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Information bulletin

Solomon Islands: Floods

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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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 currently considering a Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) request for this response.

[<click here for detailed contact information; and here for map of the affected area>](#)



The Solomon Islands Red Cross Society (SIRC) volunteers loading non-food items for distribution. **Photo:** Corinne Ambler/New Zealand Red Cross.

The Situation

Prolonged heavy rainfall associated with a tropical depression passing over the Solomon Islands group on 3 April 2014 has resulted in severe flooding in the capital Honiara, and damages in Makira, Malaita and Isabel provinces. As of 8 April, there are 23 confirmed deaths, 25 missing and an estimated 52,000 people affected across the Solomon Islands (population 515,870), around half of which are children.

Government and aid agencies are working together to support 12,000 people in 26 evacuation centres in east and west Honiara. Honiara City Council is now managing the evacuation centres and National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) is collecting food for the centres. The National Disaster Council met on 6 April and instructed partners responsible for welfare and internally displaced people to establish evacuation centre management teams.

Solomon Islands Red Cross Society (SIRC), World Vision, Oxfam and Save the Children are distributing food and non-food items (NFIs). While the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Aid Programme (NZAP) also pledged to fund NFIs and replacement of NFIs. SIRC and Oxfam are the lead actors in management of the evacuation centres.

According to the UNOCHA report on 6 April, the most populated shelters are in east Honiara, with over 3,500 people at Panatina Pavilion and around 1,000 at both the airport terminal and King George VI School. Initial food and water distributions have occurred, although there is urgent need for additional food, water, clothing,

blankets, mosquito nets and cooking utensils. Solomon Island corrections officers have been put into evacuation centers to assist with maintaining the security.

Small rivers across the northwest, central and north of the island have flooded, destroying homes, damaging bridges and displacing families. There are also reports of landslides and loss of food gardens. The Mataniko River burst its banks washing away houses and damaging infrastructure.

There is still limited communication to many of the affected areas. In Makira-Ulawa (pop. 40,419), an aerial survey was conducted, with the Waihauru Bridge cut-off and reports of damage from a 6.0 magnitude earthquake two days ago. Meanwhile, the floods have also destroyed many houses and blocked access to roads in Malaita (pop. 137,596). In Isabel (pop. 26,158), a landslide and flooding in Buala has resulted in two deaths, although it is unclear if these fatalities are included in total statistics.

Honiara International Airport has reopened to limited commercial flights as navigation lights are damaged and the domestic terminal is flooded.

The National Referral Hospital is open and accepting new patients. There are concerns that flooded areas and contaminated water supplies will lead to increased risks of infection and outbreaks of water-borne and vector-borne diseases.

The Solomon Islands Government has allocated SBD 5million (approx. CHF 600,552) in emergency funds to support response efforts.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Action

SIRC, as part of the multi-agency coordinating committee, has distributed 711 jerry cans, 45 blankets, and 122 sleeping mats to 21 of the 26 welfare centres as of 7 April.

SIRC is continuing to register displaced people and is sharing this information with Government and other agencies. SIRC will be coordinating with the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) to organize the family tracing service.

In Guadalcanal, SIRC has trained volunteers to carry out damage assessments and distribution of NFIs such as blankets, hygiene kits, kitchen sets. A SIRC staff will be stationed at the Government EOC in Guadalcanal.

On 8 April, two NOMAD water purification units operated by trained SIRC staff and volunteers are being set up on either side of the Mataniko river. These are capable of producing 5,000 litres of safe drinking water per hour. SIRC is recognized as the only agency involving in water production and treatment in the affected area.

While waiting for confirmation from the NDMO, SIRC Emergency Response Teams are well-prepared and ready to be deployed for household assessments. SIRC volunteers will be briefed about the potential danger of minefield migration/ unexploded ordnances being released by flood waters.

SIRC, with the support from Movement partners, is finalizing a request for the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the response operation.

Currently SIRC's response is being carried out by 50 trained volunteers and staff, supported by delegates from French, Australian, and New Zealand Red Cross national societies.

IFRC

On 6 April, an IFRC Asia Pacific Zone Operations Coordinator was deployed to the IFRC Pacific Regional Office (PRO) to provide surge capacity for an initial two-week period. Meanwhile, the PRO Disaster Management Coordinator (who deployed on 7 April) is working with the SIRC on the response. The IFRC Shelter Cluster Coordinator will be deployed by mid-April, supported by Australian Red Cross.

A partners teleconference was held on 8 April chaired by the PRO to coordinate support for the initial response. Those present for the teleconference include representatives from SIRC, PRO and IFRC Asia Pacific Zone, ICRC, and New Zealand, Australian, French and Japanese Red Cross national societies.

Other Movement Partners

The NFIs supported by Australian Red Cross and New Zealand Red Cross are being deployed on the earliest flights available (military and commercial flights). Australian Red Cross is also supporting the Shelter Cluster Coordinator who will be deployed by mid-April.

In addition to relief items and human resources, Australian Red Cross has also offered a NOMAD water purification unit, and has offered defogging equipment for vector control, if required.

A New Zealand Red Cross Communications Delegate deployed to the Solomon Islands on 7 April to support initial communication needs and two other New Zealand Red Cross staff members who were already in country are assisting with the response. French Red Cross imbedded delegates are also supporting SIRC on the response.

ICRC has offered SIRC support with restoring family links and weapon contamination issues.

Other actors

Pacific Humanitarian Team personnel and supplies are deploying to support response efforts. The UN Resident Coordinator and the Head of OCHA's Regional Office traveled to the Solomon Islands on 7 April to meet with the government, donors and humanitarian partners to confirm Pacific Humanitarian Team and OCHA coordination support.

Australia and New Zealand military aircraft have delivered supplies and personnel, including engineers to assess infrastructure, in particular the Mataniko Bridge.

Australia has committed a total of AUD 300,000 (approx. CHF 247,542) in emergency assistance and relief supplies, and will provide two engineers and two response specialists to assist the government and humanitarian partners.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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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.

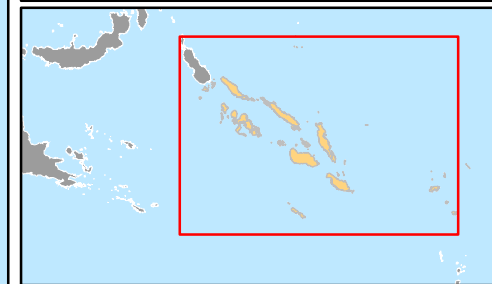
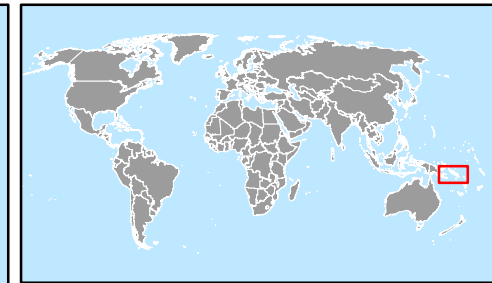
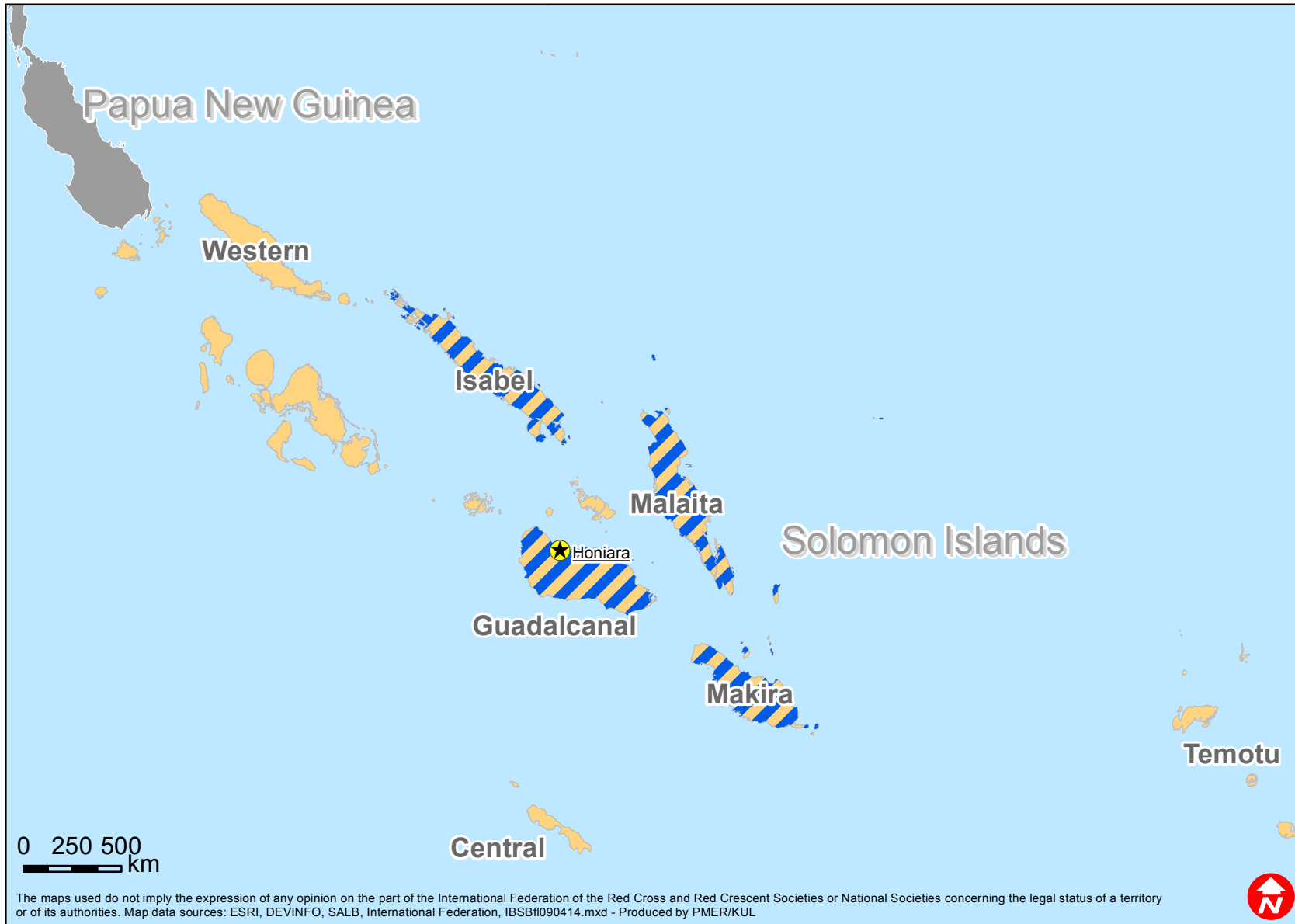


The IFRC's work is guided by [Strategy 2020](#) which puts forward three strategic aims:

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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- ★ Capitals
- ▨ Floods affected provinces

