



17,391
Affected Households



80,000
Affected Population



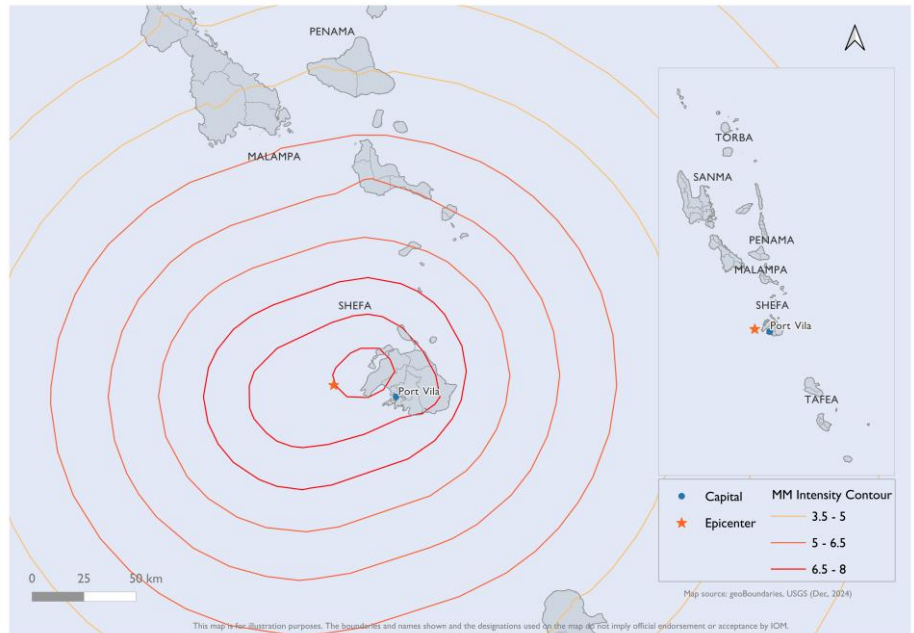
At least 947
Displaced Persons



Unknown
Damaged Houses



Unknown
Requested Funding



Vanuatu Magnitude 7.4 Earthquake, Efate, Epicenter, 12:51pm 17 December 2024

HIGHLIGHTS

- *At least **947 persons** are displaced as a result of Magnitude 7.4 Earthquake 34km West of Port Vila, Vanuatu*
- *Number of displaced is expected to increase, as IOM is working with NDMO to continue assessment*
- ***Immediate needs** for displaced populations include water, food, shelter, hygiene, sanitation, health, and protection of vulnerable populations including women, mothers, children, elderly and people with disabilities*

SITUATION OVERVIEW

On 17 December, at 12:51pm a 7.4 Magnitude Earthquake struck 34km West of Efate. Reports include that of violent shaking for at least 30 seconds. 10 people have been confirmed dead, and the number is expected to rise. Significant aftershocks persist. Landslides have occurred in Port Vila disrupting Port access, and also in nearby villages and off-shore islands. A State of Emergency has been declared for 7 days from 17 December throughout the worst affected areas of Vanuatu. Significant infrastructure damage has been sustained.

Many families and communities are in displacement as their homes incurred damage or as they await structural assessment of their impacted homes. Since 19 December 2024 low pressure system in Coral Sea is being monitored which is moving towards Vanuatu area of responsibility, and has some chance to bring heavy rainfall or develop into cyclone, which may result in landslide or flash flooding. There may be need to move those currently residing in host family and community household yards, to evacuation centers.

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DISPLACEMENT AND EVACUATION CENTRE MANAGEMENT CLUSTER COORDINATION

IOM is the co-lead of the Displacement and Evacuation Centre Management (DECM) cluster (Pacific-specific version of the global Camp Coordination/Camp Management (CCCM) cluster) with Vanuatu National Disaster Management Office (NDMO). DECM Cluster has now been activated and IOM continues to work closely with Vanuatu Government providing technical assistance to cluster coordination to support needs assessments and response for displaced populations.

IOM is supporting DECM Cluster Coordination meetings and will continue to provide technical assistance. IOM is supporting the coordination of referrals to clusters including Shelter, Health, Education, Gender and Protection, Food Security and Agriculture, and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene to address the immediate needs of displaced populations and affected communities. In this manner, IOM will ensure addressing the immediate needs especially of the most vulnerable persons such as pregnant women, lactating mothers, persons with disabilities, elderly, including internally displaced persons.



DISPLACEMENT DATA COLLECTION



IOM is tracking displacement in Vanuatu following the Earthquake. IOM is using a customized displacement tracking tool that is informed by IOM's global Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), that has been adapted to the local context and agreed with the Government of Vanuatu through prior programming.

IOM has assessed a total of 7 locations on 18 December and 5 locations on 19 December and 947 persons are reported as displaced, however this number is expected to increase.

Ground at Blacksands has large fissures and cracks which has reached people's houses and crossed roads and caused uplift and cracked buildings. Populations report feeling unsafe to return home. Expected return time is at least 1 month. Of the total, 799 displaced persons are from Blacksands Zone 2-5 and Prima Zone 1 are being hosted in Manples / Britano / Kaweriki. 145 persons displaced from Blacksands 2 are residing in 4 Kona area.

There are also likely people who are displaced but living with family relatives or another community. Confusion and uncertainty are being reported by community members on whether it is safe to return to their homes. Several mentioned that they are waiting on NDMO to provide "all clear" for them to return to their homes.

Several areas have no internet or telecommunication network access, so people are unable to check public announcements on Facebook or via text. Loudspeakers or community announcements requested for key safety information to be communicated to avoid hearing and trusting incorrect information..

Planned future and ongoing assessments include Mele Waisisi Eratap AC, Erakor AC, Pango AC, Freswota, Ohlen, Anamburu, No. 2 Lagoon and other areas.

Immediate needs for displaced populations include:

- **Water:** Only rainwater and well accessible now.
- **Food:** Particularly for large host households and evacuation centers.
- **Shelter:** Tarps and tents needed for displaced households. IOM is assessing the needs for provision of NFI and shelter kits to displaced populations.
- **Hygiene and Sanitation:** Issues with toilets being reported around sanitation and use of bush toilets, poor health and hygiene.
- **Gender and Protection:** Majority of persons displaced are vulnerable groups including women, pregnant mothers and lactating mothers, children, elderly and people with disabilities. No electricity yet connected in this area – need solar lights for nighttime security due to large populations residing within host household yards.
- **Health:** Some displaced populations yet without health checks and request for health checks and EMT – some minor injuries and diabetics reported amongst displaced populations.

IOM CAPACITY

IOM Vanuatu has 18 personnel based in Port Vila, and is supported by IOM Fiji Country Office with Coordinating Functions (COCF)- including the IOM Pacific Programme Support Unit. IOM Vanuatu will receive 2 additional surge support personnel from IOM Fiji, who will arrive on World Food Programme (WFP) Charter Flight scheduled for 23rd December 2024. Additional surge personnel will support existing IOM Vanuatu personnel in DECM Cluster coordination and displacement data collection. IOM Vanuatu is also supported by the IOM Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) in Bangkok.

IOM has strong expertise in Disaster Risk Management in the Asia-Pacific region on early recovery interventions to support disaster affected populations, including a significant focus on resilience building, disaster risk reduction and community-level climate change adaptation.

IOM Vanuatu has existing programming on disaster risk reduction and strengthening resilience to climate change and disaster-related human mobility. Under the UN secretary General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement, IOM Vanuatu co-leads (with the Government) a one-of-a-kind National Durable Solutions Taskforce. Vanuatu is the only Pacific country selected for the pilot, and IOM is implementing two projects to advance durable solutions including the development and pilot of planned relocation and durable solutions guidelines. Funded by the Government of Japan, IOM Vanuatu is implementing the "Project for Building Institutional Capacity and Strengthening National and

Community Resilience to Disasters and Displacement Risks in Vanuatu". In February 2025, IOM will begin implementing Phase 2 of Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade funded project, "Sef Ples Blong Yumi - Strengthening Evacuation and Displacement Management for National and Local Authorities and Communities in Vanuatu". Funded by the IOM Development Fund, IOM Vanuatu is implementing "Wokbaot Wetem Kalja: Strengthening the Use of Traditional Knowledge and Social and Cultural Systems in Displacement Management in Vanuatu"

IOM Vanuatu has prior experience of supporting emergency response, including in response to Cyclone Lola, Twin Cyclones Judy and Kevin, Harold and the Ambae Volcano Eruption.



IOM VANUATU MISSION



Confirmed that all IOM personnel and their dependents are safe and accounted for. IOM is continuing to assess staff welfare needs. IOM is organizing for welfare support for all personnel to ensure they are able to meet their basic needs, including food, water, shelter and banking. IOM is organizing for provision of psychosocial support to support all personnel.

IOM Vanuatu Business Continuity plan (BCP) has been activated and IOM office is regeared into emergency response. IOM is bringing in additional communications equipment to expand the scope and reach of assessments and assistance.