

“Disaster like never before!”

When I first heard of the flooding in Malawi, I went to the internet to see if there were reports from overseas and local news agencies. I was shocked to see the extent of damage that happened very quickly. Here are just a few of the news reports I saw.

Sidney Vaughn

- ❖ The Malawi President described these floods as a disaster, the magnitude of which has never happened before.
- ❖ The recent floods in Malawi have caused a national crisis.
- ❖ Malawi, with a population of 13 million, is one of the poorest countries in the world and estimates are now saying that 11,000 homes have been damaged.
- ❖ AP: Flooding in Malawi – death toll nears 200 with more missing; at least 200,000 have been displaced; homes and schools were submerged in water and roads washed away by the deluge.
- ❖ The floods have destroyed crops and swept away people’s meager possessions, raising fears for the future once the waters recede.
- ❖ Nyasa Times [Malawian Newspaper] reports “People are starving. Some crying out, “we have not eaten for days.” Survivors tell horror stories of the “sudden torrent of water and a stream of floating bodies. I could not believe my eyes. It was haunting.”
- ❖ Within an hour, the whole area where once there were villages and schools and gardens is now a lake.



Malawi flooding death toll nears 200, more missing. Loss of homes and crops !

- ❖ One woman said, “My husband and my child and I clung to a tree for two days.” She pointed to a huge lake and said, “Last week there was no lake there.”
- ❖ Tents have been set up for those left homeless, and many have found refuge with friends, neighbors, and schools, if those buildings remained habitable.
- ❖ There is now concern that the displaced people are also vulnerable to water-borne disease due to unsanitary conditions.
- ❖ In neighboring Mozambique, the Licungo River burst its banks and has reached its highest levels in 45 years.
- ❖ Flash floods caused by days of torrential rain have swept away roads and bridges, destroyed thousands of acres of crops and raised fears of a cholera outbreak.

A Call for Help!

The Mission staff is using what working funds they have to help in this immediate emergency. These working funds represent salaries, supplies, etc. and they need to be replaced.

We are in the process of sending more funds; at this point there is no end to what will be needed. Though our ability to help may be small considering the vastness of the damage, we must do what we can. Our help is going where it is needed most – first to widows and orphans. We have our people in place and I am calling on our faithful supporters to generously respond in this time of need.

Future Needs Will Be Huge

Normal harvest time for the year’s supply of food is in April, but for those whose crops were flooded – there will be no harvest and no food for the year. Many will seek to eat herbs, leaves, and roots in order to survive.

We will get detailed reports on these and other situations as they are available. Right now, the main focus is in new (temporary) living arrangements.

Sidney



Rodrick Maluwa’s new home is in ruins . . .

before it was completed !

Rodrick Maluwa, one of our long-time Mission teachers, planned on spending his retirement years in a newly built house near the Mission property. Construction was progressing well until this disaster hit. Now his dream home is in ruins.

In the Middle of a Disaster

At Namikango, we have received many calls from congregations we work with throughout the country, requesting aid. In the past, when there has been severe hunger, drought, and famine in Malawi, Namikango has responded by asking the village congregations to select people in the congregation with the most serious needs. We would help these people to purchase corn or provide shelter.

Our challenge now is that people need immediate assistance. They now have nowhere to stay; their homes have been washed away. Some stay with families or friends, or in a school. Schools have come to a halt, they were either damaged by the floods, or if the school is still standing it has now become a living facility for children and families without homes. Normal schooling is not possible.

We are currently gathering information to see how many people have been seriously affected within the communities throughout Malawi where we have the most connections. We expect this report right away. From this, we will be able to determine the amount of aid needed and how much we will be able to help. Here locally and in the communities around the Namikango campus, we have already contacted the church leaders and asked them to identify their needs, especially the widows in the community who are most desperate.

Shelter of any sort is the most immediate need, so we are assisting with wood and bamboo poles from the Mission trees, and we have purchased long sheets of plastic. We are now going to villages to help set up temporary shelters. Many houses have lost only one wall, or the outdoor toilet has collapsed, and these things can be temporarily mended with these supplies.

When the rain stops, people will begin to rebuild their homes and lives, but for now, we must help with the immediate very pressing needs for survival.

The Story of Love

Being in the middle of a disaster on this scale is devastating to see. This is an humble reminder of the fact that many things are outside our control. But, with this calamity comes an opportunity for God's people to tell the story of love.

Local Preacher
One of the local preachers from a nearby area was victim to the fate of many thousands of people here in Malawi. He has been ill for some time and is currently unable to walk. He and his wife had to move into their kitchen (a small separate building) when their house collapsed as a result of the floods. They live near the church where he preaches, which also had a wall collapse – leaving the entire building exposed.

New Life

Yes, life is full of pain, and there seems to be endless storms of all kinds. And though some may wonder where God is or why He could let this happen, answers sometimes fail us. We know that God cares deeply about what is happening, for in these difficult times, Christianity offers something that can be found nowhere else – One who Himself went through a storm. And on the cross (as Tim Keller says) the storm did not end until Jesus was swept away. He did it voluntarily, so that we would never have to. And out of that terrible storm, God raised new life! So, while there is pain in this life, we know with certainty that God is not standing by passively, but that he identifies with our pain, and because of Jesus, He can meet us in these hard times. And that is Good News to a broken world!

Shining Light

Please be praying that Christians here in Malawi are able to share this story with those who have no hope. Pray that churches embrace the opportunity to be a shining light in this situation. And please pray for those suffering from losses of different kinds, that they will meet Jesus in some way through this.

Fun in the midst of Chaos

Even with so much going on around the school and in the home, children still find things to enjoy. As we were walking around the Ntonda school campus looking at all the damage, we noticed something going on under a tree that involved a lot of laughing and throwing rocks. Upon closer inspection, we saw a small green Mamba (a deadly snake) that the kids had killed just outside the school. Not bad work for a recess break.

Ben Hayes



Children enjoy killing a Mamba snake (photo enlarged)





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Massive Floods Devastate Malawi 200 killed

Ntonda Primary School

We visited Ntonda Primary School to check out the damage there. The following is a report of our findings there. [Ben Hayes](#)

Too Much Water

Not since 1964 have the rains come like they did last week. In some places, three feet of water fell in the course of the downpour which took place over four days. Water is of course good for crops, but as we all know, too much water can do a lot of damage. Maize (corn) is the choice crop of most farmers in Malawi, and come this time of year, it should be healthy and green, but for many the excess rains have ruined the crops.

Those Affected

Among the thousands affected by the floods, there are many who have direct connections to Namikango Mission or to its staff. Several members from the local Thondwe Church here on the Mission campus have had their houses collapse, as well as relatives of staff members.

Namikango's Ntonda Primary School is a prime example of what is happening in many places in the country. As many community members' houses become inhabitable, they seek shelter wherever they can find it and schools have recently been opening their doors to accommodate those left homeless. Some families are staying permanently at schools for the time being, which is preventing the continuation of classes. Others come and go every day. Approximately 120 families started arriving at Ntonda School around 4PM in the afternoon, bringing their food, luggage, and some with their animals. They then depart by 6AM, leaving the classrooms open for school to continue.

Beyond this, the school campus has itself sustained damage; three of the staff houses have walls that have caved in. One of these

houses belongs to Timothy Jailos, our Bible teacher at the school and the one who leads the after-school Bible Club. He vacated his house when he saw signs of danger, and sure enough, the wall caved in. Timothy has moved into another house on campus which is not in great condition but livable for now, while the teachers who occupied the other two damaged homes are now renting and staying with family in the nearby town.

This kind of thing is mind boggling for many of us, and hard to imagine what this must be like. You wonder how these people will ever get back on their feet. Please continue praying that churches and the government receive wisdom in how to assist during this disaster.



**Timothy Jailos
Mission School
Teacher looks
over the flood
damage to his
home .**