

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

SOLOMON ISLANDS: TSUNAMI & EARTHQUAKE

Appeal No. **MDRSB001**
26 June 2007

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. 04; Period covered: 30 April to 14th of June 2007; Appeal target: CHF 1,691,977 (USD 1,405,645 or EUR 1,035,011); Appeal coverage: 58 %; Outstanding needs: CHF 709,890
(Click [here](#) to go directly to the attached Interim Financial Report with latest income and expenditure)

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 people.**
- **Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) allocated: CHF 65,000.**
- **Revised Emergency Appeal launched on 18 April 2007 for CHF 1,691,977 (USD 1,405,645 or EUR 1,035,011) for nine months to assist 9,000 people.**
- **Operations Update 3 further revises the plan of action in light of high logistics/distribution costs as well as developments in health and water sanitation.**

Operational Summary: Humanitarian aid arrived in sufficient quantities in the Solomon Islands to alleviate immediate needs. For the Red Cross response relief items arrived in three defined phases, with the last two being the most significant, with items from Kuala Lumpur stocks and from Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society. The challenge has been to move these supplies out to the communities from the two main supply centres of Honiara and Gizo. This has been the priority task for the logistics team in the field and was only overcome with the decision to hire larger vessels to maximize load and shorten timeframes. However this was at considerable cost to the response.

After the successful relief distribution activities undertaken by Red Cross partners led by the Solomon Islands Red Cross (SIRC), in which over 37,000 items were distributed to more than 1,800 families, the focus has now changed to support recovery initiatives led by government plans for permanent shelter. The Red Cross plan of action has been further revised to meet the changing needs and in line with the government's stated preference for permanent housing. The Red Cross is supporting the interim period by providing affected families with the capacity to build by providing technical knowledge in disaster resistant building techniques, the provision of essential building tools, and support to identify local building materials.



Government figures estimate over 6,000 households are in need of shelter support. Red Cross plans to target 1,500 households in its response.

Background

On 2 April at about 07:40 hours local time, an earthquake measuring 8.1 on the Richter scale struck Western and Choiseul provinces of the Solomon Islands, just off the coast of Gizo, 350 km northwest of the capital Honiara, causing a localized tsunami. The combined effect of the earthquake and tsunami resulted in significant damage and loss of life. According to the National Disaster Council (NDC), affected areas include Shortlands, Munda, Noro, Vella la Vella and Kolombangarra, with the worst hit being Gizo, Simbo, the western coast of Ranogga and the central southern coast of Choiseul. The unconfirmed death toll remains at 52 with the number of displaced people remaining at 9,000.

Operational developments

On 5 May 2007 the Solomon Islands Minister of Home Affairs revoked the order made on 3 April 2007 declaring certain areas in the western and Choiseul provinces to be in a state of disaster¹.

Since that time most stakeholders have begun to scale down their relief distribution activities and focussed on the medium to longer-term needs. The national disaster management office (NDMO), with support from UNDP, drafted a permanent shelter/housing strategies policy that is in the final stages of approval through government channels. The Red Cross medium term priority remains transitional shelter support to the three islands of Choiseul, Vella Lavella and Kolombangara. The Red Cross has undertaken to ensure that its activities targeting provisional/transitional shelter for the medium-term emergency response are tailored for flexibility. This has been done so that there is capacity to provide the maximum benefit to affected people both during the medium term and into the longer term of permanent shelter, as outlined in the government's shelter/housing strategy.

Kastom Garden Association of the Solomon Islands has undertaken a rapid assessment of agriculture and food security that indicates that, in general, food crops have not been substantially damaged but localized damage in some areas is significant, needing longer-term food assistance. Within the Red Cross allocated areas there have been no significant reports of food insecurity. Although this is a good sign the Red Cross continues to monitor the situation within its focus area. In other islands such as Rannonga it is estimated that 10% to 20% of families may need further food support².



Due to the remote location of many distribution sites it was necessary to have a larger vessel off shore, supported by smaller motor canoes, to ensure effective distribution and delivery.

Now that the government has officially declared the emergency over, shelter has been identified by the NDMO as the most urgent need, with permanent shelter as the government's preferred strategy. It was reported at one of the regular stakeholders meeting in Gizo (Gizo is the capital of the western Province and the major regional urban centre) that there are concerns the hospital may have to cease operations given the need for more permanent housing for its staff. In rural areas, concerns still prevail about moving back to villages close to the coast. The delivery of shelter activities will have to be flexible during the transitional medium-term phase, to meet the differing needs and concerns of all beneficiaries.

¹ NDMO Sitrep 38, 14th May 2007.

² Tsunami/Earthquake Disaster: Rapid Assessment of Agriculture and Food Security – KGA – April 2007, Kastom Gardens Association, Solomon Islands.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action - objectives, progress, impact

The immediate relief needs for the emergency phase of the operation which provided some 37,300 food and non-food items has been completed. The majority of items during the most recent distribution of stocks came from the Federation's Kuala Lumpur logistics stocks and Papua New Guinea Red Cross pre-positioned disaster response stock, supported by the Australian and Japanese Red Cross Societies.

The focus of the operation was the distribution of relief items to the designated islands of Choiseul, Kolombangara and Vella Lavella. To this end a total of 1,857 families received relief items from the Red Cross. Beneficiary figures stood at: Choiseul 499, Kolombangara 297 and Vella Lavella 655. The rest of the targeted families were located on Rendova Island and in the Gizo region.

Red Cross response is now turned to the medium-term needs for shelter. The French Red Cross has joined the Solomon Island Red Cross (SIRC) and the Federation in a coordinated response, focusing on shelter related activities for Choiseul Island. Although the number of affected on Choiseul Island is high at 833 households³, there are a number of other stakeholders including ADRA (Adventist Development and Relief Agency) and CARITAS who are also planning shelter activities on the Island. The Federation, French Red Cross and SIRC are attending coordination meetings between these parties and the local community association (Luaru) to ensure that plans are shared at community level and all areas are covered.

With the French Red Cross response focusing on Choiseul the Federation has revisited its shelter activity strategy for the remaining two Islands of Kolombangara and Vella Lavella. The need to revisit the shelter plan was necessary, given the current funding level of the appeal, and in light of the direction in which the government of the Solomon Islands has taken for permanent shelters. The general approach of all Red Cross partners is inclusive of the objective to provide better housing capacity for affected families.

As mentioned in previous updates, pre-positioned relief stocks in Gizo and the capital, Honiara, were instrumental in ensuring that communities received immediate assistance following the disaster. The distribution of pre-positioned relief stock also made "space" for further essential non-food items to be received and distributed. Additional relief items from private donations were received for distribution or purchased from Honiara or neighbouring Pacific countries, and delivered through the Federation secretariat's regional network.

Further revisions to the plan of action

Since the government's decision to lift the emergency category for the region and their intention to move swiftly to the permanent housing stage, the Red Cross has again reviewed its plan of action to face the current realities and capacities on the ground. Operational and logistics costs are very high. Rented transport between islands has been unreliable and inconsistent resulting in delays that have translated into higher expenditure and weakened service delivery. Distance between islands is great. For example, it takes three-and-a-half hours to move from Gizo – the centre of operational support for the region – to the nearest point on Choiseul Island by fast boat.

The focus of the appeal objectives for the medium-term continues to be shelter, and activities within the strategy have been adjusted to meet these new realities. As was stated in the previous update, water and sanitation components have been adjusted to take into account these realities and the activities of other partners in the affected areas. In health, no serious emergencies have been reported and the operation has decided to re-focus available resources on the most pressing component of the recovery operation. Modifications to the water and sanitation component also take into account French Red Cross-supported water and sanitation and shelter activities taking place on Choiseul.

Overall objective: Targeted beneficiaries have the necessary immediate support to meet their basic needs of non-food items; and recovery support through the provision of shelter.

No. of families targeted for assistance: 1,500 families on Vella Lavella, Koolambangara and Choiseul.

³ May 2007, Solomon Islands Government, Shelter/Housing Strategies&Proposed Assistance Package, pg 12.

Non-food relief items

Objective: Basic household kits composed of tarpaulin, hygiene kit, kitchen set, family kit and water containers for targeted 1,500 households, is provided.

- The SIRC, with assistance from other members of the Federation, has completed the relief distribution operation. In the initial stages the operation responded to needs across the wider area of earthquake and tsunami affected areas. Since mid April the Red Cross focused on the allocated geographical area of Choiseul, Vella Lavella and Kilimbangara.

The Red Cross conducted its last distribution of relief items on 19 May. During this phase the focus of the operation was to distribute relief items to the designated islands of Choiseul, Kolombangara and Vella Lavella. To this end a total of 1,857 families received relief items from the Red Cross. Distribution to the three islands started in earnest in early May and was completed by May 21st (see table below). Transportation remained problematic and costly throughout the distribution phase. The number of households receiving items in this round of distribution was Choiseul 499, Kolombangara 297 and Vella Lavella 655. The other distribution areas were identified at joint stakeholder meetings as in need of further assistance and were located on Rendova Island and in the Gizo region.

Final distribution phase

	Kitchen sets	Tarps	H/lamps	Hygiene Kits	Bush knives	W/containers	Shampoo	Clothes	Kerosene	Tents
Choiseul	765	407	612	1899	547	84	455	234	37	15
Vella Lavella	940	1155	876	54	371	576	39	9	94	8
Kolombangara	256	145	213		81	17			1	
Rendova	87	0	88	0	57	152	0	0	110	47
Gizo	4	21	8	0	5	0	0	12	16	90
Total	2052	1728	1797	1953	1061	829	494	255	258	160

**Gizo and Rendova were added after the completion of the distribution to the three islands and in consultation with other stakeholders through the regular coordination meetings.*

Lessons learnt.

On 13 June the SIRC held a 'lessons learnt' activity to review the immediate response; participants were volunteers, staff, management and the Federation. Information was shared and a number of positive outcomes have been identified for action including the following;

- Review the NS disaster plan of action and standard operation procedures (SOP's) in light of the experiences of the Gizo branch.
- The availability of pre-positioned stock was acknowledged by all; but the items were limited. The NS plans to explore opportunities to increase its pre-positioned stock level and capacity.
- In the immediate aftermath of the disaster, coordination between partners and other stakeholders was not strong and will have to be addressed to ensure similar problems do not recur in the future.
- The NS suggests that terms of reference (ToR) with the Federation outlining its role and support during the emergency response stage would have assisted in providing clarification and coordination.
- Daily briefing and debriefing sessions for volunteers would have been of benefit.
- Acknowledgement that local volunteers may also be part of the disaster affected population.

Shelter

Objective: Selected local construction materials and tools with safer/disaster resilient building knowledge to build 1,500 houses is provided.

With the government's proposed development of a permanent shelter strategy, the Red Cross has revisited its shelter activities to meet the stated objective of assisting affected households with supply of appropriate building tools and equipment, and enhancing their capacity to procure local construction materials.

During a visit to the region the shelter delegate estimated that as many as 80% of buildings damaged by the earthquake and tsunami would not have sustained such substantial damages had they been reinforced with sufficient bracing. The activity to disseminate safer and disaster resilient building knowledge has the potential to make significant inroads in assisting communities to be better prepared for disasters.

The construction process will be primarily community driven, with the Federation Secretariat and SIRCS providing complementary non-local items such as basic tools, mechanical winching devices and simple technical advice. This includes advice on the use of cross bracing, a low-cost addition to structures that can greatly reinforce their ability to withstand natural forces.

The potential risks to the operation remain the same as defined in previous updates and include land rights complications, possible shortage of local materials, or challenges in obtaining local materials because of accessibility issues. Through the revised strategy for shelter activities expressed in this update it is envisaged that many of the risks factors can be limited.

Activities to date

- Training of 16 volunteers in chain saw and milling skills organized by Solomon Islands government.
- Setting up of a coordination committee with SIRC and IFRC for shelter activities.
- Monitoring visit to communities supported during the relief distribution stage to verify shelter needs – sample of 18% of total communities affected were visited.
- Development of a damage classification methodology to enable targeted and balanced aid to disaster affected communities
- Revised activity plan and budget
- Assessment of logistical capacity and resource needs for shelter activities

Plans for June and July

- Community based milling operations on Kolombangara and Vella Lavella Islands
- Procure and distribute building tools and equipment
- Continue monitoring of communities supported and verification of relief distribution.
- Provide training on better building practices.

Capacity Building of SIRCS

Objective: Capacity building of SIRC including its branches and volunteers to further enhance the national society's capacity to respond to future disasters.

Capacity building efforts have been refined to focus on critical repairs to the Gizo branch. These include repairs to sanitation facilities, water tanks, telecommunication lines and other essential work. Plans to rehabilitate the old SIRCS headquarters in Honiara into a temporary operations centre for the recovery stage are near completion. This building will be returned to the SIRC at the end of the operation to rent out for income generation. In addition, practical experience based technical training will be provided during the planned shelter activities component of the appeal.

Capacity of the National Society

Although the scale of the disaster severely stretched the resources of the National Society, the SIRCS should be commended for their effort in providing relief support during the emergency phase. With the completion of the distribution phase, staff and volunteers are now able to return to scheduled SIRCS programming. The recovery phase is designed to take this need into consideration.

The Gizo branch, staffed by a branch officer and small team of 20 core volunteers, operates from a small office. The branch has one out-board motor (OBM) canoe. This team forms the core of the SIRCS support to the recovery stage shelter activities, in partnership with the Federation's shelter delegate. The SIRCS headquarters will continue to monitor the situation and if needed, provide additional available resources to support the team in Gizo.

Federation Coordination and Support

From the assessment stage the Federation secretariat, together with the Solomon Islands Red Cross, has been playing a central role in facilitating Movement operations in the affected areas. A Federation delegate from the Asia Pacific disaster management unit was in the Solomon Islands for the first month of the emergency, coordinating the operation including various incoming and outgoing personnel that made up the core disaster relief team. A total of ten staff from various National Societies have worked in the appeal-funded operation at different times, including those from the Australian, Japanese, New Zealand, Tonga and Vanuatu Red Cross Societies. Some were field assessment and coordination team (FACT) trained, while others had expertise in disaster management, health, logistics, media, relief and water and sanitation. The operation received additional technical visits from the Federation secretariat regional delegation and Asia Pacific service centre. Such human resource support is invaluable to the SIRCS, as the National Society is facing its own set of human resource capacity issues for the operation.

In addition to two Australian Red Cross delegates (separate to the core operational team), the French Red Cross (FRC) have stationed a two-member team to supervise their ECHO supported shelter activities focusing on water and sanitation and tool distribution project. The FRC is focusing on assisting 400 families living in the Sassamanga area in Choiseul. In collaboration with the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), CARITAS is supporting Choiseul for shelter related activities.

The National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) and provincial and central NDCs (national disaster councils) who were tasked with coordinating Solomon Islands government emergency response are now handing over overall responsibility to a sectoral-based system and refocusing on overseeing plans for permanent shelter. The government's national disaster council had initially put the Solomon Islands Red Cross in charge of distribution to all affected areas. This was later revised to include all stakeholders who agreed to focus on the following geographical areas – World Vision would be responsible for Simbo and Ranangga, Caritas for Shortlands and the northern tip of Choiseul, Oxfam for Gizo, while the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement would serve the communities in Vella Lavella, Kolombangara and Choiseul.

The NDMO, supported with UNDP technical assistance, has established a shelter stakeholders group who meet regularly. The group is made up of World Vision, Oxfam, Caritas, ADRA, French Red Cross, Solomon Islands Red Cross and the International Federation. The group meets weekly to share information.

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: Frank Kennedy (head of delegation), Martin Blackgrove (disaster management coordinator), phone: +679 3311855; fax: +679 3311406; email: Frank.Kennedy@ifrc.org or Martin.Blackgrove@ifrc.org
- Federation secretariat in Geneva (Asia Pacific department): Jae Ryul Kim (Pacific regional officer), phone: +4122 730 4260; email: JR.Kim@ifrc.org.

[Interim Financial Report below; click here to return to the title page.](#)

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDRSB001 - SOLOMON ISLANDS - EARTHQUAKE & TSUNAMI

Interim Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2007/4-2007/5
Budget Timeframe	2007/4-2007/12
Appeal	MDRSB001
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Consolidated Response to Appeal

	Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation	TOTAL
A. Budget		1,691,976				1,691,976
B. Opening Balance		0				0
Income						
<u>Cash contributions</u>						
American Red Cross		60,800				60,800
Australian Red Cross		192,402				192,402
Australia - Private Donors		4,926				4,926
Canadian Red Cross Society		210,000				210,000
Finnish Red Cross		81,000				81,000
Icelandic Red Cross		18,979				18,979
Japanese Government		242,000				242,000
Japanese Red Cross Society		49,856				49,856
Liechtenstein Red Cross		500				500
Monaco Red Cross		27,880				27,880
New Zealand Red Cross		8,945				8,945
On Line donations		10,851				10,851
Swedish Red Cross		88,650				88,650
United Arab Emirates Red Crescent So		12,142				12,142
C1. Cash contributions		1,008,930				1,008,930
<u>Outstanding pledges (Revalued)</u>						
Australian Red Cross		60,203				60,203
Hong Kong Red Cross		3,659				3,659
Japanese Red Cross Society		36,039				36,039
C2. Outstanding pledges (Revalued)		99,901				99,901
<u>Inkind Personnel</u>						
Other		17,447				17,447
C5. Inkind Personnel		17,447				17,447
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C6)		1,126,278				1,126,278
D. Total Funding = B + C		1,126,278				1,126,278

II. Balance of Funds

	Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation	TOTAL
B. Opening Balance		0				0
C. Income		1,126,278				1,126,278
E. Expenditure		-594,523				-594,523
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)		531,755				531,755

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDRSB001 - SOLOMON ISLANDS - EARTHQUAKE & TSUNAMI

Interim Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2007/4-2007/5
Budget Timeframe	2007/4-2007/12
Appeal	MDRSB001
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation		
A							B	A - B
BUDGET (C)		1,691,976					1,691,976	
Supplies								
Shelter - Relief	473,000		19,517				19,517	453,483
Construction Materials			49				49	-49
Clothing & textiles	1,537		1,424				1,424	113
Food	93,050		3,819				3,819	89,231
Medical & First Aid			493				493	-493
Utensils & Tools	97,500		82,257				82,257	15,243
Other Supplies & Services	143,400		38,133				38,133	105,267
Total Supplies	808,487		145,693				145,693	662,794
Land, vehicles & equipment								
Computers & Telecom	9,800		1,499				1,499	8,301
Office/Household Furniture & Equipm.	12,000							12,000
Others Machinery & Equipment	50,000							50,000
Total Land, vehicles & equipment	71,800		1,499				1,499	70,301
Transport & Storage								
Storage	3,330		1,129				1,129	2,201
Distribution & Monitoring	295,976		272,091				272,091	23,885
Transport & Vehicle Costs	14,680		10,685				10,685	3,995
Total Transport & Storage	313,986		283,906				283,906	30,080
Personnel Expenditures								
International Staff Payroll Benefits			18,690				18,690	-18,690
Regionally Deployed Staff	343,200							343,200
National Staff			549				549	-549
National Society Staff			8,112				8,112	-8,112
Consultants			2,454				2,454	-2,454
Total Personnel Expenditures	343,200		29,805				29,805	313,395
General Expenditure								
Travel	8,657		40,247				40,247	-31,590
Information & Public Relation			57				57	-57
Office Costs	20,090		5,854				5,854	14,236
Communications	15,778		13,408				13,408	2,370
Financial Charges			579				579	-579
Total General Expenditure	44,525		60,145				60,145	-15,620
Program Support								
Program Support	109,978		38,570				38,570	71,408
Total Program Support	109,978		38,570				38,570	71,408
Operational Provisions								
Operational Provisions			34,905				34,905	-34,905
Total Operational Provisions			34,905				34,905	-34,905
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	1,691,976		594,523				594,523	1,097,453
VARIANCE (C - D)			1,097,453				1,097,453	