Background

Kadovar Island became active on 5 January 2018 with volcanic activity.

The provincial government confirmed that to date there have been no casualties and the entire population of Kadovar island (591 people) has been evacuated.

The Kadovar population was evacuated to neighbouring Blup Blup island and is presently being hosted there. Blup Blup’s resident population is approximately 800 people (143 households).

Water and food sources on Blup Blup island are rapidly being exhausted by the additional population strain with immediate needs assessed by ward councillors to be food, water and shelter.

The provincial government outlined its current response plan as two-fold:

- Prime Minister’s Office will directly support the provincial government with food and water supplies for two weeks for 2,000 people (on Blup Blup island). This is being supported by a commercial barge engaged by the provincial government and PNGDF vessels once on site.

- Within two weeks, Provincial Government is planning to evacuate islanders from Kadovar, Blup Blup and Biem islands (approximately 3,000-4,000 people) to a resettlement site on mainland East Sepik. The identified location is in Turubu LLG in Wewak District (east of Wewak town).

Current Situation

Several assessments (based on remote and visual observation) have reported that most of the surface area on Kadovar Island has been impacted.

Minister for Inter-Government Relations and responsible for National Disaster Management has declared the Volcanic Activity on Kadovar as a ‘National Disaster’.

Prime Minister of PNG announced on 9 January a commitment of K150 000 (USD 47,170) for immediate assistance towards the people of Kadovar Island. The PM also directed the Department of Prime Minister to
ensure the provision of fresh water and food relief to displaced Kadovar islanders on Brup Brup island.

Air Niugini and PNG Air flights to Wewak have been rescheduled as a result of dust and volcanic ash fall over Wewak township.

Response to Date

Provincial government has appealed for public contributions of food relief items from local communities in Wewak to meet the immediate needs for both displaced and host communities on Blup Blup island. They are also planning to establish a relief fund for cash contributions to support ongoing relief efforts which are likely to be implemented through church partners.

The national government will be deploying a technical assessment team comprising representatives from the National Disaster Centre and RVO on 10 January supported by humanitarian partners.

Humanitarian partners have identified the availability of prepositioned relief items to meet the shelter, water and specific hygiene needs of 1500 persons and are coordinating with the National Disaster Centre on the transportation of prepositioned relief items to the disaster site.

DISCLAIMER: This document is a compilation of information gathered from various sources, including relevant UN agencies, government sources, INGOs, IOs, church-based organisations and the media.

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