

OPERATIONS UPDATE



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: TSUNAMI & EARTHQUAKE

Appeal No. MDRSB001
17 May 2007

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 185 countries.

In Brief

Operations Update no. 03; Period covered: 19 to 30 April 2007; Appeal target: CHF 1,691,977 (USD 1,405,645 or EUR 1,035,011); Appeal coverage: 58 %; Outstanding needs: CHF 709,890
([Click here to go directly to the attached Interim Financial Report with latest income and expenditure](#))

Appeal history:

- Preliminary Emergency Appeal launched on 3 April 2007 for CHF 1,118,250 (USD 819,673 or EUR 615,385) for four months to assist 5,000 beneficiaries.
- Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) allocated: CHF 65,000.
- Revised Emergency Appeal launched on 18 April 2007 for CHF 1,691,977 (USD 1,405,645 or EUR 1,035,011).
- Operations Update 3 further revises the plan of action in light of high logistics/distribution costs as well as developments in health and water sanitation.

Operational Summary: Humanitarian aid arrived in sufficient quantities in the Solomon Islands to alleviate immediate needs. The challenge has been to move these supplies out to the communities from the two main supply centres of Honiara and Gizo. This has been the priority task for the logistics team in the field.

The Solomon Islands Red Cross (SIRC) has now stepped back from taking the lead in distributing supplies, as the Solomon Islands government has taken over coordination activities, and responsibility for providing food assistance. SIRC has now taken responsibility for the distribution of non-food items for the islands of Choiseul, Vella Lavella and Kolombangara. Initial

estimates for this area of 1,000 families requiring assistance have now been increased to 1,500. The plan of action has been further revised because of the high distribution and logistics cost and other developments in health and water and sanitation areas.



Many families continue to live in camps with poor sanitation facilities such as this in Gizo.

Background

On 2 April at about 07:40 hours local time, an earthquake measuring 8.1 on the Richter scale struck Western and Choiseul provinces of the Solomon Islands, just off the coast of Gizo, 350 km northwest of the capital Honiara, causing a localized tsunami. The combined effect of the quake and tsunami has resulted in significant damage and loss of life. According to the National Disaster Council (NDC), affected areas include Shortlands, Munda, Noro, Vella la Vella, Kolombangarra with the worst hit being Gizo, Simbo, the western coast of Ranogga and the central southern coast of Choiseul. The unconfirmed death toll remains at 52 with the number of displaced people remaining at 9,000.

Operational developments

Whilst preliminary information is now available, comprehensive data on the full extent of the disaster's damage from the national disaster management office (NDMO) is still unavailable. Data collection for the emergency was initially uncoordinated and varied in its accuracy and geographical coverage. Systems to collate available data were not in place or not effectively implemented for an extended period of time. To exacerbate the situation, the displaced population is extremely mobile and difficult to locate, as survivors are scattered across the forested hillsides of disaster-struck islands and still afraid to return to the coast. It is estimated that there are 350-400 small communities living in the affected area. A staff member from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) office in Suva is now working with the NDMO to process available raw data.

Emergency food supplies have been distributed, and there are no reports of any shortages at the moment, and none expected in the immediate future. The World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) report that there are no immediate medical emergencies. There is, however, some concern that if people remain congregated in semi-formal camps as they have in Gizo, problems linked with poor sanitation may arise. Conditions in these temporary camps are very poor. There are concerns that if people do not return to their original tsunami-affected living areas, the situation in the camps will deteriorate further.

Shelter has been identified by the NDMO as the urgent need now that the government has officially declared the emergency over. Emergency supplies have yet to reach some areas as they are difficult to access. Livelihoods, and in particular loss of cash income is an emerging issue. While most of the markets and shops in Gizo are now open with a range of goods for sale, few people have the means to purchase these items.



SIRC volunteers have been working around the clock to deliver relief items to the affected people.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action - objectives, progress, impact

The emergency phase of the operation is drawing to a close and the recovery phase will soon begin. The last of the distributions is expected to finish by the second week of May, with disaster-hit families receiving 37,300 relief items as of 30 April. From the start of the operation, the Solomon Islands Red Cross (SIRC) was quick to mobilize with a disaster management plan, trained personnel and pre-positioned stocks, providing assistance and relief to the affected. Emergency response team assessments were conducted, but were inappropriate for disasters of this scale. It was found that the assessments were too detailed and the teams required too much time to cover the affected area. There were also delays resulting from a backlog in collecting and processing data. A full appraisal will take place at a later date to evaluate the effectiveness of the system and fine tune/modify as necessary.

As mentioned in previous updates, pre-positioned relief stock in Gizo and the capital, Honiara, was instrumental in ensuring communities received immediate assistance after the disaster. Additional relief items distributed were

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from private donations, purchased from Honiara or neighbouring Pacific countries, and delivered through the Federation secretariat's regional network.

Other Movement partners – the Federation secretariat and national societies from the region/working in the region – complimented the SIRCS's service delivery with financial, material and human resource support. In particular, technical expertise and human resources was needed to support the stretched capacity of SIRCS (refer to Capacity of the National Society section). Coordination among all partners of the Movement was excellent, considering the unique challenges of the operation (refer to the Federation Coordination and Support section).

It was evident from the start that the national society needed international assistance to ensure the basic needs of survivors are met and a preliminary appeal was launched shortly after the disaster. This was later revised, taking into account the Red Cross Red Crescent's targeted support to three islands (Vella Lavella, Koolambangara and Choiseul; see Federation Coordination and Support for more information), focusing on shelter, water and sanitation, health and capacity building.

Further revisions to the plan of action

Since the inception of the revised appeal however, the plan of action has been modified to take into account realities and capacities on the ground. Operational and logistics costs are very high. Rented transport between islands has been unreliable and inconsistent, resulting in delays that have translated into higher expenditure and weakened service delivery. Distances between islands are great: for example, it takes three-and-a-half hours to move from Gizo to the nearest point on Choiseul by fast boat. Most of all, the Red Cross Red Crescent had to charter extremely expensive vessels for USD 2,500 to USD3,000 per day for a longer period than anticipated, simply because no other option was available. Not chartering these vessels would have ultimately led to unacceptable delays in relief delivery to beneficiaries (see Non-Food Items section for more information).

Therefore, the health and water and sanitation components have been adjusted to take into account these realities and the activities of other partners in the affected areas. In health, no serious emergencies have been reported and the operation has decided to refocus on the most pressing component of the recovery operation: shelter. Additionally, health needs are already being overseen by the government (ministry of health) and other agencies (WHO and UNICEF). In the meantime, water and sanitation has been incorporated into the transitional shelter component and will no longer be a standalone project (refer to the Shelter section). The intervention will be limited to the provision of basic water facilities for community buildings in targeted areas. Modifications to the water and sanitation component also take into account French Red Cross-supported water and sanitation and shelter activities taking place on Choiseul. There have been some revisions to the capacity building component as well.

Overall objective: Targeted beneficiaries have the necessary immediate support to meet their basic needs of non-food items; and recovery support through the provision of shelter.

No. of families targeted for assistance: 1,500 families on Vella Lavella, Koolambangara and Choiseul.

Non-food relief items

Objective: Basic household kits composed of tarpaulin, hygiene kit, kitchen set, family kit and water containers for targeted 1,500 households, is provided.

The SIRC, with assistance from other members of the Federation, have been distributing family packs within the allocated geographical area of Choiseul, Vella Lavella and Kilimbangara. Distributions are moving forward in five waves:

- First wave from SIRC stock in Gizo.
- Second wave from SIRC container stock in Honiara.
- Third wave from items purchased in Honiara by SIRC
- Fourth wave transported from the Federation secretariat regional logistic unit's warehouse in Malaysia through Surabaya, Indonesia: 1,000 family packages

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- Fifth wave procured by the Federation secretariat office in Papua New Guinea: 500 family packages. These were procured in Port Moresby, or have been borrowed, for later replacement, from the Papua New Guinea Red Cross stocks and shipped down to Honiara.

Each family package contains:

- A tarpaulin
- A hygiene kit
- A cooking set
- A bag of clothes
- A hurricane lamp
- A bush knife
- A family tent (where appropriate)

The mosquito nets in the objective and in the original contents of the family packs has been removed. This is because the ministry of health revealed that it has large quantities of the nets in stock for distribution.

All distributions are to finish by 14 May. To date, more than 37,300 items have been delivered to affected families. These figures will be translated into number of households after data from the emergency phase has been consolidated and analyzed.

Table: Total relief items distributed

Type of items	No. of items
Shelter - tarpaulins, tents, mosquito domes	2,006
Water containers	1,503
Kitchen items - 300 pots, plates, cutlery plus 100 family kits	18,667
Hygeine items - soap, shampoos including 1000 hygeine kits	5,189
Hardware - tools nails, hammers, chainsaws	1,907
Gardening tools - bush knives, spades, hoes	3,696
Buckets	607
Sheets / Sleeping mats	2,870
Lamps	618
Medical kits	300
Clothing bales	24



SIRC volunteers unloading relief goods from the charter plane in Honiara which was dispatched from the ASPC RLU in Kuala Lumpur via Surabaya.

The storage capacity of the SIRCS local branch has been reinforced by the rental of a warehouse in Gizo for two months, as the SIRCS was originally using classrooms in a local school to store their goods. An aircraft was chartered to deliver goods from Malaysia to Honiara (Solomon Islands) via Surabaya (Indonesia). There was a severe shortage of appropriate vessels in the disaster area suitable for distributions, with a good balance between payload capacity and ability to navigate over reefs etc. The rental of an in-board engine jet boat was an expensive but unavoidable compromise as it had minimal draught, enabling it to move easily in shallow water and between inlets and creeks, right next to delivery points. Other logistics support provided are out-board motor (OBM) canoes and a small landing craft type vessel.

Koolombangara

The distribution of 300 family packages in Koolombangara is complete and was undertaken using Gizo as a base. The jet boat and two OBM canoes were used to deliver the packages to targeted communities.

Choiseul

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Distance between Gizo, the operations centre, and the closest point on Choiseul is about 100 kilometres. The landing craft carried the 700 family packs targeted for distribution, while the smaller OBM canoes and a rubber boat ferried supplies direct to villages and communities. During implementation, it was found the initial assessment data from Choiseul was not reliable, and therefore had a negative impact on the schedule. The distribution teams were forced to reassess the areas before each distribution, further delaying the process.

Vella Lavella

On 26 April, 500 family packs was shipped by container ship from Papua New Guinea to Honiara, Solomon Islands, en route to Gizo. These have been distributed in Vella Lavella by 14 May. This signals the end of relief delivery and the emergency phase, and there are no plans for further distribution of non-food items.

Additional food items funded by the Japanese Red Cross Society have been reserved for the recovery phase, which will be allocated to communities participating in the building of shelters. Families that are still particularly vulnerable at this stage may also continue to receive supplementary relief support if extra items are available.

Shelter

Objective: Selected local construction materials and tools with safer/disaster resilient building knowledge to build 1,500 houses are provided.

Transitional shelter activities are set for the recovery stage, which will begin in June, after some additional specialized assessments. The construction of community water facilities will be built into this component. The government is currently lobbying all agencies to agree on a particular design for the shelters, which include the water tanks for each home, in addition to frames, floors, gutters and tin roofs. However, certain components such as the tin roofs and individual water tanks are not appropriate considering the resources available to the agencies involved. In the Federation's case, the design will be modified and materials provided to communities will be sufficient to build the basic structure of transitional shelters. Local materials will be used where possible. The Federation shelter delegate is tasked to liaise with the national disaster management office on the plans for building shelters.

The construction process will be mainly community driven, with the Federation secretariat and SIRCS only providing materials, basic tools and simple technical advice. These include advice on the use of cross bracing, a low-cost addition to structures that can greatly reinforce their ability to withstand tension. Habitat International is also offering technical support to the government and other stakeholders involved in shelter construction. A model home is currently being constructed on Gizo, and stakeholders are currently assessing its suitability.

There are potential risks to the operation, such as land rights complications, possible shortages of local materials, or challenges in obtaining local materials because of accessibility issues. It is hoped that the formation of a formal shelter group, which would include appropriate government departments, would provide a platform for stakeholders to address such issues.

Capacity Building of SIRCS

Objective: Capacity building of SIRC including its branches and volunteers to further enhance the national society's capacity to respond to future disasters.

Capacity building efforts have been refined to focus on critical repairs to the Gizo branch. These include repairs to sanitation facilities, water tanks, telecommunication lines and other work. There are also plans to rehabilitate the old SIRCS headquarters in Honiara with the French Red Cross, which will be temporarily converted in an operations centre for the recovery stage. This building will be returned at the end of the operation for SIRC to rent out for income. In additional, some technical trainings are planned for staff and volunteers through the shelter construction component.

Capacity of the National Society

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Despite its strong presence in the country, partly due to capacity building efforts by the Federation secretariat and partner national societies over the years, the scale of the disaster has severely stretched the SIRCS capacity. While all staff in SIRCS have been active in the emergency phase and demonstrated good teamwork, it is important to point out that all SIRCS programming is funded/supported by external donors. The national society will therefore have to return to its regular programming after the emergency phase ends in mid-May. The recovery phase of the operation will have to take this into consideration.

Nevertheless, despite the limitations faced, the national society has been united in its service delivery to disaster-hit communities. The Gizo branch is backed up by a branch officer, a small team of 20 core volunteers, an office and an OBM canoe. Since the earthquake and tsunami, the branch has been reinforced by staff from the headquarters in Honiara and assessment personnel from other parts of the Solomon Islands. Additional resources were sent for the rescue effort, including a vehicle and an additional OBM canoe. The SIRCS headquarters and additional volunteers continue to support the team in Gizo.

Federation Coordination and Support

The Federation secretariat, together with the Solomon Islands Red Cross, has been playing a central role in facilitating Movement operations in the affected areas from the assessment stage onwards. A Federation delegate from the secretariat's Asia Pacific disaster management unit was in the Solomon Islands for the first month of the emergency, coordinating the operation including various incoming and outgoing personnel that made up the core disaster relief team. A total of ten staff from various national societies have worked in the appeal-funded operation at different times, including those from the Australian Red Cross, Japanese Red Cross, New Zealand Red Cross, Tonga Red Cross and Vanuatu Red Cross. Some were field assessment and coordination team (FACT) trained, while others had expertise in disaster management, health, logistics, media, relief and water sanitation. The operation received additional technical visits from the Federation secretariat regional delegation and Asia Pacific service centre. Such human resource support is valuable to the SIRCS, as the national society is facing its own set of human resource capacity issues for the operation (refer to Capacity of the National Society section).

There is currently a relief delegate (finishing on 23 May) and head of delegation on the ground, who will be complemented by a shelter delegate set to arrive on 17 May. This small team is working side-by-side with the SIRCS to achieve the objectives of the appeal.

Other Movement partners have been working in the disaster areas. In addition to two Australian Red Cross delegates (separate to the core operational team), the French Red Cross plans for a three-member team to supervise a water and sanitation and construction project. The partner national society is focusing on assisting 800 families living in the Sassamanga area in Choiseul. In addition, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) is supporting Choiseul in shelter provision.

The NDMO and provincial and central NDCs have been tasked with coordinating Solomon Islands government and other non-governmental organizations response activities. The government's national disaster council had initially put the Red Cross Red Crescent in charge of distributions to all affected areas. In practice, however, this was difficult to put in place because of geographical and logistical challenges as well as the SIRCS's capacity to coordinate the various agencies. A meeting between all major agencies was called and a more workable strategy was put in place: the agencies would split the disaster areas geographically. Following that, it was decided that World Vision would be responsible for Simbo and Ranangga, Caritas for Shortlands and the northern tip of Choiseul, Oxfam for Gizo, while the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement would serve the communities in Vella Lavella, Koolambangara and Choiseul.

The United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team, which departed from the Solomon Islands on 19 April, worked closely with the government and other agencies to facilitate the overall operation. It has been a very challenging and chaotic environment, partly because many from the local provincial disaster council are themselves affected and could not cope with the combined effect of the disaster. The situation has also been complicated by other agencies with specific areas of interest arriving in the disaster zone. Efforts to coordinate all stakeholders effectively nevertheless continue.

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 Federation's Global Agenda

The International Federation's activities are aligned with under a 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:

- Solomon Islands Red Cross: Charles Kelly (secretary general), satellite phone: 8816 3185 0301, email: ckelly_sirc@solomon.com.sb
- Pacific regional delegation in Fiji: Frank Kennedy (head of delegation), Martin Blackgrove (disaster management coordinator), phone: +679 3311855; fax: +679 3311406; email: Frank.Kennedy@ifrc.org or Martin.Blackgrove@ifrc.org
- Federation secretariat in Geneva (Asia Pacific department): Jae Ryul Kim (Pacific regional officer), phone: +4122 730 4260; email: JR.Kim@ifrc.org.

[Interim Financial Report below; click here to return to the title page.](#)

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDRSB001 - SOLOMON ISLANDS - EARTHQUAKE & TSUNAMI

Interim Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2007/4
Budget Timeframe	2007/4-2007/12
Appeal	MDRSB001
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Consolidated Response to Appeal

	Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation	TOTAL
A. Budget		1,691,976				1,691,976
B. Opening Balance		0				0
Income						
<u>Cash contributions</u>						
<i>American Red Cross</i>		60,800				60,800
<i>Australian Red Cross</i>		192,402				192,402
<i>Canadian Red Cross Society</i>		210,000				210,000
<i>Finnish Red Cross</i>		81,000				81,000
<i>Japanese Red Cross Society</i>		49,856				49,856
<i>New Zealand Red Cross</i>		8,945				8,945
<i>On Line donations</i>		558				8,671
<i>United Arab Emirates Red Crescent So</i>		12,142				12,142
C1. Cash contributions		615,703				615,703
<u>Outstanding pledges (Revalued)</u>						
<i>Icelandic Red Cross</i>		18,700				18,700
<i>Japanese Government</i>		242,000				242,000
<i>Monaco Red Cross</i>		24,600				24,600
C2. Outstanding pledges (Revalued)		285,300				285,300
<u>Inkind Goods & Transport</u>						
<i>Other</i>		78,444				78,444
C4. Inkind Goods & Transport		78,444				78,444
<u>Inkind Personnel</u>						
<i>Other</i>		2,640				2,640
C5. Inkind Personnel		2,640				2,640
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C6)		982,086				982,086
D. Total Funding = B + C		982,086				982,086

II. Balance of Funds

	Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation	TOTAL
B. Opening Balance		0				0
C. Income		982,086				982,086
E. Expenditure		-421,450				-421,450
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)		560,636				560,636

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III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation		
A							B	A - B
BUDGET (C)		1,691,976					1,691,976	
Supplies								
Shelter - Relief	473,000		36,723				36,723	436,278
Clothing & textiles	1,537		1,424				1,424	113
Food	93,050		1,650				1,650	91,400
Utensils & Tools	97,500		18,912				18,912	78,588
Other Supplies & Services	143,400		72,597				72,597	70,803
Total Supplies	808,487		131,306				131,306	677,181
Land, vehicles & equipment								
Computers & Telecom	9,800							9,800
Office/Household Furniture & Equipm.	12,000							12,000
Others Machinery & Equipment	50,000							50,000
Total Land, vehicles & equipment	71,800							71,800
Transport & Storage								
Storage	3,330							3,330
Distribution & Monitoring	295,976		188,438				188,438	107,538
Transport & Vehicle Costs	14,680		7,999				7,999	6,681
Total Transport & Storage	313,986		196,436				196,436	117,550
Personnel Expenditures								
Delegate Benefits			2,640				2,640	-2,640
Regionally Deployed Staff	343,200							343,200
National Staff			567				567	-567
National Society Staff			1,779				1,779	-1,779
Consultants			2,454				2,454	-2,454
Total Personnel Expenditures	343,200		7,440				7,440	335,760
General Expenditure								
Travel	8,657		14,731				14,731	-6,074
Information & Public Relation			57				57	-57
Office Costs	20,090		3,118				3,118	16,972
Communications	15,778		5,639				5,639	10,139
Financial Charges			438				438	-438
Total General Expenditure	44,525		23,982				23,982	20,543
Program Support								
Program Support	109,978		22,284				22,284	87,694
Total Program Support	109,978		22,284				22,284	87,694
Operational Provisions								
Operational Provisions			40,003				40,003	-40,003
Total Operational Provisions			40,003				40,003	-40,003
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	1,691,976		421,450				421,450	1,270,527
VARIANCE (C - D)			1,270,527				1,270,527	