

DREF Bulletin



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

PAPUA NEW GUINEA: MOUNT TAVURVUR VOLCANO

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The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 185 countries.

In Brief

This DREF Bulletin Update focuses on response to the recent 6.7 Richter scale earthquake in New Britain as well as continued assistance to survivors of the Mt. Tavurvur volcano. With support from the Federation delegation, the Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society has distributed water containers, tarpaulins and face masks to affected communities in Kokopo, Rabaul, and Kombiu, and plans to extend support to the Duke of York islands. Assessments have also expanded in geographical scope, resulting in revisions to the plan of action.

Period covered by this update: 14 October to 18 October 2006.

History of this Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF)-funded operation:

- CHF 30,000 has been allocated from the Federation's DREF on 14 October 2006 to respond to the needs of this operation, recover initial distribution costs and replenish disaster preparedness stocks.
- This operation is expected to complete in one month by mid November 2006. A final report will be made available three months after the operation by February 2007.
- Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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Background and current situation

On Tuesday 17 October 2006, an earthquake with a magnitude of 6.7 on the Richter scale occurred at 11.25am local time near Uvol, south coast of central New Britain. It was felt in Rabaul and as far as Port Moresby, with the quake epicenter located about 575 km northeast of Port Moresby at a depth of 32 km (United States Geological Survey; <http://earthquake.usgs.gov>). The Rabaul Volcanology Observatory (RVO) observes that the earthquake is not related to the recent Tavurvur volcano disaster. It was instead of tectonic origin, caused by sub-ducting (sinking) interaction between the Solomon and the South Bismarck plates.

The government has lifted the state of emergency on 18 October as reported in a national newspaper, and with the exception of two community schools, all other schools have reopened. Flights into Tokua airport are back to normal but restricted to smaller planes, with the largest being the F28 aircraft.

Reports from the field states that fumes are still appearing from the crater and dust emissions are still present in the air as a result of southeast winds. Strong fumes of sulphur are still evident in Rabaul town, including the Matupit area.

The national disaster centre (NDC), in coordination with the provincial government and the RVO, conducted an assessment and submitted a proposal to the national executive council (NEC) for approval and endorsement for both short- and long-term solutions.

The provincial administrator was quoted on Radio East New Britain as stating that PGK 1 million (CHF 446,805) has been approved, however there are no print media reports confirming this information as yet. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has confirmed that two water bladders were airlifted to Kokopo.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society (PNGRCS), with support from the Federation delegation, has initiated relief assistance utilizing the allocation from the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF). The DREF continues to fund local procurement of relief items and logistical arrangements to both the earthquake and volcano affected areas.

Relief supplies were purchased from local suppliers in Rabaul and operational funding support was transferred to the East New Britain (ENB) branch with the support of the Federation delegation on Tuesday, 10 October 2006.

As of Friday 13 October 2006, the following items were distributed to three care centres located in Kokopo, as well as the communities affected in Rabaul and Kombiu LLG (specifically in Baii, Matupit and Nondup):

- 571 x 5 litre water containers
- 275 x 20 litre water containers
- 77 tarpaulins
- 350 face masks

The recent restoration of the local airport has allowed additional relief items to be air freighted from Port Moresby to Rabaul:

- 420 x 15 litre water containers
- 200 tarpaulins

An assessment was conducted in the Duke of York Islands by a team of four volunteers on the 14 and 15 October 2006 to compliment previous assessments that focused on the mainland. It has been found that immediate needs of survivors in the area are water, water containers and shelter.

An emergency preparedness task force (EPTF) member arrived in Rabaul from Port Moresby on Sunday 15 October 2006 to provide technical assistance and support to the branch in terms of coordination, assessment and reporting of the development and management aspects of the emergency disaster response. Following this assessment, a revised plan of action was finalized by the EPTF, which has been meeting on a daily basis. According to the plan, the PNG Red Cross will continue providing additional relief to the affected population in the Rabaul and Duke of York areas.

The EPTF is a multi-sectoral technical advisory body that is mandated to prepare for and respond to disasters, and is constantly on standby and alert for potential deployment to the field. It was formed through joint support from the Federation secretariat and Australian Red Cross.

UNICEF has formally donated two water bladders to the PNG Red Cross Society for deployment to assist in the relief operation. The PNG Red Cross Society plans to locate one water bladder at Raluana community school and the other at a church in Vunamurmur village.

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The International Federation undertakes activities that are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to achieve the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- *Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.*
- *Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.*
- *Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.*
- *Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.*

All International Federation 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 is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>