

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

Preliminary Appeal
No. MDRSB001
5 April 2007
GLIDE no. [TS-2007-000042-SLB](#)

SOLOMON ISLANDS: EARTHQUAKE & TSUNAMI

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 185 countries.

In Brief

Operations Update no. 1; Period covered: 4 to 5 April 2007; Appeal target: CHF 1,118,250 (USD 819,673 or EUR 615,385); Appeal coverage: 33%¹; Outstanding needs: CHF 749,227, (EUR549,180, USD 412,307) ([click here to go directly to the attached Contributions List, also available on the website](#)).

Appeal history:

- Preliminary Emergency Appeal launched on 3 April 2007 for CHF 1,118,250 (USD 819,673 or EUR 615,385) for four months to assist 5,000 beneficiaries.
- Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) allocated: CHF 65,000.

Operational Summary:

Following the 8.1 magnitude earthquake and ensuing tsunami on 2 April that struck the western provinces of Solomon Islands, 30 people are feared dead. The number of people affected varies widely, ranging from 10,000 to 50,000. Accurate information and updates remains scarce at this stage of the operation. Assessments however continue, with the Solomon Islands Red Cross Society at the centre of the relief operation and receiving support from other national societies and the Federation secretariat. A preliminary appeal was launched on 3 April; a revised plan of action and appeal is underway and will be made available shortly.



A video grab shows an aerial view of damages after a tsunami and earthquake hit the Solomon Islands (REUTERS/Australian Pool via Reuters TV, courtesy of www.alertnet.org)

Background

On 2 April at approximately 07:40 hours local time, an earthquake measuring 8.1 on the Richter scale struck the western provinces of the Solomon Islands, just off the coast of the mainland of Gizo province, 350 km northwest of the capital Honiara². A succession of aftershocks followed, generating a localized tsunami and several landslides that have been also attributed to heavy rainfall. The combined effect of these disasters has resulted in significant damage and loss of life.

Operational developments

Several islands in the Solomon chain with low lying seaside areas suffered from damage from the earthquake and tsunami. These include the areas of Gizo, Simbo, Ranogga, Shortlands, Munda, Noro, Vella la Vella, Kolombangarra and parts of the southern coast of Choiseul.

¹ The appeal coverage in the attached contributions list has yet to be updated to match actual contributions to the appeal, which is more appropriately placed at 33 percent.

² [Click here](#) for a map on the disaster from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

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Red Cross sources indicate that up to 30 people have died. The number of people affected varies widely from source to source, ranging from 10,000 – 50,000 (out of a total population of 80,000 – 100,000) in Western and Choiseul provinces. Generating accurate information in the early stages of an emergency is a constant challenge, made worse by limited information flow and the difficulty in accessing remote parts of the island chain. Three temporary camps are providing much needed provisional shelter to 5,000 to 8,000 displaced persons, many of whom are also camping in the open and are exposed to weather elements and potential health risks. While some of the displaced have had their homes completely destroyed, others' homes remain intact but residents are apparently afraid to return as aftershocks continue. Psychological trauma is widely reported among the affected population.

The national disaster council in Solomon Islands reports that up to 2,500 homes have been destroyed. Other key infrastructure has been seriously damaged. The hospital in Gizo is beyond repair, and a temporary one is currently providing medical care to the affected, with the badly injured evacuated to the capital Honiara. The SIRC reports that 50 percent of health centres are non-functional. Structural damage is also reported in 30 primary schools.

The relief effort by government and other agencies is severely hampered by the lack of logistics support. Boats and vehicles to transport relief and people from island to island are not enough to meet the needs. Land transport is further restricted by landslides that have cut off part of the road network.



People rest in a make-shift hospital camp in the town of Gizo in the Western Province of the Solomon Islands (REUTERS/Dive Gizo, courtesy of www.alertnet.org)

Needs assessments

The needs of the affected population are becoming clearer as more information from the Red Cross and other sources becomes available. Clean water and the prevention of waterborne diseases is a priority, as outbreaks of diarrhea among children have already been reported in some of the camps. Although water sources are reportedly safe, delivery or tankering capacities of the government are severely stretched. Fire trucks are being used to distribute water and the few crew members are exhausted from the long shifts. The government is planning to bring in more staff to address current poor capacity. Without access to sufficient clean water however, many of the displaced are turning to surface water that could be contaminated. To reduce the population's vulnerability to severe disease outbreaks, purification items must be supplied quickly to ensure collected water is safe for consumption. Media sources have declared the provision of clean water and proper sanitation to the affected as a "race against time".

The provision of shelter is vital as many of those affected are living out in the open without adequate material and exposed to the elements. Tarpaulin is considered one of the main needs, with the government supplies not able to meet the demand. The threat of vector borne diseases is also looming, with mosquito nets in high demand, especially for the protection of young children of displaced families living in camps and in the bush.

Role of the government

The national disaster management office and national disaster council in the Solomon Islands is coordinating the government's response. Some challenges in activating the provincial disaster management committee and structures have been encountered, as many members are based in Gizo and in the direct line of the disaster's impact. However, a Gizo-based emergency coordination operations centre has just been set up and is expected to improve communication out of the affected areas.

On 2 April, the national disaster council coordinated an assessment mission to the Western province, which included representatives from the national disaster management office, ministries, the police department, the New Zealand's International Aid and Development Agency (NZAID), the United Nations Development Programme

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(UNDP), and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. In the meantime, the government and the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) have deployed three search and rescue teams as well as military planes to transport relief and medical items as well as the injured. The government has committed to provide medical assistance to survivors, in the form of eight field hospitals and a medical team of 19 personnel.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

In support of the Solomon Islands Red Cross (SIRC), the Federation immediately launched the Earthquake and Tsunami Preliminary Emergency Appeal (no. MDRSB001) on 3 April for CHF 1.12 million (USD 0.82 million and EUR 0.62 million) to deliver assistance 5,000 people. Target beneficiaries will receive assistance in the immediate emergency phase in form of relief, health, water sanitation and emergency shelter services, while the national society will benefit from capacity building initiatives (please refer to the Preliminary Emergency Appeal for objectives and activities planned). Prior to the appeal, the Federation secretariat released CHF 65,000 for SIRC response, focusing on assessments for relief supplies.

The SIRC is actively responding to the needs of disaster survivors, deploying trained volunteers and staff to the affected areas. There is a spirit of cooperation in response to the disaster, with partner national societies, sister national societies and other arms of the Movement providing necessary resource support to SIRC. Technical delegates from the Federation secretariat, Tonga Red Cross Society (TRCS), Australian Red Cross (ARC) and New Zealand Red Cross (NZRC) are arriving in Honiara. Tuvalu Red Cross and Australia Red Cross is providing satellite phones and communication equipment to SIRC, while 300 first aid kits from ARC have been deployed. Based on updated information, the NZRC has sent 100 kitchen sets and 500 hurricane lamps on request of SIRC, which arrived in Munda for distribution, together with a consignment from NZAID. This consignment consists of 2,000 water containers and 1,000 tarpaulins for the national disaster management office.

In the meantime, the SIRC continues to conduct field assessments and distribute emergency supplies to survivors, including items such as hurricane lamps, blankets, tarpaulins and cooking sets. More relief items are being procured locally or regionally. The national society is in a strong position to provide support to the affected, as it has some of the best disaster management staff in the Pacific, with one UN disaster and assessment coordination (UNDAC) team member, one regional disaster response team (RDRT)-trained staff and an excellent disaster management officer. They also have a strong core of first aid trainers and volunteers who have received branch level emergency assessment/response training. With additional external support, it is expected that the SIRC will have the capacity to expand and improve on their current support and services to the affected population.

Federation Coordination

The Federation secretariat and Solomon Islands Red Cross, together with relevant UN agencies, have started to convene regular disaster management team meetings on 4 April to review relief and assessment efforts as well as coordination strategies.

Following the earthquake and tsunami, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has activated its integrated response mechanisms and deployed an UNDAC team to the site, due to arrive on 5 April. Other agencies involved in the relief effort include the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Health Organization (WHO), RAMSI, Australian Agency for International Development (AUSAID), NZAID and World Vision, providing medical supplies, relief goods/kits, food, water purification items, logistics support to transport relief and evacuate the injured as well as assessments.

Communications – Advocacy and Public Information

The Solomon Islands Red Cross has been featured prominently in the international media, partly because the only local agency in the country's western provinces that have the capacity to simultaneously carry out detailed assessments and distribute relief. The Federation secretariat and partner national societies are also assisting the SIRC by liaising with international media to provide on-the-spot reports. Indeed maintaining a steady flow of timely and accurate information between the field and other major stakeholders is vital for fundraising, advocacy and maintaining the profile of emergency operations. Communications between affected populations and the Red Cross and Red Crescent, as well as with the media and donors, is an essential mechanism for effective disaster response and the cornerstone to promote greater quality, accountability, and transparency.

How we work

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The Federation's Global Agenda

The International Federation's activities are aligned with under a Global Agenda, which sets out **four broad goals** to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- Solomon Islands Red Cross: Charles Kelly (secretary general), satellite phone: 8816 3185 0301, email: ckelly_sirc@solomon.com.sb
- Pacific regional delegation in Fiji: Adrienne Gravatt (acting head of delegation), phone: Martin Blackgrove (regional disaster management coordinator), phone (mobile): +679 999 2487; email: Martin.Blackgrove@ifrc.org
- Asia Pacific service centre in Malaysia: Naoki Kokawa (head of the disaster management unit); phone (mobile): +60123751635, email: Naoki.Kokawa@ifrc.org; Igor Dmitryuk (head of the regional logistics unit); phone (mobile): +60122122407, email: Igor.Dmitryuk@ifrc.org.
- Federation secretariat in Geneva (Asia Pacific department): Jae Ryul Kim (Pacific regional officer), phone: +4122 730 4260; email: JR.Kim@ifrc.org.

[**Contributions list below; click here to return to the title page.**](#)

Solomon Islands: Earthquake & tsunami

ANNEX 1

APPEAL No. MDRSB001

PLEDGES RECEIVED

05/04/2007

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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CASH

REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				1,118,250		TOTAL COVERAGE 15.7%
CANADIAN - RC		100,000	CAD	105,000	03.04.07	
JAPANESE - RC		41,000	USD	49,856	05.04.07	
NEW ZEALAND - RC		10,000	NZD	8,700	01.04.07	
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES - RC		10,000	USD	12,160	04.04.07	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				175,716	CHF	15.7%

KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				0	CHF	0.0%

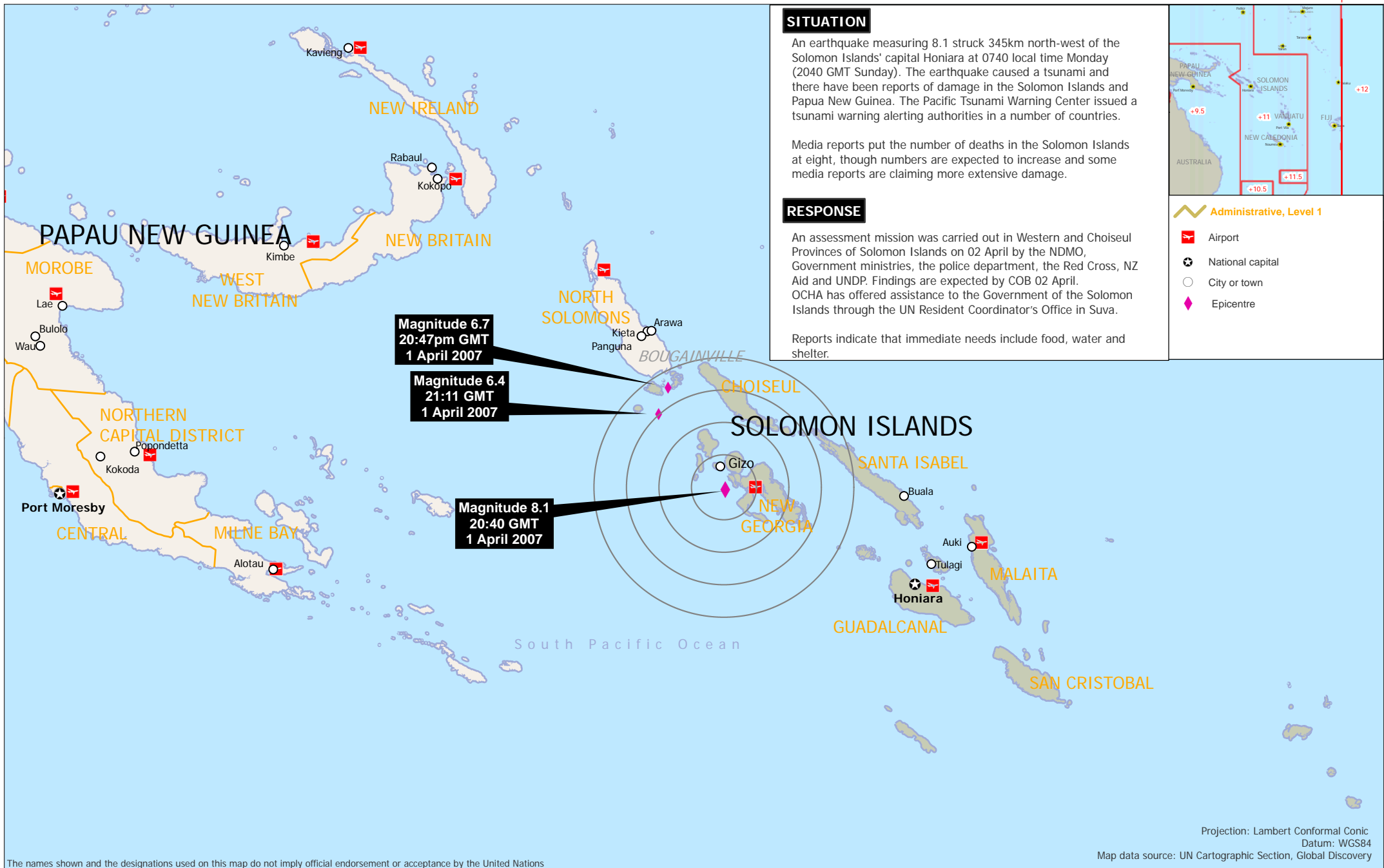
ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	



South Pacific Tsunami - 2 April 2007

Based upon OCHA Situation Report No. 1



SITUATION

An earthquake measuring 8.1 struck 345km north-west of the Solomon Islands' capital Honiara at 0740 local time Monday (2040 GMT Sunday). The earthquake caused a tsunami and there have been reports of damage in the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center issued a tsunami warning alerting authorities in a number of countries.

Media reports put the number of deaths in the Solomon Islands at eight, though numbers are expected to increase and some media reports are claiming more extensive damage.

RESPONSE

An assessment mission was carried out in Western and Choiseul Provinces of Solomon Islands on 02 April by the NDMO, Government ministries, the police department, the Red Cross, NZ Aid and UNDP. Findings are expected by COB 02 April. OCHA has offered assistance to the Government of the Solomon Islands through the UN Resident Coordinator's Office in Suva.

Reports indicate that immediate needs include food, water and shelter.

- Administrative, Level 1
- Airport
- National capital
- City or town
- Epicentre

The names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations

Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic
Datum: WGS84
Map data source: UN Cartographic Section, Global Discovery