Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

Samoa: TC Gita passed just south of Samoa as a Category 1 cyclone on the evening of 10 February. TC Gita caused damage to power and water supply infrastructure leading to the disconnection of these critical services in most parts of the country. Road access around the country was disrupted due to flooding and landslides. Telecommunication, internet connectivity and mobile communications remained functional but disrupted due to intermittent power outages. Media broadcast outlets also experienced disruption to their services due to the power outage. Government offices, educational facilities and private businesses were also closed due to the impact of the cyclone except for essential public services.
supporting the provision of emergency response actions to ensure the safety of the public. Felled trees and uprooted crops such as banana and breadfruit trees were observed throughout the country. Many residential areas in the greater Apia urban area were impacted by flooding and many homes sustained damage their roofs. 236 persons were evacuated to 2 designated evacuation centres but many others self-evacuated to church halls, families and friends.

The initial rapid assessment revealed that while there was minimal wind damage to structures, flooding in the greater Apia urban area had a severe impact on families and businesses. This assessment also noted loss of large areas of vegetation, banana and other crops particularly in the high lands of the islands. The National Disaster Council approved the extension of the Declaration of Disaster. The Government of Samoa is seeking assistance to assist the affected families in the flood affected areas through the provision of much needed relief both food and non-food items, clearance and removal of debris as well as conducting aerial assessment of key watershed and forest areas. The total financial support required is SAT$394,343.00 (US$157,155). The Pacific Humanitarian Team – UN is funding the aerial assessment.

**Niue:** Whilst initially expected to be directly in the path of TC Gita, the cyclone tracked east of Niue as it was upgraded to a Category 3 system. Strong winds affected the country but according to the media there were no reports of injury or of any damage.

**Tonga:** On Monday night, 12 February (local time) and 13 February, the eye of TC Gita passed just south of the low-lying Tongatapu islands group in southern Tonga, where the country’s most populous island, Tongatapu Island, and the capital city Nuku'alofa are located. This is the strongest recorded storm to have struck the island nation in its history. There are reports of one fatality with some people reportedly sustaining injuries. It has been reported by the National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) that 79% of the population has been affected.

NEMO is coordinating the response and initial damage assessments are ongoing. 108 evacuation centres were established with 4,500 evacuees. Electricity is reportedly down leaving people without power. Hospitals are reportedly operational using generators, although there are concerns that contaminated flood water may spread disease. There are reports of damage to some schools. Both telecommunication providers were still operating in all of Tongatapu, Ha’apai and ‘Eua, albeit with intermittent coverage.

**Fiji:** TC Gita passed into Fiji waters on Tuesday, 13 February and affected 1,579 people in the southern Lau group of islands. The Government of Fiji is focusing its response on Ono-i-Lau and Vatoa islands. There is no request for support from the UN Humanitarian team.

### Estimated Population in Need of Humanitarian Assistance
*Estimates calculated based on initial figures from Kingdom of Tonga Tropical Cyclone Response Plan, February 2018*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start of humanitarian response: KINGDOM OF TONGA</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population in Need</td>
<td>79,556</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children (Under 18)</td>
<td>31,822</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children Under Five</td>
<td>Date not available</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children 6 to 23 months</td>
<td>Data not available</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnant and lactating women</td>
<td>Data not available</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Humanitarian Leadership and Coordination
- The Government of Tonga is leading the emergency response to TC Gita, and has requested the support of the UN Humanitarian Team. The Government of Fiji is coordinating the response in Fiji, with no request to the UN for support; and the Government of Samoa is coordinating the response in Samoa with no request for support from UNICEF.

- UNICEF is co-leading the Health and Nutrition cluster with WHO, leading the Education cluster, and leading the WASH cluster for the humanitarian response in Tonga.
• The Immediate Response Plan for Tonga covers the immediate needs of the affected population until 12 March 2018. The initial recovery costs are estimated at TOP$40.9 million (US$23 million). Government assessment teams deployed to assess the extent of damage to essential services, power and electricity, agricultural crops and school buildings. Government and humanitarian and development partner support will be needed to meet priority needs in the months to come. A complete response plan will be developed and available in two weeks from 16 February.

**Humanitarian Strategy**

In Tonga, UNICEF is supporting the UN humanitarian cluster system to respond to the disaster caused by Tropical Cyclone Gita in Tonga. Support to the governments’ response will focus on provision of urgent life-saving support, including access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene for those families affected. UNICEF is working closely with the National Emergency Office, and the UN Coordination office, to coordinate activities. Emergency supplies including portable water field test kits, to check for safety of drinking water; Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Kits, which include purification tablets; water containers and hygiene products such as soap and menstrual hygiene products; inter-agency emergency health kits that include medicines, micronutrient powders, Vitamin A capsules; and tents, are ready for shipment to Tonga.

In Samoa, basic emergency supplies have already been prepositioned and have been offered to the Samoan government if required to support the needs of affected children and families. Supplies are also prepositioned in Fiji for use in affected areas. The National Disaster Management Office in Fiji have been offered the use of RapidPro – an open-source platform of applications that can help the government deliver information quickly and connect communities to lifesaving services through the short message service (SMS) for mobile phones.

UNICEF-led Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT) clusters have been convened in Suva. UNICEF, together with other PHT partners, has produced an inventory of supplies and personnel available for use in the response. This has been compiled and shared with the governments of Fiji, Samoa and Tonga.

**Summary Analysis of Programme Response**

**Health and Nutrition**

UNICEF as the co-cluster lead facilitated the Pacific Humanitarian Health and Nutrition Cluster which met on 16 February to discuss the TC Gita response for Fiji, Samoa and Tonga. Partners (WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF, IPPF, Empower Pacific and New Zealand MFAT representative) have pre-positioned items and staff on standby for response if required. The Fiji Ministry of Health and Medical Services is taking the lead in managing the affected area in Ono-i-Lau.

UNICEF is on standby for providing technical support and assistance with pre-positioned health and nutrition supplies, vaccines and cold chain if required for Fiji, Samoa and Tonga.

**WASH**

The WASH Cluster has completed a rapid assessment covering 75% of communities on the island of Tongatapu, while also waiting for assessment information from the island of Eua. The main priority for the cluster is preparedness for the high risk of a vector borne outbreak, namely Dengue Fever. Reduction of mosquito breeding sites are being advocated as well as ongoing clearing of debris. Reliable electricity is key in the access to water in a large number of the communities who rely on pumps to supply water to households. Water logged areas face sanitation problems, with seepage and leaks which may lead to diarrhoeal and/or skin infections. UNICEF continues to provide technical support to the cluster in the form of information management and cluster coordination. UNICEF is supporting the Cluster in developing a response plan to be presented to the National Emergency Management Office the week of 19 February.

**Child Protection**

On 16 February, the Pacific Humanitarian Protection Cluster met in Suva to discuss assessment tools as well as personnel deployment plans. The group identified a few protection-related issues to be shared with other clusters for inclusion in their respective sectoral assessments. The more in-depth protection assessment, which includes a particular focus on child protection and GBV, will be carried out jointly by UNICEF, UNFPA and UN Women. The Tonga Safety and Protection Cluster is being activated under the leadership of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. UNICEF will be deploying a Child Protection Officer to assist the Ministry to coordinate the assessment of needs, planning, implementation and monitoring of the response in the area of child protection. UNICEF interventions will build on emergency preparedness efforts carried out in 2016 through the training of key stakeholders at national level and in 3 island groups (Tongatapu, Ha’apai, Vava’u) in Child Protection in Emergencies.
Education
UNICEF is leading the education cluster. Temporary learning spaces will be required as a number of schools have been affected with minor to major damages in Tonga. It is reported that 12 schools have damaged buildings with further assessments ongoing.

Communications for Development (C4D), Community Engagement & Accountability
The Government of Tonga has prepared messages in the Tongan language for vector borne illnesses and water purification. UNICEF C4D is ready to provide support to the Government as required on messaging for affected communities.

Supply and Logistics
Pre-positioned supplies are ready to be sent by ship to Tonga the week beginning 19 February, including WASH kits containing soap, menstrual products, water container, and purification tablets. Inter-agency health kits are also for shipping.

Media and External Communication
On 13 February, the first UNICEF press release on TC Gita was issued. Interviews have been conducted with Radio NZ (Morning Report), SBC news (Australia), Newshub (NZ), Stuff.co.nz, UNIC in Canberra, UN News Centre, Pacific Beat Radio Australia. Social media posts have been shared to update on the cyclone path, preparedness, impact and UNICEF preparedness to support the response. Updates have also been provided to National Committees. One communication staff from the NZ National Committee deployed for three days to obtain initial photos/videos of the impact of TC Gita. On 16 February, a deployed communication staff visited Eua Island with the Australian High Commission. A communication staff will be deployed when supplies arrive into Tonga next week to cover UNICEF’s initial response activities.

Funding
Initial recovery costs in Tonga are estimated at TOP$40.9 million (approximately US$23 million), based on initial Government assessments on the extent of damage to essential services, power and electricity, agricultural crops and school buildings. A complete response plan will be developed and available in two weeks from 16 February.

Next SitRep: 20 February 2018
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