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- On 25 January a state of Natural Disaster was been declared over the western parts of Viti Levu where several thousand families and businesses were flooded following torrential rains from 22 to 24 January.
- 841 individuals remain in 13 evacuation centers, down from a high of over 4,000 evacuees in over 54 centers.
- Government authorities, local businesses, the Fiji Red Cross Society and community groups have been working tirelessly to restore life to normal – assessing damage, cleaning mud and debris, restoring water and electrical supply, providing food and clothing and donations where needed.
- Current weather forecasts suggest continued rain fall from today through Friday as another low pressure system moves towards Fiji's west coast.

## Situation Overview

From 22-24 January over a 48 hour period 400mm of rain fall was recorded in western Fiji, which triggered flooding across the west coast of Viti Levu. On the 25 January the cabinet declared areas a state of "natural disasters" in five districts. The death toll remains at six (6). Thirteen evacuation centres remain opened with a total of 841 evacuees in three districts. All evacuation centers in schools were closed last weekend in preparation for the start of the new school term. Western Health Services have commenced a disinfectant exercise and have completed spraying in several villages in affected areas. Ba is the hardest hit area with considerable damage to homes, businesses and infrastructure. Government is now focusing on the following actions to ensure that people in affected areas are safe and have access to essential services as soon as possible: a) Completion of Initial Damage Assessment; Provision of relief supplies to evacuees; Coordination of local and international assistance and clean-up of affected areas; Medical surveillance and water purification; and restoration of basic utilities and infrastructure. Several donors have pledged support to national relief efforts including Australia, China, EU, Japan, New Zealand, Russia, United Kingdom and the United States.

The major challenge now is the restoration of the basic necessities such as water, electricity and food. This includes the implementation of the clean-up campaign to avoid any possible outbreak of post-disaster epidemics. Priority areas that need to be attended to immediately are shelter, education, food ration, water, electric power, and health. Death toll remains at six (6) with three (3) injured persons.

## Humanitarian Needs and Response

### Evacuation Centers

A total of 13 evacuation centres remain open based on NDMO reports. All schools that were used as evacuation centres were vacated prior to the start of the new school term on Monday 7 February 2012. All evacuation centres in Tavua, Ba and Ra have closed whilst Lautoka, Nadi and Nadroga still have evacuation centres that are opened.

District	Evacuation Centers	Adults	Children	Total
Lautoka	3	225	159	384
Nadi	6	140	73	213
Nadroga	4	119	125	244
Tavua	0	0	0	0
Ba	0	0	0	0
Rakiraki	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>484</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>841</b>

Fiji Red Cross Society (FRCS) and local officials are monitoring the needs in evacuation centers and provided assistance to families as needed such as food, clothing, cooking equipment, and water. Police are stationed 24 hours at designated Evacuation Centers for law and order and registration, and in addition later this week will receive written guidance on their roles and function at the collection centers.

Given the level of damage in Ba and reports from recent mission, some partners in Suva are concerned that not all evacuation centers are being accounted for or that some families may have been moved from schools without adequate time or options being made available. Protection and Education specialists will be looking at this further to support any measures ensuring safe, secure adequate shelter is provided for those families still unable to move back to their homes.

## Health

The Ministry of Health will mobilise health teams from 31 January and will provide them with essential emergency health supplies for distribution at all health facilities. There have been new cases reported of the following illnesses: Leptospirosis (two new cases in Western Division); Dengue Fever (three adults admitted in Lautoka Hospital and one patient died suspected of Dengue); Diarrhoea (seven cases reported in Ba Mission Hospital and two in Tavua Hospital); Typhoid (five cases suspected in Sigatoka Hospital, others in Ba and Nadi).

The Ministry of Health has teams deployed and working around the clock to monitor health issues related to post-flood environments. Water and electricity is reportedly fully restored in all health facilities in the Western Division and adequate emergency drugs are available in all health facilities.



Many Ba residential areas remain without water for clean-up (OCHA)

Some of the environmental health interventions reported by MoH have included disinfection of all evacuation centers in Lautoka and anti-dengue spraying in Nadi. 10,000 water purification tablets have been distributed to the Western Health Office. This is to ensure there is safe drinking water for people and is a preventative measure against any outbreak of diarrhoea.



Clean-up crews cleared debris from drainages across western Fiji (OCHA)

Water supply problems (low to no pressure) in many hospitals at Nadi Hospital and Ba Mission Hospital have reportedly been addressed. Electricity and Water Supply have been restored at Namarai Health Centre.

## WASH

Several areas in Ba and Lautoka remain without access to safe drinking water. The Water Authority Fiji (WAF) continued to tanker water to various communities today. However, the Divisional EOC is still receiving requests from members of the public for additional water to communities and the refill of allocated water tanks. Maintenance work at the damaged pipelines at the Mota Bridge is reported to be 50% complete with the hope of having water flowing over the course of the coming few days.

UNICEF has made available its current stock of purification tablets in Suva for NDMO/Red Cross distribution.

In Ba, where residences and offices have been without water for more than five days, the water supply has been restored to Ba Mission Hospital, Ba Depot, and a few other neighbourhoods. Water shortages or challenges are also being faced in Sigatoka, Nadi, and Lautoka where rural water trucks have been mobilised to cart water to affected areas, schools and public centers. Work crews continue to restore pipe and clean-up water systems.

IFRC are supporting the FRCS and Ba local government through the deployment of a Nomad Portable Water Purification System, capable of producing 95 liters per minute or up to 136,800 liters per day. Australia Red Cross has provided technical support to establish the system.

## Education

All affected schools in the Division had been reopened except for those in the Ba district that are awaiting the completion of cleaning-up exercise. Education Cluster members met yesterday afternoon, comprised of SC, UNICEF, MoE and AQEP (AusAID funded project) and agreed on a joint assessment tool for affected schools to be conducted starting 1 February. A list of pre-positioned education emergency supplies has been shared with MoE should they be needed following the assessment.

## Agriculture

Extension Officers in the field especially those staff in the Western Division were mobilised to complete the detail damaged assessment on Friday 27 January/2012. Based on the detail crop damage survey the actual damage

caused by the Flood and strong winds were valued at \$8,651,193. 34 Districts in four Provinces were reportedly affected by the flood and a total of 4,590 farmers planting on the flats were directly affected. As part of its immediate response plan the Department of Agriculture plans to: 1) Conduct a details crop and livestock damage survey (area and cost of damage), 2) Determine the extent of damage on Food Security, and 3) Develop a rehabilitation program with focus on supply of vegetable seeds and other early maturing crops. The MoA has requested F\$ 451,357 for vegetable seeds and animal health.



Downtown Ba businesses cleaning up last Friday (OCHA)

### Electricity

Over the past seven days several districts in Western Division were without electricity, however, the steady progress being made by Fiji Electrical Authority is expected to see full restoration of electricity to all areas by 31 January.

### Coordination

- A Gender focal points meeting took place Monday, 30 January, supported by UN Women and IASC GenCap, to discuss protection and gender issues needing to be addressed or better understood for an informed response.
- Ministry of Health partners meeting on the flood response is being held today 31 January at MoH
- Ministry of Education and partners held meeting on assessing and supporting MoEs current response to Evacuation Centers and rehabilitation of schools affected by the flood.
- A PHT aid coordination meeting will be held at the NDMO at 15:00, Wednesday 1 February. The PHT has convened four general coordination meetings chaired by OCHA and the NDMO since the flooding.

### Weather outlook

A trough of low pressure with associated cloud and rain remains slow moving over Fiji group. Meanwhile, an active trough of low pressure is approaching the group from the west. The tropical depression (09F) is deteriorating as a tropical system with no likelihood that it will become a tropical cyclone now. However, this system is still going to bring heavy rain and gusty winds tonight and as a result increased risk of flooding tomorrow.

The next depression in the queue - 07F - is moving east-southeast towards Fiji and intensifying. There is a moderate to high risk that this system may become a tropical cyclone later tomorrow as it nears Fiji. The approach of this second system tomorrow will reinforce the rain and gusty winds, but it too is unlikely to make it all the way to Fiji as the strong high pressure to the south maintains its influence.

The major hazard facing Fiji remains the risk of flooding, especially in the west and north. From tomorrow the risk starts to rise, and bursts of heavy rain can be expected over coming days as rain bands pass over Fiji associated with the series of depressions. These rain bands will move over Fiji, even though the depressions will not necessarily, and as we know even weak weather systems can produce flooding rains if they hang around for long enough. People in the west should be prepared for possibility of flooding and listen for advisories from local authorities. Wind, while strong and gusty, is unlikely to do any significant damage.

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