



Solomon Islands

Humanitarian Situation Report

unicef 

Highlights

- Torrential rain in Guadalcanal Province, especially around the capital city of Honiara, is causing ongoing flooding since Thursday, April 3. The storm may develop into a tropical cyclone in the next 24 hours. Heavy rain warning for Solomon Islands remains in force.
- Up to six provinces may be affected and are on Tropical Disturbance Watch: Rennell & Bellona, Western, Russells, Guadalcanal, Makira and Malaita
- The airport has been closed since last night, and up to 1,000 people may be camped there. At least three bridges are under water and/or destroyed and many roads are impassable.
- Six people have been reported dead and 30 are reported missing. 10,358 are estimated to be affected, but not all communities have reported to the national emergency operations centre.
- 5,000 people are reported to be in eleven evacuation centres where registration work is ongoing by Red Cross and partners.
- Nine of the evacuation centres are schools. School classes have been suspended.
- 500 patients have been relocated from the national hospital in Honiara to other non-medical facilities.
- Mataniko River in central Honiara has burst its banks, resulting in major flooding affecting residential areas along the river bank. There are reports of entire residential areas having been washed away.
- Electricity and internet connections are interrupted and there are reports of landslides.
- Government of Solomon Islands has declared a Natural Disaster and the Prime Minister is considering declaring a State of Emergency.

Solomon Islands Flooding

Just over 10,000

People affected (SI Emergency National Operations Center, 3 April 2014)

UNICEF Appeal*
US\$ 100,000

*subject to revision after assessments complete

UNICEF and Partners Response to Date



It is likely that most of the more than 10,000 people in the affected areas are cut off from access to clean water. UNICEF is designated by the Government as their supporting Agency for the coordination of the WASH Cluster.



At least nine schools have been turned into evacuation centers; others are damaged and learning has been disrupted for thousands of children. UNICEF and Save the Children are designated to support Government with coordination of the Education Cluster, and have initiated coordination with cluster members, is sharing information, and is on standby to distribute school tents, tarpaulins, school in a box, and ECD kits which are pre-positioned in Honiara.



UNICEF's Health and Nutrition programme are cluster members under the Health and Nutrition Cluster headed by Government and WHO. WHO and UNICEF are sharing an advisory against distribution of infant formula and encouragement to promote breastfeeding, as well as other health messages. UNICEF is on standby to distribute health kits, oral rehydration solution and support a health and nutrition assessment. The Government has advised that emergency food relief in evacuation centres is a priority.



UNICEF is designated as Government's supporting agency for coordination of the Protection Cluster. Government entities are carrying out search and rescue missions and Red Cross and other partners are supporting through carrying out registration at evacuation centres. Protection issues, especially for the elderly, disabled, sick, women and children are a high priority for rapid assessment, especially considering anecdotal reports on social media of looting.

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

Up to six Provinces in the Solomon Islands may be affected by three days of heavy rain. The most information is known about the situation in Guadalcanal Province, where the capital city of Honiara is located. Honiara and its surrounding areas have experienced severe flooding. Just over 10,000 people have been affected and many are taking shelter in schools and other buildings that are used as evacuation centers. There are 11 designated evacuation centers, nine of which are schools, where around 5000 evacuees have been registered. Registration is ongoing by the Red Cross and other partners. Flood waters have covered and/or destroyed at least three bridges and many roads. There are reports of landslides. At least six people are reported dead. Pictures of looting in China town has circulated on social media site Facebook. Police have been deployed.

No formal assessments have been carried out thus far, but Government, bilateral partners, UNICEF and other UN partners, NGOs and other partners are collecting information from multiple sources, compiling, verifying, analyzing, and reporting even as they organize for response. Rapid assessments are being planned but are contingent on a lessening of the heavy rains, some clearing of roads and availability of boats.

Humanitarian leadership and coordination

The Solomon Islands National Emergency Operations Center is active 24/7 and the National Disaster Management Office is requesting all Disaster Management Stakeholders and Partners to support their designated Clusters and assist with their operations as per preparedness planning. The Pacific Humanitarian Team based in Suva, Fiji, has met and is coordinating regional stand-by and ongoing support. The Humanitarian Coordinator has sent a letter of support to the Prime Minister.

Humanitarian Strategy

UNICEF has activated cluster coordinators and contact persons in both the Solomon Islands and Suva, Fiji. UNICEF is the main support to Solomon Islands Government led clusters for WASH and Protection and Co-Support for Education. UNICEF supports government and WHO for Health and Nutrition. We have provided lists of staff in Honiara and Fiji, and lists of stock in Honiara and Fiji. We are providing emergency messages for transmission covering UNICEF's core commitments to children in humanitarian situations. Our priority is clean water and sanitation, child protection, strong communication, health and nutrition, followed by restoring education as soon as possible.

Human resources

UNICEF staff members in Honiara, Solomon Islands include a Chief of Field Office, two child protection staff, an education staff, an immunization logistician, health staff and administrative staff. Additional staff in WASH, health, nutrition, child protection, education and communication are on stand-by to join from UNICEF Pacific's base in Suva, Fiji.

Funding

At this stage Solomon Islands National Emergency Operations Center have requested SBD\$ 1,000,000.00 funds to support logistics and all the 11 designated evacuation centers. Funding requirements are expected to increase after they receive the results of detailed needs assessments. UNICEF's initial estimate based on previous experience with disasters in Solomon Islands, is USD 100,000 to complement and supplement funds and supplies from other partners. This is likely to change after needs assessments are complete.

Next SitRep: 7 April 2014

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