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Information Bulletin

Vanuatu: Tropical Cyclone Lusi

 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.

[<click here to view the map of the affected area, or here for detailed contact information>](#)

The situation

Tropical Cyclone (TC) Lusi formed as Tropical Depression 18F in the east of Penama Province Vanuatu early in the morning of Sunday, 9 March. At 09:00 hours local time on 10 March, Tropical Depression 18F was designated Category 1 TC Lusi by the Fiji Met Office. Category 1 TC Lusi passed across Northern Espiritu Santo in Sanma Province on late 10 March and early 11 March, crossing over Port Orly, Espiritu Santo, and then heading southeast approaching Ambae, Pentecost and Maewo in Penama Province. TC Lusi moved out of Vanuatu on the morning of 12 March moving over the Shepherd's Group in Shefa Province as a Category 2 storm. Throughout Wednesday, 12 March, it continued to move away from Vanuatu as it strengthened into a Category 3 cyclone well east of the main islands in Tafea Province.

From 9-12 March, TC Lusi affected approximately 20,000 people and caused 8 fatalities in Vanuatu. Many families had been evacuated before and during the cyclone, and as of 16 March the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) reported that 27 people were still in evacuation centres.

In the cyclone's immediate aftermath, reports indicated widespread damage across Northern and Central provinces: Shefa, Sanma, Penama, Malampa and Torba.

The NDMO determined the need for an aerial reconnaissance based on the initial field reports from Provincial Authorities and in consultation with humanitarian partners. The aerial assessment took place on Friday, 14 March and the Vanuatu Red Cross Society (VRCS) Disaster Risk Reduction Officer was part of survey team of six.

Based on the report of the aerial assessment, the following eight islands within five provinces were the most affected:

Penama Province: Western Pentecost, East Ambae, Maewo

Malampa: Western Ambrym

Sanma Province: South Santo

Torba Province: Gaua and Vanua Lava

Shefa Province: Shepherd Islands

According to the initial findings of the aerial assessment, the emerging needs likely to include water and sanitation (WatSan), non-food items (NFIs), food, and agriculture assistance. Although evidence has shown minimal damage to houses, the findings suggest tarpaulins as temporary roofing material is a prioritized need.

The aerial assessment report also stated that banana plantations and root crops across the northern and central provinces sustained significant damage from winds, flooding and high water-tables and notes that in

the following months, impacted families will need support to recover their livelihoods, particularly in the agricultural sector, and to build their resilience to future disasters.

As of 17 March, there have been no formal requests from the Vanuatu Government for international assistance.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Action

On 12 March, Vanuatu Red Cross Society (VRCS) branch based Emergency Response Teams (ERTs) were mobilised to participate in joint initial assessments with Community Disaster Committee members, with assessment and coordination support from the Vanuatu Humanitarian Team (VHT).

VRCS has activated its Emergency Operations Centre and is participating in coordination meetings for preparation and planning of a national response. As co-lead of the Shelter and Logistics clusters, VRCS met with other cluster members to discuss logistics of the aerial reconnaissance and subsequent initial damage assessments and relief. VRCS Disaster Risk Reduction Officer was on the team which undertook the aerial reconnaissance.

VRCS is closely coordinating with the VHT especially in assessment, logistics, shelter, NFIs and food distribution. In the meantime, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Pacific Regional Office is coordinating at the regional level with the PHT.

VRCS is distributing NFIs (tarpaulins, water containers, cooking sets, hurricane lamps, tools) in Torba, Penama, Sanma and Tafea provinces.

VRCS headquarters is closely monitoring stock levels in the branches to effectively plan for any immediate replenishments.

IFRC

IFRC has been in regular contact with VRCS since the cyclone warning was released and is providing ongoing support to the Disaster Management Officer, including posting a Disaster Management Information System (DMIS) update, and monitoring the weather situation.

IFRC has been participating in PHT meetings to ensure coordination with other regional humanitarian actors and is facilitating discussions on the provision of logisticians to the VHT. IFRC voiced to the PHT that emergency shelter assistance has to take into consideration the emphasis of the Vanuatu Government's National Plan on individual household resilience and self-help methods first.

IFRC has sent a number of updates to Movement partners since the cyclone hit Vanuatu, the last being sent on 17 March. IFRC will continue regular communication with VRCS and advice on coordination of a partner teleconference.

Other Movement Partners

On 13 March, IFRC coordinated with the French Red Cross representative in Vanuatu and an Australian Red Cross WatSan delegate working in Ambrym Island to ensure stand-by assistance if necessary.

A New Zealand Red Cross representative is attending the New Zealand Government's Emergency Task Force meetings on TC Lusi.

Other actors

On 11 March, a FRANZ coordination meeting was held to update partners on the situation. The Australia and New Zealand governments offered the availability of their military aircraft should they be needed. The French Government also indicated that French military assets based in New Caledonia are available for relief efforts, if needed.

The New Zealand Government has prepositioned relief supplies in Vanuatu, managed by the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), which can be released if requested by the Vanuatu Government and has allocated emergency funds available for the response, if needed.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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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.

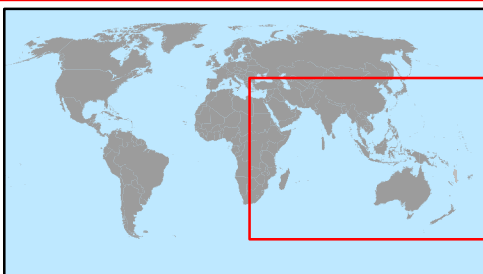
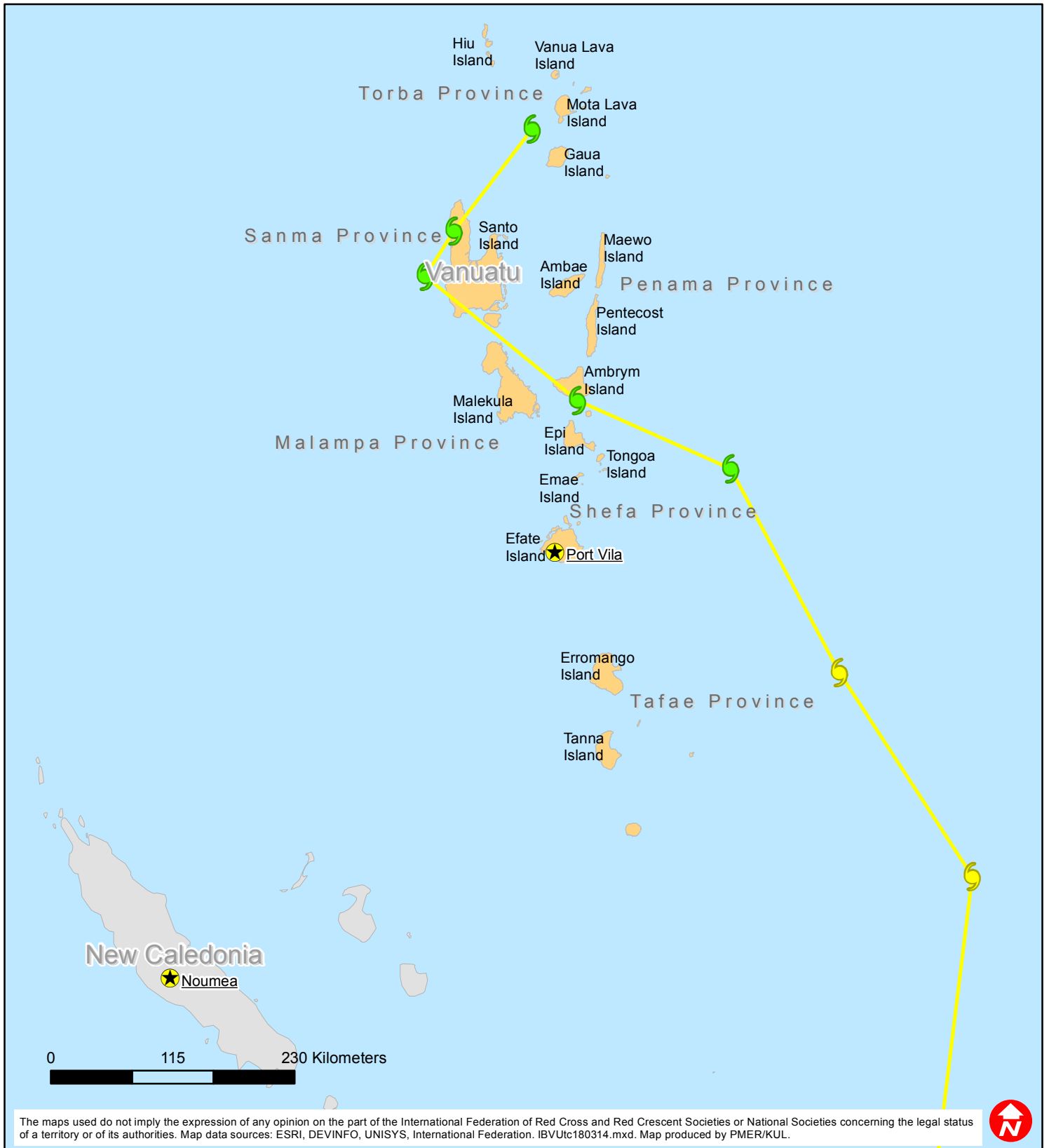


The IFRC's work is guided by [Strategy 2020](#) which puts forward three strategic aims:

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.
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- CYCLONE-1
- TROPICAL STORM