

= Cyclone Fanele =

Cyclone Fanele was the first cyclone of tropical cyclone status to strike western Madagascar since Cyclone Fame one year prior . It formed on January 18 , 2009 in the Mozambique Channel , and rapidly organized as it remained nearly stationary . Fanele ultimately turned toward the southwest Madagascar coastline , reaching peak winds of 185 km / h (115 mph) , according to the Réunion Météo @-@ France office (MFR) . It weakened before moving ashore in Menabe Region southwest of Morondava , and rapidly weakened over land . Fanele briefly re @-@ intensified after reaching open waters , only to become an extratropical cyclone by January 23 .

The cyclone caused heavy damage near where it moved ashore and along its path , resulting in ten deaths . Fanele struck Madagascar just two days after Tropical Storm Eric brushed the northeastern portion of the country . The two storms affected over 50 @, @ 000 people , of which at least 4 @, @ 000 were left homeless . Fanele struck the country during a series of government protests , and consequentially relief efforts were hindered .

= = Meteorological history = =

For several days in the middle of January 2009 , a very weak low @-@ level circulation persisted in the Mozambique Channel , accompanied by intermittent and disorganized convection , or thunderstorms . By January 17 , an area of convection persisted about 510 kilometres (320 mi) west @-@ southwest of Antananarivo , Madagascar . Early on January 18 ; the circulation rapidly consolidated and organized while the thunderstorms developed into tightly @-@ curved rainbands . Environmental conditions favored further development ; an anticyclone formed over the disturbance , an approaching trough provided favorable outflow , and the system benefited from both light wind shear and warm water temperatures . At 0600 UTC on the 18th , the Réunion Météo @-@ France office (MFR) initiated advisories on Tropical Disturbance 07 , noting its intensification as it drifted southwestward .

Six hours after being declared a tropical disturbance , MFR upgraded it to tropical depression status , and the agency predicted the system would eventually reach peak winds of 130 km / h (80 mph) before moving ashore . Its track was expected to follow that of another tropical cyclone east of Madagascar , which would become Tropical Storm Eric . Late on January 18 , the system briefly became disorganized , only to re @-@ organize and attain tropical storm status on January 19 ; upon doing so , the Malagasy Weather Service named it Fanele . Around the same time , the Joint Typhoon Warning Center (JTWC) began issuing advisories on the storm . The agency noted uncertainty in the future track of the storm , due to interaction with Tropical Storm Eric east of Madagascar , and Fanele was located within an area of weak steering currents . Tropical Storm Fanele quickly strengthened , developing an eye feature , and late on January 19 the JTWC estimated sustained winds of 120 km / h (75 mph) ; the agency predicted further strengthening to peak winds of 140 km / h (85 mph) . Around that time , Fanele began rapid deepening under very favorable environmental conditions , and the MFR upgraded the storm to tropical cyclone status with winds of 150 km / h (95 mph) . Upon attaining tropical cyclone status , the MFR forecast Fanele would intensify further to peak winds of 185 km / h (115 mph) .

Early on January 20 , Cyclone Fanele began a northeast motion , tracking along the eastern periphery of a ridge located over Mozambique . Later it turned southeastward under the influence of another ridge further to the east . The thunderstorms organized further around the eye , and at 1200 UTC on January 20 the MFR estimated Fanele attained peak winds of 185 km / h (115 mph) about 180 km (110 mi) west @-@ northwest of Morondava along the Madagascar coast . At the same time , its atmospheric pressure was estimated at 927 hPa (mbar) , and peak wind gusts were estimated at 261 km / h (162 mph) . The JTWC also assessed peak winds of 185 km / h (115 mph) . As it approached the coast , the cyclone became slightly less organized , with weaker convection and a less distinct eye ; the weakening was due to an eyewall replacement cycle . At around 0215 UTC on January 21 , Fanele made landfall on the western Madagascar coastline , to the southwest of Morondava .

Cyclone Fanele weakened quickly over land ; within four hours of moving ashore , its winds decreased to 150 km / h (95 mph) , and its wind field expanded . The eye feature dissipated as the system weakened to tropical storm status , and increased wind shear contributed to further weakening . By January 22 , the poorly defined circulation moved over open waters , by which time its winds weakened to about 45 km / h (30 mph) . Upon reaching the ocean , convection began to reform near the circulation , and Fanele re-attained tropical storm status . Cooler waters caused convection diminish near the center , which began the process of extratropical transition . Late on January 22 , the JTWC issued its last advisory on the storm . By January 23 , Fanele completed the transition into an extratropical storm as it accelerated toward the south-southeast . It persisted as a distinct tropical cyclone until later that day .

= = Impact = =

Though the cyclone developed quickly , authorities were prepared for the storm ; earlier in the year , Madagascar 's National Office for Natural Disasters Preparedness implemented a plan for localized storm warning . Officials deployed warnings via radio to citizens in the path of Fanele , as well as to fishermen who were told to avoid leaving port .

Cyclone Fanele made landfall on western Madagascar in Menabe Region , where it destroyed many buildings , flooded large areas , and left thousands of people isolated . In the city of Morondava near the landfall location , the cyclone flooded 80 % of buildings and damaged about half of the houses , leaving 3 000 people homeless . Throughout the region , the winds damaged 158 classrooms attended by 9 000 children . Further inland , the cyclone damaged bridges and roads , leaving some areas isolated . The outer rainbands of the storm produced heavy rainfall in the northwest portion of the country , resulting in flooding that left about 250 people homeless in Sofia Region . The passages of Cyclones Eric and Fanele affected 54 802 people , leaving 4 102 without shelter . At least 28 000 people were affected directly by Fanele , and the cyclone killed a total of ten people . The cyclone disrupted work to rebuild areas that were affected by Cyclone Ivan in February 2008 .

Cyclone Fanele struck the country during a series of government protests , and consequently the national government provided little response to the storm . Instead , United Nations (UN) agencies quickly provided relief to affected citizens . The World Food Programme prepared 87 metric tons (MT) of cereal and 13 MT of various types of pulses . Five United Nations Children 's Fund (UNICEF) trucks arrived in Morondova on January 25 with various supplies . In the days after the storm , contaminated floodwaters resulted in cases of dysentery . To prevent the spread of disease , UNICEF provided vaccines , deworming tablets , and water cleaning devices . Within three days of the storm 's landfall , the agency also began distributing health kits and bed nets . As many schools were affected , UNICEF set up temporary classrooms in tents , while workers began fixing and cleaning the damaged buildings . Despite the quick response by the UN , thousands of people were left without aid . The Malagasy Red Cross deployed its volunteers to affected areas , although disrupted transportation services and the political situation hindered relief efforts .