



## **SITUATION REPORT NO. 5, 22<sup>nd</sup> JANUARY 2013: MAJOR INCIDENTS /ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE RAINFALL SEASON**

### **1. Zimbabwe Brief Hydrological Update as at 21<sup>st</sup> January 2013 ( ZINWA)**

- Flows in the country's major rivers continue to rise due to the heavy rains being received across the country. As a result of the rainfall activities, flows as well as dam levels have been increasing significantly across the country. The flow increases are causing major flooding threat in the flood prone areas of Muzarabani, Gokwe, Middle Sabi, Tsholotsho and lately Chikwalakwala.
- The Zambezi River flows have been increasing as a result of the rains being experienced within the country and the Zambezi upstream countries. As of today (21 January 2013) the flows are averaging **883m<sup>3</sup>/s** which is above the expected flows of 753m<sup>3</sup>/s at this time of the year.
- Limpopo River experienced significant increases in flows during the week and burst its banks at B35 station yesterday (20 January) when the river level rose to more than 10m. As of today the levels were around 8m. The burst flooded the Beit Bridge Pump Station.
- Lake Kariba is now at 63.9% full. The current lake level is above the 39.8% level expected at this time of the year. Last season at this time of the year the lake level was at 65.9% full.
- The national dams have gained 3.61% on average since the 14<sup>th</sup> of January 2013. The current level stands at 58.6% full on average.
- In the **Gwayi Catchment** which covers greater parts of Matabeleland North Province, there has been a rapid increase in dam levels of 10.0% since the 14<sup>th</sup> of January 2013. The current dam levels stand at 76.6% full on average.
- In the **Mzingwane Catchment** (mainly Matabeleland South Province), flows averaging 66.5m<sup>3</sup>/s are being recorded in the Buby River at Buby Bridge (B59). Currently there is a lot of backflows in Mzingwane, Shashe and Buby River as a result of high flows in the Limpopo River leading to the major tributaries failing to discharge into the Limpopo. All areas around the confluence of the major rivers and Limpopo are under threat of major flooding. These include the flood prone area of Chikwalakwala.
- In the **Save Catchment** (mainly Manicaland Province), flows in the Save River at the Condo Dam site (E21) are currently averaging 809m<sup>3</sup>/s and have been increasing since the 14<sup>th</sup> of January. Downstream at Save Gorge the levels stand at 4m. Flows in Devure (E118) which feeds into Save River are currently averaging 27.8 m<sup>3</sup>/s which is a decrease from the 60.7m<sup>3</sup>/s on the

14<sup>th</sup> of January 2013. There has been an increase of 4.4% in dam levels since the 14<sup>th</sup> of January. The chances of major flooding in the Middle Save remains high and communities have to be very alert of the situation on the ground.

- In the **Manyame Catchment** (mostly Mashonaland West Province), significant flows continue to be noted in the Manyame River system as well as Musengezi River. The flows in Musengezi River at C68 (Centenary) is currently averaging 17.1 m<sup>3</sup>/s. The current flow is above both the average flows expected at this time of the year (9.7m<sup>3</sup>/s) and the flows reached the previous season (5m<sup>3</sup>/s). Downstream at Chidodo in the Mbire District the Musengezi River has decreased compared to last week and the level as of today stands at 4m. Though the level is below the threshold of flooding (7.2m), major rainfall events can plunge the area into flooding.
- In the **Mazowe Catchment** (mostly Mashonaland East and Central Provinces), the Mazowe River flows have decreased from 600m<sup>3</sup>/s on the 14<sup>th</sup> of January 2013 to 440m<sup>3</sup>/s as of today (21 January 2013). The current flows are above the average expected flows (191m<sup>3</sup>/s) at this time of the year as well as the volumes attained last year at this time (149.7m<sup>3</sup>/s). The dam levels in the catchment have increased by a 0.9% since the 14<sup>th</sup> of January 2013 and now stand at 80.3% full on average.
- In the **Runde Catchment** (mainly Masvingo Province) there has been an increase of 2.1% in the dam levels. Dams in the catchment are still very low and stand at 27.2% full on average. Chances of flooding in the Malapati area are slim at the moment even if the rainfall activities persist.
- In the **Sanyati Catchment** (Mainly Midlands Province) there has been a 4.2% increase in the dam levels since the 14<sup>th</sup> of January and the level stands at 70% full. Chances of flooding in Gokwe remain high if rainfall activities continue.

## 2. Major Incidents: Provincial Summaries

### **Matabeleland North**

Tsholotsho: The Tamuhla community near Gwayi River in Tsholotsho is likely to be marooned if the rains continue and are therefore on high alert and monitoring river flows. Several homesteads in Tsholotsho, (about 500 to date) have succumbed to excessive moisture and have collapsed and about 100 families have been left homeless as a result and require tents. Affected families have been given \$100 per household to enable them to purchase food and other urgent consumables.

### **Matabeleland South**

Beitbridge: Communities along the Limpopo are at risk to flooding as the river is full and the district has received heavy rains. Tributaries both within the country and those emanating from

neighboring countries particularly Botswana are full and dams are reportedly spilling.

Air Force of Zimbabwe has evacuated 8 families from Chikwakwala to high ground on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2013. Twenty six families in Tsitulipasi were displaced by flooding on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2013 and are temporarily sheltered at the local police station. Sixteen homesteads collapsed. The road network in the area is badly damaged and bridge across Bubi linking Chiredzi and Chikwalakwala has been swept away. Three people have died among them a husband and wife who drowned. The border post was temporarily closed on 21<sup>st</sup> January as the water level had reached the bridge. The local Civil Protection Committee is providing the necessary relief. IOM has provided non food items such as blankets and utensils; Zimbabwe Red Cross has provided tents, other NGOs are providing logistical support in the form of transport and food. The National Civil Protection Fund has availed \$100 per household for the displaced and those whose homesteads have been destroyed to enable them to purchase urgent essentials and has also availed \$200 for the bereaved to assist with burials. The Directorate has also dispatched a lorry to assist with transportation.

### **Midlands**

Gokwe: A helicopter had to be dispatched to rescue 8 villagers marooned on Ume, Dande and Sengwa rivers on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2013.

### **Manicaland**

#### Nyanga District

The local Civil protection Committee is investigating alternate access routes into the area cut off by the damaged Nyangombe Bridge. A comprehensive assessment of needs will then be conducted.

### **Harare**

Chitungwiza: An unusual incident unrelated to the rainfall season occurred in Zengeza 2 Township in Chitungwiza. A powerful explosion killed 5 people one of them a child and injured 12 and 3 are critical at about 15 00hrs on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2012. Four houses were destroyed and other nearby houses were damaged including a school. Investigations are underway to determine the cause. The local Civil Protection Committee is assessing the extent of assistance required.

### **3.Weather summary for the period 14 to 20 January 2013:**

Moist conditions persisted across the country for the whole week. This resulted in moderate to heavy rainfalls across the country. There was precipitation across the whole country with a bias of heavier falls to the south of the country, especially over Bulawayo and Matabeleland South.

In some cases very heavy falls in excess of 100mm in 24 hours were experienced over Matabeleland South. No long term records were broken. The ground has become water logged in places and the drainage of water has been greatly reduced.

**Extended weather forecast 22 to 29 January 2013:**

**All areas:**

Although there will be precipitation across the country on 22 January 2013 the falls should be light to moderate. However there should be drying out across much of the country from 23 January to Friday 26 January. During this period rainfall activity should be confined to the North East of the country that is Mashonaland Provinces, Harare, and the North of Manicaland. From 27 January to the end of the period, there should be an increase in rainfall activity especially over Mashonaland Provinces, Harare and Manicaland.

**Recommendations:**

- Vehicles whether private/public should not attempt to cross flooded low lying bridges.
- People should not attempt to cross streams/rivers which are flooded.
- Farmers who are into tobacco farming should make sure that their crop is insured for hail damage.
- People should quickly move to higher ground if they notice that their area is becoming flooded.
- Do not take shelter under trees during a thunderstorm to avoid being electrocuted.
- People should refrain from parking vehicles under big and old trees as the trees may fall down.
- People should refrain from working in the open when it is raining.

**Compiled by Department of Civil Protection**

**For further information, contact [sndlovu@eprzim.co.zw](mailto:sndlovu@eprzim.co.zw) 0775022140 / 791287 or [lbetera@eprzim.co.zw](mailto:lbetera@eprzim.co.zw)**

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