Highlights

- Initial assessment reports confirm destruction ranging from 20 to 90 per cent of houses, schools, clinics, churches and crops.


- UNICEF staff who are part of the first joint rapid assessment team to reach Tanna Island, have conducted initial assessment of all schools.

- Schools are scheduled to restart on 30 March. UNICEF is establishing temporary learning spaces and delivering school supplies.

- UNICEF-supported measles, polio and tetanus immunisation campaign continues in Port Vila and Efate.

- Joint Statement for Appropriate Infant Feeding in Emergencies, signed by UNICEF, WHO and MoH, has been distributed.

- Supplies delivered to Tuvalu, for onward distribution to remote affected islands

- UNICEF WASH & other supplies are on their way to Temotu province, the most affected areas in the Solomon Islands.

Vanuatu:
171,000 people estimated by WFP to be affected (Source: WFP 18 March)
Including 82,000 children

57,000 children targeted by Education Cluster

34 schools in use as evacuation centres

2,836 children under 5 have been reached

Solomon Islands:
Communities in 5 Provinces in Solomon Islands need assistance

UNICEF Needs*
USD 3,000,000

*subject to revision after Assessments completed & official appeal launched
Overview

Results of aerial assessments in Tafea, Shefa and Malampa Province were made available. The Australian Defense Force compiled and issued a national damage assessment in support of coordination which should be available tomorrow.

Results indicate that approximately 70 to 80 per cent of villages have been destroyed in Erromango. Roads are blocked by broken trees and debris, although they are clearable. The runway is clear.

Villages in Paama are up to 90 per cent destroyed, while Ambrym appears to be less damaged and Malekula to be less affected by the cyclone.

In Tongoa, Tongariki and Buninga, most houses were damaged and roofless. Gardens and trees are destroyed. Fallen trees are blocking roads and school buildings are damaged.

Coastal flooding was visible in Emae, Makira, Mataso and Nguna.

On Epi Island, many houses are destroyed or damaged. Fallen trees are blocking roads and gardens, and many trees have been destroyed. Landslides occurred in many areas of the island. About 90 per cent of the eastern part of the island is destroyed.

Government-led joint rapid assessment teams were deployed, including UNICEF staff in WASH, Child Protection and Education, to Tafea, Penama, Malampa and Shefa Provinces. Each mission comprises an official from the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), a provincial official and a member of the armed forces. It is expected that more detailed information on affected communities will now become available.

Humanitarian leadership and coordination

The National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) is coordinating the response with support from various agencies, Governments and major partners. The National Disaster Management Office is expanding its coordination structures and systems to provide support to the Government and responding relief agencies. The United Nations has set up a Humanitarian Response Page as the central repository of documents generated in support of the coordination effort related to Tropical Cyclone Pam.

The government-led joint initial rapid assessments continued on 18 and 19 March, broadening the reach to include islands in Tafea, Penama, Malampa and Shefa Provinces. The information collected will inform further response decisions. Islands assessed are Tanna, Erromango, Anatom, Futuna, Epi, and Emae.

NDMO is in contact with chairmen from all provincials’ disaster committees through satellite phones and have started receiving updates from the field. Rapid assessment teams have been deployed. The Emergency Operation Center (EOC) is functional with 24 hour radio broadcasts relayed throughout the country, and monitoring supported by the Vanuatu Humanitarian Team (VHT) members.

UNICEF’s response

Education

Schools are postponed for two weeks with a start date of 30 March. An estimated total of 34 schools are being used as evacuation centres in Efate, Torba and Penama. Some schools require repairs to ensure students’ safety.

UNICEF will ship two batches of education supplies this week. This will include school-in-a-box kits, backpacks, recreational kits, early childhood development kits, tents and tarpaulins.
The Education Cluster is targeting about 57,000 affected school aged children from early childhood to secondary school. Infrastructure, facilities and resources are damaged in a majority of schools in Efate, Tafea, Torba and Penama. The Education Cluster leadership and operation has yet to reach full capacity, and the UNICEF Pacific Chief of Education has been deployed to Vanuatu to support Save the Children as cluster co-lead with the Ministry of Education.

Assessments of all schools in Port Vila in particular those used as evacuation centres have been conducted. A Rapid Assessment of Tanna confirmed that most of the schools were seriously damaged or destroyed and the few classrooms that remained standing are used as evacuation centres by people who lost their homes. A number of deaths in Tanna were reported to be as a result of collapsed classrooms.

Communication and access within and between islands remains the greatest challenge. The rapid assessment teams together with teachers hiked all over Tanna to inspect school damage as all the roads are impassable. The rapid assessment team, which was the first to arrive on the island, reported that the immediate needs are food and water. Further assessments are underway for the islands of Malekula, Ambrym and Penama.

**Health and nutrition**

Six teams comprising of nurses from the Ministry of Health (MoH) were deployed to communities around Port Vila to provide vaccination against measles, polio and tetanus. These teams also conducted rapid assessments, distributed bed nets and provided health education to the affected communities. Around 2,836 children under 5 have been reached so far. The target in Port Villa was to reach 10,500 children between 6 to 59 months. Upon learning of suspected measles cases in Tanna, UNICEF immediately partnered with Rescunet to start administering vaccines on 20 March for children 6 to 59 months old in Tanna, to last for 2 weeks.

UNICEF EPI/MCH clinic in Port Vila, the largest facility, opened as of today and began providing health services, including immunization. UNICEF is preparing and dispatching the measles outreach teams and is involved in micro planning, arranging logistics, preparing vaccines, briefing and debriefings and funding the teams. UNICEF continues to assess accessible health facilities on a daily basis to determine damage to the cold chain equipment/rooms and provide on-site repairs/training.

UNICEF is leading on technical expertise in emergency nutrition. A core coordination team of UNICEF, WHO and MoH nutritionists are working closely to map capacities in the humanitarian partners and existing community and health structures for nutrition interventions, focused on support to infant and young child feeding. Coordination has been initiated with the Food Security Cluster to ensure that the nutrition needs of young children and pregnant and lactating women are being prioritized in the planning of food distributions.

From pre-cyclone support from UNICEF, the national referral hospital is equipped to treat children for severe wasting. Supplies and pediatric staff trained in management of severe wasting are in place. The teams of outreach workers who are conducting measles campaign have also been briefed on infant feeding in emergencies to facilitate referral of children who are sick or for mother-infant pairs who are having difficulties breastfeeding. There are currently no children admitted for treatment. Capacity for out-patient treatment of severe wasting can be installed in the national referral hospital as soon as ready-to-use therapeutic foods arrive. Screening for severe wasting is currently limited to the children who present at the hospital; health staff have been encouraged to reinforce screening at the facility level to ensure that children who present at the hospital are referred for appropriate treatment.

The Joint Statement for Appropriate Infant Feeding in Emergencies, signed by UNICEF, WHO and MoH, has been distributed.

Key infant and young child feeding messages have been translated and are being broadcasted via radio. Information, Education and Counseling materials are being identified for printing and dissemination. Opportunities for adding complementary nutrition interventions to the current outreach activities are being
explored with the health cluster. Vitamin A and deworming will be delivered in conjunction with the immunization campaign that is currently underway.

Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

All available WASH stocks in country are *en route* to affected people by air and sea. Water is considered absolutely critical and no restriction will be placed on relief action aimed at securing and distributing safe water.

While awaiting more solid information and analysis, the WASH sector assumes that 60 per cent of the population of Shefa and Tafea has been affected and have no access to drinking water. Based on individual reports, access to water has emerged as the biggest need. This is confirmed by Shefa provincial government attending the WASH cluster meeting, sharing observations from the assessment reports, which are not yet analysed.

Based on the individual reports: Mataso (400 people), Etas (3,000 people), Eratap (1,300 people), Salini (200 people), Prima (200 people) have no access to water due to lack of power to operate the piped water supply, ground water sources being contaminated or broken down rainwater harvesting structures. The Shefa Provincial Government is to present a basic analysis of the situation to the WASH cluster.

UNELCO water supply is safe to drink and is verified by the Department of Geology, Mines and Water Resources. DGWMR and UNICEF re-connected water supply systems in Teoumaville in the outskirts of Port Vila. UNICEF will also support partners with generators, fuel and water trucking. Eratap will be provided a generator and fuel with support from ADRA and UNICEF. Mataso, Etas, Eratap, Salini and Prima will be supported by water trucking in collaboration with ADRA, OXFAM and UNICEF.

UNICEF handed over WASH supplies for 2,000 families to the provincial government of Tanna. Additional supplies are ready for dispatch from Fiji, and orders for more have been placed.

There are no analysed assessment reports available which will guide plans and identify the needs. Communication and logistical challenges as well as limited supplies in-country are some of the difficulties being faced by the WASH sector.

Child protection

A UNICEF Child Protection Officer flew to Ambae and Maevo as part of the joint assessment team.

There is a need to strengthen management of evacuation centres and the people displaced. Approximately 3,000 people remain in Efate, while an unconfirmed number of shelters exist in neighboring islands. Many people are returning, to their homes during the day, which makes it difficult to track the number of people in evacuation centres.

There have been four cases of gender based violence reported to the national hospital in Port Vila. The blood bank at the hospital is low and there is a call for donors.

The Efate evacuation centres are being managed mainly by Save the Children; with some managed by Red Cross and ADRA. During the day, the evacuees return home to clean up and repair homes and return to the centres in the evening for food and shelter.
Communications for communities

There is still no radio or telephone communication with the outer islands. Digicel and TVL are working together to get communications back up. Digicel will have full network online by end of the week. Satellite phones with Provincial Disaster Committees available in all provinces except Torba.

The NDMO has a communication plan in place which includes:

- Radio: pre-recorded messages with VBTC national radio
- TV: advert prepared for airing on national TV when this is functional
- Mobile phones: emergency text messages with updated information will be sent to all TVL and Digicel phone users.

Vanuatu Women’s Centre are speaking on Vanuatu Broadcasting Commission to provide a voice for women and children, and support to access help where violence is occurring. They will remind listeners about the importance of listening to the needs of the most vulnerable, in particular women & children.

Communication of key food security messages (FM & HF radio, pamphlet, mobile, newspaper) has begun. The Pacific Media Assistance Scheme (PACMAS) media capacity building group can assist with information dissemination.

UNICEF Pacific’s partnership with Oceania Football Confederation’s Just Play programme will provide support to play activities in safe learning and recreation spaces.

Supply and Logistics

Five containers are ready for shipment from Fiji, with important items to support health, WASH, education and child protection interventions, with a planned arrival of 26th March.

The Bauerfield International airport runway is 110m shorter due to degradation. A complete aerial assessment is still pending to determine access to landings and impact of cyclone on transport routes, which will determine constraints on logistics support operations. There is a need to augment storage in Port Vila and in Tanna, particularly as the amount of relief items to arrive is likely to increase. WFP with assistance from UNICEF is to establish two storage hubs, one in Port Vila and another in Tanna, and additional WFP staff will be hired to establish and run these hubs.

Prepositioned supplies available in Port Vila have been mobilised for the hospital, as well as for immediate water supply needs. 48 cartons of health supplies, including basic emergency health kits, Oral Rehydration Salt sachets, zinc tablets, Vitamin A tablets and de-worming tablets have arrived by air to Port Vila. The basic health kits will be distributed to affected islands. 15,000 water purification tablets were given to Save the Children for use in evacuation centres. 17m3 of storage space were made available to Oxfam for hygiene kits.

Relief supplies, including UNICEF WASH supplies, are prepositioned for the Vanuatu Ferry for Tanna is scheduled for arrival on 20 March.

Tuvalu, Solomon Islands, and Kiribati

TUVALU

Five days into Tuvalu’s declaration of a State of Emergency, details of the impact on outer islands remain sketchy. Funafuti, the most populous island of about 4,500 people was comparatively unscathed by the cyclone.

The Government of Tuvalu (GoT) is still awaiting details from a rapid assessment team that left Funafuti for the central islands (Nui, Vaitupu and Nukufetau) on Sunday evening. Lack of power and communication on Nui has hampered field reporting. Initial reports suggest Nui, and to a lesser extent other Islands, have been substantially impacted by heavy seas and storm surge that inundated houses, undermined building foundations, flooded Pulaka pits (the main source of food), damaged crops and killed livestock. Damaged and sea-water inundated water tanks have taken a heavy toll on water reserves on the worst impacted islands.
Reports suggest that the impact have been severe on some islands (particularly Nui and Nanumaga) but are largely restricted to storm surge. According to NZ MFAT, Nanumaga Island initially reported up to 60 families were evacuated to evacuation centres and a further 27 families to other houses during the height of the cyclone. However most households have returned to homes with only 10 families residing near the coast that remain displaced. GoT believes that most islands have adequate supplies of food and water to meet immediate needs.

UNICEF health and WASH supplies were delivered to Funafuti on 19 March. A charter flight scheduled for 21 March will carry the rest of medical and shelter supplies. UNICEF will provide school supplies and student backpacks for children on the affected islands.

SOLOMON ISLANDS

Tropical Cyclone Pam brought widespread heavy rain to most provinces in Solomon Islands. Temotu province experienced hurricane force winds as the tropical cyclone intensified and moved out of the Solomon Island territory. Some vulnerable families have been displaced and food gardens destroyed. Accessibility to and from communities has been difficult or impossible due to flooding, fallen trees and very rough seas.

Although Anuta Island in Temotu were the most affected, it is not heavily populated and government have indicated they have everything under control. Worth noting is that supplies shipped to the island take three days by boat from the capital Honiara. The Ministry of Health and Medical Services assessment team will head to Temotu on Friday 20 March.

KIRIBATI

Four metre high waves were experienced in Kiribati on 13 March, causing extensive damage to the Dai Nippon Causeway. On the southern islands Tamana and Arorae 20 houses along the shore on Arorae were destroyed, and families are now housed in schools. Some have started rebuilding their houses further inland. No figures yet from Tamana on how many houses affected. Onotoa Island reported that the causeway was damaged preventing vehicles from crossing to the islet, but no information is available on the extent of the damage and how many people are affected. An assessment team departed today for affected areas.

In Tarawa, the causeway connecting Betio and Bairiki re-opened, for limited loads of not more than 2 tons. Road conditions are very bad throughout the atoll. Tabonkabwauea Bairiki seawall on the Oceanside is badly damaged causing power outage. Tebikenkora Elta Village seawalls are badly damaged and seawater is running into all ten houses of this community.

The Betio national hospital and maternity ward was damaged and patients had to be temporarily re-located. Repairs have been undertaken and patients were moved back to wards on Monday 16th March. Fortunately, there have been no disease outbreaks reported. Schools are open but many children, especially adolescents in secondary schools, cannot reach school on time due to lack of transport as hardly any buses now operate. Town councils are providing trucks to transport school children. The disaster management committee is monitoring progress and assisting communities to build or strengthen sea walls with local contractors.

A small amount of UNICEF emergency supplies is available from pre-positioned stocks in Tarawa, and an additional consignment is expected to arrive on 24th March. A UNICEF child protection officer was deployed to Tarawa for two weeks.

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