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Pacific MCO Vanuatu

Humanitarian Situation Report No. 3

Situation in Numbers

58,000

children in need of humanitarian assistance*

*Estimated number based on UNICEF analysis.

Reporting Period: 5th March to 11th March 2023

Highlights

- Vanuatu has been hit by two cyclones in early March 2023.
- According to the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), a total of 148,981 people (46 per cent of the total population) have been affected including an estimated 58,000 children under 15.
- On March 5th a national state of emergency was declared for six months.
- The initial estimate of the recovery cost following Vanuatu's twin cyclone disaster is estimated at six billion vatu (US\$50 million) by the country's Prime Minister Ishmael Kalsakau.
- The provinces of Tafea and Shefa are the worst impacted. Preliminary findings suggest that the province of Shefa with the islands of Efate, Efate outer islands and the Shepherd Islands appear to be the most severely impacted but assessments have been hampered by weather and logistic constraints.
- Currently no deaths have been reported, 22 injuries and 3,311 were displaced to evacuation centres on Shefa Islands.
- UNICEF has prepared a 5M USD response plan to assist key government counterparts with critical support for children.

UNICEF Response

- UNICEF has 16 staff members in Vanuatu supporting the Government of Vanuatu with coordination, assessments and response across multiple key sectors: WASH, Health, Nutrition, Education and Protection.
- An additional 10 surge staff are being immediately deployed to support with operations and technical programming expertise.
- Emergency supplies from Fiji and Australia are being deployed in addition to contingency stocks in country that are already under distribution.

WASH

- UNICEF is co-leading the National WASH Cluster with the Department of Water Resources (DoWR) to coordinate the WASH response of more than 10 CSO partners and multiple national and international government agencies.
- UNICEF supported the WASH Cluster to finalize the initial WASH response plan on March 6th with a budget of 5.2M USD for the first six months of response.
- Distribution of hygiene kits is taking place with WASH cluster partners around Efate with Vanuatu Red Cross Society (VRCS) and Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA). 230 hygiene kits have been distributed

to people in emergency evacuation centres reaching an estimated 1,150 people. An additional 500 kits have been made available to ADRA on Efate and 100 to VRCS on Tanna.

- WASH is supporting education cluster on messages to schools concerning water quality.
- Water trucking started on March 9th through DoWR in Efate. UNICEF is supporting with water bladders and collapsible water containers to distribute to the affected communities.
- Dedicated WASH teams are being deployed to affected provinces to take stock of damages and implement quick fixes- this is awaiting approval from the NDMO.
- Longer term partnership agreements are being put in place with CSOs to support transitioning between lifesaving activities and longer-term recovery efforts.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

- UNICEF has supported the MoH to rehabilitate vaccine storage facilities and ensure monitoring of effective cold chains in affected population centres.
- 4 solar-powered cold chain equipment, essential health supplies, tents and vaccines sent to the Shepherd & Epi Islands.
- Provision of health assessments in 4/37 evacuation centres with identification of skin and diarrhoeal diseases and unvaccinated children identified for urgent campaign.
- A package of integrated minimum health services for mothers and children staying at evacuation centres has been defined. Logistics arrangements are ongoing for initiation of service delivery on March 13th.
- Partnership with World Vision Vanuatu to strengthen nutrition interventions in Shefa & Tafea.
- UNICEF has been supporting the MoH to activate nutrition sub-cluster. In coordination with Food Security cluster, assessment on status of malnourished children has started.
- Therapeutic food for severe acute malnutrition, micronutrient powders, and zinc were provided to the pediatric unit of the Port Vila central hospital after a quick assessment.

EDUCATION

- UNICEF & Save the Children co-lead the Education Cluster with the Ministry of Education. UNICEF is leading the coordination in Shefa Province.
- UNICEF is supporting 18 affected schools in Port Vila, North Efate and Tongoa and setting up temporary learning spaces supported with learning and education supplies enabling the reopening of schools on Monday the 13th of March.

CHILD PROTECTION

- To ensure effective coordination of the child protection response and feed into the broader protection response, UNICEF has activated the CPIe subcluster and developed ToRs to ensure its effective functioning.
- UNICEF has monitored distribution of supplies in evacuation centres to support identification of any protection risks.
- UNICEF supported integration of child protection related questions into the rapid assessment tool to better assess the impact of the emergency on children's protection and well-being.

Situation

One week after Vanuatu has been hit by tropical cyclones Judy and Kevin, the country has declared a state of emergency for six months. An estimated 150,000 people are affected including more than 58,8000 children. Vanuatu's Prime Minister Ishmael Kalsakau announced initial recovery cost estimate close to 50M USD.

Main impact areas appear to be centred around the provinces of Shefa and Tafea with the capital of Port Vila facing significant damage to housing and infrastructure. Assessments in outer islands have been delayed due to heavy seas and closure of roads and airports. Joint assessment teams are being mobilized to outer islands this weekend. Preliminary findings suggest that Shefa province is the most impacted.

Access to safe water is a critical concern as no running water is available in the main affected areas and many areas remain without power. Education and healthcare facilities have also been significantly impacted, with many schools remaining closed, and some healthcare facilities have been damaged. The Ministry of Education is intending to reopen schools on Monday 13th March.

The distribution of emergency supplies has begun through multiple government and CSO partners. Children affected by the disaster could require access to psychological support and a protective environment to mitigate the impact of trauma and reduce the risk of violence, abuse, and exploitation.

Funding Overview:

UNICEF has developed an initial response plan that will support the national response plans of the Government of Vanuatu in the aftermath of Cyclones Judy and Kevin. The exact extent of damage and needs over the medium term is to be determined based upon the results of the detailed assessments that are currently underway. This plan aims at directly supporting at least 50,000 children with the indirect support benefitting a total of about 100,000 children, which is approximately 30 per cent of the country's total population, for a total of US\$5 million.

External Media

<https://pina.com.fj/2023/03/09/six-billion-vatu-vanuatu-twin-cyclone-disaster-cost/>
<https://www.stuff.co.nz/pou-tiaki/131437332/food-health-concerns-in-the-aftermath-of-vanuatu-storms>
<https://asiapacificreport.nz/2023/03/08/vanuatu-children-need-to-see-their-friends-educator-warns/>
<https://twitter.com/UNICEFNZ/status/1631546800430792705?cxt=HHwWgoDSofbKtaQtAAAA>

Media links:

Photo essay: <https://www.unicef.org/pacificislands/stories/thousands-children-urgent-need-aftermath-two-devastating-cyclones-vanuatu>

Social media:

<https://twitter.com/unicefpacific/status/1634308922793394176?s=46&t=CukI901bHnTR6POTsgeVNg>
<https://twitter.com/unicef/status/1634117167779131394?s=46&t=CukI901bHnTR6POTsgeVNg>
<https://twitter.com/unicefpacific/status/1634021757861634048?s=46&t=CukI901bHnTR6POTsgeVNg>
<https://twitter.com/unicefpacific/status/1633954639329792000?s=46&t=CukI901bHnTR6POTsgeVNg>
<https://twitter.com/unicefpacific/status/1633271767186935808?s=46&t=CukI901bHnTR6POTsgeVNg>
<https://www.instagram.com/p/CphtPAwvyBZ/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>

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