

 Early Warning System

AFDB-P-MW-AA0-043

MALAWI - Emergency Humanitarian Response to the 2025-26 Lean
Season



Quick Facts

Countries	Malawi
Specific Location	Zomba District
Financial Institutions	African Development Bank (AFDB)
Status	Approved
Bank Risk Rating	C
Voting Date	2025-12-09
Borrower	Government of Malawi - Department of Disaster Management Affairs
Sectors	Agriculture and Forestry, Humanitarian Response
Investment Type(s)	Grant
Investment Amount (USD)	\$ 0.99 million
Project Cost (USD)	\$ 0.99 million



Project Description

According to the Bank's website, the Emergency Humanitarian Response to the 2025/26 Lean Season in Malawi is an operation designed to support the Government's response to the severe food insecurity caused by consecutive climate shocks, including Cyclone Freddy, El Niño and La Niña, which have significantly reduced agricultural production and household food availability across the country. The project is financed through a USD 1 million grant from the African Development Bank's Special Relief Fund (SRF) and is implemented by the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) under the Ministry of Homeland Security, in close collaboration with the National Food Reserve Agency (NFRA) and local authorities. The Bank's support complements the Government's National Lean Season Food Insecurity Response Plan and ongoing assistance provided by development and humanitarian partners, including the World Bank and UN agencies, by helping to fill part of the remaining financing gap for emergency food assistance.

The objective of the project is to improve food and nutrition security of households affected by the 2025/26 lean season by reducing the immediate food gap through the provision of emergency maize supplies. Specifically, the operation aims to stabilize food consumption among vulnerable households during the peak of the lean season, mitigate negative coping strategies such as meal reduction and asset depletion, and contribute to restoring a minimum level of food access while the country recovers from the combined effects of climatic shocks and economic pressures.

The project directly targets approximately 23,672 vulnerable households, corresponding to about 118,000 people, with at least 40 percent women beneficiaries, in drought- and flood-affected areas, with a focused intervention in Zomba District in the Southern Region of Malawi. Beneficiaries will receive emergency food assistance in the form of maize grain, with a total of about 1,183 metric tons to be procured and distributed, providing one month of food support to the targeted population. The operation prioritizes poor rural households, female-headed households and other vulnerable groups who are most exposed to acute food insecurity during the lean season.



Early Warning System Project Analysis

Environmental Category: [3] Low Risk

The project was categorized in ISTS and validated in SAP as Category 3 (Low Risk). The proposed project activities are expected to have low environmental and social risks and impacts because they involve procurement/purchase of maize grain to address the immediate national food gap induced by the effects of the La Nina Weather pattern, thereby contributing towards enhancing the food and nutrition security of the affected population and enhance government's capacity to respond to the emergency humanitarian needs of the people affected by La Nina.



Investment Description

- African Development Bank (AFDB)

The project is financed through a USD 1 million grant from the African Development Bank's Special Relief Fund (SRF).

Financial Instrument: Emergency Assistance

Commitments (UA): 733,224

Conversion Rate USD (2026-01-27): 1,35078

Commitments (USD): 990,424.31



Contact Information

Name: Doreen KUMWENDA

Email: d.kumwenda@afdb.org

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

You can submit an information request for project information at: <https://www.afdb.org/en/disclosure-and-access-to-information/request-for-documents>. Under the AfDBs Disclosure and Access to Information policy, if you feel the Bank has omitted to publish information or your request for information is unreasonably denied, you can file an appeal at <https://www.afdb.org/en/disclosure-and-access-to-information/appeals-process>.

ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISM OF AfDB

The Independent Review Mechanism (IRM), which is administered by the Compliance Review and Mediation Unit (CRMU), is the independent complaint mechanism and fact-finding body for people who have been or are likely to be adversely affected by an African Development Bank (AfDB)-financed project. If you submit a complaint to the IRM, it may assist you by either seeking to address your problems by facilitating a dispute resolution dialogue between you and those implementing the project and/or investigating whether the AfDB complied with its policies to prevent environmental and social harms. You can submit a complaint electronically by emailing crmuinfo@afdb.org, b.kargougou@afdb.org, b.fall@afdb.org, and/or s.toure@afdb.org. You can learn more about the IRM and how to file a complaint at: <https://www.afdb.org/en/independent-review-mechanism/>



Bank Documents

- [Appraisal Report \(EN\)](#)