

Further rainfall expected for areas recently devastated by floods

Disruptive rainfall has caused havoc across the north-eastern and central parts of the country in recent weeks, with clean-up operations well underway. Fortunately, during this past week, South Africans living in the north-eastern parts of the country have finally enjoyed some sunshine and relief from the rain. However, this relief is likely to be short-lived in certain areas as further disruptive rainfall is expected over the weekend and into early next week.

A weak tropical low pressure that is currently situated in the Mozambique Channel is expected to move south-westwards over southern Mozambique. This low pressure is likely to result in further disruptive rainfall, especially over the *eastern parts of Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces* as well as over the north-eastern parts of *KwaZulu-Natal*. The rain is expected to start on Friday evening (12 February) and continue over the weekend, persisting into Monday (15 February).

Please note this low pressure is not comparable to Tropical Cyclone “Eloise” as it is significantly weaker. The main concern with this rainfall is that it is expected to affect areas which have recently been negatively impacted. This is especially relevant in areas where the ground is saturated, which could exacerbate the current situation even further, as additional rain will rapidly lead to overland runoff and additional flow into rivers and streams, already swollen by recent rains. Impacts are expected to include danger to life due to fast-flowing streams, flooding of roads and settlements as well as damage to mud-based houses. Moreover, further rockfalls can be anticipated in hilly terrain, with certain roads likely to become impassable. Damage and localised flooding affecting villages and settlements could also result in some communities becoming displaced or possibly requiring evacuation.

Winds will start to pick up on Sunday, possibly resulting in damage to settlements and the risk of trees or large branches toppled by strong, gusty winds. Structural damage to houses and roads is therefore possible, whilst closure of certain susceptible and key routes should also be anticipated. Electrical infrastructure could also be damaged, hence the public are strongly urged to treat any fallen or damaged wires and electrical poles as being live and to stay well away from such wires or

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structures. Unexpected, localised electrical outages can therefore also be expected, which may take time to repair, depending on the extent and severity of damage to infrastructure.

The rainfall is expected to start easing off towards the end of next week, however the South African Weather Service will continue to monitor the situation very closely and issue updates as needed.

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