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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 not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation.**

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## The Situation

Prolonged heavy rainfall associated with a tropical depression passing over the Solomon Islands group has resulted in severe flooding in the capital Honiara, and damage across Guadalcanal province.

The National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) requested that a multi-agency approach to coordination of evacuation centres be used. Solomon Islands Red Cross (SIRC) and Oxfam are to convene a multi-agency committee to provide technical advice and operational support to the management of evacuation centres, which will ultimately be done by the Solomon Islands government.

As of 5 April there are 17 confirmed fatalities and 23 people missing, with an estimated 12,000 people affected in Honiara (population 64,609) and 37,000 in Guadalcanal province (population 93,613). Good Samaritan Hospital is being used to accommodate emergency patients following the evacuation of the main National Referral Hospital.

Registration of evacuees is continuing with an estimated 10,000 people in 26 evacuation centres. The government is distributing food and water, and begun assessments with the main needs identified as emergency shelter, food aid, clothes, health, protection of vulnerable people, psychosocial support and water, sanitation and hygiene. The National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) requested that a multi-agency approach to coordination of evacuation centres be used. Solomon Islands Red Cross (SIRC) and Oxfam are to convene a multi-agency committee to provide technical advice and operational support to the management of evacuation centres, which will ultimately be done by the Solomon Islands Government. It is anticipated this group will report to the Internally Displaced Person and Welfare Cluster.

Logistics are difficult with flights remaining suspended at Honiara International Airport due to debris on the runway and damage to navigation and lighting systems. Roads are blocked and bridges have been damaged or washed away. Engineers are trying to reinforce the main Mataniko Bridge, the only remaining link between east and west Honiara in which there are evacuation centres on both sides. Despite damage to the main wharf, Honiara Port remains functional.

Makira-Ulawa and potentially other provinces are also impacted. In Makira, communities alongside the Hariga River and dam have been relocated and are sheltering in tents supplied by the Provincial Disaster Committee.

The National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) is coordinating the response and has activated National and Provincial Emergency Operations Centres to manage the situation. Honiara City Council and Guadalcanal province have been declared a disaster zone. On 5 April the Solomon's Island Government requested international emergency assistance to aid relief efforts

The NDMO has requested the deployment of all Pacific Humanitarian Team clusters and coordination support from OCHA.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent Action

On 3 April, SIRC staff and volunteers assisted in the evacuation of vulnerable communities along Mataniko river and began registering displaced people at one evacuation centre.

SIRC staff were evacuated from their headquarters due to flooding and the SIRC Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) was established at the Honiara Hotel. On 4 April, SIRC emergency response teams (ERTs) deployed to three main evacuation centres, and supported the NDMO to distribute food at the Henderson, King George Sixth, Commonwealth Youth Programme, Panatina Pavilion and Coronation School evacuation centres.

SIRC reports the needs in the centres include: water (tanks), sanitation, food, bedding, kitchenware, clothing and protection. The only remaining bridge continues to be a concern with the increasing possibility of it collapsing. This will essentially 'split' Honiara in two parts with evacuation centres of different sides of the river making the situation even more complex.

SIRC staff attended the National Disaster Operations Committee (NDOC) meeting and a stakeholder meeting held on 4 April.

### IFRC

The IFRC Pacific Regional Office is providing ongoing support to SIRC, and has agreed on the following coordination points with SIRC Secretary General:

- A grant from the IFRC Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) will be requested
- The New Zealand Red Cross (NZRC) staff member in country will be the acting country team representative, to coordinate with SIRC, French Red Cross, Australia Red Cross and NZRC, until the deployment of the IFRC disaster management coordinator from the Pacific Regional Office.

A shelter cluster coordinator has been recruited and the aim is to deploy within the week. Australia Red Cross will support the deployment in the first few weeks, with long term support being assessed depending on the need.

### Other Movement Partners

Australian and French Red Cross delegates are working alongside SIRC in emergency response. On 7 April New Zealand Red Cross is deploying the following non-food items using New Zealand military assets to transport them: shelter tool kits, tarpaulins, mosquito nets, kitchen sets, blankets, water containers and a bladder and tap stand. Australia Red Cross is also deploying non-food items using their military assets.

### Other actors

There is a large contingent of aid agencies based in Honiara who are on standby to provide support. On 5 April non-governmental organizations, UN agencies and SIRC held a multi-agency committee meeting to discuss coordinated needs assessments and support to evacuation centres. The Pacific Humanitarian Team is meeting regularly in Suva to support response efforts. The governments of Australia and New Zealand have pledged to fund non-food items and their replacement. According to NEOC, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade conducted an aerial assessment of Honiara on 4 April to gain a clear picture of the extent of damage.

### 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.

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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.