

INFORMATION BULLETIN



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

NIAS: EARTHQUAKE

30 March 2005

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

In Brief

This Information Bulletin (no. 03/2005) is being issued for information only. The Federation is not seeking additional funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

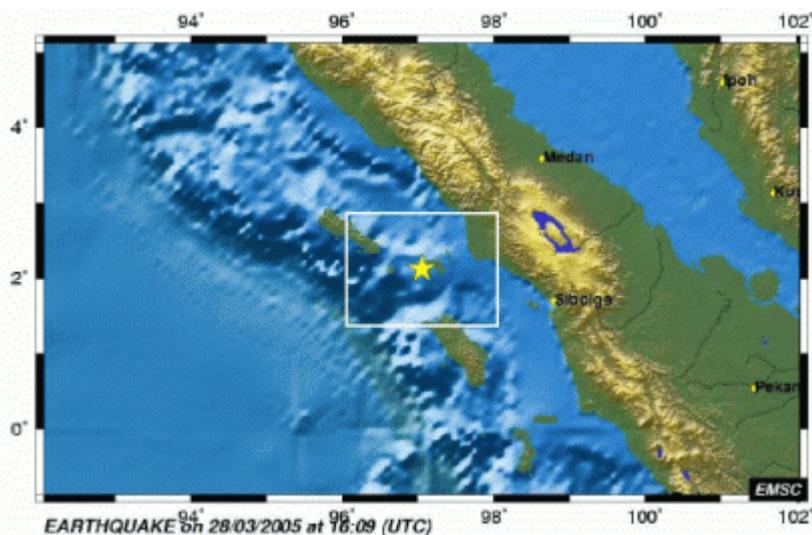
For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- Indonesia: Ole J Hauge, Head of Delegation; phone: +622.1791. 91 841; mobile: +628 11 824 859; fax: +622 179180 905; email: ifrcid01@ifrc.org and Latifur Rahman, Disaster Management Delegate; phone: +62.811.82.6624; fax: +62.217.18.0905 email: ifrcid05@ifrc.org
- In Geneva: Jasna Djordjevic, Southeast Asia Desk (Indonesia, Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia) a.i., Geneva; phone: +41.22.730.4829; fax: +41.22.733.0395; email: jasna.djordjevic@ifrc.org
- In Geneva: Josse Gillijns, Regional Officer for Eastern Africa, Africa Dept.; email: josse.gillijns@ifrc.org; Phone: +41.22.730.42.24; Fax: +41.22.733.03.95
- Media Department: Sian Bowen, phone: + 41.22.730.4428; email: sian.bowen@ifrc.org

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

The Situation

So far 13 aftershocks between 5.5 and 6.7 have been registered, further to the massive earthquake that struck Northern Sumatra in Indonesia on 28 March 2005.



While no major damage or casualties have been confirmed in Aceh province, the initial assessments report that the earthquake caused devastation at Nias island while the damage in Simeulue island seems to be more contained.

It has been lately reported that the road between Medan and Meulaboh is closed due to the landslide triggered by the earthquake which put on hold fuel deliveries to Medan. Three people died in Meulaboh when a house on the road to the airport collapsed during the earthquake.

At the same time, the structural damage on Nias island is approximately 60 to 65 percent, especially in areas headed towards the airstrip which is located about 16 km south of the capital, Gunungsitoli. The road from airport to the capital has been blocked by landslide. Prior to the landslide, the road was under construction and was used by motorcycles and small cars only.

The total number of dead varies from 150 to 870 (UN estimate is 1,000 people dead of a population of 637,000). More precise estimates have been hard to obtain due to the short grounding time on the island of Nias and particularly bad weather that made flying and landing difficult.

In Simeulue, 10 to 15 percent of buildings are visibly damaged. The airstrip is cracked halfway, but still has space to land small aircraft. The airport building and adjoining structures are levelled. According to local people, dozens were killed while 80 were injured.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Federation, including a number of Red Cross Red Crescent partners present in Indonesia are by now actively involved in supporting the PMI in their assessment activities, health and relief, primarily related to the islands of Nias and Simeulue.

Nias island

The Federation assessment team no.1 met with the local authorities at Nias island, OCHA and Indonesian rescue services.

It was agreed by the Federation and OCHA that the UN body would proceed to the town of Gunungsitoli to assess the health situation. Urgent reinforcement of medical staff seems to be needed for Gunungsitoli. It was reported that there were no doctors available in the capital, while four nurses were treating approximately 200 patients suffering mostly from fractures, flesh wounds and cuts.

The Federation transported a Spanish Red Cross doctor together with four PMI health personnel from Medan with seven first aid kits and approximately 35 kg of medical supplies by helicopter to Gunungsitoli to assist the situation.

The Federation team including PMI and French and Spanish Red Cross partners, will continue the assessment early Wednesday morning. While the Spanish Red Cross water and sanitation team is on standby, the PMI will shuttle a Satgana team (PMI's rapid response team), medical team and material to Nias accompanied by the PMI chairman and will be followed by the Japanese and Singapore Red Cross medical teams during the day.

The French Red Cross has hired a helicopter which will be made available also for the Federation by tomorrow afternoon. They have also sent a health, and water and sanitation staff to Nias today together with the UN team.

Two flights (landing crafts from Calang) with relief items are scheduled from Medan to Nias for tomorrow carrying new emergency health kits, tarpaulins, tents and family kits. They will also load four-wheel drive vehicles and necessary trucks.

Simeulue island

The Federation assessment team no.2 which was bound for Simeulue island had to abort their mission due to fuel problems and will re-engage early Wednesday morning.

Singkil (south of Meulaboh)

ICRC is planning an assessment mission to Singkil tomorrow by helicopter. UNOCHA is reportedly also assessing the environs of that town in order to check the damage in that area.

Inter-agency coordination and information sharing

Coordination with UN and other agencies is ongoing at Meulaboh, Banda Aceh and Jakarta.

According to the UNOCHA (UNICEF/OCHA/IGov), with approximately 300 hundred dead and 2,000 internally displaced persons, search and rescue operations are needed on Nias island as well as food, tents, medical and psychological support. The Indonesian government will also deploy a medical team to the island tomorrow. The UN team reports about 100 houses collapsed with people trapped beneath. While the airport is damaged, small planes are able to land. The port is reportedly undamaged.

According to Oxfam estimates, around 8,000 people on Nias island will need assistance, especially medical assistance and water.

UNOCHA (OCHA/WHO/WFP/IGov) states that there is no major structural damage reported on Simeulue island. There is no need for search and rescue and no major population movement has been registered. Small-scale medical interventions might be needed, mostly trauma cases are apparent.

All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal.

[Click here to return to the title page or contact information.](#)