



## A ‘Fridays of the Commission’ series that presents the urgency to expedite resilience-building on the continent

### Series I: Building Resilience after Cyclone Freddy

Date and Time: 27 October 2023 11.00-13.00

African Union Headquarters, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

#### I. Background

From Cyclone Freddy to Storm Daniel, and to the Earthquake in Morocco, the year 2023 has been one of the deadliest years on the African continent. The recent events present only the tip of the iceberg. Small and slow-onset disaster events most often receive less attention and account for significant losses. This is often because they do not directly lead to massive disaster deaths. Yet, these small events result in huge economic impacts and wider, long-term impacts on development. In 2022 alone, disasters in Africa led to economic losses of 38.5 billion United States Dollars.<sup>1</sup> This economic loss for 2022 is more than the combined GDPs of 15 African countries in the same year.<sup>2</sup> These include Eswatini, Sierra Leone, Djibouti, Liberia, South Sudan, Burundi, Central African Republic, Lesotho, Eritrea, The Gambia, Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Seychelles, Comoros, and São Tomé and Príncipe.

With climate change and unregulated development, disaster risk and losses are projected to increase exponentially. However, the disaster losses can be prevented or substantially reduced. The Programme of Action for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in Africa, which was adopted by the AU Executive Council in 2017, aims to substantially reduce continental disaster losses by 2030. Further to this, the AU Commission has developed a number of programmes to achieve this ambition. These include (i) Strengthening Disaster Risk Governance for Resilience in African Regions and Countries; (ii) Sahel Resilience Project; (iii) Africa Multi-hazard Early Warning and Early Action System (AMHEWAS); (iv) Africa Urban Resilience Programme (AURP); and (v) ongoing establishment of Pan African Civil Protection Mechanism for Disaster Preparedness and Response.

The Fridays of the Commission series will present the state of disasters in Africa and appraise the efforts being taken or needed to build resilience. The Commission envisages three events of the series in 2023. The first instalment will focus on the impacts of Cyclone Freddy across Malawi, Mozambique and Madagascar. The second in the series will discuss the devastating floods in Libya and Earthquake in Morocco; and the third instalment will focus on the protracted droughts in the Horn of Africa. The discussions will include the impacts and efforts needed to support immediate recovery, as well as those necessary to build long-term resilience. During this series, AU initiatives and progress on disaster risk reduction and resilience will be presented.

This concept note focuses on the first series.

#### II. Series I: Building Resilience after Cyclone Freddy

On 27 October 2023, the AU Commission will organise a ‘Fridays of the Commission’ on resilience building after Cyclone Freddy which left behind a trail of unimaginable destruction across Malawi, Mozambique and Madagascar. The AU Commission has recently undertaken field assessments in the

<sup>1</sup> AMHEWAS Annual Report 2022

<sup>2</sup> World Bank (2022). GDP- Sub-Saharan Africa

three countries. A short video report on the impact and recovery efforts for the affected countries will be presented. The AU Commission will also use the opportunity to present two initiatives: AMHEWAS and Africa Urban Resilience Programme to set the scene for interactive discussions.

### III. Objectives

The objective of this instalment of the series is as follows:

- To shed light on the extent of loss and complex recovery challenges being faced by the affected countries in recovering from the recent cyclone Freddy.
- To present the relevance of the current programmatic efforts of the AU in dealing with disasters (ie. AMHEWAS and the AURP) in the light of the cyclone.
- To make a case for support by the wider AU family, multi-lateral and international partners to support the affected countries in building resilience.

### IV. Participants

The AU Commission invites all AU Member States' Embassies and Permanent Mission to the African Union in Addis Ababa, All Foreign Embassies and Permanent Mission Accredited to the African Union, AUC departments, AU agencies, international partners, and other relevant stakeholders. Senior officials from the affected countries will make interventions online during the event.

### V. Programme

<b>Time (27 Oct)</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
11.00-11.15	Opening remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair of PRC Sub-committee on Special Emergency Fund on Drought and Famine</li> <li>• Chair of PRC Sub-Committee on Environmental Matters</li> <li>• H.E. Josefa L.C. Sacko, Commissioner, ARBE</li> </ul>
11.15-11.45	Impact of Cyclone Freddy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short video - AUC</li> <li>• Lessons, recovery needs, challenges and recommendations for recovery</li> </ul>	AUC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Olivier Andriakaja, Director General, Madagascar (virtual)</li> <li>• Mr. Charles Kalemba, Commissioner for Disaster Management Affairs, Malawi (virtual)</li> <li>• H.E. President, Luisa Celma Meque, INDG, Mozambique (virtual)</li> <li>• Interventions by partners (UNDRR and UNDP – presentation of recovery needs and way forward)</li> </ul>
11.45-12:15	AU initiatives on DRR and resilience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AMHEWAS</li> <li>• Africa Urban Resilience Programme</li> </ul>	AUC
12.15-13:00	Discussions, Questions and Answers	Commissioner Sacko
13.00-14.00	Lunch	AUC