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Information bulletin

Fiji/Pacific: Tropical Cyclone Evan

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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This bulletin is being issued for information only and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation. The Fiji Red Cross will, however, accept direct assistance to provide support to the affected population.



Homes in Fiji's Volivilo battered by Cyclone Evan. **Picture source:** APP

[<click here for detailed contact information>](#)

Summary

Tropical Cyclone Evan hit Fiji from 16 to 18 December as a Category 4 storm. This caused rivers to flood and trees to topple, while accessibility to towns have been blocked due to damaged and collapsed roads and bridges.

Due to the dire situation, a Declaration of a State of Natural Disaster was announced on 18 December by the Government of Fiji. This declaration was put into effect with the hopes that government and non-governmental organisations would be able to respond to the needs of the people and assess and clear up the damage caused by Tropical Cyclone Evan.

The situation

Tropical Cyclone Evan hit Fiji from 16 to 18 December 2012 as a Category 4 storm with winds of more than 240 kilometres per hour. The cyclone passed over the Yasawa and Mamanuca groups with the eye of the storm coming 28 kilometres from the western coastline of Viti Levu (the main island) near Lautoka and Nadi — two of the most populated cities in Fiji.

The tropical cyclone led to the flooding of rivers and toppled trees. Public infrastructure such as roads and bridges were damaged, hampering immediate access to affected areas. The Government of Fiji had ordered evacuations of low lying areas, and at the beginning of the emergency there were more than 10,000 people in over 150 evacuation centres across the country. As of 23 December, just over 2,700 people remained in 59 evacuation centres in Fiji, mainly in the Western Division.

The Government of Fiji announced a Declaration of a State of Natural Disaster on 18 December for the Northern and Western Divisions to be in effect for an initial period of 15 days, to allow authorities and stakeholders to speed up rehabilitation work in the aftermath of Tropical Cyclone Evan.

Since the declaration of a State of Natural Disaster, government agencies have been working with the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) to ensure there is sufficient manpower, resources and coordination on the ground. Public servants around the country have been fully mobilized to assist the NDMO and local disaster management officers with damage assessment, relief, recovery and rehabilitation works in particularly the Western and Northern divisions.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Operation activities of the Red Cross branches in the western division began on 20 December. A Fiji Red Cross Society (FRCS) staff member was part of the government assessment team that visited Yasawas Islands, which was the most affected.

Assessment and distribution of relief items were carried out by Sigatoka, Nadi and Lautoka branches on 21 December while Tavua branch started assessment and distribution of relief items on 22 December. Rakiraki branch started distributing hygiene kits on 23 December and relief items were distributed by Ba branch on 24 December.

FRCS also assisted the government with the payment of boats to transport a joint government-Red Cross team to conduct an assessment at Vatulele. FRCS was also part of the team that distributed relief items to the Yasawas Islands.

As of 20 December, the FRCS health team from the national headquarters have been distributing dignity and hygiene packs to the populace who had to leave their homes. To address and curb the spread of diarrhoea, the FRCS health team also worked with the Ministry of Health in promoting hygiene sessions in evacuation centres.

An International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) delegate has already conducted shelter training for the army engineers which will later be followed by the Red Cross volunteers. Additionally, the IFRC regional disaster management unit in Suva has and will continue to support the Western Division in information management.

The French Red Cross has deployed of three water engineers to operate the NOMAD water purification unit in Ba district.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- **Fiji Red Cross Society:** Director General, Felipe Nainoca; phone: +679 999 2484; email: directorgeneral@redcross.com.fj
- **IFRC Pacific regional office:** Regional disaster management coordinator, Ysabeau Rycx; office phone: +679 331 1855 ; mobile: +679 999.2509; email: ysabeau.rycx@ifrc.org
- **IFRC Zone:** Operations coordinator, Mathew Schraeder; office phone: +603 9207 5814; mobile: +6019 620 0758; email: mathew.schraeder@ifrc.org



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How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGOs\) in Disaster Relief](#) and the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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The IFRC's work is guided by [Strategy 2020](#) which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.