



**FOOD FOR
THE HUNGRY**

FH Responds in Devastating Aftermath of Cyclone Idai with Clean Water, Emergency Supplies

Over 11,000 children and families in FH's programs affected in the regions hit by "one of the worst" disasters in the Southern Hemisphere

BEIRA, Mozambique (March 19, 2019) – More than 1.5 million people across Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Malawi have been severely affected by the deadly Cyclone Idai, which hit the city of Beira in Mozambique last Thursday, March 14.

The cyclone brought heavy rains, flooding, and destruction in the week leading up to the disaster, injuring 111 people and killing a total of 84 people in the Sofala district, where Food for the Hungry (FH) has operations. The Category 3 storm is being labeled of the worst disasters in the Southern Hemisphere by the UN.

"The cyclone has brought total devastation to Mozambique," reported Shep Owen, FH's Senior Director of Relief and Humanitarian Affairs, who is assessing needs on the ground in Beira. "It's hard to believe—the entire city is underwater and there's almost nowhere to land. Aerial assessments show an inland ocean with floodwaters up to the fronds of palm trees."

The president of Mozambique has estimated that the death toll could be as high as 1,000 people. The full extent of Cyclone Idai's damage is still not yet clear, as the city remains without electricity, telephone and internet communication—and expects to be without power for up to two months.

Owen and the FH Mozambique team—which also personally lost houses and family members—are assessing preliminary needs to provide life-saving emergency supplies including food, medical necessities, and access to clean water. The United Nations (UN) and humanitarian partners have appealed for \$40.8 million to provide critical emergency relief to approximately 400,000 people across Southern Africa affected by Cyclone Idai.

"In the wake of this humanitarian catastrophe, Food for the Hungry is rapidly working to attend to the immediate needs of those affected, and getting ahead of waterborne diseases like cholera," Owen said. "Our utmost priority is ensuring the safety and well-being of the 11,000 children and families involved in our Mozambique program in areas severely affected by Cyclone Idai." The impacts of the cyclone will be multiplied in coming weeks, complicated by the lack of drinkable water, increased food insecurity due to the flooded crop harvest, destruction of public infrastructure, and lack of power.

Shep Owen is on the ground in Mozambique supporting Food for the Hungry's response operations in Mozambique and is available for interviews upon request. Please contact Abrielle Swisher for more information, photos, and to set up a time.



For more information and to give, visit <https://www.fh.org/mozambique-emergency/>.

About Food for the Hungry

Food for the Hungry is a Christian humanitarian organization ending all forms of human poverty by providing life-changing development programs, disaster relief, and advocacy. Since 1971, Food for the Hungry has been going into the world's hardest places with an exit strategy: to respond to human suffering and graduate communities of extreme poverty into self-sustainability, all within a decade. By creating context-specific solutions in education, agriculture, health, livelihood, clean water, and conflict risk reduction, the nonprofit focuses on transformational development, investing in children as the key to lift entire communities out of poverty. With 98% of staff working in their country of origin, Food for the Hungry works side-by-side with local leaders, churches, and families to implement innovative solutions. The organization currently serves more than 12.7 million people in over 20 countries worldwide. For more information, follow @food4thehungry or visit www.fh.org.

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