



STORMS and floods have claimed many lives and caused millions of rands worth of damage across many parts of the country, especially KwaZulu-Natal, the Western Cape, Eastern Cape and Free State in recent months. | African News Agency (ANA)

■ DISASTER

Flood-hit provinces granted millions in relief

Finance minister announces aid of R151 million for KZN and R3.4 million for Western Cape

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TWO provinces ravaged by flooding and fire damage earlier this year will receive a windfall of almost R155 million from Finance Minister Tito Mboweni.

Mboweni has allocated over R151.2m to KwaZulu-Natal and another R3.4m to the Western Cape after the provinces were hit by flooding and fire damage.

Heavy rains and thunderstorms earlier this year left 87 people dead in KZN, the Eastern Cape and the Free State.

The floods caused an estimated R1.1 billion in damage, with KZN the hardest hit with 71 lives lost.

Mboweni said: "This (funding) is necessitated by the need to allocate a portion of an unallocated schedule 7, Part A, grant to KZN and the Western Cape following rain, thunderstorms and fire damage experienced by both provinces,"

The money came from the National Department of Human Settlements' Provincial Emergency Housing Grant.

It will be used to enable the provinces to provide temporary shelter assistance to affected households.

According to Mboweni, it will also provide funding to repair the damage to housing suffered by low-income households, should the cost of repairs be less than the cost of relocation and provision of temporary shelter.

In 2018/19, the National Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs Department was allocated an additional R1.2bn to provide immediate drought relief and future mitigation funding to affected sectors such as water, agriculture and environmental affairs.

This has led to budgeted spending in the National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC) decreasing at an average annual rate of 31.4% – from R2bn in 2018/19 to R636.1m in 2021/22.

In June, KZN Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs MEC Sipho



Tito Mboweni

Hlomuka said the damage caused to infrastructure, including houses, roads, power networks, schools and health facilities, was quantified at R1.1bn.

The eThekweni Metro alone accounted for over R650m of the damage sustained.

He said the provincial government had intervened through the provision of emergency support and helped affected people with temporary shelter.

They were also provided with food, blankets, mattresses and other necessities.

The province also approached the national government to work with it on outstanding infrastructural issues.

The NDMC declared the floods a provincial disaster in May, after massive damage to critical public and private infrastructure, including health and educational facilities, as well as road and railway infrastructure across the three provinces.

Disaster management legislation enables the premier of a province to declare a provincial state of disaster following such a classification by national government.

The National Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs Department worked closely with other ministries, including human settlements, defence, police, social development, water and sanitation, public works, health, and home affairs to ensure that priority post-disaster activities were undertaken.