

Information bulletin



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Solomon Islands: Tropical Cyclone Ului

Information bulletin n° 1
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19 March 2010

This bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Solomon Islands Red Cross Society is currently assessing the needs of the affected population and determining the level of external support required.

Tropical cyclone Ului intensified to a “category four” cyclone as it moved through the Solomon Islands bringing with it storm force winds and heavy rains causing flooding and damage to housing in six provinces including Isabel, Malaita, Guadalcanal, Temotu, Makira and Uluwaa, and Rennel and Bellona Provinces. Heavy rains brought by tropical cyclone Ului further compounds the impact of intermittent flooding that the Solomon Islands Red Cross Society (SIRCS) has been responding to in Guadalcanal since January. The response to tropical cyclone Ului will see the deployment of SIRCS staff and volunteers with prepositioned relief items with interagency assessment teams to conduct assessments in the provinces to determine the extent of damage, and the immediate needs of those affected.

The Situation

Tropical cyclone Ului formed west of Santo Island in Vanuatu around 1200 coordinated universal time (UTC) on 12 March 2010. The cyclone gained strength as it moved on a westerly course toward the Solomon Islands. By 15 March it had intensified to a “category four” cyclone and was located 128 kilometres southeast of Rennel Island in the Solomon Islands. At 7:30 am yesterday morning, tropical cyclone Ului, “category four”, was still approximately 240 nautical miles south, south west of Rennell Island. While the system moves slowly south at three knots a tropical cyclone watch remains in force for the Rennell and Bellona province. It is expected that near gale force winds (28 to 33 knots) which are still in force for Rennell and Bellona should ease in the next six to 12 hours as the system moves towards the coast of Australia.

The extent of damage caused by sea surges, storm force winds and heavy rains remains unclear as communications with the provinces remain unreliable, and focal points in the provinces are unable to move freely due to bad weather. To date, assessment teams have been unable to mobilize as a result of rough seas caused by the slow moving system. Many of the provinces continue to be cut off by sea and communications are intermittent. However, reports from government and SIRCS focal points from all affected provinces suggests damage to housing, roads and other infrastructure as a result of winds and flooding, with the worst damage concentrated in the three provinces: Rennell/Bellona, southern coast of Makira, and the southern coast of Guadalcanal.

It is likely that aerial surveys of the affected provinces will commence tomorrow morning, weather permitting.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

SIRCS has been trying to maintain contact with branch, sub-branch officers and volunteers in the affected areas. In addition, SIRCS has been liaising closely with the national disaster management office (NDMO) to monitor the situation and to support arrangements for the deployment of assessment teams once weather permits. SIRCS has mobilized six national disaster response teams to be on standby to accompany inter-agency assessment teams, led by the Solomon Islands NDMO, to support of rapid assessments of the affected provinces. A Saturday deployment is anticipated. SIRCS have additional trained emergency response team staff

members and volunteers in Temotu, Malaita, Rennel and Guadalcanal who can be mobilized to support the response should the need arise.

A consolidation of existing prepositioned emergency relief items available in prepositioned containers following the response to the floods in Guadalcanal was already underway before cyclone Ului hit. SIRCS has been preparing a list of additional stocks likely to be needed for the distribution, some of which will be procured locally in the coming days. Some existing stock including hygiene and family kits have been prepared for deployment with the assessment teams.

SIRCS headquarters briefing teams are on standby on a daily basis. This is so as they keep themselves abreast of the developments and progress on the likely deployment of assessment teams.

How we work

All International Federation 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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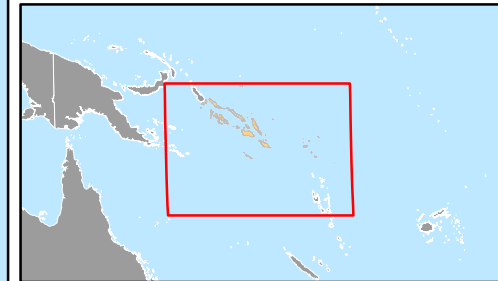
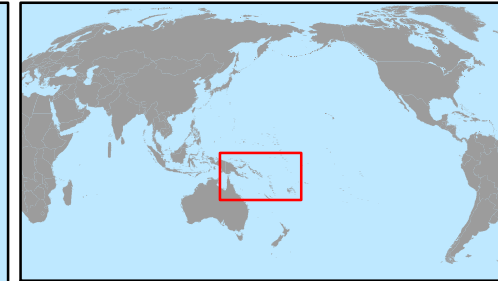
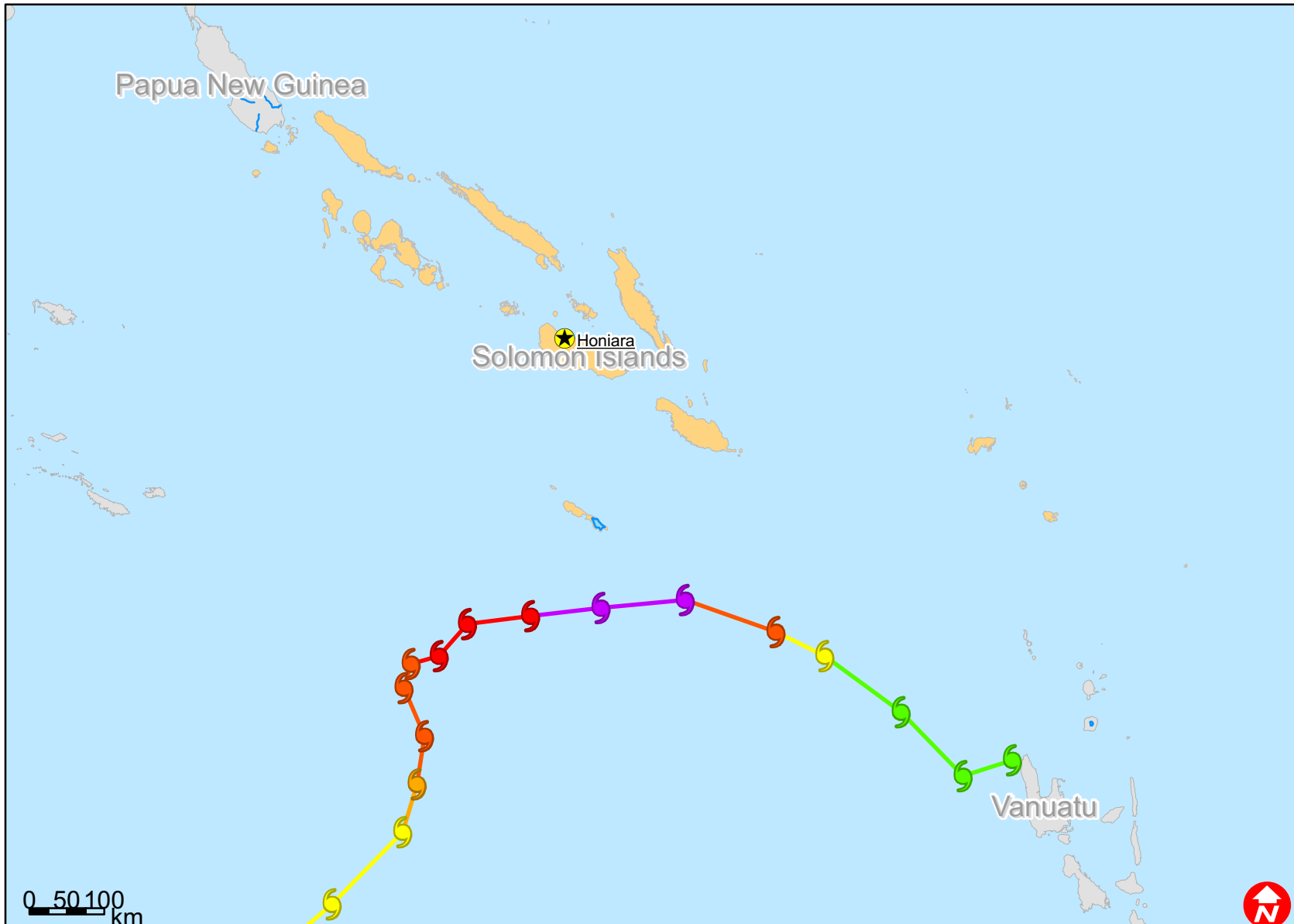
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[map below; click here to return to the title page](#)



Solomon Islands: Tropical cyclone ULUI



-  TROPICAL DEPRESSION
-  TROPICAL STORM
-  CYCLONE-1
-  CYCLONE-2
-  CYCLONE-3
-  CYCLONE-4
-  CYCLONE-5