



PRESS RELEASE

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Thousands of people in southern Africa still face impacted water supplies in wake of tropical storm Ana – WATERAID

More than two weeks after tropical storm Ana hit Madagascar, Mozambique and Malawi, hundreds of thousands of people are still struggling with access to safe, clean water, as the storm damaged boreholes, sanitation and other facilities.

Restoring these facilities in the aftermath of the storm is vital to prevent the outbreak of water borne diseases such as cholera, WaterAid said.

In Malawi alone, many face an increased risk of disease outbreaks, having to walk for miles for safe water or drinking expensive bottled water. Tropical storm Ana impacted or destroyed an estimated 1,000 boreholes and twenty larger water supply facilities, which at least 500,000 people depend on. It also damaged close to 80,000 hectares of farmland.

In Mozambique, where the storm mainly hit in the provinces Zambezia, Nampula and Tete and flooded over 70,000 hectares of land, water systems were also impacted. In Zambezia alone, some 40,000 people were affected. Sanitation and water resources were contaminated or completely destroyed in homes, schools and health facilities as sanitation and water systems collapsed.

Madagascar was hit by tropical storm Ana, mainly affecting water systems in the capital, and last weekend by cyclone Batsirai, which impacted vulnerable communities in the southeast of the country.

WaterAid is responding in the aftermath of storm Ana through the provision of emergency water, sanitation and hygiene supplies, to help prevent the spread of disease. It also works to restore impacted water and sanitation facilities, and will run awareness raising campaigns in communities.

With climate change driving more erratic weather events, including heavy rains and flooding, it is paramount new facilities for water, sanitation and hygiene are set up in a sustainable way that can withstand the impacts of the climate crisis, WaterAid said.

“It is vital people have access to water and sanitation, no matter what the weather”, said Mercy Masoo, country director of WaterAid in Malawi. “Storm Ana has

impacted that security for hundreds of thousands of people in Malawi alone, erasing some of the progress that was made over the past years. We can't let that happen again with future climate shocks."

The newly established Water and Sanitation Ministry in Malawi earlier this week warned populations living around rivers to refrain from settling or cultivating crops and to be alert for flooded waterways.

WaterAid's Regional Programme Manager Elijah Adera, said: "The destruction of water and sanitation infrastructure in homes, schools, health care facilities and other public spaces increases the risk of water borne diseases.

"When a disaster of this magnitude strikes, affected populations urgently need access to clean and safe water, sanitation facilities and hygiene supplies. Especially for women and girls, who are usually hardest hit in disasters.

"This immediate support helps to mitigate or even prevent further disaster caused by disease."

Storm Ana swept across Madagascar and Mozambique, killing dozens of people before it hit Malawi. WaterAid Mozambique is working with a partner in Zambezia province to help prevent the spread of diseases like cholera. In Madagascar, WaterAid has been providing clean water and hygiene kits to people who had to flee their homes in the wake of storm Ana.

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Notes to Editors:

WaterAid

WaterAid is working to make clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene normal for everyone, everywhere within a generation. The international not-for-profit organisation works in 28 countries to change the lives of the poorest and most marginalised people. Since 1981, WaterAid has reached 28 million people with clean water and nearly 29 million people with decent toilets. For more information, visit www.wateraid.org, follow @WaterAidUK or @WaterAidPress on Twitter, or find WaterAid UK on Facebook at www.facebook.com/wateraid.

- 771 million people in the world – one in ten – do not have clean water close to home.^[1]

^[1] WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) *Progress on drinking water, sanitation and hygiene: 2017 update and SDG Baselines*

- 1.7 billion people in the world – more than one in five – do not have a decent toilet of their own.^[2]
- Around 290,000 children under five die every year from diarrhoeal diseases caused by poor water and sanitation. That's more than 800 children a day, or one child every two minutes.^[3]
- Every £1 invested in water and toilets returns an average of £4 in increased productivity.^[4]
- Just £15 can provide one person with clean water.^[5]

^[2] WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) *Progress on drinking water, sanitation and hygiene: 2017 update and SDG Baselines*

^[3] Prüss-Ustün et al. (2014) and The Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (2018)

^[4] World Health organization (2012) Global costs and benefits of drinking-water supply and sanitation interventions to reach the MDG target and universal coverage

^[5] www.wateraid.org