



SITREP 4

Vanuatu: Earthquake



Figure 1: VRCS health coordinator and a VRCS volunteer helping out at the Vila Central Hospital. (VRCS)

SitRep No.	4	Reporting period	21 December 2024
SitRep Date	21 December 2024	People affected	80,000 People
Disaster categorization	7.3 Magnitude Earthquake	Total people affected	80,000 People
Volunteer #	39	Start date of the operation	18 December 2024

Main Highlights

- VRCS ongoing assessments show urgent needs for clean water and shelter among displaced populations.
- The National Shelter Cluster meeting is being coordinated by the shelter cluster lead and co-lead.
- Around 80,000 individuals have been directly impacted by the earthquake.
- Immediate requirements include healthcare, shelter, food, water, and family reunification efforts.
- Communication, electricity, and water outages have been reported in certain areas.
- Two Surge Support personnel from New Zealand Red Cross are in the country assisting with internet connectivity.
- A DFAT flight carrying four pallets of non-food items (NFIs) has arrived in the country.
- 11 households in the Tanvasoko area have received shelter NFIs.
- Volunteers are deployed to Mele and Melekat areas for community needs assessments.
- The death toll has risen to 12¹.
- VRCS staff are attending WASH and Shelter cluster meetings for updates.

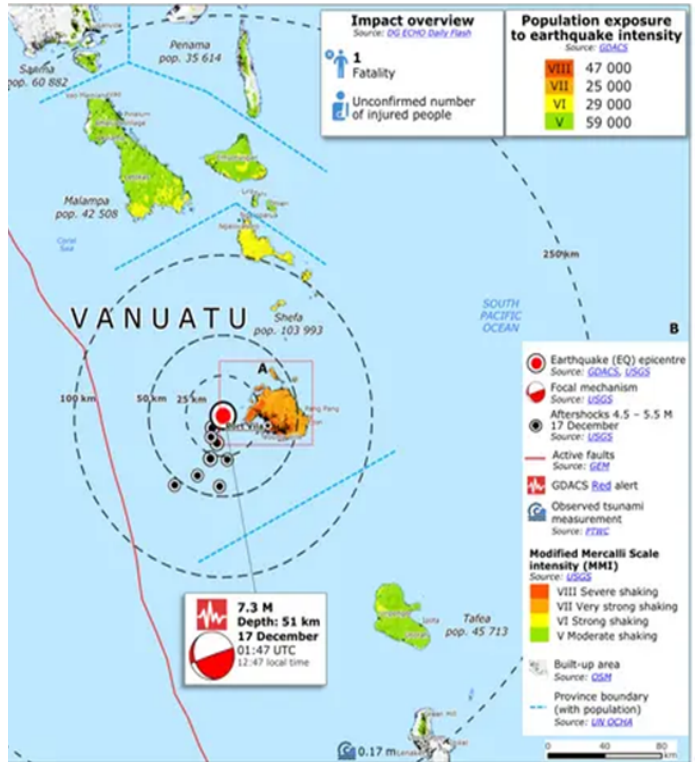


Figure 2: Earthquake Track (OCHA)

Key Humanitarian Priorities

Shelter	Health	PGI	WASH
<p>195 People reached through 24 Tarpaulins; 41 Kitchen sets;</p>			

¹ OCHA Flash Update 4

Situation Overview

A magnitude 7.3 earthquake hit near Port Vila, Vanuatu, on December 17, 2024, at around 12:47 PM local time. The epicenter was approximately 30 kilometers west of Port Vila at a depth of 57 kilometers. Initial reports suggest at least six unconfirmed fatalities and major communication disruptions, which delayed contact with the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) and government officials until around 6:30 PM local time. Star link was eventually activated to restore communication with the NDMO.

Communication, electricity, and water outages have significantly impacted the affected areas following the earthquake. Rapid initial response efforts are underway, with communities urgently requesting shelter for evacuees now staying on football fields without protection. Local authorities have emphasized the need for supplies such as drinking water, tarpaulins, medicine, and shelter materials and tools. Internet services remain down in the affected regions, with Star link being relied upon for communication as telecom providers Vodafone and Digicel work to assess damages and restore their networks. Reports have confirmed six deaths due to a landslide and two people rescued from a collapsed building, while the search for additional missing individuals is ongoing.

Coordination

The Government of Vanuatu is leading the humanitarian response and all national clusters are actively coordinating and meeting regularly with all the partners.

The Cluster system in Vanuatu is a stand-by committee that is also active during preparedness & response.

Clusters are led by the relevant Line Ministry or National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) and co-led by agencies.

After a disaster, and upon activation of the State of Emergency, the overall coordination of the response lies with the NDMO & the NDC.

VRCS, with the support of IFRC, Core-leads the Shelter Cluster in Vanuatu, supported the NDMO as lead agency, for this response, as well as it does during preparedness.

Operational Strategy

The overall objective of the immediate humanitarian response in the event of emergency/disasters is to mitigate/alleviate suffering of the most affected population through provision of Non-Food Items (NFIs) & CVA and may lead to other relevant interventions such ongoing distribution of NFI's and recovery response. The operation includes all relevant VRCS sectors such as: Shelter, WASH, Health, Logistics, Gender and Protection, Displacement and Communication and CVA.

The VRCS staffs and volunteers working within each cluster are in continuous liaison and communication with their respective National Cluster group to ensure information sharing and continuous updates

Sectors of intervention key highlights



Shelter

Needs

- Affected people needed urgent support in emergency shelter.

- Shelter/tarpaulins considered to be the priority needs.
- % Of toilets are destroyed and advised to be build and used accordingly.
- Affected communities in evacuation centers need shelter assistance.

Response

- Shelter items form the VRCS warehouse in Port Vila will be distributed tomorrow to allocated areas of response.
- Volunteers will be on ground demonstrating with IEC materials safe shelter awareness.
- Shelter assessment conducted in Ohlen and Blacksand Area.
- Dispatched of shelter NFIs to communities.
 - o 288 shelter kits
 - o 567 tarpaulins
- 24 Tarpaulin distributed to 23 household in Black sand area.
- 41 Kitchen kit distributed to 41 household in Black sand area.
- 46 HH with 302 people assessed using NDMO community assessment form in black sand area, Tanvasoko Ward.
- 39 HH with 222 people assessed using NDMO community form in Melematt area.
- 50 HH with 211 people assessed using NDMO community assessment form in Ohlen area, Northen Ward.



Livelihoods and basic needs

Needs

- Shortage of food is likely within a few days.
- Food distribution should be considered a priority.
- Livelihood in most affected areas were partly affected.
- Commercial banks have been affected therefore circulation of funds is limited.



HEALTH & WASH

Needs

- Water shortages and unsafe drinking water in most affected areas.
- % Of toilets are destroyed and advised to be build and used accordingly.
- Health awareness to commence immediately.
- Water shortage in affected areas.
- First Aid Assistance needed in affected areas.

Response

- Responding to a casualty (Asthma attack & injured person).
- 11 volunteers divided into 3 groups are helping out at the Vila central hospital.
- PIROPS WASH surge support 8 personnel.



Needs

- Psychosocial support is urgently needed in affected areas for families that are still in shocked.
- Restoring family links in community areas.
- Risk of Gender Base Violence in affected communities.
- Women may have need in MHM.

Response

- Briefing to volunteers on Child protection code of conduct.
- Communicate with IFRC PGI Senior officer (Remote support)
- Awareness on PGI in affected communities.
- Working close with Operations to identify vulnerable community members.

Cross-cutting/Support services key highlights

Communications

Response

- Communication towers for both Vodafone and Digicel Vanuatu were impacted.
- Participating in relevant clusters to ensure coordination of human and material assets.
- VRCS SG and DM Coordinator meeting and communicating with IFRC and is frequently to coordinate and execute plans of actions.
- CEA in communities for further assessments and distribution in communities.
- VRCS establish a team to work in restoring family links (RFL).
- VRCS was able to connect 13 families using restoring family links (RFL).

Logistics

Needs

- International commercial flights not confirmed apart from relief flights.
- International Ports and harbor not accessible imports shipments due to road accessibility.

Response

- Dispatched from VRCS HQ Warehouse, 24 pieces tarpaulins, 40 kitchens set to black sand area in Port Vila.
- NFIs from NCRC arrived in Port Vila.
- Mobilize 15 Volunteers to help with offloading and loading from the airport to HQ.
- NFIs from DFAT
 - 288 hygiene kits
 - 288 shelter kits
 - 567 tarpaulins
- Delegates from IFRC/NZ/PIROPS.

PMER

Response

- Situation Reports.
- Collect information from field officers and volunteers.

- Analyzing needs assessment data for distribution.
- 2 volunteers entering assessment and distribution data.
- Updating different shelter cluster with information for cluster meetings.

IFRC

Response

- IFRC CCD Suva continue to monitor the situation through ongoing dialogue with VRCS.
- IFRC CCD Suva is developing and mobilizing funding with an Emergency Appeal process yet to be finalized.
- Continuing to respond to numerous media requests for updates on current situation and plans going forth.
- Exploring opportunities to deploying key personnel in support of VRCS and its response efforts.



Figure 3: VRCS volunteers conducting assessment. (VRCS)

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation, please contact:

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