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Information bulletin

Fiji: Floods

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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17 February 2012

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 Fiji Red Cross will, however, accept direct assistance to provide support to the affected population.

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

The situation

The western and northern parts of Fiji experienced heavy rains on 24 January, which led to widespread flooding. This resulted in eight deaths and localised landslides. A State of Natural Disaster was declared over some parts of the Western Division of Viti Levu for 15 days, starting from 26 January 2012. The scale and extent of the damage varies considerably from area to area. However, due to the magnitude of the damage caused by the recent floods in the Western Division as well as the continuous adverse weather experienced nationwide, the State of Natural Disaster has been extended for another ten days until 18 February 2012. Whilst some parts of the Western Division are still experiencing occasional rain the flooding situation is easing.

To date, the number of deaths reported has increased to ten. The Fiji government reported that during the peak of the flood there were 64 evacuation centres open with a total of 4,561 evacuees. As of 15 February, the government was reporting that there is only one active evacuation centre, the Girit Centre, in Lautoka with 20 families of 150 evacuees.

Clean-up operations are now underway in all areas in the Western Division. The Fiji government is reporting that Fiji Electricity Authority has restored all power in the Western Division and that the Ministry of Works and Public Utilities has confirmed the remainder of roads closed is eight. The Water Authority of Fiji is also reporting that water supplies have resumed as normal in all areas except for Ba, where teams are working around the clock on the rehabilitation. The Ministry of Health reported five typhoid cases in the village of Koroboya and there has been one confirmed fatality as a result of dengue fever. The district emergency operations centres (EOCs), together with health officials, continue monitor the situation closely.

As the weather condition improves, the government's focus now is the completion of relief, rehabilitation



Fiji Red Cross staff and volunteers operating the NOMAD water purification unit in Ba area. Photo: Jim Boyce /Australian Red Cross

and reconstruction phase. This includes fumigation exercise conducted by the Ministry of Health in Declared Disaster Areas in the Western Division and continuation of clean-up campaign being conducted by the Republic of Fiji Military Forces (RFMF) Engineers, Police and National Fire Authority. The exact timeline for the full restoration of public utilities will very much depend on the weather status.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

MANAGEMENT AND OVERALL COORDINATION

The Fiji Red Cross staff and volunteers are working with their district emergency operation centres in full support to the activities that are currently in operation on the ground. Branches in the areas of Rakiraki, Tavua, Ba, Lautoka, Nadi and Sigatoka are operational and working closely with relevant stakeholders on the ground.

Fiji Red Cross National Office in Suva is working closely with the National Disaster Management Office to ensure there is a coordinated response to the affected communities' needs.

Fiji Red Cross did receive the committed grant donations from various donors and established a consolidated plan with incomes and expenditures to manage the overall response, with the support of IFRC finance development delegate.

Fiji Red Cross, with the support of IFRC regional office, is coordinating with the cluster members (water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), health) to have a common approach to the response in the different areas and identify opportunities and gaps.

Fiji Red Cross is coordinating closely with IFRC regional office and their Pacific Red Cross partners to support their efforts in the response.

ASSESSMENTS AND DISTRIBUTION OF NON-FOOD ITEMS

Branches are now finishing up their assessments and the distribution of non-food items (NFIs) is continuing. Currently Fiji Red Cross has distributed:

Location	Black Pack	Cooking Set	Tarpaulin	Water Container	Dignity Kit	WASH kits	Hygiene kits	Blankets
Nadi	104	35	4	16	6	100		222
Sigatoka	113	6	12		4	205	317	37
Lautoka	267		13	227		322		38
Ba	457	283	467	521		208		1,634
Tavua	348	9	3			110	151	38
Rakiraki	154	8	4	2	12		57	
Nalawa	12	3	2					
Totals	1,455	344	505	766	22	945	525	1,969

WATER

The district of Ba has had the worst impact on the water supply during this event. Fiji Red Cross has deployed a NOMAD water purification unit to Ba. In the beginning, the team was supported by two Australian Red Cross water and sanitation delegates, but both have since returned to Australia and the Fiji Red Cross team is managing the programme on its own.

In partnership with the District Officer of Ba, the Fiji Red Cross team identified three villages in need of the NOMAD programme. However, due to continuing rain the turbidity of the water was high, which made the pumping of water difficult. The Red Cross team procured four tanks to be used as settlement tanks to confine with the NOMAD operations. The provision of settlement tanks meant the team could successfully pump a total of 2,500 litres of safe drinking water per day. To date, the team has pumped 40,000 litres of safe drinking water for the villages. The Fiji Red Cross team hopes to expand this programme to reach more villages in the coming days.

The health team has also been working on the distribution of local WASH kits supplied by UNICEF. The donation of 4,000 x 10 litre collapsible water containers and 500 local family water and sanitation (WASH) kits were made in two batches from 3 February – 9 February. The 500 local WASH kits contained a total of:

- 1,000 x 10 litre collapsible containers
- 3,000 bars of Protex soap
- 2,500 packets x 50 water purification tablets
- 500 brochures with water purification tablet instructions
- 500 'hand' fliers with emergency messages

The local WASH kits were then split up by Fiji Red Cross volunteers to make smaller kits so they could reach a larger number of communities and families. Fiji Red Cross also supplied the instruction materials in Fijian.

HEALTH AND HYGIENE PROMOTION

All branches are working closely with the National Office health team to coordinate the distribution of Health in Emergencies supplies, which include hygiene kits designed to help mitigate the health impacts of a disaster for a family of four to six people. The kits contain items such as bathing soaps, washing soaps, sanitary pads, toothpastes, toothbrushes, detergent, candles, matches, mosquito coils, hand sanitizers, and male condoms, as well as educational leaflets on sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and a leaflet with hand washing steps in Fijian, Hindi and English. Dignity kits, supplied by UNFPA, containing basic personal supplies to ensure that women have appropriate access to specific hygiene items, such as sanitary pads, sulus, underwear, etc, have been and continue to be distributing.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- **National Society:** National Board Liaison, Annie Rogers; office phone: +679 331 4133; Mobile +679 999 2486; email: redcross@connect.com.fj
 - **IFRC regional office: Disaster management coordinator,** Ysabeau Rycx; office phone: +679 331 1855 ; mobile: +679 999 2509; email: ysabeau.rycx@ifrc.org
 - **IFRC Zone: Operations coordinator,** Christine Strater; office phone +60 3 9207 5727; mobile: +6012 213 0199; email: christine.strater@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 \(NGOs\) 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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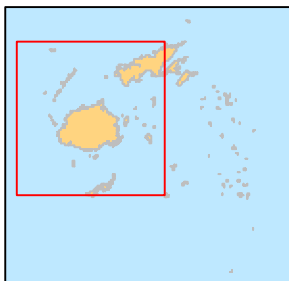
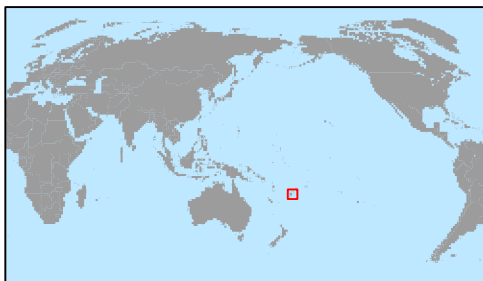
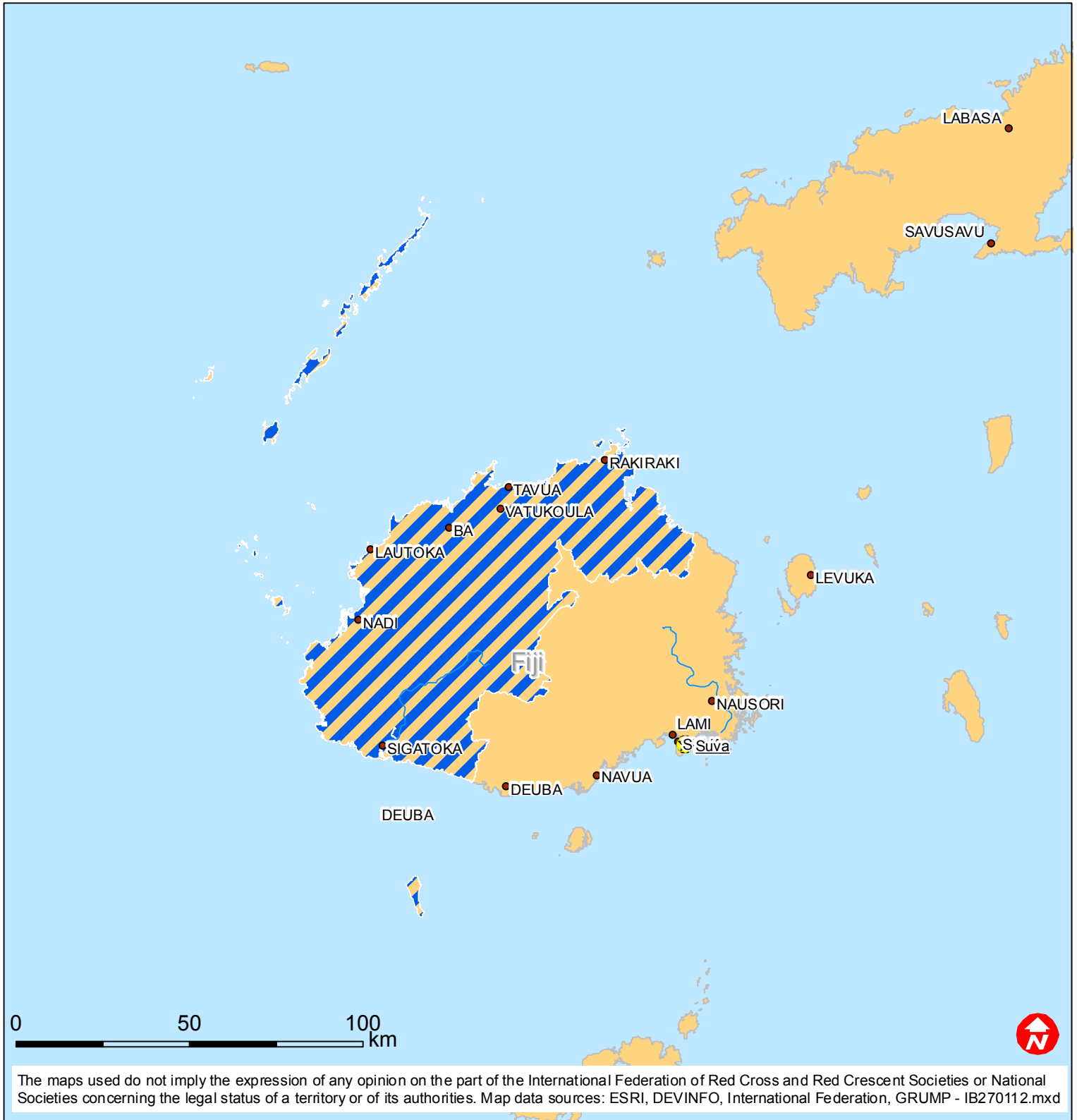



The IFRC's work is guided by [Strategy 2020](#) which puts forward three strategic aims:

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.



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 Western division