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Information bulletin

Federated States of Micronesia: Typhoon Maysak

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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Host National Society(ies): Micronesia Red Cross Society	

This bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Micronesia Red Cross Society, with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), has analyzed that the available information points toward significant humanitarian needs. A scaled-up response, which will require support from the IFRC Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) or other international disaster response mechanisms, is envisioned.

[<click here for detailed contact information>](#)

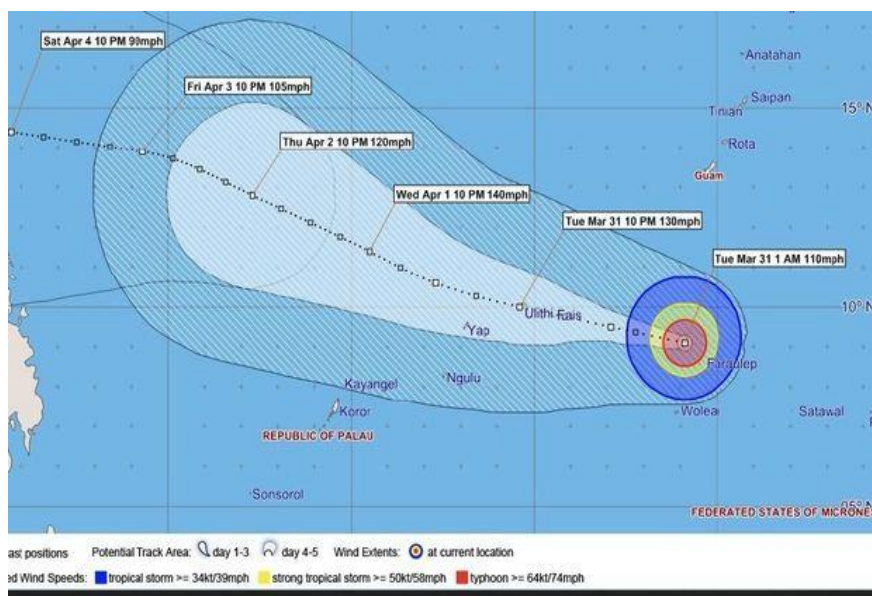
The situation

On Friday, 27 March 2015, a tropical depression was noted forming in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), near Pohnpei state and the national capital in Palikir. The storm continued gathering strength and developed into a strong and dangerous typhoon – Typhoon Maysak – which has since been upgraded to a Super Typhoon.

From Pohnpei it tracked west hitting Chuuk state (population approximately 30,000) over the weekend with damaging winds and torrential rainfall as the main core of the storm moved directly over the island. The small atoll of Ulithi is in

direct hit from the eyewall of Maysak. The last major event in Chuuk state was July 2002 – Tropical Storm Chataan – heavy rainfalls had caused more than 30 landslides (47 people dead and many injured).

In Chuuk state, the government has reported five deaths, extensive damage to private and public properties including schools, health facilities, public utilities, private residences, and the sinking of several fishing, passenger, and dive ships.¹ Chuuk airport was closed due to debris. Many outlying atolls have reported damage to crops and to fresh water supplies. Schools have been closed until further notice. The Chuuk Governor



Tracking map from National Weather Service via [RadioNZ](#)

¹FSM Presidential Decree, 30 March 2015

declared a State of Emergency and established a Typhoon Maysak Disaster Assessment Task Force (TMDAT) to conduct assessments across the State. Radio is still operative and providing announcements on the situation.

On 30 March, the FSM President issued an emergency declaration allocating USD 100,000 (approx. CHF 96,412) for relief efforts and establishing a National Emergency Taskforce to implement immediate measures as are necessary to contain the damage arising from the emergency situation, including close monitoring of vulnerable populations in the low-lying atolls and shorelines.

At the time of this bulletin, Typhoon Maysak is now passing through Yap State (population approximately 11,000). Yap consists of 14 outer islands (mostly atolls) reaching to the east and south for some 800 km, covering 102 km². Most goods, including food, wood for construction comes from the high islands. Typhoon warnings have been posted by the National Weather Service in Guam for parts of Yap state, including the islands of Fais, Ulithi and Yap.

Maysak will be close to peak intensity at this time with sustained winds expected to be 160mph (260kph) or more – the equivalent of a Category V hurricane. Wind gusts may be even higher.

Given the damage that occurred at Chuuk which was well before Typhoon Maysak reached its current strength, it is expected that this will be a significant event. Already some of the eastern-most islands have experienced intense winds with reported damage to crops and buildings.

Warnings have been issued for the public to relocate to the nearest shelters. A group of undocumented migrants and those aboard Vietnamese fishing vessels that arrived in November 2014 are also being sheltered in a nearby school. The airport has been closed and communication antennas and internet are likely to be closed down for protection during the impact.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action



MRCS Yap Chapter coordinator checks relief goods in the disaster preparedness container stationed in Yap. Photo: IFRC.

Micronesia Red Cross Society (MRCS) national office in Pohnpei is liaising closely with its active chapters in Chuuk and Yap, as well as with the national and state authorities, IFRC and other key partners.

Assessments are in the early stages at Chuuk. The low level of local relief supplies in the MRCS Chuuk Chapter are being supplemented by items from the MRCS national warehouse which were sent on 30 March via patrol boat from Pohnpei. These relief items included blankets, cooking sets, tarpaulins and jerry cans. The government and other locally based organizations have also sent relief supplies.

The MRCS disaster management officer is now in Chuuk to support coordination of the assessments and relief operation. The chapter coordinators and volunteers are activated and placed on stand-by to report and respond to the emerging situation.

The Yap Chapter conducted an inventory of currently stocked relief supplies and activated volunteers in preparation for the typhoon. The relief supplies are found to be lower than ideal level and will require additional replenishment to support higher numbers of affected people. It is anticipated that currently staff and volunteers will be waiting out the intensity of the storm until it is safe to assess the damage.

The IFRC North Pacific office (NPO) - based in the Republic of the Marshall Islands - is closely monitoring the situation and coordinating with the Pacific regional office in Fiji and Asia Pacific zone office in Malaysia. The NPO is also in contact with the Palau Red Cross Society as the typhoon is anticipated to pass well into the north of Palau.

In addition, IFRC is in contact with other key partners in the region, in particular the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) which has presence on the ground and is sharing information on the impact situation in some of the outer islands.

Based on the available information that points toward significant humanitarian needs and with further information through assessments when safety conditions allow, the IFRC NPO is working closely with MRCS to determine the appropriate scaled-up response and support from the IFRC Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) or other international disaster response mechanisms.

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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 Humanitarian 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**.

The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:



Save lives.
protect livelihoods,
and strengthen recovery
from disaster and crises.



Enable **healthy**
and **safe** living.



Promote **social inclusion**
and a culture of
non-violence and **peace**.
