

Press release: UK sends humanitarian experts ahead of Mozambique cyclone

The UK is sending humanitarian experts to assess the impact of an expected cyclone in Mozambique which could leave hundreds of thousands of people without food and shelter.

Specialist humanitarian advisers, from the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), are expected to deploy from London this evening (14 March). The experts will assess what UK aid is needed to support people affected by the cyclone and plan and co-ordinate relief efforts.

The Met Office predicts that flash flooding, large waves and extremely high-speed winds pose a danger to life and could also significantly damage buildings and other infrastructure. The cyclone is expected to make landfall this evening (14 March), and thousands of Mozambicans have already been evacuated for their own safety.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

We are sending UK aid experts to Mozambique to be our eyes and ears on the ground and to make sure we're ready to rapidly increase our response if needed.

UK aid is already helping people and families affected by the heavy rains, as we had pre-positioned items including tents, buckets for clean water and basic cooking items. We are ready to offer further help to anyone in need.

My thoughts remain with those people who have already been affected by the recent extreme weather, and anyone who has lost loved ones.

UK aid prepositioned vital relief items in Mozambique to support any response to a humanitarian emergency – some of which have now already been given to people in need – including:

- 9,000 hygiene kits, which include basic hygiene items such as soap, toothbrushes and buckets to carry clean water;
- 7,000 tool kits, which include shovels, saws and other items to help repair homes and clear debris;
- 6,000 family kits and 1,000 latrine kits, which include solar lamps, water purifiers and toilet paper;
- 5,000 shelter kits, 10,000 tarpaulins and 600 plastic rolls to provide emergency shelter to those that have been made homeless; and
- 1,573 family tents and 15 community tents.

In addition to the humanitarian aid items, the UK is supporting the World Food Programme (WFP) to help 130,000 people feed themselves for two weeks.

WFP will distribute emergency food and food vouchers for people to use at local markets.

The cyclone is also expected to hit Malawi, which has been suffering from severe flooding over the last five days, leaving at least 56 people dead, and may also affect Zimbabwe. The START Fund, which is managed by a group of NGOs and to which DFID is the biggest donor, has allocated £400,000, to enable Trocaire and HelpAge International to meet immediate needs such as clean water and shelter in Malawi.

Tomorrow in Mozambique, a UK government team is leading a meeting of donors and other countries, alongside the Government of Mozambique, to help co-ordinate the response.

Notes to editors

- DFID has provided £764,000 to the World Food Programme to provide food and food vouchers. This is an allocation from DFID Mozambique's annual budget for 2018/19.
- DFID provided approximately £1.5 million from the 2018 Mozambique bilateral budget to preposition relief items in warehouses of the Mozambique National Institute for Disaster Management.
- DFID is the largest donor to the Start Fund. In 2018, we committed an additional £37.5m over three years

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