TROPICAL CYCLONE PAM: Vanuatu

HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Nutrition**: UNICEF continues to provide urgent nutrition support to treat and prevent deterioration of nutritional status of children and pregnant and lactating women (PLW) through delivery of infant and young child feeding support, treatment of severe acute malnutrition and the provision of micronutrients in affected areas.

- **Disease Surveillance**: All 24 sentinel sites reported in the past week. The general trend of all reported diseases continues to decrease. The plan is to return to the pre-cyclone surveillance system that includes four reported syndromes and a reduced number of active sites.

- **Health facilities repairs**: Naviso Dispensary is no longer considered a priority now that quick repairs have been completed and the facility is functioning again. Temporary shelters are now established on Tongoa (Nimair and Tavalapa Dispensary), Tongariki (Amboh Dispensary), and Tanna (Ikiti Dispensary, Green Hill Health Centre and Kitow Health Centre).
- **WASH**: The distributed of 11 LIFESTRAW water systems to priority health facilities was delayed this past week due to weather and is now scheduled to happen in the coming days. Further water safety assessments at damaged health facilities will be conducted in conjunction with the distribution of the LIFESTRAW water systems.

- **RMNCAH**: The MoH has issued a memorandum to all provincial heads, supply officers, and health facility service providers on the immediate distribution of emergency drugs and supplies. This includes multiple Micronutrients, ORS, Zinc, Iron, Folate, de-worming drugs and others to all service delivery points in the country to ensure availability and immediate resumption of services.

- **Immunization**: Of the planned 18 cold chain equipment installations for the month, four health centres have now been equipped with new solar powered refrigerators (MKS044) to store vaccines, covering around 3,000 children in remote rural areas of Erakor in Shefa province, Port Orly, Hog Harbour and Fanafo in Sanma province.

- **Foreign Medical Teams**: There are currently five FMTs deployed in Vanuatu, including three that provide medical services on a permanent basis. More than 12,000 consultations have been carried out since FMT’s were deployed following Cyclone Pam.

### CURRENT SITUATION

A half day health cluster lessons learned workshop was conducted this past week. Eleven groups within the health cluster presented on the strengths and weakness of the different stages of the TC Pam response, which were *before, immediately after* (within 72 hours) and during the *emergency phase* (72 hours to 6 weeks). A lessons learned report with these recommendations will be presented to all partners in the coming weeks. The National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) will be conducting a lessons learned workshop for all clusters on the 24th and 25th June.

The implementation of the Health Cluster Strategic Plan continues with working groups developing their terms of reference. Further discussions are planned next week to set specific timelines and work plan activities.

The Government of Vanuatu has revised the approved reporting template of the Humanitarian Action Plan (HAP) and clusters will be submitting reports this week. Proposals submitted under the HAP are still awaiting approval of funding. Partners are encouraged to explore other sources of financial support.

As part of planning the recovery and rehabilitation phase, the Government has been working on a Recovery Action Framework, which will tie into a Recovery Plan. This is a working document that will involve consultations with development partners, faith-based organisations, civil society and the private sector.
HEALTH SECTOR RESPONSE

Nutrition

UNICEF continues to provide urgent nutrition support to treat and prevent deterioration of nutritional status of children and pregnant and lactating women (PLW) through delivery of infant and young child feeding support, treatment of severe acute malnutrition and the provision of micronutrients in affected areas.

Implementation of the micronutrient powders (MNPs) continues with programme sensitisation, development of IEC materials, training of community health workers (CHWs) and meeting with provincial and village-level leaders. During the HAP period, the Ministry of Health and UNICEF, through SCA implementation, aim to reach all children 6 to 59 months in affected areas.

Progress against WG targets:

- 4,207 mothers of children under 24 months were reached with basic infant and young child feeding (IYCF) messages and counselling in Sanma and Tafea since Cyclone Pam.
- Identified and treated 35 cases of severe acute malnutrition (with complications) children 6 to 59 months of age, and two children under 6 months, at three inpatient treatment facilities, Lenekal, VCH and Northern District hospitals, since the cyclone to 22 May.
- There are no outpatient treatment centres for severe acute malnutrition (without complications). Plans are being developed.
- All reported Milk Code violation complaints have been followed up on.
- Eight health facilities are screening for acute malnutrition; screening is targeted for 71 health facilities.
- No children under five years of age have received MNPs; implementation is still underway.

Working Group Activities:

- Nutrition supplies have been released to the Central Management Stocks (CMS). The CMS, with support from UNICEF, will distribute items to 66 health facilities in affected areas.
- Save the Children received nutrition supplies from UNICEF (height boards and scales) to assist with trainings, growth monitoring and other nutrition programming in affected areas.
- Maintaining referral pathway linking SAM children due to possible neglect with the Child Protection working group/protection cluster.

In addition to the above progress against targets, UNICEF, with the MoH and partners, continues to:

- Monitor nutrition surveillance through 8 WHO/MoH-supported sentinel sites in Shefa province.
- Strengthen the inpatient treatment programmes at three provincial hospitals through supportive supervision, provision of supplies, and strengthening of reporting against SPHERE standards (supported by WHO and World Vision).
- Rollout acute malnutrition screening, and IYCF messaging at aid posts (supported by SCA) as part of the integrated MNP campaign.

Disease Surveillance

All 24 sentinel sites reported in the past week. The general trend of all reported diseases continues to decrease. The plan is to return to the pre-cyclone surveillance system that includes four reported syndromes and a reduced number of active sites.
There have been a total of nine suspected measles cases. Five suspected cases in Erakor, three in Eratap and one in Rentabau area. The surveillance team is conducting field investigations on reports from the NTM clinic and following lab confirmation.

The suspected cases have been advised on the proper protocols to follow and screened for hospital admissions and referral. VCH is well aware of the protocols if measles cases are suspected. The EPI team has revisited the area and no new cases have been identified.

Most cases are older than the six to 59-month age group that was vaccinated during disaster response. To cover the overall gap in immunity, a nationwide campaign will be undertaken in the coming months.

Investigations last week:

In Penama, there was an investigation at Melsisi health centre following an unusual increase of ILI (influenza like illness) cases. After further review, the suspect cases did not meet the case definition of ILI and did not warrant further action. Another investigation was conducted in North Pentecost following information about a patient with fever and rash. Samples were taken and sent to Noumea for further analysis.

An investigation was done in Ambrym for patient clusters that presented with symptoms of acute fever, swollen legs and sores. Seven cases were reported at Utas Health Centre and an unknown number in a neighbouring village. A team collected samples for testing. Similar cases have been reported in Qatvaes (Banks Islands) and on Epi Island.

Investigations and outbreak response, as part of the surveillance system, need to be improved and supported in future, both at the national and provincial levels.

Restoration of Health Facilities

Infrastructure:

Naviso Dispensary is no longer considered a priority now that quick repairs have been completed and the facility is functioning again.

Temporary shelters are now established on Tongoa (Nimair and Tavalapa Dispensary), Tongariki (Amboh Dispensary), and Tanna (Ikiti Dispensary, Green Hill Health Centre and Kitow Health Centre).

Changes in shipping arrangements have delayed the deployment of Utas Health Centre site shelters and additional equipment.

Distribution of tents to Paunangisu Health Centre are planned to assist with staff housing following damage to staff quarters. Discussions are underway for potential assistance from the French Navy in New Caledonia in refurbishing this facility later this year.

General Equipment:

Equipment packs are being established with power generators and lighting, office and medical furniture and building materials for water capture. All temporary set-ups will receive equipment packs. Distribution depends on when suppliers deliver the materials, and is completed when items are received. Focus remains on the seven priority sites listed above (not including Naviso on Maewo).
The Waste Management Group had formalised with the MoH a waste management unit to support VCH.

**Biomedical Equipment:**

WHO continues to support the nutrition working group for UNICEF equipment distribution through the CMS. Equipment is to be distributed to three affected sites in the Shephard Islands in the coming days using the Sea Mercy fleet.

A MoH Biomedical Engineer and VCH Biomedical Technician travelled to Lenakel hospital on Tanna on 11 May to conduct urgent repairs, install several items of new equipment, provide user training to clinicians and further assess longer term needs.

The following items were delivered by air and installed at Lenakel hospital:

- 2 Bedside Patient Monitors (1 to Emergency Department, 1 to Operating Theatres) - these monitor ECG, Blood Pressure, Blood Oxygen (SpO2) and Temperature;
- 3 Binocular Microscopes (all to Pathology/Lab for diagnostic use);
- 2 Volumetric Infusion Pumps (1 to Emergency Dept, 1 to Dr's Room) - necessary for safe infusion of Intravenous fluids and blood transfusions;
- 2 Syringe Infusion Pumps (both to Dr's Room);
- 1 12-lead ECG (Emergency Dept);
- 2 Pulse Oximeters (both to Pharmacy/CMS) - for measuring blood oxygen levels;
- 3 Mercury Sphygmomanometers (all to Pharmacy/CMS) - for measuring blood pressure non-invasively; and
- 1 Portable Suction Unit (Emergency Dept).

All of these items are new and from a recent donation of medical equipment by the Chinese Government. In addition, a vertical Steam Steriliser was delivered by sea freight to Lenakel and installed during the visit.

Further assistance was provided in the delivery and set-up of four patient beds, approximately 12 bedside lockers and several over bed tables donated from Noumea. The following items were loaded onto Greenpeace’s Rainbow Warrior ship due to arrive in Lenakel on 20 May:

- 1 Medical Refrigerator (Laboratory) - essential for the safe and secure storage of blood products and certain reagents;
- 1 Infant Incubator (Maternity) - necessary for the post-natal care of premature or otherwise ill neonates;
- 1 Infant Warmer (Operating Theatre) - often required in the minutes following birth to allow stabilisation and resuscitation of the infant as needed;
- 2 Oxygen Concentrators (recovery/Emergency Dept) - these allow oxygen therapy to be rendered to one patient per unit for an unlimited period of time; and
- 1 Anaesthetic Machine (Operating Theatre);

Work is underway to source a working Biochemistry analyser from VCH to send to Lenakel Hospital in order to restore full diagnostic capabilities at the laboratory there.

The delivery and installation of the aforementioned items provides the equipment needed to restore full functionality to the Emergency Department, Maternity (birthing suite) and Operating Theatres.
However, the x-ray machine at Lenakel Hospital is not functioning and needs to be replaced, as repairs are not feasible based on the latest assessment. The assets unit will look at options for funding support for this particular item.

Another visit to Lenakel Hospital will be planned in the coming weeks to follow up on the above-mentioned installations and complete any further user/technical training that may be needed and to perform any follow-up assessment of equipment needs.

**Future Assessments:**

Over the coming days, Sea Mercy staff will assess the following health facilities and evaluate the impact of the response activities to date.
- Tavalapa Dispensary (Tongoa)
- Nimair Dispensary (Tongoa)
- Amboh Dispensary (Tongariki)

**WASH**

The 11 LIFESTRAW water systems offered by Youth with a Mission are still awaiting distribution to priority health facilities following delays due to weather and administrative issues. Distribution on the Greenpeace Rainbow Warrior is planned for the coming days.

Further water safety assessments at damaged health facilities will be conducted in conjunction with the distribution of the LIFESTRAW water systems.

LIFESTRAW is a high-volume, point-of-use community water purifier, which has built-in safe storage and provides microbiologically safe drinking water for schools, health facilities, workplaces and community settings. It is a chemical free filtration system and prevents water-borne diseases including diarrhoea, typhoid, cholera, worms, and cryptosporidium.

**Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescent Health**

The MoH has issued a memorandum to all provincial heads, supply officers, and health facility service providers on the immediate distribution of emergency drugs and supplies. This includes multiple Micronutrients, ORS, Zinc, Iron, Folate, de-worming drugs and others to all service delivery points in the country to ensure availability and immediate resumption of services.

Another one-day training session on MISP (including RH Kits, Dignity Kits, and referral mechanism) for provincial management staff will be conducted in Sanma on 26 May, 2015. This training will be done with UNFPA support in Penama and Malekula, in addition to the sessions already done in Tanna and Shefa.

UNICEF has responded to a request from MoH for additional local nurses and midwives to Tanna MCH clinic and health centres. They will provide antenatal and post natal care, child health, family planning and other essential health services, as well as managing MCH programs in alignment with the longer term human resources (HR) improvement plan.

MoH has sent a letter of request to UNFPA to continue the deployment of Fijian midwives for an additional two months, due to immediate HR needs.

UNFPA will support CMS with office equipment and Lenakel Hospital in repairing their incinerator and ceiling and repainting the family planning room, following an MoH request.
Three sets of solar powered foetal dopplers with lights are in country thanks to support from UNICEF. They will be distributed to health facilities with no power grid as specified by the MoH. Directions on the appropriate use of this equipment will follow.

Seventy sets of community-based newborn packages supported by UNICEF will be in country next week to re-establish newborn services in remote and rural affected islands.

**Immunization Activities**

A nationwide measles immunisation campaign will be conducted in the upcoming months. This will be to cover the immunity gap of children over five years of age that were not vaccinated during the previous campaign.

Of the planned 18 cold chain equipment installations for the month, four health centres have now been equipped with new solar powered refrigerators (MKS044) to store vaccines. These health centres cover around 3,000 children in remote rural areas of Erakor in Shefa province, Port Orly, Hog Harbour and Fanofo in Sanma province. The refrigerators will replace poor performing equipment in Erakor, Port Orly and Fanofo, and provide cold chain storage capacity to Hog Harbour Health Centre.

These installations include new high quality solar panels and poles tied together with strong bolts, knots and couplings. These installations are in accordance to disaster resilient standards to be to withstand strong cyclones and other natural disasters. Installations are ongoing for the remaining 14 health facilities in the country.

MoH will convene a meeting next week with partners and the infrastructure working group on the refurbishment plan of the cold room building.

**Information, Education and Communication (IEC)**

In light of fresh reports of measles cases on Efate last week, a series of alerts were distributed through various communication channels.

- An SMS text message was disseminated to 65,000 people on the Digicel network in Bislama, warning people to be vigilant about the symptoms of measles and to get immunized if they suspect measles and have not been already immunized.

- An alert was also printed in the local newspaper the Daily Post, which explained in more detail the symptoms of measles, how to avoid catching it and urging people to report any cases to their nearest health facility and consult with a health worker as soon as possible.

- The health alert was also distributed through the health cluster partner the Vatu Mauri Consortium, which is communicating the message to village chiefs and community leaders in villages on Efate.

A news release and photo story featuring the restoration of health services at damaged health facilities in Tanna were published on the WHO website this week. The news release was submitted to the Daily Post for publication as well. Both the release and the photo story outline progress made since the cyclone and highlight plans to build back better facilities in future.

This week’s talkback show on Radio Vanuatu focused on non-communicable diseases, a subject that has received very little attention since Cyclone Pam. The speakers reiterated the importance of a healthy diet. Of the seven callers who asked questions, one questioned the diet provided to students and patients in schools and hospitals. Another caller expressed appreciation for the Ministry of Health’s continued
communication of key health messages. One person called from Santo, highlighting the broad reach of the radio as an effective communication channel.

1,200 copies of IEC materials focusing on NCDs were donated by JICA. The booklets provide information about the risk factors associated with NCDs and a log book that individuals can use to monitor their health. The materials will be distributed to all hospitals and health centres in Shefa, Tafea, Penama, Malampa and Sanma.

**Foreign Medical Teams (FMTs)**

There are currently five FMTs deployed in Vanuatu, including three that provide medical services on a permanent basis.

Youth With A Mission (NZ) concluded its medical activities (both hospital and outreach) at Lenakel hospital this past week. A total of 855 consultations were conducted (including two deliveries and three ER consultations) during their two week deployment on Tanna Island.

More than 12,000 consultations have been carried out since FMT’s were deployed following Cyclone Pam.

Aside from FMT deployments, the Ministry of Health receives Technical Assistance from the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), UNFPA, UNICEF and the WHO.

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<th>Team</th>
<th>FMT type</th>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>No. of Consultations</th>
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**PARTNER UPDATE**

Individual organisations’ activities can be reviewed in the 3W which continues to be published in the Google drive, on the health cluster dashboard and on the humanitarian response homepage following the below links.

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0Byp_4UwN2cqIfmEwSGRmcnFVVTdOdWREUG05UUZfd0RYZH2NHFIsb293ejlrcnY3T1J3TDQ

https://cyclone-pam.palantircloud.com/slate/documents/vanuatu-3w

https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/vanuatu
FUNDING UPDATE

The funding situation for the health sector remained the same with only a nominal increase in funding toward the original Flash Appeal. According to the OCHA FTS, 52.4% (USD 2,579,387) of the requested USD 4.9 million requested by the Health and Nutrition Cluster has been provided.

Future Response

The Health Cluster Strategic Plan 2015 has been finalised. Please email healthclustervanuatu@wpro.who.int if would like further information.