



NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT OFFICE

PRESS RELEASE

Date: 08/01/2022

**** For Immediate Release ****

STAY WAY FROM FLOODED AREAS AND RIVERS: NDMO

SUVA – The National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) is strongly urging the public to stay away and refrain from crossing flooded roads, rivers, streams and walkways.

NDMO Director Ms. Vasiti Soko said with the heavy rain warning and severe flood alert in place for most parts of Fiji, members of the public need to heed the advisories issued by authorities seriously to ensure their safety during such times.

“Flooding is one of our main areas of concerns. Data released by the Fiji Police Force indicate that between 2017 and August 2021, a total of 17 people had drowned during an event of a natural disaster. Majority of these incidents involved people being swept away by strong currents while trying to cross flooded rivers, creeks, and streams during disasters. This is why the NDMO has continuously pleads with the public to stay away from these flooded areas,” Ms Soko said.

“These fatalities can be reduced because avoiding drowning is well within our control. Members of the public should remember that crossing flooded rivers and streams could result in loss of lives and also place search and rescue teams at risks.”

“We have started receiving reports of flooding in the West and we would like to plead with members of the public to limit travels and refrain from making unnecessary movements for their own safety.”

“During times such as this, we also continue to call on parents to ensure that their children are supervised at all times and children must not be allowed to swim in flooded waters.”

With more rain also forecasted in the next three days, Ms Soko has also called on the public living in landslide prone areas to take precautionary measures to ensure their safety and that of their loved ones.

“With already highly saturated soil as a result of heavy rain in the last few days, there are also high chances of landslides occurring. Therefore, we wish to again remind the public to evacuate if the need arises while it is still daylight.”

“Additionally, we also wish to remind the public to store sufficient amount of water as there is a possibility that water sources could be disrupted in an event of a landslide and from heavy rains.”

Ms Soko says the NDMO is closely working with the Fiji Meteorological Services to monitor the current weather situation in the country.

“Our National, Divisional and District Emergency Operations Centers (NEOC) are already on partial activations for monitoring of the current situation. In addition to this, the Emergency Committee has also met today to discuss forward plans in light of the present weather forecast,” she said.

-ENDS-

For press enquiries:

Aqela Susu, MRMDDM, Tel. +679 3216456/+679 9985670 , aqela.susu@govnet.gov.fj