

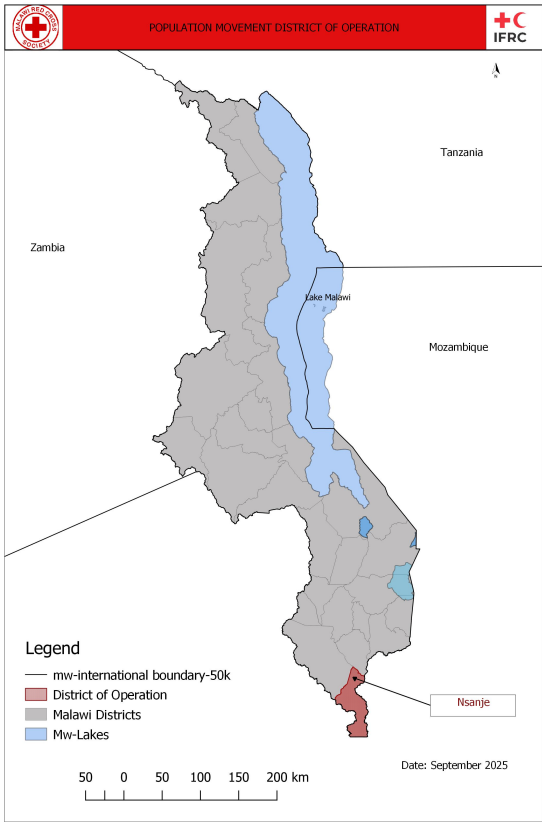


MRCS staff and volunteers responding in Nsanje District

Appeal: MDRMW022	Total DREF Allocation: CHF 499,942	Crisis Category: Yellow	Hazard: Population Movement
Glide Number: -	People Affected: 7,456 people	People Targeted: 14,877 people	People Assisted: 18,623 people
Event Onset: Slow	Operation Start Date: 11-02-2025	Operational End Date: 30-09-2025	Total Operating Timeframe: 7 months
Targeted Regions: Southern Region			

The DREF operation was supported by the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Description of the Event



District of operation

Date when the trigger was met

29-01-2025

What happened, where and when?

1. Background

Following the post-election unrest in Mozambique, Malawi hosted 7,456 asylum seekers across Nsanje, Dedza, Chikwawa, Mwanza, Mulanje, and Dzaleka beginning in December 2024. The influx followed political instability and violence that forced Mozambican citizens to seek refuge in Malawi.

On 27 February 2025, Mozambique’s Minister of Home Security led a delegation to Malawi to meet with government officials and discuss plans for a voluntary repatriation process. The two governments agreed that asylum seekers willing to return should be allowed to do so under a coordinated and safe process.

2. Repatriation Process

A joint registration exercise was conducted for asylum seekers who expressed willingness to return to Mozambique. The Mozambican government provided vehicles to transport voluntary returnees to the Shire River Dock, where they were ferried across the river by speedboats.

The repatriation process began on 28 February 2025 and concluded on 13 March, during which 7,076 registered Mozambicans were repatriated. Despite this achievement, the operation faced challenges, including high Shire River water levels caused by heavy rains and flooding, logistical constraints, and reluctance among some asylum seekers due to ongoing security concerns in Mozambique.

Between 13 March and 30 April 2025, the Government of Malawi undertook various activities to facilitate the closure of the Nyamithuthu Camp, marking the end of the repatriation phase.

3. Remaining Population and Refugee Status Determination

While a majority of asylum seekers returned to Mozambique, a number remained unwilling to do so. Many of those who stayed cited



fears for their safety, particularly individuals with political affiliations who feared persecution upon return. Others reported trauma from earlier violence, including assaults, arson attacks, and property loss.

As of 26 April 2025, 336 households (671 individuals) remained registered as Mozambican asylum seekers at Nyamithuthu Camp. On 27 April, the Department for Refugees (DfR) conducted a Refugee Status Determination (RSD) exercise to assess eligibility for refugee status. Of the 268 individuals targeted for interviews, 221 participated, but their claims were found to lack credibility. Most applicants failed to provide consistent or verifiable information about their origins or experiences. Consequently, all 221 individuals were recommended for denial of refugee status. The Government of Malawi concluded that the remaining asylum seekers did not qualify as persons of concern requiring protection.

4. Camp Closure:

Following the RSD outcomes, Nyamithuthu Camp was officially closed by the Government of Malawi on 30 April 2025. During the process, it was observed that the Mozambican authorities repatriated not only asylum seekers linked to the 2024 unrest but also other Mozambican nationals who opted to return.

Despite ongoing reconciliation efforts, reports of insecurity and violent protests in Mozambique persisted, suggesting that new asylum inflows into Malawi could continue in the future.

5. Post-Closure Humanitarian Response

In response to the camp closure and its effects on host communities, the Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS), with support from the IFRC Harare Cluster, submitted an operations update in May 2025. The update requested approval for additional activities aimed at rehabilitating affected host communities, focusing on Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) interventions in schools and nearby villages. Following the approval, a WASH assessment was carried out between 20 and 25 June 2025. The assessment found that key sanitation activities such as solarization of water systems, desludging, and latrine maintenance could not be completed before the DREF operation's official closure in August 2025. This revealed a gap between the planned interventions and the achievable implementation timeframe.

6. Impact on Host Communities

The arrival and temporary settlement of asylum seekers placed significant strain on host communities and public infrastructure. Local villages lacked sufficient capacity to provide essential health services such as first aid, mental health support, and epidemic prevention awareness. This increased vulnerability to potential health crises.

Access to safe water remained limited, as asylum seekers relied heavily on boreholes in host communities. These boreholes were later damaged when tensions escalated after the announcement that none of the remaining asylum seekers qualified for refugee protection. Pipes, roads, and pedestals were destroyed or filled with mud, further disrupting water access.

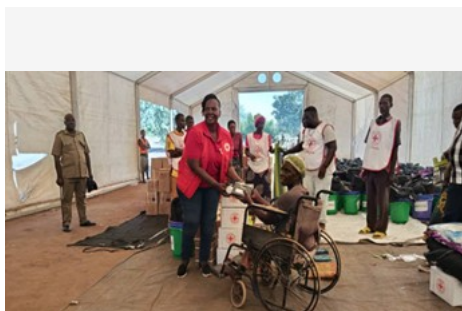
In the education sector, children of asylum seekers were integrated into three nearby schools, which became overcrowded. The heavy use of school latrines resulted in deterioration and filling of sanitation facilities, with two schools now requiring urgent rehabilitation. Despite repeated requests from the Department for Refugees, these sanitation challenges remained unresolved due to competing priorities among humanitarian actors.

7. Key Observations and Outstanding Needs

- The repatriation process demonstrated strong collaboration between the Governments of Malawi and Mozambique, but logistical challenges hindered efficiency.
- The lack of sustainable WASH infrastructure in host communities highlighted the need for longer-term recovery support beyond camp closure.
- Health and sanitation systems in affected areas remained overstretched, increasing the risk of disease outbreaks, particularly cholera.
- Rehabilitation of damaged boreholes and latrines, along with continued hygiene promotion, was urgently required to restore community resilience.



DG-ECHO Field Visit to Nsanje District Council 16.7.25



Relief distribution to Asylum seekers



MRCS NDRT & stakeholders teams engaging with communities and assessing needs



Asylum seekers in Nyamithuthu
Refugee camp collecting water

Scope and Scale

The displacement crisis that followed the October 2024 presidential elections in Mozambique led to the arrival of 7,456 asylum seekers across several districts in Malawi, with Nyamithuthu Camp experiencing the highest concentration. Driven by political instability and protection-related concerns, many asylum seekers reported experiences of violence, trauma, and loss of property. Between February and April 2025, a voluntary repatriation exercise, jointly undertaken by the governments of Malawi and Mozambique, successfully returned 7,076 individuals. Despite logistical challenges, including high water levels on the Shire River and uncertainty surrounding reception arrangements, the operation was completed. However, some returnees later returned to Malawi, citing inadequate shelter and essential services upon arrival in Mozambique.

During and after the repatriation process, the remaining asylum seekers at Nyamithuthu Camp placed immense pressure on nearby villages and public systems. Host communities lacked the capacity to respond effectively to health-related needs, especially in First Aid and Mental Health support. Risk communication and understanding of epidemic risks were limited, leaving these communities vulnerable in an area known for recurrent cholera outbreaks. The overreliance on local boreholes by asylum seekers led to their eventual damage; pipes, rods, and pedestals were destroyed or buried in mud after tensions escalated following the denial of refugee status. These actions rendered critical water sources unusable for surrounding residents.

Schools near the camp were equally strained, as asylum seeker children were integrated into local classrooms. The influx led to overcrowding and overuse of sanitation facilities, with latrines in two of the three schools becoming filled and severely degraded. Despite consistent appeals from the Department for Refugees, humanitarian actors were unable to respond to sanitation challenges due to competing operational priorities. By the time all humanitarian support was withdrawn and the camp officially closed, urgent action was needed to rehabilitate essential school infrastructure, restore safe water systems, and strengthen community health capacity. These measures were critical to preventing disease outbreaks and ensuring long-term resilience, especially as Nyamithuthu had historically served as a host site during recurring displacement waves from Mozambique.

Source Information

Source Name	Source Link
1. Field Report	https://malawiredcross-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/stembo_redcross_mw/EZjQgcj4tRBGgOw84GR4gkQBg9rMCh52eixsBiMYM9B_Dg?e=5aw3CQ
2. Appeal to support Nyamithuthu	https://malawiredcross-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/stembo_redcross_mw/ESOlCj6dMwpKj6b43h0KS7MBzvfB4xCP6KRuCOlvikRe9w?e=6fltSu



National Society Actions

Have the National Society conducted any intervention additionally to those part of this DREF Operation?	Yes
Please provide a brief description of those additional activities	To address the acute food insecurity faced by asylum seekers at Nyamithuthu camp, the Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS), in partnership with the World Food Programme (WFP), delivered a one-time food distribution targeting all households. This intervention was critical, as food access had emerged as a major challenge for the displaced population, threatening their health, dignity, and stability. Through this collaboration, MRCS distributed 25kg of maize per household, reaching a total of 3,500 households. The timely provision of staple food helped alleviate immediate hunger, supported nutritional needs especially for children and lactating mothers and reinforced MRCS's commitment to safeguarding vulnerable communities beyond its core support from IFRC.

IFRC Network Actions Related To The Current Event

Secretariat	IFRC has an established office in Malawi and is supported by the Harare Country Cluster Delegation. The Office in Malawi has one technical staff supporting Cholera under the Country support Platform. The cluster office under the leadership of the Head of delegation has technical and support team that has provided Technical and Strategic guidance to the National Society on this response development and will continue its role thereafter.
Participating National Societies	The Danish Red Cross, Swiss Red Cross, and Belgian Red Cross were Partner National Societies (PNSs) that worked bilaterally with the Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) in country. They provided technical support on how to approach the response and were part of movement coordination platforms where information was shared with members.

ICRC Actions Related To The Current Event

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) implemented its mandate through the MRCS and, through ongoing program support to the National Society, provided Restoring Family Link services, such as free phone calls and tracing for unaccompanied children.
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Other Actors Actions Related To The Current Event

Government has requested international assistance	Yes
National authorities	The following Government agencies were active and led the response. The Department for Refugees (DfR) coordinated and oversaw the interventions, including asylum seeker registration, relocation, and settlement management. The Malawi Defense Force (MDF) provided transportation support for relocating asylum seekers to the Nyamithuthu resettlement camp. The Malawi Immigration Department assisted with the registration and verification of asylum seekers. The Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) managed the emergency response, including the provision and coordination of food and shelter. The Ministry of Health (MoH) conducted mobile health outreach services, particularly targeting pregnant women and children under five. Regarding security, initiatives were implemented to enhance safety and reduce security concerns resulting from overcrowding, with the police tasked with providing protection for the asylum seekers. The DfR, in collaboration with UNHCR, coordinated the actions of other actors, updated partner positions and activities, and supported the gap analysis for further action. The Department for Refugees, together with UNHCR, led support efforts in both refugee settlements,, where various partners provided different forms of assistance.
UN or other actors	The different UN agencies were on the ground providing various forms of support across several pillars. Details of the assistance provided as of January were available in the Malawi situational reference reports. UNHCR provided tents, non-food items, and support for protection services. The agency also assisted in coordination and logistics for the relocation of asylum seekers. The World Food Programme (WFP) distributed food aid consisting of 25 kilograms of maize per household and provided one-time cash assistance of MWK 25,000 per household. WFP worked with the Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) as an implementing partner in distributing food and cash to 3,500 asylum seeker households on a once-off basis. UNICEF supported Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) services, provided child protection support, and contributed to education programs. The World Health Organization (WHO) supplied medical materials and provided public health support throughout the response.

Are there major coordination mechanism in place?

There were 3 coordination mechanisms established for the response; one at the national level, district level and another at the camp level. The operation was implemented in close collaboration with the Nsanje District Council.

The operation was coordinated by the Department for Refugees (DfR), which worked hand in hand with the Nsanje District Council hosting the asylum seekers. With support from UNHCR, the DfR activated joint coordination efforts for the emergency response to Mozambican asylum seekers in Malawi. These efforts included identifying land for resettlement, screening and registering asylum seekers, transporting them from other camps to the resettlement centre, coordinating the actions of other actors, updating the 5Ws, and conducting gap analyses for further action.

Several strategic meetings were held involving humanitarian partners and government lead agencies. On January 14, NGO humanitarian organisations held a stakeholder breakfast meeting to discuss ways of strengthening national-level coordination.

From the Movement partners' side, the Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS), through a senior management visit to Nyamithuthu, assessed the situation and confirmed the existing gaps in humanitarian needs while engaging with other actors on the ground. On January 27, MRCS conducted a partners' call and provided an update on the Go platform.

Needs (Gaps) Identified



Shelter Housing And Settlements

As of 12 March 2025, a total of 336 households (671 people) were residing in Nyamithuthu Camp and had received a range of non-food items (NFIs) borrowed from the National Society's warehouse. These included blankets, sleeping mats, cooking utensils, and solar lanterns to support dignity and survival, as many asylum seekers lacked basic essentials. Communal items such as tents, public floodlights, and kitchen sets, which had been distributed earlier in the response, were scheduled for replenishment.

However, following the Refugee Status Determination (RSD) process conducted in April, none of the remaining households met the criteria for relocation, and Nyamithuthu Camp was officially closed on 30 April 2025. Consequently, there was no longer a need for shelter-related support under activities targeting the host communities. The operational focus shifted to reinforcing host community systems, particularly school and WASH infrastructure, which had been strained during the asylum seekers' stay.



Livelihoods And Basic Needs

The Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS), with support from IFRC, provided cash transfers of MK70,000 per household to 336 asylum seeker households residing at Nyamithuthu Camp. These cash grants enabled recipients to meet their immediate household needs and purchase essential food items, including maize flour, CSB flour for children under five, salt, sugar, milk, and dried fish, thereby contributing to household food security and helping prevent hunger-related health complications. Given the disruption to their livelihoods during displacement, the cash support offered temporary relief to stabilize living conditions within the camp.

At that time, there was a recognized need for additional support to ensure dignity and access to basic services. However, following the Refugee Status Determination (RSD) process conducted by the Department for Refugees, none of the remaining households qualified for refugee status, and Nyamithuthu Camp was officially closed on 30 April 2025. All 336 households had since departed.

With the camp closed, the operational focus shifted entirely to host communities affected by the presence of the asylum seekers. As a result, livelihood support was no longer required or planned for asylum seekers, and all ongoing activities were designed to benefit host populations.



Multi purpose cash grants

The provision of a multipurpose cash grant was considered an effective solution to address various challenges faced by asylum seekers, particularly given the camp's proximity to the Nyamithuthu trading center, where essential commodities were available. To date, the Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) had provided two cash transfers of MK25,000 per household to 3,500 households with support from WFP, and a MK70,000 cash distribution to 336 households with support from IFRC. Other organizations, such as Self-Help Africa, withdrew their support due to the repatriation process. There was a recognized need to sustain such support, as cash assistance enabled refugees to purchase essential items, including salt, sugar, soap, relish, and other urgent household necessities.



Health

The remaining asylum seekers continued to face challenges in accessing health services. The Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) distributed various WASH items, including 2,172 hygiene kits and 672 mosquito nets. These items had been borrowed from the National Society's stock, with plans for replenishment through ongoing actions. The general health conditions in the camp required continuous support until the camp's closure. Additionally, there was a high risk of mental health issues resulting from the Refugee Status Determination (RSD), which denied asylum seekers any protection status from the Government of Malawi. Some asylum seekers continued to express fear of returning to Mozambique due to past experiences of loss of relatives, property, and livelihoods, highlighting the need for mental health and psychosocial support services.

While awaiting the departure of all residents, MRCS continued addressing major healthcare gaps, including the lack of transport for



medical referrals and the absence of integrated outreach services to ensure access to healthcare and essential medical supplies. This situation necessitated ongoing support to the District Health Office to conduct mobile outreach clinics across all sites until the camp was fully closed. Given the ongoing rainy season, the risk of malaria and diarrheal diseases, including cholera, remained high.

MRCS volunteers joined Ministry of Health personnel in assessing and treating children with minor illnesses. A total of 50 volunteers were trained in sanitation and hygiene promotion and conducted awareness campaigns on proper sanitation and hygiene practices. The response also included the distribution of hygiene and sanitation kits to 1,336 households, the provision of insecticide-treated mosquito nets to 1,336 households, and the provision of communal tents. These activities formed part of the broader health services delivered within the camp.



Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

The Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) supported the pitching of 18 latrines, which were actively used by camp residents. Volunteers assisted with the installation of toilets, including digging pits. MRCS distributed bath and laundry soap (3 and 5 tablets per household respectively) to 1,336 households. Additionally, two 20-litre buckets with taps were provided per household to 1,336 households, and 500 20-litre buckets were provided for communal use at the camp. Volunteers continuously disseminated health and hygiene promotion messages. Furthermore, MRCS distributed 1,200 hygiene kits to support basic sanitation needs.

Before its closure, Nyamithuthu Camp continued to face serious hygiene challenges, despite hosting only 336 remaining asylum seeker households. Limited access to hygiene materials and infrastructure made it difficult for residents to maintain basic cleanliness. This situation particularly affected women and adolescent girls, whose menstrual hygiene management (MHM) was compromised by a lack of privacy, inadequate disposal facilities, and insufficient hygiene supplies. Many were forced to manage their periods under unsafe and undignified conditions.

Access to drinking water deteriorated further when asylum seekers began using boreholes originally drilled for host communities. Tensions escalated dramatically after the government communicated that none of the remaining asylum seekers qualified for refugee status or further protection. Violent protests ensued, damaging borehole infrastructure, including pipes, rods, and pedestals, which were filled with mud and rendered nonfunctional. This disrupted the water supply for both asylum seekers and residents.

In the education sector, children from the camp were enrolled in three surrounding schools. However, two of these schools were left with severely dilapidated sanitation facilities. Toilets required urgent rehabilitation, and previous appeals from the Department for Refugees to humanitarian actors went unmet due to competing priorities. As humanitarian partners prepared to exit the camp, the sanitation crisis remained unresolved, raising the risk of potential cholera outbreaks. Girls were particularly affected, as menstrual hygiene rooms were lost in all schools, increasing discomfort and absenteeism.

To address these challenges, MRCS launched a comprehensive support initiative. Volunteers promoted hygiene practices, reaching over 5,300 individuals with key messages, distributed more than 1,170 buckets and soap, and supported household-level chlorination. Despite these efforts, supplies remained limited, and there was a continued need for essential items such as soap, disinfectants, and menstrual hygiene products, which MRCS provided and planned to replenish.

Building on previous support, the operational action plan included drilling 3 new boreholes and solarizing 1 borehole at a school (revised from two). Two 10,000-litre water tanks were to be installed to improve water access. In the education sector, 6 school latrines were scheduled for rehabilitation, 16 toilets were planned for desludging, and 8 handwashing facilities were to be set up across schools. Hygiene promotion was extended not only within the schools but also throughout host communities to bridge existing gaps.



Protection, Gender And Inclusion

The population in the camp was exposed to multiple protection risks due to varied vulnerabilities, including lack of access to adequate food and the absence of livelihood opportunities. These conditions increased the risk of abuse and exploitation for vulnerable groups, such as women, children, and persons with disabilities, including exposure to gender-based violence (GBV). To address some of these challenges, MRCS distributed solar lamps to 336 households, installed 10 floodlights to provide lighting across the camp, and volunteers conducted 24 sessions on the disadvantages of gender-based violence.

It was considered essential to implement protection measures and ensure the inclusion of vulnerable groups in all response activities in order to mitigate risks and safeguard their well-being until the camp was officially closed.



Migration And Displacement

Nyamithuthu Camp had become a regular site for hosting displaced people from Mozambique. The camp had hosted Mozambican asylum seekers for the fourth time due to different situations and had accommodated IDPs since 2015 whenever the lower side of the camp was flooded. Volunteers and branches in such locations needed to be capacitated in various areas to ensure readiness to support similar incidents. During the current event, MRCS struggled to identify volunteers to provide services such as First Aid, Mental Health support, and RCCE activities. There was a continued need to implement planned volunteer capacity-building activities as initially intended.

The assessment found that the remaining asylum seekers claimed they had fled Mozambique due to post-election violence following the 9 October 2024 presidential elections. Out of the targeted 336 households comprising 671 individuals, 268 individuals were scheduled for interviews; however, 221 individuals attended and were interviewed. All 221 individuals were recommended for denial of refugee status, as their claims were deemed not credible enough for RSD consideration. Most could not provide convincing facts about their place of origin in Mozambique and failed to competently answer general questions about their claims. These results indicated that the remaining asylum seekers were no longer considered persons of concern requiring government protection. Following this, the DfR planned to close the camp and requested the humanitarian community's support to facilitate the closure process and finalize all commitments made to host communities.

MRCS fulfilled its mandate of restoring family links and providing support with technical assistance from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Asylum seekers at Nyamithuthu received various services to restore links with their families, including the provision of phone calls and additional support packages to households fostering unaccompanied children.

The overall situation of migration linked to Mozambican displacement remained concerning. The Malawi Department for Refugees (DfR) reported that the number of asylum seekers arriving in Malawi had increased drastically from the usual average of 300 individuals per month to around 120 individuals per week. Reports indicated continued insecurity and violent protests in Mozambique despite reconciliation efforts, and the growing number of internally displaced Mozambicans suggested that arrivals seeking refuge in Malawi might continue.



Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation And Recovery

Although Nyamithuthu Camp had officially closed, environmental degradation remained a pressing concern. During its operation, asylum seekers relied heavily on wood fuel for cooking, leading to indiscriminate tree cutting both within the camp and in surrounding host communities. This practice contributed to deforestation, posing long-term ecological risks such as soil erosion and biodiversity loss. Despite the reduction in camp residents, the environmental impact was already evident, and the risk of continued tree depletion persisted.

To address this, the Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) committed to conducting environmental awareness sessions targeting host communities. These sessions aimed to promote sustainable practices and encourage environmentally friendly adaptation measures. MRCS worked closely with local structures to support these efforts.

While the humanitarian response at the time did not directly focus on afforestation, host communities continued to advocate for support from various organizations to restore degraded areas. MRCS remained actively engaged with partners to mobilize resources and promote reforestation initiatives, recognizing the importance of preserving the natural environment in the aftermath of displacement.



Community Engagement And Accountability

MRCS, in collaboration with the DfR and UNHCR, engaged MRCS volunteers to carry out various activities. Volunteers also supported the councils in conducting rapid assessments of affected households. During the cash and food distribution exercise, beneficiaries were engaged in meetings prior to the distribution to explain the selection criteria, distribution processes, and entitlements. A help desk was set up at the distribution site to answer questions and address concerns in real-time.

Given the volatility of the situation, strong community engagement and communication remained a key need. MRCS volunteers played a central role in mobilizing efforts to engage asylum seekers more effectively, creating an environment where beneficiaries could provide feedback and participate in decisions affecting their daily lives. MRCS established a complaints and feedback mechanism and provided suggestion boxes, which remained on site to ensure that issues raised were addressed accordingly. Additionally, settlement committees were formed to handle prompt feedback from beneficiaries.



Operational Strategy

Overall objective of the operation

This intervention aimed to continue providing critical humanitarian support to the remaining asylum seekers at Nyamithuthu Camp, while also addressing the needs of surrounding host communities in Nsanje district amid the new scenario of volatile returns. The operation focused on facilitating safe and dignified self-repatriation or integration of asylum seekers, while mitigating the impact on host communities through health promotion, environmental restoration, WASH improvements, and protection activities. Accordingly, the objective was extended to 14,877 people, including the 336 asylum seeker households and the 1,500 host community households.

In parallel, MRCS supported camp closure efforts and delivered services such as borehole drilling, latrine rehabilitation, hygiene promotion, and measures to address vulnerabilities generated by the displacement situation.

Operation strategy rationale

Background:

Nyamithuthu Camp in Nsanje District has historically served as a reception site for displaced populations, both from Mozambique and internal displacement. Following the post-election violence in Mozambique on 9 October 2024, asylum seekers fled to Malawi, with Nyamithuthu Camp hosting these populations for the fourth time. By early 2025, the camp hosted 336 households (671 individuals), after a voluntary repatriation exercise relocated 7,076 of approximately 7,900 asylum seekers.

Operational Context:

Asylum seekers at Nyamithuthu faced multiple vulnerabilities, including limited access to food, health services, safe water, sanitation, and livelihood opportunities. The remaining population also experienced psychological distress due to the denial of refugee status by the Malawi Government. Tensions over water and sanitation resources arose, leading to the destruction of borehole infrastructure and further straining local services. School sanitation was severely impacted, particularly affecting girls' menstrual hygiene management.

MRCS, with technical support from IFRC and the ICRC, intervened to provide humanitarian assistance across multiple sectors, including shelter, WASH, health, protection, RFL, and multipurpose cash grants.

Key Interventions and Achievements

1. Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFIs)

MRCS distributed shelter and essential items to 336 households. This included sleeping mats, blankets, family tents, solar lamps, kitchen sets, communal tents, and flood lamps. NFIs previously borrowed from the National Society's warehouse were replenished, ensuring continued access to dignity and basic household needs.

2. Multipurpose Cash Assistance

MRCS provided MWK 70,000 per household to the remaining 336 households. This support enabled beneficiaries to meet food and household needs, including maize flour, CSB flour, salt, sugar, milk, and dried fish. Post-distribution monitoring was conducted to assess the impact.

3. Health Services

MRCS deployed volunteers trained in health promotion, community first aid, and MHPSS. Mosquito nets, oral rehydration salts (ORS), and medical support were provided to mitigate malaria and cholera risks. Volunteers supported Ministry of Health personnel in assessing and treating minor illnesses, particularly in children under five.

4. WASH Interventions

MRCS provided hygiene promotion, distributing 1,172 buckets, soap, dignity kits, and hygiene kits. Boreholes serving the host community were repaired and solarized, and three new boreholes were drilled. School sanitation was rehabilitated with six latrines rehabilitated, sixteen desludged, and eight handwashing facilities installed. Household and school-level chlorination was conducted to ensure safe water access.

5. Protection and PGI

MRCS implemented protection measures for vulnerable groups, including women, children, and persons with disabilities. Volunteers conducted 24 sessions on the disadvantages of gender-based violence. Solar lamps and floodlights were installed to enhance safety. RFL services continued through the provision of phone calls, IEC materials, and volunteer support.

6. Community Engagement and Accountability

MRCS volunteers facilitated beneficiary engagement, establishing help desks at distributions and implementing complaints and feedback mechanisms. Settlement committees were trained to manage feedback and ensure participatory decision-making. Lessons-learned



workshops were conducted at district and national levels to inform both the MRCS and the Government on future interventions.

7. Migration and Displacement

The Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) successfully delivered migration and displacement services through the Restoration of Family Links (RFL) services at Nyamithuthu camp, ensuring vital communication and reconnection for asylum seekers. A total of 463 phone calls were facilitated, benefiting 314 males and 149 females, while 256 individuals accessed free phone charging and internet services to connect with their families. MRCS also received 83 visitors seeking tracing support, conducted 99 home visits, and registered four new tracing cases involving females. In addition, 76 individuals were newly registered, though no unaccompanied or separated children were recorded during this phase.

Beyond Nyamithuthu, MRCS expanded its migration and displacement support by providing free phone calls to 2,300 asylum seekers, identifying two houses fostering five unaccompanied children, and orienting 10 volunteers who delivered RFL services to 671 people through airtime, phone services, and tracing support. Five unaccompanied children were identified and attached to foster families. MRCS volunteers, working alongside other organizations, also facilitated feedback collection during food and cash distribution sessions, strengthening accountability and community engagement. To enhance awareness, MRCS developed Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials, with dissemination pending printing.

Institutionally, MRCS convened engagement meetings with government authorities, security agencies, and local leaders, raising awareness of its auxiliary role to the Malawi Government and the importance of RFL in humanitarian contexts. These sessions introduced participants to the Red Cross Movement, its principles, and the operational framework of RFL, including tools, intervention circumstances, and prevention of family separation. The meetings resulted in a formalized approach to RFL service provision and an agreed strategy for outreach in areas lacking full-time services. Supported financially by IFRC, MRCS also strengthened its internal capacity, training 360 staff and volunteers, which significantly enhanced service delivery and preparedness for migration and displacement challenges.

8. Environmental Management

During the camp's operation, reliance on wood fuel contributed to deforestation and environmental degradation. MRCS conducted environmental awareness sessions for host communities and engaged partners to promote reforestation and sustainable practices.

Operational Adjustments

Following the camp closure on 30 April 2025, MRCS revised its operational strategy to focus on supporting host communities affected by the displacement, including providing equitable WASH, health, and protection services. Support targeted 336 remaining asylum seeker households and 1,500 host households.

Exit Strategy:

MRCS developed a structured exit plan emphasizing:

- Handover to the Department for Refugees and local authorities, ensuring continuity of WASH, health, and protection services.
- Community-led management of hygiene, shelter maintenance, and protection committees.
- Long-term water and sanitation solutions through borehole management committees and integration into local water systems.
- Social cohesion initiatives to foster peaceful coexistence between host and displaced populations.
- Volunteer engagement to monitor and support ongoing activities beyond the DREF response.

MRCS successfully delivered integrated humanitarian services, reaching over 5,320 individuals with key messages and direct assistance. Despite the camp closure, ongoing support was essential to address residual protection, WASH, health, and environmental needs among host communities. The intervention highlighted the importance of preparedness, community engagement, and sustainable solutions in displacement response contexts.

Targeting Strategy

Who was targeted by this operation?

MRCS targeting was updated in response to the changing context. In January and February, MRCS had planned to support 3,500 families before some were repatriated. Before the repatriation process, 7,456 asylum seekers were reached with various services, as detailed in the actions conducted so far.

After the repatriation process, MRCS supported at least 336 asylum seeker households (671 individuals) remaining in Nyamithuthu Camp. Services focused on ensuring their safe and dignified self-repatriation or integration into host communities. Volunteers supported the Department for Refugees (DfR) and the District Council in camp closure activities, including camp dismantling, cleaning, disinfection, and demobilization of latrines.

The action continued to target all eligible asylum seekers registered by DfR at the camp, currently totaling 336 households, though this



number could potentially increase. These populations were hosted in Nsanje District in the Southern Region of Malawi. Additionally, MRCS supported 1,500 households (approximately 6,750 individuals) in the host community. Host communities were reached with messages on health, environment, protection, feedback mechanisms, and access to safe water through borehole drilling. In total, excluding households potentially reached with pre-positioned items, the intervention reached at least 18,623 individuals, including the host community.

Explain the selection criteria for the targeted population

The targeted population for this response consisted primarily of asylum seekers from Mozambique who had entered Malawi through various border points, including Nsanje, Dedza, Mwanza, and Mulanje. These individuals had been granted asylum seeker status through the collaborative efforts of the Department for Refugees (DfR) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which oversaw the registration process. Consequently, all support was directed to those who had been formally registered and possessed identification documents issued by the DfR.

In addition to the asylum seekers, the response also targeted 1,500 households from the host communities surrounding the former camp site. These communities had played a critical role in hosting the displaced populations during the crisis and had experienced both environmental and social pressures as a result. Further focus was placed on schools located within the affected host communities. These institutions had suffered infrastructural strain and sanitation-related challenges due to population pressures stemming from the presence of asylum seekers. Selection of schools was based on factors such as documented damage, lack of adequate WASH facilities, and proximity to the former camp site. Targeted schools and communities benefited from borehole drilling, latrine rehabilitation, desludging of existing toilets, handwashing station setup, and hygiene promotion efforts aimed at improving the health environment for students and staff.

Moreover, this selection strategy incorporated a forward-looking approach that recognized the area's potential to host future asylum seekers. By enhancing WASH infrastructure and hygiene practices, the response aimed to build resilience and readiness for possible future displacement scenarios. This not only protected the health and dignity of residents at the time but also strengthened systems that could be called upon in subsequent emergencies.

Total Assisted Population

Assisted Women	10,168	Rural	-
Assisted Girls (under 18)	1,006	Urban	-
Assisted Men	6,704	People with disabilities (estimated)	0.6%
Assisted Boys (under 18)	745		
Total Assisted Population	18,623		
Total Targeted Population	14,877		

Risk and Security Considerations (including "management")

Does your National Society have anti-fraud and corruption policy?	Yes
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Does your National Society have prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse policy?	Yes
Does your National Society have child protection/child safeguarding policy?	Yes
Does your National Society have whistleblower protection policy?	Yes
Does your National Society have anti-sexual harassment policy?	Yes

Please analyse and indicate potential risks for this operation, its root causes and mitigation actions.

Risk	Mitigation action
The primary emerging risk was related to targeting inclusion and exclusion errors, given the significant volatility of the displacement context, particularly due to uncertainty in population figures and shifting government plans. The unclear legal and protection status of many residents in Nyamithuthu Camp increased the likelihood of inclusion and exclusion errors during targeting under the DREF operation. This uncertainty was further compounded by a rapid increase in new arrivals, rising from 300 per month to approximately 120 individuals per week, which risked overwhelming operational capacity and rendering initial response plans outdated.	To address this, the operation included a scenario-based adaptive planning approach, supported by a brief scenario analysis embedded in the operational strategy. This allowed for flexible adjustment of activities and targeting criteria as the situation evolved. Ongoing coordination with the Department for Refugees (DfR) and other stakeholders ensured that the response remained aligned with official guidance, while minimizing risks of misallocation or gaps in coverage. Continuous monitoring and real-time analysis supported timely decision-making and mitigated potential exclusion or duplication of assistance.
Continued political instability in Mozambique	MRCS advocated for the Malawi Government to actively promote and support peacekeeping discussions in Mozambique. This was aimed at addressing the root causes of displacement, reducing cross-border tensions, and fostering a stable environment that would prevent further asylum flows into Malawi.
Further, devaluation of the Malawi Kwacha increased the cost of goods and living expenses.	Procurement was conducted internationally to ensure timely availability of required goods and supplies.
Asylum seekers bringing harmful weapons	Conducted a detailed joint technical security risk assessment to ensure that all necessary information on risks was collected to mitigate potential threats to staff and volunteers.
Negative perception by host community	MRCS actions and selection criteria were explained to both asylum seekers and host communities.
Disease outbreaks due to congestion and lack of or inadequate hygienic conditions and safe water i.e. Cholera & scabies	Intensive community sensitisation meetings on hygiene and sanitation were conducted; pot-to-pot water chlorination was carried out; temporary pit latrines were constructed at designated camps; and safe water was provided.
Harsh weather i.e. heat wave & stormy rains	Weather alert planning and implementation of interventions were promoted following the weather advisories.

Please indicate any security and safety concerns for this operation:

During the needs assessment, there were no security or safety concerns that could affect the operation, as well-organised community structures, such as community policing groups, worked collaboratively with Area and Village Civil Protection Committees, which provided security when needed. With support from the district protection cluster, led by the Police, regular sensitisations were conducted to maintain peace and stability in the settlements.

Has the child safeguarding risk analysis assessment been completed?

Yes

Implementation



Shelter Housing And Settlements

Budget: CHF 117,995

Targeted Persons: 7,456

Assisted Persons: 7,330

Targeted Male: 2,851

Targeted Female: 4,479

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of people provided with emergency shelter and settlement assistance	7,456	7,330
# of families provided with Essential households items and tents	336	336
# of people that benefited from communal tents at waiting areas	5,000	7,330
# of families provided with family tents during their stay in the camps	839	503

Narrative description of achievements

To uphold the dignity, safety, and livelihood security of asylum seekers at Nyamithuthu camp, the Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) implemented a comprehensive shelter and non-food item (NFI) response that was both timely and lifesaving. Recognizing the urgent need for emergency shelter, MRCS volunteers played a pivotal role in preparing the camp by clearing designated areas and installing 10 communal multipurpose tents, which served not only as sleeping spaces but also as Early Childhood Development (ECD) centers and temporary clinics. In addition, MRCS supported the installation of 503 family tents, ensuring privacy and protection for displaced households. To further enhance living conditions, MRCS distributed 356 kitchen sets, 672 blankets, and 336 sleeping mats critical NFIs that enabled families to cook, rest, and maintain basic comfort amidst displacement. The provision of these items was essential in restoring a sense of normalcy, safeguarding health, and enabling families to focus on rebuilding their lives. At the closure of the camp, MRCS volunteers, in collaboration with the Nsanje District Council shelter cluster (co-chaired by MRCS), led the decommissioning process, which included dismantling, cleaning, and fumigating the tents for future use. This volunteer-led effort exemplified MRCS's commitment to responsible humanitarian action and reinforced the central role of community-based support in emergency response. Overall, MRCS supported 7,330 asylum seekers, comprising 4,479 females and 2,851 males, with camp-based and household shelter and non-food items. The underachievement is because most of the asylum seekers returned to Mozambique in the midst of the operation.



Lessons Learnt

- The shelter response was significantly limited by inadequate supplies of tents, tarpaulins, and essential non-food items such as buckets and blankets.
- Delays in the delivery of relief items left many households exposed to harsh living conditions.
- The absence of skilled personnel to mount tents further reduced the effectiveness of the intervention.
- There is a need to preposition NFIs at district level, strengthen logistical arrangements for timely transportation, and build local capacity in tent mounting to enhance future shelter responses.
- Nyamithuthu has frequently served as a temporary site for asylum seekers, yet it lacks permanent and adequately equipped structures.
- The site should be designated as an official evacuation and transit center, instead of relying on schools and CBCCs, which disrupt education and community activities.
- Developing Nyamithuthu into a proper facility with durable shelters, sanitation infrastructure, and basic services would benefit both asylum seekers and host communities.
- Establishing a well-planned, permanent site would provide a sustainable and safer evacuation option for future emergencies.

Challenges

- a) Limited stock availability during peak influx periods led to delays in distribution.
- b) Distribution disturbances by the Mozambique government during repatriation processes



Multi Purpose Cash

Budget: CHF 60,027
Targeted Persons: 4,000
Assisted Persons: 1,680
Targeted Male: 672
Targeted Female: 1,008

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# households provided with multipurpose cash grants	336	336
% of target households that have are able to meet their basic needs	85	100
# of households registered for MPC	2,000	336

Narrative description of achievements

In response to the urgent humanitarian needs at Nyamithuthu camp, the Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) prioritized the provision of cash for livelihood to asylum seekers as a critical intervention to enhance food security, dignity, and self-reliance. Initial cash and food support were essential in improving daily meal access, particularly for vulnerable groups such as children and lactating mothers, whose nutritional needs are heightened during displacement. Recognizing these needs, MRCS implemented two rounds of cash transfers at MK 25,000 per household, reaching 3,500 households with support from the World Food Programme (WFP). Additionally, a targeted cash transfer of MK 70,000 per household was provided to 336 households to enable asylum seekers to meet their basic needs, including food, shelter, and essential services. This approach not only empowered families to make choices aligned with their priorities but also contributed to stabilising their well-being during a period of acute vulnerability.

Some PDM findings;

The findings from this assessment reveal that MRCS has made significant strides in delivering essential support to affected, but there are still several areas that require attention to ensure the optimal effectiveness of interventions. While most respondents used the provided NFIs for domestic purposes, a small percentage shared them voluntarily with others. This demonstrates a sense of community solidarity, but it also highlights the need to ensure that enough resources are provided to meet the collective needs of all beneficiaries.



The cash assistance provided was largely spent on food, indicating a high level of food insecurity within the community. However, a low percentage of respondents were able to save any portion of the cash, further underscoring the urgent and overwhelming needs that the assistance aimed to address. The fact that many respondents reported delays in receiving assistance, along with the price hikes observed in local markets, suggests a need for improvements in timely delivery and market stabilisation efforts.

Furthermore, community engagement and accountability mechanisms, while largely effective in providing communication channels, need to be strengthened to ensure that all voices are heard and that feedback is acted upon promptly. While 97% of respondents indicated they were well informed about the intervention details, a gap in follow up responses from MRCS was noted, which could undermine trust and future community participation.

The role of female heads of households in decision-making was significant, demonstrating the importance of gender sensitive approaches in the planning and distribution of assistance. Additionally, the overall positive feedback regarding respectful treatment during the distribution process highlights the professionalism and commitment of MRCS staff and volunteers.

The beneficiaries were verified with the support of the immigration department, and DfR ensured that they met the inclusion criteria of being an asylum seeker. The cash was distributed by the contracted service provider (Logistic and Transport Services-LTS). The beneficiaries were oriented on the purpose, and frequency of the distribution of the cash before the actual day, and on the day of the cash distribution, to avoid misuse of the cash.

Lessons Learnt

- Inadequate coordination among partners during the cash response demonstrated the importance of stronger collaboration and joint planning to ensure timely delivery of assistance.
- Weak data management systems, including ghost beneficiaries and voucher inconsistencies, highlighted the need for robust data verification and accountability mechanisms.
- Delays in cash disbursement emphasized that effective coordination and clear roles among partners are critical to maintaining the timeliness and impact of support.
- The experience reinforced the importance of transparency and shared responsibility to ensure that cash assistance reaches the intended households efficiently.

Challenges

- a) Consistent stoppages by the Mozambique government resulted in delayed distribution of cash
- b) Rising cost of things in the surrounding markets during cash distribution days
- c) Market volatility affected the purchasing power of cash grants.



Budget: CHF 21,776

Targeted Persons: 14,877

Assisted Persons: 5,997

Targeted Male: 1,974

Targeted Female: 4,023

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of people reached with community-based disease prevention and health promotion programming	14,877	5,997
# of people reached via outreach clinic services	14,877	2,340
# of people reached with Mental Health and Psychosocial Support	14,877	5,997



Narrative description of achievements

Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) launched a targeted health service delivery initiative to support asylum seekers and host communities, beginning with health needs assessments that informed the deployment of mobile clinics and outreach services. Seven outreach clinics were established, reaching 2,340 individuals with essential health care. To reinforce hygiene practices and reduce disease transmission, MRCS installed eight handwashing facilities in two schools, directly benefiting over 5,000 learners.

To address immediate hygiene and protection needs, MRCS distributed 2,172 hygiene kits and 672 mosquito nets to vulnerable households. More than 5,000 households also received dignity kits, which played a vital role in promoting personal hygiene and safeguarding the wellbeing of women and girls. Additional hygiene items such as soap, buckets, and chlorine were mobilized to support daily sanitation needs and prevent waterborne diseases.

Health promotion and community engagement were integral to the response. MRCS reached 5,997 individuals (4,023 females and 1,974 males) through follow-up sanitation and health education activities. These efforts helped reinforce public health messaging and encouraged safe hygiene behaviors across both asylum seeker and host populations.

Volunteer capacity building was a cornerstone of MRCS's health strategy. A four-day training on epidemic control and mental health equipped 47 volunteers (17 females, 30 males) to manage disease outbreaks and provide psychosocial support. Thirty volunteers (12 females, 18 males) were trained in risk management and community engagement, enhancing their ability to identify health risks and mobilise local responses. Sixty participants (33 males, 27 females) received health promotion training, and an additional 40 volunteers were specifically trained in mental health and psychosocial support (PSS), strengthening MRCS's ability to deliver holistic care and build community resilience.

The underachievement is because most of the asylum seekers returned to Mozambique in the midst of the operation

Lessons Learnt

- Limited logistical support for outreach activities and shortages of medicines, nutrition, and drug supplies highlighted the need for stronger investment in health logistics and supply chains to ensure continuity of essential services during emergencies.
- Weak port health services along unmonitored border routes revealed the importance of strengthening cross-border disease surveillance and response mechanisms.
- Delays in partner support for health and nutrition promotion underscored the need for timely and coordinated interventions to prevent service disruptions.
- The provision of undiversified food assistance demonstrated the importance of promoting diversified food or cash transfers to address nutritional gaps among vulnerable groups.
- The reliance on curative rather than preventive health services at camps and host sites showed the need to shift focus toward preventive health and nutrition promotion to reduce recurring health risks.
- Inadequate outreach capacity reinforced the importance of expanding mobile and community-based health services to bring care closer to affected populations.
- The experience emphasized that consistent facility management, coupled with increased provision of drugs, supplies, and staff, is vital for sustaining effective health service delivery during humanitarian operations.

Challenges

- a) Shortage of medical supplies and personnel to meet the growing demand.
- b) Language and cultural differences hindered effective health communication.
- c) Limited access to specialized care, especially for chronic illnesses and maternal health.



Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

Budget: CHF 146,752

Targeted Persons: 14,877

Assisted Persons: 18,623

Targeted Male: 7,449

Targeted Female: 11,174

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
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# of people with access to clean safe drinking water	14,877	2,315
# of people provided with WASH supplies	7,456	5,320
# of people supported with Dignity Kits	1,500	5,000
# of people reached with messages	14,877	18,623

Narrative description of achievements

Trained 100 volunteers, conducted Hygiene promotion sessions and reached 5,320 individuals in the camp and 13303 in host communities using door-to-door visits and public meetings.

Additional support included the distribution of 1,172 buckets (20L), 7,680 tablets of laundry soap, and 10,008 tablets of bathing soap. Twenty volunteers received basic first aid training, and 15 participants, including health officials, were trained as trainers in cholera preparedness. Collectively, these interventions improved public health, strengthened local response capacity, and advanced National Society Strengthening.

In order to address the challenges of the damages caused by the asylum seekers on WASH facilities in the host communities and the surrounding schools, 15 enumerators conducted a comprehensive WASH facility assessment that informed infrastructure planning and hygiene promotion requirements. Three boreholes were drilled, benefiting 157 households, and a handpump was upgraded to a solar-powered reticulation system serving 1,145 learners, 14 teachers, and 63 households. To ensure sustainability, three water point committees comprising of 33 participants were trained in Community-Based Management, including pump care mechanics. Borehole drilling was supervised by WASH cluster officers, and pre-drilling training prepared communities for infrastructure development.

Sanitation interventions included the construction of 18 latrines, rehabilitation of six VIP latrine structures, and desludging and repair of 29 latrine cubicles, benefiting 2,508 learners, eight caregivers, and 44 teachers. In schools, 29 toilets were desludged and 27 rehabilitated, improving sanitation for 3,653 learners, 1,829 males and 1,824 females and 44 teachers, including 30 males and 14 females. These efforts enhanced hygiene, dignity, and retention among students and staff.

The target of the host community on WASH interventions including awareness activities, contributed to the achievement of this result area. Overall, the WASH sector reached 18623 people, including the asylum seekers and the host community.

Lessons Learnt

- Inadequate WASH support in both main and transit camps highlighted the need for sufficient and timely provision of essential supplies to meet minimum humanitarian standards.
- Delays in constructing disability-friendly sanitation facilities underscored the importance of inclusive WASH planning that ensures accessibility for all groups.
- Interruptions in water trucking services, especially during power blackouts, revealed the need to strengthen the resilience of water systems through backup power solutions and alternative water sources.
- Delays in hygiene promotion activities demonstrated the importance of early and continuous community engagement to sustain positive hygiene practices.
- Overall, the experience emphasized the value of investing in durable WASH infrastructure, reliable supply chains, and adaptive systems capable of maintaining safe water access during disruptions.

Challenges

- Insufficient water sources in overcrowded camps strained existing boreholes.
- Poor sanitation infrastructure led to increased risk of waterborne diseases.
- Cultural barriers affected adoption of hygiene practices like handwashing and latrine use.





Protection, Gender And Inclusion

Budget: CHF 4,888

Targeted Persons: 7,456

Assisted Persons: 4,567

Targeted Male: 2,731

Targeted Female: 1,835

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of people reached with PGI and prevention and response to SGBV awareness messages	7,456	4,567
% of SGBV survivors reported that are referred for services	100	100

Narrative description of achievements

During the humanitarian response at Nyamithuthu camp, the Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) implemented a robust Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI) strategy to ensure equitable, safe, and dignified support for all affected populations. MRCS volunteers reached 4,567 individuals (2,731 males and 1,836 females) with PGI awareness messaging and conducted 24 dedicated sessions on the disadvantages of gender-based violence (GBV). GBV sensitisation was also integrated into cash, food, and non-food item distributions to reinforce protection principles during service delivery.

The response placed strong emphasis on the inclusion of persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, ensuring their access to services and meaningful participation in decision-making processes. MRCS complemented these efforts by facilitating engagement meetings with government authorities, security agencies, and local leaders to strengthen institutional collaboration and community preparedness. These sessions reinforced the importance of PGI in emergency contexts and promoted coordinated protection efforts.

In addition to these core activities, MRCS work hand in hand with SAVE the Children and established Child-Friendly Spaces (CFS) within the camp to provide safe and nurturing environments for children. These spaces offered psychosocial support, recreational activities, and protection services, helping to mitigate risks of exploitation and neglect. PGI focal points were deployed to monitor protection concerns and facilitate confidential feedback and complaints handling, ensuring that affected populations could safely report issues and influence service delivery. Furthermore, MRCS distributed dignity kits to women and girls, which included menstrual hygiene items and culturally appropriate materials. These distributions were accompanied by menstrual health education sessions aimed at promoting hygiene and reducing stigma.

Together, these PGI interventions contributed to a more inclusive and protective humanitarian response, upholding the dignity and rights of all individuals affected by displacement and crisis.

Solar Lamp Distribution and Floodlight Installation:

As part of the protection and safety measures at Nyamithuthu camp, MRCS installed 10 public solar lamps and floodlights in key communal areas. These installations significantly improved visibility at night, reducing risks of theft, harassment, and gender-based violence, particularly for women and children. The lighting also enhanced safe access to essential services such as water points, latrines, and communal gathering spaces after dark. By providing reliable, renewable energy, the solar lamps not only strengthened physical protection but also promoted a sense of security and dignity among asylum seekers, enabling them to move freely and safely within the camp environment.

District and Community Exit Meetings:

To ensure sustainability and shared ownership, MRCS convened district and community exit meetings at the conclusion of the project. These meetings brought together government authorities, security agencies, local leaders, and community representatives to review achievements, challenges, and lessons learned. The sessions reinforced MRCS's auxiliary role to the Malawi Government and formalised collaboration frameworks for the Restoration of Family Links (RFL) and broader humanitarian services. Importantly, the exit meetings provided a platform for communities to voice feedback, strengthen accountability, and agree on strategies for continuity in areas without full-time RFL services. They also ensured that local structures were empowered to maintain protection gains, integrate lessons into district disaster preparedness plans, and foster stronger community resilience against future migration and displacement challenges.

The underachievement is because most of the asylum seekers returned to Mozambique in the midst of the operation



Lessons Learnt

- Limited protection resources and overreliance on external partners highlighted the need for contingency funding at the council level to strengthen local response capacity.
- Weak camp security, characterised by poor lighting, overcrowding, and inadequate coordination with police, underscored the importance of enhanced safety measures and stronger collaboration with law enforcement.
- Insufficient consideration for disability inclusion revealed the need to ensure that all camp structures and facilities are disability-friendly and accessible to everyone.
- Poor communication between Malawian and Mozambican authorities during repatriation processes emphasized the need for improved cross-border coordination and information sharing.
- Weak reporting and referral mechanisms for GBV and child protection cases demonstrated the importance of establishing robust feedback, reporting, and survivor support systems to ensure timely and appropriate assistance.
- Overall, the experience reinforced that comprehensive protection planning, inclusive design, and effective coordination are critical to safeguarding vulnerable groups during humanitarian responses.

Challenges

- Limited resources, heavy reliance on external partners.
- Lack of security lamps for lighting
- Weak security at the Camp
- Some structures were not disability friendly.
- Overcrowding and poor living conditions.
- Lack of coordination between police and partners.
- Malawian attempting and registering as Mozambique.
- Poor communication between Malawian and Mozambicans authorities in repatriating people.
- Inadequate reporting of GBV cases and Child Abuse cases.



Migration And Displacement

Budget: CHF 4,209

Targeted Persons: 7,456

Assisted Persons: 5,997

Targeted Male: 1,974

Targeted Female: 4,023

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
% of people accessing free phone calls	7,456	9
# of care givers /foster parents provided with specialized support including essential household items	50	0
# of people reached with RFL information and are aware of MRCS supported RFL services	7,456	5,997
# of Unaccompanied & separated children registered and receiving support from the operation	50	5
% of tracing requests collected & acted upon	100	100



Narrative description of achievements

Registration

MRCS supported the Department for Refugees, UNHCR and the Immigration office to undertake comprehensive registration processes across all operational sites to systematically identify and register asylum seekers. This enabled structured identification and tracking of new arrivals, ensuring accurate population data for planning and service delivery. The registration framework supported accountability, facilitated access to humanitarian assistance, and laid the groundwork for future protection and integration efforts

Logistics

Logistical operations were bolstered through strategic support from the Malawi Defence Force, which provided transport assets including a truck to relocate asylum seekers from satellite camps to Nyamithuthu. MRCS provided resources and volunteers to support the movement and consolidation of displaced populations, including supporting the allocation of tents where they were staying, ensuring safe and orderly relocation.

The MRCS logistics department provided timely release of NFI and other supplies to meet the programme's requirements, which helped in streamlining camp management and optimising resource allocation across sites.

Restoration of Family Links

Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) successfully delivered Restoration of Family Links (RFL) services at Nyamithuthu camp, facilitating vital communication and reconnection for asylum seekers. A total of 671 phone calls were made, with 314 males and 149 females benefiting from the service. The lower than anticipated number of people is because most of the people had already linked up with their relatives through the phone calls at the start of the operation, and the drop was also necessitated by the fact that some people were repatriated back in the middle of the operation. Additionally, 256 individuals (161 males and 95 females) accessed free phone charging and internet services to connect with their families. MRCS received 83 visitors seeking tracing support, conducted 99 home visits (49 males and 50 females), and registered four new tracing cases involving females. 76 individuals (42 males and 34 females) were targeted for new registration and no unaccompanied or separated children were newly recorded. The RFL operation increased capacity base of MRCS where 360 MRCS staff and volunteers were trained and eventually helped in service delivery.

To strengthen institutional collaboration and community preparedness, MRCS convened engagement meetings with government authorities, security agencies, and local leaders. These sessions increased awareness of MRCS's auxiliary role to the Malawi Government and emphasized the importance of RFL in humanitarian contexts. Participants were introduced to the Red Cross Movement, its principles, and the operational framework of RFL, including tools, circumstances requiring intervention, and prevention of separation. The meetings resulted in a formalized approach to RFL service provision across institutions and an agreed strategy for outreach in areas lacking full-time RFL services. Financial support from IFRC enabled MRCS to address community challenges and chart a path forward for improved humanitarian response, with gender

The dissemination of RFL and related humanitarian messages was done through radio broadcasts, door-to-door volunteer visits, and open-air meetings at the camp had a significant impact on asylum seekers and host communities. These channels ensured wide coverage and accessibility, reaching both literate and non-literate populations with timely, clear information. The messages increased awareness of available RFL services, encouraged community participation, and reduced misinformation, while also promoting protection principles and preventing family separation. By combining mass communication with direct interpersonal engagement, MRCS strengthened trust, accountability, and inclusivity, enabling asylum seekers to better access services and reinforcing community preparedness in displacement settings.

The underachievement is because most of the asylum seekers returned to Mozambique in the midst of the operation

Lessons Learnt

- There should be an integrated approach to system verifications between Malawi and Mozambique. There is a need of capacity building and long-term interventions of formalising the border entries and exits.
- Need for constant engagement and resource pooling for improved coordination

Challenges

- a) Voluntary return hesitancy due to safety concerns in countries of origin.
- b) Legal and logistical hurdles in cross-border movements.
- c) Insufficient reintegration support for returnees affected the sustainability of repatriation.
- d) Lack of connectivity and digital tools made tracing family members difficult.
- e) Low awareness among asylum seekers about RFL services.





Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation And Recovery

Budget: CHF 30,513

Targeted Persons: 14,877

Assisted Persons: 18,625

Targeted Male: 7,449

Targeted Female: 11,174

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of people sensitized on safe and environmentally friendly shelter construction	14,877	18,625

Narrative description of achievements

Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) conducted awareness campaigns to discourage littering and open dumping at the site. The team also promoted responsible site management by advising those pitching tents to avoid unnecessary tree cutting. Furthermore, MRCS collaborated closely with other stakeholders to encourage and implement environmentally friendly practices that support sustainable recovery efforts.

Environmental Management and Green Shelter Awareness: The three awareness sessions on environmental management and green shelter construction reached 5,672 individuals across all camps in Nsanje, creating widespread understanding of sustainable practices in displacement settings. These sessions promoted responsible resource use, reduced environmental degradation, and encouraged communities to adopt eco-friendly shelter solutions that are more resilient to local hazards.

In collaboration with partner organizations, the distribution of emergency cooking stoves to every household further reinforced environmental protection by reducing reliance on firewood, lowering deforestation pressures, and minimizing harmful smoke emissions. This intervention not only conserved the environment around the camps but also improved health and safety for families, particularly women and children who are often most exposed to indoor air pollution and protection risks when collecting firewood.

Together, these actions strengthened community resilience, promoted sustainable living in humanitarian contexts, and demonstrated how environmental conservation can be integrated into emergency response to safeguard both people and ecosystems. The overachievement is because the activities also targeted the host community.

The risk reduction, climate change and recovery interventions reached 18,625 asylum seekers and the host community, to all to help maintain the environment by encouraging them not to cut trees unnecessarily.

Lessons Learnt

- Uncontrolled tree cutting around camp sites highlighted the need for proactive environmental management and the integration of reforestation programs in future response operations.
- Poor waste management practices, including inadequate pit latrines and improper disposal systems, underscored the importance of establishing semi-permanent sanitation structures and effective waste management systems in camps.
- The experience demonstrated that environmental considerations must be embedded in humanitarian planning to prevent degradation and promote sustainable site management.
- Community awareness campaigns on littering, open dumping, and environmental protection are essential to foster long-term behavioural change and maintain healthy living environments.

Challenges

- Environmental degradation emerged as a significant concern during the operation, driven by uncontrolled tree cutting around camp sites and the absence of proper waste management systems. Inadequate pit latrines and poor waste disposal practices led to unhealthy



living conditions and increased open defecation in some areas. Limited follow-up on reforestation and other environmental initiatives further exacerbated the problem.



Community Engagement And Accountability

Budget: CHF 20,097

Targeted Persons: 7,456

Assisted Persons: 18,623

Targeted Male: 7,449

Targeted Female: 11,174

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of staff and volunteers working on the operation who have been trained or oriented on community engagement and accountability	130	40
% of queries / feedback received through the feedback mechanisms established that were responded to.	50	25
# of operational decisions made based on community feedback	100	100

Narrative description of achievements

Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) undertook a series of strategic engagement meetings to strengthen community ownership, coordination, and accountability during the asylum seeker response. A coordination meeting with Nsanje District Disaster Risk Management Committee (DDRMC) brought together 40 participants (32 females and 8 males), enhancing district-level preparedness and reinforcing MRCS's auxiliary role. Additionally, MRCS engaged 22 local leaders and five volunteers from the host community to promote inclusive planning and clarify community roles in humanitarian coordination. These sessions were enriched by the presence of MRCS headquarters staff, who provided technical support and strategic guidance.

To further reinforce national and local collaboration, MRCS held six engagement meetings with the Department of Refugees (DfR), advocating for a national-level dialogue with humanitarian actors and supporting the establishment of camp coordination and management structures. MRCS also facilitated a meeting with DoDMA to lobby for direct intervention in the response. Three additional meetings with Nsanje District Council focused on encouraging support for DfR-led efforts and clarifying MRCS's operational role, including tent mounting. Furthermore, four community engagement meetings were conducted to discuss the responsibilities of host communities and leadership roles among asylum seekers themselves. These efforts reflect MRCS's commitment to transparent, inclusive, and accountable humanitarian action. The action also targeted the host community for proper hosting of the asylum seekers without conflicting with each other. During the implementation period, MRCS, through the established complaints and feedback system, received and addressed 25 pieces of feedback/queries, which were mostly asking for more food support and improved water and sanitation at the camp. All the issues were addressed, and MRCS supported the drilling of boreholes in the community and sanitation facilities in schools, which hosted asylum seekers when they arrived in Malawi. The scope got reduced due to the repatriation of some asylum seekers, hence the underachievement.

Lessons Learnt

- Misunderstandings about relief assistance created tension and mistrust between host communities and asylum seekers. Many host community members believed that food aid intended for them during the lean season was being diverted to asylum seekers, reflecting weak communication, limited consultation, and inadequate community engagement. These gaps undermined transparency and accountability, widening the divide between aid agencies, asylum seekers, and host communities.

To address this, partners should strengthen community sensitization and ensure coordinated communication strategies that clearly explain targeting criteria, entitlements, and program objectives. Future interventions should adopt inclusive approaches that provide complementary support to both asylum seekers and surrounding host communities to foster trust, cohesion, and shared resilience.

- Accountability structures, including suggestion boxes and case management desks, were established to collect and review community



feedback. However, their effectiveness was limited by inadequate logistical and resource support. Volunteers and staff managing complaints often lacked basic provisions such as water and other operational necessities, which affected motivation and reduced the efficiency of the feedback system.

To strengthen accountability in future responses, all feedback and complaint mechanisms should be adequately resourced and supported. Ensuring consistent logistical support for frontline personnel will help maintain transparency, responsiveness, and community trust throughout the response cycle.

Challenges

- a) Misinformation and rumors spread quickly due to lack of trusted communication channels.
- b) Low literacy levels among some asylum seekers made message delivery challenging.
- c) Limited community participation in designing RCCE strategies reduced effectiveness.



Secretariat Services

Budget: CHF 16,267

Targeted Persons: 7,456

Assisted Persons: 4

Targeted Male: 2

Targeted Female: 2

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
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Narrative description of achievements

This response has received huge technical support from the IFRC – Harare Cluster office in various sectors, such as the overall planning of the response, coordination, information management, finance, as well as planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting provided great technical support for the operation. This gesture ensured that MRCS activities are implemented in line with the IFRC quality and standards. This action greatly impacted the good quality of the overall response.

During the implementation period, the operation benefited from on-site technical support provided by four IFRC personnel from the Operations, PMER, Information Management, and Finance units, who undertook missions to Malawi to provide in-country technical assistance and strengthen the quality and accountability of implementation.

Lessons Learnt

The IFRC programmatic and finance teams provided continuous support to the DREF operation from its inception to completion. This collaboration ensured that MRCS received timely technical guidance from IFRC, particularly during operational adjustments following the repatriation of asylum seekers to Mozambique.

Technical support from IFRC plays a crucial role in ensuring the timely implementation and maintaining the overall quality of project delivery.

Challenges

No significant challenges were reported.



National Society Strengthening

Budget: CHF 77,418

Targeted Persons: 20

Assisted Persons: 34



Targeted Male: 26
Targeted Female: 8

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of lessons learnt conducted	1	2
# of staff and volunteers trained	109	598

Narrative description of achievements

The operation provided vital support to the Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) through the procurement and distribution of branded golf shirts and bush jackets for volunteers, staff, and National Disaster Response Team members. This initiative significantly enhanced the visibility of the National Society during field operations, community outreach, and coordination meetings. The branded materials not only promoted recognition and trust among communities and stakeholders but also served as a platform for disseminating the Movement's Fundamental Principles through the messages printed on them. This visibility and principled messaging contributed to reinforcing the identity and credibility of MRCS as a neutral and impartial humanitarian actor.

In addition to material support, the operation enabled MRCS to conduct a comprehensive review of its 2024/2025 seasonal emergency response. This reflective process allowed the National Society to assess operational effectiveness, document lessons learned, and identify areas for improvement in preparedness and response planning. Furthermore, response supported MRCS to actively participate in various emergency coordination platforms at national and district levels, strengthening its engagement with government agencies, humanitarian partners, and other stakeholders. These efforts not only improved coordination and information sharing but also positioned MRCS as a key contributor to national disaster management efforts.

Ns monitoring visit

MRCS Headquarters and district teams conducted monitoring visits to the operation to provide on-site technical support and to strengthen the quality of implementation. The majority of these visits were undertaken jointly with the Department of Refugees (DfR) and the District Council, enabling coordinated assessments of the immediate needs of asylum seekers. Through this collaborative approach, partners were able to verify emerging gaps, align response actions, and ensure that assistance was timely, appropriate, and responsive to the evolving context on the ground.

Lessons learnt workshops

The district Lessons learnt was comprised of the District Commissioner for Nsanje, the District Disaster Risk Management Committee, which is comprised of Social welfare, Department of Water, Shelter, Health, Wash, Environment, the army, police and other stakeholders.

The response highlighted the importance of coordination, but also exposed gaps. Differences in policy and mandates. Making things worse was the situation where the Department of Refugees (DfR) for Malawi was the one dealing with the Department of Disaster in Mozambique complicated decision-making. The absence of clear district level guidelines on handling asylum seekers further added to confusion. On the positive side, organisations showed a strong willingness to collaborate, and the cluster approach brought together seven active sectors that collectively achieved significant results. Weekly review meetings played a vital role in surfacing problems early and enabling quick solutions. These mechanisms demonstrated the value of structured coordination but need to be reinforced with clear roles, responsibilities, and policies.

The National lessons learnt, in attendance, were DoDMA, Department for Refugees, and all the sectors that were represented at the district level were available at the national level.

The response highlights cross-sectoral lessons and recommendations to improve preparedness, coordination, and efficiency in future emergencies. Key priorities include prepositioning supplies, strengthening logistics and partner coordination, improving data management to prevent duplication and ghost beneficiaries, and building local capacity. Timely and quality assistance across shelter, food security, cash, health, and WASH is emphasised, alongside promoting dignity through flexible assistance modalities and inclusive, disability friendly infrastructure. Environmental sustainability, protection of vulnerable groups, restoration of family links, and strengthened accountability, security, and cross-border coordination are critical to ensuring effective, dignified, and resilient humanitarian responses.

Overall, this support contributed meaningfully to National Society Strengthening by enhancing operational visibility, promoting



principled humanitarian action, fostering institutional learning, and reinforcing MRCS's leadership role in emergency coordination. These gains are expected to have a lasting impact on the Society's capacity to respond effectively and accountably to future emergencies.

Lessons Learnt

The support contributed meaningfully to National Society Strengthening by enhancing operational visibility, promoting principled humanitarian action, fostering institutional learning, and reinforcing MRCS's leadership role in emergency coordination. These gains are expected to have a lasting impact on the Society's capacity to respond effectively and accountably to future emergencies.

Challenges

- a) Fragmented coordination mechanisms among humanitarian actors led to duplication or gaps.
- b) Limited data sharing between agencies affected planning and response.
- c) Resource constraints hindered regular coordination meetings and joint assessments.



Financial Report



DREF Operation

Final Report (CHF)

Date from: 1 Jan 2025 to 31 Aug 2026

MDRMW022 - Malawi - Population Movement

Operating timeframe: Start date: 11-Feb-2025 End date: 30-Sep-2025

Appeal launch date: 13-Feb-2025

I. Summary

	Actual (CHF)
Opening Balance	0
Funds & Other Income	499,942
DREF Response Pillar	499,942
DREF Anticipatory Pillar	
Expenditure	-439,641
Closing Balance	60,301

II. Expenditure by planned operations / enabling approaches

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
PO01 - Shelter and Basic Household Items	117,995	18,611	99,384
PO02 - Livelihoods			
PO03 - Multi-purpose Cash	60,027	93,395	-33,368
PO04 - Health	21,776	78,821	-57,045
PO05 - Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	146,752	156,662	-9,910
PO06 - Protection, Gender and Inclusion	4,888		4,888
PO07 - Education			
PO08 - Migration	4,209		4,209
PO09 - Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	30,513	12,928	17,585
PO10 - Community Engagement and Accountability	20,097		20,097
PO11 - Environmental Sustainability			
Planned Operations Total	406,257	360,417	45,840
EA01 - Coordination and Partnerships			
EA02 - Secretariat Services	16,267	9,800	6,467
EA03 - National Society Strengthening	77,418	69,424	7,994
Planned Operations Total	93,685	79,224	14,461
Total	499,942	439,641	60,301

III. Expenditure by budget category & group

Prepared on 23-Sep-2026

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[Click here for the complete financial report](#)

Please explain variances (if any)

The main reason the DREF operation was not implemented as originally planned was the rapid and unforeseen change in the operational context following the voluntary repatriation of Mozambican asylum seekers from Malawi. The operation was initially designed to support 7,456 asylum seekers (approximately 3,640 households) over six months. However, between 28 February and 13 March 2025, a joint Malawi-Mozambique repatriation exercise resulted in the return of 7,076 asylum seekers, leaving only 336 households (671 individuals) in Nyamithuthu Camp. Following the Refugee Status Determination (RSD) exercise, none of the remaining asylum seekers qualified for



refugee status and the Government of Malawi officially closed Nyamithuthu Camp on 30 April 2025. The heavy rainfall and flooding in March and April also complicated an already worse situation.

As a result:

1. The target population reduced dramatically, making several planned emergency activities no longer relevant or necessary.
2. Major shelter, NFI, and cash assistance requirements declined substantially because the majority of the intended beneficiaries had already repatriated.
3. The operation shifted from supporting asylum seekers to addressing the impacts left on host communities, particularly damage to water systems, schools, sanitation infrastructure, and community resilience.
4. A temporary stop-work order issued by the Department for Refugees (DfR) delayed implementation of key activities and procurement processes during March, reducing the expenditure rate and implementation progress.
5. Procurement delays, inflation, seasonal flooding, poor road access, and the redesign of activities towards host community support further affected implementation timelines.
6. Some activities originally planned under the emergency response were reclassified as recovery or resilience interventions and therefore deprioritized under the DREF. Notably, the procurement of 2,000 energy-efficient stoves and 5,000 briquettes was removed from the emergency scope.

Output Variance

PO01 Shelter - Large procurement quantities initially planned for 2,500 households were no longer required because only 336 households remained. This significantly reduced expenditure requirements.

PO04 Health – Due to heavy rain and flooding in the periods leading to March and April 2025 caused the water levels in Shire River rising. This exposed the asylum seekers and host community to cholera, diarrheal diseases, malaria, respiratory infections, malnutrition, injuries, and mental health distress. This also led to contamination of water sources, destroy livelihoods, damage health infrastructure, and disrupt essential health services, increasing vulnerability among children, pregnant women, the elderly, and people with chronic illnesses. With this more interventions we prioritised to minimize these health impacts

PO05 Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) - Major capital investments including:

- 3 boreholes
- Solarization systems
- 10,000-litre water tanks
- School latrine rehabilitation
- Desludging

required additional assessments and procurement, necessitating a no-cost extension beyond August 2025.

PO06 Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI) - Reduced beneficiary caseload resulted in lower demand for PGI activities and related training events.

PO08 Migration and Displacement (RFL) - Lower-than-anticipated protection caseload and camp closure reduced expenditures under RFL services.

PO09 Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery - The procurement of:

- 2,000 energy-efficient stoves
- 5,000 briquettes

was removed from the emergency scope and deferred to longer-term resilience programming. This represents one of the largest budget variances.

PO10 Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) - Trainings postponed due to repatriation activities and operational reprioritization. Reduced operational period and shifting context. Mid-course operational redesign affected planned engagement structures.

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