

Information bulletin



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Fiji: Floods

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This bulletin is being issued for information only.

Severe floods in the North, Central and Western Divisions of Fiji have affected approximately 10,500 people, with 11 deaths recorded to date. More rainfall is expected in the coming days. Preliminary assessments indicate that water, electricity and telecommunications services have been disrupted in different parts of the country, and crops, bridges and roads have been damaged or completely destroyed.

The Fiji Red Cross responded rapidly to the disaster with relief distributions and supported the national disaster management office with evacuations and providing aid to affected communities through its pre-positioned relief stocks. To date, the national society has provided aid to approximately 3,500 of the most affected people in Nadi, Ba, Lautoka, Tavua, Rakiraki, Wainibuka, Rewa and Sigatoka. The national society continues to work closely with relevant government agencies while maintaining close communication with the International Federation's regional office, partner national societies as well as other agencies.



The Fiji Red Cross Society responded quickly to the needs of communities affected by the floods in the country. Beneficiaries from Burebasaga village, one of the many affected, received relief items from national society, including tarpaulins, cooking sets and water containers. FRCS.

The Fiji Red Cross Society, with the support of the International Federation, has determined that external assistance is currently not required.

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

The Situation

Prolonged rainfall since 8 January 2009 has resulted in severe flooding in the North, Central and Western Divisions of Fiji. Worst-affected areas include the major towns of Nadi, Ba, Sigatoka and Labosa. Preliminary assessments by the national disaster management office and other actors in the field indicate that approximately 10,500 people are affected, with 11 deaths recorded to date. In addition, sugar cane crops were destroyed, roads severed and bridges submerged by floodwaters. A 30-day state of natural disaster was declared in the Western Division on 11 January, and government agencies are working to restore services as well as water and electricity supply. The international airport was left without electricity on 13 January, as were the major towns of Nadi and Ba. The Fiji interim government has not requested for international assistance at time of reporting.

More rainfall and floods are forecasted for the week by the Fiji Meteorological Service. Public advisories continue to be shared with the communities, and district offices are providing food rations to an increasing number of families occupying up to 156 evacuation centres.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Fiji Red Cross Society mobilized up to 13 emergency response teams to support district government agencies to evacuate and support the affected communities in Nadi, Lautoka, Ba and Rakiraki. Assessments,

relief and response work continue to be carried out by the national society. On 13 January, an emergency response team managed to visit 116 families in the villages of Burebasaga, Nukutubu, Nasigatoka, Nabua, Nasilai, Drekanā, and Waivu, but had to return when weather conditions took a turn for the worse. Distributions carried out by the national society up to 15 January 2009 are as follows:

Affected areas	No. of beneficiaries reached	Black packs ¹	Blankets	Tarpaulins	Cooking sets	20-litre water collection containers
Nadi	748	227	362	41	30	81
Ba	475	150	181	24	-	35
Tavua	401	104	181	18	10	29
Rakiraki	184	37	111	17	3	7
Rewa	930	239	537	87	79	86
Wainibuka	677	131	261	51	14	25
Sigatoka	23	4	19	3	3	-
Total	3,438	892	1,652	241	139	263

In Ba and Rakiraki, the FRCS branches were activated as a temporary evacuation centre for ten families since 9 January 2009. The families remain in the centre and are being cared for by FRCS volunteers at the branch.

The FRCS is currently awaiting clearance and logistics support in the form of boats for assessments and relief from the relevant government agency to enter disaster-affected areas in Nadi that are inaccessible by road. The national society also plans to send volunteers to the Nagai community hall in the Northern Division where approximately 30 families are believed to be sheltered, once the floodwaters recede.

The national society has 19 pre-positioned and stocked containers located around the country that is part of the wider Pacific container programme supported by the International Federation and partner national societies. Relief stocks from the national headquarters as well as other branches are being mobilized and deployed to replenish exhausted stocks in affected areas.



Assessments carried out by the Fiji Red Cross Society include interviews with the affected communities. A villager from Wainibuka gives his account of the damage in the area to an FRCS staff. FRCS.

Since the start of the relief effort, the FRCS has maintained close and regular coordination with the National Disaster Management Office at national and district levels as well as other relevant government agencies. The FRCS has also maintained close communication links with the International Federation's regional office in Suva, neighbouring national societies such as the Australian and New Zealand Red Cross societies, as well as other aid agencies. The New Zealand government, through the New Zealand Red Cross, provided \$100,000 to the FRCS to support it in its response to the disaster.

The International Federation's regional office and the Asia Pacific zone office's disaster management unit have offered further support and assistance if needed, together with neighbouring partner national societies such as the Australian and New Zealand Red Cross societies.

The experience of the relief effort so far highlights the importance and value of the pre-positioned disaster containers in getting immediate and prompt relief to people affected by disasters in a region where access and transport is a major challenge. Supported by various partner national societies such as the Australian and Japanese Red Cross societies and other non-governmental organizations, as well as resources from national appeals by the FRCS, the strategically positioned stocks close to disaster-prone areas have shown a very positive impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of the relief operation.

¹ Each black pack includes four two-metre wide black Polythene sheets, a blanket, two towels, an assortment of men's, ladies' and children's clothes, soap, matches, mosquito coils, mini first aid kit and camphor as well as other items.

How we work

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.

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet 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.

Contact information

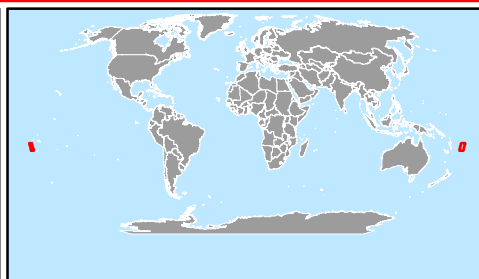
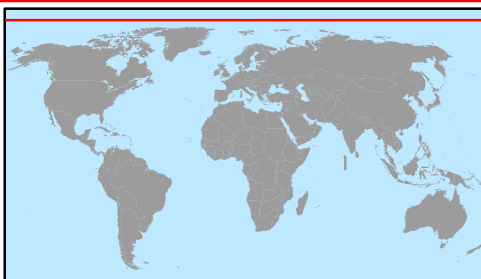
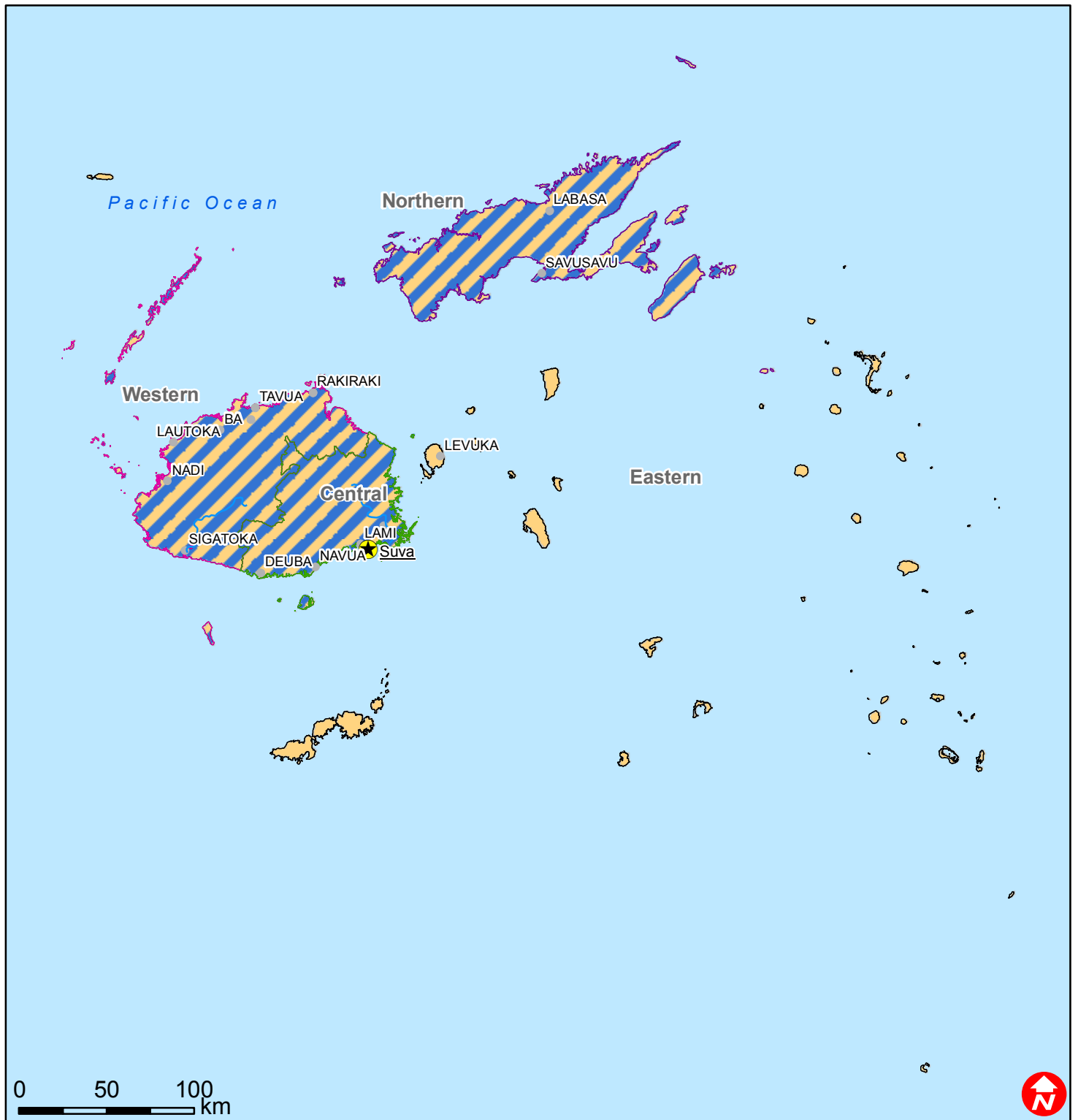
For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:







- In Suva, Fiji: Fiji Red Cross Society: Ms. Alison Cupit, Director General, phone: +679 3314 133; email: redcross@connect.com.fj
- Pacific regional office in Suva, Fiji: Mr. Frank Kennedy, Head of regional office, email: frank.kennedy@ifrc.org, or Mr. John Bales, Regional disaster management coordinator, john.bales@ifrc.org, phone: +679 3311 855, fax: +679 3311 406
- Asia Pacific Zone office in Malaysia: Disaster management unit: Mr. Daniel Bolanos (Regional disaster response delegate), email: daniel.bolanos@ifrc.org; mobile; +60 12 283 7305; Regional logistics unit: Mr. Jeremy Francis (Regional logistics coordinator), jeremy.francis@ifrc.org, mobile: +60 12 298 9752, fax: +60 3 2168 8573.

[<map below; click here to return to the title page >](#)



Fiji: Floods



-  Capital
-  River
-  Northern region
-  Central region
-  Eastern region
-  western region
-  Affected areas