

# INFORMATION 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

## ***SOLOMON ISLANDS: CYCLONE ZOE***

7 January 2003

***Information Bulletin N° 2***

***DREF Allocated: CHF 50,000 on stand-by***

***This Information Bulletin is being issued based on the needs described below reflecting the information available at this time. Based on further updates and details from assessment reports, or should the situation deteriorate, the Federation will consider international support through an Appeal.***

### ***The Situation***

On 28 December 2002 Cyclone Zoe, a category 5 tropical storm with wind speeds over 300 km/h swept through the islands of Tikopia, Anuta and Fataka, part of the Santa Cruz group of the Solomon Islands, about 1,000 km east of the capital Honiara.

The Solomon Islands National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) estimated that approximately 2,000 people were affected in the two worst hit islands of Tikopia and Anuta. There was initially no direct contact with the islands as the radio communication system was not working. The first plane to fly over Tikopia on 1 January 2003 reported massive destruction and few signs of life. While confirming extensive damage to houses and crops, an Australian Air Force Hercules that circled Tikopia and Anuta the following day, found signs of reconstruction and no evidence of large-scale loss of life or injury. Both flights could not land because there is no airstrip on the islands. An NDMO coordinated team, including UNDAC, Red Cross, OXFAM and World Vision, was immediately formed to reach the islands by boat within 2-3 days in order to carry out an in-depth assessment of needs. The ship also carried initial relief supplies, including food, water, blankets, shelter materials and medical supplies.

### ***Red Cross/Red Crescent Action***

Two boats with the assessment team and relief supplies arrived in Tikopia on 5-6 January 2003, the island worst hit by the cyclone, delivering relief supplies consisting of 430 water containers, 1,740 blankets, 535 shelter materials, 4 chain-saws and 12 tons of rice provided by the Solomon Islands Red Cross (SIRC), World Vision, Oxfam, ADRA and Solomon Islands National Disaster Management Office (NDMO).

The assessment team initially reported no fatalities except some minor injuries. According to a former ICRC doctor representing the Ministry of Health, there is no imminent danger to public health of the people or any epidemic of infectious diseases. While damage to water piping systems was identified, the assessment team confirmed that safe water sources are available. The assessment team also reported that about 70 families in Tikopia have lost domestic items such as cooking utensils, clothes and bedding as their houses were washed away by Cyclone Zoe.

The medical team has rehabilitated the local clinic to restore primary health care services on the island, and radio communication at the clinic is functioning normally with the repairs undertaken. Carrying out the in-depth

assessment, the assessment team is also assisting in the distribution of relief supplies under the leadership of the SIRC assessment team leader and disaster-management coordinator.

Meanwhile, a medical team and a Red Cross volunteer arrived in Anuta in the early morning of 7 January. Five traditional houses were reportedly damaged but remain in use. A local school is intact. With some shelter materials, blanket and rice that the team brought to the island, it is expected to cover the needs of Anuta, the island inhabited by about 50 families. The third boat from Honiara is scheduled to leave shortly for Lata, the provincial capital, with family kits, rice, plumbing materials and fuel.

Meanwhile, the overall picture of the damage caused by this cyclone has not yet been clear. The SIRC's national headquarters in Honiara is awaiting the results of the assessment report on the outstanding needs from the SIRC's assessment team leader now in Tikopia. The Federation, in close consultation with SIRC, will make a determination on further action as soon as this final assessment report is available. In addition to the 1,740 blankets provided by the SIRC, the national society has also provided a thirty-horse power engine for a dingy boat, a back-up generator and fuel to reinforce the operational capacity of the assessment team.

Based on initial reports from Tikopia, the SIRC in cooperation with the ICRC regional delegation in Suva has made available 100 family kits, containing cooking pots; plates, fork, spoons for 5 persons; blankets; hoe; fishing kits; three types of seeds; washing soap and bathing soap. The family kits are being loaded on the third boat, which was scheduled to leave Honiara the afternoon of 7 January.

The Federation's regional delegation in Suva is closely coordinating Red Cross activities with the SIRC. The Australian Red Cross has provided 10,000 Australian dollars to support the relief and assessment operations. The New Zealand Red Cross is also making funds available to purchase relief items. The Japanese Red Cross is maintaining close contact with the Suva regional delegation to monitor the developments of this disaster.

### ***Coordination with other Agencies***

The SIRC maintains close coordination with the NDMO as well as other agencies such as OXFAM and World Vision while the Suva Regional Delegation has been keeping close contact with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Regional Office in Suva. OCHA deployed a disaster assistance and coordination team to the Solomon Islands on 3 January. OCHA has provided a \$10,000 emergency grant to purchase relief supplies and will continue to provide updates on the situation.

For a full description of the National Society profile, see [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)

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*All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>*

*For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal for the Pacific Regional Programmes (no. 01.71/2003)*

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