



Central Africa Medical Mission April 2023

Greeting in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

In the month of March 2023, Malawi received a violent and destructive storm, Cyclone Freddy which affected the Southern part of the country. The cyclone was so bad that hundreds of people have lost their lives and some are still missing. Thousands of people have been displaced and lost their homes and property in the process. The districts that were mainly affected are Blantyre, Mulanje, Phalombe, Thyolo, Zomba, Balaka, Machinga and Mangochi. Churches, villages, livestock and fields were washed away leaving people desperate.

This comes at a time when the country is still dealing with a cholera outbreak, which has also claimed many lives. Cyclone Freddy has come at an unexpected time, and it has negatively impacted people's health. Hospitals are overwhelmed with casualties. Health services have been disrupted due to structural damage to health facilities. Schools have been shut down due to damaged school buildings. *"Though the mountains be shaken, and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken or my covenant of peace be removed, says the Lord who has compassion on you"* **Isaiah 54:10** This is what the Lord is saying to the people of Malawi, that his love for them stays forever.

As the country is already struggling with cholera pandemic, there is a strong possibility that the impact of cyclone Freddy might worsen the impacts of the cholera outbreak since people are living in camps that are highly populated and with poor hygiene leading to potential problems in these camps.

Our Clinics, which are Msambo, Thunga, Suzi and Mwalaulomwe are near Lilongwe, in the Central region of Malawi. This is about 190 miles north of the affected area and we therefore did not receive severe weather from the Cyclone. However, we still received heavy downpours which made our roads very bad, hence we had difficulties reaching two of our clinic sites, Suzi and Thunga, as we use dirt roads. Unlike Msambo and Mwalaulomwe, which are just off a main road, we don't encounter many problems and we are able to reach these clinics in good time. Being Malaria season, our clinics still are receiving many patients some of whom are severely sick. Having well qualified and experienced nurses and clinicians, our patients are helped and given the care that they deserve. And, if there is a need for a referral, we refer them to hospitals for continued care and treatment.

Currently, cholera numbers have gone down both in the communities we serve and in Malawi as a whole. Ever since this cholera outbreak, our clinic has received 7 suspected cases of which two were severe. The acute ones, after thorough assessment, were given diluted Oral rehydration salt (ORS) to be taken both at the clinic and some at home. They were then sent back home and advised to rush to a nearby health center if signs and symptoms persist. The two that were severely sick were given intravenous fluids and when able to drink they were given ORS till fully awake. These patients were then referred to nearest health centers for continued management, testing and confirmation if they really have cholera. As of now, there is only one case at Chiwamba cholera treatment center, which is a treatment center in the communities that we serve.

We thank our donors for the continued support they give to the Central Africa Medical Mission. We pray that God continues blessing them and that He should give them a long and healthy life. Your Sister in Christ, Violet Chikwatu, LMC Nurse in Charge