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## Information bulletin

### Papua New Guinea: Floods & Landslides

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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#### Information Bulletin n° 1

[FL-2013-000017-PNG](#)  
8 February 2013

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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. The Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society (PNGRCS) will, however, accept direct assistance to provide support to the affected population.



Papua New Guinea Red Cross staff and volunteer load water containers and tarpaulins to be airlifted to Oro Province for the flood. Photo: Warren Dage/PNGRCS

## Summary

Heavy rainfall since November 2012 has resulted in floods and landslides affecting homes, properties, vegetation, gardens, water sources and infrastructure. Thousands of people are affected in several provinces. The PNGRCS has undertaken initial assessments and are distributing relief goods.

## The situation

The cyclone season that usually occurs on November – April every year in PNG has major impact on the lives of many people. These heavy rainfalls result in floods and landslides affecting homes, properties, food gardens, vegetation, water source and infrastructure for basic services. This season is no exception. Continuous rains have caused severe flooding and landslides in some areas throughout the country. It is predicted by the National Weather Office that the rains will continue until the end of May 2013.

Estimates from a range of sources indicate that up to 35,000 people might be affected. To date, the PNGRCS has been able to reach 630 people with a range of relief items and is rapidly increasing the distributions.

### Oro Province – Large scale flooding in November 2012 to present

The widespread flooding in Oro Province since November 2012 continues in 2013. Areas severely affected include Oro Bay, Kokoda, Mamba, Gira, Eia, Waria, Tufi, Musa (Karaisowu, Karaiso, Foru and Guruguru) and especially coastal villages and communities located at the mouth of the Major Rivers Girua, Mamba, Gira, Eia, Embogu, Kumusi, Ope and others.

About 27,000 people were affected as per the Provincial Administration Report. A total of 21 houses were washed away by the flood. Food gardens, cash crops and cemeteries are inundated with flood water. Water sources have been contaminated by mud and debris and the likely outbreak of waterborne diseases and malaria is high at water-logged areas.

#### **Sandaun Province – Landslides and flooding in January 2013**

The landslides affected more than 6,700 people in the following villages and hamlets: Lumi, Yaluwape, Karaitem, Minatem, Souqito, Youngito, Tolopounge, Waluwape, Tanqupe in the Aitape/Lumi District. The landslides affected the livelihood of people, as it destroyed food gardens, cash crops, plants, lakes, freshwater streams, wildlife as well as the forest (disrupting hunting and gardening activities). A total of 40 houses were completely destroyed and others partially destroyed. Access remains very difficult and is preventing accurate assessments.

Continuous rainfall have caused heavy floods which affected about 908 people in Yakamul, Paup and Afua villages in the Aitape/Lumi District. Food gardens, water sources, houses and domesticated animals have been damaged by the flood.

#### **Morobe Province – Heavy flooding in January 2013**

Disasters occurred in various districts, including floods, landslides and conflicts in and around the Lae City. Affected areas include Bulolo, Markham, Huon Gulf, Nawaeb, Menyamy and Lae. The damages include loss of homes, food gardens, vegetation and infrastructures such as roads and schools as well as economic activity.

#### **Western Highland Province – Heavy flooding and mudslides in January 2013**

A total of three houses were completely destroyed by the landslide and two partially destroyed in the community along the Kala River. The main flood-affected areas are in Wara Pump, Tambul Nebilyer and Dei Council areas.

Food gardens were destroyed and cash crops inundated. Water sources were contaminated and filled with mud and debris from the flood. Outbreak of waterborne diseases in those areas is highly likely.

#### **Jiwaka Province – Flooding in January 2013**

The heavy rainfall caused the river to flood its banks into the surrounding areas of Waghi Bruk, Kinden, Kondapina, Balum and Water Lilly affecting food gardens, cash crops and water sources. Road access is limited and there is a likely threat of waterborne diseases.

#### **Central Province – Flooding in January 2013**

The heavy rains and flood caught the people by surprise as they had been experiencing a dry spell for a very long time. The flash floods swept away the food gardens and cash crops while the people took refuge on higher grounds.

#### **National Capital District (NCD) – Flooding in January 2013**

Heavy rains since the beginning of 2013 caused major floods in some parts of the city with some damages and lost property. There has also been incidences of violence and several cases of burnt houses in which the National Capital District/Central Branch of the PNGRCS has been responding.

The areas in which the branch has responded to are Kilakila, Vadavada, Six mile, Taurama Beach, and Five mile areas.

## **Red Cross and Red Crescent action**

To date, PNGRCS has assisted 630 people and continue to conduct assessments and develop their response action plans. There are action plans for each provincial flood event.

Relief stocks of tarpaulins, blankets, jerry cans, mosquito nets and hygiene kits are being dispatched to the branches for distribution. This is likely to be an ongoing operation through February. Funding support for the relief operations has been received from the PNG Government and the US Embassy in Port Moresby.

Australian Red Cross in coordination with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, sent an operational manager to support PNGRCS responses to all current disasters.

## Contact information

**For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:**

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All IFRC 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 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.
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