The Gumira Clinic reported 209 cases of malaria. They anticipate outbreaks of dysentery, malaria and possibly cholera, in view of which, IOM has provided drugs to the clinic.



Rapid Assessment

Rapid assessments were conducted at Tongogara refugee camp, Masimbe, Maronga and Gumira. Most of the shelters have collapsed as they were made out of pole and dagga. Sanitary facilities collapsed and those that are still intact could collapse anytime and also require disinfections like chloride of lime. Food is still a major challenge as storage rooms were submerged into water. Diseases like malaria, skin infection and diarrhea are reported and there is potential for an increase.

It is anticipated that outbreaks of cholera, dysentery, malaria, diarrhea and skin diseases could occur. Monitoring of affected areas is in place and areas not previously reach to assess health risks are currently being surveyed.

HARARE

Epworth

The IOM team carried out a rapid assessment on 8 January 2008. Focus-groups discussions were held using the Rapid Assessment Tool, and interviews with key informants that included local leaders and storm victims were conducted. The following were the key findings:

Most of the buildings that collapsed were sub-standard extensions to the core structures. Most damage took place in the informal settlements. Those that completely collapsed were built using un-burnt earth bricks-under pieces of asbestos weighed done with stones, and the affected house-holds are either renting accommodation elsewhere or families have split and are accommodated by others and relatives. IOM is planning to provide tarpaulins to the affected families shortly.

12 people were confirmed to have suffered injuries by the falling debris, while 25 households lost part of their food stocks which they had either bought or received as food aid, through moisture and soil contamination. More houses continue to fall.

Water sources remained intact due to very stable underground soils and protection. Many toilets had their rain-ward side walls destroyed. The eco-san system was spared because of the design save for a few that sunk in resulting in the affected households having to use facilities that belonged to neighbors.

Caledonia

The team conducted focus group discussions using the Rapid Assessment Tool and also conducted interviews with local leaders, peer educators and victims. The following were the findings:

Approximately 219 households are estimated to have had their houses damaged by the incessant heavy rains. The damage was mostly on rain-ward side of buildings leaving roofs precariously hanging. This was compounded by sub-standard buildings. A few houses completely collapsed forcing the occupants to seek shelter from other families. There were 2 confirmed injuries as a result of the storm. The damage was concentrated in section 2 and 3 mostly because of weak and unstable soils. Two households had already completed rebuilding their houses. IOM is planning to distribute tarpaulins to the remaining affected households in greatest need.

Almost all toilets sank and the people are now using the bush or fields. Shallow wells are now overflowing. One of the boreholes is not working forcing people to collect water from shallow wells.

Health

The IOM nurse visited Caledonia on Tuesday 8th January 2008 to assess the health situation. It is reported that the community is facing problems in accessing health care at the nearest health centre due to a shortage of drugs to treat the diarrhea cases. Skin diseases are on the increase with scabies mainly affecting children. Meanwhile, IOM has trained community health volunteers who are assisting with health education in the area. IOM sent its Mobile Clinic to Caledonia on Friday 11th January 2008 for follow-up.

Chiredzi, Malipati, Chikwalakwala

The IOM team was in Chiredzi, Malipati and Chikwalakwala from 4 to 7 January. The area was found not to have been affected by floods as was previously reported. The communities expressed their anticipation of good rains in order to yield a good harvest.

Mt Darwin

Date is an upland area and no floods are expected, however, the Date School Headmaster's house had its roof swept away by the winds. One pupils' toilet block collapsed because of the continuous rains. In the surrounding communities, it was reported that 6 houses were completely collapsed and 8 houses cracked.

Chigango was found to have no flooding in the community. The only damage from the rains is the Secondary School toilet block that collapsed.

Gungwa is an area located in the low lying area of Dande Valley bordering Mozambique. The area can only be accessed by 4X4 trucks, access is further hampered by damage to bridges due to heavy rains.

Kachidza village reported that 7 huts collapsed and 6 huts cracked as a result of heavy rains. However, due to the originally poor condition of the collapsed structures, those affected were already part of IOM's shelter programme, whereby they are already engaged in construction of transitional houses.

The Mt Darwin area has received heavy rains in some areas which affected a few households, however, there was no need for further humanitarian assistance.

Mwenezi

According to district authorities, the rains that Mwenezi received were not necessarily extra ordinary as they have received similar quantities before. They were not aware of any flooding having occurred in the district except for cases of streams, river and tributaries overflowing. No casualties were reported in the district from the rain. There were however isolated incidences that occurred prior and during the raining season and the assessment team reported the following:

The collapse of a Mucheni bridge occurred. The bridge was still under construction and was washed away. Its now impossible for cars or carts to pass through.

A block of toilets at Rufaro School (ward 4) sunk. Although, there was no one at the school to confirm when the toilets had sunk, it looked highly probable that they sunk during this rainy season.

The roof of a maternity home and nurse's house at Mbudzi clinic was blown off the 25th November 2007. Roofs for 2 classroom blocks and a teacher's house at Chemvana School (ward 7) were blown off on the 4th October 2007. Many stationery-text and exercise books were also destroyed in the process in this storm. Mwenezana Estates came earlier to assess the damage and the school head was hopeful that they could get some form of assistance.

Gutu

Several farmers had their planted fields submerged in water. The IOM assessment team noted that the most affected farmers were those that had settled in wet lands which were quick to saturate. However, the general crop situation was pathetic as the crops had stunted growth and showed signs of nutrient deficiency due to the incessant rains. Some farmers were already opting to replant but could not do so as the rains continued to fall.

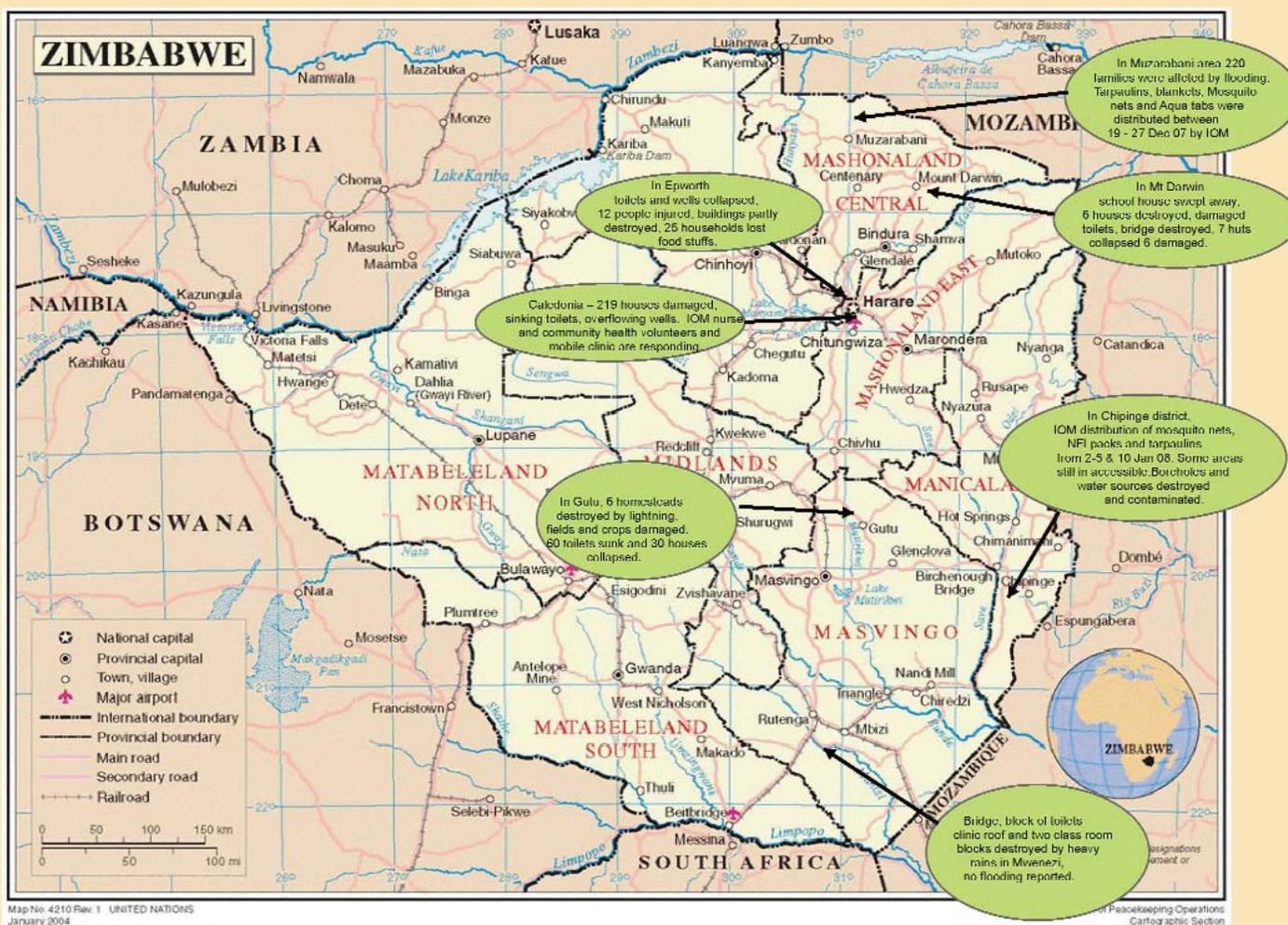
Six families had their houses destroyed by lightning. The assessment team managed one such family in ward 29 which had its two houses destroyed by lightning in October. Fire destroyed all their food stocks, clothing and household utensils. The other areas could not be visited due to their inaccessibility.

Toilets structures were sinking with houses and granaries falling off. The councilor for Ward 29 reported that at least 60 toilets had sunk and that about 10 granaries and around 30 houses had collapsed owing to the continued wet spell. Although it is indubitable that the rains triggered the crumbling of structures, it was also evident that there was poor citing and workmanship in the construction of the various structures that were collapsing.

If Gutu continues to receive rainfall then the situation may deteriorate further; more toilets and houses are likely to collapse and the crops may be a complete right off.

Based on findings from the assessment team and reports received from the local authorities there seem not to be an emergency situation in Mwenezi although the situation in Gutu may degenerate into a disaster if it continues to rain.

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The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration

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