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Information bulletin

Federated States of Micronesia and Palau: Tropical Storm Bopha

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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This bulletin is being issued for information only and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation.

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The situation

On 27 November, Tropical Storm Bopha developed southwest of Pohnpei and southeast of Chuuk in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), intensifying overnight with a current maximum wind speed of 40 knots near its centre, and has moved westwards as expected. It is currently a Category 1, and tropical storm warning remains in effect for the following locations in the FSM: Pohnpei state (Nukuoro); Chuuk state (Puluqat, Likunor, Losap, Chuuk Lagoon Islands); and Yap state (Satawal). The tropical storm is expected to worsen over the weekend with the likelihood of it developing into a Category 4 tropical storm, effecting greater risks in Palau and Yap state of FSM.

Residents in Palau have been urged to secure their homes, prepare for the storm and restrict travel to outer islands.

In FSM, the latest report as of 29 November from Chapter Coordinator in Chuuk to national headquarters stated that three islands have reported damage to housings (in Ta islands) and livelihoods (Lukunoch and Kuttu islands).

The potential population affected might reach 20,000 to 25,000 people including Chuuk, Yap and Palau islands.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Palau Red Cross Society (PRCS) has already been made aware of the impending tropical storm and has met with National Emergency Management Office (NEMO). The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Pacific Regional Office, on 29 November, deployed a delegate (acting disaster management coordinator) to support PRCS contingency planning activities in preparation for the approaching tropical storm. The delegate is working alongside PRCS and NEMO to assist with coordination of preparedness activities and in obtaining New Zealand Red Cross support for emergency communication strategy for outlying states of Kayangel, Peleliu and Angaur. Additional precautionary measures taken by PRCS have been to mobilize at least additional volunteers on standby in case the National Emergency Operation Center needs extra personnel in the preparations. American Red Cross in Northern Mariana Islands will also be able to support PRCS with sending emergency relief items from Saipan. PRCS is maintaining close coordination with their Government and national partners. Further plans will be discussed in the next national planning meeting.

Micronesia Red Cross Society (MRCS) is consistently maintaining communication with all its chapters since 26 November. While some minimal damage was experienced in Chuuk, Yap state is likely to be most affected by the tropical storm. The MRCS DM officer is currently liaising with local shipping companies and also government ships on contingency plans for moving stock from Pohnpei state where the national headquarters is located. Disaster preparedness containers at Yap and Chuuk are stocked with tarpaulins, blankets, kitchen sets, jerry cans and buckets. However, it will need to be replenished once distribution of relief items commence. MRCS is also conducting emergency communications (satellite phones) test with the regional office. MRCS's community disaster response volunteers are on stand by at national level and in the different branches for further assessments.

The IFRC regional office in Suva is facilitating arrangements to ensure both national societies (PRCS and MRCS) have access to all the necessary support and expertise to prepare and equip them during this time. The current plan of action being implemented by the IFRC is as follows.

- Continuously updating national societies' disaster management (DM) focal points with information, who will in turn inform management, staff and field officers.
- Assisting the national societies in interpreting weather information received.
- Deployment of IFRC acting DM coordinator to PRCS to provide operations coordination (arrived in Koror on 29 November).
- Ensuring information sharing and coordination among Red Cross and non-Red Cross partners.
- Coordinating with other national partners, thus providing PRCS with some leverage to engage effectively with them, particularly NEMO.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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How we work

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

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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The IFRC's work is guided by [Strategy 2020](#) which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.