Situation Update #03, 22 March 2023
Vanuatu Earthquake and Tropical Cyclones Judy and Kevin

Situation Background

- The island nation of Vanuatu declared a State of Emergency (SOE) on 5 March 2023 for the whole country after it had experienced two cyclones and an earthquake. The strong winds and substantial rain caused major flooding, damage to infrastructure, and caused power outages and communication system breakdowns across the country. Current priorities are restoring energy/power, communication systems, transport systems, and shelter.
- As of 10 March 2023, the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) in Port Vila reported some 251,346 people (about 80% of the population) and 30,000 households in all six provinces in Vanuatu had been exposed to the impacts of the cyclones. Authorities are assessing the full extent of damages.

National Coordination

- The NDMO leads the response's overall logistics operations under the national cluster system. The Pacific Logistics Cluster (PLC) co-leads and provides logistics coordination and information management.
  o **Upstream coordination:** The NDMO requests partners for a detailed list of relief items before they arrive in the country, along with a distribution plan to be submitted to logs.neoc.ndmo@gmail.com. In parallel, the PLC is consolidating pipeline information already received from partners and will share it with the National Cluster Lead. Still, partners are urged to notify NDMO directly as well.
  o **Downstream coordination:** The NDMO is also coordinating requests for logistics assistance to access Australian and French in-country transportation capacities. NDMO established focal points for coordinating logistics planning, asset mobilisation, and authorizations. All requests for logistics assistance from agencies responding to the emergency, such as storage, cargo and passenger transportation, procurement, and labour support, must be submitted to the National Cluster Leads first, who will then forward the requests to the NDMO focal points: Pacific - Vanuatu National Cluster Leads, 15 March 2023 | Logistics Cluster Website (logcluster.org)

Logistics Constraints

**Road**
- As per the NDMO's Infrastructure and Transportation Cluster report on 20 March 2023, 10% of the arterial road network in largely three out of six provinces remain inaccessible (Penama, Malampa, and Shefa). Road conditions may be difficult on rural routes and regional highways in parts of Vanuatu.

**Air**
- Deployment by air to outer islands is limited under the current situation and requires regulatory approval for some airports, while some airports remain non-operational. See the maps below per the Situation Report from the Vanuatu Infrastructure and Transportation Cluster from 20 March 2023.

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Logistics Operations

Air Transport

- Information on the airports’ status in Vanuatu has been updated in the Logistics Information Exchange (LogIE) Pacific platform: LogIE Pacific (logcluster.org)
- The NDMO reported on 17 March 2023 that:
  - 81% of Vanuatu’s airports are operational for emergency services; and
  - 67% of Vanuatu’s airports are operational for commercial services.
- The Bauerfield International Airport in Port Vila was cleared for commercial operations from 6 March 2023.
- As per the NDMO’s Infrastructure and Transportation Cluster report on 20 March 2023, the following other airports are approved for commercial services:
  - Torba: Gaua, Motalava, Sola, and Linua Airports;
  - Sanma: Pekoa Airport;
  - Penama: Longana, Sara, and Lonorore Airports;
  - Malampa: Norsup, South West Bay, and Ulei Airports;
  - Shefa: Lamen Bay Airports (and Bauerfield International);
  - Tafea: White Grass (Tanna), Dillons Bay, Aniwa, Tavarere, and Mystery Island Airports.
- Military helicopter operations are permitted upon request by the Government and/or NDMO under the SOE, provided approval is given by Vanuatu’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and cleared by Customs and Immigration. Commercial helicopter operations from foreign states must obtain approval from the Civil Aviation Authority of Vanuatu (CAAV) for conducting flight operations within Vanuatu.
- Some international relief assistance is arriving in Vanuatu through New Zealand Air Force and Australian Defence Force flights coordinated by MFAT and DFAT, respectively. Organisations can obtain further information on flights ex Auckland by contacting Mehaka Rountree (mehaka.rountree@mfat.govt.nz) and flights ex Brisbane by contacting Elle Bradshaw (Elle.Bradshaw@dfat.gov.au).
- From 10 March 2023, Virgin Australia resumed its direct international flights from Brisbane to Port Vila, with up to five flights a week. Connections are available from Sydney and other domestic Australian markets via Brisbane. The airline serviced Port Vila from Brisbane five times a week but stopped since COVID-19 border restrictions.

Sea Transport

- As per NDMO’s update on 14 March 2023, all of Vanuatu’s seaports (wharves and jetties) are operational.
- As per the NDMO’s Infrastructure and Transportation Cluster report on 20 March 2023, the relevant authorities still conduct hydro graphical surveys within harbour limits. Navigation aids have been assessed and require urgent repair work.
- There are volunteers available to assist with the loading of items at the wharves.

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- Tiwi and Kiwi ships and domestic vessels (such as MV Young Blood, MV Urata, and Vanuatu Ferry) are being used to transport food rations and relief supplies to the outer islands. Vessel tasking is coordinated by NDMO.
- **Respond Global** provides sea transport to supply medical and other emergency response equipment and personnel. Its HELPR-1 vessel has returned to Port Vila from supplying relief items to outer islands in Shefa Province. For further information, organisations can contact: Rebecca.Weir@respondglobal.com

**Emergency Telecommunications Services**

- FM and AM radio coverage are functional for all three radio broadcasters in all urban island centres.
- The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) activated the **Disaster Connectivity Maps (DCM)** campaign on 5 March 2023 to track mobile network and data connectivity across the 13 islands.
- The ETC Coordinator in the Pacific is liaising with local, regional, and international partners to support Vanuatu in re-establishing communications and identifying resources to deploy. For further information, please contact pacific.etc@wfp.org.
- The latest ETC Situation Report is available here: **ETC Vanuatu SitRep#1 13 March 2023 | Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) (etcluster.org)**

**Coordination and Information Management Support**

- The PLC deployed two staff to Vanuatu to support on-ground logistics coordination and information management led by NDMO. The team is now embedded in the Logistics Section under the NDMO and supported NDMO in drafting a distribution plan for the outer islands.
- The PLC completed a basic Logistics Service Market Assessment (LSMA) by reaching out to logistics companies operating in Vanuatu, offering air, sea, road transport, and warehousing services. Interested organisations can contact PLC (pacific.clustercargo@wfp.org) to request a detailed assessment with contact information.
- The second regional Pacific Logistics Cluster meeting focusing on the Vanuatu Emergency Response was held on 16 March 2023. It allowed information sharing among regional partners to identify needs and gaps in the logistics response and remind partners about the Vanuatu NDMO process for Request for Assistance (RFA). Meeting minutes were published on the website: Pacific Region - Vanuatu Response - Coordination Meeting Minutes, 10 March 2023 | Logistics Cluster Website (logcluster.org)
- The Logistics Cluster published the General Logistics Planning map for Vanuatu: **Pacific Region - Vanuatu Map, March 2023 | Logistics Cluster Website (logcluster.org)**
- Vanuatu’s Logistics Capacity Assessment (conducted in 2017) is available here: **Vanuatu - Logistics Capacity Assessment - Digital Logistics Capacity Assessments (logcluster.org)**
- Situation updates are published on a weekly basis. Previous updates published:
  - Vanuatu Earthquake & Tropical Cyclones - Situation update #1, 9 March 2023 | Logistics Cluster Website (logcluster.org)

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- Pacific - Vanuatu Earthquake & Tropical Cyclones - Situation update #2, 15 March 2023 | Logistics Cluster Website (logcluster.org)

The Next Pacific Logistics Coordination Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 23 March 2023.

Contacts

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