



## How Your Support Helped to Save Lives and Rebuild Hope in the Aftermath of Cyclone Idai

**Final Report – April 2020**

2-year-old Simon sits with his mother, Albertina, at a resettlement camp for families who lost their homes during Cyclone Idai. During the cyclone and the floods that followed, Simon's family lost most of their belongings, including clothes and food. They also lost all of their animals and crops, from which they used to earn a living. In April 2019, in the aftermath of the cyclone and floods, Albertina took Simon to a Save the Children mobile clinic because he had been lethargic and feverish. At the clinic Simon tested positive for malaria - one of the biggest killers of children under five in Mozambique - and was given treatment. He is now fully recovered.

*Photo: Guy Hubbard/Save the Children*

## Executive Summary

Save the Children staff responded immediately to areas severely impacted by Cyclone Idai, which tore through Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe on March 15, 2019 and left immense destruction in its wake.

Our relief and recovery response experts delivered lifesaving supplies to children and families including shelter kits, bedding, food and clean water and continues to help those in need. Our teams of doctors and nurses worked continuously to prevent outbreaks of disease and give access to health care.

In addition, because we understand returning to school is a crucial step for children to regain a sense of normalcy, we worked to ensure girls and boys continued to learn by constructing temporary learning spaces, providing school supplies and training teachers how to offer practical and emotional support to traumatized children.

Funding supported our health, shelter and education work with goals to provide shelter kits to households, medical support, and establish temporary learning spaces for children whose schools had been damaged or destroyed, or closed due to use as emergency shelters.

Across the three countries, our response has reached more than 780,000 people, including 450,000 children, with aid. We are pleased to share this report describing how your support fueled our humanitarian response.

## The Emergency at a Glance

Cyclone Idai made landfall in central Mozambique on March 15, 2019, bringing torrential winds and rains to Sofala, Zambezia, Tete, Manica and Inhambane provinces, leaving behind devastating loss of life and extreme damage. The storm was followed by days of heavy rain, with floods submerging entire villages.

Many families were separated as they fled the rising water, while others were trapped on high ground for days. The storm demolished buildings and flooded fields, including staples such as maize, beans and rice, displacing 130,000 people.

When Idai finally left Mozambique, it ripped through neighboring Malawi and Zimbabwe, wreaking havoc on vulnerable communities and families who were already struggling before the cyclone. Overflowing rivers ruined crops and contaminated water.

## Our Response in Mozambique

During the initial aftermath of the disaster, Save the Children distributed urgently needed shelter and hygiene kits to some 5,800 families across three provinces. Kits contained blankets, tents, tarps, mosquito nets, water storage containers and means to purify water, solar lamps and latrine supplies.

## Deploying Our Emergency Health Unit to Save Lives

Our Emergency Health Unit team was deployed in Mozambique to be there during the most critical hours and days following Cyclone Idai. Teams of doctors and nurses worked across four of the most severely affected provinces –Sofala, Zambezia, Tete and Manica – to prevent outbreaks of disease and give families access to health care. They treated children for malaria, diarrhea and malnutrition and provided pre- and postnatal care to mothers and vaccinations for their babies. Mobile health clinics traveled to the most remote communities to provide essential health services such as screening children for malnutrition and referring them for treatment, as well as providing vital nutrition information, including the importance of mothers affected by the disaster continuing breastfeeding babies. Our mobile teams have provided more than 8,000 consultations across 16 different locations in Manica and Sofala Provinces alone.

With cholera a key threat, we vaccinated 6,000 people and set up a 40-bed cholera treatment center.

## Supporting Health Through Nutritious Food

Huge concerns regarding food security erupted after the cyclone hit. Many of those affected were subsistence farmers who rely on their harvest to feed their families, and were already economically vulnerable prior to the disaster. Approximately 1.85 million acres of crops in the region known as the breadbasket of Mozambique were affected, impacting the entire country's access to food. Save the Children provided food to more than 285,000 people in need, including 164,000 children. We continue to strengthen agriculture in cyclone-affected areas, as well as support livelihoods and income-generating activities to reduce food insecurity so that communities can bounce back.

## Supporting Health Through Clean, Safe Water

The cyclone created a devastating impact on people's access to clean water and sanitation. An already-high risk of waterborne diseases, including cholera, increased significantly. We worked to repair and rehabilitate water and sanitation facilities in schools so that children had safe, clean drinking water and toilets. This vital work reached 3,377 people, of whom 2,035 were children. Save the Children also continues to provide hygiene and water purification supplies to children and families. Our aim is that the most marginalized communities have protected, reliable access to safe, clean water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in a healthy environment.



A Save the Children health worker checks the nutrition status of a child during a mobile clinic session at a resettlement camp in Manica Province, Mozambique.

*Photo: Guv Hubbard/Save the Children*

## Restoring Children's Access to Learning

Thousands of classrooms in all three countries were destroyed, disrupting the learning of hundreds of thousands of children and hindering their physical and mental recovery. We opened 128 temporary learning spaces, which gave 28,970 children a positive and safe place to spend time and learn. In addition to our disaster risk and reduction “Build Back Better” projects restoring classrooms, we continue to implement activities in temporary learning spaces.

## Protecting Children From Harm

Living through a disaster can be traumatic for any child who finds his or her life suddenly turned upside down. Some children are separated from their parents and find themselves on the streets – alone, frightened and confused – where they're at risk of being exploited. Protecting children has always been essential to our emergency work. After Idai, we quickly launched a tracing service with the government and partners that works with our temporary learning centers. To date, we've registered more than 950 unaccompanied and orphaned children. We also opened 37 child-friendly spaces, where children can come to feel safe, play and learn. In each one, children are given support to put their traumatic experiences behind them and rediscover their sense of fun and adventure.

## One Year Later: Relief and Recovery in Mozambique

One year after Cyclone Idai left a trail of destruction across parts of Mozambique, nearly 100,000 people continue to live in makeshift shelters. These accommodations, which are most often tents, do not provide sufficient shelter from the heavy rain, flooding and winds from the extreme weather events that have occurred within an unusually short period of time over the past year.



Above, children continuing their education in Mozambique at a Save the Children-supported temporary learning space. Save the Children is rehabilitating damaged schools, providing learning materials and constructing temporary learning spaces so kids can keep learning.

*Saman Saidi/Save the Children*



Temperature averages in Southern Africa are rising at twice the global rate. The cyclone, floods and drought have destroyed crops and livelihoods. More than 700,000 hectares of crops, including maize, beans and rice, were destroyed by Cyclone Idai. Efforts to replant the crops have also been hampered by the recent flooding, which wiped out much of the replacement crops that families had planted with the support of aid agencies. As a result, people in Mozambique (and Malawi and Zimbabwe) who could least afford the shock of the cyclone are now faced with even more adversity. In Mozambique, it is estimated that nearly 2 million people face difficulties accessing food.



Paula, 8, lives with her mother and siblings in a temporary camp for people displaced by cyclone Idai in Sofala, Mozambique after her house flooded and was destroyed by the cyclone. Her father received medical treatment after getting trapped by falling debris during the storm. Paula attends a Save the Children temporary learning center and child-friendly space.

*Photo: Hanna Adcock/Save the Children*

Many children are still attending temporary learning spaces as their schools have not yet been repaired or they are one of the approximately 1,100 schools that have once again been destroyed after being rebuilt.

As a result, Save the Children is still responding in Sofala, Manica and Zambezia with our food security and livelihoods; education; shelter; child protection; water, sanitation and hygiene; and health and nutrition programs.

## One Year Later: Relief and Recovery in Malawi and Zimbabwe

### Malawi

In January 2019, prior to the cyclone, southern Malawi was hit with heavy rains, strong winds and flash floods. In February and March 2019, the same region experienced widespread heavy rainfall and excessive flooding before and after Cyclone Idai. An estimated 870,000 people were affected, with more than 86,000 who were displaced.

Over the past year, we have worked to make sure that children's needs are met. To date, we have reached over 148,000 people, including 81,000 children with food support.

The biggest milestone of this response has been our work with local governments across six districts to make sure children's needs are at the center of the response. We continue to ensure that children whose homes were washed away are safe and that those who were moved to temporary camps have access to child-friendly spaces. As immediate and lifesaving humanitarian needs have ebbed, we have shifted our efforts to support household and community recovery and longer-term efforts to build resilience, such as distributing seeds, tools and other essential items to provide families with a source of income.

## Zimbabwe

In total, 270,000 people in Zimbabwe were affected by Cyclone Idai, including 120,000 children, and 10,000 were displaced. Save the Children deployed the Emergency Health Unit to the country to conduct a rapid assessment and set up emergency health, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene programming so that people had access to basic services and to reduce the risk of disease outbreaks. In total, we reached more than 51,000 people through our response.

In the months after Cyclone Idai, a second extreme climate event – severe drought – began to fuel an unprecedented food crisis in Zimbabwe. Across the country 7.7 million children and adults are food insecure – meaning many are eating fewer meals or are unsure of where their next meal will come from. To cope, families are selling off livestock and other assets, working dangerous jobs, migrating to other countries and taking their children out of school to work.

To help mitigate this situation, we are supporting vulnerable families through a cash transfer project, providing them with the funds they need each month to buy food and other essential items, while also supporting the recovery of local markets.

## Conclusion

Save the Children is grateful for your generous support of lifesaving humanitarian assistance in Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe in the aftermath of Cyclone Idai. Your funding enabled us to help families find food and shelter, medical support and access to safe learning. One year later, our efforts to care for and provide a sense of hope to many children, caregivers and communities is ongoing as they work to rebuild their lives.

