



SIMPLIFIED EARLY ACTION PROTOCOL OPERATIONS UPDATE

Malawi | Pluvial Floods

30th April 2026



Stakeholders during the lessons learnt workshop in Lilongwe

sEAP №: sEAP2024MW01	Operation №: MDRMW023	sEAP approved: 17/10/2025
sEAP triggered (if applicable): 7/01/2026	Early action timeframe: 3 Months	Timeframe covered by this update: 7/01/2026– 30/04/2026

Budget: CHF 219,287
To assist:12,500 people

SIMPLIFIED EARLY ACTION PROTOCOL

Situation Overview

Following the issuance of the forecast by the Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services (DCCMS) on 6 January 2026, the Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) activated its sEAP in line with the impact-based forecast dataset generated by DCCMS, targeting selected areas in the Central Region and parts of the lakeshore districts. Based on the technical guidance provided, Salima District was prioritised for implementation of Early Actions. This decision was informed by the trigger thresholds outlined in the sEAP and observed water level trends, which indicated a high risk of flooding.

By 8 January, prior to the onset of heavy rains, pre-targeting of vulnerable households and beneficiaries was conducted in close coordination with Salima District Council stakeholders, particularly the District Disaster Risk Management Office and the Social Welfare Office. In addition, MRCS undertook community alert and preparedness activities aimed at enhancing awareness, reducing risks, and safeguarding lives and livelihoods.

Summary of revisions to the operation

According to the list of prioritized Early Actions, the Anticipatory Action (AA) interventions initially planned included cash distributions alongside risk reduction activities such as digging drainage trenches to improve water flow, as well as community engagement initiatives, particularly the dissemination of early warning and preparedness messages through local radio, mobile van announcements, and door-to-door sensitization by volunteers.

However, at the time the forecast was issued and Early Action implementation commenced, readiness and pre-positioning activities had not been fully completed, which constrained the scope for effective implementation of the prioritized actions. As a result, MRCS relied partly on existing pre-positioned stocks from its warehouse. Considering the short alert period and limited lead time, some planned activities could not be implemented. In addition, the lack of completed readiness and pre-positioning measures further constrained operational capacity, thereby limiting the effective implementation of certain activities.

In particular, cash distributions were not implemented due to the limited time available for operational preparation, especially the need to engage Financial Service Providers (FSPs), as well as the limited availability of sufficient resources within the country. Furthermore, considering that the district where the activation was undertaken was not part of the prioritized districts, prior beneficiary registration needed to be conducted in time and the selected FSP required funds to be deposited in advance prior to disbursement, which could not be completed within the short implementation window.

In April 2026 as the season came to an end, MRCS conducted a lesson learnt workshop to systematically document key achievements, gaps, and challenges encountered during the activation and implementation phases. The outcomes of this process were tailored to inform improvements and strengthen preparedness and response strategies for the upcoming 2026/2027 rainy season.

The NS received two tranches of funds from the CCD:

- 1st Tranche – Year one readiness and prepositioning of stocks: CHF 81,688
- 2nd Tranche – Early Actions: CHF 53,039
- Total Funds Disbursed – CHF 134,727

Of the funds disbursed, the National Society spent CHF 50,380 and have a balance of CHF 84,347.

The breakdown of the funds is as below:

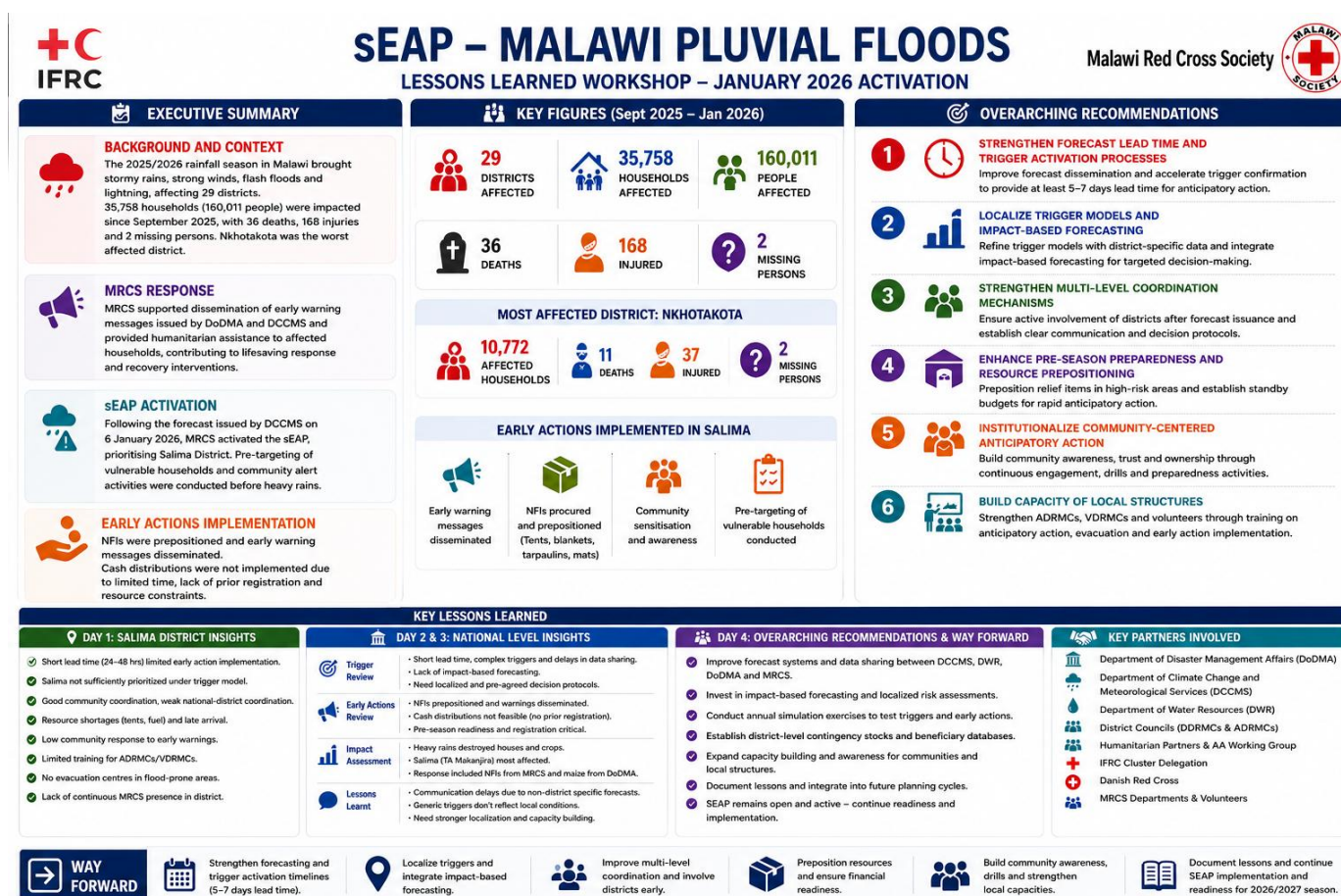
Action	Budget	Expenditure	Balance	Comment
Pre-positioning	46,419.00	32,092.09	14,326.91	These are for Year 1. Second procurement to be done in Year 2 However depending on the forecasts and

				warnings we will strategically preposition the procured items
Readiness	74,907.00	3,716.14	71,190.86	Capacity building trainings and assessments are scheduled in Q3 and 4. The other funds are also earmarked for Year 2 of the SEAP
Early Actions	64,977.00	11,829.57	53,147.43	Once approved by AA DREF, the budget will be reviewed to align with the EA budget requirement and targets

In the meantime, MRCS is submitting this Operations Update to formally request that the SEAP remain active until October 2027. This extension will enable MRCS to continue supporting preparedness and readiness actions ahead of the anticipated rains, with the 2026/2027 rainy season expected to run from October 2026 to March 2027.

The extension of the protocol is justified to consolidate learning from its first operational season and address gaps identified during implementation. The protocol was successfully activated in January 2026 following a forecast issued by the Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services (DCCMS), enabling Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) to implement anticipatory actions in Salima District. However, subsequent flood events did not trigger the sEAP due to technical challenges related to forecast interpretation, trigger performance, and activation decision-making processes. These issues highlighted the need to refine thresholds, improve coordination, and strengthen operational procedures before transitioning to a full EAP.

An extension will allow MRCS and partners to apply recommendations from the lessons learned process, validate revised triggers, strengthen preparedness systems, and maintain readiness for flood-prone communities. It will also support continued alignment with Malawi's National Anticipatory Action Framework while protecting vulnerable households from increasingly frequent and severe flood events.



Prepositioning, readiness and Early Action Overview

PLANNED OPERATIONS

 Shelter, Housing and Settlements	Total number of people to be reached	500HH	36,426CHF
	Number of people reached with shelter, housing and settlement interventions in advance of a hazard	Target	2500
Indicator:	Number of volunteers to support with emergency shelters	Target	100
Readiness Activities	1. Conduct refresher training of 100 volunteers (20 per district) on temporary shelter construction and tent mounting (Training to focus on ensuring that volunteers include some members of the Area/Village Disaster Risk Management Committees have adequate capacity to support communities in pitching large evacuation tents and also construction of temporary shelters when a warning has been issued). 2. Conduct 1 assessment with communities in each of the five target districts to strategically identify evacuation centers in the communities prone to flooding, identify pathways and enhance awareness to the communities.		
Prepositioning activities:	Pre-activation 1. Awareness raising to the communities on flood risks, early warning and advisories to enable them to protect their shelter. 2. Strategic reallocation of tents to communities that do not have safe evacuation centers 3. Conduct beneficiary verification to be supported with rolls of paper sheets to protect their houses Full Activation 1. Procurement of 500 plastic paper sheets rolls (50 meters) to cover shelters on the sidewalls or rooftops in order to protect them from collapsing. The plastic rolls will account for 25,000meters which will be shared to 500 targeted HH per district. 2. Procurement of 72m² tents for communal evacuation. 3. Prepositioning of 5 communal tents in strategic warehousing facilities.		

Priority Early Actions:	1. Carry out distribution of plastic paper rolls to households for them. to strengthen their houses before the rain starts. 2. Pitching tents in strategic evacuation areas. 3. Support evacuation of people to upland areas when 3-day lead time alerts have been issued by DCCMS of persistent rains in high-risk areas.
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Status of implementation

Early Action	Actual Planned	Target Achieved
Carry out distribution of plastic paper rolls to households for them. to strengthen their houses before the rain starts.	500	2500
Pitching tents in strategic evacuation areas.	4	1
Support evacuation of people to upland areas when 3-day lead time alerts have been issued by DCCMS of persistent rains in high-risk areas.		0

The project still has in stock some items which were procured as part of the prepositioning and are currently being stored in strategic warehousing facilities in Lilongwe and Blantyre. Som of the distributed materials during the activation period were from the MRCS stock. The tent that was pitched during the activation was properly removed and has been taken back to the HQ for safe keeping and management in readiness for the next season.

 Multi-purpose Cash	Budget		68,629CHF
	No. people targeted		6,500 people
Indicator:	Number of people reached with multi-purpose cash in advance of a hazard	Target	1000HH
Readiness Activities:	1. Conduct 2 market assessments to determine the minimum expenditure basket (to be coordinated by the National Cash Technical Working Group) in the prioritized districts. 2. Conduct pre-registration of beneficiaries using UBR or JEFAP guidelines and vulnerability identification criteria (outlined in the MRCS CVA SOPs). 3. Train 100 staff and MRCS volunteers on CVA including sensitive CVA checklist, beneficiary registration and cash distribution process, including key messaging, code of conduct and use of CEA specific tools. 4. Conduct 2 Reviews on FSP performance and carry out meeting with pre-identified FSP teams to discuss and agree on modalities (cash/mobile money), revisit terms and conditions in case trigger is not reached and prepositioned funds not used, followed by orientation of FSPs in distribution		

	methodology, code of conduct and humanitarian standards, RC principles and respect and dignity for beneficiaries. 5. Conduct coordination meetings with Movement Cash Working Group to effectively prepare for MPCT.	
Prepositioning Activities:	1. Preposition cash with FSP to enable timely distribution.	
Priority Early Actions:	Pre-Activation 1. Coordinate with Movement Cash Working Group on the possibilities and feasibility of response using cash upon receiving an alert from DCCMS. 2. Deploy NRTs, 4 staff and 20 volunteers previously trained to provide information and assistance to the population related to CVA, including beneficiary selection. 3. Sensitize and mobilize communities on selection criteria and eligibility, including dissemination of the beneficiary list 4. Verification of recipients based on the vulnerability criteria selection list. 5. Inform FSPs to start preparatory arrangements. 6. Pre-positioning of cash and sharing of cash disbursement plan with the FSP. Full activation 1. FSP conduct Resource and funding mobilization. 2. Conduct cash distribution to support 1,000 targeted HH with a transfer value of MWK 100,000 3 days before peak of the floods (the transfer value might be adjusted in line with the National Cash Technical Working Group recommendations).	
Status of implementation		
Early Action	Actual Planned	Target Achieved
Conduct cash distribution to support 1,000 targeted HH with a transfer value of MWK 100,000 3 days before peak of the floods (the transfer value might be adjusted in line with the National Cash Technical Working Group recommendations).	1000	0
The cash that was meant to be distributed as part of early actions wasn't used and is still in the NS bank accounts. According to the lessons learnt workshop it was agreed that MRCS emphasizes to the IFRC DREF that the SEAP remains open until the end of the 2027 season. This will allow the NS time to complete the readiness actions, complete prepositioning of stocks and be ready to activate early actions when the triggers are met later in the year.		

 Risk Reduction, climate adaptation and recovery	Budget	19,736 CHF
	Target	10000 people
Indictor:	Number of people reached with risk reduction and/or climate adaptation interventions in advance of a hazard	
Readiness Activities:	1. Support awareness and sensitization of the communities on the seasonal weather forecast (1 per year). 2. Conduct staff, Government Stakeholders and volunteer orientation on risk monitoring, interpretation of risks levels, using the DCCMS/DWR forecast information and trigger mechanisms – 1 meeting per district. 3. Conduct 5 simulations per district in the community to test the SEAP prioritized activities, identify gaps and document lessons learnt with focus on communication and feedback, CVA and other cross-cutting issues.	
Prepositioning Activities:	1. Procurement of 50KGs polythene bags (5,000 Bags-1000 per district) for filling in sand to be used for building embankments. 2. Procurement of 50 shovels and 25 wheelbarrows (10 and 5 respectively per district) to support the building of the embarkments. 3. Procure 100 bags cement (20 Per District) for embankment reinforcement - the cement will be mixed with sand and the money for buying cement will be done to work within the lead time. 4. Reinforce dykes and riverbanks using sandbags. 5. Identify areas which have potential to drive water in the community, fill in sand in sandbags and establish temporary dykes/embankments to protect public and community infrastructure.	
Priority Early Actions:	Pre-activation 1. Clean and clear drainage systems in the communities allow safe passage of storm water.	
Status of implementation		
Early Action	Actual Planned	Target Achieved
Clean and clear drainage systems in the communities to allow safe passage of storm water	5	0
The activities under this planned action were not implemented and the project plan to implement the in the upcoming season.		



Community Engagement and Accountability

Total number of people

100,000

9,445 CHF

AP Code:102

Indicator:

Number of people reached with community engagement and accountability interventions in advance of a hazard

Readiness Activities:

1. Develop jingles focused on flood risk and preparedness.
2. Develop standardized messages for warnings and alerts in local languages (to be used for dissemination when DCCMS has issues alerts).
3. Develop simple guide on disability-inclusive warnings and alerts in line with the standardized messages.
4. Establish a feedback system to gather community input, complaints, and suggestions through their preferred and trusted communication channels.
5. Develop or revise referral pathways for managing sensitive complaints.
6. Mainstream CEA and PGI in all phases of program implementation.

Priority Early Actions:

Pre-activation

1. Implement the feedback mechanism to involve the community and their representatives in planning the distribution process, while also gathering feedback, complaints, and suggestions.
2. Communicate grievance redressal plans and feedback mechanisms to the community, ensuring beneficiaries are informed in advance about the distribution day, venue, time, and their entitlements following the activation of the trigger. Develop contextualized messages for media dissemination.

Full Trigger

1. Support 200 volunteers conducting meetings and door-to-door dissemination of alerts.
2. Support van publication to disseminate alerts and warnings.
3. Buy airtime for community radio alert on flood risk, preparedness and general advisories through jingles.

Status of implementation

Early Action	Actual Planned	Target Achieved
Support van publication to disseminate alerts and warnings.	5	1
Support 200 volunteers conducting meetings and door-to-door dissemination of alerts.	200	0
Buy airtime for community radio alert on flood risk, preparedness and general advisories through jingles.	5	1

This action was not implemented further after the initial activation in January.

Enabling approaches

 National Society Strengthening	Total Target	86	60,263 CHF
			AP Code: AP124
Objective:	Support effective implementation if early Actions		
Readiness Activities:	1. Anticipatory action focal point to support implementation and deliver the readiness and early action activities. 2. Support 1 NRT training and include AA refresher topics. 3. Conduct training in First Aid for first responders. 4. Mapping of warehousing facilities.		
Prepositioning Activities:	1. Procurement of search and rescue equipment (5 first aid kits) 2. Procurement of safety equipment for securing warehousing facilities such as lighting materials, PPEs and padlocks		
Priority Early Actions:	Pre-activation 1. Identify and preposition NRT based on the predicted forecast and districts to be affected. 2. Update MRCS AA implementation strategy and ToRs for the NRTs. Full Trigger 1. Deployment of 23 NRT to support coordination and implementation of Early Actions across targeted districts.		
Status of implementation			
Early Action	Actual	Planned	Target Achieved
Deployment of 8 NRT to support coordination and implementation of Early Actions in Salima districts	8		8
No more deployments of the NRT was done after the activation in January. The SEAP supported salary contribution for the AA focal point between January and April			

	Coordinati on and Partnershi ps	Budget	3,914CHF	
		People targeted	30 stakeholders and MRCS Staff	
Indicator:	# of coordination meetings conducted		Target:	4 meetings
Readiness Activities:		1. Conduct monthly coordination meetings with stakeholders DoDMA and DCCMS and other relevant stakeholders for effective implementation of AA. 2. Monthly Coordination meetings with authorities.		
Prioritized Early Actions:		Full Trigger 1. Activate the EOC		
Status of implementation				
Early Action		Actual Planned	Target Achieved	
Activate the EOC		0	0	
No EOC was activated during this reporting period				

	Secretariat services	Budget	20,874 CHF	
		People targeted	10 Staff	
Indicator:			Target:	
Readiness Activities:	1. Support Supervision costs from the Cluster Team 2. Bank Charges 3. Support salary Operations Management for Cluster			
Prioritized Early Actions:	1. Support Supervision costs from the Cluster Team 2. Bank Charges 3. Support salary Operations Management for Cluster			
Status of implementation				
Early Action		Actual Planned	Target Achieved	
1. Support Supervision costs from the Cluster Team		2	1	

- The IFRC cluster delegation was in the country in April to support the lessons learnt workshop for the EA activation in January. The activity was done in the district where the activation was carried out and later with some key stakeholders at national level.
- The SEAP equally supported the CCD with salaries for essential strategic positions required for effective operation delivery.
- Provide technical and coordination support through the IFRC Country Cluster Delegation (CCD), including PMER, finance, and logistics, in compliance with DREF and IFRC policies.

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