



"Always Needed, Always There"

Rapid Assessment: Eastern Cape & KwaZulu Natal Thunderstorms and Floods June 2024



Date: 10 June 2024

1. Background

Parts of the Eastern Cape especially Nelson Mandela and Buffalo City Metros experiences heavy rains accompanied by strong winds early hours of the 2nd of June 2024 which resulted in severe flooding in most parts. Over the weekend, the [South African Weather Service](#) issued a yellow level 6 warning with predictions of strong winds, snowfalls and flooding in parts of the Western Cape, KwaZulu Natal, Northern Cape and the Eastern Cape. In addition, dam walls were compromised and canals were unable to deal with heavy rainfall which resulted in water flooding into homes and businesses. So far more than 10150 people (2030 households) have been affected including 2500 people have been displaced and 7 people have lost their lives to the floods and a number still reported missing. <https://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/condolences-eastern-cape-flood-victims-0> The heavy rains resulted in flash floods especially in the 2 Metros (Nelson Mandela Bay and Buffalo City) wreaking havoc in affected areas. <https://www.heraldlive.co.za/news/2024-06-03-heavy-rains-wreak-havoc-in-nelson-mandela-bay> About 70 people have been rescued in 55 operations since Sunday, according to the National Sea Rescue Institute (NSRI). People have been evacuated to town halls and schools, however, some families are refusing to relocate because they are concerned over their belongings. <https://mg.co.za/news/2024-06-03-six-people-dead-and-hundreds-evacuated-in-eastern-cape-floods/>

In addition, on the 3rd of June 2024 a tornado resulted in adverse floods which affected more than 36415 people and displaced more than 2500 people in KwaZulu Natal Province mainly in Ethekwini, uMkhanyakude, uMzinyathi, King Cetshwayo, Ugu and Amajuba districts resulting in a total of 7358 households destroyed. <https://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/946183-2/> A total of 3 shelters have been established accommodating a total of 731 people. As of today, 14 people lost their lives in KwaZulu Natal due to the tornado that hit the province late afternoon on the 3rd of June 2024 <https://allafrica.com/stories/202406050036.html>

https://www.news24.com/fin24/climate_future/news/explainer-whats-behind-the-kzn-tornadoes-floods-and-snowfall-across-sa-20240605

2. Situational analysis

The Sara Baartman District Municipality and 2 major metros (Nelson Mandela Bay and Buffalo City) in Eastern Cape and KwaZulu Natal province, Ethekwini and Amajuba district that are affected by the floods as show in the table below;

Eastern Cape Floods and KwaZulu Natal Tornado Impact						
Province	District/Metro	Households Affected	People Affected	Fatalities	Number of shelters	People in shelters
Eastern Cape	Nelson Mandela City	750	3750	7	4	350
	Buffalo City	780	3900		6	744
	Sara Baartman	500	2500			
KwaZulu Natal	Ugu	17	85			
	Ethekwini	7000	35000	14	3	731
	Umkhanyakude	132	660			
	uMzinyathi	28	140			
	King Cetshwayo	56	280			
	Amajuba	67	250			
TOTAL		9330	46565		13	1825

Table 1: Floods impact in Eastern Cape and KwaZulu Natal

In the Sarah Baartman District Municipalities, the areas that are adversely affected by the floods include Kouga area – Sea Vista, Oyster Bay, Jeffreys Bay, Thornhill and in Ndlambe area – New Rest Informal Settlement was also affected. The Nelson Mandela Metro is the most severe hit area with Kariega in Ward 51 and 48 suffering the worst damage. Damage to infrastructure included damages to roads, sewer systems, buildings and houses including the Traffic Department and the fire station. School has been disrupted, there are water interruptions and there are electricity interruptions with households not having these two basic services since Sunday. The dam wall near Lapland or Tyriville is currently being assessed as there are fears it will collapse causing further flooding in areas. Bridges have collapsed along the Rocklands Road as well as Matanzima road in Kwanobuhle. It must be noted that many people who have lost their homes and belongings are not at community halls but are residing with family members in Kariega. The areas affected include Kuyga, Kwadwesi, Qunu, Langa and Greenfields, Kariega Central and Kamesh, Missionvale, Gerald Smith, De Mist, Doctor Brawn, Eric Dodd. Missionvale, Walmer, Witteklip, Daleview, Kwanoxolo, Vastrap, Jachtlakte, Rocklands, Zwelidinga, Rosedale, GMV, Riemvasmaak, Kleinskool, Joe Slovo, Lapland and Tyriville.

In addition, Buffalo City Metro has been adversely affected, Duncan Village, Amalinda, Gompo, Mdantsane, Stoney Drift, Kelly Road, Vincent Park, Pfefferville. Damages are also reported in Ngqushwa, Great Kei LM and Amahlati. It is worth noting that figures would possibly rise as assessments are ongoing and more information continues to be received.

Furthermore, KwaZulu Natal province was hit by a tornado which caused havoc in Ethekeeni (Tongaat – Mangwaveni, Babries, Tshatsha) and Amajuba district (Newcastle and Utrecht area).

In line with the above, on the 5th of June 2024 the South African government declared a National State of Disaster following the floods in Eastern Cape (2nd of June 2024) and 2 tornados in KwaZulu Natal (3rd of June 2024). The declaration also followed an appeal from government sectors requesting humanitarian agencies like SARCS to assist in addressing the humanitarian crisis in the 2 provinces. The following needs have been identified so far.

- ❖ Clean water supply (water treatment and purification)
- ❖ Psychological First Aid (PFA)
- ❖ Protection of family links to displaced families
- ❖ Food
- ❖ Blankets
- ❖ Mattresses
- ❖ Hygiene packs
- ❖ Building material
- ❖ Water installation
- ❖ Temporary shelter
- ❖ School uniforms
- ❖ Support for businesses and livelihood projects affected

3. South African Red Cross Society response

The South African Red Cross Society (SARCS) is in collaboration with Disaster Management Centres at all levels National, Provincial, District and Municipal level. There has been constant participation in Joint Operations Committee (JOC) in all affected municipalities to establish protocols. SARCS has mobilized teams to provide support to those living in shack areas and assistance was given to clear out houses, to rebuild some shacks and to clean up. Soup and clothing was provided to the homes given.

SARCS has activated a total of 40 volunteers in different affected districts to conduct assessments, distribute clothes in shelters and provide Psychological First Aid (PFA) was provided to approximately 130 victims who have experienced terrible trauma including one who lost her brother, the other whose house collapsed and another who tried to rescue a disabled neighbour who unfortunately drowned in his house

SARCS is collaborating with corporate partner Shoprite to provide soup to the people being housed temporarily in shelters. This will be provided for as long as needed in the areas affected. SARCS also facilitated the process of ensuring mobile clinics are sent to the sites where people are being accommodated. Note was made of many victims who urgently required chronic treatment for ailments such as epilepsy, diabetes and blood pressure.

5. Response by other humanitarian organisations

The greatest response has come from churches in the area who have opened their doors and activated their congregants to help provide meals and distribute relief. SARCS is currently working with one of the largest halls in Kariega, NG Kerk where PFA has been provided.

Gift of the Givers has distributed blankets and municipalities are also distributing blankets and mattresses with a total of 1000 being distributed in the Nelson Mandela Bay.

6. Implications to national society

Although SARCS has been anticipating thunderstorms after early warning issues by SAWS the impact experienced after the occurrence paused a strain to the NS as it seems massive, and it requires more resources to ensure timely response and recovery. The prepositioned stock for food stock, blankets and mattress is depleting and requires support to provide timely response to affected communities.

7. Overall recommendation

- ❖ There is need for continuous joint assessment and response with government and humanitarian actors in relation to floods to avoid duplication of services.
- ❖ Field teams require protective clothing (gumboots and raincoats) to reduce the risks which teams are exposed to.
- ❖ Relief needs to be sourced to provide to those affected, Needs are diverse and widespread from food, hygiene kits, clothing to bedding to furniture and repairs to homes
- ❖ Psychological first aid will need to continue not only to the victims of the disaster but also to the relief workers from the churches as they are also overwhelmed by the situation.
- ❖ Efforts must be made to ensure prepositioning of relief to ensure a prompt response
- ❖ Continuous engagements by SARCS at all levels that is, national, provincial, district and local municipality will strategically position SARCS to solicit resources from funding agencies.

- ❖ Red Cross and Red Crescent movement partners need to continue providing technical support to SARCS on its pursuit for Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) and response related interventions to ensure timely response.



