



This report is produced by the OCHA Regional Office for the Pacific (ROP) in collaboration with humanitarian partners. It covers the period from 14 to 15 March 2015. The next report will be issued on or around 16 March 2015.

Highlights

- Tropical Cyclone Pam struck Vanuatu, hitting the capital of Port Vila, as an extremely destructive category 5 cyclone on the evening of 13 March.
- Winds are estimated to have reached 250kmph with gusts peaking at around 320kmph, causing serious damage to infrastructure and leaving debris strewn across the capital.
- Shefa Province has been declared a state of emergency, with other areas to be determined following aerial assessments.
- There are six confirmed fatalities.
- In Efate, an estimated 90 per cent of structures are either damaged or destroyed.
- More than 2,000 people are sheltering in over 25 evacuation centres in Efate, Torba and Penama.
- All commercial flights in and out of Port Vila are currently grounded, with only military flights landing.

6

Confirmed fatalities

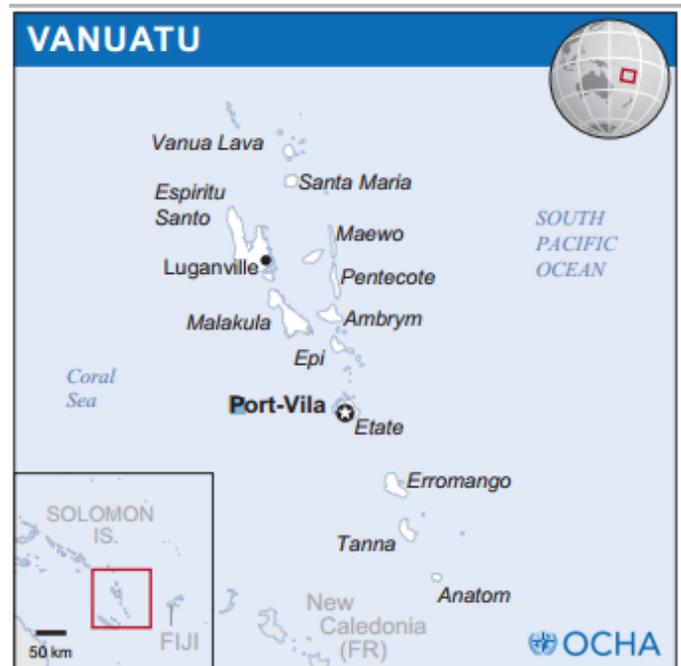
2,000

People in
evacuation centres

90%

Est. structures in
Efate damaged or
destroyed

Source: Vanuatu NDMO, OCHA ROP, Pacific Humanitarian Team



Map Sources: ESRI, Gov't of USA, UNCS.
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Map created in Sep 2013.

Situation Overview

Severe Tropical Cyclone (TC) Pam struck Vanuatu (population 234,000), affecting the capital of Port Vila, as an extremely destructive category 5 cyclone on the evening of 13 March at around 11 p.m. local time. The cyclone's eye passed close to Efate Island, where the capital is located, and winds are estimated to have reached 250kmph with gusts peaking at around 320kmph. Information from colleagues and partners indicates that the cyclone was stronger than expected, and Port Vila has experienced widespread damage with debris strewn in the streets.

There are six confirmed fatalities, although the death toll is expected to rise as communication is reestablished with outer islands. The entire country has likely been affected, to some extent, by the extremely damaging winds, heavy rainfall, storm surges and flooding. There is concern for the southern-most islands of Tafea Province (total population 32,540), which was directly struck by the eye wall and is without communication. The northern islands of Sanma, Penama and Torba Provinces (population 86,000) are also expected to have been heavily impacted as the cyclone headed south-southwest towards the capital. Communication was cut for many hours but some phone lines and internet access are becoming available. The airport is closed to commercial flights and some roads are impassable. Although badly damaged, the main hospital in Port Vila is operational.

A state of emergency was officially declared today for Shefa Province, which includes the capital Port Vila, and will be expanded to other provinces following aerial assessments in coming days. Early estimates from Efate are that 90 per cent of structures are either damaged or destroyed, with over 1,500 people in more than 25 evacuation centres. There are a further 430 people seeking emergency shelter in Torba and Penama. Shelter is likely to be a major immediate need, as is drinking water and food. The logistical challenges will be significant, particularly in terms of communications, transportation and needs assessments. Pre-positioned stocks across all provinces are likely to have been damaged, in which case there will be an urgent need to bring in more supplies. Priority is establishing communication, especially with outer islands, to obtain urgently needed information about the situation outside Efate.

The Vanuatu Humanitarian Team (VHT) is supporting the Government-led response and is holding regular cluster meetings with in-country partners. A United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team will arrive in Port Vila on 16 March. Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT) partners, including the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), are also deploying to support the response. A number of NGOs are ready to deploy from across the region pending flight availability. A challenge will be ensuring humanitarian partners do not overwhelm the small island government-led response. There is a need to scale-up regional and international assistance over time, and in accordance with the Government's priorities.

In addition to Vanuatu, the Government of Tuvalu has declared a State of Emergency on 13 March due to the impact of storm surges, which have so far affected about 4,000 people (a quarter of the population). The Government is under pressure to provide relief supplies and has asked for regional and international support. In the Solomon Islands, some destruction has been reported on the outer islands. Of further concern is Tropical Cyclone Nathan, currently a category 2 storm, forecast to track back to the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu over the coming days. This could pose a serious threat to the populations already affected by TC Pam.

Humanitarian Response

The Government is leading response efforts across all clusters supported by humanitarian partners. A clearer picture of overall needs and response will emerge in coming days.



Logistics

Response:

- WFP has deployed a logistics expert to support the Logistics Coordinator in the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO).
- The Vanuatu Mobile Force is working with to clear debris from roads.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Phone and communication networks are intermittent in Port Vila and mostly down in outer islands.
- There is substantial surface flooding and damage to the tower at the main airport, with authorities reporting that the airport will be closed to commercial flights for up to two weeks. The priority is reopen the airport to expedite the relief operation. Debris and damage to roads is also hampering movement and the distribution of supplies.
- Most clusters are requiring logs cluster support and coordination. There is need for logistics experts and light reconnaissance planes/helicopters, pilots, and fuel to deliver supplies and conduct assessments. There is also a need for sea shipping to transport food, water and rebuilding materials.



Shelter

Needs:

- There are estimates that around 90 per cent of structures have been damaged or destroyed on the most populated island of Efate.
- The extent of damage in outer islands is unknown, although they have less sturdy structures than those in Port Vila.
- The NDMO has reported around 2,000 people in over 25 evacuation centres in Efate, Penama and Torba. It is difficult to track the number of people in evacuation centres as many return to their homes during the day to clean-up and conduct repairs.

2,000

People in evacuation centres

Response:

- Save the Children and VRCS are visiting evacuation centres to conduct assessments and deliver food.
- Following a request by the Government, IFRC has deployed a regional shelter delegate and has requested additional support from the global shelter cluster.
- Vanuatu Red Cross Society (VRCS), World Vision, ADRA, Save the Children and UNICEF have non-food item (NFI) stocks available to support response efforts, including shelter kits, kitchen kits and hygiene kits.
- Australia has delivered the first 11 pallets of supplies, with hygiene kits, shelter tool kits, water purification, and tarpaulins to assist 500 families (for 2500 people, and humanitarian supplies to assist up to 5,000 people, including water and sanitation and shelter kits).

Gaps:

- There is limited capacity to support the management of evacuation centres over the long term. OCHA is in contact with IOM as Global Camp Coordination lead to seek advice and assistance. NFIs will need resupply.



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Needs:

- Although Port Vila's water supply is back online in at least some areas there are concerns for non-reticulated areas as well as the safety of drinking water.
- The provision of WASH services in the more than 25 evacuation areas is urgent, as is the assessment of WASH needs in rural areas in all affected provinces.

Response:

- The Vanuatu WASH Cluster is operational through its lead agency, the Directorate of Geology Mines and Water Resources (DGMRW). UNICEF is providing support as co-lead of the WASH cluster.
- Active WASH partners with on-the-ground presence and WASH projects in Vanuatu include: ADRA, UNICEF, World Vision, LLEE and VRCS. Partners indicating the availability of surge support for WASH include: ASB Bundesverband, Save the Children (UK, Vietnam), OXFAM NZ, French Red Cross, New Zealand Red Cross, IFRC, UNICEF, and a Netherlands water Management coordination team. Clearance for surge support should be obtained through the regular channels with the NDMO and the VHT.
- WASH supplies are available for immediate use from VRCS, ADRA, World Vision and UNICEF, including containers, purification tablets, jerry cans and buckets, WASH kits and hygiene kits.
- The Vanuatu WASH Cluster has also worked on an agreed initial rapid assessment form.

Gaps:

- As current stocks can only cater for 5-10,000 people, a 10-fold increase in WASH supplies will be needed for the next 2-3 months.



Health & Nutrition

Needs:

- There are six confirmed fatalities and an unknown number of injuries.
- The main hospital in Port Vila is badly damaged. Patients have been transferred to a newer part of the building, but there is an urgent need for medical supplies. VRCS is providing tarpaulins and assisting with food deliveries as the hospital kitchen was badly damaged. The morgue is unserviceable.

17,000
Children under 5 at
risk of illness

Response:

- The Health cluster in Vanuatu is co-led by the Ministry of Health and WHO. They are holding regular meetings and identified the need for medical support in evacuation centres.
- There have been a number of offers to HQ for foreign medical teams. Australia has deployed a medical team and urban search and rescue personnel.
- There is concern about the water supply and purification tablets may be needed. Disease outbreaks are also a concern, especially as Vanuatu was recently impacted by a measles outbreak.
- It is expected that at least 50 per cent of children under five (17,000 children) will be at risk of worsening childhood illnesses and nutritional status. Immunization and child nutrition will need to be prioritized in order to prevent further deterioration of children's health or epidemic outbreaks.
- In partnership with UNICEF and WHO, the Ministry of Health and NDMO are prioritizing measles vaccinations and preparedness action is underway.
- The Government has requested 25 health kits which each supporting around 10,000 people. There are two kits in Vanuatu, with UNICEF to send an additional five kits from Suva. WHO is liaising with their Manila office to mobilize additional supplies. UNICEF will provide ORS and zinc tablets in anticipation of a diarrhoeal outbreak given compromised water safety and hygiene.
- Initial assessments will include an assessment of infant feeding. WHO and UNICEF will also release messages on Infant Feeding in Emergencies to protect children from unhygienic practices associated with infant formula and other breast milk substitutes.
- WHO will deploy a post-disaster outbreak surveillance expert from Suva, along with a logistician and a communications officer once flights are available. WHO will also deploy a dedicated health cluster coordinator who will coordinate the incoming Foreign Medical Teams (FMTs).
- A Nutrition in Emergency Specialist will be deployed from UNICEF to assist in the nutrition response, initially from Suva with possibility of moving to Vanuatu in coming weeks. WHO may have two nutritionists already mobilized in Vanuatu.

- ASB (Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund Deutschland eV) offered to deploy a primary health care team subject to the provision of air transport.

Gaps:

- A UNICEF staff member is working to repair the EPI cold-room genset unit after it was flooded. Alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the cold chain are needed whilst repairs are underway.



Food Security

Needs:

- The cluster is estimating extensive damage to crops across the country. Banana crops and leafy vegetable crops are likely to have been destroyed, with root crops uprooted or inundated. Fruit trees will have lost fruit and small livestock and pens will have been destroyed. The cluster is also expecting the destruction of food and seed stocks, including fishing assets.
- Food shortages in the coming days will be a serious concern for the majority of the population, particularly those without homes and food gardens.
- 80 per cent of Vanuatu's population engage in subsistence agriculture as a primary economic activity. It is anticipated that emergency food relief could be needed for up to a month, plus longer term recovery support.

80%

Vanuatu population
who rely on
subsistence agriculture

Response:

- Support for emergency food aid is required for urban evacuation centres and rural communities, as well as storage facilities in Port Vila and outer islands. FAO is not able to support food aid distribution and is liaising with WFP for assistance and guidance.
- Seeds and planting materials for approximately 25,000 households is required, specifically cabbage varieties, tomatoes, corn, dwarf beans, capsicum, carrots and pumpkin/squash. Planting materials include; bush knives, spades and crowbars.
- The cluster is developing a household food aid package and key agriculture and food security messages.
- FAO has surge capacity available if required.



Education

Needs:

- Status of the schools will not be known until the rapid assessment is conducted, however in view of the scale and magnitude of the cyclone it is likely that a significant number of schools will be severely damaged and schools will not be safe to open for classes for some time.
- Several schools are being used as evacuation centres or have been damaged by the cyclone.

Response:

- UNICEF Education in Emergencies (EiE) supplies, such as tents, school in a box, recreation kits, early child development (ECD) kits and student backpacks will be shipped from UNICEF Fiji. Save the Children and CARE also have prepositioned EiE supplies in Vanuatu.
- Surge specialists from UNICEF and Save the Children will be deployed to Vanuatu to support the Education Cluster.



Protection

Needs:

- Many of the evacuation centres have numerous women and young children sleeping in close quarters, so protection issues will be paramount in coming weeks.

Response:

- OHCHR/UNHCR have RedR capacity on the ground.
- Assessment forms have been developed and translated into Bislama.
- Save the Children and IFRC will visit evacuation centres tonight to determine numbers of people and needs.
- UNFPA has staff available to support gender, and sexual and reproductive health. UN Women and UNICEF also have staff available to deploy from Suva. The UNICEF child protection focal point in Suva is coordinating through Gender and Protection cluster in Vanuatu.



Early Recovery & Livelihoods

Response:

- UNDP are ready to begin planning for early recovery, in coordination with other clusters/partners, with surge capacity en route to Suva for deployment to Vanuatu in coming days. Other technical capacity from UNDP in Suva is available for deployment depending on needs and access to flights.
- UNDP can also provide specific support on debris management, such as cash for work.

Funding

The Government of New Zealand has announced an initial contribution of NZ\$1 million (US\$754,000) to assist Pacific nations impacted by TC Pam. The amount includes NZ\$200,000 for specific requests for assistance in Vanuatu, Fiji, Tuvalu and Solomon Islands, and NZ\$400,000 for NGOs in Vanuatu and Solomon Islands.

The Australian Government is providing an initial package of life-saving support in response to a request from the Government, including AU\$5 million (\$3.9 million) to be delivered through Australian NGOs, the Red Cross and UN partners. USAID will make available US\$100,000 to the French Red Cross to support WASH activities.

The UK has made available up to £2 million (\$3 million) for humanitarian response. Up to £1 million is for UN organizations and international aid agencies already working in the region. An additional £1 million will be made available by the activation of the UK's Rapid Response Facility. The European Union (EU) will provide initial humanitarian assistance of €1 million (\$1.12 million). Japan will pledge support once needs assessments have been conducted. The Fiji Government will meet tomorrow to discuss assistance to Vanuatu.

UNDP Emergency Grants of up to US\$100,000 per country will be available in coming days. The Australian Red Cross has launched an appeal for donations to help Pacific communities impacted by TC Pam. The UN Emergency Response Fund (CERF) is also available to support life-saving activities.

General Coordination

The National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) is coordinating the response and has activated the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC). The Government is coordinating and collating the various offers of assistance. The Vanuatu Humanitarian Team (VHT) is supporting the Government and is a collaboration between Vanuatu based NGOs, the Red Cross, UN and government agencies. In the Vanuatu cluster system, Government ministries act as cluster leads with members of the VHT acting as co-leads. There are five clusters: Health, WASH, Agriculture and Food Security, Logistics and Emergency Education.

A United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team will arrive in Port Vila on an Australian Government flight on 16 March. Three staff from OCHA's Regional Office of the Pacific will also travel to the capital on 16 March to support the humanitarian response. Australia has indicated it can provide operational support to UNDAC, which will be critical given the wide geographic area and the potential need to spread out to different islands. Telecoms Sans Frontieres and MapAction will be deploying to the region responding to initial reports indicating that telecommunication services have been compromised, making communication between islands particularly difficult. UNOSAT are providing satellite imagery and analysis, focusing on before and after photos of the south-east islands.

The EU is sending two experts to assess humanitarian needs and liaise with partner organizations on the ground. The France, Australia and New Zealand (FRANZ) partnership has been requested to provide a range of support, including aerial assessments. Clusters are meeting daily and the next inter-cluster meeting is Tuesday 17 March. A number of NGOs are awaiting an official request for assistance from the Government. IFRC will deploy a response coordinator to support VRCS, and is providing an allocation from its Disaster Emergency Relief Fund (DREF).

The Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT) is meeting regularly to share information and coordinate deployments. The Government has made a specific request to be in the lead on this response. This also includes strict management of humanitarian deployments from the PHT and other humanitarian partners, all of whom must be approved by the NDMO prior to departure. The PHT cluster leads and co-chairs, including the UN Resident Coordinator and the OCHA Head of Office are responsible for communicating deployments to the NDMO for approval.

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For more information, please visit www.unocha.org/rop or <http://reliefweb.int/disaster/tc-2015-000020-vut>

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