

# DREF operation



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Cook Islands: Tropical Cyclones

DREF operation n° MDRCK002  
GLIDE n° TC-2010-000024-COK  
12 February 2010

The International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the Federation in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross and Red Crescent emergency response. The DREF is a vital part of the International Federation's disaster response system and increases the ability of National Societies to respond to disasters.

**CHF 150,000 (USD 140,434 or EUR 102,280) has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Cook Islands Red Cross National Society in delivering immediate assistance to 1,671 beneficiaries. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.**

**Summary:** In a period of two weeks since 28 January 2010, the 15 atolls which make up the Cook Islands have been affected by three successive tropical cyclones. On 11 February 2010 at approximately 3am, Tropical Cyclone Pat, classified as category 3, made a direct hit on Aitutaki in the Southern Cook Islands. The cyclone has caused considerable infrastructural damage in Aitutaki where it is estimated that 90 per cent of housing has been damaged. While Cyclone Pat has dissipated, the Asia Pacific Centre for Emergency and Disaster Information warns that conditions in the Northern Cook Islands remain rife for tropical storm production. Support is required to mobilise response teams and emergency relief supplies such as tarpaulins, blankets, water containers, family and hygiene kits for distribution to 1,671 beneficiaries on Aitutaki.

This operation is expected to be implemented over three months, and will therefore be completed by 12 May 2010; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 12 August 2010).

[<click here for the DREF budget, here for contact details, or here to view the map of the affected area>](#)

## The situation

In a period of two weeks since 28 January 2010, the 15 atolls which make up the Cook Islands have been affected by three successive Tropical Cyclones. The latest and the strongest of the three, Tropical Cyclone Pat, brought destructive winds to the Island of Aitutaki and gale force winds and rain to Rarotonga and Palmerston.

As a result the Government of the Cook Islands has declared Aitutaki a disaster zone and announced a state of Emergency in Rarotonga. At its height Tropical Cyclone Pat was classified as a category 3 cyclone bringing destructive wind gusts of over 100 knots.

While Tropical Cyclone Pat has dissipated, the Asia Pacific Centre for Emergency and Disaster Information warns that conditions in the Northern Cook Islands remain rife for tropical storm production. Thus, there remains continued risk for more cyclone activity in the northern Cook Islands.

Aitutaki is a popular island for tourism and has an estimated population of 1,671. Initial reports estimate that 90 per cent of the houses on the northern side of the island have experienced significant damage to roofing. The airport, hospital and most major buildings on Aitutaki have only sustained minor damage and

are still functional. The government is currently trying to restore communications and power on the island. The authorities evacuated most of Aitutaki's residents from low lying areas before the storm impacted, only a few minor injuries are being reported. The main source of water on the island is rain water tanks. There is also widespread damage to trees, crops and other vegetation.

The Cook Island Red Cross Society (CIRCS) has been meeting regularly with government officials to coordinate closely on response. Preliminary assessments of the situation suggest that shelter and water will present the greatest needs on the island.

## **Coordination and partnerships**

The CIRCS is coordinating closely with the Cook Islands Government in deploying joint assessment teams and sharing information. The Cook Islands disaster management office (DMO) is attending the national disaster coordination meetings and the CIRCS Secretary General is meeting regularly with government representatives to coordinate on response activities at the national level.

The International Federation is liaising directly with the CIRCS on the need for support and coordinating closely with partner national societies in the region to assist in mobilizing personnel and relief items. Further support to the CIRCS in undertaking the needs assessments and potential relief and recovery work is being provided by the International Federation through its global disaster management resources, including the Asia Pacific disaster management unit, located in Kuala Lumpur.

The Australian Red Cross is sending a water and sanitation specialist at the request of the national society to assist with assessments and is on standby to mobilize shelter and hygiene kits as well as tarpaulins as a part of the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) operation. The New Zealand Red Cross is coordinating closely with the New Zealand Government on the possibility of deploying relief items for distribution and replenishment.

## **Red Cross and Red Crescent action**

The CIRCS took quick and early action in advance of the tropical cyclones by prepositioning additional relief supplies including tarpaulins, blankets first aid kits and ropes with their branches located in the Southern Cook Islands of Mangaia, Atiu, Mauke, Mitaro and Aitutaki on 9 February 2010.

Branch volunteers on Aitutaki assisted some elderly residents with storm preparation and relocation to inland shelters.

The CIRCS disaster management officer has joined government officials on a flight to Aitutaki to conduct an initial damage survey and to mobilize volunteers into assessment and relief teams.

The representatives from the International Federation's Pacific regional office located in Suva are coordinating offers of support to CIRCS from regional partners including the New Zealand Red Cross, the Australian Red Cross, the French Red Cross and the South Pacific Regional Intervention Platform (PIROPS). The International Federation's Pacific regional office is also liaising with UN OCHA for CIRCS.

To date, at the request of CIRCS, the New Zealand Red Cross has mobilized: 100 water containers, 100 tarpaulins, 50 first aid kits, five satellite phones, candles and rain coats were provided to supplement CIRCS's existing pre-positioned relief supplies. In effect, CIRCS is preparing to mobilize further relief items pending the outcome of assessments.

In its preparations and drawing on its auxiliary status to the government, CIRCS has also arranged with the custom authorities to facilitate the clearance of inbound humanitarian goods without incurring duty.

The current plan of action outlined by CIRCS is to focus on determining the extent and scale of the damage caused by tropical cyclone Pat by mobilizing a team of five staff and volunteers to travel to Aitutaki within the next 24 hours to undertake a damage and needs assessment: Whereupon, relief and recovery needs will be identified. The assessment team will also be supported by an experienced disaster management; and water and sanitation delegate from the Australian Red Cross.

Further support to CIRCS in undertaking the needs assessments, and relief and recovery work is being provided by the International Federation through its global disaster management resources, including the Asia Pacific disaster management unit located in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

## The needs

Many of those affected have experienced significant damage to their homes and household items, and are being temporarily housed in evacuation centres and community buildings. Main needs identified include shelter, water, and essential household items, and materials for cleaning and setting up immediate shelter structures for families. There has been damage to the main water feed on the island. While some clean water supply is currently available from community water tanks further assessment is required on water needs. It is likely that there is still a need for water distribution and collection means. With beneficiaries in temporary shelter and the likelihood of continued wet conditions over the coming month as well as uncertainty regarding water supplies hygiene and sanitation is also of concern.

## The proposed operation

This DREF operation is aimed to meet the immediate needs in providing support to families affected by Tropical Cyclone Pat through the provision of non-food relief supplies. The operation will provide shelter kits, family kits shelter kits, tarpaulins and water containers. Additional stocks will be repositioned in the Northern Cook Islands to respond to future risk.

### Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

**Objective: The distribution of 100 kitchen sets, blankets and sheltering materials to 334 families (1,671 beneficiaries).**

**Activities planned:**

- Support to ongoing needs and capacity assessments
- Train volunteers on IFRC distribution procedures
- Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance.
- Distribute relief supplies and control supply movements from point of dispatch to end user.
- Replenishment of pre-positioned relief stocks
- Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions.

### Emergency Health

**Objective: The risk of waterborne and water related diseases has been reduced through the provision of 500 mosquito nets to 334 families (1,671 beneficiaries). The psychological support needs of beneficiaries are addresses.**

**Activities planned:**

- Conduct training/information programmes for Red Cross volunteers and beneficiaries of waterborne and water related diseases
- Conduct training for Red Cross staff and volunteers for the provision of psychological support in emergencies
- Disseminate the risk of waterborne and water related diseases and PSP activities in affected communities

### Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

**Objective: Reduce the risk of waterborne and water related diseases through the provision of safe water, adequate sanitation as well as hygiene promotion to 334 families (1,671 beneficiaries).**

**Activities planned:**

- Assess the existing coverage with a view of ensuring availability of an adequate water supply
- Provide potable water, appropriate sanitation and hygiene promotion for 334 families.
- Conduct training/information programmes for Red Cross volunteers and beneficiaries, in particular hygiene promotion.

## 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 the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The International Federation'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.

The International Federation'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.

## Contact information

**For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:**

In Cook Islands Red Cross National Society

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**[<DREF budget and map below; click here to return to the title page>](#)**

## **DREF BUDGET SUMMARY**

Annex 1

Cook Islands : Tropical Cyclones

Appeal n°MDRCK002

### **ORIGINAL**

#### **RELIEF NEEDS**

Shelter 24,845

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**Total Relief Needs 24,845**

#### **CAPITAL EQUIPMENT**

Computers & Telecom Equipment 22,000

#### **TRANSPORT, STORAGE & VEHICLES**

Storage - Warehouse 5,000

Transport & Vehicles Costs 28,000

#### **WORKSHOPS & TRAINING**

Workshops & Training 30,000

#### **GENERAL EXPENSES**

Travel 18,000

Information & Public Relations 3,000

Office running costs 5,000

Communication Costs 5,000

#### **PROGRAMME SUPPORT**

Programme Support - PSR (6.5% of total) 9,155

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**Total Operational Needs 125,155**

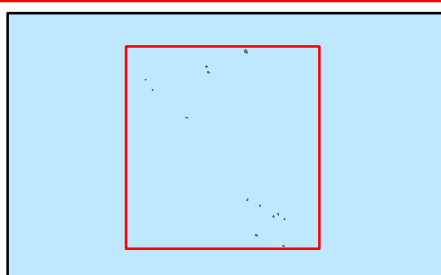
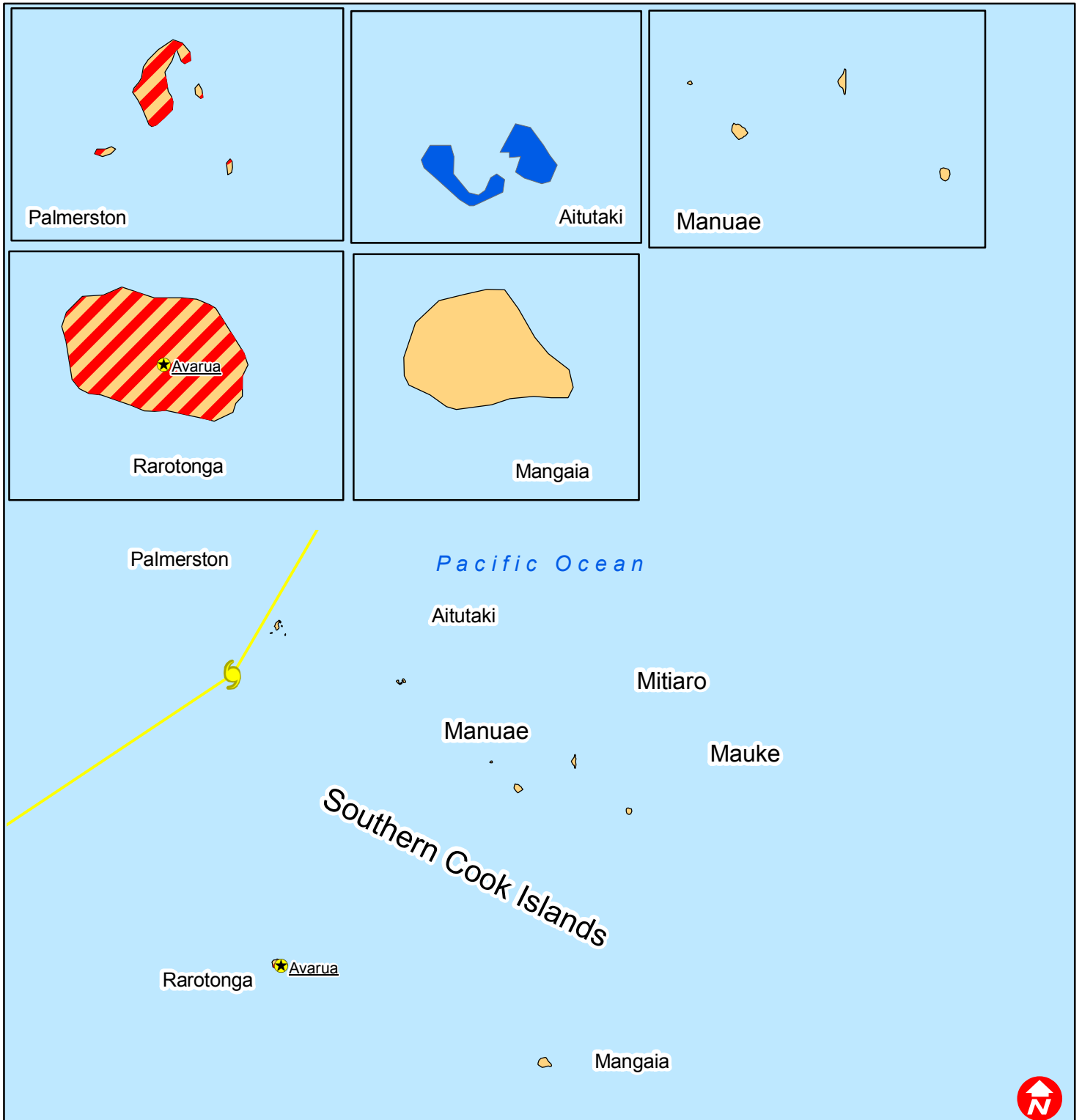
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**Total Appeal Budget (Cash & Kind) 150,000**

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# Cook Islands: Floods



- Tropical storm
- Tropical depression
- Storm category 2
- Storm category 1
- Capitals
- Affected areas by the force wind
- Most affected area