

22 April 2016



FUNDING RECEIVED

14.7 million

received (US\$) through the Flash Appeal

**Flash Appeal
38% Funded**

Key Facts

- On 20 and 21 Feb, Cat 5 Tropical Cyclone Winston hit Fiji.
- Winston was the strongest cyclone to make landfall in the Pacific.
- Whole villages were destroyed on the hardest hit outer islands.
- 350,000 people or 40 per cent of the population are affected.
- 31,200 houses were damaged or destroyed
- 250,000 affected people were left without access to safe water

Tropical Cyclone Winston

Nearly two months have passed since Category 5 Severe Tropical Cyclone Winston, the most powerful cyclone to strike the Pacific in recent times, hit Fiji with devastating impacts. A total of 44 people were killed, 40 per cent of the population was affected, more than 31,000 houses were damaged or destroyed and essential services were disrupted across the country. Whole villages on some of the country's eastern outer islands were washed away by the combined impact of strong winds and massive storm surge. Since then, widespread flooding caused by a series of tropical depressions and a second cyclone, Cyclone Zena, have compounded the hardship faced by many affected communities, especially in the country's agricultural areas. The flooding has exacerbated needs and eroded some of the gains made through early humanitarian action with emergency shelter items such as tents and tarpaulins damaged or destroyed and crops re-planted post-Winston now washed away.

Through the Flash Appeal, the Fiji response has received US\$14.7m to date, while many millions more were received in bilateral funding. These funds have been used by the Fijian Government, UN Agencies, the Red Cross and local and international NGOs to rapidly provide humanitarian assistance to hundreds of thousands of affected people. Humanitarian actors working through the government led clusters warn that despite this hard work and generous funding, significant humanitarian needs remain, particularly in locations hit by both the cyclone and subsequent flooding. These needs include agriculture items, sanitation infrastructure, disease control, shelter, education supplies and psychosocial support. While the transition to the recovery phase has commenced, including a Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA), humanitarian partners continue to call on the international community to support Fiji in meeting outstanding humanitarian needs.



Progress and remaining need

11,500

Households with core shelter need



31,200

Needing Build Back Safer training



Shelter

Shelter assistance has emerged as a critical ongoing need after Cyclone Winston and the recent flooding, however the Cluster is currently one of the lowest funded of all sectors in this response, severely restricting efforts to assist those in need. A total of 31,200 houses were damaged or destroyed by Cyclone Winston. Since then 13,700 households have received emergency items including tents, tarpaulins or shelter kits. The Cluster continues to work to deliver emergency shelter assistance to the 17,500 remaining households.

Significant stocks of emergency items are currently in the distribution pipeline and will bring some immediate relief however vulnerable communities will still need additional assistance to meet core housing needs. There are significant outstanding needs in terms of support for shelter self-recovery activities including technical training for carpenters and owner-builders to construct more durable housing. The Cluster estimates its current funding shortfall for these vital early recovery activities to be up to US\$20 million. If this gap in funding remains, thousands of families will continue to live in make-shift shelters and those who are in a position to start rebuilding their houses will not receive critical training to ensure their new homes survive the next cyclone. To assist in the reconstruction process, the Fijian Government has also announced an ambitious US\$35 million cash voucher program providing affected households with pre-loaded cards for the purchase of building supplies. If properly supported, this landmark program has the potential to assist Fiji in building its long term resilience to future disasters and climate change but a substantial increase in international support is required.



Photo credit: UNOCHA / 2016 / Parry

4.4 million

Cuttings needed



3.4 million
cuttings needed

1 million
cuttings distributed

Food Security and livelihoods

Tropical Cyclone Winston destroyed 100 per cent of crops and blew away household food stocks in many of Fiji's most affected areas prompting the rapid delivery of emergency food, as well as seeds and cutting by the Government. As agricultural distributions were rolled out, the Ministry of Agriculture and its partners rapidly embraced text messaging technology as an innovative way of talking directly to farmers and villagers about the need for urgent replanting of quick-growing crops. In a massive logistics exercise, more than 370,000 people across the country were successfully reached with first round of emergency rations in the weeks immediately after the Cyclone. Further support has followed including cash welfare top-up payments for the poorest Fijians to use for the purchase of food. The Government and its partners have made extensive efforts to distribute seeds and more than a million cuttings to the 45,000 farmers in need, however, much of this important early humanitarian work has unfortunately been undone by flooding in key agricultural areas during April. Recent

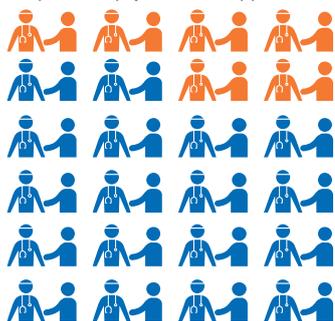


Photo credit: UNICEF Pacific / 2016 / Mephram

assessments showed 80 per cent crop destruction of newly planted seeds and cuttings in areas hit by flooding, particularly in the country's West. The country's main vegetable growing area, the Sigatoka Valley, has seen extensive damage and there are concerns about likely increases in vegetable prices as produce becomes scarce. Additional work is needed to track price increases and the impacts of this on household budgets. The total agricultural damage bill from the floods alone is estimated to be US\$650,000. Assistance is urgently needed to source and re-distribute millions of seeds and seedlings, as well as fertilizer and equipment. Particular concerns have been raised about the risk of malnutrition on affected maritime islands with women and children at particular risk. The economically critical sugar cane industry in Fiji's West was hit particularly hard by El Nino and has now suffered further damage with serious implications for local livelihoods which are heavily reliant on the industry. Forestry and Fisheries have also been affected. The sector remains significantly underfunded against these changed needs.

24,000

People need psychosocial support



6,000

Gap

18,000

Reached

Health and Nutrition

The Government of Fiji was quick to restore damaged health facilities to operation after the cyclone in order to treat patients in need however almost 40,000 people are still in need of healthcare post-cyclone and many health buildings still require extensive repairs. Fiji is facing a range of post-Cyclone health and nutrition risks which have been exacerbated by the recent flooding. Scaling up mosquito control is a key priority especially in the flood-affected West. The rapid establishment of the Early Warning Alert and Response System (EWARS) in 34 sentinel sites has resulted in the quick identification of Typhoid, diarrhea, Chikungunya and Zika Virus cases. More than 18,000 people have benefitted from psychosocial support. Another 6,000 people still need to be reached with these immediate services and there are concerns about the longer-term mental health implications of the cyclone if tailored support is not provided to vulnerable groups in the community.

Education

The Ministry of Education worked closely with its Cluster partners to support the reopening of schools (preschool, primary and secondary) and reduce the education interruption for the 86,000 children in affected areas. This was achieved through the provision of 1,520 Temporary Learning Spaces for nearly 40,000 students and urgent repairs to schools, as well as the provision of emergency housing for teachers. Only three schools now remain closed and students



Photo credit: UNICEF Pacific / 2016 / Mephram

from closed schools have been offered places in neighbouring schools as an interim measure. There remain challenges to ensuring regular attendance which the Cluster and Ministry are working to overcome. The provision of psychosocial support to 3,500 students and almost 300 teachers, as well as one hot meal per day for children in class are important factors in helping students return to their lessons. Both of these extremely effective activities require financial support to continue. Efforts to address the psychosocial needs of children have also included the local production of six customized children's books to help young people cope with the emotional impact of the disaster and provide preparedness strategies for future emergencies. While the Education Cluster has received at least 90 per cent of the funds requested for immediate response, there are still significant remaining needs for the early recovery phase. There is an acute need for replacement of education and learning materials which were blown and washed away in

69,200

Children need learning materials

19,800

Reached



49,400

Gap

the Cyclone. To date, less than 20,000 students have received these supplies from an estimated total need of almost 70,000. The Fiji Government has identified almost US\$30 million worth of building repairs needed to restore the 494 damaged schools and early childhood centres to their pre-cyclone capacity.

250,000

Affected people with access to emergency water



50,000

People in need of rehabilitated latrines



Water, Sanitation, Hygiene (WASH)

Since the cyclone, the WASH Cluster has used its well established partnerships and solid funding to provide nearly all of the 250,000 affected people with access to emergency water supplies and hygiene promotion information. The Cluster's work has included the rehabilitation of more than 500 rural water systems, extensive water trucking and the distribution of hygiene kits to almost 66,000 households. Assessments are ongoing to identify any new threat to safe drinking water supplies as a result of the recent flooding. Disinfection of flooded communities is also a need. In two of the areas most affected by the cyclone, Koro and Vanuabalavu, more sustainable water solutions are also required in the long term with new treated water reticulation systems identified as an ongoing need. Sanitation remains a key area of concern with only 191 toilets built since the cyclone, leaving more than 49,000 affected people without access to latrines. A shortage of skilled tradespeople or humanitarian partners to build the required sanitation facilities is the main constraint on progress in this area.

Safety and Protection

To assist humanitarian partners in meeting their protection needs during the response, the Cluster developed and widely disseminated a Code of Conduct to guide the behavior of all responders. The impact of Tropical Cyclone Winston has further exacerbated pre-disaster inequalities, vulnerabilities and protection risks in the community based around gender, age, physical ability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and other factors. The prevailing protection needs and risks will be further compounded as communities struggle to meet basic requirements including food, shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene. Gender based violence (GBV) and violence, exploitation and abuse of children are heightened risks as community protection mechanisms are disrupted and populations are displaced and in distress. There is a continued information gap on these key protection risks and needs of affected populations, particularly for those living without shelter or in unsafe shelter conditions. In response to this, the Safety and Protection Cluster is coordinating the first Inter-Organisational Rapid Protection Assessment, which will create an overview of the protection needs and impacts resulting from Cyclone Winston to inform current and future programming, as well as feeding into preparedness actions, prevention and response. The assessment and responses to its findings will provide a pathway to bridging the divide between the humanitarian, recovery and development phases.

350,000

Affected people need protection related support



Photo credit: UNOCHA / 2016 / Parry

Early Recovery

Partners have been working on early recovery projects aimed at kick-starting livelihoods through capital injections, access to supplies and the provision of services including cash-for-work schemes, small scale infrastructure reconstruction and waste management (including debris clearance). So far, partners have been coordinating with the NDMO to provide support for cash-for-work and debris management activities targeting the most affected villages and some cities. In Nadi, Lautoka and Suva, steps are being taken to reduce debris through green waste processing. With CERF Funds, partners have started debris clearance and training of 450 people in four villages. Partners are also targeting young people for work on debris clearance with activities planned for 16 villages. A great deal of green and construction debris is still in situ after the Cyclone and needs to be safely removed either to permanent waste disposal sites or channeled through reusable waste programs. Composting of green waste has the potential to be an income generating activity. Failure to quickly establish systems for the safe clearance of debris from affected areas can compound environmental and public health risks by increasing unregulated burning and facilitating the spread of disease. Despite the importance of debris clearance, early recovery activities under the Flash Appeal remain unfunded.

Key Constraints & Challenges

Persistent heavy rain and flooding has set-back agricultural recovery and increased the hardship facing people without a permanent roof over their heads. The limited availability of key agriculture items such as seeds and cuttings in-country is constraining efforts to avoid food insecurity. Quarantine/biosecurity is an added complication for the importation of these items. Funding gaps mean some sectors, particularly Shelter and Food Security, will not be able to meet identified humanitarian needs, especially in areas affected by both Cyclone Winston and the subsequent flooding. The complex logistics and expense of responding to needs across dozens of severely affected outer islands is challenging some sectors. This will become more acute now that foreign military assets have left the country and are no longer available for humanitarian work. Limited local availability of people or implementing partners with skills in key areas, such as toilet construction, is restricting progress. Information gaps are also restricting current understandings of need across affected communities. Assessments that are now underway will assist but improved data will result in a more effectively targeted response.

Response to Recovery

As the Cyclone Winston response continues, planning is well underway for the enormous recovery challenge ahead. The Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) process started on 29 March with the aim of assessing the socio-economic impact of the cyclone, including quantifying the damage and loss in critical sectors of the economy. The PDNA focuses on critical early, medium and long-term recovery and reconstruction needs in all key sectors and these are being documented in a Disaster Recovery Framework scheduled to be finalized by 30 April. The main figures and highlights of the PDNA have been presented to the Disaster Controller and the Disaster Management Council. The Disaster Recovery Framework will provide a means by which to ensure a coordinated response to recovery transition, being aware that response will continue well into the recovery phase.



U-Report

In a bid to track public perceptions of the Cyclone Winston response and emerging needs moving into recovery, the Fijian Government will pilot an SMS-based social monitoring and engagement tool called U-Report to form the foundations of a Community Feedback System. **U-Report** is a social messaging tool currently being used in more than 20 countries with over two million registered users that allows anyone, from any community, anywhere in the world to respond to polls, report issues and work as positive agents of change on behalf of people in their country. UNICEF Pacific, supported by UNICEF's Global Innovation team will assist the Fijian Government to rollout U-Report. The goal is to begin operating towards the end of the response phase. The system will also be a valuable communication asset as the Government navigates a complex recovery process, ensuring its priorities and support are in line with the community. This builds on work already begun by a range of response partners in Fiji using text messaging to reach key communities with targeted information.

World Humanitarian Summit

The successes, challenges and lessons from Tropical Cyclone Winston in Fiji will be high on the agenda at the **World Humanitarian Summit (WHS)** in Istanbul on 23-24 May 2016. The experiences of those affected by and responding to the disaster reflect the priority issues raised at last year's WHS regional consultation for the Pacific in Auckland. Participants called for affected people to be at the centre of humanitarian action and for the system to be realigned to support government leadership. Local capacities must also be strengthened to manage disaster risk and to build resilience to the increasing impacts of climate change. Pacific leaders will make specific commitments related to natural disasters and climate change, as outlined in the Secretary-General's report: *One Humanity: Shared Responsibility*.



Acknowledgements

OCHA Regional Office for the Pacific would like to thank the following partners for their support in capturing the ongoing needs facing Fiji after Cyclone Winston:

- The Fijian Government
- The National Disaster Management Office
- Cluster Leads and Co-Leads
- The Pacific Humanitarian Team

For further information, please contact:

Sune Gudnitz, Head of Office, UNOCHA Regional Office for the Pacific
gudnitz@un.org, Tel. (+679) 999 1664

Danielle Parry, Public Information Officer, UNOCHA Regional Office for the Pacific
parryd@un.org Tel. (+679) 777 1433

OCHA Information on Cyclone Winston is available at:

www.unocha.org/rop | HumanitarianResponse.Info | www.reliefweb.int