

Cyclone Freddy in Malawi; Response by PWS&D (Presbyterian World Service & Development) and Malawi partner Churches Action in Relief and Development (CARD)



Cyclone Freddy Impact Story, Malawi (Mulanje District): Six Months Later by Stephanie Chunoo, Aug 21, 2023

When Cyclone Freddy struck Malawi in March 2023, it provided a real-life example of nature's fury, ranking high up among the strongest and longest-lasting storms ever documented in the southern hemisphere.

Freddy wreaked havoc on the lives of countless Malawians, causing significant disruptions to daily activities, washing away essential food crops and destroying critical infrastructure, which led to widespread displacement. The loss of crops and livestock has further intensified the already critical food insecurity in the southern region of Malawi.

Six months later, families have returned to their homes, now in ruins, their harvests washed away, and the loss of their livestock making the difficulties they face even greater.

Recovery Support: After the initial impact in March, PWS&D's partner, Churches Action in Relief and Development (CARD), immediately responded. PWS&D provided an initial contribution to CARD to assist with search and rescue efforts, needs assessments, and emergency food for evacuated households.

Six months later, PWS&D and partners at Canadian Foodgrains Bank are supporting a recovery phase of the project to aid families in getting back on their feet.

The project—implemented by CARD—provides cash assistance allowing households to address their pressing food needs. Households will also receive seedlings like sweet potato vines and winter vegetables for farming during the colder months. Additionally, smallholder farming households who grow crops mainly for personal use, with a smaller portion for profit, receive specialized recovery packages. These packages are designed to boost both food and cash crop production in the subsequent rain-fed growing season.

A total of 2,500 households are participating in the project—863 of the households are women-headed. Emphasis is placed on women-headed households, as oftentimes, when disasters strike, women and girls are more vulnerable to increased risks of gender-based violence.

Your support means families will be given a chance to rebuild their lives after such devastation. Thank you!

* This project ended December 2023. It received support from Canadian Foodgrains Bank. PWS&D is a member of the Foodgrains Bank, a partnership of 15 churches and church agencies working together to end global hunger.