

## ***VANUATU: EARTHQUAKE/TIDAL WAVE***

**Preliminary Appeal**

**no: 33/99**

1 December 1999

### ***THIS PRELIMINARY APPEAL SEEKS CHF 188,000 IN CASH, KIND AND SERVICES TO ASSIST 1,000 BENEFICIARIES FOR 5 MONTHS***

#### ***Summary***

The Vanuatu Red Cross, with International Federation support, has immediately responded to the earthquake and subsequent tidal wave which hit Vanuatu on Saturday, 27 November by carrying out an initial distribution of relief items. Efforts to reach the affected area to undertake more detailed assessments continue. Meanwhile, the Federation is launching this Preliminary Appeal to support the existing assistance operation, pending the assessment of further needs.

#### ***The Disaster***

An earthquake measuring 7.1 on the Richter scale hit the Pentecost Province and other neighbouring provinces of Vanuatu in the early hours of Saturday, November 27, 1999, followed by a Tidal Wave 15 minutes after the Earthquake. The province has an estimated population of 12,000 people. The islands affected were Pentecost, Ambrym, Paama and Epi. Initial assessments indicate twelve confirmed deaths, with more than 100 injured and thousands left homeless. Reports indicate extensive damage to roads and properties including private homes, churches and schools and concrete water tankers. Government ministers have flown to the affected area several times in the last three days but have not been able to reach all the affected areas.

#### ***The Response so far***

The Federation released CHF 50,000 from the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) immediately after the disaster to respond to the initial relief needs. The Suva Regional Delegation, in co-ordination with the National Society, is making arrangements to support the local procurement of basic relief items. The Federation's Head of Regional Delegation in Suva, together with the Vanuatu Red Cross, are planning to go to the affected areas to carry out a more detailed assessment of needs. The Australian Red Cross has indicated readiness to support the technical health, water and sanitation assessment.

Several co-ordination meetings between the Government of Vanuatu, diplomatic missions, donor agencies and humanitarian organisations have taken place. The Governments' National Disaster Co-ordination

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Office indicated the following as the priority needs for 1,000 individuals: shelter materials, non-food items such as blankets, second hand clothes, calico (cotton fabric), axes and bush knives, medicine, food consisting of rice and tinned meat and fish, water purification tablets and jerry cans.

The Vanuatu Red Cross is a member of the National Disaster Management Office and has been actively involved in all co-ordination meetings.

#### **Government Action w**

The Government of Vanuatu is coordinating the response, and has requested international assistance.

#### **Red Cross/Red Crescent Action w**

At the request of the government, the Vanuatu Red Cross provided the following items from the Disaster Preparedness containers donated by the Japanese Red Cross for distribution in Pentecost: 200 tarpaulins, 150 blankets, 13 cooking sets, 20 bales of used clothes, 25 rolls of calico, 1,000 water purification tablets, and 50 jerry cans for water.

#### **Co-ordination w**

The overall co-ordination of the relief operation is being undertaken by the Director General, National Disaster Executive Committee (NDEC) in Vanuatu. To date there have been daily meetings which bring together Government Ministries, Diplomatic Missions, UN agencies, and Regional and International Humanitarian Organisations.

## ***The Intended Operation***

#### **Assessment of Needs •**

A full scale assessment is still to be completed, and information has only been collected for some parts of the affected areas. The Government provided initial available information on the scale of the disaster and the immediate needs.

#### **Immediate Needs •**

The immediate needs are temporary shelter, food (rice and tinned fish/meat) medical supplies, water purification tablets, cooking sets, clothes, blankets, mosquito nets, axes, and bush knives.

#### **Anticipated Later Needs •**

It is anticipated that the later needs will be in the areas of health, water, and sanitation, mainly for the construction of latrines and water storage tanks, as well as for medical supplies.

#### **Red Cross Objectives •**

- To immediately give technical assistance to the Vanuatu Red Cross to carry out a rapid health, water, sanitation and relief assessment to identify the priority needs of the affected population.
- To immediately assist with shelter and distribute non-food items such as blankets, clothes, and cooking sets to the affected population while assessments are conducted.

## ***National Society/Federation Plan of Action***

#### **Emergency Phase 1 : November - December 1999 •**

Phase One will concentrate on addressing the most urgent needs of the affected population, including the distribution of shelter materials, food, and non-food items. The assistance will be targeted to the most vulnerable, and will be procured and provided through the Vanuatu Red Cross, Headquarters staff and Branch officials in Pentecost. Disaster Preparedness (DP) stocks maintained by the Vanuatu Red Cross have already been sent to Pentecost, and some distribution of tarpaulins, blankets, water jerry cans and purification tablets has taken place. It is intended that these DP stocks will be replaced through the appeal. Red Cross volunteers will be recruited and trained in Pentecost.

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**Phase 2: December 1999 - March 2000 •**

This phase will include the rehabilitation and construction of new water storage tanks, repair of some of the damaged ones, and assistance with medical needs.

**Capacity of the National Society •**

The National Society currently employs 4 staff, and has 4 active branches countrywide. The strength of the Society has been the DP Container Programme; it is the only organisation which currently has stocks available in-country.

**Present Capacity of the Federation in Suva •**

The Regional Delegation in Suva presently has a staff of 3 expatriates and two National staff.

**Media support •**

The Kuala Lumpur Regional Delegation is supporting the media coverage of this relief operation through its Information Unit and the Media Service in Geneva.

## ***Budget summary***

See Annex 1 for details.

So far, the National Societies of Australia, Japan and New Zealand, as well as the Department for International Development (DFID) and AusAid have indicated their willingness to support the Red Cross once an appeal is launched.

## ***Conclusion***

The Vanuatu Red Cross and the Government are the only source of relief assistance operational in the affected area. The Disaster Preparedness stocks maintained by the Red Cross have enabled a rapid initial response. Further supplies are being procured following a CHF 50,000 DREF allocation. With the current assessments underway, the extent of the damage, number of people affected, and needs will be determined.

For further information, please contact Kentaro Nagazumi, Desk Officer; Tel.41-22-730-4273 (email:nagazumi@ifrc.org) or Abbas Gullet, Head of Regional Delegation; Tel.679-311855 (email:ifrcrds@is.com.fj).

Margareta Wahlström  
Under Secretary General,  
Disaster Response & Operations Coordination

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**BUDGET SUMMARY**

Preliminary Appeal - Vanuatu : Earthquake/Tidal Wave

APPEAL No. 33/99

ANNEX 1

IN CHF

**RELIEF NEEDS****Food items**

Rice	41,000
Tinned Fish	15,000

**Non food items**

Blankets	11,200
Kitchen Sets	10,200
Tarpaulins	36,200
Tools (Bush knives/Axes)	4,000
Jerry cans	4,300

**Medical items**

Water purification tablets	3,100
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<b>TOTAL RELIEF NEEDS</b>	<b>125,000</b>
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**Capital expenditures****Transport, storage & vehicles costs****Personnel**

Expat staff (2 expat .)	20,000
National staff	10,000

**Administrative, office & general services**

Travel & Communications	15,000
Assessment/Survey mission/Evaluation	5,000
Printing Costs/Information/Visibility	3,000
Other administrative services	3,000
Secretariat operational support	7,000

<b>TOTAL OPERATIONAL NEEDS</b>	<b>63,000</b>
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<b>TOTAL APPEAL CASH &amp; KIND</b>	<b>188,000</b>
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LESS PLEDGES ANNOUNCED	0
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<b>NET REQUEST CASH &amp; KIND</b>	<b>188,000</b>
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All items are to be purchased locally

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