

1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Pacific ranks amongst one of the most vulnerable regions in the world in terms of the recurrence, severity, and range of natural hazard experience. PICTs are susceptible to volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, cyclones, earthquakes, floods, tidal surges, landslides, droughts etc.

A magnitude 7.3 earthquake struck near Vanuatu's coast in the South Pacific Ocean on December 17, 2024, followed by several major aftershocks of varying but strong intensities. The most affected is the densely populated capital city of Port Vila, Efate. About 80,000 people are estimated to be affected with the government confirming 14 fatalities, 265 injuries and over 1,450 displaced individuals of whom 673 are children. Many buildings and some bridges sustained major damage, so did power lines and public water supply. Displaced populations face health risks, water shortages, disrupted education, and psychological distress. The ongoing cyclone season exacerbates vulnerabilities.

The immediate needs are for life-saving Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene supplies, first aid and health needs, temporary learning spaces and material, and Mental Health and Psychological Support (MHPSS) for affected children and their families on Efate Island, including Port Vila and nearby villages affected by the EQ. UNICEF in coordination with the Recovery Operation Centre, the National Disaster Management Office and cluster partners, is providing life-saving response in WASH, Education, Child Protection and Health and Nutrition sectors.

ROLE PURPOSE

The primary objective of the deployment of the MHPSS Specialist is to support the delivery of quality MHPSS services to children, their caregivers and people living in Efate Island, in the city of Port Vila, Vanuatu.

MAJOR DUTIES AND KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Build the capacity of responders in providing PFA, PFA training, individual and group counselling of non-specialist, MHPSS in case management, psychosocial skills of healthcare workers and of MHPSS in education.
2. Support governmental actors to develop MHPSS related standard operating procedures for emergency response.
3. Create referral pathways across sectors in cooperation with local organizations, churches, and governmental departments.
4. Ensure complementarity of activities and synergies with other UN-agencies, INGOs and local organizations.

KEY DELIVERABLES

1. Standard operating procedures for cross-sectoral MHPSS emergency response are drafted in consultation with relevant stakeholders.
2. Referral pathways between schools - communities – case managers – health workers and mental health services are established.
3. Training and coaching have been provided (unless delivered by other actors):
 - PFA Training of trainers
 - Group counselling for children and families.
 - MHPSS in case management and special work
 - Psychosocial skills for healthcare workers
 - MHPSS for education staff

The deployment will be hosted by the UNICEF Pacific Office in coordination with the Government led coordination mechanisms, including the Child Protection, Education and Health sectors, and will take place in coordination with the global MHPSS Reference Group.

Natural disasters that could occur prior to or during the deployment could necessitate alterations to the Terms of Reference. A detailed workplan will be set and agreed monthly. The day-to-day supervision and technical oversight will be provided by the Chief, Child Protection, UNICEF Pacific Office.

MINIMUM PROFILE REQUIREMENTS:

- An Advanced University degree in international development, human rights, psychology, sociology, economics, international law, and other social science field is required. A qualification in Social Work or Psychology involving clinical experience and supervision working with children and families is highly desirable.
- A minimum of 5 years of professional experience in social development planning and management in child protection and/or other related areas at the international level some of which preferably were served in a developing country is required.
- Direct experience working with children providing mental health and psychosocial support services is required.
- Experience in providing training on working with children to front line service providers is highly desirable.
- Work experience in the Pacific of small island nations is highly desirable.
- Relevant experience in child protection in humanitarian action, and related areas, program/project development, and management in a UN system agency or organization is an asset.
- Understands, uses and adapts the tools, mechanisms and processes developed as part of Humanitarian Reform
- Proven ability to work independently under difficult conditions.
- Fluency in written and spoken English.