

ZIMBABWE FLOOD RESPONSE

September 2014 – Six Month Report
Prepared for the States of Jersey Overseas Aid Commission



Oxfam has built a water system providing water for 15,000 people



One of the 300 latrines pits built on new settlement plots for families displaced by the dam

Situation

The Tokwe Mukorsi Dam is currently under construction in Masvingo province, however when unexpectedly heavy rains pounded Zimbabwe in January 2014, inflow into the dam increased five-fold in just 48 hours, flooding households who had not yet been relocated. Some people were trapped in islands in the dam basin, and families had to be quickly evacuated by helicopter, truck, or bus.

The Zimbabwean Government had planned to systematically relocate people living in the dam basin, but the relocation was occurring slowly.

Over 15,000 people were at risk of drowning and were evacuated to resettlement areas in Chingwizi camp over 100km away, which was undeveloped and without sanitation or water infrastructure.

What we are doing Zimbabwe

The Government declared the flood an official disaster on 9 February, which brought in more resources and support from international NGOs. Oxfam was directly asked by UNICEF to come in and install a water supply system in the camp. Oxfam worked with one local partner BHASO who focused on sanitation, hygiene promotion and HIV and AIDS awareness. Oxfam used its equipment already stockpiled for flooding in country and installed a water treatment plant and a distribution network including drilling 16 wells within two weeks. This system replaced costly water trucking and provided 15 litres of water per day to 15,000 people including the local population. Our partner BHASO installed 100 latrines across the camp and later once people had moved to their resettlement plots installed 300 latrines. Local people were paid to build the latrines and lay the water system. The ground is hard rock so a jack hammer was brought in to dig the latrine pits. Latrines and water points were installed close to schools and clinics in the camps and local community.

The lack of water available for people to wash themselves and clothes, and to clean latrines during the water trucking phase was a serious concern. The camp latrines were dirty and people were defecating in the open and littering across the camp, which increased the potential for a water borne disease outbreak. Our local partner BHASO, trained 90 volunteers mainly women as hygiene promoters working across the camps delivering three training sessions a week to camp

residents in addition to two campaigns per month on specific themes such as rubbish collection. The promoters were also in charge of monitoring and cleaning the latrines. With the new water system in place, the change in the camp was miraculous and we had no disease outbreaks. Some of the hygiene promoters have since been engaged by the Ministry of Health and Child Care as Village Health Workers.

Within our activities prepared for JOAC we had proposed to distribute food vouchers, however, these were donated by the private sector, churches and the



With the Oxfam water system in place, there were no disease outbreaks across the camp

World Food Programme (WFP). However, there was also another need, as Zimbabwe has the fifth highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rate (15%) in Africa, we were keen to support people affected by the floods and living with HIV/AIDS or those who thought they may have the virus. In this response with our partner BHASO we set up five support groups which met regularly and delivered awareness campaigns on HIV/AIDS across the camp including one led by a famous Zimbabwean comedian Sabhuku Vharazipi which attracted 1,000 people. BHASO also supported people to get tested and sign up for Anti Retro Viral (ARV) treatment.

The camp is situated in a resettlement area which was previously used for cattle ranching and isn't set up for large scale habitation. Throughout the planning of our work our aim was to support resettlement of these families who would not be returning to their homes near the dam. We lobbied local Government agencies including the Civil Protection Unit (CPU), National Water Authority (ZINWA) and District Development Fund (DDF) to take on more responsibility for response activities so they would be better prepared in future. ZINWA did surveys for the water pipeline, DDF sited the boreholes and oversaw the drilling and installation of hand-pumps and Oxfam provided tools, transport, hardware, materials and technical support. No funds were given directly to local Government. The CPU's main role is to be the point of contact for NGOs working on the whole response. The water treatment plant and water distribution system was handed over to the CPU to manage and maintain which bodes well for long term sustainability as this system will be providing water to newly resettled families and local residents. The latrines were handed over to the Ministry of Health. By actively involving local Government personnel we were able to reduce our own staff costs leaving more funds for direct response activities.

**THANK YOU TO THE STATES OF JERSEY FOR THEIR SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE IN ZIMBABWE
AFFECTED BY FLOODING**

CASE STUDY

Zimbabwe TV star helps push HIV/AIDS messages



Our partner BHASO in conjunction with Oxfam, Save the Children and Child Line held a two day campaign on various public health issues which reached more than 6 000 people. Oxfam staff conducted sessions on water and sanitation and gender, BHASO delivered sessions on HIV/AIDS and good hygiene practices and Save the Children and Child line on child protection.

Campaign event held in the Tokwe, the Oxfam speaker is talking about gender issues such as violence against women

A popular national Comedian Sabhuku Vharazipi gave his time for free to be the master of ceremonies. Due to his popularity people flocked to the area where the event was being held. Sabhuku is the star of a national comedy show, he plays a character who is always chasing after women.



Wilson Masilo (in the hat) talks about living with HIV/AIDS with Comedian Sabhuku Vharazipi

Music and dance were also used as a method to attract more people and push the messages home is a fun way.

Local Government takes over the Oxfam water system in Tokwe



Minister for Masvingo Province, Hon Kudakwashe Bhasikiti-Chuma officially handing over the facility to the people of Chingwizi

The 24th of June 2014 marked a special day as Oxfam handed over of a water purification system to the Civil Protection Unit and the people of Chingwizi temporary settlement area. Oxfam was one of the NGOs that responded to the plight of people affected by the floods in the Tokwe Mukorsi area. Oxfam came in and worked alongside the Government of Zimbabwe, District and Provincial Authorities and local partners to provide for the needs of the over 15 000 people affected by the floods.

When the camp was established, the lack of water and sanitation was a ticking time-bomb that could have led to a disease outbreak and extreme hardship for the people in Chingwizi. However, Oxfam used its water, sanitation and hygiene expertise to build a water-purification system capable of converting 180,000 litres of river water into potable water every single day.

This system now provides all of the water requirements for 15 000 people in the resettlement area. Oxfam also worked with its partners, such as BHASO to ensure that the clean water was accompanied by hygiene and health promotion to prevent disease outbreaks.

It was the objective of Oxfam to hand over the project so that the people of Chingwizi can work together with local authorities to ensure that the needs of the people in the resettlement area continue to be met sustainably.



Chingwizi Temporary Camp

At the handover ceremony, resident Minister for Masvingo Province, Hon Kudakwashe Bhasikiti-Chuma acknowledged the massive importance of clean water in the holding area and described it as the biggest weapon in the fight against disease outbreak. Local authorities also acknowledged the work of the Oxfam team that set up the water system and worked with partners to ensure that the Chingwizi people's hardship did not end in tragedy.

We will continue to use our water and sanitation expertise as well as our experience in working with partners to ensure that lives are saved and communities supported to rebuild their lives after such an event.