

# *Red Cross Launches Emergency Appeal as Aid Groups Assess Cyclone Damage in Vanuatu*

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Port Vila, March 19 (RHC)-- The International Red Cross has launched an emergency appeal for the South Pacific island nation of Vanuatu following last week's massive cyclone. The storm reportedly destroyed or damaged 90 percent of buildings in the capital Port Vila.

Red Cross official Simon Eccleshall said the impact is still being assessed. He told reporters: "We have launched an emergency appeal for Vanuatu Tropical Cyclone Pam to the tune of 3.9 million Swiss francs (\$3.8 million). The emergency appeal focuses on the provision of food, water, shelter, health, urgently needed non-food relief items. And we can expect this emergency appeal to be revised over the coming days on the basis of the further assessments which are currently being undertaken."

The typhoon left some 3,300 people homeless, but the number is expected to rise as aid workers reach Vanuatu's outer islands.

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