

Project Management Update from Harare



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News from Zimbabwe

Urgent Humanitarian Crisis Looms as Zimbabwe Eastern border region is devastated by Cyclone Idai

Zimbabwe and Mozambique will require urgent humanitarian interventions and massive infrastructure recovery projects following the devastation caused by Cyclone Idai in mid-March 2019. The two southern African countries were the hardest hit by the Cyclone which built up from the Indian Ocean and swept westwards inland across the two countries leaving a trail of death and destructions. The cyclone ravaged the Eastern region of Zimbabwe covering areas of Chimanimani, Chipinge and parts of Masvingo and Midlands. According to the Civil Protection Unit (CPU) of Zimbabwe over 200 death were recorded in Zimbabwe at the time of going to press with this article and more numbers were expected to be counted, while 187 remained unaccounted for. About 4 884 were completely displaced, while 136 were still marooned with 162 injured.



Photo above courtesy of <https://www.zimbabwesituation.com/news/cyclone-idai-devastation-in-mozambique-and-zimbabwe/> where more information can also be found.



Photo above: washed away bridge along Umvumvu river in Chimanimani, Zimbabwe on March 18, 2019 (Reuters), courtesy of Dhaka Tribune at <https://www.dhakatribune.com/world/2019/03/19/at-least-157-dead-in-zimbabwe-mozambique-as-cyclone-idai-leaves-trail-of-destruction>

Zimbabwe President Emmerson Mnangagwa had already declared 2 days of national mourning of the victims of the disaster on 23 and 24 March 2019.

A proper assessment has not yet been undertaken due to access challenges. The domestic and international appeal document for assistance is being finalised and is scheduled to be launched on Tuesday 26 March 2019. Access to the affected areas has improved following the clearing of road from Chipinge to Chimanimani Town. Weather condition has also improved despite some intermittent rainfall episodes in the affected areas. Search and rescue efforts are underway, albeit difficult conditions,” said CPU in a statement.

At least eight districts have been affected, with Chimanimani recording the highest number of deaths which stood at 129, while Chipinge had six and Masvingo Province registering five deaths. Mutare rural witnessed four deaths, while Makoni and Buhera registered one death apiece. On infrastructure, at least 18 water points had been affected, while 10 bridges bore the effects of the cyclone, with 48 schools affected.

“At least 95 percent of the road networks in the affected areas were damaged. Priority is to save lives first. Operations are underway in Kopa and Rusitu areas of Chimanimani. Efforts are being made to recover mudslide and rubble covered bodies, however the process is slow,” said the CPU.

“Only positively identified bodies are ferried by helicopters for burial by relatives, 18 unidentified bodies are yet to be buried but are now in a decomposing state. Vhimba area in Chimanimani still to be reached.”

CPU said all necessary efforts were being made to make the link roads to the affected areas trafficable as a total of 66 patients had been airlifted to medical centres.

“There is a total of 40 doctors drawn from PSMI, Zimbabwe Medical Association, ZRP and the army and these have been deployed to Chipinge Hospital, Skyline and others are in the field. 36 classrooms were damaged and require repairing, 160 squat holes were flooded, 25 teachers houses had their roofs blown off, 3 teachers are missing, Charles Lwanga is the only school that was closed,” added the CPU.

“Through Government-sponsored programmes, support the rebuilding of stronger and more durable structures of shelter for our rural communities, starting with families in susceptible areas. Our whole approach to built environments just has to change in light of experiences of this deadly cyclone.”

The department said Government will embark on comprehensive disaster mapping for the whole country, rework the national disaster management plan to make sure the country was better prepared for disasters in future.

Plans were also afoot to build a National Disaster Fund which would finance programmes and projects meant to fortify communities against future disasters.

“In all these measures, Government will proceed by way of broad consultations at all levels, and with all citizens to ensure there is consensus. For when all is said and done, a good disaster plan is one that enlists the support and involvement of communities,” said the CPU.

Zimbabwe Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services Minister Monica Mutsvangwa said the declaration by the President of the two days of national mourning was timely, right and proper.

“Two day mourning has been declared by President Mnangagwa – mourning in respect of those who perished in the disaster. A solemn occasion where Zimbabweans as a total nation can bring their mind to focus on an unprecedented natural calamity never experienced in a time of peace. The outpouring grief for the deceased and sympathy for the suffering victims has elicited that spirit of togetherness and unity on all the populace. There is palpable feeling from empathy as Zimbabweans all identify as one in bereavement, pain and suffering,” she said.

Minister Mutsvangwa said Cyclone Idai had turned out to be “an occasion to search deep down and bring the finest attributes of the spirit of being Zimbabwe”.

“It is timely, right and proper that President E.D Mnangagwa had fittingly captured the mood of the terrible time and brought Zimbabweans together as one in the two day mourning period. Not only are we supplying much needed material relief to the victims, we are going further to deliver our soul and mind to our fellow compatriots in Chimanimani-Chipinge environs and even beyond to equally stricken brothers and sisters in Mozambique and Malawi,” added Minister Mutsvangwa in a statement.

When he declared the national days of mourning, President Mnangagwa implored the nation to spare a thought for those still grieving.

“We expect all our citizens, both individually and collectively, and in different ways which are informed by their faiths, beliefs and cultures, to remember all our dear departed by way of prayers and in whatever other forms and practices,” said President Mnangagwa.



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Peter Banda is an agile Portfolio Manager with Change Management, Marketing & Project Management Skills, and an accomplished entrepreneur with broad stakeholder management experience. He is a founder of Zimbabwe's largest Association of Project Managers with a membership of over 1000, Project Management Zimbabwe (PMZ - formerly called Project Management Institute of Zimbabwe). He has worked in both the private & public sectors during the last 20 years in Zimbabwe, Botswana & South Africa. Peter is a born & passionate teacher, mentor & trainer with skills ranging from Personal Development Planning to Project Management. Peter has presented & published over 20 papers at high profile international conferences & leading newspapers & publications respectively during the last 8 years.

Peter is currently Secretary- General & CEO of PROJECT MANAGEMENT ZIMBABWE (PMZ). Responsibilities cover strategic navigation of PMZ towards the vision covering board advisory and stakeholder management. He was previously a Higher Education Examiner, Facilitator, Lecturer, Curriculum Developer and Assessor for both local and International Diploma and Degree courses for the Zimbabwe Ministry of Higher & Tertiary Education. He also served as an Examiner, Assessor and Facilitator on for SpringSoft in South Africa. Peter holds a Bachelors (Hon.) degree and MSc qualification, and is currently studying for a PhD & PMP exams. A God fearing father of 2 lovely daughters & 1 son, Peter likes reading & researching current affairs, coaching others to realise their dreams, and watching soccer & cricket.

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