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Information bulletin

Fiji: Tropical Cyclone Zena

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Date of issue: 6 April 2016

Date of disaster: Imminent

Host National Society: Fiji Red Cross Society

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 at this stage. The Fiji Red Cross Society has released FJD 280,000 (CHF 129,000) from its Disaster Fund to mobilize personnel and supplies for immediate response, if required.

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The situation

A new tropical cyclone is threatening Fiji less than two months after Severe Tropical Cyclone Winston lashed with a deadly impact. According to meteorological projections by the Fiji Metrological Service, around 18:00h local time on 6 April 2016, TC Zena – a Category 3 cyclone – with average winds of 100 kph and gusts of 150 kph. The cyclone is located about 630 km west of Nadi and is moving east-southeast at 35 kph. If it maintains the [projected track](#), it will be about 200 km west-southwest of Nadi at 21:00h local time on 6 April and about 350 km southeast of Nadi at 09:00h on 7 April. On the current track, TC Zena is predicted to pass south of the main island towards south of Viti Levu on Thursday morning, 7 April.



A section of road in Ra Province, Western Division, is already impassible due to the intense rains in the past few days.
Photo: Fiji Red Cross Society

Although TC Zena is not expected to pass directly over Suva, an active trough of low pressure, with associated intense rain, remains slow moving over Fiji. Two deaths have been reported as a result of rains that have poured over the past few days while several rivers in the Western and Central Divisions of Fiji are flooded.

The potential intense rains due to TC Zena – predicted to fall within the next 24 hours – could bring more flooding. The additional rains would worsen the situation for thousands of people who are yet to get adequate and safer shelter after they were impacted by TC Winston in late February. Marine and road transport is already limited to a large degree by the rain and floodwater. In addition, the strengthening winds ahead of the approaching cyclone will make travelling very hazardous.

Actions taken by government and other agencies

The National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) and Fiji Metrological Service and are sending out regular updates, and a coordination system was put in place from the start of the TC Winston response and will continue to be active.

In view of the situation, including the heavy rainfall that has poured over the past few days, the authorities have opened 79 evacuation centres in which at least 3,592 people have sought shelter.

As a pre-emptive measure, schools across the country have been closed while authorities have warned people against traveling because of further flood risks. The authorities have suspended all marine traffic while a curfew has been put in place starting 18:00h local time on 6 April.

Earlier today, the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT) held a meeting to discuss the situation in which representatives from the IFRC Country Cluster Support Team (CCST) in Suva participated in. The shelter cluster – convened by the IFRC – that is active for TC Winston response has undertaken a mapping of shelter items available in-country so as to ensure swift mobilization in case they are needed.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Fiji Red Cross Society (FRCS) is monitoring the approaching cyclone and conditions on the ground via its branches. A total of six branches have been activated with 80 volunteers on standby. The National Society has put experienced and well-trained first response and assessment teams on standby for immediate deployment if required. The national headquarters has sent regular updates to its branches so that they can prepare for any eventuality.

A meeting, chaired by Director General of FRCS, was held on 6 April to put in place a strategy for an effective response by the Red Cross in the event that TC Zena triggers a humanitarian impact. FRCS has also released FJD 280,000 (CHF 129,000) from its Disaster Fund to mobilize staff, volunteers and relief supplies for immediate response should the need arise.

The IFRC CCST in Suva is coordinating with the disaster and crisis prevention, response and recovery (DCPRR) unit of the IFRC Asia Pacific regional office in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on preparedness planning. A teleconference was held on 6 April to ensure that all Movement partners with presence in Fiji shared the latest information on preparedness measures and the potential needs. The call was attended by representatives from IFRC, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Australian Red Cross and New Zealand Red Cross participated.

IFRC, ICRC, Australian Red Cross and New Zealand Red Cross have a number of technical specialists in-country, who are currently supporting FRCS's TC Winston response. Some of these specialists may be available to support the rapid assessments and immediate response to TC Zena should the need arise. However, any reassignment will be done in a manner that will ensure the ongoing TC Winston response activities are not disrupted. If needed, and upon the request of FRCS, surge capacity can be mobilized from sister National Societies or other IFRC offices in the Asia Pacific region.

Meantime, to augment the team currently involved in the TC Winston operation, the manager who has been overseeing the Typhoon Haiyan operation in the Philippines is immediately deploying to Fiji for a three-week support mission. The manager, who has experience in initiating and overseeing several responses to tropical cyclones and will boost the capacity available in-country to support FRCS.

Contact information

For further information 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 (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the **Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian 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:



Save lives.
protect livelihoods,
and strengthen recovery
from disaster and crises.



Enable **healthy**
and **safe** living.



Promote **social inclusion**
and a culture of
non-violence and **peace.**