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Information bulletin

Vanuatu: Volcanic activity in Ambae



Glide n° VO-2017-000140-VUT	Date of issue: 26 September 2017
Date of disaster: imminent	Point of contact : Jaqueline De Gaillande, CEO
Host National Society: Vanuatu Red Cross Society	
Number of people affected: currently over 7,000	
Categorization of disaster: Yellow ¹	

This bulletin is being issued for information only and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. Vanuatu Red Cross Society (VRCS) with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is continuing to assess the evolving situation, and has requested for allocation of disaster relief emergency funds (DREF).

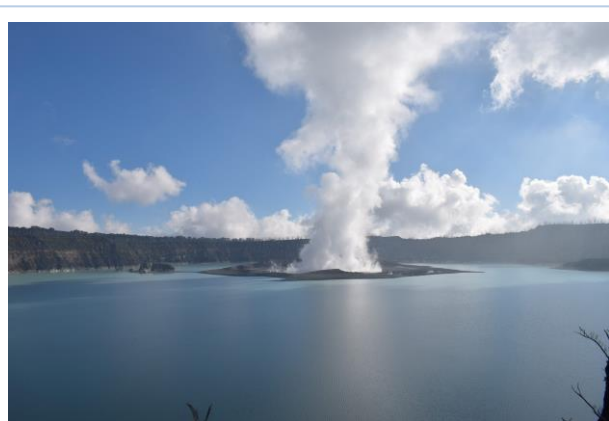
[< click to view the map of the affected area and detailed contact information >](#)

The situation

On 23 September 2017, the Vanuatu Meteorology & Geo-Hazards Department (VMGD) increased the activity level for Monaro volcano on Ambae island, Penama province to Level 4: a moderate eruption state.

With this situation, flying rocks and volcanic gas will affect the Red Zone which is about 6.5km radius around the volcano's crater. Villages located further from the volcano's centre can expect unusual volcanic hazards and ash falls around the island especially in villages exposed to prevailing trade winds direction. Acid rain may also be expected which may damage garden crops.

VMGD has advised that the activity may increase, or decrease, at any time without warning. Evacuations have begun for people living in high risk areas. The Vanuatu government has requested that partner agencies be ready to support the response in the coming days.



Monaro Volcano on Ambae Island

Source: [Vanuatu Red Cross Facebook Page](#)

The provincial government authorities are currently evacuating people in high-risk areas – as of 24 September, 3,000 people had been moved to safer areas on the island. As of 25 September evening, Penama provincial authorities had a record of approximately 6,800 people in evacuation centres on Ambae with an additional 900 people who have yet to be evacuated. Host communities and provincial authorities are currently supporting evacuee needs. The Provincial Disaster Committee is currently leading the response on the ground. The National Disaster Management Office advises that further evacuations are likely to occur if the situation escalates.

¹ Based on the IFRC Secretariat's Operational Response Framework. This categorization implies that the response intervention is within the capacity of the National Society of an affected country to manage with resources available in-country. If requested, the IFRC Country Office may provide any necessary technical or management support to the National Society, and if required, the IFRC Regional Office may support the mobilization of regional disaster response tools, with Geneva supporting the allocation of Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF).

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

On 23 September, the Vanuatu Red Cross Society (VRCS) Disaster Management Coordinator (DMC) was informed that the VRCS Branch officer and community Emergency Response Teams (ERT) volunteers have been assisting the Penama provincial disaster committee to evacuate people living in high risk areas and conducting awareness in villages on preparedness in the case of a larger eruption.

The team has also conducted awareness sessions with host communities to improve acceptance of evacuees in these areas.

The VRCS chief executive officer (CEO) attended the government National Disaster Committee (NDC) in the capital Port Vila to discuss the release of funds to support the provincial governments' actions for preparedness.

On Monday 25 September, the DMC was deployed to the affected area to carry out an initial situation overview (ISO) and support the local branch with the activation of their Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) as well as identifying what support the branch requires.

VRCS continues to be closely engaged in the National Disaster Committee and Cluster Coordination meetings through participation by the acting DMC and the cluster leads upon request and under the coordination by the National Disaster Management Office.

Regular updates are also provided by the VRCS CEO to the IFRC country cluster support team (CCST) office in Suva.

The VRCS has published a DMIS report following updates from the field on the same day on the IFRC Disaster Management Information System ([link here](#)).

The VRCS has also expressed in this DMIS that a DREF allocation is needed for imminent support to localised response carried out by the volunteers and branches, and replenishment of non-food items that will be deployed for assistance, in preparation of the South West Pacific Cyclone season starting in November.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- **Vanuatu Red Cross Society**
 - Jaqueline De Gaillande, chief executive officer; phone: (678) 27258; ceo@redcrossvanuatu.com
- **IFRC country cluster support team (CCST) in Suva**
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[Click here](#)

1. [Map of the affected areas here](#)
2. Click [here](#) to return to the title page

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 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.

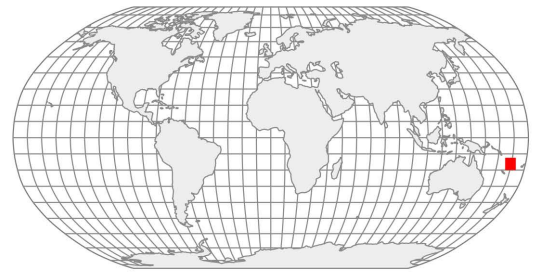
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The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

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.



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