

Information bulletin



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Japan and Pacific: Earthquake and Tsunami

Information bulletin n° 2

12 March 2011

This bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Japanese Red Cross Society, with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, has determined that external assistance is not required, and is therefore not seeking funding or other assistance from donors at this time.

[<click here for detailed contact information>](#)



Houses and cars are swept out to sea in Kesenuma City. Photo: Reuters.

The Situation

In Japan

On 11 March 2011, an earthquake hit off-shore of Japan at 14:46 (local time). The epicentre has a latitude of 38.0N and longitude 142.9E (373km northeast of Tokyo, about 130 km off the eastern coast of Japan) with a depth of 13.5 km and magnitude of 8.8.

Since the earthquake struck, there have been repeated earthquakes, with magnitudes of 6.6, every 30 to 60 minutes at the inland of Honsyu Isle. However, it was reported that damages were minimal.

As at 12 Mar 2011, it has been reported that more than 574 people have been confirmed dead, and 586 missing. These figures may rise in the following days. According to local news reports, about 300,000 people in the affected areas have been evacuated to safer public facilities.

The tsunami alert is still active, preventing the recovery of several hundred bodies on the shore. However, in many areas, the estimated scale of the tsunami has decreased. Landslides have been reported in 37 areas. More than 2,500 houses have totally collapsed while a further 2,500 houses are damaged as a result of the earthquake and tsunami. Ten villages in Iwate prefecture and 1,800 households in Fukushima prefecture have been devastated by the tsunami.

Roads, bridges, railroads, dykes and buildings are damaged in about 460 places. Electricity remains cut in approximately five million households, while one million households in the most affected areas have had their water supply cut.

In the most affected areas of north eastern Japan, the main highways remain closed; only emergency aid vehicles are allowed to pass through the highway. Several airports have reopened but two remain closed.

With international communities offering assistance to this operation, the Japanese Government has so far accepted rescue teams from the USA, Australia, New Zealand and the Republic of Korea.

In South East Asia, the Pacific and Americas

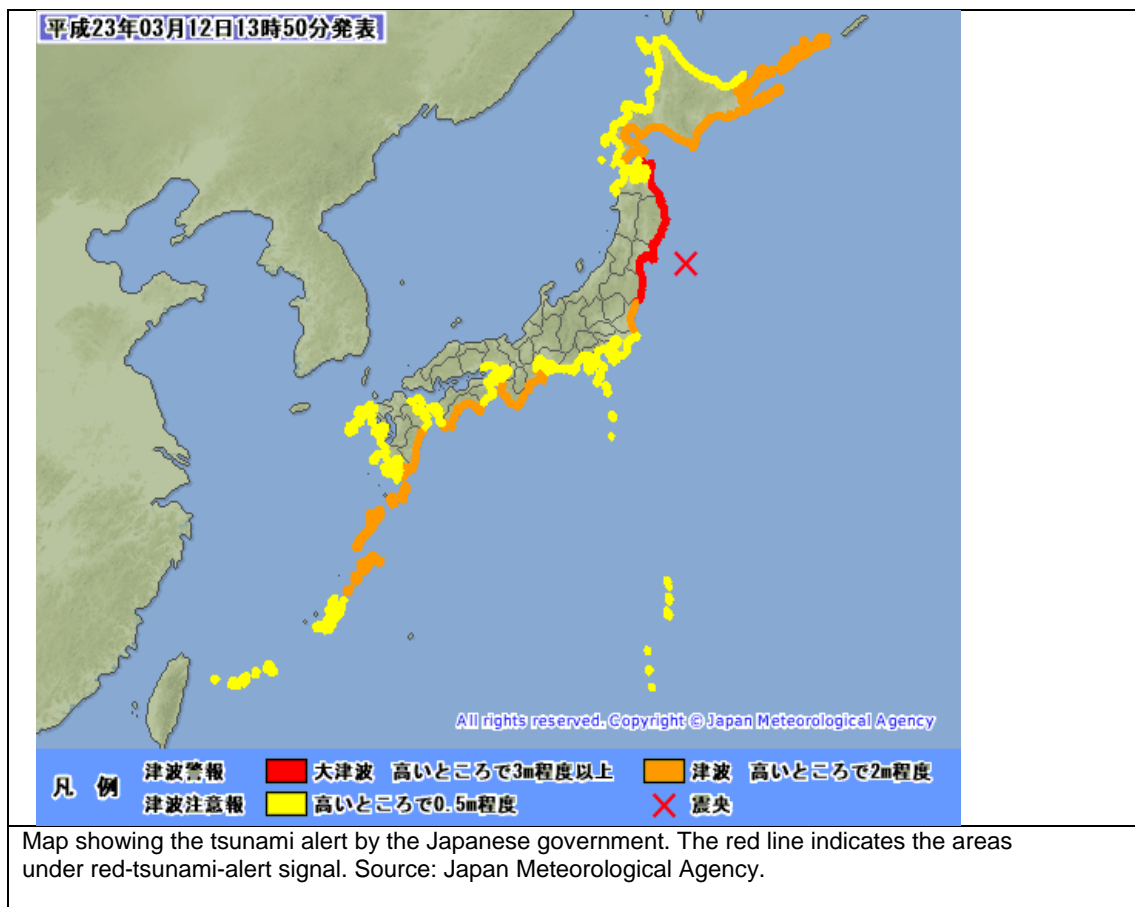
The National Societies of Indonesia and the Philippines were on alert under the tsunami warning, monitoring the situation and assisting families living in coastal areas to evacuate to higher ground. Both the Papua New Guinea Red Cross and Fiji Red Cross have been working with the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) in their respective countries on the tsunami alerts. To date, except some damages recorded in Papua New Guinea, there being no report on casualties and damages in other areas.

The tsunami alert for Taiwan was lifted in the late hours of 11 March. As of 12 March, Taiwan was not hit with any tsunamis. There being no reports on casualties and damages.

In the Americas, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Pan America Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) are on alert and the preliminary reports are the waves are between 0.5 up to 2 m on the western coast of the Americas, with no damage reported.

The Disaster Management Office of the Europe Zone Office is also on standby to go to Moscow to support the Russian Red Cross, who is also assessing and monitoring the possible impact there.

Tsunami warnings were all cancelled for these regions outside Japan.



Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Japanese Red Cross Society (JRCS) continues to assess the situation at both national headquarter and branch levels. A total of 62 National Disaster Response Teams (NDRT), with more than 400 staff members including doctors, nurses and administration support are currently conducting assessments in the affected areas as well as providing first aid, health and possible psychosocial support (PSP). More NDRT teams are on standby for further deployment.

Some assessment teams are having difficulty in accessing some areas, as there is still a red-tsunami-alert for four prefectures which are mostly the worst-hit areas.

The Government has opened many evacuation centres (halls, gyms etc) which are currently housing people. JRCS are supporting these centres with health, psychological support and relief items. 30,560 blankets have been sent to the affected area for further distribution.

A communications delegate from the Asia Pacific IFRC office has arrived in Tokyo and is liaising with the media there with the assistance of JRCS. The IFRC is currently preparing a high level international support/liaison team to Japan to support the activities of the Japanese Red Cross. In addition, the Asia Pacific Regional Logistics Unit has emergency stocks ready to be dispatched from Kuala Lumpur if needed.

With regards to restoring family link, the JRCS, in cooperation with the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) has set up a family link website: <http://www.familylinks.icrc.org/eng/familylinks-japan>.

The IFRC Pacific regional office has been closely working with all the National Societies in the region and facilitated good early warning through the Red Cross volunteers network, with key activities like:

- Papua New Guinea Red Cross (PNG RC) has raised the alert in every branches, PNG headquarters used IFRC info as they do not have access to info system (TV/radio).
- Solomon Island Red Cross is still monitoring alert with permanent contact with their branches.
- Tuvalu Red Cross has sent an announcement to their branches via the National Disaster Coordinator
- Fiji Red Cross is alerted – the Disaster Management Office (DMO) is in contact with the branches' volunteers to disseminate the alert and the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) has launch the alert on radio and telephones.
- Cook Islands Red Cross is disseminating the alert to the population via their volunteer network. The DMO is in contact with the branches via their satellite phone communication
- Palau Red Cross was in contact permanent with their NDMO who launched the alert in the Radio very early. DMO was in the villages with volunteers to disseminate alert.

The Russian Red Cross has been in contact with Emercom to assess the situation of the more remote areas.

PADRU has activated its crisis room and has been working closely with the National Societies in the region.

The American Red Cross chapters are on alert, with evacuation shelters opened with additional locations on standby in Oregon, Washington and California to prepare for Tsunami.

No international assistance (cash, in kind, human resource) has been requested so far.

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:

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