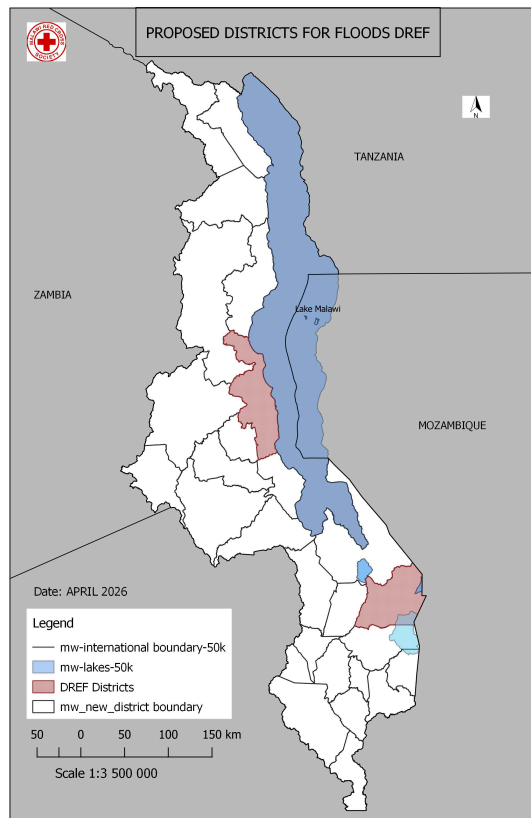




Some damaged households in Mchinji District @MRCS

Appeal: MDRMW025	Total DREF Allocation: CHF 746,437	Crisis Category: Orange	Hazard: Flood
Glide Number: -	People Affected: 359,999 people	People Targeted: 45,885 people	
Event Onset: Sudden	Operation Start Date: 06-02-2026	New Operational End Date: 30-09-2026	Total Operating Timeframe: 7 months
Reporting Timeframe Start Date: 06-02-2026		Reporting Timeframe End Date: 30-09-2026	
Additional Allocation Requested: 371,513		Targeted Regions: Central Region	

Description of the Event



DREF targeted districts @MRCs

Date of event

27-03-2026

What happened, where and when?

In early January, Nkhosakota District experienced its first wave of devastating floods, triggered by heavy rainfall exceeding 285 mm in a single day. The floods destroyed homes, farmland, and infrastructure, leaving communities vulnerable and struggling to recover. This initial disaster marked the beginning of a prolonged crisis that would intensify in the months ahead.

Furthermore on 5–6 January 2026, the Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services (DCCMS) issued forecasts warning of extreme rainfall across several districts. These alerts reached thresholds that triggered preparedness measures, including the activation of the Malawi Red Cross Society's Simplified Early Action Protocol (sEAP) in Salima District. While Salima was prioritized for anticipatory action, Nkhosakota remained highly exposed and at risk.

On 20 January 2026, Nkhosakota was struck by a second, more severe wave of flooding. This compounded the destruction from December, hitting communities that had not yet recovered. The floods displaced 2,132 households (10,912 people) into 14 camps, caused 12 deaths, 39 injuries, and 2 missing persons, and inflicted widespread damage on homes, schools, health facilities, WASH systems, and crops. The scale of destruction created urgent humanitarian needs and highlighted the district's chronic vulnerability.

By 21 January 2026, government assessments confirmed the extensive damage in Nkhosakota. Recognizing the severity of the situation, the Government of Malawi formally addressed a request for support to the Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCs) on 4 February 2026. This appeal aimed to ensure the rapid scale-up of life-saving assistance to affected households.

In February 2026, the MRCs launched a Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) Response in Nkhosakota. Through this intervention, 1,425 households received cash distributions of MK90,000 each, helping families meet immediate needs and begin restoring livelihoods. While

impactful, the response was limited compared to the scale of displacement and destruction, leaving significant gaps in humanitarian coverage.

On 15th March, the Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services issued a Heavy Rainfall Warning Update on 15 March 2026, valid from 16 to 18 March 2026, noting that a low-pressure system would bring heavy rainfall across lakeshore areas and the southern region. This forecast materialized, resulting in continuous rainfall during the stated period, which led to localized flash flooding in saturated, low-lying areas. Districts most affected included Nkhotakota, Salima, Blantyre, Thyolo, Chiradzulu, and Mulanje, with additional flooding risk in Chikwawa and Nsanje due to runoff from highlands. Rainfall exceeded 100mm in some areas, intensifying flood potential. Residents were advised to avoid crossing flooded rivers, stay clear of low-lying zones, and remain cautious during thunderstorms, particularly in landslide-prone districts of the Southern Highlands. From this advisory, more districts were affected than those which were mentioned in the warning by DCCMS.

Between 15 and 18 March 2026, Malawi started reporting nationwide flooding, affecting 23 councils, including Balaka, Blantyre, Chikwawa, Dedza, Machinga, Mangochi, Salima, Zomba, and others. In total, 69,088 households (310,896 people) were affected, with 6,155 households displaced into 84 camps. The floods caused 34 deaths and 197 injuries in Mangochi, Machinga, with figures expected to rise as assessments continued in inaccessible areas. This nationwide disaster compounded earlier impacts in Nkhotakota and other districts, stretching response capacity across the country. This inter-agency assessment affirmed these figures

On 25 March 2026, the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) issued an official update confirming the scale of impact across the affected councils. The department appealed for US\$10 million (≈K17 billion) to meet immediate humanitarian needs, restore basic services, and initiate early recovery. This marked the latest step in mobilizing coordinated humanitarian response and resource mobilization.



Delivery of NFIs during Anticipatory Action in Salima



One of the affected household in Machinga district due to the recent flooding



The MRCS National Treasure hands Cash to a beneficiary in Nkhotakota



Nkhotakota District Council officer disseminating Cholera prevention

Scope and Scale

Nkhotakota District was severely impacted by the cumulative effects of the 2025/26 rainy season, which brought successive flooding events that compounded vulnerabilities across already affected communities. The first wave of flooding occurred in January 2026, when rainfall exceeded 285 mm in a single day, destroying homes, farmland, and infrastructure. This was followed by flood forecasts issued by the Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services (DCCMS) in early January 2026, which indicated the likelihood of extreme heavy rainfall across several parts of the country. The forecasts proved accurate, as the predicted heavy rains materialised into widespread flooding. In response, the Malawi Red Cross Society activated its Simplified Early Action Protocol (sEAP), focusing on anticipatory activities in Salima District, where the alert was highest. Despite this, Nkhotakota emerged as a critical hotspot requiring urgent humanitarian support due to its repeated exposure to flooding.

In February 2026, the district was struck by a second, more severe wave of floods, compounding the destruction from December. This event displaced 2,132 households, affecting approximately 10,912 people, and resulted in 12 deaths, 39 injuries, and two missing persons. The floods destroyed homes, blew off roofs, and caused extensive damage to critical infrastructure, particularly health and WASH

facilities. Survivors were initially accommodated in 14 displacement camps, many of which have since been decommissioned as families attempted to return home despite limited support. The recurrence of floods before recovery efforts could be completed underscored the district's chronic vulnerability and the urgent need for sustained humanitarian assistance.

These localised disasters formed part of a broader national crisis marked by stormy rains, strong winds, flash floods, and lightning across 29 councils. By February, 36,283 households, approximately 163,274 people had been affected nationwide, with 40 deaths and 209 injuries recorded. The cumulative destruction exacerbated food insecurity, as farmland and household food stocks were washed away, leaving communities vulnerable to hunger and malnutrition. Vulnerable groups such as children, elderly people, people with disabilities, and female-headed households faced disproportionate impacts, including disrupted schooling, poor living conditions in camps, and heightened health risks.

The situation remained ongoing, as heavy rainfall continued across Malawi, progressively increasing soil saturation levels. The risk period persisted until March 2026, when another wave of nationwide flooding struck between 15 and 18 March. This disaster affected 69,088 households with approximately 310,896 people across 23 councils, displaced 6,155 households into 84 camps, and resulted in 34 deaths and 197 injuries. The March floods compounded earlier impacts in Nkhotakota and other districts, stretching response capacity across the country and leaving tens of thousands of households in urgent need of life-saving assistance. Taken together, the past and present impacts illustrate the combined scale of the disaster: Nkhotakota District stands at the center of humanitarian concern, while nationwide, communities remain displaced or affected. The cumulative effects of successive floods have created urgent needs for shelter, WASH, food, health, protection, and livelihood support, underscoring the importance of coordinated humanitarian response and sustained resource mobilization.

In addition to Nkhotakota, Machinga District was also heavily affected during the March 2026 floods. The district reported 7,045 households affected, with 110 households displaced into two camps, alongside 3 deaths and 32 injuries. Farmland and household food stocks were washed away, leaving communities exposed to hunger and malnutrition. The destruction of homes and livelihoods has created urgent humanitarian needs, particularly for displaced families who face challenges in accessing shelter, clean water, and healthcare. Given the scale of impacts in both Nkhotakota and Machinga, there is a pressing need to extend the current Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) support beyond Nkhotakota to include Machinga District. Expanding assistance would ensure that vulnerable households in Machinga receive life-saving support, while also strengthening the overall humanitarian response capacity to address the compounded effects of the 2025/26 rainy season. This extension is critical to safeguard lives, restore dignity, and reduce the risk of prolonged displacement and food insecurity in both districts, while maintaining a coordinated national response to the widespread impacts of flooding.

Source Information

Source Name	Source Link
1. Flooding Alert from DCCMS	https://malawiredcross-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/stembo_redcross_mw/IQDETU-KnpQsSoC2DXhhS3IKAc5dmHNvM9Wi0QihfqUHQ24?e=dOuvom
2. 2nd Update on flooding	https://malawiredcross-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/stembo_redcross_mw/IQD2tkGU9k1zQqS8MmzeztFuAR8pasyCRNv4w9gm174DMx4?e=ttqf7O

Summary of Changes

Are you changing the timeframe of the operation	Yes
Are you changing the operational strategy	No
Are you changing the target population of the operation	Yes
Are you changing the geographical location	Yes
Are you making changes to the budget	Yes



Are you requesting an additional allocation?

Yes

Please explain the summary of changes and justification:

Here's a consolidated narrative without a table, with a clear justification for why the National Society has taken this approach:

The Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS), with support from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) through the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF), has been responding to floods in Nkhotakota District. The initial operation targeted Traditional Authorities (TAs) Kanyenda and Malengachanzi, but following consultations with the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) and the Nkhotakota District Council, the focus shifted to TAs Nkhanga and Kalimanjira, as government support had already reached the original areas. While this adjustment was underway, a new wave of flooding affected 23 districts nationwide, including Machinga District, significantly increasing humanitarian needs. In response, MRCS is requesting additional funding to scale up its operation, expanding coverage to Machinga District (TAs Mchinguza and Chamba). The revised operation now targets 2,850 households with multipurpose cash transfers and 500 households with non-food items (NFIs), with a total budget requirement of CHF 746,437.

The rationale for this scale-up is grounded in the urgent humanitarian situation. The new floods displaced households and destroyed livelihoods, requiring immediate intervention. Expanding the geographical scope to include Machinga ensures equitable support for vulnerable communities, while the targeting shift within Nkhotakota aligns with government priorities and avoids duplication of efforts. Importantly, although the targeted areas have changed, the overall population size and vulnerability profile remain consistent, as both Nkhotakota and Machinga interventions focus on rural communities with similar needs where the population density is low.

The revised operation introduced several strengthened interventions to meet the heightened humanitarian needs. Cash assistance was expanded from 1,425 households to 2,850 households across both districts, with each household receiving MK 90,000 per month for three months. Shelter support was scaled up, with tarpaulin and blanket distributions doubled to cover 500 households, compared to the initial 250. WASH interventions were reinforced through the provision of 1,000 buckets, doubled soap allocations, and increased chlorine distribution to safeguard health, now reaching 500 households compared to 250 initially. Volunteer engagement was also enhanced, with the number rising to 400 and training broadened to include epidemic control, hygiene promotion, and mental health and psychosocial support. Community engagement activities were extended to both districts, ensuring participatory dialogue platforms and feedback mechanisms are in place. Finally, visibility and humanitarian diplomacy were strengthened through expanded media documentation, donor profiling, and joint monitoring with government stakeholders, ensuring transparency and accountability across the operation.

The National Society has taken this approach to ensure that humanitarian assistance is both equitable and aligned with national priorities. By expanding to Machinga, MRCS is addressing newly affected populations while avoiding duplication of efforts in Nkhotakota, where government support had already been provided in the original target areas. The scale-up reflects the severity of the floods, which displaced households and destroyed livelihoods across multiple districts, necessitating a broader and more robust response. Doubling NFIs and expanding cash assistance ensures that immediate needs for shelter, health, and livelihoods are met, while increased volunteer engagement strengthens community-level resilience and service delivery. Enhanced visibility and accountability measures safeguard donor confidence and reinforce MRCS's commitment to transparency. Ultimately, this approach allows MRCS to complement government interventions, safeguard dignity, restore livelihoods, and build resilience among Malawi's most vulnerable households.

Given the increase in scope and scale, this operation update also covers a time frame extension from 31 August to 30 September 2026.

IFRC Network Actions Related To The Current Event

Secretariat

The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is providing technical support to MRCS across different aspects of the ongoing response operations in the country. MRCS is also receiving additional technical support from the Harare Cluster team, while IFRC is leading fundraising initiatives to mobilize resources in support of MRCS's operations. Currently, IFRC has provided a total sum of CHF374,924 to MRCS in support of the current response. The CCD has supported the NS in the development of the operation implementation plan and is working closely to ensure the funds are implemented within the required timeframes.



Participating National Societies	The Danish Red Cross (DRC) is providing technical support to the Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) in its flood response operations. This support includes the provision of vehicles that facilitate the delivery of relief and response activities in affected districts. In addition, through its Community Resilience Project, DRC is supporting volunteers engaged in the response and mobilizing resources to strengthen operational capacity. As part of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, DRC contributes to the collective response through regular partner coordination calls and meetings. During these engagements, emergency issues are discussed, and partners, including DRC and IFRC, provide technical input, resources, and strategic guidance to reinforce MRCS's plans and approaches to emergencies. This collaborative support ensures that MRCS can deliver timely, well-coordinated, and effective assistance to affected communities while maintaining alignment with national priorities and Movement standards.
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ICRC Actions Related To The Current Event

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) does not currently have a delegation in Malawi and has not been involved in the ongoing response

Other Actors Actions Related To The Current Event

Government has requested international assistance	Yes
National authorities	The Department of Disaster Management Office has supported the provision of maize flour, beans, buckets, plastic plates and plastic sheets to a few affected households only
UN or other actors	The ongoing flood response in Malawi is being supported by a range of humanitarian actors working alongside the Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) and government structures. Several international and national NGOs, as well as UN agencies, have mobilized resources and expertise to complement the operation. Key partners include Self Help Africa, Plan Malawi, World Vision, UNICEF, and the World Food Programme (WFP). Their contributions span from food assistance, child protection, livelihood recovery, and essential supplies, reinforcing the collective effort to address urgent humanitarian needs and safeguard the dignity and resilience of affected communities

Are there major coordination mechanism in place?

DoDMA is coordinating the response across the District Councils with support from different partners. The district has activated the cluster system, which is responsible for the thematic coordination of the response. MRCS staff and volunteers are members of this coordination mechanism.

District Disaster Risk Reduction Committees are coordinating the response at the district level, supported by Area Disaster Risk Management Committees at the community level. At the camp level, camp management committees have been established to oversee day-to-day management of displaced households. MRCS is represented in all these structures and remains a key stakeholder supporting affected communities. At the national level, the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) continues to provide overall coordination through the cluster system, with MRCS co-leading the Shelter and Search and Rescue clusters



Needs (Gaps) Identified



Shelter Housing And Settlements

Following the 2025/26 flooding that affected several districts, shelter, housing, and settlement needs remained critical, with significant gaps undermining the safety and dignity of affected households. In Nkhotakota, the January floods displaced 2,132 households (10,912 people), forcing families into 14 temporary camps or overcrowded relatives' homes. Many houses constructed with mud walls and grass-thatched roofs were completely destroyed or severely damaged. Emergency shelter assistance was insufficient to meet demand, and access to durable shelter materials, tools, and technical guidance for safe reconstruction remained limited. Inadequate land tenure security and the absence of planned relocation options continued to expose communities to repeated flood risks, hindering recovery and resilience. Settlement-level infrastructure such as drainage, access roads, and basic services was also damaged, further constraining safe return and rebuilding.

In Machinga, the March 2026 floods affected 7,045 households, with 110 households displaced into two camps, alongside 3 deaths and 32 injuries. Housing destruction was widespread, particularly among vulnerable households relying on traditional construction methods. The destruction of homes and livelihoods created urgent humanitarian needs, particularly for displaced families who faced challenges in accessing shelter and Non-food items.

Taken together, the combined impact across Nkhotakota and Machinga amounts to 9,177 households (45885 people) directly affected or displaced, with thousands of homes destroyed or severely damaged. Both districts face overlapping vulnerabilities: widespread housing destruction, displacement into temporary camps, loss of livelihoods, and inadequate access to shelter materials. The cumulative effect of successive floods has left households without safe housing, while settlement-level infrastructure damage continues to hinder recovery. The affected households urgently need lifesaving shelter and essential household items to support temporary shelter for displaced and affected people, as well as reconstruction. The following activities will be done
Detailed assessment of the needs and vulnerabilities, damages of affected households by volunteers and staff in Nkhotakota and Machinga

- Procure and distribute 1000 tarpaulins to support temporary shelter construction.
- Procure and distribute 1000 blankets to safeguard the dignity and well-being of affected families.
- Community awareness on building back safe/better, DRR, AA activities and awareness building in Nkhotakota and Machinga Districts
- Support the distribution cost for Nkhotakota and Machinga
- Support operational costs for volunteers and district stakeholders for Nkhotakota and Machinga districts
- Support the deployment of NDRT to support distribution for Nkhotakota and Machinga districts
- Procure and distribute 200 Bibs for volunteers (100 for Nkhotakota and Machinga, respectively)



Multi purpose cash grants

Floods in Nkhotakota District during the 2025/26 rainy season struck twice in December 2025 and February 2026 displacing 2,132 households (10,912 people) and destroying homes, farmland, and productive assets. Families lost food stocks, livestock, fishing equipment, and small-scale trading assets, severely undermining income sources and leaving them vulnerable to hunger and malnutrition. Many households had not recovered from the lean season, and the additional shock eroded resilience and heightened risks of food insecurity. In Machinga District, the March 2026 floods affected 7,045 households, with 110 households displaced into two camps, alongside 3 deaths and 32 injuries. The destruction of farmland, housing, and household reserves compounded vulnerabilities, leaving families exposed to hunger and poor living conditions. Livelihood challenges are central: repeated floods stripped households of productive assets, reduced access to farmland, and disrupted small-scale businesses, weakening coping capacity and deepening dependency on relief. Immediate assistance is required to stabilize food consumption and support recovery.

Priority activities will include: -

- Conduct CVA awareness information in Nkhotakota and Machinga districts
- Conduct Beneficiary identification, registration and verification in Nkhotakota and Machinga districts
- Provision of multipurpose cash to 2850 households @ Mk 90000 per month for a period of three months
- Payment to FSP distributing cash 6%
- Support the deployment of volunteers to support and monitor the cash transfer process to the beneficiaries in Nkhotakota and Machinga Districts
- Conduct post-distribution monitoring in Nkhotakota and Machinga
- Support district and community entry and exit meetings in Nkhotakota and Machinga
- Support District technical facilitation by NDRT members in Nkhotakota and Machinga districts





Health

The floods in Nkhotakota and Machinga Districts have displaced thousands of households, leaving communities exposed to poor living conditions and heightened health risks. Overcrowding in camps has disrupted access to services and increased vulnerability to cholera, malaria, and other communicable diseases, while psychosocial distress has emerged from the loss of property, livelihoods, and loved ones. To strengthen community resilience, the response will prioritize disease prevention, health promotion, and psychosocial support.

Key activities include:

- Training of 200 volunteers in epidemic control to enhance preparedness and response capacity.
- Supporting 200 volunteers per district to conduct hygiene promotion activities three days per month.
- Training of 200 volunteers in mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) to provide care and counseling to affected households.

Support Deployment of 20 mobile outreach clinics to deliver integrated services for children under five, pregnant and lactating women, chronically ill persons, and youth



Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

In terms of WASH, flooding severely affected sanitation and hygiene, particularly in temporary displacement camps located in schools. Safe drinking water access has been compromised, latrines have collapsed, and handwashing facilities are lacking, increasing the risk of cholera and other diarrheal diseases. Menstrual hygiene management services have also been disrupted, while boreholes and other water sources have been contaminated by floodwaters. To address these urgent needs, the response will focus on WASH and hygiene promotion. This includes the provision of handwashing buckets, soap, chlorine, support menstrual hygiene and personal well-being, water treatment with chlorine HTH, and hygiene promotion campaigns to prevent disease outbreaks. Handwashing items will be procured and distributed to affected households to reduce further risks.

The consolidated targets for both districts are:

- Procure and distribute 1,000 buckets (20L)
- Procure and distribute 2,000 units of laundry soap
- Procure and distribute 3000 units of bathing soap
- Procure and distribute 8 chlorine units (25L)



Protection, Gender And Inclusion

The displacement of thousands of households created urgent Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI) needs. Displacement, loss of livelihoods, and overcrowded shelters have heightened risks of gender-based violence, child protection concerns, family separation, and exploitation, particularly for women, girls, older persons, persons with disabilities, and female-headed households. Access to safe and confidential protection services, including psychosocial support and referral pathways, has been limited, especially in hard-to-reach areas. Inadequate lighting, privacy, and sex-segregated facilities in temporary shelters further exacerbate protection risks.

To address these gaps, the response will focus on PGI mainstreaming and community engagement through the following activities:

- Conduct orientation of volunteers in Gender based violence, referral pathways and PSS support
- Support volunteers to create awareness on dangers of Gender based violence in camps and communities hosting IDPs in Nkhotakota and Machinga districts



Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation And Recovery

Communities in Nkhotakota and Machinga Districts remain highly exposed to recurrent flooding due to their terrain, geographical position, and widespread poor construction practices. Weak site selection for housing, low construction standards, and extensive environmental degradation, particularly deforestation have worsened vulnerability, leaving households at risk year after year. These factors demand proactive measures that combine safe shelter awareness, environmental protection, and alignment with government-led risk reduction and climate adaptation efforts. To reduce further risks, the following activities are recommended in both districts:

- Community 10 outreaches with key messages on safe shelter construction using the Participatory Approach to Safe Shelter Awareness (PASSA).
- Conduct 10 Community dialogues and awareness campaigns to strengthen ownership and resilience against future floods.





Community Engagement And Accountability

The significance of Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) in disaster situations cannot be overstated. It ensures that affected populations are fully informed, actively involved, and able to hold responders accountable, thereby safeguarding dignity and trust. In the flood-affected districts of Nkhotakota and Machinga, communities require clear communication on WASH, Shelter, Health, Protection, Livelihoods, and the criteria for assistance. Strong engagement mechanisms also help reduce misinformation, strengthen participation, and ensure interventions are responsive to actual needs.

Key activities to be implemented in both districts include:

- Orient 200 volunteers and staff in CEA in both districts.
- Facilitate 10 dialogue platforms to leverage local knowledge and strengthen community participation.
- Establishment and management of feedback and complaints mechanisms to ensure accountability and inclusive decision-making.
- Mobilization of 200 volunteers (100 from Nkhotakota and 100 from Machinga) to support PGI activities at community level.

Any identified gaps/limitations in the assessment

A thorough gap analysis is essential in understanding the limitations of preliminary flood assessments, as it highlights where information may be incomplete or biased and ensures that future interventions are better targeted, inclusive, and evidence-based. Identifying these gaps allows humanitarian actors to refine methodologies, strengthen coordination, and ensure that vulnerable groups are not overlooked.

Below are the Key Gaps and Limitations Identified:

- **Time Constraints:** Rapid assessments limited household-level detail, relying heavily on estimates and key informant inputs, which reduced accuracy and depth.
- **Resource Limitations:** Constrained human and financial resources restricted coverage, prevented the use of advanced tools (e.g., GIS, mobile data collection), and limited sex, age, and disability-disaggregated data.
- **Accessibility Challenges:** Flood-damaged roads and bridges made many communities inaccessible, leaving remote and vulnerable populations underrepresented.
- **Geographic Coverage:** Physical and logistical barriers led to prioritisation of accessible areas, risking exclusion of pockets of severe need.
- **Data Reliability:** Heavy reliance on secondary sources and community leaders introduced bias, with vulnerable groups and household coping mechanisms often overlooked.
- **Sectoral Depth:** While shelter, WASH, food security, health, and protection were assessed, livelihoods, education, and psychosocial support received limited attention.
- **Coordination Limitations:** Multi-agency coordination challenges caused inconsistencies in tools and approaches, duplication in some areas, and delays in consolidating findings.
- **Community Participation:** Limited involvement of affected populations reduced opportunities to capture local perspectives, feedback, and priorities, weakening inclusivity and accountability.
- **Information Management:** Fragmented reporting formats and a lack of standardised tools delayed data consolidation and analysis, affecting timely decision-making.

Operational Strategy

Overall objective of the operation

The overall objective of the operation is to scale up the response to continue supporting Nkhotakota District while extending assistance to the flood-affected Machinga District. Across both districts, the operation will reach 7,177 most vulnerable households (45,885 people) affected by floods, with the aim of meeting their immediate essential needs in a safe, dignified, and timely manner. The operation further seeks to support affected families to recover from the crisis, restore their basic living conditions, and protect and strengthen their livelihoods, thereby enhancing resilience to future shocks. Given the increase in scope and scale, this operation update also covers a time frame extension from 31 August to 30 September 2026.

Operation strategy rationale

The operation strategy is grounded in the recognition that the needs of flood-affected communities have increased from Nkhotakota to include Machinga District. The response will cut across multiple sectors, requiring a comprehensive and multisectoral approach. The floods have caused widespread damage to shelter and settlements, disrupted livelihoods, heightened health risks, including psychosocial distress, compromised water and sanitation systems, and increased protection concerns. Addressing these interconnected challenges



demands an integrated response that restores dignity, safeguards health, and strengthens resilience.

In addition, the decision to shift targeted areas within Nkhotakota from TAs Kanyenda and Malengachanzi to Nkhanga and Kalimanjira was based on consultations with DoDMA and the District Council, ensuring alignment with government priorities and avoiding duplication of efforts where support had already been provided. At the same time, the expansion to newly affected areas in Machinga District were necessitated by the scale of the disaster, which affected over 7,000 households in the district. By broadening the geographical scope, MRCS intends to ensure equitable support to vulnerable communities while maintaining operational efficiency.

The strategy retains the same core activities, such as cash assistance, shelter, WASH, health, and community engagement, because these interventions directly address the most urgent needs identified during assessments. Cash and Voucher Assistance empowers households to meet diverse urgent needs, while NFIs such as tarpaulins and blankets restore dignity and stability for displaced families. WASH interventions, including buckets, soap, and chlorine, reduce the risk of waterborne diseases, while health and psychosocial support mitigate epidemic risks and help families cope with distress. Volunteer engagement and training strengthen community-level delivery, ensuring outreach and accountability.

The rationale for scaling up these activities lies in the heightened humanitarian needs and the consistency of vulnerability profiles across both districts. Rural households in Nkhotakota and Machinga face similar challenges, making replication of interventions across districts both practical and impactful. By doubling NFIs, expanding cash transfers, and increasing volunteer capacity, MRCS is able to reach more households while maintaining transparency and accountability.

The revised scaled-up integrated response strategic rationale is as follows. Cash assistance was expanded from 1,425 households to 2,850 households across both districts, with each household receiving MK 90,000 per month for three months. Shelter support was scaled up, with tarpaulin and blanket distributions doubled to cover 500 households, compared to the initial 250. WASH interventions were reinforced through the provision of 1,000 buckets, doubled soap allocations, and increased chlorine distribution to safeguard health, now reaching 500 households compared to 250 initially. Volunteer engagement was also enhanced, with the number rising to 400 and training broadened to include epidemic control, hygiene promotion, and mental health and psychosocial support. Community engagement activities were extended to both districts, ensuring participatory dialogue platforms and feedback mechanisms are in place. Finally, visibility and humanitarian diplomacy were strengthened through expanded media documentation, donor profiling, and joint monitoring with government stakeholders, ensuring transparency and accountability across the operation.

It is worth noting that the Key factors influencing this strategy include government coordination, the NS response strategy and the urgency of addressing immediate humanitarian needs. The approach ensures complementarity with government interventions, while reinforcing MRCS's role as a trusted national responder. Ultimately, this strategy enables MRCS to safeguard dignity, restore livelihoods, and build resilience among Malawi's most vulnerable households, while ensuring that interventions remain evidence-driven, inclusive, and aligned with national priorities.

Targeting Strategy

Who will be targeted through this operation?

The Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) intends to support 2,850 households (14,250 people) directly and 7,177 households (45,885 people) indirectly affected by floods in Nkhotakota and Machinga Districts. Direct assistance will focus on restoring dignity and meeting urgent needs, while indirect support will strengthen resilience and community preparedness. Within these districts, the most affected Traditional Authorities (TAs) will be prioritized based on preliminary assessments, with emphasis on areas that have experienced the greatest structural damage, high concentrations of vulnerable populations, and limited presence of other humanitarian actors. It is important to note that this targeted figure represents a new scale-up and should not be confused with the earlier Nkhotakota-only target. The expansion to Machinga reflects the increased geographical coverage following the new floods. However, because the shift in the targeted areas in Nkhotakota, which was peri-urban to Nkhotakota rural areas, has significantly affected the overall targeted number as both new targeted areas in the two districts are rural with relatively low population density, the overall reach remains proportionate to the scale of need.

The operation specifically targets households that are most impacted and were displaced by the floods. This includes families whose homes have been destroyed or rendered uninhabitable, households with limited economic capacity to recover independently, and those facing multiple layers of vulnerability. Special attention will be given to child-headed households, female-headed households, persons with disabilities, the elderly, and households caring for young children. These groups are at heightened risk of exclusion and require tailored support to meet their immediate needs.

Targeting will be conducted through community-based mechanisms to ensure transparency, accountability, and inclusivity. Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI) principles will be integrated throughout the process to guarantee equitable access to assistance and safeguard the dignity of all recipients. Volunteers will play a key role in beneficiary identification, verification, and follow-up, ensuring that the most vulnerable are reached and supported effectively.



Explain the selection criteria for the targeted population

At the community level, MRCS will work closely with District Disaster Risk Management Committees to identify the most affected areas requiring urgent support. These consultations will be followed by detailed household-level assessments to determine the extent of damage and vulnerability. The targeting strategy is designed to ensure that assistance reaches those most impacted by the floods and those least able to recover without external support.

The primary criteria for selection will include flood-affected households, particularly those whose homes have been damaged or destroyed and who have lost essential household assets. Displaced households living in camps or temporary shelters will be prioritized, as they face heightened risks to safety, dignity, and health. Within the affected population, special attention will be given to children under five years of age, who are highly vulnerable to malnutrition and disease outbreaks, and to pregnant and lactating mothers, whose health and nutritional needs are critical for both themselves and their infants.

Beneficiary verification will be prioritized before distributions are carried out to ensure that assistance reaches those who need it most and that the project achieves meaningful outcomes. Community-based and district-level structures will be actively involved in the verification process, which will be conducted in a transparent and accountable manner.

Additionally, MRCS will provide orientation to volunteers, committees, and local leaders to ensure that the beneficiary identification and selection process is well-coordinated, inclusive, and transparent. This approach will strengthen community ownership, safeguard dignity, and guarantee that the most vulnerable households are not excluded from receiving support.

Total Targeted Population

Women	12,389	Rural	100%
Girls (under 18)	15,142	Urban	0%
Men	8,259	People with disabilities (estimated)	3%
Boys (under 18)	10,095		
Total targeted population	45,885		

Risk and Security Considerations (including "management")

Does your National Society have anti-fraud and corruption policy?	Yes
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
Water borne disease outbreaks such as Cholera in affected areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intensive community sensitization meetings on Hygiene and Sanitation Conduct Pot to Pot water Chlorination. Construction of temporal Pit latrines at temporarily designated camps
Continuous heavy rainfall and projection of further floods	Continuous coordination with the government and other partners in monitoring the weather situation and providing timely alerts to people residing in the affected or disaster-prone areas. Risk reduction efforts at the community level are also an integrated part of the operational strategy to mitigate further impact.
Concurring disasters and increased flooding across the country exceeding the NS society to respond with in country resources	MRCS will use the contingency plan with possible scenarios while mapping available stocks. MRCS will use the existing response plan based on the increased needs and request for more allocation from the requested DREF.
Impassable roads in the affected areas	MRCS works hand in hand with DODMA and other government departments, such as the Malawi Defence Force, which can provide needed transport, such as helicopters, boats, etc., when the need arises.
Further devaluation of the Malawi Kwacha	Continue monitoring the economy and seeking additional funding from the donor
<p>Please indicate any security and safety concerns for this operation:</p> <p>During the recent needs assessment, there were no security and safety concerns that might affect the operation because there are well-organised community structures, such as the Area and Village civil protection committee, who does provide security if the need arises.</p>	
Has the child safeguarding risk analysis assessment been completed?	No

Planned Intervention



Shelter Housing And Settlements

Budget: CHF 70,784

Targeted Persons: 45,885

Targeted Male: 18,355

Targeted Female: 27,530

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of households provided with emergency shelter and settlement assistance	5	0



# of people reached with building back safer/better, DRR, and anticipatory action (AA) awareness activities	45,885	7,539
# of detailed assessments conducted	2	1
# of tarpaulins procured	1,000	0
# of blankets procured	1,000	0

Progress Towards Outcome

Key Activities Undertaken

- So far, the detailed needs assessment was conducted in Nkhotakota and is awaiting the joint assessment report for Machinga district. The procurement of
- Activation of camp management structures and pitching of tents.
- Construction of temporary bathing shelters in camps.
- Provision of essential household items including blankets, sleeping mats, mosquito nets, and kitchen sets.
- NFIs is to be done during the second trench of funding.



Multi Purpose Cash

Budget: CHF 459,751

Targeted Persons: 45,885

Targeted Male: 18,355

Targeted Female: 27,530

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of households supported with unconditional cash	2,850	1,425
# of beneficiaries verified and registered for cash assistance	2,850	1,425
% of surveyed people whose households received MPC are satisfied with the amount received	80	0
# of post distribution monitoring conducted	1	0

Progress Towards Outcome

- MRCS, together with the government stakeholders, conducted a joint assessment of the affected households in consultation with the district council in Nkhotakota district. The district council directed MRCS to work in Traditional Authority Kalimanjira and Nkhanga, where the team conducted CVA awareness.
- 1425 households were registered for cash support, and 250 beneficiaries registered for NFI support.
- All the 1425 households in Nkhotakota district have received first month cash transfer support, and those targeted for NFIs are yet to receive awaiting procurement, which will be done during the second cash transfer.
- PDM is yet to be conducted to determine beneficiary satisfaction of the cash support

Budget: CHF 19,223
Targeted Persons: 45,885
Targeted Male: 18,355
Targeted Female: 27,530

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of volunteers trained in Epidemic control and Mental Health and Psychosocial support (MPHSS)	200	0
# of people reached with health and hygiene promotion	45,885	7,539
# of volunteers trained in Epidemic control and Mental Health and Psychosocial support (MPHSS)	200	100

Progress Towards Outcome

- So far, 100 volunteers have been trained in Mental Health and PsychoSocial support, and 7539 people have been reached with health and hygiene promotion in the Nkhotakota district
- Collaboration with the Ministry of Health to disseminate health messages and support disease prevention.
- Provision of outreach health services in camps and affected communities.
- First aid services delivered by branch disaster response teams.

Search & Rescue / Disaster Response

- Deployment of branch disaster response teams for search and rescue operations.
- Activation of the National Disaster Response Team (NDRT) to support lifesaving interventions.
- Logistics department mobilized boats, vehicles, and response tools for rapid deployment.



Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

Budget: CHF 15,474
Targeted Persons: 45,885
Targeted Male: 18,355
Targeted Female: 27,530

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of 20L water buckets procured	1,000	0
# of bathing soap procured	2,000	0
# of 25kgs chlorine buckets procured	8	0
# of laundry soap procured	3,000	0



Progress Towards Outcome

- Procurement has not yet been initiated, awaiting second trench funding
- Distribution of multi-purpose soap, household buckets, and installation of communal handwashing facilities with taps.
- Hygiene promotion sessions and pot-to-pot chlorination conducted by volunteers.
- Intensification of emergency WASH services in cholera-prone districts.



Protection, Gender And Inclusion

Budget: CHF 9,611

Targeted Persons: 45,885

Targeted Male: 18,355

Targeted Female: 27,530

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of volunteers oriented on GBV, referral pathways and PSS	200	0
# of people reached with n GBV and prevention and referral pathways and PSS	45,885	7,539

Progress Towards Outcome

- 7539 people were oriented on Gender-Based Violence (GBV), referral pathways and Sexual and Gender based violence during the first Cash transfer awareness sessions in Nkhotakota
- Sensitization and awareness-raising on PGI issues in camps.
- Engagement with camp managers and protection structures to safeguard vulnerable groups.



Community Engagement And Accountability

Budget: CHF 24,416

Targeted Persons: 45,884

Targeted Male: 18,355

Targeted Female: 27,530

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of volunteers oriented on CEA & CFM	200	0
# of complaints managed under the project (handled and closed)	200	12
# of dialogue sessions conducted	4	0

Progress Towards Outcome

- Community entry meetings were conducted, beginning with local structures such as the Village Disaster Risk Management Committees (VDRMCs), who were oriented on the project objectives and the beneficiary selection criteria for both cash assistance and



NFIs. Communities were also informed about the available feedback and accountability mechanisms, including suggestion boxes, help desks, and the complaints and grievance system established at the district level.

- To date, some feedback has been received, particularly concerns from certain Group Village Heads that only a limited number of households were selected. These concerns have been addressed through community sensitisation, clarifying that targeting prioritises households whose homes were most severely damaged.



Coordination And Partnerships

Budget: CHF 32,727

Targeted Persons: 39

Targeted Male: 24

Targeted Female: 15

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of Lessons Learnt Workshops	1	0
# of Monitoring visits	3	0
# of featured stories on the mainstream media	3	1

Progress Towards Outcome

- During the reporting period, MRCS worked together with government stakeholders to support the monitoring of beneficiary registration and cash transfers. The stakeholders provided technical guidance to ensure that the MRCS beneficiary selection criteria and cash distribution processes were aligned with established government standards and principles. Both the National and District media teams were engaged to profile the cash distribution exercise.
- Active participation in national and district-level coordination structures.
- Engagement with Partner National Societies (PNS) for resource mobilization.



Secretariat Services

Budget: CHF 24,581

Targeted Persons: 10

Targeted Male: 6

Targeted Female: 4

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of IFRC CCD monitoring visits conducted and field reports shared	2	0
# of Kick off meeting held within 7 days of DREF approval	2	1

Progress Towards Outcome

- After the approval of the Nkhotakota DREF, IFRC convened a meeting with MRCS Senior management and key technical staff to kickstart the project. After this meeting, MRCS also conducted district entry meetings with the Nkhotakota district council and briefed



them about the project.

National Society Strengthening

Budget: CHF 89,869

Targeted Persons: 30

Targeted Male: 22

Targeted Female: 8

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of lessons learnt conducted	1	0

Progress Towards Outcome

During the reporting period, some funds have been used for salary payment, office supplies and bank charges

About Support Services

How many staff and volunteers will be involved in this operation. Briefly describe their role.

This operation will involve approximate 100 volunteers and 21 operational staff . Their support is broken down as below:

Direct supervision , monitoring at branch level is organised by

- 100% District Manager
- 100% Driver
- PMER Coordinator, Finance and Admin Coordinator and Partnership Coordinator will be requested for oversight on the operation in a regular basis.

The Response will receive strategic direction from the staff below:

Secretary General

- Director of Programs and Development
- Director of Finance
- Head of Disaster Management
- Head of Procurement and Corporate Services.
- Head of Health
- Chief Accountant

Other staff supporting the response

- Procurement Officer
- Communications Officer
- Logistics Officer
- Program Assistant

Does your volunteer team reflect the gender, age, and cultural diversity of the people you're helping? What gaps exist in your



volunteer team's gender, age, or cultural diversity, and how are you addressing them to ensure inclusive and appropriate support?

Yes. There are volunteers of different genders, ages, and cultural diversity

If there is procurement, will it be done by National Society or IFRC?

MRCS will utilize the current stock of health items available in the warehouses for the deployment of the mobile health teams, and where necessary, the DREF allocation will be used to replenish the consumed supplies. The NS will collaborate with other partners for support for storage at the branch level through its well-established base. MRCS has taken proactive steps to strengthen its partnerships, renewing its contract with the financial service provider in target areas.

For the remaining procurement and replenishment, MRCS will be doing the procurement, including all the Health and WASH NFI materials, which will be procured locally by the procurement team. The National Society's logistics team, which has extensive expertise in procurement, logistics, and warehouse management, will lead the process in line with IFRC procurement standards. This ensures that all procedures are compliant with international requirements while leveraging the team's strong local knowledge and operational capacity.

The procurement is intended for direct distribution to affected communities rather than for replenishment of central stocks. MRCS will also collaborate with partners to secure storage at the branch level, making use of its well-established base and logistics infrastructure to ensure timely delivery and distribution.

For Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA), MRCS has proactively renewed its contract with the Financial Service Provider (FSP) in the target areas. This step ensures readiness and continuity for CVA implementation, allowing affected households to access assistance quickly and efficiently through established financial channels.

How will this operation be monitored?

Regular branch manager supervision reports will be consolidated to feed into the monitoring plan. The NS HQ will ensure oversight of quality and effective monitoring from technical units, but also from finance.

To strengthen monitoring and reporting performance, MRCS will establish a consolidated reporting calendar aligned with IFRC deadlines within two weeks and share it with the IFRC Delegation for joint tracking. A dedicated reporting focal point will be appointed within one week to coordinate data collection, report drafting, and submission, ensuring clarity of roles and accountability. Monthly coordination meetings between MRCS and the IFRC Delegation/Region will be held to track reporting progress, document action points, and address emerging challenges.

In addition, an accountability and escalation mechanism will be introduced within one month through a reporting alert system between MRCS and the Cluster to monitor status regularly, reduce delays, and ensure that overdue reports are eliminated.

The IFRC CCD PMER will conduct a monitoring visit to the NS for support supervision

The CCD Operations and Finance team will have 2 visits to check on progress and implementation, and for expenditure verification.

Please briefly explain the National Societies communication strategy for this operation

The National Society's communication department will collaborate closely with implementation teams to gather important information and regularly disseminate updates on the operation through various communication channels, including print, electronic, and online platforms. IFRC will assist the NS communications team in communicating with external audiences, particularly focusing on the protracted humanitarian audience.



Budget Overview



DREF OPERATION

Code - Malawi Red Cross Society
Floods

Operating Budget

Planned Operations	599,259
Shelter and Basic Household Items	70,784
Livelihoods	0
Multi-purpose Cash	459,751
Health	19,223
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	15,474
Protection, Gender and Inclusion	9,611
Education	0
Migration	0
Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	0
Community Engagement and Accountability	24,416
Environmental Sustainability	0
Enabling Approaches	147,177
Coordination and Partnerships	32,727
Secretariat Services	24,581
National Society Strengthening	89,869
TOTAL BUDGET	746,437

all amounts in Swiss Francs (CHF)



Contact Information

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[Click here for the reference](#)

