



ASIA: EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMIS

Fact sheet No. 6 – updated 14 March 2005

Background: The 9.0 earthquake off the western coast of northern Sumatra on 26 December 2004, depth 10 km, 7.59am local time (00.59 GMT) triggered massive waves or 'tsunamis', inundating coastal areas in countries around the Indian Ocean rim. Sri Lanka, the Indonesian province of Aceh, four states of southern India, the Maldives, coastal areas of Thailand, Malaysia, and Myanmar were the most severely affected.

Latest human toll: over 2.4 million affected, with over 273,000* dead and more than 7,200 missing. Figures are being revised regularly as recovery of bodies continues and will remain unofficial until one year from the disaster's date.

Highlights of overall Red Cross and Red Crescent operations

- Since the beginning of the operation, over 734,000 people affected by the disaster have received some form or combination of assistance coordinated by the International Federation.
- The emergency response units (ERUs) in Indonesia and Sri Lanka are at different stages in their operation - some continue delivering services while others are gradually handing over their work to local counterparts as their expatriate staff departs. Some have ceased work entirely or are in the process of finalizing handovers (integrating with local health services and handing over equipment).
- Over 28,000 people in Indonesia and Sri Lanka have been able to restore family links and learn whether their family members are still alive with assistance from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

INDONESIA

- Following the first round of meetings held in Banda Aceh last week, the technical working groups are now undertaking specific assessments and the production of detailed project proposals in the different areas covered. A number of sub-groups have been set up and lead partners identified (e.g. Australian Red Cross for blood and ambulances; Danish Red Cross for psycho-social support; British Red Cross for livelihoods).
- The Federation will take the lead for coordination in water and sanitation, construction and organizational development and, for the time being, continue to lead the working groups together with [Palang Merah Indonesia](#) (PMI)/Indonesian Red Cross which is working to recruit programme staff to increase its capacity. The next round of technical working group meetings will be held in Banda Aceh between 15-18 March.
- Through 5 March, 155,865 people in Banda Aceh, Aceh Besar, Biren, Pidie, Lhokseumawe, Lam No, Calang, Teunom, Meulaboh, Simeulue Island and Nagan Raya had received non-food relief items from either pre-positioned stocks or resources mobilized through the appeal.
- PMI and the Federation were requested to help meet an urgent gap in water and sanitation facilities identified in the temporary living centres set up by the government to house internally displaced people (IDP) around Aceh. In the short-term, water production has increased and drinking water is being delivered by water tankers to the centres, complemented by the ongoing installation of tanks to provide on-site storage. Sanitation needs will also be addressed through construction and upgrading of latrines, establishment of solid waste collection programmes, desludging of tanks and deployment of PHAST-trained PMI volunteers.
- Overall, clean water is being provided on a daily basis to some 86,400 beneficiaries, with additional support to medical facilities and other organizations. The ERUs are producing 885,000 litres of water per day. The Spanish, German and French ERUs are all in the process of phasing-out their activities and handing-over to PMI. The number of delegates is being reduced to a minimum and PMI volunteers are operating the equipment. The Austrian/Swedish/Macedonian ERU remains active and is expanding its capacity to meet the newly-identified need in the temporary living centres.
- Basic health care unit ERUs and PMI together have offered basic and specialized health care to an estimated 87,000 people. Following the first round of technical working group meetings in Banda Aceh, a psycho-social programme (PSP) consortium is being set up under the lead of the Danish Red Cross, with the immediate aim of improving coordination and information sharing between interested partner national societies (PNSs). A PSP coordinator at PMI has been named and training-of-trainers in PSP techniques, recently carried out in Medan, has resulted in the placement of the first four volunteers in Meulaboh.

In Indonesia and India only, the number of dead includes those listed as missing though this will only be official in Indonesia one year after the disaster's date.



SRI LANKA

- Since the operation began, over 223,000 people in Ampara, Galle, Hambantota and Matara received non-food relief including shelter supplies, essential household items, sleeping mats and mosquito nets distributed by the American Red Cross' relief ERU and the Ampara branch of the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS).
- 47,800 persons in Ampara, Kalutara, Hambantota, Bentota and Galle continue to benefit from water and sanitation activities which include distributions of clean water, cleaning of wells and construction of latrines.
- The British Red Cross handed over its logistics ERU responsibilities to Federation staff and left the country. The French and Finnish Red Cross' basic health care unit ERUs are concluding operations and handing over functions, equipment and supplies to local health authorities.
- PNSs in Colombo have started mapping their interests in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of health infrastructure in order to be ready when a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Health is signed on today for 30 health institutions and three temporary training schools for nurses. Further institutions not covered by other agencies may be added. Mapping of PNS interest in community-based health programmes has also commenced.
- Comprehensive comparison of national salary levels was studied by reviewing studies already made in Sri Lanka by the Federation and SLRCS, necessitated in light of the high demand for local expertise and corresponding rises in salary levels. These are expected to be approved at the task force meeting on 17 March to allow partners to engage staff according to agreed procedures set within the service centre of the Movement's cooperation office.
- The first service agreements have been signed in Sri Lanka although there is a pending decision on the final level and apportionment of fees. Technical committees have been meeting since 15 February and, with the move into the new Movement coordination office on 4 March, these will take place regularly every Monday.

MALDIVES

- On 1 March a legal status agreement was signed between the Federation and the Government of the Maldives that will allow the Federation to proceed with major recovery phase projects.
- In the absence of a national society in the country two senior representatives from the Ministry of Planning attended the Tsunami Response Forum in Hong Kong, reflecting the importance attached by the government to assistance from the Red Cross and Red Crescent.
- A total of 32 generators have been airlifted into the Maldives to provide replacements for those destroyed during the disaster. As part of the airlift, 18.5 kilometres of cabling, 203 distribution boxes and spare parts also arrived to address the needs of the communities that suffered shortages in power as a result of the disaster.

THAILAND

- [Thai Red Cross Society](#) has provided a fibreglass tank for the affected villages in Satun and is providing over 350 small fishing boats for affected families in tsunami-affected Ranong and Krabi. The society is also piloting a subsistence agriculture project in Phang Nga, providing materials and stock for a fish pond.
- A second coordination meeting will be held in Phuket on 21 March for the national society, the Federation and major PNSs to coordinate and consolidate future Movement recovery programmes in Thailand.

Highlights of the Red Cross Red Crescent Tsunami Response Forum, Hong Kong, 3-5 March 2005

- The coordination frameworks in operation as well as proposed in the field were endorsed with recognition of the importance of field decision-making with appropriate global checks and balances. The decision-making process will be transparent and inclusive, operating mainly through country-level technical working groups, with criteria for decision-making also discussed for use at the field level.
- The Movement platform (the host national societies, ICRC and the Federation) will have oversight of the operation and work to ensure the success of the Movement's work and the country-level plan. The Federation will separate its coordination and leadership functions from its operational role and, where necessary, will take on an operational role in support of multi-lateral members. Mechanisms are being agreed as how best to



achieve this and the model being tested in Sri Lanka will require the programme sector coordinators in the delegation to submit project proposals for approval by the Movement Platform in the same way as the coordinated bilateral partners.

- Service agreements were recognized to be key instruments that will enable a broad Movement response and are being developed in line with local laws to provide both rights and responsibilities of all parties to them.
- Coordination mechanisms have been put in place in Sri Lanka and Indonesia. In countries where there are no conflicts or where there is no host National Society, the Federation will rely on its usual coordination mechanisms and procedures. In the coming weeks, decisions will be taken on early recovery and rehabilitation work.
- The forum reached a consensus on the Regional Strategy and Operational Framework and there was agreement on the general principles of an accountability framework. A solid base now exists where targets, impact on those affected, cost effectiveness, transparency and timeliness of action can be agreed. Programme accountability will reside with project managers in the field and the Federation will provide guidance and leadership on accountability.
- Agreement was also reached that a communications working group would be set up this month to finalize the strategy and outline a 30-month operational plan. Criteria for project approval were also identified.
- The next steps are to focus upon implementation and delivery. Specifically in Sri Lanka, partner National Societies will be invited to present their concept papers for approval by the Movement partnership. This process began immediately following the Hong Kong forum, and some 14 concept papers were received to date, with project approvals expected following the Sri Lanka task force meeting on 17 March. Selection and recruitment of national staff is running parallel to this, and PNS project bank accounts are being opened in Colombo to allow implementation of approved projects to begin without delay. The Government of Sri Lanka's Task Force for Rebuilding the Nation (TAFREN) has appointed a focal point dedicated to following Red Cross Red Crescent projects and to facilitate contacts and communication as required.
- A high-level Advisory Group comprised of the Federation's Secretariat and National Societies will be established to follow up on commitments, delivery and accountability.

For more details and news stories, photos and all operational updates related to the tsunami:

<http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/response/tsunamis/index.asp>