

# OPERATIONS UPDATE



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

## BAY OF BENGAL: EARTHQUAKE & TSUNAMIS

27 December, 2004

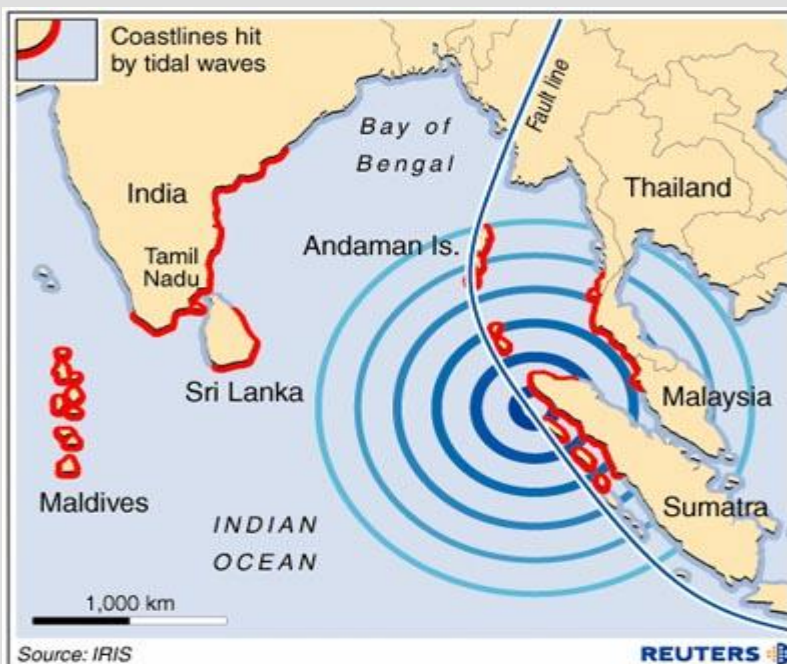
The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

### In Brief

Preliminary Appeal No. 28/2004; Operations Update no. 1; Period covered: 26-27 December, 2004; Appeal coverage: 100%; Note: this appeal is fully covered, and a revised appeal and plan of action is under preparation. The list of contributions is being updated and will be posted to the Federation's website shortly.

#### Appeal history:

- Launched on 26 December 2004 CHF 7,517,000 (USD 6,658,712 or EUR 4,852,932) for 6 months to assist 500,000 beneficiaries.
- Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) allocated: CHF 1,000,000.



**Outstanding needs:** this appeal is fully covered, and a revised appeal and plan of action is under preparation. The list of contributions is being updated and will be posted to the Federation's website shortly.

**Operational Summary:** The day after the disaster, the severity and impact of the event in terms of the human toll is now emerging, along with a better picture of the immediate humanitarian needs. Efforts continue to accurately assess the situation to adjust the operational response, but a lack of information and communications continues to hamper a coordinated and effective response. It is anticipated that the deployment of the Federation's Field Assessment and Coordination Teams (FACT) in Sri Lanka and Indonesia will result in the required detailed information to serve as a basis for a plan of action, and a revised emergency appeal and budget. With the decision to deploy Federation Emergency Response Units (ERUs) for Sri Lanka (initially logistics, but also potentially water and sanitation, basic health, and possibly telecoms) the Federation will be using its full range of emergency response tools to support the national societies' response to this unprecedented disaster. Reports are also coming in of the tsunami's effects along the east Africa coast, including Somalia and Kenya.

**Tracing:** the Federation and ICRC are coordinating tracing action and activities. Immediate actions are focusing on providing a facility to enable people who have survived to notify family members who are

looking for them. Within 72 hours the ICRC will have a website functioning for this, making it available to the Federation as a link to the Federation website.

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*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>*

## Background

An earthquake measuring 8.9 on the Richter scale struck the area off the western coast of northern Sumatra Sunday morning, 26 December 2004, at 7:59 am local time (00:59 GMT), triggering massive tidal waves or tsunamis that swept into coastal villages and seaside resorts. According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS) National Earthquake Information Center, the earthquake epicenter was located at 3.30 N, 95.78E at a depth of 10 kilometers (see map above). This area is historically prone to seismic upheaval due to its location on the margins of tectonic plates. An estimated total of 23,710 people are thought dead, with an estimated 7,500 reportedly injured, 4,946 missing, over 1 million displaced, and over 200,000 homeless. These figures are expected to increase. Anticipating the need to immediately respond in a large and coordinated fashion, the International Federation launched Preliminary Emergency Appeal no. 28/2004 to support the immediate relief and assistance activities of the national societies in the affected countries, with a particular focus on Sri Lanka, India, and the Maldives.

*Right: rescuers scoured the sea for missing tourists and raced to recover bodies amid fears of disease in Indonesia's worst hit Banda Aceh.*



## Operational developments & update on the Red Cross and Red Crescent, Government, and other agencies action

### Objectives and activities planned

**Objective 1:** based on the assessment and evaluation of needs in the affected areas, distribute emergency shelter materials, food, and non-food relief items.

#### Activities planned:

- organize purchase and transport of basic relief items (food and non-food, such as tarpaulin, mosquito nets, food, health kits, and family kits) to the affected areas.

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- carry out door-to-door surveys to select and register people.
- distribute the relief items among the most vulnerable affected households focussing on targeted, affected areas.

A day after the disaster, the severity and impact of the event in terms of the human toll is now emerging, along with a clearer picture of the related humanitarian needs. Efforts continue to accurately assess the situation to adjust the operational response, but a lack of information and communications continues to hamper a timely and effective coordination of the relief operation.

### SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS) teams comprising 3 doctors (Sri Lankan and expatriates) and 6 volunteers per team) have been despatched to 10 districts (Amparai, Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Galle, Matara, Hambantota, Kalutara, Gampaha) with medical supplies.

SLRCS Batticaloa branch: 5,000 families are taking shelter in 12 welfare centres in town areas (4 Oddammavadi, 3 Kokkadicholai, 4 Kaluwanchkudy). The SLRCS has deployed 100 volunteers to work in welfare centres. SLRCS volunteers provided First Aid to 600 injured in welfare centres.

- 490 dead bodies in Batti hospital (approximately 50 evacuated by SLRCS batti branch).
- 687 injured admitted (approx 100 transported to hospital by SLRCS batti branch).
- Tracing of missing persons.

With the support of an ICRC delegate, volunteers are recording details of the missing in four welfare centres.

Trincomalee branch :

- 50,000 affected families.
- 27,000 displaced families.
- 700 reported dead.
- 100 volunteers have been deployed and engaged in emergency activities-
- 65 dead bodies were evacuated to the Trinco Base hospital by the SLRCS;
- 50 injured were evacuated to the Trinco Base hospital by SLRCS;
- food items were distributed in Nilaveli welfare center.
- 1,000 packets of milk powder, 300 tents, 300 mats and 300 towels were distributed with UNHCR support.
- 2 medical teams are deployed in affected areas .

Killinochchi branch:

- 600 bodies have been recovered.
- branch volunteers are providing First Aid services, mobile health services for the affected housed in schools.
- branch does not have relief items NFR at present such as clothes, et al.

Mullativu branch:

- 4 dead bodies were brought to Vavuniya hospital by the SLRCS.
- 2 injured children transferred to hospital.

Gampaha branch:

- 15,000 are housed in 6 welfare centres (7,500 in Thewatte church, 2,500 in Negombo Church, 1,500 in Negombo St Peters College, 2,000 in Pallansena Church, 1,000 in Dusna Church, and 500 in Kkamat mosque).
- SLRCS branch volunteers have visited these centers yesterday and today and have ascertained needs. Requirements highlighted: medicines, clothes and milk powder.

Colombo branch:

- 4,850 are housed in seven welfare centers in Dehiwela.
- 1,200 are housed in 2 welfare centres.

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- 3,000 are staying with friends and relatives in Moratuwa, around 3,000 people are staying with relatives.
- 5 dead bodies were transported by the branch.

### Kalutara branch:

- 21,000 are housed in 15 welfare centres in Kalutara North and Beruwela.
- 24 deaths were reported.
- SLRCS branch has distributed cooked meals in Kalutra North.
- 3 NDRT members from Ratnapura branch are assisting the Kalutara branch.
- More than 150 injured have been transported to the hospital by SLRCS branch.
- First AID volunteers have been deployed at the welfare centres.

### Matara branch:

- 5,650 have been located in 8 welfare centres in the district.
- 6,000 persons are living with friends and relatives.
- 500-600 deaths reported.
- 4,000 casualties reported.
- 800 missing are reported.

### Puttalam branch:

- 22,500 are housed in 9 welfare centres.
- SLRCS is supplying drinking water to these camps via 3 tractor bowsers.
- SLRCS is supplying cooked meals to some of the camps.
- 2,000 persons have been identified as displaced from 'uncleared areas'.



### Hambantota branch:

- 7,500 persons are located in 34 camps in Tangalle and Hambantota.
- The SLRCS is supplying drinking water to these camps via 3 tractor bowsers.
- The SLRCS is supplying cooked meals to some of the camps.
- 2,000 persons have been identified as displaced from 'uncleared areas'.
- 5,000 are taking shelter with friends and relatives.
- 1,000 reported dead and 1000 reported missing.

## INDIA

The IRCS's DP stocks have been released for Andaman and Nicobar Islands from the Salt Lake warehouse (based on a request earlier in the day from the Andaman branch), and are being airlifted on a no-cost basis by Jet Airways (1.5 metric ton weight allotted to IRCS by Jet Airways) from Kolkatta early tomorrow morning (28 December). The following quantities have been released: 1,000 towels, 1,000 bedsheets, 400 tarpaulin sheets, 400 kitchen sets. The IRCS will focus on clothing materials, shelter materials including blankets, water and medicines support.

The IRCS sent a team to assess the situation composed of the Joint Secretary (Dr. Ganthimathi) and the Federation DM delegate who joined the IRCS Secretary General in Chennai. The team arrived last night and had a meeting with the state branch and the IRCS Secretary General this morning and the team went to see the affected sites of

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Chennai city (Patanapakkam) where people are still panicking, particularly those who are living close to the sea. The water level in the houses reached over one and a half meters and washed away most of the houses and the belongings. Data collection is going on by the district collectors and IRCS branch in close contact with the control room and concerned authorities for situation update.

A truck load of 4,000 family packs was despatched to Chennai, out of the 5,000 family packs of non-food items as DP stock at the Arakkonam warehouse in Tamil Nadu. More materials will be despatched to the affected areas, such as bed sheets, clothes (Sarees & Dhuties) and blankets.

The IRCS state branch is in contact with the district branches to mobilize local resources. The donations received from various sectors will be sent with other relief materials to the affected areas to be distributed by IRCS volunteers and district branches. Moreover, the state branch has requested donations from the general public in Tamil Nadu to assist the needy people. Furthermore, the district branches in Tanjore district branch mobilized 10 medical doctors with 5 ambulances along with relief materials and volunteers who are helping the affected people in Nagapattinam district.

The team (Dr. Ganthimathi and Mohamed Babiker) will leave this evening by train/bus to assess the situation in Nagapattinam districts as one of the worst affected districts. While the Finnish Red Cross regional programme coordinator and the Spanish Red Cross delegation representative will join the team in Chennai to assess the situation further in the coastal areas of Chennai city.

The IRCS is mobilizing ham-radios in two places (Nagapattinam and Sirgazhi). The IRCS state branch DM coordinator is coordinated with the relevant authorities and in regular contact with the national headquarters.

In Andhra Pradesh, the IRCS mobilized volunteers and provided essential assistance to the affected people. In collaboration with Coca Cola who provided 12,000 litres of drinking water and mobilized food items and blankets.

As of the morning of 27 December 2004 the following information was available from the Ministry of Home Affairs: on the southeast coast of the country the worst affected states are Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh. The UTs affected were Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Pondicherry. As per reports received so far the total death toll has reached 3,000. The state and national authorities have mounted continued relief and rescue operations round the clock. The priority is now focused on relief supplies and evacuation in Nicobar Islands and assistance to Maldives and Sri Lanka.

**Andaman and Nicobar Islands:** the worst affected islands are Car Nicobar and Great Nicobar, which were cut off due to the extensive inundation. Communication links and water supplies have been disrupted in these areas. Per preliminary reports, 77 lives have been lost – 73 in Car Nicobar (including 65 defense personnel and their families) and 4 on Great Nicobar). The casualties are likely to increase. About 1,000 persons are reported to be missing. Some 22 people, including 8 policemen, were earlier evacuated by the Coast Guard.

The following support for rescue and relief operations has been requested: two additional flights one each from Kolkatta and Chennai for evacuation of stranded tourists at Port Blair; essential commodities and clothing; containers for transportation of water (500); tents: 10,000; 10 portable diesel pumpsets of 3/5 HP capacity for draining out the water; 200 portable generator sets; mobile satellite phones (50) and torches (1,000); strengthening of telecom facilities (technical support, along with equipment).

The Ministry of Home Affairs is coordinating the relief efforts and is in constant contact with local authorities in the affected areas. The MHA had earlier arranged supplies of rice, sugar, blankets and tents (30 MT load), which was airlifted in the morning of 27 December, 2004 from Tambram Air Port, Chennai. In addition, two AN 32 aircraft and one IL 76 (20 MT) with a full load (4 MT) of relief material consisting of blankets, clothes, drinking water and foods packets, will leave on 27th December, 2004 for the islands -- one each from Bhubneshwar, Bhub, and Ahmedabad. Two specialized Medical First Responder (MFR) teams-- one each from ITBP and CISF -- have flown on 27 December to Car Nicobar to assist the local administration in rescue and relief operations. 8 satellite phones were also airlifted to the islands on 27 December.

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The Ministry of Health has deployed a five-member team consisting of physicians and public health experts on 27 December to the islands for emergency medical relief. The team is also delivering emergency medical supplies.

**Andhra Pradesh:** tremors were felt in the Triupati, Nellore, Krishan, Prakasam, Visakhapatnam, Srikakulam and West and East Godavari districts. Significant tidal surge experienced in Krishna, Günter, Prakasam and Nellore districts. The death toll in the state has gone up to 69 (26 in Krishna, 25 in Prakasam, 9 in Nellore, 01 in Guntur, and 8 in West Godavari ). About 800 persons are reported missing, along with about 900 boats.

The Chief Minister, Andhra Pradesh visited the affected areas on 26 December to deliver relief assistance, including financial support to families. The State Government has already initiated relief, rescue and evacuation measures. The State government has evacuated about 9,000 persons to safer areas and provided food packets. Medical teams have been deployed to take sanitation measures in the affected villages. Two Indian Coast Guard (ICG) ships have been deployed -- one in Nellore and the other at Visakahapatnam. The State Government has sought assistance of the coast guards/navy for search and rescue of missing fishermen. No other assistance is being sought by the State Government at this stage.

**Kerala:** 130 persons (104 in Kollam, 21 in Alleppy, 4 in Ernakulam and 1 in other districts) have lost their lives. About 300 people were reported to be stranded in a narrow strip of land between the coastal region of the backwater off Oachira in Alappuzha district. The navy sent their diving teams by road on 26 December and started rescue operations today (27 December, 2004). There are no further requests from the State Government at this stage. The State Government has indicated concern about their citizens living in Male. Air dropping of food packets and medicines are being organized from 1200 hrs. today, 27 December, 2004 to the Maldives.

**Tamil Nadu:** Tamil Nadu is the worst affected state in the mainland. The tsunamis caused a sudden rise in the water resulting in the inundation of many habitats along the coastal areas. The State Government undertook relief and rescue operations and instructed the people to move to safer areas. The death toll in the State has gone up to 2,367 (1,329 in Nagapatnam, 338 in Cuddloor, 67 in Kancheepuram, 132 in Chennai, 460 in Kanyakumai, 4 in Triuneveli, 29 in Villupuram, 13 in Thiruvarur and 3 in Thoothukkudi. He State Government reported the occurrence of tremors in Chennai. Flood water reportedly entered the Kalapakam Atomic Power Plan. 20 people were evacuated by helicopter. The State Government has airdropped 1,000 food packets at Vivaknanad Memorial, Kanyakumari. 1,000 persons have been evacuated from the Memorial.

The Ministry of Health has deployed 30 doctors in Chennai. A three-member medical team left in the evening of 26 December, 2004 to Chennai. Medical teams from Chennai consisting of specialists have been formed, headed by the Regional Director for Health & FW, Chennai and emergency medical stores from the CGHS/ Central Government. Medical relief is being provided to the affected victims.

The State Government has been requested to dispose of dead bodies, and will be assisted by the army in this work. The State Government has been advised to deploy civil defense volunteers. The State Government has constituted search and rescue teams to find out missing people. The State Government has been requested to indicate their additional medical requirements to the Ministry of Health office based in Chennai. No other assistance is required by the State Government at this stage.

**Pondicherry:** coastal areas in the Pondicherry and Karaikal region were inundated, and people living in low lying areas were evacuated to safer places, and essential commodities including readymade meals were provided. In Karaikal, a bridge along the Arasalar River was damaged, and communications in the southern part of Kariakal region are affected. Police and fire services have been pressed into service. Reports indicate 307 deaths (236 in Karaikal and 71 in Pondicherry). A three-member high level central health team headed by the Deputy Director General (Medical) was deployed in the evening of 26 December, 2004 to Pondicherry. Teams from JIPMER, Pondicherry have been constituted by the Ministry of Health to visit affected areas and provide emergency medical relief. The Pondicherry administration is now engaged in the disposal of dead bodies, assisted by civil defense volunteers. There are no other requests from the Pondicherry Administration at this stage.

## BANGLADESH

Based on preliminary reports and information available, damage in Bangladesh appears to be limited. The latest situation reports on status of aftershocks of the tremors and tsunami in Bangladesh are as follows: three

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aftershocks were felt across Bangladesh cracking buildings and raising the water levels of rivers, lakes and ponds. The tremors jolted the entire country including Dhaka City; coastal belt and Chittagong port leaving two persons dead and over 100 injured. A number of old buildings developed cracks in many parts of the country including Dhaka, Chittagong, Munshiganj and Chandpur. Some mud houses also collapsed due to the impact of earthquake in the coastal belt. According to the meteorological department, the biggest of the tremors was recorded at Bangladesh's observatory centre in Chittagong at 7 A.M. yesterday (26 December) measuring 7.36 on the Richter scale and lasted for 1.42 minutes. The second tremor was recorded almost two hours later, at 4.35 on the Richter scale and lasting 25 seconds. Officials of the country's observatory said that this was the first time that Bangladesh had been hit by such a high intensity earthquake, and it's considered miraculous that there were no large scale casualties and limited damage. The BDRCS and the delegation are closely monitoring the situation which at present is not serious. If any change occurs, further updates will be issued.

### INDONESIA

As a result of the earthquake and the tsunamis provoked, hundreds of houses were swept away and thousands displaced from their homes in the towns of Medan and Banda Aceh, the capitals of two of Sumatra's provinces. Power and telephone networks in the area have been disrupted, making it difficult to assess the extent of the devastation. An estimated 4,900 people are feared dead according to the latest media report, mostly in the worst hit of Aceh. The government stated that the earthquake in Aceh and North Sumatra provinces a national calamity. The local governments have been evacuating affected people to safe areas, providing first aid, emergency food and drinking water. The government deployed a team from several departments to Aceh on 26 December to assess the situation and immediate needs. Assessment is on going process to get number of affected people, buildings damage and other loss materials. The national government is working on a service delivery plan to support local government in terms of providing emergency relief to the displaced.

180 local emergency response team volunteers of the Indonesian Red Cross are working in Aceh since 26 December, providing search and rescue, evacuation, first aid and transportation service. Another 30 volunteers are providing the same services in Nias Island, North Sumatra Province. Emergency shelter (tarpaulin), family kits (containing household and hygiene items), sleeping mats, blankets, jerry cans, and medicine have been made available for thousands of families from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) – Aceh sub-delegation stock (where the ICRC is lead agency for the Movement). The Medan provincial chapter has mobilized in the evening of 26 December five large tents for Aceh and another five for Nias Island to provide emergency shelter to displaced persons. Body bags and burial clothes will also be mobilized from Medan on 27 December. There is close coordination with local district coordinating unit for disaster management and internally displaced persons on initial assessment. Specific needs identified by the field team are tents, body bags and burial clothes.

The national society headquarters is closely coordinating with the Medan, Nias and Banda Aceh provincial chapters and has established regular communication with the National Coordination Committee and local disaster management units of Medan and Aceh. A two-member team, led by the chairman of the society, arrived in Aceh on 26 December to assess the situation and immediate needs in close coordination with the national and local authorities.

A meeting among the Indonesian Red Cross, ICRC and the Federation was held on 26 December to coordinate actions from the Movement. It has been agreed that the national society will lead the response operation in Aceh with initial support of the ICRC. ICRC relief, health and cooperation delegates are on standby for any technical assistance while the Federation will mobilize international resources to the national society and provide technical support in the areas of disaster management and health. The society continues to share information with the Federation delegation, UN and other partner agencies.

A joint Indonesian Red Cross and ICRC assessment team along with the Federation regional senior disaster management programme officer (of Indonesian origin) will be deployed on Wednesday (29 December) to Aceh.

### THAILAND

The latest official report indicates that the tsunamis killed 431 people (unofficial report put the death toll at over 800) and injured 5,000. Majority of the dead are tourists and among them is the grandson of the king. Many people, of unidentified number, are missing. An ad hoc task force has been set up under the ministry of foreign affairs with teams assigned to address needs of specific foreign nationals. The Thai government will focus on

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immediate and short-term needs of the affected people. It has called for more medical doctors and people with search, rescue and psychosocial support expertise, and helicopters from neighbouring countries to assist in search and rescue and relocating people from the outlying islands.

The Thai Red Cross has sent five doctors to Phuket and another medical doctors and nurses to the affected provinces. Four health centres have been established in Phuket, Krabi, Satul and Phang Nga where food, clothes, drinking water and hygiene items are being distributed to the affected people. The society is focusing its activities on Phang Nga provinces as relief efforts of the government and other agencies have been sufficient in Phuket and Krabi at the moment. Some orthopedic surgeons from other parts of the country have also been mobilized to respond to earlier shortage. The society has received substantial local contributions in cash and in kind, and has distributed 1,000 household kits, 600 sets of medicine, 100,000 water bottles to the affected. External assistance with regards to goods and personnel is not needed at this stage but cash contribution remains welcomed. A help centre (tel: +66-2-252 4106-9) has been opened at the headquarters for tracing, money and blood donation.

**MYANMAR**

Unconfirmed reports indicate that a total of 32 people have died as a result of two successive earthquakes, measuring up to 7.3 on the Richter scale on 26 December, and the consequent tsunamis. The coastal town of Labutta in the south-west has been the worst hit where 22 people have been killed and 80 houses damaged. Ten people were also killed in the southern city of Kawthoung. The lack of official information on the impact of the disaster is making it difficult to assess and respond to the actual humanitarian needs in the country.

Local Red Cross volunteers are assisting the government, particularly the fire department, in search and rescue activities along the coast. Given the limited information available about the situation, the information officer and logistics officer of the Myanmar Red Cross will go to Labutta tonight (27 December) to assess the situation. The Federation country delegation is staying in close contact with the national society providing technical support as necessary. A meeting will be held tomorrow with Myanmar Red Cross. Close coordination and information sharing is also maintained with the UN and other aid agencies.

**MALAYSIA**

According to the Malaysian Red Crescent Society, the tsunami of 26 December has killed 42 people, mostly in the second largest city of Penang. Search effort for the eight missing is continuing. The tsunamis hit the coastal three states in northern peninsula of Malaysia: Penang, Kedah and Perlis. The waves reached up to 15 feet and hit the coastal areas, causing damage to boats and the town of Kuah on Langkawi Island. Most of the fishing boats in Penang and Kedah were also damaged.

The Malaysian Red Crescent Society has mobilized five regional disaster response team (RDRT) members to coordinate with the affected chapters. Red Crescent staff and volunteers are assisting the government in search and rescue and in providing medical care in the hospital.

The preliminary appeal launched yesterday has received generous response from the international community and the Red Cross Red Crescent societies. USAID has pledged for USD 100,000 with regional offices in the process of making additional contributions. ECHO and the Australian government have both indicated substantial contributions.

The Singapore Red Cross has pledged for 150,000 Singapore dollars (around CHF 100,000) earmarked for immediate relief items for Sri Lanka, Indonesia, India and Thailand, and is also in the process of launching a nation-wide appeal. Red Cross Red Crescent societies of Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Taiwan Red Cross have also offered to send medical teams to the affected countries in south and Southeast Asia.

Meanwhile, an indication of the widespread geographical nature of the disaster is the impact of the tidal waves on the east coast of Africa and the Indian Ocean Islands of the Seychelles, Mauritius, Réunion, and Madagascar.

**SEYCHELLES**

The storm surge struck all three islands on the morning of 26 December. On the main island roads were flooded and in some cases impassable. Three people have been unofficially confirmed as killed and 2 more missing. On the Island of La Digue the hospital has been relocated. A second surge was expected at 0100 local time of 27th.

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Some telephone lines are down; the mobile phone network is very busy. There are fears of long-term ecological damage due to the exposed reefs. The Government and NGOs are on alert to provide assistance. The Government has relocated vessels from 2 islands for their protection. There is severe damage to both outlying islands in terms of infrastructure, communication, transport, power supplies, houses and shelters, but it is not known how widespread this is. The main island has been affected in the port area along side Victoria and there has been damage to boats. The Government is requesting all people to remain at home until the surge passes but has the situation is under control. On south side of the main island at the coast there has been damage to a number of houses. Water has risen from 0.5 to 1 metre hence houses have been damaged and flooded.

The Seychelles Red Cross has responded by mobilizing their volunteers, placing their National Disaster Response Team on stand-by and communicated with the National Disaster Committee and are liaising with the Ministry of Health. Volunteers have assisted the population to evacuate and take preventative measures in the outlying Islands. The national society has set up a contingency plan and will make an assessment with the authorities and a separate Red Cross assessment. They have communicated with their two branches on Praslin and La Digue by HF radio. Unfortunately the Red Cross headquarters office on the main island has been flooded and the national societies are operating from buildings on higher ground. They are assisting with ambulance services, first aid, tracing, evacuation, clearing and cleaning up, and the provision of relief items (food and non-food) as required. On the morning of 27 December a total evaluation of the situation was started by the national society in order to determine the needs with the National Committee for Disasters.

The PIROI (Platform for Rapid Intervention in the Indian Ocean Islands), a French Red Cross coordinated response team, is on standby with capabilities in water and sanitation and shelter from their base in the French Island of Reunion.

### MAURITIUS AND REUNION

While there have been unconfirmed media reports of damage in Mauritius and the Reunion Islands, the national society in Mauritius has stated that they have not been affected and no reports have been received of damage from the French Red Cross in Reunion. Attempts are being made to contact Comoros and Madagascar but it is considered unlikely that they have been affected as they are much further south. No reports have yet been received from the Somalia Red Crescent to confirm the media reports of deaths of fisherman on the northern coast of Somalia although efforts are being made to confirm this.

### KENYA

The Kenyan Red Cross reports one death in Watamu and one in Malindi (north of Mombassa on the coast). In Mombassa no casualties, there was no evacuation in Mombassa but that hotels were instructed by the police not to let tourists on to the beach area and water levels are subsiding. KRCS volunteers are out assessing and reporting in and a comprehensive picture will be available later today.

The Federation's regional organizational development delegate and disaster management coordinator in the Nairobi regional delegation are in contact with the Seychelles Red Cross and Somali Red Crescent. Further information and updates are expected shortly.

## **Objective 2: complement local reconstruction initiatives through the distribution of essential building materials and basic tools.**

### **Activities planned:**

- organize, purchase and make available basic building and repair tools.
- carry out door-to-door surveys to select and register people.
- undertake distribution among the households in the targeted areas.

Action for this objective is pending further assessments and the priority delivery of basic relief.

### **Federation Coordination**

The Federation is managing this operation from its Secretariat in Geneva, supported by its regional delegations in Bangkok and New Delhi and country delegations across the disaster zone, including Indonesia and Sri Lanka.

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Some 15 national societies participated in a conference call held today (Monday 27 December) at the Federation Secretariat in Geneva.

**Communications – Advocacy and Public Information**

Given the scope and scale of this disaster, there is intense media focus and interest in the response. The Federation has been well-featured across radio, television, and other media components, and will continue to meet the need to provide updated and accurate information, both externally and internally. In India, media/TV contacts have been made with the IRCS and Federation representatives in Tamil Nadu by BBC, Radio France International, and a Japanese journalist. The IRCS has made a request for the general public within India, as a flash news, to help the affected people.

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- organizations.