

Southern Africa Floods: Situation Update

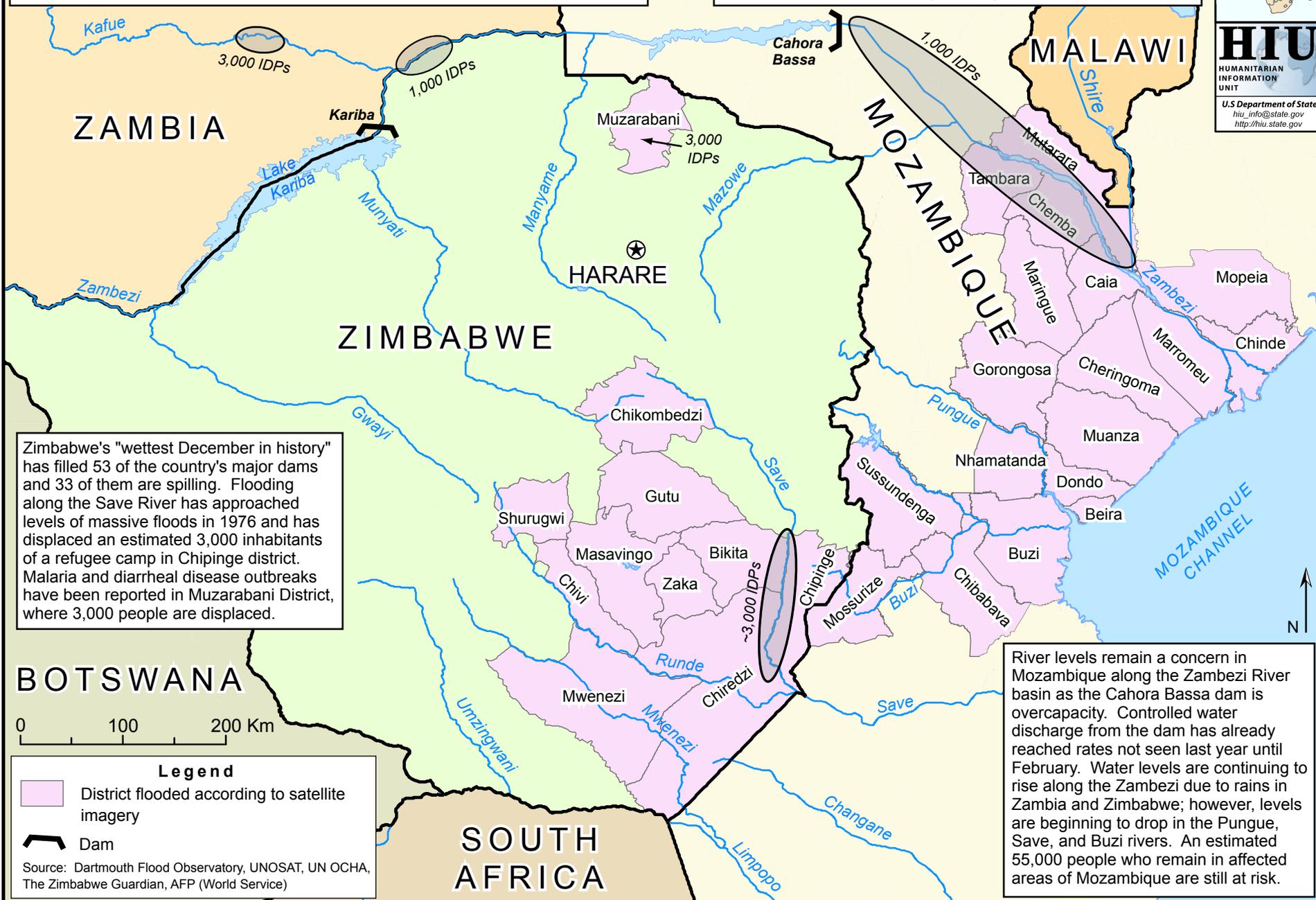
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Unusually heavy rains since early December 2007 have affected approximately 80,000 people in Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique; however, at this point no appeals for assistance from foreign governments have been made. People have been displaced locally; an increase in international border crossings in response to the flooding is not likely. To date, there have been fewer than 50 flood-related deaths.

As of early January, the Armed Forces of Mozambique (FADM) enacted proactive flood-response measures and is effectively handling the situation. If the crisis expands, it is likely that South Africa will be called upon to provide the majority of aid to Mozambique, as it did during flooding in 2000.



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Zimbabwe's "wettest December in history" has filled 53 of the country's major dams and 33 of them are spilling. Flooding along the Save River has approached levels of massive floods in 1976 and has displaced an estimated 3,000 inhabitants of a refugee camp in Chipinge district. Malaria and diarrheal disease outbreaks have been reported in Muzarabani District, where 3,000 people are displaced.

River levels remain a concern in Mozambique along the Zambezi River basin as the Cahora Bassa dam is overcapacity. Controlled water discharge from the dam has already reached rates not seen last year until February. Water levels are continuing to rise along the Zambezi due to rains in Zambia and Zimbabwe; however, levels are beginning to drop in the Pungue, Save, and Buzi rivers. An estimated 55,000 people who remain in affected areas of Mozambique are still at risk.