



## PRESS RELEASE

### Mozambique: Thousands remain vulnerable to recurrent disasters one year on from Cyclone Idai

**Beira/Nairobi/Geneva, 11 March 2020** — It is almost 12 months since Cyclone Idai hit Mozambique, but communities remain intensely vulnerable to the next big disaster, which is a matter of “when, not if”—the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) warned today.

Cyclone Idai was 2019’s biggest disaster, killing more than 650 people and affecting more than 1.8 million others. While Red Cross teams have made significant progress in the response that followed the devastating cyclone, including giving emergency and recovery assistance to more than 310,000 people, the scale of the needs continues to outstrip the resources that are available to meet them.

The Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre notes that cyclones like Idai “*fit what we expect to see in a world where the climate is changing: stronger and more destructive storms, both in terms of wind intensity and amounts of rainfall (and thus flooding and landslides). To avoid impacts from ballooning even further, we must minimize further warming and increase ambition to reduce risk and preparedness for such events.*”

Mozambique Red Cross and its partners have provided emergency shelter, shelter reconstruction, livelihoods support, health services and community mobilization activities, as well as health facility reconstruction and psychosocial support. Yet thousands of people remain in a precarious situation, vulnerable to extreme weather that has been hitting the region.

Rui Alberto Oliveira, IFRC’s head of operations in Mozambique, said: “*Cyclones Idai and Kenneth hit communities that were already facing challenges from recurring floods and droughts, ongoing economic instability, non-resistant building construction, poorly maintained and protected water structures and assets, and communities heavily reliant on subsistence agriculture.*”

Recent events show how quickly communities can be set back. In the past month, Buzi district, which was devastated by Cyclone Idai, was again hit by severe flooding, with thousands displaced from their homes and many left clinging to trees to avoid being swept away by the rising river.

Following last year’s cyclones, the Mozambique Red Cross has strengthened its branch in Buzi, allowing an immediate local response to last month’s disaster, saving scores of lives in the days before outside help could reach the district.

“*In addition to meeting humanitarian needs, significant investments in the recovery phase are needed in affected countries to ‘build back better’ and include support for climate-smart, risk-informed development,*” Alberto continued.

The IFRC emergency appeal launched after Cyclone Idai is 86 per cent covered, leaving a funding gap of some 4.4 million Swiss francs to complete the two-year response and recovery programme.

## Note to editors

For broadcast quality video of the response and recovery effort, please visit IFRC's digital newsroom: [www.ifrcnewsroom.org](http://www.ifrcnewsroom.org).

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