



Photo Credit: FID

Cyclone Gezani

REPAIRING LIVES, REBUILDING FUTURES

How the REPAIR program helped unite a community in rebuilding their town following a devastating cyclone.

The Context

Between February 8 and 10, 2026, Madagascar was struck by intense tropical cyclone (TC) Gezani, one of the most catastrophic cyclonic events the country had witnessed in decades.

The storm made landfall with devastating force, with winds exceeding 200 km/h and generating torrential downpours.

The cyclone claimed at least 59 lives, affected over 423,000 individuals, and left around 40,000 citizens displaced. The public education system was badly hit: 286 schools were damaged, compromising the safety and education of 64,621 vulnerable students.

The Challenges

Toamasina, Madagascar's second-largest city, bore the brunt of Gezani's impact. But implementing a post-disaster response of the required magnitude presented several challenges, including a local capacity deficit, institutional and coordination bottlenecks, and logistical obstacles.

The education sector was hit hard. In Toamasina alone, 121 schools were damaged by the cyclone.

Numerous schools were also requisitioned as temporary accommodation sites to shelter displaced individuals. In total, over 23,000 students were unable to resume their studies.

The Solution

To complement their response, the authorities submitted an activation request to the Regional Emergency Preparedness and Inclusive Recovery Program (REPAIR).

Within 10 days, REPAIR had disbursed USD11 million and USD4.58 million to two local delivery channels, namely the *Fonds d'Intervention pour le Développement* (FID) and the *Fonds National de Contingence* (FNC), respectively.

The FNC swiftly procured vital building materials which allowed the FID to rebuild the town and restore a sense of community thanks in large part to its Cash-for-work activities.

Responding to the Crisis

In accordance with the Bureau National de Gestion des Risques et des Catastrophes' Crisis Response Plan, the FID's immediate priorities consisted of:

- Meeting the immediate needs of affected households;
- Assisting with debris clearance to facilitate a swift return to normal life;
- Supporting the rehabilitation of essential small-scale community infrastructure;
- Supporting economic recovery by stimulating local demand.

Organizing Cash-for-Work Activities

Cash-for-Work activities, along with direct cash transfers, had already been identified as the most effective means of meeting these objectives. Affected households were asked to register with FID, with the ultimate aim of reaching the entire low-income population of Toamasina (approx. 57% of the total population).

Workers were paid USD33.40 for 20 days of work, such as removing debris and rehabilitating infrastructure. Affected households also received food supplies and 1.5kg of seeds. In total, more than 46,000 families were targeted for financial assistance.

Before



After



Photo Credit: FID

Before



After



How Cash-for-Transfer Activities Were Deployed for Maximum Impact

- The FID received the REPAIR funds in one installment 10 days after its application was approved; the pay-out facilitated by the fact that contracts with service providers had been drawn up in advance.
- The first contracts for the payment of transfers were signed on 17 February 2026, followed shortly after by those for beneficiary targeting, support and guidance, and the supervision of activities.
- The initial CFW activities involved cleaning up neighbourhoods, including the collection of debris into temporary storage areas.
- FID then contracted transport companies to ensure the permanent removal of debris helping to generate temporary jobs both for households benefiting from CFW activities and for transport SMEs.
- FID undertook the re-roofing of schools, universities and a hospital to ensure these essential services were immediately operational; the corrugated metal sheets were supplied by the FNC and installed as part of CFW activities.

AFTER THE STORM

A victim of Gezani talks about rebuilding, resilience and REPAIR.

The night of February 10, 2026, will forever be etched in Lydia Anita's memory. The sheer intensity of tropical cyclone Gezani left her and her loved ones reeling with an overwhelming sense of helplessness. The 38-year-old remembers huddling under a table with her three children, whilst a pregnant family member remained seated on a chair for lack of space. The violent winds eventually tore off the roof, flooding her home and all her family's possessions.

The next day brought little solace to this resident of a low-income area of Toamasina. As she recalls, around 80% of the town had suffered from Gezani's onslaught, the streets were strewn with debris, and there was widespread damage to infrastructure. Several neighbourhoods had been completely inundated, whilst fallen power lines made it dangerous to get around.

The cyclone's aftermath was equally traumatic. Living conditions were extremely precarious. Without proper shelter and with limited resources, it was difficult to meet her family's basic needs, particularly when it came to feeding her children.

Enter REPAIR

In the weeks that followed, the REPAIR disbursement funded the deployment of the first support measures. Cash-for-work (CFW) activities, implemented by the Fonds d'Intervention pour le Développement (FID), began around 15 days after the disaster, enabling communities to begin clearing debris and rehabilitating the worst-affected areas.

In parallel, the program provided direct financial support (unconditional cash transfers) to affected households to help them meet their most urgent needs. Interventions carried out through the National Contingency Fund (FNC) also enabled, amongst other things, the distribution of emergency kits and food aid, thereby helping to support families during the first few weeks following the disaster.

Beyond material and financial support, REPAIR



also empowered the community to take the lead in its town's recovery. By encouraging collective work, it strengthened solidarity among residents whilst offering some of them the opportunity to play a role in the reconstruction.

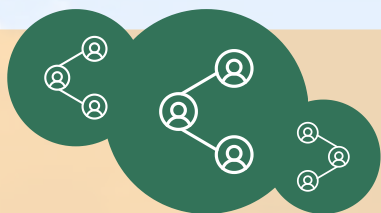
Lydia, for instance, didn't limit herself to her role as a beneficiary. She was appointed team leader of a CFW activity, coordinating a group of around 10 people in the clean-up and rehabilitation of their neighbourhood.

Rekindling Hope

With the support of REPAIR, residents organized themselves around a common goal, working side-by-side to restore their localities.

Beyond the financial support provided to households, Lydia notes above all that REPAIR helped to rekindle a genuine spirit of solidarity within the community.

Residents didn't simply receive aid: they became active participants in their town's recovery, working together to rebuild their neighbourhood and regain confidence in the future.



A holistic approach to pre-arranged disaster risk finance

The rapidity with which REPAIR disbursed the funds post-Gezani was not the program's contribution to the successful clean-up and rehabilitation of Toamasina.

Other highlights included:

- The seamless collaboration between two delivery channels, the FNC and the FID, allowing for the swift procurement and deployment of building materials.
- The flexible nature of the REPAIR funding, which allowed for budgetary adjustments, were key to helping Toamasina get back on their feet quickly.
- Constant communication between the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the FID, the FNC and REPAIR.

Driven by the CFW and direct cash transfer programs, these collaborations allowed essential services to resume, pupils to return to their classrooms, and affected communities to sustainably recover from the devastation of intense tropical cyclone Gezani.

Did you know?

Over 62,000m³ of debris was removed during the clean-up of Toamasina, enough to fill 25 Olympic swimming pools!



The disbursement of REPAIR funding within 10 days of the impact of the intense tropical cyclone Gezani empowered the FID to implement post-disaster response activities to support the most vulnerable households, which were hardest hit by the disaster, through cash transfers and cash-for-work schemes.

Vaohirana Rasoarimanana

REPAIR Focal Point & Coordinator
of Productive Social Nets
Fonds d'Intervention pour le Développement (FID)



What is REPAIR?

The Regional Emergency Preparedness and Access to Inclusive Recovery Program (REPAIR) is a World Bank program which promotes climate resilience in its member countries.

It is implemented by ARC Ltd, which is the financial arm of the African Risk Capacity Group, with financial support from the Global Shield Financing Facility.

Running through 2031, REPAIR will comprise 12 countries across its three phases, enhancing the resilience of over 28 million people in Eastern and Southern Africa.