

Climate Change and SADC's Role in Malawi: A Brief Situational Analysis after Cyclone Freddy

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Abstract:- The economic integration process of the Southern African Development Community is being affected by the damage caused by storms and floods in the region. The study looked at the role of the Southern African Development Community in the aftermath of Tropical Cyclone Freddy. The aim of the research is to provide an overview of the response of the Southern African Development Community to Cyclone Freddy in Malawi, based on secondary data published in newspapers, reports, articles and research papers. The need for assistance in the country increased because of the economic, social and infrastructural development that was affected by the storm. The study shows that the Southern African Development Community didn't play much of a role in providing emergency assistance. The study found that the Southern African Development Community has invested a lot in climate change and adaptation measures rather than responding quickly to the impact of storms in the country. The establishment of a good office in the Southern African Development Community would be important in the event of a storm in the region.

Keywords:- SADC, Climate Change, Mitigation, Adaptation.

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the biggest challenges for the African people, the government and the African Union is to understand climate change, which has been described as the biggest challenge for humanity and the environment of the 21st century (African Climate Change Strategy, 2020). Some say climate change is causing conflict, so a better understanding of what's happening in Africa is important. Much has been written about climate change in recent years, with research into how climate change affects humans and what would happen without intensive care. Many of these studies explore the interaction between climate change, water and food security, conflict and development. Debay Tadesse's research (Debay, 2010). In this research, Debay (2010) confirmed that developing countries, especially Africa, contribute to mitigating global climate change. But research predicts that climate change will harm these countries' ability to achieve water and food security, sustainable development, and the political and economic stability necessary for their survival. He also argued that developing African countries need information on climate change and the status of international climate agreements on adaptation, mitigation and

compensation (African Climate Foundation, 2023). Moreover, considering the recent changes in the African world, it can be reflected that climate change does not necessarily lead to inter-state conflicts and scarcity of water and food in the land, but it leads to more violence, thus delaying the solution of the problem. problems. effort. Although there are questions about the causes and impacts of climate change, the role of African regional groups such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has not yet been explored. Although the Southern African Development Community has set some frameworks to address climate change issues in Southern Africa (Africa Climate Change Strategy, 2020), the Southern African Development Community Southern, non-state actors, billionaires, citizens. Community participation in member states' competitions and studies still remains hopeful and in need of further research. It is also worth noting that the involvement of civil society, state actors, academia and others has made the climate change debate interesting and generated new research in SADC members such as Malawi. However, the shortcoming of these groups in countries like Malawi is that they work outside the responsibilities and discourses of developing countries, financing them and ignoring good organizations such as the Southern African Development Community, thus widening the gap between them with the cooperation of the Southern African Development Community. all. Contribution of climate change and adaptation (World Bank Group, 2022).

To make matters worse, storms and droughts are becoming more frequent in Southern Africa, pointing directly to climate change. These events have a negative impact on the population and economy of the Southern African region. Malawi, a landlocked country that is one of the centres of the Southern African region and a member of the Southern African Development Community, is not immune from these unforeseen disasters. With a population of over 22 million, the country is considered by many to be the heart of Africa and is called vulnerable to many threats, the biggest of which are floods, drought, storms, hail, earthquakes, pests and diseases (Kayuni & Chunga, 2023). Historical observations show that Malawi's average annual temperature has increased by 0.9°C since 1960, changing El Niño and La Niña conditions, thus causing climate change and uncertainty (African Climate Foundation, 2023). Lately Malawi has been going through a storm from left to right in the SADC region. Tropical Cyclone Freddy is one of the climate change and major disasters that will cause disaster in the country in

March 2023. The cyclone mainly affects southern Malawi. During cyclones, flooding and severe landslides cause deaths and destruction of homes, buildings and other assets.

The Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services under the office of the Natural Resources, Energy and Mines worked intensively to provide climate and weather services to meet the needs of Cyclone Freddy, but it still faced the following challenges: Poor policy and Institutional frame works on climate change, weak services a, and insufficient capacity and economics to meet the needs of commercial and private users (Department of Climate Change and Meteorology, 2023). SADC, as one of the main actors, is also working to combat climate change in Malawi in response to Cyclone Freddy, which claimed many lives. Despite the positive response of the South African Community Development after the cyclone, the region still needs more effective support and efforts to help it cope with high levels of climate change and adaptation. Cyclone Freddy has exposed some of the shortcomings in the Southern African Development Community's cooperation on climate change in Malawi (Tarvinga and Makombe, 2023). Therefore, this study will provide a brief overview of climate change and the role of the Southern African Development Community in the post-Malawi Cyclone Freddy era. The research is based on secondary sources such as literature reviews, reports, articles and books. The research was conducted with the following objectives:

- To assess the impact of Cyclone Freddy in the hit areas in Malawi
- To Investigate the response of Malawi as a nation to the occurrence of the cyclone
- To Assess the role played by SADC in response to the Cyclone.

This research is important because it will provide further insight into the impacts of climate change and help determine the country's vulnerabilities and defences. The article will also help evaluate the effectiveness of SADC by identifying the strengths and weaknesses of SADC interventions and suggest improvements in future interventions to ensure stability in Malawi and the southern part of Africa.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents the rich literature analysis backing the study. Basing on the academic demands of this paper the chapter has been divided into two sections namely conceptual framework and theoretical framework.

➤ *Conceptual Framework*

- *The Concept of Climate Change in Malawi*

To comprehend the concept of climate change, it is essential to grasp the definition of climate. Climate refers to the typical weather conditions experienced in a specific area over a period of time. It can take a few months, seasons, or even a few years (Houghton 2000). Climate change refers to the alteration in long-term patterns of climate, encompassing shifts in average temperatures and precipitation. Nature or

humans can bring about these changes. Secondly, the gradual increase in the earth's average surface temperature, which some attribute to human activities, is known as global warming (Downie et.al, 2007). Al 2009). In various circles, climate change is often referred to as global warming, and vice versa (bulkeley & betsill, 2003). The ongoing debate surrounding climate change focuses on whether it is real or not, and it is important to note that these terms are not interchangeable. In those debates, for instance, global warming is believed to cause climate change (nhamo, 2012).

Located in southern Africa and bordered by Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zambia, Malawi is a small, densely populated, and landlocked country with one of the lowest levels of per capita income in the world. Malawi is one of the member-states of SADC, a regional economic community which has been in existence since 1980 with the main aim of coordinating development projects in the region in order to lessen economic dependence on the then apartheid South Africa (SADC, 2023). Like most countries of the region, Malawi has not been left out from the world catastrophe of climate change. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) defines climate change as the change or alteration in weather pattern that is attributed directly or indirectly to anthropogenic interference that alters the composition of the global atmosphere (Downie & et. al, 2009). In recent years, cyclones, floods and droughts have long been a constant occurrence across Malawi's landscape and climate change has intensified the impact of these events. Malawi's landscape has experienced the exploitation of forests and depletion of other green natural resources through a vice known as deforestation. Authors like (Kayuni & Chunga, 2023) have pointed out that deforestation in Malawi triggered by rapid population growth has been the major contributor of climate change in the country. Scientifically, trees heavily help in regulating climate by absorbing carbon dioxide gas and other greenhouse gases. Therefore, when they are cut down, this positive effect is lost and carbon stored in the trees is released into the atmosphere which heavily contributes to heavy accumulation of these gases in the atmosphere.

Climate change in Malawi has brought some devastating effects on the country as the vast majority of Malawians rely on small-scale, rain-fed agriculture, thus making them highly dependent on weather patterns. Climate change has increasingly exacerbated droughts, flooding, and inconsistent rainfall, contributing to food insecurity and threatening to derail progress toward Malawi's goal of self-reliance. The country has also experienced some devastating effects of cyclones and this has been elude to climate change (SADC, 2024).

- *Cyclone Freddy: A Climate Change Devastating Catastrophe in Malawi*

The increasing frequency of cyclones worldwide can be attributed to the impact of climate change. A cyclone, which is a weather phenomenon characterized by rotating winds that converge towards an area of low atmospheric pressure, is a series of destructive events that can have significant environmental consequences (tropical cyclone, 2023). The

extent of damage caused by a tropical cyclone, like a hurricane or tropical storm, is primarily determined by its strength, its size, and its position. Malawi has encountered various challenges, including floods, strong winds, earthquakes, diseases, and pest outbreaks. Nevertheless, cyclones are the most hazardous natural disasters that the country has encountered thus far. The country has been affected by a number of cyclones, tropical cyclone Freddy being one of them, which developed in the western Indian Ocean and moved eastwards, influencing torrential rains over the southern part of Malawi (Malawi government, 2023).

Tropical cyclone Freddy struck the southeastern coast of Mozambique on February 11, 2023, and then moved on to wreak havoc in other southern African countries, such as Malawi. Tropical cyclone Freddy caused heavy rainfall in the southern region of Malawi from March 11th to 15th, 2023, resulting in various calamities in 14 districts (emergency response plan, 2023). The storm caused strong winds, heavy rains, flash floods, and severe mudslides, which were the primary reasons for deaths, destruction of homes, buildings, and other infrastructure, as well as damage to agriculture and the displacement of thousands of people. Freddy was a novel experience for most Malawians and the government, as it possessed unique characteristics in terms of its strength, location, and consequences (Lutala & Makwero, 2023). Consequently, the government was ill-equipped to handle the magnitude of destruction, with a significant number of deaths, missing individuals, and injuries. As a result, the government declared a state of emergency on 13th March 2023.

The aftermath of cyclone Freddy had substantial effects on Malawi. According to Braka & et al. (2024), the cyclone had a significant impact on the health sector as it worsened the cholera outbreak in the country, resulting in the loss of lives. This was exacerbated by the structural damage of healthcare facilities, which hindered the delivery of services to the affected population. There were losses of medications, damaged medical equipment, including the loss of medical records and other supplies. Furthermore, a total of 624 schools in 22 education districts were impacted by the cyclone, affecting a total of 724,709 learners. The physical assessment report (government of Malawi, 2023) also indicated damages to classroom blocks, teachers' houses, boreholes, shelters, learning materials, and a significant number of textbooks. In regions with significant infrastructure, major roads were severely impacted by floods and mudslides, causing disruptions in the delivery of crucial humanitarian services (situation report, 2023). The government of Malawi also reported the impacts on shelter and livelihoods with an estimation of 146,506 households mounting to 659,278 persons were internally displaced in 14 councils across the affected districts of southern Malawi consequent to the cyclone. This vulnerability was further exacerbated by the country's poor socio-economic and demographic factors, such as a narrow economic base, dependence on rain-fed agriculture, high reliance on biomass energy and low adaptive capacity at the community and national levels (Lesolle, 2021).

- *The Southern African Development Community (SADC)*

Regional integration is embraced by most African countries as a development strategy that would help to alleviate the economic constraints faced by small and fractionated economies working in isolation (Uneca, 2019). This has led to the creation of various regional alliances in Africa. The Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC), the forerunner of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), was formed in Lusaka, Zambia on 1 April, 1980, following the adoption of the Lusaka Declaration Southern Africa: Towards Economic Liberation by the nine founding member states (SADC, 2002).

The agreement and treaty that replaced the coordination conference, was signed at the summit of heads of state or government on August 17, 1992, in Windhoek, Namibia. SADC has 14 member states namely: Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Each member state is responsible for coordinating a specific sector or sectors on behalf of the other member states (SADC, 2002).

The primary objective of SADC is to stimulate economic progress and sustainable development in the entire region by encouraging collaboration and integration among its member nations. In the near future, the Southern African Development Community's main objective is to alleviate poverty, with the ultimate goal of eradicating it completely.

➤ *Theoretical Framework*

- *Intergovernmentalism*

This study uses the theory of intergovernmentalism proposed by Stanley Hoffman, which includes regional integration as a discipline of international relations. Hofmann's goal differs from that of other scholars such as Ernst B. Hass, who studies the evolution of supranational organizations such as the European Union (Jansen, 2006).

Nugent defines government intervention as an arrangement by which the nation-state can manage and cooperate on matters of interest in a variety of situations and circumstances. In this case, the country has the freedom to choose whether to cooperate or not and can determine the level of cooperation. A country may choose to block the proposals of others by vetoing them (Nugent, 2003). In the Southern African Development Community, leaders of the frontline states united through the Southern African Coordination Conference (SADCC) and reduced their dependence on South Africa; working together to eliminate the problem, they affected retaliation against apartheid South Africa.

Hoffman argued that perceived factors such as historical and geographical disputes were more important to policy makers than similarities or similarities in goals (Jansen, 2006). From this perspective, the prospect of integration must carry a "heavier burden" than before. Integration is hampered by historical relationships and the responsibility of the nation state. The establishment of the Southern African Community

among members of the Southern African Development Community is based on the historical process and the quest of countries at the forefront of liberating Africa. In this respect, the establishment of SADC carried a "heavy burden" because it gave rise to opposition to the oppression that still exists in countries such as Zimbabwe and South Africa. Once this goal is achieved, the next step is to transform the Joint Forum into a Community Development Forum that allows community members to advance issues that affect them in the current context, such as poverty, development and the environment. Learning about change (Jansen, 2006). According to this theory, national interests of nation-states have differences that arise from their past history, historical background and social relations, competing differently in the national and international environment (Hoffmann, 1983). However, nation-states still benefit from regional integration processes; because regional organizations help them achieve greater effectiveness in solving problems in the country and in positions of power in the world. Nation-states manage regional integration processes in line with their own interests. Moreover, regional organizations do not reflect the death of nation-states, on the contrary, they support their survival and adaptation to changing global conditions (Jansen, 2006). Drawing on the Southern African Development Community and existing work on climate change, the regional organization was created with the aim of improving the performance of nation states. SADC works directly to empower these people's change by developing policies, plans and projects to enable member states, particularly the most vulnerable regions, to recover from the impacts of climate change. Although regional organizations are created by member states, it is also clear that regional organizations contribute to the success of the nation state by influencing the actions of member states. This also ensures the effective functioning of regional organizations and the achievement of their objectives; because, according to this theory, meeting the internal needs of member states takes precedence over transnational or regional goals.

III. METHODOLOGY

➤ *Research Design*

This study employed an exploratory research design, as its primary objective was to explore the research questions, while also aiming to provide final and conclusive solutions to the existing problem.

➤ *Nature and Source of Data*

The information used in this article was gathered from secondary sources. The study utilized a wide range of sources, including peer-reviewed journal articles, books, press reports, notes from different countries on climate change, and internet-based materials. These sources of literature were accessed through the physical library, school monitored online databases such as ebscohost, sage premier, ebrary, jstor, proquest, and ebook collection of ebscohost (formally

known as net library). In addition to these library interfaces, the article also utilized free search engines like google scholar and google books.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Impact of Cyclone Freddy on Malawi

Tropical cyclone Freddy originated in the western Indian Ocean and moved eastward, resulting in significant rainfall in southern Malawi. The Malawi government released a statement in 2023, highlighting the occurrence of numerous flood cases in Blantyre, Thyolo, and Mulanje districts on March 12th. Numerous earthquakes and landslides frequently take place in the region. As of March 14, 2023, the affected regions expanded and encompassed Nsanje, Chikwawa, Neno, Mwanza, Machinga, Balaka, Zomba, and Mangochi district. The research findings revealed that over 2,267,458 individuals were impacted, with 659,278 being displaced, 679 losing their lives, 537 going missing, and 2,178 sustaining injuries (government of Malawi, 2023). Additionally, the study also found that 1,156,819 of the total affected population were women and girls of reproductive age, and around 90,399 are pregnant (Malawi government, 2023).

Considering the ratio of affected persons to the total population of the district, Phalombe was the most affected district with 60%, followed by Chiradzulu (54%), Mulanje (53%), Nsanje (44%) and Zomba (43%). As indicated in table 1 below (government of Malawi, 2023), the population in Blantyre city and district accounts for 35% of the total population. The research findings revealed that torrential downpours caused significant harm to homes, roads, schools, healthcare facilities, bridges, water supplies, power lines, crops, and water pipes in the impacted regions. The majority of displaced individuals resided in temporary shelters like refugee camps, schools, churches, community centers, and other makeshift accommodations, although some still found themselves in their original community. The research findings revealed that certain displaced regions were overcrowded and lacked proper access to water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities, leading to concerns about the spread of diseases, including a potential cholera outbreak that was already present. Conversely, the study also found that individuals with disabilities, those living with HIV, and those with albinism were more significantly impacted by the absence of support (Kadzuwa, 2023). Over half of immigrants prefer to reside in schools, which poses challenges in delivering educational services effectively. Similarly, some healthcare facilities and medical equipment were affected by the flood, and healthcare services were interrupted. The department of disaster management (DODMA) declared the emergency operations center (EOC) on March 11, 2023, to streamline the coordination of response operations. Following extensive floods, earthquakes, landslides, and landslides, the president of the country, Dr. Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera declared a state of emergency in the affected region.

Table 1 Showing Cyclone Freddy Affected Districts in Southern Malawi

COUNCIL	2018 Population	AFFECTED HOUSEHOLDS			AFFECTED POPULATION		DISPLACED PEOPLE				DEATH	INJURIES	MISSING	CAMPS
		Total	MHH	FHH	Total	% of Total Affected	HH	Pop	Male	Female				
Balaka	438,379	3,611	1,810	1,801	10,551	2%	167	807	375	432	1	31	0	4
Blantyre	1,251,484	87,900	34,281	53,619	434,586	35%	8,981	38,503	18,866	19,637	286	433	79	26
Chikwawa	564,684	55,439	21,621	33,818	101,786	18%	22,258	90,232	44,214	46,018	26	40	5	38
Chiradzulu	356,875	42,642	23,481	17,161	191,889	54%	1,687	7,592	3,720	3,872	16	164	0	40
Machinga	735,438	26,595	10,372	16,223	114,562	16%	4,709	22,260	10,907	11,353	4	76	0	37
Mangochi	1,148,611	51,194	19,966	31,228	230,373	20%	3,375	13,984	6,852	7,132	9	124	1	35
Mulanje	684,107	72,427	28,247	44,180	362,135	53%	25,366	131,830	64,597	67,233	151	147	219	128
Mwanza	130,949	11,837	4,616	7,221	53,267	41%	287	1,292	633	659	0	6	0	0
Neno	138,291	218	85	133	1,090	1%	209	1,045	512	533	1	3	0	0
Nsanje	299,168	29,174	11,378	17,796	131,283	44%	29,174	145,870	71,476	74,394	13	12	15	62
Ntcheu	659,608	556	217	339	2,502	0%	280	1,260	617	643	0	0	0	1
Phalombe	429,450	57,466	32,458	25,008	258,597	60%	26,178	117,801	57,722	60,079	137	1,084	211	104
Thyolo	721,456	9,696	4,150	5,546	43,632	6%	2,780	6,106	2,992	3,114	16	0	0	48
Zomba city	106,013	3,045	1,188	1,857	8,267	8%	171	304	149	155	6	14	0	5
Zomba District	746,724	71,764	27,988	43,776	322,938	43%	17,865	80,393	39,392	41,000	13	44	7	219
Total	8,411,237	523,564	221,857	299,707	2,267,458	27%	143,487	659,278	323,026	336,252	679	2,178	537	747

Malawi Government, 2023.

On the other hand, as reported by (UNESCO, 2023) the total effects of tropical cyclone Freddy across social, productive, and infrastructure sectors were estimated at \$506.71 million, with physical damages valued at \$347.23 million and economic losses assessed at \$159.4 million and the most affected sector being the infrastructure sector (\$178.04 million).

B. Disaster Effects of Tropical Cyclone Freddy across Sectors

➤ *Housing*

The study by reviewing necessary literature discovered that, approximately 146,506 households (659,278 individuals) were forced to relocate in 14 councils due to the impact of tropical cyclone Freddy. The majority of displaced households were provided shelter in designated camps, schools, churches, mosques, health facilities, and community childcare centers. This led to people being homeless in the affected areas. Malawi Government (2023) pointed out that, the destructiveness of cyclone Freddy in the affected areas destroyed much houses and left a lot of people without accommodation and homeless.

➤ *Education*

After a thorough review of literature, the study discovered that the education sector in the affected areas was heavily affected. Malawi Government (2023) points out that, A total of 624 schools in 22 education districts were affected, disrupting access to education for 724,811 learners (356,396 boys, 368,313 girls). Classroom blocks, teachers' houses, latrines, administration blocks, libraries, dormitories, kitchens, feeding shelters and boreholes were damaged.

Teaching and Learning materials (TLM) that were damaged include textbooks, exercise books, chalk, dusters and teacher reference materials. Influx of IDPs in schools further disrupted teaching and learning processes. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in schools was compromised because of damaged water points. The presence of IDPs in schools also placed pressure on already inadequate latrines in school premises.

➤ *Agriculture and Livelihood*

A total of 202,095.5 hectares (ha) of farmland owned by 467,958 households (241,535 fhh 226,423 mhh) were severely impacted (malawi government, 2023). The agricultural households faced the unfortunate loss of their crops, including maize, ground nuts, soybeans, tobacco, sesame, rice, and cotton, either due to complete flooding or submersion. On livestock 1,428,584 combined livestock species owned by 104,565 livestock keepers were either killed or injured by the floods. It was crucial to offer support to affected households in terms of agricultural resources and livestock to improve their food security and sustain their livelihoods (sadc, 2023). This resulted in a scarcity of both adequate and healthy food in the nation.

➤ *Health*

Under this, and back by several literature materials the study discovered a heavy negative impact of cyclone Freddy on the health sector. The tropical cyclone disrupted delivery of health services in 63 health facilities through infrastructure damage, power cuts, loss of drugs, damaged medical equipment, and loss of medical files, records and other supplies. Of the total damaged facilities, 24 health facilities were severely damaged requiring immediate repairs, 35 were

partially damaged and required medium urgency for repairs. There were 16,824 pregnant women who were internally displaced and residing in camps who requiring delivery kits, essential health care medicines and other supplies (Malawi Government, 2023). Other necessary reproductive health services for women of childbearing age included family planning, dignity kits, and post abortion care. There were 99,552 under five children among the IDPs who required integrated child health services.

➤ *Transport and Logistics*

The major roads from Blantyre were severely affected by floods and landslides, causing significant disruptions in the transportation of vital humanitarian supplies. Multiple regions in chikwawa, mulanje, phalombe, and zomba districts were rendered inaccessible by road, and the entire nsanje district was completely isolated. Access to secondary roads in the region was severely limited, making it difficult to transport relief supplies within the districts. Over 44 roads

were affected, with 16 being major roads, 17 being secondary roads, and 10 being tertiary roads. In a total of 15 councils, over 40 bridges suffered damage (Malawi Government, 2023).

The power transmission lines, which carry electricity at a voltage of 132kV and 66kV, as well as the distribution infrastructure, including poles, broken jumpers, and conductors, were all affected by the storm. The repairs to the damaged power infrastructure were postponed because the poor road access hindered the transportation of necessary supplies to the affected areas. It was crucial to clear the roads and fix any damaged sections and bridges to ensure the smooth functioning of the humanitarian supply chain and enable the efficient delivery of socio-economic services. The electricity power distribution systems required repair to facilitate economic activities in the impacted regions.

➤ *Malawi`s Southern Region Affected Areas*

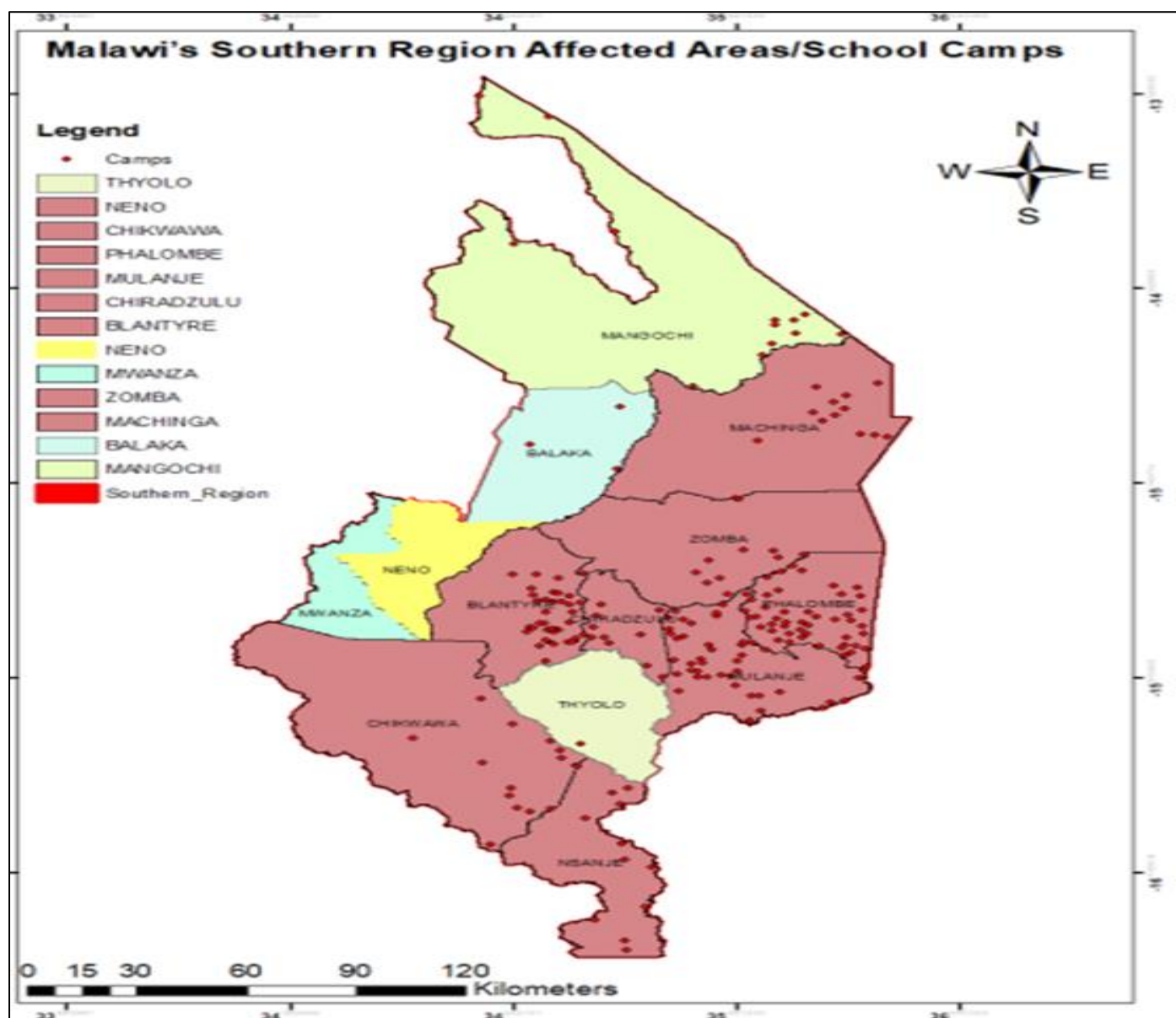


Fig 1 Malawi`s Southern Region Affected Areas
Adopted from Kadzuwa (2023)

C. Malawi's Response to Cyclone Freddy

Following the disaster, the needs of affected people needed to be addressed and interventions developed to meet these needs in the short, medium and long term. Disaster recovery techniques, including the use of disaster mitigation measures and disaster recovery planning in dealing with disasters such as cyclones, have a significant impact on people and the environment (Zorn and Shamseldin, 2015).

➤ *The Disaster Immediate (RAPID) Response*

The study discovered that, due to the impact of the disaster, the President of Malawi declared a state of disaster in the affected areas from 13 March 2023. The President appealed to international donors, the free society, the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and private businesses to provide humanitarian assistance to alleviate the suffering of those affected. The President's was well received, and private humanitarian aid from international donors, the United Nations, non-governmental organizations, individuals and businesses has begun to flow into the country, and people started receiving food, shelter and other items (African Climate Change Foundation 2023).

Additionally, the study also discovered that, immediately following the disaster, the Malawi government put in place an integrated system to carry out flood management and conduct a rapid needs assessment to identify immediate life-saving needs. This was followed by a joint evaluation, the results of which were published and informed the development of the Freddy emergency response plan, which was to be implemented for a period of three months with an estimated \$143.6 million in emergency service needs and the emergency response plan acknowledged that the government faced a financial gap of \$107.3 million in its short-term response (UNESCO, 2023). The emergency plan set several categories of interventions, including food conservation, education, health, shelter and camp management.

➤ *Long Term Response*

The study discovered that, Malawi has not been silent on promoting disaster risk management as a legal and policy framework designed to promote adaptation and mitigation as part of its long-term response message to Cyclone Freddy. Disaster risk management (DRM) policy in Malawi is influenced by international frameworks, including the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and the African Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy 2004 (USAID, 2023). This process informed the development of Malawi 2063 (MW2063), a plan that reflects the vision and aspirations of the Malawian people to build a youth-led, inclusive, sustainable society by 2063. By severing ties, it intends to minimize dangers to Malawians and enhance their ability to withstand disasters and business challenges. Mw2063 is built upon three fundamental pillars: (1) enhancing agricultural productivity and commercialization, (2) promoting industrialization, and (3) fostering urbanization. The national resilience strategy has also guided the execution of DRM activities in the country. Drawing from the lessons learned from the implementation of Malawi vision 2020 and other previous experiences, mw2063 incorporates

environmental sustainability as one of the seven key factors for achieving the country's vision and aspirations.

Furthermore, the national disaster risk management policy (2015), which is currently being reviewed, offers practical guidance on how to effectively, implement, and coordinate disaster risk management at all levels of policy and planning to ensure its long-term sustainability. The policy offers a comprehensive set of key activities and strategies to enhance Malawi's readiness for disasters. It also encourages all public institutions, non-governmental organizations, private organizations, the media, and development partners of national and local governments to prioritize risk management and the implementation of the plan in their activities

The law holds significant importance in Malawi and is viewed as a crucial factor in the country's ability to endure long-term challenges. On April 12, 2023, parliament passed the new disaster risk management act. The national disaster preparedness and relief act of 1991, which established the department of disaster management affairs, still provides the main legal framework for DRM, however, until the new act is operationalized (Lutala, et. al., 2011). The disaster preparedness and relief act (1991) was established to provide guidance on coordinating and executing disaster reduction efforts in Malawi. It also created the national disaster preparedness and relief committee (at both technical and steering levels) and the national disaster preparedness and relief fund, as well as local-level civil protection committees. The disaster preparedness and relief act also establishes a legal framework for the president of Malawi to declare a state of emergency, which outlines the geographical scope of the affected area and can be in place for up to three months. The updated disaster risk management act (2023) offers enhanced guidelines for DRM, prioritizing resilience building and sustainable financing. This is also part of the ongoing efforts in the country to address and prepare for disasters in the long run.

➤ *SADC's Response to Cyclone Freddy*

The devastation caused by cyclone Freddy highlighted the necessity for robust mechanisms through regional bodies like the southern African development community (SADC). This is because problems in one-member state affect the overall performance of the entire region. Over the past five years, the SADC region has experienced a decline in performance due to climate change-related events such as droughts, cyclones, and floods, which have caused damage to infrastructure, crops, and livestock. To make progress towards the agreed targets, SADC member states need to actively participate and contribute to the development of member states, whether it be in terms of economic growth, infrastructure development, or macroeconomic stability.

SADC has established and is coordinating a weather and climate monitoring program to promote collaboration among its 16 member states, with the aim of enhancing regional security and fostering stronger regional integration. SADC has developed a climate change strategy and action plan to address the challenges that have been exposed by climate change. According to the plan which provides a broad outline

for harmonized and coordinated regional and national actions to address and respond to the impacts of climate change, sadc's ultimate goal is to stabilize greenhouse gas concentration and promote sustainable economic growth in ways that foster social equity (taruyinga & makombe, 2023). Furthermore, the regional alliance has a dedicated unit for disaster risk reduction, which is responsible for handling situations like the recent flood in Malawi. The unit is in charge of overseeing and coordinating regional preparedness and response programs for transboundary hazards and disasters. The center also acknowledges that the southern african region has been prone to several natural disasters such as cyclone eline which ravaged mozambique and zimbabwe in the early 2000's ((taruvinga & makombe, 2023).

There has been a projected increase in both frequency and severity of multiple disasters such as droughts, tropical cyclones, floods, wildfires, and rising sea levels in the sadc region. Considering this, a sadc humanitarian operations centre (shoc) was established in mozambique and launched in 2021. The operation of the centre is underway and one of the achievements made so far is the support offered to malawi which amounted to US\$300,000 towards humanitarian assistance to those affected by tropical cyclone freddy (sadc report, 2023).

In reference to Taruvinga & Makombe (2023), SADC's efforts in response to cyclone Freddy was delayed as compared to countries like Zambia & Tanzania who provided helicopters and other support to the country for the victims at a good time. Other than providing US\$300,000, the regional body did not provide the support the country needed given the fact that the president alluded to how the level of devastation in the country was beyond the resources the country posse thus calling strong regional bodies like SADC to its rescue.

While efforts were made by SADC, cyclone Freddy exposed some fissures in its involvement in the member state. Given the impacts, the regional body should not overlook its important role in assisting member countries at times like these.

V. CONCLUSION

Climate change in Malawi still possesses a threat to the development of the country which is ranked amongst the power countries. This is happening despite effort from different sectors striving for climate change mitigation and adaptation. The involvement of SADC as a regional bloc in matters of climate change in Malawi is something which has to improve as it can be noticed that there has been minimal or under pant involvement of the regional bloc in issues of climate change in Malawi. As portrayed by this article, despite SADC having a number of climate change programmes and agendas, the institution's effort in responding to Tropical Cyclone Freddy in Malawi was minimal hence a need for the institution to improve in terms of its response to the occurrence of climatic disasters in its member states. Thus, the article basing on secondary data has exposed some gaps in the interaction of SADC with its member states in issues of climate change response.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MALAWI AS A MEMBER-STATE OF SADC ON ENHANCING CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCE IN THE COUNTRY IN CASES OF DISASTERS

Despite Malawi's efforts on climate change and regional cooperation, the existence of various pressures continues to challenge the effectiveness of regional plans to protect or combat climate change. Although the number of climate change-related programs and projects in Malawi is increasing, there is still much policy work to be done. Therefore, considering Malawi's lack of progress in this regard, significant efforts need to be made on policies that will make the country resilient to climate change. Many factors and measures should be considered and taken into account when developing a system for addressing climate change. The following recommendations are practical and indicative:

Enhance the organization, operations, facilities, and financial planning for disaster management (drm) in the country. The government of Malawi should put into action the existing working arrangements and clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the different departments, offices, or institutions involved in disaster risk management at all levels. The financial risk system needs to be enhanced to handle risks in the built environment and safeguard critical infrastructure, aiding in disaster preparedness and emergency preparedness.

Disaster risk awareness needs to be improved for effective planning and disaster risk reduction. Concerns about the lack of special attention to land safety and the promotion and use of flood safety information to eliminate criminals have been raised by the impact of Tropical Cyclone Freddy. The impact of climate change will require action at many levels for change to be successful in the country.

Both the Malawi government and SADC should also put strong structures in place that will be working on monitoring and evaluating of the climate change mitigation and adaptation frameworks transparently. This will assist in making sure that the implemented frameworks are fully and effectively working towards their set intended purpose. This is against the background that in Malawi, less effort is usually spent on monitoring and evaluation of set and implemented policies. Hence, by having structures working on monitoring and evaluation of climate change adaptation and mitigation frameworks, a clear picture will be created on how effective are the frameworks.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
GHG	Green House Gases
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
MDG's	Millennium Development Goals
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

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