



Cyclone Idai in Mozambique:

How Your Support Fueled Our Humanitarian Response

Six-Month Report

September 2019

We treated one-year-old Sara for malaria after her mother, Rosa, brought her to one of our mobile health clinics. We also vaccinated Rosa's other children. Photo: Saman Saidi/Save the Children

THE DAY DISASTER STRUCK ...

On Friday, March 15, Cyclone Idai made landfall in central Mozambique. Winds of up to 110 mph swept across the countryside, destroying homes, schools, hospitals and roads. The weeks before the storm had seen heavy rain, and with Idai dumping torrents of water, rivers burst their banks. Whole communities were submerged under filthy, fast-moving floodwater. Many families had to climb onto the roofs of their homes or into trees to escape.

Crops were destroyed. Livestock were lost. Families were left with nothing. No food, no shelter. Everything they owned was gone. It's a day no one will ever forget – especially children who had never seen anything like it before.

But the rampage wasn't over when Idai finally released its grip on Mozambique. In neighboring Malawi and Zimbabwe, the torrential rains continued over already saturated provinces. Rivers there also overflowed, creating similar flooding. Families who had the fewest means to deal with a disaster were even more vulnerable.

Thanks to you, Save the Children teams in all three countries were on the ground within hours. With your support, we were there to help families find food, shelter and safety. And in the following weeks and months, we've supported people as they began rebuilding their lives.



Sacha Myers/Save the Children

OUR RELIEF AND RECOVERY IN MOZAMBIQUE

The scale of the devastation was immediately apparent. The government estimated that 1.85 million people were affected, including 900,000 children. Many lost their homes and their crops. They were hungry and at grave risk from diseases like cholera, which often follow a disaster when water supplies are contaminated.

Because of your compassion, Save the Children was able to move fast to save lives.

Delivering Lifesaving Supplies to Children and Families

Cyclone Idai tore down houses, leaving families without a home. All their possessions – from bedding and clothing, to kitchen utensils and tools – were lost. With your support, Save the

Children was on the ground distributing shelter kits to protect children and their families from the elements. You also helped to provide food, water, bedding and eating utensils.

“IT DESTROYED THE CORN THAT WAS STILL GROWING”

Joanna’s home and crops were ruined by Cyclone Idai, leaving the family with little to eat. “There were no cucumbers or tomatoes, and we only had rotten corn that I had to give to my child.”

We provided Joanna and many other families in her area with emergency supplies including food, mosquito nets to help prevent malaria and tents for shelter.



Hanna Adcock/Save the Children

Providing Nutritious Food and Hope

With an estimated 1.85 million acres of crops affected in the “breadbasket” of Mozambique, there was a heightened risk of malnutrition among young children and pregnant and nursing women. They and their families needed food – fast. With your support, we distributed food to more than 285,500 people, including 164,470 children. You also helped us to provide vital information about nutrition, including the importance of mothers continuing breastfeeding babies affected by the disaster.

“THREE OF MY CHILDREN WERE TAKEN BY THE WATER”

Marcos and Joanna woke up to find floodwater around their home. They pushed their children up into a tree and tried to hold on, but their

three daughters fell into the water and were swept away. Marcos and Joanna now live in a settlement camp, where Marcos is recovering from injuries to his hands. Joanna is unwell and can’t work either. Then their only surviving daughter, one-year-old Fatima, fell ill.

“The children saw the water first and told their father. We managed to climb the tree. Three of my children were taken by the water. They couldn’t hold on any longer. They were Sofina, 13, Orizario, 10, and Julieta, 7. They were all girls. I brought my child to the clinic because she is unwell. The doctor said the baby is sick and that she has malnutrition. They gave us peanut paste to feed her. We liked the way the doctors attended to us.”



Sacha Myers/Save the Children

Providing Clean, Safe Water

After the disaster, many families were left to live in shelters and evacuation centers. With water sources contaminated, the chances of a disease outbreak were high. Thanks to your generous support, we worked to repair and rehabilitate water and sanitation facilities in schools – ensuring children had safe, clean drinking water and toilets. This vital work reached 3,377 people, of whom 2,035 were children.

“WE’RE DRINKING CLEAN WATER”

Celeste, Armando and their six-month-old son, Antonio, sheltered in a tree for several days. Antonio’s older sister and grandmother died

when a river burst its banks and they could not escape. The family was taken to a school, and then to a resettlement camp, where they live in a tent.

“This is the third month that we have been here. We were given tents and food. Before we had latrines, we had to go very far into the bush. But it’s changing. Latrines came and then water – we’re drinking clean water.

“We are going to stay here. We hope to build a new house. After building a house, we would take our hoes to farm again. I want my son to grow up, go to school and find work.”



Guy Hubbard/Save the Children

Deploying the Emergency Health Unit

Save the Children's Emergency Health Unit was on the ground in the immediate aftermath of Cyclone Idai. Our teams of doctors and nurses worked across four of the most severely affected provinces – Manica, Sofala, Tete and Zambezia – to prevent outbreaks of disease and give families access to health care. They treated children for malaria, diarrhea and malnutrition. They provided ante- and post-natal care to mothers and vaccinations for their babies.

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

Six months into our response, you continue to help Save the Children reach vulnerable families in the remotest parts of the country. Your contributions help support mobile clinics, which

bring staff, medical expertise and medicines to these hard-to-reach areas.

“SIMON’S BETTER. HE’S OKAY.”

Since Cyclone Idai struck, Albertina, her husband and children have been living in a resettlement camp. When her two-year-old son Simon fell ill, Albertina was desperately worried. Back home, there was a hospital nearby. Thankfully, she was able to bring Simon to Save the Children's mobile clinic, where he was treated for malaria.

“Simon's better. He's okay. We are being helped and we've got a safe place to stay. I would like for Simon to be able to go to school. He can be a journalist. He can be a teacher. He can even be a policeman. That's my wish.”



Guy Hubbard/Save the Children

Restoring Access to Learning

Cyclone Idai destroyed schools, disrupting education for 382,000 children. Going to school is a part of everyday 'normal' life – without it, children feel lost. That's why we work to ensure girls and boys continue to learn even though they are living through the aftermath of a disaster.

You helped us open 128 temporary learning spaces, which gave 28,970 children a positive and safe place to spend time. Teachers were trained to offer practical and emotional support to traumatized children.

“I MISS MY HOME”

Ten-year-old Mateo spent three nights in a tree after floodwater swept his home away before being rescued. He is now living in a resettlement camp and attends one of our temporary learning spaces.

“I was fetching water when I saw the flood come from the river. There was a big tree close to our house. My father helped my brothers, my mother and I to get up in it. We watched everything getting washed away. We were all wet and cold. We did not really sleep – we were all scared to fall down.

“Before we came to here, I was attending another school close to my home. I like this one much better, but I miss my home.”



Saman Saidi/Save the Children

Protecting Children from Harm

Protecting children has always been at the heart of all our emergency work. With your support, we can achieve our goal of helping children to recover physically and emotionally, so they are ready to continue with their lives.

With the Government of Mozambique and other partners, we've run a tracing service and, in the aftermath of Cyclone Idai, we registered more than 950 unaccompanied and orphaned children. We follow every avenue that could lead to reuniting a child with their surviving family.

You also helped us set up 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. We trained volunteers, staff and government personnel to protect children from violence and exploitation.

Milford was separated from his three brothers – the four lived by themselves – during a boat

rescue. They had made their way to a soccer stadium where there was no food or water. Boats were taking children to a safer place.

“I WAS ALWAYS THINKING, ‘IS MY BROTHER GOOD? IS HE EATING?’”

Milford spent a month at a shelter in a school. Meanwhile, his brothers were worried sick. “I was always thinking, ‘Is my brother good? Is he eating?’” said his older brother, Augusto. “I tried to look for him. One of our neighbours went to Beira. And so I was calling him, although the line was not good. But one day he called me and he said he saw Milford.”

Augusto longed to bring his brother back. But he was unable to pay for a bus ride to Beira. Happily, one of our volunteers arrived to tell Augusto that Milford would be coming back to a nearby village. It will take some time until the brothers are able to fully recover. But for now, Milford says, “I feel so happy. I'm back in my home, with my brothers and my neighbors.”



Arbie Baguios/Save the Children

Why Your Support for Child-Friendly Spaces Matters



Baptiste, 14, and his family lost their home. Cyclone Idai's torrential rains and strong winds also destroyed roads and bridges nearby and interrupted basic social services. As a result, Baptiste, his three younger sisters and his parents moved into a tent in a large resettlement site near Beira.

Baptiste attends a Save the Children child-friendly space, where our child protection team helps him acclimate to his new surroundings by offering him a safe place where he can learn and have fun playing with his friends. "I like to come here because I know that tomorrow I am going to have a good future," he says. He attends school in the afternoon, and his favorite subjects are math, Portuguese and the social sciences. At night, he enjoys doing his homework before going to bed.

Baptiste believes education is important and dreams of one day becoming a traffic policeman. "I want every boy to go to school for the good of their future and not give up," he says. For his part, Baptiste teaches his siblings what he learns so that they too have bright futures ahead of them.

Linda also spends most days at one of our child-friendly space in a resettlement site near Beira. "I like going to the space...I arrive here, I play football and we dance," says the 12-year-old, who is busy with chores beforehand. "When I wake up, I sweep the yard and then I wash the dishes. I put a pot on the fire to cook beans, and after that I take a bath and come to this space."

In the evenings, Linda sleeps in a shelter made of tarpaulin and wood with eight other family members: her grandmother, two sisters and five brothers. They were forced to relocate after Cyclone Idai hit their community, leaving a trail of damaged schools, hospitals and homes, including their own.

Although living in a tent away from home is hard, Linda – who hopes to become a teacher – says the best part of her day is "playing with my friends and being happy" in the safe environment Save the Children has created for her with your support.



SAVE THE CHILDREN RESPONDS TO CYCLONE IDAI IN MALAWI AND ZIMBABWE

Our longstanding presence in Malawi and Zimbabwe and our trained local staff positioned us for an immediate response to the severe flooding that Cyclone Idai created in those countries. As in Mozambique, floods decimated homes and crops and disrupted local services that children and families depend on.

Over 90,000 children in Zimbabwe had their education put on hold. Contaminated, stagnant water heightened the risk of diseases like diarrhea, typhoid and cholera. The disaster was especially cruel to families who rely on agriculture, as crops nearly ready for harvest were destroyed – on the heels of a drought and reduced harvest in 2018.

In Malawi, we've focused on providing access to clean water, improving hygiene and sanitation to prevent the spread of diseases and strengthening health systems. More than 2,600 families received cash vouchers to exchange for food.

In Zimbabwe, we distributed food, blankets, soap, water purification tablets and water storage containers to families. We chartered a helicopter to help the Ministry of Health deliver essential medicines to health facilities isolated by high water and damaged roads. More recently, we've trained health workers how to screen children under age 5 for malnutrition, which is always a grave concern when families lose the ability to provide for their own food needs.



Roger Zowa/Save the Children