

INFORMATION BULLETIN



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

VANUATU: CYCLONE IVY

27 February 2004

Information Bulletin N° 2

Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) Allocated: N/A

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 180 countries.

For more information: www.ifrc.org

In Brief

This document is being issued for information only. The Federation is not seeking any funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

The Situation

Tropical Cyclone Ivy struck Vanuatu on 26 February, moving southwards from the northern islands and affecting all six provinces. Vanuatu's northern and central islands were hit by winds of 130-150 km/h with gusts up to 200 km/h as the cyclone moved slowly through the island-nation, made up of over 80 islands with an estimated total population of 200,000 people.

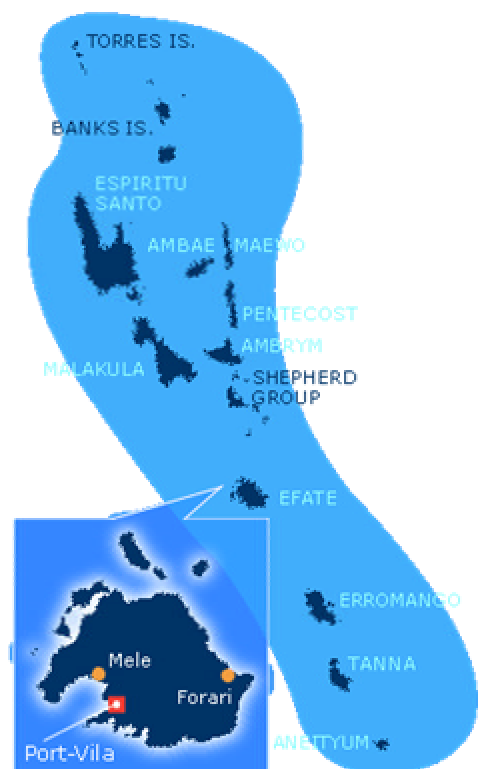
No loss of life has been reported so far, but initial reports suggest there has been significant damage to houses and schools, while trees were uprooted and crops damaged by strong winds. Some areas are experiencing power cuts. Telephone and radio communications with outlying islands were severely disrupted, making accurate damage and needs assessments more difficult. An aerial assessment has been postponed at this stage due to high winds.

In Port Vila, residents from coastal and low lying areas were evacuated, while the rest of the population was advised to stay indoors. A number of people suffered cuts and scratches from flying debris, as well as some fractures.

Some roads in or around the capital were blocked by fallen trees, but most were cleared by Friday afternoon. Two long-liner fishing boats sank in Port Vila's main wharf, seeping oil and blocking access to container and cruise ships. The international airport is operational, but fuel supplies have run very low. Domestic flights were on hold, but may resume soon.

Red Cross action

The Vanuatu Red Cross is working closely with the National Disaster Management Office in Port Vila, and has been actively involved in the evacuation of over 1,000 people to temporary shelters in Port Vila. It is expected that most people will be able to return home shortly. Volunteers are now assessing immediate needs in



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order to prioritise relief distributions to areas of greatest needs. As communications with other islands are still limited, further information is also being collected through radio and satellite phone links of the Peace Corps volunteers' network.

Two disaster containers with relief supplies were pre-positioned in the capital Port Vila (Efate) and Luganville (Santo). Each contained basic supplies including tarpaulins, sheets, jerry cans, kitchen sets and tents as well as tools and first aid kits.

The New Zealand Red Cross has released NZD 10,000 for the replenishment of essential relief supplies and the Federation made CHF 3,000 available to support initial assessments and the mobilisation of volunteers. The needs for further support will be determined once more detailed information becomes available and initial needs assessment has been finalised.

For a full description of the National Society profile, see www.ifrc.org

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All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal.