

FIJI AND SOLOMON ISLANDS

**IMMEDIATE NEEDS FOR CHILDREN AND WOMEN
AFFECTED BY CYCLONE TOMAS AND CYCLONE ULUI**



25/03/2010

1. CRITICAL ISSUES FOR CHILDREN

Between March 13th and March 17th Cyclone Tomas (Category 4) buffeted the **Fiji Islands**. The most affected areas have been eastern parts of Vanua Levu and the Lau Islands Group. The cyclone passed over an area in which 130,000 people reside, with around 30,000 directly in its path, mostly in the northern Lau Islands. A State of Natural Disaster was declared by the Government of Fiji in both Northern and Eastern Divisions on March 16th. While formal assessment data are still being collected, there have been reports of extensive damage to schools, health facilities, plantations, local farms, police posts, and homes. The Fiji Red Crescent Society (FRCS) currently has eight assessment and relief teams on the ground and estimates that the total affected population might be over 4,000 households (including partial damage to dwelling homes, crops and/or water supply). DISMAC (Fiji Disaster Management Committee) reports that a total estimate cost of rehabilitation of damaged roads are US\$1.14 million (FJ\$2.2 million). Sea-surges have caused major flooding along coasts. At least three deaths have occurred as a result of the cyclone. Communication with Vanua Levu, Taveuni, Cikobia and many of the other smaller islands has been cut due to damage to telecommunication facilities. Savusavu airport remains closed on Vanua Levu as the runway has been damaged. The Nadi international airport is fully operational.

The national Disaster Management Agency (DISMAC) reports that a rapid assessment of affected areas is one of the most urgent priorities. The Fiji military, Navy and three government shipping vessels will be tasked to provide support to assessment teams and the delivery of relief to the eastern islands of Vanua Levu and Cikobia, Lomaiviti group and Lau group. The government is seeking international support and is holding meetings with donor and development partners in order to communicate the priority areas of assistance. The Fiji Ministry of Foreign Affairs has formally requested the provision of air support for medical evacuation, transportation of rations and aerial survey. Requests have also been made for immediate relief assistance (shelter, food, blankets, drinking water, water purification tablets and water containers). New Zealand and Australian military aircraft conducted fly-over assessments on Wednesday 17th and Thursday 18th March.

194 Evacuation Centres were established across the country before the cyclone hit, with 12,586 people (6,196 adults and 5,236 children) sheltering in these. All centres are now closed.

Cyclone Ului formed in Northern Vanuatu last week and tracked west, affecting the southern and western provinces of **Solomon Islands**. Reaching a Category 5 status, this hurricane affected Rennell and Bellona Province in particular. It is estimated that 5,000 people have been impacted, although this number could increase taking into account coastal villages in Makira/Ulawa Province affected by storm surges and flooding. In 5 villages of Rennell and Bellona, there has been significant damage to housing and some roads remain blocked due to debris. There have been no reports of fatalities or injuries from the cyclone. Access to affected areas remains difficult. Aerial assessments conducted by the NDMO note that most of the damage is in relation to food gardens due to storm/sea surges. AusAid has provided \$170,000.00 SBD to support the mobilization of assessment teams (Rennell/Bellona and Makira Provinces) and the provision of relief supplies. The NDMO have made a request to

international agencies (March 22nd) for non-food items- notably tarpaulins, water purification tablets – although UNICEF is yet to receive an official letter which clearly states the exact items and quantities required.

2. UNICEF'S EMERGENCY RESPONSE: ISSUES AND ACTIONS

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Issues – Fiji Islands

- Food security: No substantiated information yet available, although initial reports of considerable damage to plantations and local food crops in the Northern Division, Fiji Islands, may have eventual repercussions on nutritional status of women and children.
- Clinics damaged: No substantiated information yet available, but the Ministry of Health reports some clinics have suffered damage and interruptions to power and water supplies.

Urgent Actions – Fiji Islands

- Dispatch 15 health kits – 5 to Northern and 10 to Eastern Divisions. Each emergency health kit can be used for 1,000 people and contains medical supplies such as dressing tray, forceps, antibiotics, as well as oral rehydration salts.
- Pending results from the rapid assessments, further kits and other health equipment may be required for distribution to Northern and Eastern Divisions. Nutrition needs of children and women may need to be responded to depending on results of the rapid assessment.

Issues – Solomon Islands

- Food security: No substantiated information yet available, although initial reports of considerable damage to coastal gardens in Rennell and Bellona and Makira/Ulawa Provinces, Fiji Islands, may have eventual repercussions on nutritional status of women and children.

Urgent Actions – Solomon Islands

- Nutrition needs of children and women may need to be responded to depending on results of the rapid assessment.

WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION

Issues – Fiji Islands

- Village and school water supplies and sanitation facilities damaged: rapid assessments should be able to determine longer-term rehabilitation needs.
- Typhoid: outbreaks of typhoid had been recorded in the Northern Division prior to the cyclone. Further disruption to water supplies and the crowding of large numbers of people in evacuation centres with poor sanitary conditions heightens the risk typhoid and other diarrhoeal diseases spreading rapidly.

Urgent Actions – Fiji Islands

- Dispatch 2,000 (10-litre) collapsible containers, water purifying tablets, soap supplies and health communication materials for purification tablets, safe water, and hand-washing.

- Support government in radio broadcasts of health messages related to safe water, hygiene and sanitation.
- Consider support for typhoid vaccination.
- Consider longer-term community and school water and sanitation infrastructure needs.

Issues – Solomon Islands

- No substantiated information yet available on the extent of damage to water and sanitation systems.

Urgent Actions – Solomon Islands

- Prepare collapsible containers, water purifying tablets, soap supplies and health communication materials for purification tablets, safe water, and hand-washing ready for dispatch if required.

EDUCATION

Issues – Fiji Islands

- Early reports suggest twenty-one schools in Eastern Division and one in the Northern Division were damaged.

Urgent Actions – Fiji Islands

- Dispatch ten (10) 24 m² tents for temporary schools and 10 Enhanced Education Kits to assist children recommence classes as quickly as possible.

Issues – Solomon Islands

- No substantiated information yet available on the extent of damage to schools.

Urgent Actions – Solomon Islands

- Prepare tents and education kits for dispatch if required.

CHILD PROTECTION

Issues – Fiji Islands

- Awaiting further information.

Urgent Actions – Fiji Islands

- A UNICEF Pacific Protection Officer is currently traveling in Eastern Division with a government relief/assessment team and will assist in determining what support may be needed in relation to protection issues.

Issues – Solomon Islands

- Awaiting further information.

Urgent Actions – Solomon Islands

- Awaiting further information.

COORDINATION AND LOGISTICS

Issues – Fiji and Solomon Islands

- Both governments are conducting rapid assessments.
- Communication of information between national and local administrations, and between government and response agencies must be ensured.
- Timely and accurate receipt of supplies by end-users must be monitored.

Urgent Actions – Fiji and Solomon Islands

- Support both governments in conduct and analysis of rapid assessments as requested.
- Assist both governments in communication of response activities to various stakeholders as requested.
- Assist both governments in end-user supply tracking.

ESTIMATED FUNDING REQUIREMENTS FOR PLANNED ACTION FROM MARCH TO AUGUST 2010

UNICEF is working with partners and sister agencies in the conduct of a rapid assessment in the coming days. In the meantime and in order to respond quickly, UNICEF is requesting an initial US\$318,500 to meet the immediate and medium-term needs for children and women throughout the affected areas for the coming 6 months. UNICEF has already reprogrammed US\$60,000 from its regular budget to the emergency response.

The best emergency response requires both short and medium-term actions and donors are therefore requested to provide flexible, thematic funding against this Immediate Needs document. Funds received for the emergency will be spent over time to cover both immediate, live-saving activities and recovery and rehabilitation actions.

Table 1. Estimated funding requirements from March to August 2010*

SECTOR	ACTION	AMOUNT (US\$)
Health and Nutrition	Emergency health kits and other medical supplies	14,500
Water and Environmental Sanitation	Deployment of Emergency WASH Specialists	15,000
	Water containers, soap and flyers for water purifying tablets Note: tablets for Fiji being supplied by Government of Australia	45,000
	Typhoid vaccination	60,000
	School and community WASH infrastructure	76,000
Education	Enhanced Education kits	15,000
	Temporary school tents	32,000
Child Protection	Rapid assessment (under Coordination and Logistics)	
Communication	Health communication materials and broadcasts (radio)	18,000
Coordination and Logistics	Rapid assessment (Fiji Islands)	16,000
	Rapid assessment (Solomon Islands)	12,000
	Support for end-user supply tracking	15,000
TOTAL**		318,500

*Funds received against this appeal will be used to respond to both the immediate and medium-term needs of children and women as outlined above. If UNICEF should receive funds in excess of the medium-term funding requirements for this emergency, UNICEF will use those funds to support other, under-funded emergencies.

**The total includes a maximum recovery rate of 7%. The actual recovery rate on contributions will be calculated in accordance with UNICEF's Executive Board Decision 2006/7 dated 9 June 2006.

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