Funding Overview and Partnerships

UNICEF appeals for $7.7 million to support its humanitarian operations in Vanuatu, Fiji, Solomon Islands and Tonga which were devastated by TC Harold. The appeal has so far received $550,000 from UNICEF’s Global Thematic Humanitarian Funds. The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) has committed $890,000 to support WASH ($690,000) and Nutrition ($200,000) interventions in Vanuatu. CERF has also committed to support the Fiji response, but no sector allocation has been issued yet.
The first wave of UNICEF emergency supplies flown-in to Vanuatu were part of the stock procured as a preparedness measure through the First Action Initiative (FAI) and stored at the Australian Government’s humanitarian warehouse in Brisbane. UNICEF Pacific’s preparedness strategy to pre-position emergency supplies in Australia where they could be delivered faster to Pacific Island Countries was realized through the support of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the FAI.

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

In early April 2020, Tropical Cyclone Harold caused widespread destruction in Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji and Tonga. In Solomon Islands, heavy rain and strong winds damaged homes, schools and gardens across four provinces. Approximately 27 people went missing after being washed off a ferry traveling from Honiara to Malaita.

The cyclone was most destructive in Vanuatu, making landfall as a category 5 cyclone on 6 April with sustained winds of more than 200 km/h. Roads, hospitals, schools, homes and churches suffered significant damage across the northern and central islands of Maewo, Pentecost, Ambae and Santo. Approximately 92,300 people, including 24,300 children, live in the worst affected areas, representing 30 per cent of the country’s population. A joint assessment led by the Ministry of Health assessed 46 health facilities in the provinces of Sanma, Penama, and Malampa, 60 per cent of which were severely damaged. Twenty of the facilities experienced damage to their cold chain equipment. Essential medicines and other equipment were also damaged. Some health personnel were injured, and some lost their homes. Many other families also lost their homes, leaving them without access to food gardens and WASH facilities. This situation creates a highly dangerous environment for young children and poses a significant threat to child survival and well-being. Dengue and malaria cases are already being reported in Sanma Province.

The cyclone caused widespread flooding across Fiji as heavy rain and strong winds hit the country on 8 April. It left some 2,494 houses damaged or destroyed in its wake. Preliminary reports also show that 116 schools were damaged, affecting 11,524 children, with schools in eastern and central divisions most severely affected. The storm then hit Tonga, where an estimated 428 houses were also damaged or destroyed.

The global COVID-19 pandemic makes the response to the cyclone especially challenging. Governments in the Pacific continue to enforce strict control measures like border closures, travel restrictions and lockdowns to prevent introduction of the virus in Vanuatu and Solomon Islands and community transmission in Fiji. Even in normal times, travel and logistics across the vast Pacific region are difficult which is now compounded by the COVID-19 situation. The Government of Vanuatu has maintained that foreigners will not be allowed entry and that all humanitarian cargo will have to undergo strict health protocols before being offloaded.

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

UNICEF will focus its programme response to the worst affected areas specifically the islands of Pentecost, Santo and Ambrym in Vanuatu; the Kadavu and Lau group of islands in Fiji; parts of Honiara and Guadalcanal in Solomon Islands and some districts in Tongatapu and Eua islands in Tonga. At least 110,300 people with 47,500 children are in these worst affected areas and are in need of immediate and sustained humanitarian assistance. WASH and Education will respond to all the four countries while health and nutrition will focus in Vanuatu and Solomon Islands. Child Protection will have activities in Vanuatu, Fiji and Tonga while Social Policy plans to initiate cash transfer programming in Vanuatu.

Health and Nutrition

Vanuatu

Health services in the affected areas in Vanuatu were compromised because of the damage inflicted by TC Harold. Twenty eight of the 46 health facilities (61%) in the three most affected provinces in Vanuatu suffered moderate or severe structural damage, 18 (39%) had damaged medical equipment and 16 (35%) lost some or all of their medical supplies. UNICEF mobilized its resources to quickly address these needs.

- Four health kits that provides essential medical care to 4,000 people; 4 midwifery kits designed for 50 deliveries each, 3 tents for temporary clinics were immediately dispatched to Santo, Pentecost and Ambrym to ensure continuity of health and nutrition services. The supplies are being used by local health workers and emergency medical teams deployed by the Ministry of Health (MoH) reaching at least 4,000 people (5 newborns in Ambrym benefited from the midwifery kit). Additional supplies are aboard a quarantined boat awaiting unloading and distribution in Pentecost (Melsisi).
- Together with MoH, UNICEF repaired cold chain equipment in eight health facilities, allowing the immunization programme to continue (the repairs are temporary; permanent fixes will be required later).
UNICEF has also supported MoH to develop and publish information, education and communication (IEC) materials for affected population. Funds have been provided to deploy community outreach teams from national and provincial levels to affected communities.

WASH
The cyclone damaged water systems in all four affected countries, making access to safe drinking water a key concern.

Vanuatu
- UNICEF provided technical assistance for the development of the WASH cluster response plan and provided US$40,000 to the Department of Water Resources (DoWR) for the deployment of WASH cluster teams for assessment and response. As a result, DoWR was able to immediately deploy teams of technicians, including a UNICEF WASH engineer consultant, who repaired WASH facilities in affected communities.
- UNICEF-funded quick fixes of water systems will benefit approximately 1,600 households (8,000 people).
- The teams are also building hand-washing stations, especially in Malampa.
- UNICEF has provided at least 1,800 people in Vanuatu with a range of WASH supplies, including dignity kits, water bladders and containers, water filters, liquid chlorine and tarpaulin. Water filters and water purification tablets have been provided to MoH to ensure an immediate response to potential outbreaks of water-borne diseases. Additional WASH supplies are on the Pacific Star awaiting unloading in Pentecost.

Solomon Islands
- UNICEF responded immediately to a request from the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), providing WASH and dignity kits for worst affected 60 households and 20 units of tarpaulin.
- The Solomon Islands WASH sub-cluster has been activated and a first meeting has been held.

Fiji
- UNICEF provided WASH and dignity kits for 2,400 households through the Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MOHMS) and NDMO. Positive feedback was received from households on the usefulness of the WASH kits (data collected from five villages in the Central Division using mobile data collection). An additional 400 WASH kits are in the pipeline and are expected to arrive from Australia on 30 April.
- UNICEF also procured soap, disinfectants, sprayers and hand sanitizers on behalf of MOHMS that will benefit approximately 3,600 people.
- Upon the request of MOHMS, UNICEF contracted three local consultants to support the needs assessment of WASH facilities, follow-up on the distribution of WASH kits and other materials, and information management for both cyclone and COVID-19 responses.

Tonga
- The WASH cluster has met to create a response plan. They have expressed the need for hygiene kits and water containers to affected households on Tongatapu and ‘Eua, prioritizing female-headed households, households with elderly people, and people with disabilities.

Education
Schools have been damaged in all four affected countries.

Vanuatu
- UNICEF is working with the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) to procure and distribute tents, school-in-a-box kits, early childhood development (ECD) kits and hygiene kits to Santo and Pentecost to establish 210 temporary learning spaces for more than 9,000 students.

Fiji
- UNICEF is providing 30 tents to substitute for damaged classrooms in Kadavu and Lau group of islands to ensure no school disruption for at least 1,200 students and learners.

Child Protection
Vanuatu
- Sixteen protection cluster partner staff have been deployed across four provinces. UNICEF is supporting national and provincial (Shefa and Sanma) child protection officers from the Ministry of Justice and Community Services (MoJCS) and youth officers from the Ministry of Youth and Sports Development (MoYSD).

Fiji
- UN Women and UNICEF are providing coordination support to the safety and protection cluster, which is meeting weekly. UNICEF has provided technical assistance to the Child Support Unit of the Ministry for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation (MWCPA) on the inclusion of child protection rapid assessment questions in cyclone assessments.
- UNICEF is also providing technical support to MWCPA to conduct psychosocial support to children and families, including children with disabilities in Kadavu and Lau. Finally, UNICEF has provided recreational kits for child-friendly spaces in Kadavu and Lau, benefitting 1,000 children.

**Tonga**
- UNICEF has shared the child protection in emergencies (CPiE) toolkit and rapid assessment form with the Ministry of Internal Affairs. UNICEF is also offering technical assistance for the development of psychological first aid and psychosocial support materials in response to the cyclone and COVID-19.

**Communications for Development (C4D), Community Engagement & Accountability**
UNICEF supported Fiji’s NDMO to broadcast “Get Ready” messages via television and radio, providing information on how families can protect themselves from and respond to the cyclone.

**Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy**
UNICEF leads the clusters for WASH and education, and the sub-clusters on nutrition and child protection under the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT). The PHT is a network of humanitarian organizations that works together to assist Pacific Island Countries and Territories in preparing for and responding to disasters. It is composed of UN agencies and international humanitarian organizations and co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinators and the head of OCHA. UNICEF and the PHT support the leadership of governments and work within their respective political structures. Vanuatu, Fiji and Tonga have officially adopted the cluster approach in their humanitarian architecture, while Solomon Islands has a similar configuration through their sector committees. Unlike cluster systems in other countries, these mechanisms are active year-round and are the coordinating bodies not just for emergency response but also for disaster risk management and preparedness.

**Next Situation Report: 7 May 2020**

UNICEF Pacific: [https://www.unicef.org/pacificislands/](https://www.unicef.org/pacificislands/)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who to contact for further information:</th>
<th>Sheldon Yett</th>
<th>Vathinee JITjaturunt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Representative</td>
<td><a href="mailto:syett@unicef.org">syett@unicef.org</a></td>
<td>UNICEF Pacific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF Pacific</td>
<td><a href="mailto:vjitjaturunt@unicef.org">vjitjaturunt@unicef.org</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eric Durpaire</td>
<td>Zelalem Taffesse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief of Field Office</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ztaffesse@unicef.org">ztaffesse@unicef.org</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF Pacific Field Office in Vanuatu</td>
<td><a href="mailto:edurpaire@unicef.org">edurpaire@unicef.org</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>