



Along the roads, lives are rebuilding

The passage of Cyclone Gezani left behind devastated communities, destroyed homes, and families facing significant losses. In response to this emergency, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Madagascar, through the VONONA project funded by the United States Government, mobilized its teams to support affected populations.

This photo essay retraces the different stages of this humanitarian response: from field assessments to the selection of the most vulnerable households, all the way to the distribution of emergency assistance.

Each photo reflects not only the scale of the losses endured by families, but also the solidarity and efforts deployed to reach them—as far as possible, and as much as possible.





Ready, trained, committed!

Emergency response relies above all on dedicated men and women. Adventist Youth volunteers are selected from within communities for their motivation, integrity, and local knowledge. This proximity enables them to act quickly and effectively to support the most vulnerable households.

Before deployment, they receive practical training focused on humanitarian principles, aid distribution, communication with beneficiaries, and protection measures. Equipped with these skills, Adventist Youth volunteers become key actors in the response, capable of delivering fast, organized assistance while respecting the dignity of affected populations. The Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Tamatave supported this venture by providing a comfortable venue for the trainings, and subsequent meetings of the volunteers and the response team.



Aligning to act better

Following coordination with the BNGRC and the cluster, teams engage in direct dialogue with local authorities to prepare each intervention under the best conditions. This step allows for the sharing of key information, validation of intervention areas, and ensures complementarity with other actors on the ground. These exchanges strengthen transparency and collaboration while facilitating access to the most affected communities.

As far as possible

Despite damaged roads, isolated villages, and difficult conditions left by Cyclone Gezani, ADRA Madagascar teams mobilized to reach the most affected communities by all possible means.

Guided by a spirit of solidarity and humanity, they went as far as possible, doing everything in their power to bring assistance to affected families.



Solidarity

In the aftermath of Cyclone Gezani, roads were left blocked and impassable by fallen trees and debris.

Teams from ADRA Madagascar, led by Dr. Chidi Nweneka, Head of Programs and Acting Country Director, together with local communities, joined forces to clear access routes. Working side by side, they removed obstacles by hand, driven by solidarity, resilience, and a shared sense of purpose.

Each path reopened brings aid one step closer to those who need it most.





One volunteer, a thousand lives to reach

With a helmet secured, a life jacket on his back, and a sleeping bag in hand, this volunteer embodies preparation and determination. Ready to face difficult conditions, she moves forward with one goal: reaching the most isolated communities and delivering life-saving assistance.

Facing reality

An ADRA Madagascar enumerator visits an affected household to assess damages and identify urgent needs. True to its approach, ADRA conducts visits to every household without distinction to ensure a fair and context-appropriate humanitarian response. Using a mobile phone, the enumerator fills in a digital survey form, recording data directly in the field. This data collection is a crucial step in organizing an effective and targeted response.





The chalk of hope

After each survey, the volunteer writes an identification code on the household's door. This simple marking clearly indicates that a survey has already been conducted, preventing duplication and confusion.

For families, it means much more: it is the chalk of hope, a sign that someone has heard their voice and that their situation is being taken into account.



One by one

True to its proximity approach, ADRA Madagascar teams visit each household individually, requiring beneficiaries to patiently wait their turn.

Holding her national ID card, a beneficiary waits for an ADRA enumerator to reach her household, one that appears to have been completely destroyed by Cyclone Gezani.





Transparency

After the list of beneficiaries has been drawn up, ADRA Madagascar teams return to the community to validate it. A validation committee is formed, including local authorities, fokontany leaders, traditional leaders, and representatives of women and youth.

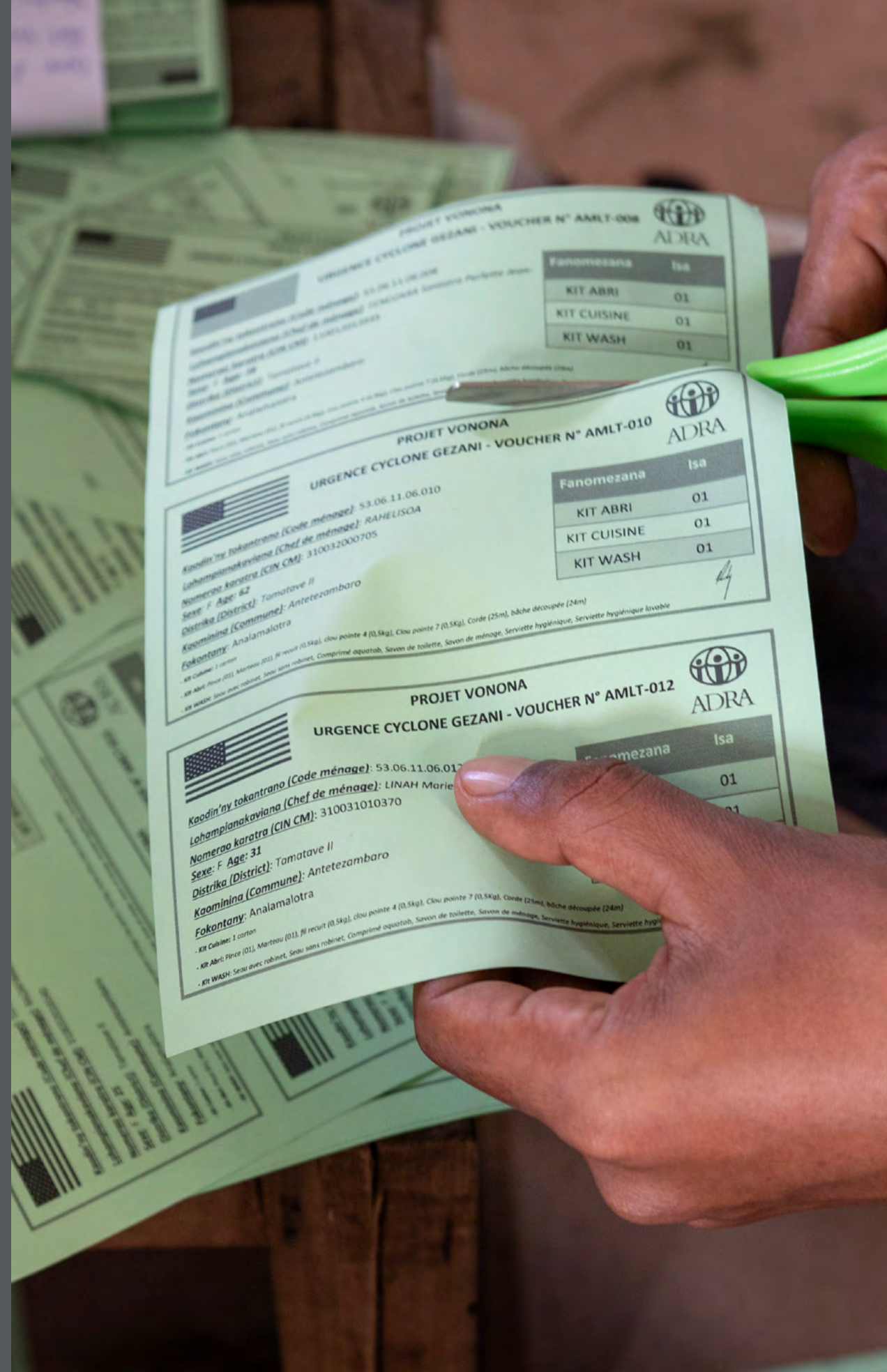
Each name is read aloud, line by line, to ensure no duplication, confirm residency, and verify that the list reflects real needs. At the end, an official report signed by committee members validates the final list, allowing ADRA to proceed with the next step in full transparency and fairness.



The winning ticket

Once the beneficiary list is finalized, ADRA Madagascar prepares the vouchers, essential tickets that allow each selected person to receive assistance. Each voucher contains key identifying information such as name, code, and location, ensuring aid reaches the right person.

More than just paper, the voucher connects rigorous selection to tangible aid, ensuring every family receives exactly what they need, transparently.





Right on time

Before each distribution, ADRA Madagascar teams deliver vouchers directly to beneficiary households, ensuring families know when and how to receive their assistance, while reinforcing transparency and trust.



On the way

Meanwhile, in warehouses, logistics teams prepare kits and load trucks according to the exact number of beneficiaries. When roads are no longer an option, the journey continues by water. Teams adapt to the terrain, using boats to transport relief kits to isolated communities.

In any case, they ensure that aid arrives intact and on time at its destination.

Mile After Mile

Across damaged roads and remote areas, a long convoy of trucks moves steadily toward affected communities in the wake of Cyclone Gezani. Organized by ADRA Madagascar, each vehicle carries essential relief kits carefully prepared to support families in urgent need.

This journey is more than a logistical effort; it is a commitment in motion. Mile after mile, the convoy pushes forward, overcoming challenges to reach even the most isolated areas.







Aid in hand, hope in heart

On distribution day, ADRA Madagascar teams call out beneficiaries from the list to ensure their presence. Another team verifies vouchers against identification documents and collects signatures.

Once all checks are completed, beneficiaries receive their assistance kits and can return home with peace of mind, knowing their immediate needs have been addressed.





Leadership in Action

Even as Acting Country Director, Dr. Chidi Nweneka remained fully engaged on the ground, working tirelessly alongside teams to support the distribution of relief kits.

He was joined by Loveness Chitesah, Associate Head of Program and Business Development Director, who was also present in the field and actively contributed to the response effort.

Because true leadership is not only about direction, it is about standing with people, every step of the way.



“ Mpirahalahy mianala ”

In Madagascar, there is a saying: “Toy ny mpirahalahy mianala, ianao tokiko, izaho tokinao” — Like brothers crossing the forest together: you are my support, and I am yours.

The United States stands with the people of Toamasina and Madagascar in the aftermath of Cyclone Gezani, to restore hope for those most affected. During a visit to one of ADRA Madagascar's distribution sites, Acting Deputy Chief of Mission Steve Bremner saw firsthand the impact of U.S. support.



The road to relief

With their assistance kits in hand, beneficiaries walk back home, each step filled with relief and gratitude.

This journey, sometimes long and difficult, marks the end of waiting and the beginning of tangible comfort for their families.



White everywhere

White tarpaulins can be seen everywhere, visible from afar. They silently testify that these households have received essential support to protect themselves and rebuild.





Surprise

As kits are opened, surprise appears on every face. Families discover more than assistance: tools to rebuild, cook, and restore daily life. Men find what they need to repair and rebuild their homes, while women regain essential cooking items lost in the cyclone.

Support at scale

Through the VONONA project, funded by the United States Government with a total budget of \$1,549,322, ADRA Madagascar delivered life-saving assistance to 15,994 households across 44 fokontany affected by Cyclone Gezani.

In Toamasina II District (Atsinanana Region), the project supported 15,329 households in six communes, including 9,197 female-headed households and 6,132 male-headed households. In Ambatondrazaka District (Alaotra Mangoro Region), an additional 665 households in one commune received assistance, including 399 female-headed households and 266 male-headed households.

Overall, VONONA reached 15,994 households among 16,000 households targeted, comprising 9,596 female-headed households and 6,398 male-headed households, enabling vulnerable families to meet their urgent needs and begin rebuilding their lives.

Through timely and coordinated humanitarian action, the project not only addressed immediate recovery needs but also strengthened the resilience of communities facing the increasing impacts of climate-related disasters in Madagascar.



Key results and achievements



15,994 households assisted and
63,377 people reached



11,381 shelter kits distributed



15,994 kitchen kits distributed



16,576 households reached
with hygiene promotion



85% overall beneficiary
satisfaction



65% of households repaired
their homes within 48 hours





Ranarison Livatina
Diane Yverson