SITUATION OVERVIEW AND HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

Comoros experienced significant impact from Tropical Cyclone Kenneth, a category 1 storm (speeds of up to 110 kph) on 24/25 April. Flooding has occurred in high risk areas of the entire archipelago, mainly on the coastal lines. Preliminary estimates indicate seven people have died and over 200 people were wounded. An estimated 45000 people were affected, and at least 20,000 displaced (many of them are children). The number of displaced is likely to increase once a better indication of how many households have been destroyed is available.

Clean water is an issue, as more than 96 water tanks have lost their covers and are polluted with rubbish or filled with sea water; heightening the risk of water-borne diseases spreading. The situation is likely to deteriorate rapidly if urgent action is not taken to purify water tanks and the number of people affected is likely to increase.

The electricity grid is destroyed throughout the territory. The water supply system (Mbeni and Mitsamiouli) is primarily affected by lack of power, preventing pumping. People have resorted to rainwater, which is available but not potable for consumption. Limited access to the affected areas due to damaged roads is a significant issue. With all national transport suspended and no power supply, the ability to move supplies is seriously hampered.

Highlights

- An estimated 45,000 people have been affected by Cyclone Kenneth, which hit Comoros on 24 April. Initial estimates indicate seven people died, over 200 people were wounded, and 20,000 people displaced.
- Almost 80 per cent of farms are destroyed, which will have a significant impact as agriculture is the main economic sector of the country. An estimated 63 per cent of crop plants and 35 per cent of cash crops have been destroyed.
- The cyclone destroyed 3,818 houses, while 400 schools and six health centers were damaged, and one hospital was flooded.
- With the start of Ramadan this week, the loss of staple food crops will cause food shortages and price inflation for other foodstuffs.
- UNICEF has deployed staff from all sectors to assist the Government in rapid assessment activities.

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From 24 April, Government facilities, including schools were closed. The cyclone has damaged 608 schools (mostly pre-primary and primary). The cyclone also caused the total destruction of 3,818 houses and the partial destruction of 7,013 houses. Sixty three percent of food crops, 35 per cent of cash crops and 34 per cent of fruit trees were destroyed.

Map showing affected areas and impact

HUMANITARIAN LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION

The Comorian Government has taken the lead to respond to the crisis supported by UN agencies, the Red Crescent and local NGOs. Multi-sectoral needs assessments teams were deployed by the Government (with the support of UN and partners) and data is being compiled.

The UNCT deployed the members of the inter-agency DRR/DRM Task Force to assist the Government in the preparedness and rapid assessment activities, including inter-sectoral coordination with the national authorities and humanitarian actors. National actors are led by the Government with the support of civil society organizations and UN Partners. Several clusters were activated: food security, health and nutrition, WASH, shelter and NFIs, education and protection, and logistics (including communication and security).

The UNCT has provided the logistics to support the rapid assessment teams. Emergency supplies have also been positioned for the health, education, nutrition and WASH sectors. The UNCT has identified and reprogrammed funding ready to be availed within 24 hours to strengthen the Government response capacity.

On 25 April 2019, the President thanked the UN Resident Coordinator for the commitment and availability of all UN system staff to support the Government of Comoros in coordinating the preparedness and response activities in support of the management of the impact of the cyclone.

UNICEF Comoros teams have been in the field, continuing to support communities and partners in response efforts.

Key recommendations from the needs assessments were the mobilization of human and financial resources to respond to immediate needs, strengthening coordination, and ensuring that all sectors join efforts.
UNICEF HUMANITARIAN STRATEGY

UNICEF strategy consists of interventions in Health, Nutrition, WASH, Education, Child Protection and Communication for Development (C4D) all of which were prioritized to address the needs of people currently facing the humanitarian situation at national level. Interventions are currently being coordinated with government at central level, and have been guided by assessment, including the Government and UN under the leadership of the COSEP. UNICEF humanitarian interventions are complementary to government action. UNICEF’s strategy aims at providing timely immediate humanitarian assistance to children and women while addressing long-term development needs by focusing on:

- **Nutrition**: Address nutritional status of under 5-years.
- **Health**: Support Government to re-establish health services for affected communities and to ensure critical health supplies are available for outreach services.
- **WASH**: Support sector coordination and evaluate reconstruction needs, re-establish access to drinking water, Water purification, Access to appropriate sanitation and hygiene facilities (for most vulnerable, with property/house damage), Access to essential NFIs (soap and water container) for the most vulnerable, with property/house damage and loss of belongings and dissemination of information on Safe water, sanitation and hygiene.
- **Education**: Support children to access quality learning opportunities and recreational activities by ensuring learning resumes in temporary learning spaces in damaged schools.
- **Protection**: women and children access gender-based violence prevention and response services; and Support to the most vulnerable families with unconditional monetary transfers to meet the basic needs and possibly boost recovery efforts.
- **C4D**: people will be reached with key life-saving and behavior change messages on health, WASH nutrition, education and protection

SUMMARY ANALYSIS OF PROGRAMME RESPONSE

UNICEF Comoros has launched its contingency and immediate response plan to provide an immediate response to the humanitarian situation as it unfolds. The UNICEF Comoros team is closely monitoring the situation, along with partners, and will respond accordingly. UNICEF has no available supplies on Anjouan and Mohali, this presents a major challenge in the flooded areas on these two islands. Potential communication and transport challenges between islands is also a challenge. The following resources and supplies are available for immediate response:

- Some emergency contingency stocks are in place in Grande Comore for the initial response, including WASH material (seals, flexible jerrycans, bladder, water tank and emergency toilets), Health (midwifery kits, oxygen extractor and LLINs), Nutrition (RUTF, F75 and F100) and Education (recreation kits and school-in-a-box).
- US$100,000 has been re-programmed from Regular Resources for immediate response to the emergency. Additional funding will be required as the impact of the cyclone is substantial.
- UNICEF staff have been deployed in the field to determine the impact and assess the situation with Government and partners.
- Deployment of UNICEF teams in all regions for rapid assessment/ evaluation to mobilize resources.

The following sector response activities are being planned:

**Health** - Organize outreach and fixed-point health services to displaced communities, organize outpatient sessions for children, providing basic curative and preventative services aligned to national protocols (IMNCI), procurement and distribution of vitamin A, four interagency kits, 19,000 ITNs, and support community health workers to deliver key preventive messages.

**Nutrition** - Training and logistic support for active acute case screening through MUAC, and referral and treatment of SAM children. Procurement and distribution of RUTF and other nutritional commodities used for treatment of SAM cases.
**Primary needs after the assessment in Health and Nutrition:** Rehabilitation of affected hospitals, the establishment of an emergency health service in the affected regions in order to be able to accompany the health centers for the care of patients and pregnant women and the Monitoring of malnutrition and waterborne diseases

**Water, Sanitation and Hygiene – WASH** - Provision of sector coordination, provision of access to safe water, provision of access to appropriate sanitation and hygiene facilities, Procurement of essential NFI soap, water containers) and dissemination of information on Safe water, sanitation and hygiene.

**Primary needs after the assessment in WASH:** Treatment of water tanks with chlorine, water distribution in some localities, facilitate the access to the landfill site and waste collection along the roads.

**Education** - Procurement of materials for construction of Temporary School Facilities (tents), School-in-a box leaning materials, and learner kits, provision of technical support and build capacity for construction and setting up of tarp tents. Provision of technical support on the use of ECD kits for preschoolers in safe learning spaces

**Primary needs after the assessment in Education:** Repairs of Classroom damaged roofs, distribution of school kits and classroom Sanitation

**Social Protection** - Support to the most vulnerable families with unconditional monetary transfers.

**Communication for Development (C4D)** ensure delivery of effective communications the number of people reached with key life-saving and behavior change messages on WASH, health, nutrition and child protection through face-to-face approaches. Through the Nutrition and WASH programmes implementation

**Funding**

The overall financial needs of the humanitarian response will be determined following the finalization of response plans. Based on initial estimates, UNICEF will require US$530,000 to cover the immediate humanitarian needs of the affected population. Detailed funding requirement will be outlined in the next Situation Report.
Some photos from the field

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