

INFORMATION BULLETIN



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: Cyclone Zoe

2 January 2003

Information Bulletin N° 1

*Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) Allocated:
CHF 50,000 on stand-by*

This Bulletin is being issued based on the needs described below reflecting the information available at this time. Based on further updates and details from assessment reports, or should the situation deteriorate, the Federation will consider international support through an Appeal.

The Situation

On 28 December 2002 Cyclone Zoe, a category 5 tropical storm with wind speeds over 300 km/h swept through the islands of Tikopia, Anuta and Fataka, part of the Santa Cruz group of the Solomon Islands, about 1,000 km east of the capital Honiara.

The Solomon Islands National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) estimated that approximately 2,000 people were affected in the two worst hit islands of Tikopia and Anuta. There has been no direct contact with the islands as the radio communication system is not working.

The first plane to fly over Tikopia on 1 January 2003 reported massive destruction and few signs of life. While confirming extensive damage to houses and crops, an Australian Air Force Hercules that circled Tikopia and Anuta the following day, found signs of reconstruction and no evidence of large-scale loss of life or injury. Both flights could not land because there is no airstrip on the islands.

An NDMO coordinated team, including UNDAC, Red Cross, OXFAM and World Vision, is scheduled to reach the islands by boat within 2-3 days, depending on the weather, in order to carry out an in-depth assessment of needs. The ship will also carry initial relief supplies, including food, water, blankets, shelter materials and medical supplies.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

The Solomon Islands Red Cross (SIRC) has maintained close coordination with NDMO from the onset, and has assisted in the preparation of the assessment team deployment. Red Cross team members include a field assessment coordination team (FACT) trained disaster management coordinator and a medical doctor.

The SIRC has provided some 1,700 blankets from its relief stock, which had been procured earlier under the Japanese Red Cross-funded regional disaster preparedness container programme. World Vision and Oxfam will supply additional shelter materials.

The Federation's regional delegation in Suva has maintained close contact with the Australian Red Cross and New Zealand Red Cross and other agencies including OCHA, sharing information regarding Red Cross action and relief personnel on stand-by. The Federation's regional delegation in Fiji also released SBD 16,800 (CHF 3,100) to SIRC in support of logistics and travel of the Red Cross team.

Meanwhile, the Fiji Red Cross is launching a national appeal to assist the Solomon Islands Red Cross directly.

Outstanding needs

Detailed relief and rehabilitation needs will only be determined once the assessment team reaches the affected areas. The SIRC has indicated that relief items most needed are likely to include tarpaulins, water containers, blankets and sarong-type clothes. Based on the details of the assessment, the Federation will consider whether international support will be sought through an Appeal. Meanwhile, up to CHF 50,000 is available on a stand-by basis from its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF), depending on the findings of the assessment team.

For a full description of the National Society profile, see www.ifrc.org

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All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal.

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