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Information bulletin

Solomon Islands: Earthquake and Tsunami

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Information Bulletin n° 1
TS-2013-000015-SLB
8 February 2013

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 (SIRC) will, however accept direct assistance to provide support to the affected population.



Solomon Island Red Cross volunteers loading the emergency items for distribution on to the police boat.
Photo credit: SIRC

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

Summary

On 6 February, there was an 8.0 magnitude earthquake off the coast of Santa Cruz Islands, Temotu province in the Solomon Islands, followed by more than 100 strong aftershocks. There was a tsunami watch as well as tsunami warnings issued (and subsequently cancelled) for a number of Pacific Island countries. A tsunami wave (one meter) travelled 500 meters inland and flattened many traditional houses in the Temotu Province. The National Disaster Council of the Solomon Islands is reporting six casualties and four missing, including a child who was swept away by the wave. Initial reports indicate that 431 houses in Temotu Province have been damaged or destroyed. Up to 3,500 people have been displaced. The Solomon Islands Red Cross (SIRC) is working closely with the government to conduct assessments, organize relief distributions, and assist with emergency shelters.

The situation

An undersea earthquake measuring 8.0 which occurred 33 kilometres west southwest of the Santa Cruz region in the Solomon Islands generated a tsunami which affected a number of villages in three different provinces (Temotu, Makira-Ulawa and Malaita). Shortly after the earthquake, a Pacific-wide warning and watch was issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center which resulted in several evacuations throughout the Pacific region. The warning was cancelled at approximately

0347 GMT during which time early reports of damage in Solomon Islands were already being received.

While no reports of damage were received from neighboring countries, it appears that a number of villages in the Solomon Islands southeastern province Temotu (approximately population of 20,000) have suffered extensive damage due to the tsunami.

Initial reports indicate that 431 houses in Temotu province have been damaged or destroyed. Up to 3,500 people have been displaced, some of whom are being accommodated by relatives, friends, or at schools or churches. School and church buildings in Lata are being used as temporary shelters.

Santa Cruz (Nendo) Island is currently experiencing power outages. The terminal building at Lata Airport has sustained damages. Early reports indicate inundation of the Lata wharf.

The water supply in Lata is significantly damaged, affecting more than 2,300 people. The National Disaster Management Office has identified drinking water, water purification systems and water purification tablets as an urgent need. The Solomon Islands Government is deploying water supplies to Temotu Province and they are expected to arrive on Sunday evening.

The Solomon Islands Government has already dispatched teams from its capital, Honiara, to support the Provincial Emergency Operation Centre in Temotu. A request for a flyover by Solomon Islands Airlines to provide an immediate situation overview is being considered.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The SIRC Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) was activated with 20 staff on receipt of early warning information from the National Emergency Operation Centre on 6 February. The National Society's EOC maintains contact with volunteers from its branch in Lata, Temotu. SIRC has 18 trained Emergency Response Team (ERT) members in the affected province. On 7 February, SIRC dispatched a team of nine from Honiara to Lata on the SIG Patrol Boat. The team includes a technical communications support delegate from the Australian Red Cross and a water and sanitation engineer delegate from the French Red Cross. The boat should arrive before midnight on 8 February.

Details of the National Society's initial response activities are as follows:

Information management

- Assessment report continually shared by SIRC with national and international partners.
- SIRC personnel are in regular communications with IFRC regional office and with partner national societies.
- The National Society's secretary general and disaster management officer are attending meetings with the National Disaster Operations Committee to provide updates on the National Society's response activities.
- To facilitate good communications structure, SIRC is establishing a forward command base at its branch in Lata with a team deployed from Honiara. This team will also facilitate rapid damage and needs assessment for the provision of urgent relief supplies to the most affected villages.

Temporary shelter and non-food items

Non-food items

- Initial distributions of relief stocks are to be conducted from the prepositioned storage centre in Lata once initial assessments are completed.
- All partners are on standby to support further needs in emergency items, based on SIRC request.

Emergency Shelter

- SIRC is working to establish temporary emergency shelters for displaced people.
- SIRC logistics team is mobilizing to distribute tarpaulins and commence trainings to support communities in building temporary shelters.

Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

- A water purification unit (NOMAD) that produces 5,000ltrs of clean water per hour is being deployed from Honiara along with hygiene promotion awareness materials.
- Australian Red Cross (ARC) will be providing support in the form of NOMAD spare parts for this deployment as requested by SIRC.

Restoration of Family Links (RFL)

- SIRC will establish additional support for Restoring Family Links from its forward base in Lata.

Partners' support

IFRC regional office will be deploying a disaster management/logistic delegate to further support the SIRC team in their response management in Honiara.

In addition to the human resource from ARC and French Red Cross, ARC has also supported SIRC by sending spare supplies for their NOMAD, arriving in Honiara on 8 February. ARC is accessing funds through AUSAID to further support SIRC (AUD 250,000).

New Zealand Red Cross (NZRC) and French Red Cross are mobilizing their network to further support SIRC. NZRC is currently exploring possibilities of sending non-food items and human resources (as needed) on 11 February.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- **Solomon Islands Red Cross:** Secretary General, Ms Joanne Zoleveke, mobile phone:+677 749 9662; email: secgen@redcross.org.sb.
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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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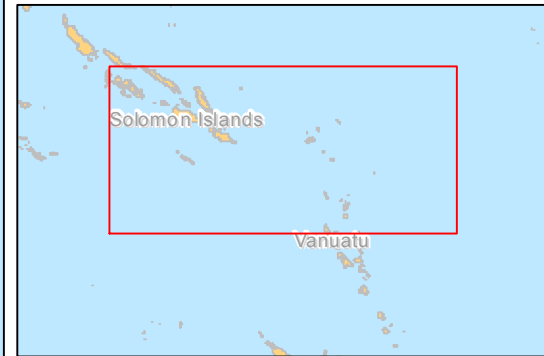
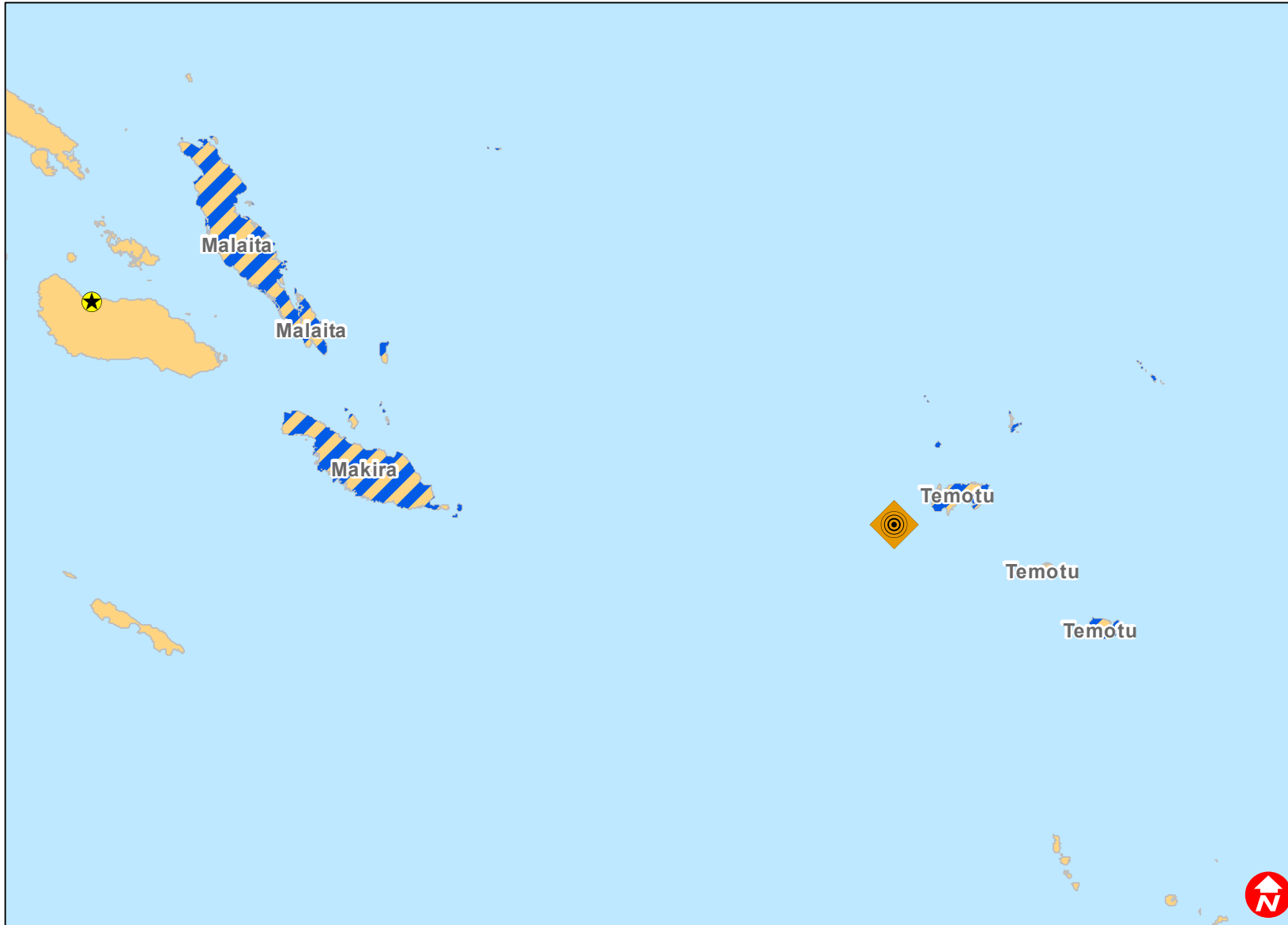



The IFRC's work is guided by [Strategy 2020](#) which puts forward three strategic aims:

- 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.



Solomon Islands



-  Earthquake
-  Affected States