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Information bulletin

Solomon Island: Earthquake

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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Host National Society: Solomon Island Red Cross	Date of disaster: 9 December 2016

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. The Solomon Island Red Cross Society (SIRCS) will, however, accept direct assistance to provide support to the affected population.

The situation

A very strong undersea earthquake of magnitude 8.0 occurred at 4.39am about 62 kilometers west-southwest of Kirakira, Makira Ulawa Province in the Solomon Islands. Shaking was strongly felt in Makira, south of Malaita, north of Guadalcanal and in Rennel & Bellona. Tsunami was observed in Makira.

Tsunami Warning and Watch advice initially issued immediately following the earthquake for Makira, Temotu, Malaita, Rennel & Bellona, Central Islands, South Guadalcanal provinces, was cancelled at 9.30am. An "all clear" message was issued by National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) at 10.25am.

A Pacific-wide Tsunami alert was initially issued for Vanuatu, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Tuvalu, Kosrae - a chapter of the Federated States of Micronesia, and New Caledonia in the morning but was cancelled shortly after 7.55am Fiji time.

In the several hours following the earthquake, the Solomon Islands experienced ten significant aftershocks ranging from 4.5M to 5.5M. The National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) activated its National Emergency Operation Center (NEOC) in the capital city Honiara, where relevant humanitarian actors including UNOCHA are present. An aerial assessment has been conducted by NDMO to provide an overview of damage in the affected areas Malaita and Makira-Ulawa provinces. Results of the aerial assessment will be made available overnight. Meanwhile, initial reports received from the provinces indicate disaster impacts resulting from the earthquake and tsunami, in the summarized table below.



SIRCS Auki Branch volunteers doing interview and inspecting the level of damages sustained by the earthquake that struck most parts of the Solomon Islands on Friday, 9th December 2016.
(Photo: SIRCS)

Province	# villages impacted	Affected population	# houses destroyed	# houses damaged	# people injured	# affected institutions*	# affected infrastructure**
Makira	14	3,042	5	3	-	3	3
Malaita	3	327	16	23	1	-	-
Temotu	1	343	-	-	-	-	-
Total	18	3,712	21	26	1	3	3

*affected institutions: schools

**affected infrastructure: churches and community buildings

The government has not yet requested for international assistance, but have asked for information on available resources and relief supplies in country from humanitarian actors and UN Agencies with OCHA assisting in compilation of information. OCHA Pacific has indicated to the Director of NDMO outlining the support that can be offered by OCHA and the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT) of which IFRC is a member, should the government require international assistance.



A child sits in front of his destroyed home in Radefasu village in Malaita, one of the communities in the Province that is also affected by the magnitude 7.8 earthquake that struck the Solomon Islands on the early morning of 9th December 2016. **(Photo: SIRCS)**

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Solomon Island Red Cross Society (SIRCS) activated its emergency operations centre (EOC) since 6am, providing support as auxiliary to government efforts to respond, and carried out an initial briefing for all key staff in the SIRCS headquarters. The first Situation Report was circulated to all partners at 7.17am reflecting initial reports have reached the National Society through its internal communication with two branches from Makira and Malaita provinces, indicating that houses are severely damaged or destroyed, water and electricity supply disrupted. SIRCS branches in Malaita, and Honiara and Guadalcanal have activated their Emergency Response Team (ERT) trained volunteers. In addition, volunteers of the Malaita branch have started assessments and distribution to communities accessible to the branch. Non-food items (NFI) stock update has been provided to NDMO National Emergency Operations Center.



One of the response volunteers interviewing a woman at Oibola village in Malaita. Auki Branch has begun distributing NFIs to households that are affected. **(Photo: SIRCS)**

SIRC launched a disaster management information system (DMIS) entry and has been in contact with IFRC country cluster support team (CCST) office in Suva and the Partner National Societies present in country. Australian Red Cross (ARC) communications department was alerted and put on standby for communications surge capacity. New Zealand Red Cross assisted with the activation of satellite phones in country to enhance communication resources. French Red Cross and ARC who are both present in country have been briefed on the situation and are working closely with SIRCS and IFRC in supporting the planning for potential response.

IFRC CCST office based in Suva is in close communication with SIRCS to monitor the situation, providing communication updates through various social media and partners updates, and is standing by to coordinate further support as needed working closely with the Asia Pacific regional office.



SIRCS Auki Branch doing distribution to families whose homes are destroyed by the earthquake at Oibola village in Malaita Province. Items distributed include Tarpaulins, shelter kits, hygiene kits, kitchen sets, solar lamps, mats, blankets, mosquito nets and 10-liter water containers. **(Photo: SIRCS)**

Contact Information

For further information, please contact:

Solomon Island Red Cross Society (phone: +677 25299):

- Joanne Zoleveke, secretary general; email: secgen@redcross.org.sb
- Cameron Vudi, disaster risk manager; email: disastermgr@redcross.org.sb

IFRC country cluster support team, Suva (phone: +679 3311 855):

- Kathryn Clarkson, head of country cluster support team; email: kathryn.clarkson@ifrc.org
- Stephanie Zoll, disaster risk management coordinator; email: stephanie.zoll@ifrc.org

Asia Pacific regional office, Kuala Lumpur (phone: +603 9207 5700; fax: +603 2161 0670):

- Martin Faller, deputy director; email: martin.faller@ifrc.org
- Nelson Castaño, head of disaster and crisis; email: nelson.castano@ifrc.org
- Timothy Lam, operations coordinator; mobile: +601 2207 6534; email: timothy.lam@ifrc.org

For partnership and resource development enquiries:

- Pierre Kremer, head of partnership; mobile: +60 19 620 0758; email: pierre.kremer@ifrc.org

For communications enquiries:

- Patrick Fuller, communications manager; email: patrick.fuller@ifrc.org

For planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (PMER) enquiries:

- Clarence Sim, acting head of PMER; email: clarence.sim@ifrc.org



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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 (NGO's) 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.**