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Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA)

Marshall Islands: Drought Response

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF Operation n°	**MDRMH002**	**Glide n°:**	DR-2022-000176-MHL
For DREF; Date of issue:	28/02/2022	**Expected timeframe:**	4 months
		Expected end date:	30/06/2022
Category allocated to the of the disaster or crisis: Yellow			
DREF allocated: CHF 221,332			
Total number of people affected:	9,326 people	**Number of people to be assisted:**	9,326 people (1524 households)
Provinces affected:	**17 Atolls** Aur, Ailinglaplap, Ailuk, Jabot, Jaluit, Lae, Lib, Likiep, Maloelap, Mejit, Mejjato/Ebadon, Namdrik, Namu, Utrok, Ujae, Wotho, Wotje	**Provinces/Regions targeted:**	**17 Atolls** Aur, Ailinglaplap, Ailuk, Jabot, Jaluit, Lae, Lib, Likiep, Maloelap, Mejit, Mejjato/Ebadon, Namdrik, Namu, Utrok, Ujae, Wotho, Wotje
Host National Society presence: The Marshall Island Red Cross Society (MIRCS) was established in 2019 as the 191st Member of the RCRC Movement. Since its establishment, MIRCS has invested in strengthening its auxiliary role in the Republic of the Marshall Island (RMI) with two newly established branches in Ebeye and Jaluit, two of the most densely populated outer islands of the RMI. The MIRCS has recruited 100 active volunteers serving in Majuro, Ebeye and Jaluit, with ten local members trained in first aid and disaster response in the neighbouring islands. They have recently been active in the roll-out of the RMI COVID-19 pandemic vaccination and response plans.			
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners actively involved in the operation: The National Society is working with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), American Red Cross Society and Australian Red Cross Society (ARCS), and New Zealand Red Cross Society (NZRCS).			
Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation: The RMI Government has released its Republic of the Marshall Islands drought response plan for general circulation. This plan details the work of the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Cluster. The cluster consists of the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), International Office of Migration (IOM), Ministry of Health and Human Services (MHHS), Majuro Atoll Waste Company (MAWC), Majuro Water Sewage Company (MWSC). The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) leads the cluster, of which MIRCS is also a member.			

A. Situation analysis

Description of the disaster

Located just north of the Equator in the Pacific Ocean, the Republic of the Marshall Island comprises 1,200 islands, islets, and atolls with a land area of 180 square kilometres. Like most countries in the region, RMI faces increasing challenges from climate change and natural hazard-related disasters.

The US Drought Monitoring Report received through the RMI National Weather Service Office (WSO) dated 24 December 2021 indicated extreme drought for the Northern Marshall Islands. Weather Service Office Majuro and Weather Forecast Office Guam will continue to monitor conditions across the Northern Marshalls. According to the

Drought Information Statement (DIS) issued on 6 January, some Northern islands have reported limited to no rain in the first week of January. Mostly dry conditions have persisted across the Northern Marshall Islands. D1 (Moderate drought) was introduced for Wotje atoll based on insight from WSO Majuro and the USDM USAPI team. Atolls near and North of Wotje are likely facing similar drought outlooks. Weather Service Office Majuro and Weather Forecast Office Guam will continue to monitor conditions across the northern Marshalls. A drought statement Issued on 25 February 2022 found here

Due to the continued dry conditions in the northern islands west of the Republic, the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) has activated the National Emergency Operations Committee (NEOC) in Majuro on 1 February 2022. The NEOC's purpose is to discuss further steps in response to the ongoing abnormally dry situation, which primarily affects RMI's northern and western islands.

The NEOC initially developed the Immediate Drought Response Plan in response to the critical conditions reported from 14 neighbouring islands/communities, including Aur, Ailuk, Jaluit, Lae, Lib, Likiep, Maloelap, Mejit, Wotho, Wotje, Mejjato/Ebadon, Utrok, Ujae, Namdrik, Jabot, Ailinglaplap and Namu. Therefore, the RMI Government has now released for general circulation the: "Immediate and Early Drought Response Plan for the Republic of the Marshall Islands"[1].

Led by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the WASH Cluster organized a meeting to initiate partner coordination. The first meeting was held in January to provide technical input to the Drought Response Plan. The second meeting was held on 16 February to review the plan with partners after the parliament endorsed the Drought Response *Plan.*

Summary Of Drought Impact

- D3 Extreme drought in Wotje and RMI atolls
- D1 Moderate drought in Kwajalein/Ailinglaplap (RMI)
- D3 Extreme drought in the Northern Marshall Islands near and north of Majuro
    - This includes, but is not limited to, Wotje, Ailuk, Mejit, Wotho, Utirik, Maloelap, Ebadon, Namu, Jabot, Aur.

Many catchments are very low or empty, and some wells are salty, but well water levels are still decent. Catchment water is being used for drinking on many islands, with some using coconuts for hydration. Plants are yellow to brown with absent leaves, and some fruits are dropping prematurely. Some islands have reverse osmosis units, but many are inoperable. Many islands have two to four weeks of water left if no rain falls. Rains are predicted to return around mid-to-late March based on all guidance, including long-range model output, and there are expectations for waning La Nina conditions in the next few months.

It is anticipated that even if rain starts to fall now, for the most drought-affected atolls/islands, the current impact of the drought condition will continue for several months. It will take months for water sources to replenish, water quality to improve, and lost crops to be replanted and harvested. Worthy of note, although RMI can have a large amount of rainfall annually, storage capacity is limited; thus, groundwater supplies are small[2]. It has been estimated that due to evaporation, only 50 per cent of the rain falling on Majuro contributes to recharging the freshwater lens beneath the island thus, droughts are a severe concern of RMI[3]. Droughts are especially damaging in the atolls lacking sufficient rainwater harvesting/storage capacity to withstand dry periods, as with most of the outer atolls of the dry north.

Remote islands of Kwajalein atoll**:** Water resources are stressed on the most remote islands of Kwajalein atoll.

Wotje and nearby atolls**:** Mainly dry trade-wind weather is expected over several weeks. Model consensus is for around 0.50" of rain through late February, leading to worsening drought conditions. There are conflicting signals about how long the drought will last in the northern Marshall Islands. Climatologists predict rain (more than 4"/month) is likely by April, but confidence is admittedly low as to when rains will return. Based on all guidance, it seems likely that rain will return around mid to late March.

[1] https://ndmo.gov.mh/

Kwajalein and nearby atolls: Models indicate 0.50" to 1.00" of rain through late February, and this is likely to lead to worsening drought, particularly the remote islets of Kwajalein atoll. Rains are predicted to return around mid-March based on long-range model output and the expectation for waning La Nina conditions in the next few months.

Forecast
Based on the DIS issued by National Weather Services Tiyan, Guam, La Nina continues based on large-scale oceanic and atmospheric conditions. A series of westerly wind bursts in December 2021 induced a downwelling oceanic Kelvin wave. [4]This downwelling Kelvin wave is expected to set the stage for weakening La Nina signals over the next several months.

An El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) neutral pattern may be set up by late spring. Overall expectations are for the current drought condition to worsen across the northern Marshall Islands the next month or so before showers begin in mid to late March. This largely follows climatology and seasonal climate model guidance.

Recent rainfall (inches) for select islands across the Republic of the Marshall Islands and Chuuk State; per cent of average rainfall based on 1991-2020 rainfall data is found here.

Summary of the current response

Overview of Host National Society Response Action

Timeline	Activity
26 January	• MIRCS communication officer attended the first meeting and posted the drought press release from the NDMO office on MIRCS Facebook and shared it with the network of staff and volunteers.
1 February	• The National Disaster Committee approved the press release.
	• The WASH Cluster shared the Initial Damage Assessment (IDA) Form and requested MIRCS disaster management team, Ebeye branch and IFRC for support in adapting a drought detailed assessment form for house-to-house needs assessment.
16 February	• MIRCS Secretary-General, disaster management officer and IFRC DRM delegate attended the second meeting of the WASH Cluster on 16 February 2022. In this meeting, the RMI Government Drought Response Plan was shared and MIRCS' role in the Drought Response plan was agreed upon. The agreed role of MIRCS is to: o assist with carrying out IDA in the outer islands o provide a detailed assessment of the situational impact o support the supply of Reverse Osmosis (RO) spare parts o provide maintenance training for focal persons in charge of the RO units in the outer islands in partnership with IOM o provide technical support o provide water containers and hygiene kits o provide hygiene promotion and water safety measures in the outer islands. • This complements Government measures and supports the outer island's efforts to respond to this event, while the Government focus on providing technical support.
	• Climate officer and DRM officer have revised the drought assessment form and have reviewed it against the NDMO Drought Situation Overview (DSO) assessment form.
24 February	• MIRCS deployed the DRM officer as part of the initial situation overview assessment with the WASH Cluster Committee to determine the level of damage in Likieb Atoll as part of an ongoing overview monitoring by the WASH cluster.

Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement Actions in country
The IFRC supports in-country through a DRM delegate stationed in RMI for the North Pacific sub-delegation, advising the National Society's planning and response. IFRC Pacific country cluster delegation in Suva, Fiji and ICRC Pacific

[4] More information on Oceanic Kelvin waves.

delegation are providing remote technical assistance towards the operation through coordination of updates and information to all regional partners and technical support. IFRC in-country support includes:

- Provision of technical assistance with adapting the drought assessment tools and supporting on data collection, review and analysis methods and approaches
- Provision of guidance to MIRCS planning and mobilization
- Coordination of information to partners both locally and regionally
- Provide guidance on information management, reporting and drafting of EPoA and budget for the MIRCS operation

MIRCS is an active member of the National Disaster Committee (NDC) and will continue to coordinate its efforts under the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) leadership in partnership with local governments for further logistical support. The government will continue to provide coordination support through its technical WASH Cluster Lead EPA and NDMO on areas the MIRCS needs assistance.

The ICRC and IFRC support the MIRCS communications officer in carrying out the dissemination of information and communication plans that the National Society is undertaking in this response.

Overview of other actors' actions in country

A sound foundation for collaboration has been established through the coordinated effort from NEOC members led by the NDMO. The following combined response for the drought is what is known to date:

Table 2: Cluster's current /undertaken activities and responses due to the ongoing dry conditions

Cluster/Sector	Response to date	Partners
WASH	Verifying and collating an updated drought status with the National Weather Service Office and other international Agencies	RMI WSO/NOAA[5] NDMO
	Contacting NDMO Outer Island focal points /and Atoll local governments to collect updated data for drought through filling out the Drought Situation Report (DSO)	NDMO Outer Island Focal Points, Atoll Local Governments
	Conducting coordination meetings	NDMO, EPA, IOM, MIRCS, NDMO, MWSC, MAWC.
	Drafting request memos to IOM and MIRCS for further assistance in providing RO unit parts and a full set of RO units.	IOM, MIRCS, NDMO, EPA
	Conducting RO units inventory and maintenance	NDMO, MWSC, IOM, MIRCS

Details on the current status of the Reverse Osmosis (RO) units' functionality are available, according to an assessment conducted by NEMO.

Table 3: Northern and Kabinmento RO units' current status

Atoll	Total # RO	Status	New RO requested	Parts requested for RO's
Utrok	1	Down, needs the batteries	0	Need 4 batteries
Ailuk	1	Down, need chemical to flush the unit	0	4 filters, 8 chemicals, 4 batteries, 2 pumps
Wotje	2	2 RO units on island and they both working	0	Needs rapid assessment and maintenance check
Aur	2	Both are down need batteries for replacement	0	8 batteries
Maloelap	4	Need 1 additional RO and some parts for existing units which are down	1	1 RO, 14 batteries and 4 regulators
Likiep	2	1 RO unit working, and 1 RO unit has battery problem	0	Need 4 batteries
Mejit	1	RO unit not operational	0	Needs 1 RO
Jaluit	0	No RO on islands	1	Needs 1 RO
Ujae	0	No RO unit on island	1	Need 1 RO
Lae	0	No RO unit on island	1	Need 1 RO
Wotho	1	Down and needs 1 regulator	0	Need 1 regulator
Lib	1	Down? Replace pump	0	Need 1 pump
Namu	0	No RO unit on island	4	Need 4 RO units
Mejjato	1	Down? Need replacement parts	0	Need 1 membrane, 2 cooling fans, 2 pumps

[5] National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

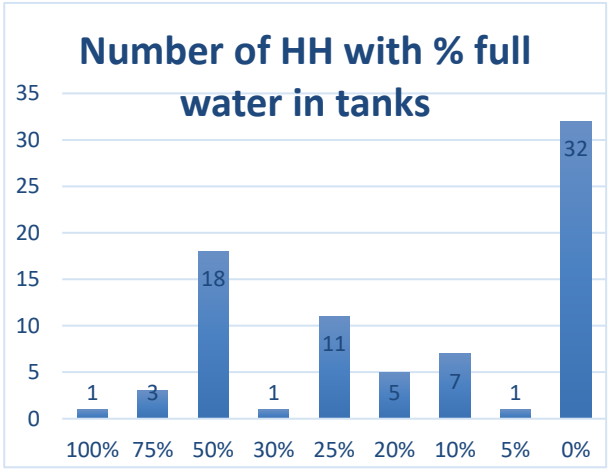
Ebaddon	1	Down? Need replacement parts	0	Need 2 pumps and 2 cooling fans
Jabot	0	Send a team to conduct Initial Rapid Assessment		Needs rapid assessment
Ailinglaplap	0	Send a team to conduct Initial Rapid Assessment		Needs rapid assessment
Namdrik	0	Send a team to conduct Initial Rapid Assessment		Needs rapid assessment
Total RO	**17**		**8**	**ROs required plus parts**

Of the 17 units, ten are currently not working, and an additional eight units have been identified as being needed.

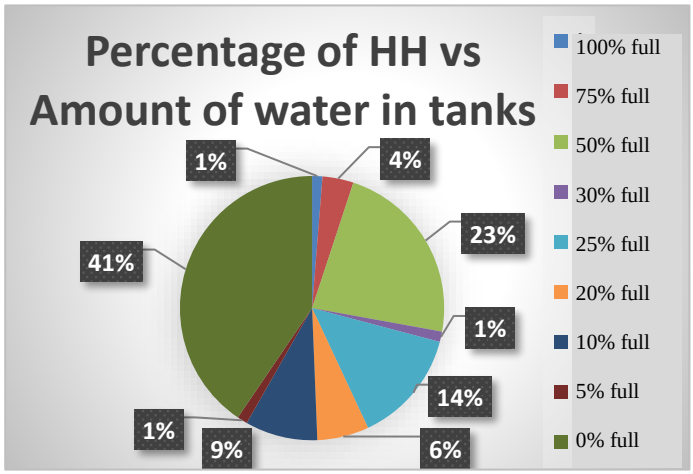
The RMI Government has released the plan entitled "Immediate and Near-Term Drought Response Plan for the Republic of the Marshall Islands" for general circulation. This plan details the work of the WASH Cluster, which consists of NDMO, IOM, MIRCS, MOHHS, MAWC, MWSC and is led by EPA. The activities in this proposal have developed from discussions and close coordination with the RMI Government and members of the NEOC and WASH Cluster. The WASH Cluster was requested by the NEOC Chair (NDMO) to develop an immediate drought response plan.

Coordination is crucial for the operation's success because of the distances between the affected atolls/islands and the scarcity of means of transportation.

EPA carried out the ACWA (Addressing Climate Vulnerability in the Water Sector) project Technical Design Survey mission to Aur Atoll from 24 to 31 January. The community of Tobal was surveyed on 25 and 26 January, and the community of Aur was assessed on 27 and 28 January. EPA issued a report that stated the following analysis of these two communities water capacity:



Amount of water in the 79 households surveyed in both Tobal and Aur communities.



Percentage of households in both communities with different levels of water in water catchments. (1-100%, 2-75%, 3-50%, 4-30%, 5-25%, 6-20%, 7-10%, 8-5%, 9-0%)

A total of 79 households were surveyed during this mission. From the 79 households:

- 41 per cent of the households' water catchments are empty
- 28 per cent are at one-quarter capacity or less
- 23 per cent are at half capacity
- only about five per cent are near full
- only one per cent of the HH had a full tank
- over a third of HH had empty tanks

Communal Water sources were also assessed and found to have the following capacity.

- Aur UCC church has three buildings with only one concrete water catchment with water level at about 20 per cent of total capacity.
- Aur Elementary School has two buildings with five water catchments: four - plastic water catchments are about 80 per cent full and the concrete catchment is completely empty.
- Aur Mon Council has two 1500-gallon water tanks with one tank empty and the other at 25 per cent capacity.
- Aur Assembly of God Church is without a water tank.
- Aur Health Centre has two 1500-gallon water tanks at 75 per cent capacity.
- Tobal airport terminal has one empty 750-gallon water tank

- AOG church is without a water tank.
- Tobal Health Center have four water catchments. However, the team did not check the amount of water in them.
- Tobal Mon Council has a 1000-gallon water tank currently at 20per cent capacity.
- The UCC church has three buildings with one plastic and one concrete water tank. The 750-gallon plastic water tank is leaking and empty, whereas the concrete tank is at 20per cent capacity.
- Tobal Elementary School has two main buildings with six water catchments (five plastic tanks and one concrete water tank). The concrete water tank is also being used by WIU staff, who are currently constructing the seawall at the airport. Two of the 1500-gallon are at 20 per cent capacity, the 750-gallon water tank is empty, and two of the 1000-gallon water tanks are both at full capacity.

In terms of water quality, the assessment team surveyed 54 groundwater wells during this mission, 27 wells in Tobal and 27 in Aur communities and found the following: 93 per cent of the groundwater wells are of freshwater quality, and seven per cent were found to be slightly brackish. Groundwater is mostly used for washing and bathing, but some households use the wells for cooking purposes and drinking during this dry period. However, the systems are highly sensitive, especially during dry periods. When lower rainfall persists with higher temperatures, the groundwater resources of these atolls would decrease, with less rain-fed recharge, increased evaporation and increased water demand. Additionally, with sea-level rise, the freshwater lens which floats above a mixed saltwater base will be elevated. This is likely to result in increased lateral saline mixing, increased evaporation through wells and increased loss of freshwater by coastal leakage. Saline water will be brought within reach of coconut and other tree crop roots or wells, pump intakes, and generally, freshwater resources will be lost.[6] Suppose increased storm surges accompany sea level rise (as seen in December 2021). In that case, such 'wash processes' will render groundwater saline until a state of stability returns, which is only possible if sea level rise ceases.

Both RO units in the two communities are non-operational. The team was informed that the RO units require new batteries, as indicated in the table above.

The following additional elements have been completed and will continue to be supported through the operation:

- Press releases and radio announcements were given to the communities and outer islands through the local government representatives in Majuro. MIRCS is working with its communication officer to establish CEA feedback once the implementation is underway through verbal feedback collated over the phone from the Outer Island Representatives. Community leaders are meeting before the assessments by EPA and MIRCS to garner community support for the response and provide the local knowledge on assessment areas.
- The outer island atolls do not have access to the internet, phone lines are intermittent, and communities are heavily dependent on radio announcements for information. Focal people on the islands have sporadic access to network connectivity to relay any request to Majuro. HF Radios are commonly used to relay urgent messages to Ebeye, Majuro and Jaluit.

Needs analysis, targeting, scenario planning and risk assessment

Needs analysis

The press release by NDMO dated 27 January stated general advice to the communities to start conserving water immediately. Other advice included cleaning water catchments, roofs, and gutters. Catchment water is to be for drinking only. Well water might become brackish and should only be used for cooking and washing. It was recommended to boil water before drinking. During water shortage, health issues such as pink eye and gastro-intestinal problems become more common and serious. Dehydration is a major problem during drought periods. Recommendations to clean water containers, boil drinking water, and wash hands constantly are shared.

The anticipated needs based on the existing data are that there will be:

- Health impacts: due to lack of safe water, diseases will spread, especially when hygiene practices are reduced, and clean and safe water is unavailable for drinking and bathing. Outbreaks of diarrhoea and sickness linked to inadequate waste disposal (when poorly managed) could increase health risks and environmental degradation.

[6] Climate Country Risk Profile: Marshall Islands, World Bank (2021) HERE

Also, the effects of drought and the uncertainty/insecurity may distress and worsen the mental wellbeing of those affected.

- Food security and livelihood issues: severe water shortages that lead to a loss of crops become critical for food security. The land is mostly unsuitable for farming, allowing few crops to grow. The limited crops that can grow in the hostile atoll environment — such as coconut, breadfruit, bananas, and pandanus fruit trees — will likely continue to wilt and become inedible. The income for the atoll population is highly dependent on fishing and the selling of local produce. Dependency on canned and imported goods will increase, resulting in further risks of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD).
- Social impacts: Droughts also have socio-economic impacts. During extreme events, community gatherings will be disrupted, schools and churches, and normal social practices will likely decrease. There may be poor coping behaviours that can increase violence.

Targeting

Based on the Drought Situation Overview assessments done by NDMO outer Island focal points from the reported atolls /islands:

- The drought is now affecting some 9,326 people across the 17 atolls/islands in the North and West of Majuro.
- The RMI Government estimates that more than 9,000 people (18 per cent of the RMI total population) are experiencing limited to no rain from the past two to three months.
- Further detailed assessments will be part of this EPoA to determine the level of damage and impact at household level

A preliminary overview of the population to be assisted is presented in the table, with plans that the detailed assessment will provide the disaggregated data of the population affected in the coming weeks.

All targeting is to be verified upon completion of assessments. Targeted household numbers are based on the average of 6.8 people per household (2011 census).

Number of affected populations and households.

	Affected Atoll	Population	Households
1	Aur	370	33
2	Ailinglaplap	1673	287
3	Ailuk	250	48
4	Jabot	58	16
5	Jaluit	1860	252
6	Lae	386	54
7	Lib	149	21
8	Likiep	416	83
9	Maloelap	546	113
10	Mejit	235	57
11	Mejjato/Ebadon	460	61
12	Namdrik	508	97
13	Namu	780	131
14	Utrok	271	45
15	Ujae	364	52
16	Wotho	110	24
17	Wotje	800	150
	Total	**9,326**	**1524**

Targeting of protection gender and inclusion (PGI) will be reviewed once assessments are completed and those most vulnerable requiring special assistance to be revised/confirmed. The current estimate is based on six per cent of the population requiring specific support.

Scenario planning

Scenario	Humanitarian consequence	Potential Response
Prolonged extreme drought situation affects the main islands of Kwajalein, Ebeye and Majuro	High water demand in the country, increased potential of social issues, increased risks of agriculture and livelihood scarcity, increased health issues, and waterborne disease outbreak, putting excess stress on the health system.	International assistance will be required to provide water supply, food, and livelihood assistance to the whole country. A nationally declared disaster and controlled use of resources throughout the Republic. International partners will increase their humanitarian footprint
King Tide inundation and extreme windy conditions	Due to saltwater inundation, there are increased vulnerabilities in water quality and access to safe water. The supply of resources from Majuro, Ebeye and Kwajalein is cut off.	Local entities will have to work hard on their water and resource rationing. Humanitarian assistance will be focused on more immediate needs whilst working on the prolonged impacts of the severe drought conditions.
COVID-19 outbreak and community transmission in Majuro and Kwajalein	Restriction of movement and increased social impacts to those already lacking support. Fear amongst the people and psychological impacts increasing.	Focus would be given to the COVID-19 situation. More restrictions are put in place. Local resources and systems need to be activated. Coordination amongst Government and partners continues.

		Concerns related to the effectiveness of handwashing during drought, need to share IEC material such as" No soap? No running waters? Handwashing is still possible from the WHO."[7]

Operation Risk Assessment
The following are the main risks:

- Transport: Planes leave every Friday, but it is difficult to confirm seating; boat transport is unpredictable. Therefore there are risks in the timeline that activities will take longer than planned.
- Bad weather conditions will contribute to the delay of implementation as these islands are remote and hard to reach.
- If there is any COVID-19 outbreak in communities, outer islands will be completely cut off, and no one will be allowed to travel interisland as part of the future prevention plans by the Ministry of Health.
- Procurement for materials/repair parts for the Reverse Osmosis units may be delayed due to complex needs or procurement challenges, finding sources of materials, etc which will impact repair and operationalizing the RO units, and access to clean water. In the logistics section below procure /timeframes are being supported by IFRC CCD and Australia Red Cross.

B. Operational strategy

Overall Operational objective:
This operation aims to provide support to the drought response plan (RMI Government Drought Response Plan) through the collation and analysis of more detailed data at the household level and to provide:

- Support to develop and adapt detailed needs assessment tool specific for drought
- Support with purchasing and transport of the RO spare parts (shared cost with IMO)
- Support distribution of WASH items (shared costs with cluster)
- Support development of training on maintenance of equipment; and household hygiene promotion and water safety awareness
- Support printing and translation of hygiene and water safety IEC materials from previous response including "No soap? No running waters? Handwashing is still possible" from the WHO[8]

During the response, the activities are planned according to the RMI COVID-19 safe protocol.

Based on the outcome of the assessment, MIRCS will identify if further response activities are required and will consider support in:

- WASH: strengthen hygiene promotion including menstrual hygiene management (MHM), community outreach to support the implementation of the drought management SOPs, i.e., support with water rationing plan which includes protection, gender, and inclusion (PGI) lens, and assist authorities to monitor water distribution points.
- Health: strengthen health and hygiene awareness, including waste management, conduct community outreach on safe drinking water awareness to reduce waterborne diseases.
- Livelihood: consider options for supporting home gardening and support to fisherfolk and farmers.
- Education: support schools to implement drought action plans.
- Distribute WASH and health items.

Forty volunteers will provide the operational support relevant to this operation - ten from Ebeye branch, ten from Jaluit branch, ten from Majuro and the ten outer island focal persons. Nine staff from the Branches and Headquarters will also do their part in supporting the response. Remote technical support will be sought from RCRC partners in the Pacific. A dedicated finance person will be funded for the duration of this operation to support the financial reporting and management of the expenditures. Technical assistance will be provided in country by the IFRC DRM delegate.

Operational support will be provided through the following:

Communications and Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA)

[7] https://cities4health.org/assets/library-assets/handwashing-alternatives-20200608-(1).pdf
[8] https://cities4health.org/assets/library-assets/handwashing-alternatives-20200608-(1).pdf

- MIRCS has a strong communication team supported by ICRC and the IFRC communications manager. The National Society has invested in training communication volunteers to support collating evidence and stories from the response. Internet and phone lines 2G and 4G are easily accessible on the main island. In Kwajalein and Ebeye, most of the outer islands affected by drought have no accessibility to the internet and very sporadic access to the 2G network.
- CEA capacity of the NS is new; however, they have staff who have been trained and can lead the CEA design and approaches. The MIRCS know their context and adapt their approach to ensure proper CEA throughout the response.
- MIRC will monitor CEA implementation activities, supported by the IFRC climate and resilience delegate and CCD planning monitoring evaluation reporting (PMER).

PMER

- The RMI National Weather Services monitors the water safety and the ongoing situation.
- The WASH Cluster Lead heads coordination and monitoring of the activities with support from NDMO.
- Agency plans and activities are monitored within each agency's ability reported to the WASH Cluster through the coordination meetings. NDMO will have the responsibility to report to the NDC meetings when called.
- MIRC will monitor the operational activities, supported by the IFRC DRM delegate and CCD PMER. This will include a lessons learned workshop conducted towards the end of the operation. Monitoring shall also be conducted through community engagement and accountability methods.

Logistics

- Local procurement is possible; however, the suppliers would not be many. Only a few service providers have systems to support a proper procurement process beyond the basic purchase. The IFRC CCD logistics manager seeks guidance and support to ensure the local procurement is in line with the standard IFRC procurement process.
- NS has one pickup truck that is used for disaster response. Other NS activities hire vehicles on a needs basis. The NS has a Vehicle Policy that needs strengthening by the management.
- The transportation services that shall be accessed will be via road and considering inter-island transport means with only few service providers available in the country.
- The main terminal for the RMI is currently closed, and with the COVID-19 restrictions, landing international freights will have to be pre-approved by the NDC and comply with the RMI Pandemic Travel Safety Program.
- Assistance to IOM in identifying RO spare parts suppliers is done through the logistics manager in the IFRC CCD. Logistics delegates in Australia Red Cross support IOM and GoP with their procurement.
- With the anticipated distribution plan, the replenishment of the stocks would be done locally. Basic logistics training is needed for the MIRCS organized by the CCD. An IFRC volunteer will provide in-house support throughout the operation, and a surge delegate to support supply chain management will be sought. Transportation from Majuro to close by islands can be via airplane or boat. The Likiep atoll and most atolls that have a runway will need the team to fly in and be grounded for a maximum of four to six hours before returning to Majuro. The outer islands further away will be accessed by boat and dependent on the weather. This could take between two to eight days.
- IOM and MIRCS have prepositioned WASH supplies in the country. However, the reach is very minimal and is located in Majuro. Shipment to the outer islands will require bigger freight and a coordinated effort among the partners.
- MIRCS stock count as of December 2021 has the following supplies as shown in the table below, not all of which will be mobilized for this response.
- Soaps and other hygiene items can be sourced locally in Majuro if required.

Stock count ot date:

Hygiene kit	Kitchen set	Bucket	Shelter tool	Tarpaulin	Mosquito net	Blanket
118	118	115	116	46	100	250

Security

- There are low-security issues in RMI and especially in the outer islands. The National Society's security framework will be applicable for the duration of the operation to their staff and volunteers.

- In case of need for deployment of personnel under IFRC security's responsibility, including surge support, the existing IFRC security plan will be applicable.
- All IFRC personnel must, and Red Cross Red Crescent staff and volunteers are encouraged to complete the IFRC Stay Safe e-learning courses. Staff and volunteers will be aware of the security situation and briefed on restrictions and reactions in an emergency before deployment in the operational area.
- Any field missions undertaken by IFRC personnel will be undertaken following the current IFRC travel approval process, current health advisories and business continuity planning (BCP) guidance regarding COVID-19. There are currently no significant security issues or threats for NS and IFRC staff.

Finance

- MIRCS has only one finance officer who is fairly new to the organization and her role. Therefore support from the Board members and one part-time consultant is given to bring their finance and administrative function up to speed. MIRCS must consider ongoing work and anticipate this response's load and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic operation.
- The IFRC finance team in the Pacific CCD office supports financial matters and reports.
- Through the Australia Red Cross and New Zealand Red Cross, delegates mentor the finance network in the Pacific and give remote training and technical advice to the finance staff. The National Society has had very little funding for programmes, and the Government supports a small portion of its annual budget.

Information Communication Technology

- Information Technology, including the cost of communications (telephone, etc.), is detailed in the operational support budget. However, a dedicated person is needed for data entry and to provide oversight and analysis support to ensure the WASH Cluster receives a timely analysis of the situation for planning purposes.

C. Detailed Operational Plan

Health

People targeted: 9,326
Requirements (CHF): 19,559

Needs analysis: The initial focus will be to prevent diseases caused by the lack of access to safe water. Hygiene promotion and education to support the use of soap and water alternatives for handwashing will be important. The reduced access to water to support menstrual hygiene for women and girls will require support to ensure their health is not compromised. The effects of drought and the uncertainty/insecurity may distress and influence the mental wellbeing of those affected. Health questions have been integrated into the IDA drought assessment tool, and the Ministry of Health will be informed of the assessment result.

Risk analysis: While so far there is no analysis showing increased communicable diseases yet, the risk ofwaterborne diseases, respiratory illness, conjunctivitis, skin rashes and other health complications exists due to the lack of access to safe water for drinking, food preparation, cleaning, and personal hygiene. Mental health and wellbeing may be negatively affected by the pressure put on households and communities and the uncertain length of the current conditions. MHPSS IEC materials may be included in the distribution of other planned IEC materials. The remoteness of the affected atolls and islands means they have access to only basic health support from an island health worker, but no health care facility should they have increased healthcare needs. RMI currently remains COVID-19 free. However, COVID-19 education and messaging will be important to include as a part of any activities to refresh knowledge and prepare the affected communities for any future cases/outbreaks.

Population to be assisted: The total estimated number of people is 9,326. However, the actual numbers to be targeted will be determined through the implementation of the detailed assessment planned in the coming weeks. Once the detailed assessments are completed, a more refined targeted population will be determined.

Programme standards/benchmarks: Sphere and CDC, WHO International standards- adapted to suit the local context and ability of the local Ministry of Health to support.

P&B Output Code																	
	Health Outcome 4: Transmission of diseases of epidemic potential is reduced																*Number of people reached with health promotion as a response to an emergency by community-based volunteers (Target: 9,326)*
	Health Output 4.1: Community-based disease control and health promotion is provided to the target population																*Number of people reached with health promotion as a response to an emergency by community-based volunteers (Target: 9,326)*
	Activities planned Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
AP021	Rapid rollout of National Society trainings in Epidemic Control for Volunteers					*x*	*x*										

AP084	CEA activities to promote community-based disease control and health promotion (IEC materials, feedback mechanisms)							*x*	*x*								
P&B Output Code	**Health Output 4.1: Community-based disease control and health promotion is provided to the target population**									*Number of people reached with health promotion as a response to an emergency by community-based volunteers (Target: 9,326)*							
	Activities planned Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
AP021	Health and hygiene promotion campaigns on prevention and control of common communicable diseases such as Dengue, Acute Watery Diarrhoea, Bloody Diarrhoeas, Dermatitis, and other outbreaks likely to occur during emergencies									*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*				
P&B Output Code	**Health Outcome 6: The psychosocial impacts of the emergency are lessened**									*# of people who receive mental health and psychosocial services in emergency situations from RCRC (Target: 9,326)*							
	Health Output 6.1: Psychological first aid (PFA) support provided to the target population as well as to RCRC volunteers and staff									*# of staff trained to provide psychological first aid PFA (Target: 40)*							
	Activities planned Week	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*	*12*	*13*	*14*	*15*	*16*
AP023	Identify and train volunteers in psychosocial support									*x*	*x*						
AP023	Assessment of PSS needs and resources available in the community	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*												
AP023	Provide PSS to people affected by the crisis/disaster											*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*		
AP023	Provide PSS to staff and volunteers										*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	

Water, sanitation, and hygiene

People targeted: 9,326 people
Requirements (CHF): 94,596

Needs analysis: Extreme drought conditions are putting stress on water sources. Therefore, the primary need identified is to maintain the existing RO units in the 17 heavily affected atolls. There is also the anticipation that there will be a need to conduct training for local focal people to manage and take care of these RO units, monitor the usage, and monitor water usage and water storage by the targeted population. There is a need to ensure adequate supplies of hygiene products and proper demonstration on the use of these to the targeted population. Safe water storage is also a need, and the provision of such resources alongside translated and contextualized IEC materials will ensure that the targeted population adheres to safety.

Risk analysis: A COVID-19 outbreak would limit the activities. Water quality issues may further increase health risks, including increased risk of COVID outbreaks.

Population to be assisted: A total estimated number of 9,326 people will be provided with hygiene promotion and awareness-raising activities on safe water storage and water management/rationing. However, the actual numbers to be targeted will be determined by implementing the detailed assessment planned in the coming weeks. Once the detailed assessments are completed, a more refined targeted population will be determined. Hygiene kits will be distributed to selected vulnerable households (people living with disabilities, chronical illness, breastfeeding mothers, babies up to two years old, and seniors with existing chronic illness). MIRCS will promote hygiene practice by distributing hygiene kits to prevent an outbreak from the drought impact. This will go hand in hand with the hygiene promotion and health campaigns planned in the response.

Programme standards/benchmarks: SPHERE Standards

P&B Output Code	**WASH Outcome1: Immediate reduction in risk of waterborne and water related diseases in targeted communities**																	*Number of people targeted for WASH assistance in the response phase (Target: 9,326)*
	WASH Output 1.1: Continuous assessment of water, sanitation, and hygiene situation is carried out in targeted communities																	*Number of target communities /sites with WASH situation assessments conducted at least once (Target: 17)* *Number of volunteers trained in WASH M&E (Target: 49)*
	Activities planned Weeks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
AP026	Develop water, sanitation, and hygiene assessment form ensuring the minimum standards for PGI in emergencies are integrated	*x*																
	Conduct training for RC volunteers on carrying out the water, sanitation and hygiene assessment	*x*	*x*															
AP026	Conduct initial assessment of the water, sanitation and hygiene situation in targeted communities			*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*											
AP026	Analysis and adaptation of plan according to outcomes of the assessment			*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*											
AP026	Continuously monitor the water, sanitation and hygiene situation in targeted communities					*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	
AP026	Assess progress and evaluate results									*x*	*x*					*x*	*x*	
AP026	Coordinate with other WASH actors on target group needs and appropriate response	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	
P&B Output Code	**WASH Output 1.2: Daily access to safe water which meets Sphere and WHO standards in terms of quantity and quality is provided to target population**																	Number of people that have access to sufficient safe water (Target: 9,326)
	Activities planned Weeks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
AP026	Provide safe water to 9,326 people in targeted communities through rehabilitation of RO units					*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*			

AP026	Train population of targeted communities on safe water storage and management					*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*		
AP026	Train water committees in management of water supplies and operation and maintenance of infrastructure													*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*
P&B Output Code	**WASH Output 1.4: Hygiene promotion activities which meet Sphere standards in terms of the identification and use of hygiene items provided to target population**							Number of people reached by hygiene promotion activities (Target: 9,326)									
	Activities planned Weeks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
AP030	Develop a hygiene communication plan, including amendments made throughout program based on continuous monitoring activities			*x*	*x*					*x*	*x*						
AP030	Train volunteers to implement activities from communication plan				*x*	*x*					*x*						
AP030	Design/print IEC materials					*x*	*x*				*x*	*x*					
AP030	Deliver hygiene promotion activities, including encouraging construction and maintenance of handwashing facilities and sharing information on alternatives to soap and water for handwashing in targeted communities						*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*		
P&B Output Code	**WASH Output 1.5: Hygiene-related goods (NFIs) which meet Sphere standards and training on how to use those goods is provided to the target population**							*Number of the most vulnerable people reached by hygiene kits (Target: 400 HH)*									
	Activities planned Weeks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
AP030	Determine the needs for hygiene NFIs, including soap, hand sanitizer, water storage and menstrual hygiene for each community based on health risks and user preference in targeted communities in coordination with the WASH cluster and other WASH actors			*x*	*x*	*x*											
AP030	Distribute 400 hygiene kits, sufficient for four months. And water buckets for cleaning and containers for water storage						*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*							
AP030	Train population of targeted communities in use of distributed hygiene kits						*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*							
AP030	Determine whether additional distributions are required and whether changes should be made							*x*									

AP030	Monitor use of hygiene kits and water treatment products and user satisfaction through household surveys									*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*				

Protection, Gender, and Inclusion

People targeted: 2,400 people
Requirements (CHF): 2,937

Needs analysis: Socio-economic issues are anticipated due to severe drought conditions stressing basic water sources. Water is a basic need for survival and livelihood. Drought can be considered one of the most severe emergencies affecting agriculture and food production. Women in rural areas are burdened with household work and toiling the land for domestic crops. Despite added water issues, women and other marginalized groups' involvement in decision making is often limited. Women are usually responsible for water to cook and clean. A change in this pattern may result in a change in family eating patterns and cleaning/hygiene needs, which may directly or indirectly put women and caregivers at the risk of increased health issues. Stress and violence due to dissatisfaction from family members may also increase. Assumptions on women's ability to manage and cope in extreme situations cannot be made compared to men. Therefore the response needs to be looked at from a gender and protection lens, which will assist in identifying positive coping mechanisms. The degree and level of socio-economic messaging dissemination within society should accommodate such differences and be more responsive to the varying needs that pre-exist in society.

Risk analysis: Increased stress from water shortage may indirectly trigger violent behaviour patterns, increase health issues, result in loss of work due to lack of water or no waterand increase stress on food security. Menstruating women and girls will face increased challenges to maintain hygiene and health.

Population to be assisted: A total number of 2,400 beneficiaries will be assisted. This is based on a six per cent estimation of the population having specific needs: seniors, single female-headed households, households with young children/babies. This may change upon completion of assessments and feedback.

Program standards/benchmarks: SPHERE Standards and IFRC Minimum Standards in Emergencies

P&B Output Code																	
	Protection, Gender & Inclusion Outcome 1: Communities become more peaceful, safe, and inclusive through meeting the needs and rights of the most vulnerable.							*Does the response adhere to IFRC Protection, Gender and Minimum Standards (Target: yes)*									
	Protection, Gender & Inclusion Output 1.1: Programmes and operations ensure safe and equitable provision of basic services, considering different needs based on gender and other diversity factors.							*Data collected is segregated according to sex, age, and disability. (Target: yes)*									
	Activities planned	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16

	Weeks																
AP031	Conduct an assessment of specific needs of the affected population based on criteria selected from the minimum standards for PGI in emergencies. (This is integrated into the IDA with other sectors)	*x*	*x*														
AP031	Support sectoral teams (WASH and health) to mainstream gender and inclusion in their planning include measures to address vulnerabilities specific to gender and diversity factors (including people with disabilities) in their planning	*x*	*x*														
AP031	Support sectoral teams to ensure collection and analysis of sex-age and disability-disaggregated data (see guidance in Minimum Standards)	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*										
P&B Output Code	**Protection, Gender & Inclusion Output 1.2: Programmes and operations prevent and respond to sexual- and gender-based violence and other forms of violence especially against children.**							*Volunteers briefed on CoC and relevant policies (Target: 40)*									
	Activities planned Weeks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
AP033	MRCS staff and volunteers are briefed on code of conduct, PSEA and child protection/child safeguarding policies	*x*															
AP033	Ensure that referral systems are in place to provide psychosocial support to children in collaboration with PSS specialists. For SGBV MIRCS reports to and partners with other capable actors	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*
AP033	MRCS conducts child safeguarding risk tool analysis for operations	*x*	*x*	*x*													

Strategies for Implementation

Requirements (CHF): 104,240

P&B Output Code	**S1.1: National Society capacity building and organizational development objectives are facilitated to ensure that National Societies have the necessary legal, ethical, and financial foundations, systems and structures, competences and capacities to plan and perform**							*Volunteers that are insured and equipped to perform their duties (Target: yes)*									
	Output S1.1.4: National Societies have effective and motivated volunteers who are protected							*# of staff and volunteers engaged in the lessons learned workshop (Target: 45)*									
	Activities planned Weeks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
AP040	Ensure that volunteers are insured	*x*															

AP040	Provide complete briefings on volunteers' roles and the risks they face and ensure safety and wellbeing	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*								
AP040	Provide psychosocial support to volunteers	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*
AP040	Ensure volunteers are properly trained	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*
AP040	Ensure staff and volunteers' engagement in decision-making processes and have an opportunity to contribute to lessons learned														*x*	*x*	*x*
AP040	Local hire of finance support staff to support adequate financial management and acquittal submission	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*
P&B Output Code	**Output S2.1.3: NS compliance with Principles and Rules for Humanitarian Assistance is improved**							*NS implements CEA mechanisms (Target: yes)*									
	Activities planned Weeks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
AP084	Community feedback systems (including rumour and/or perception tracking) are established, and feedback acted upon and used to improve the operation			*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*
AP084	Community engagement activities help to promote healthy and safe behaviour in relation to the identified risks and vulnerabilities													*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*
AP084	Develop an exit strategy that includes community consultation and sharing of the lessons learned with the community													*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*
P&B Output Code	**Output S2.1.4: Supply chain and fleet services meet recognized quality and accountability standards**							*Transportation and logistics effectively support the operation (target: yes)*									
	Activities planned Weeks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
AP050	Organize basic logistics training by IFRC DRM delegate for staff of MIRCS in Majuro, and the two branches including two regular volunteers			*x*			*x*						*x*				
AP046	Logistics management support (Surge)	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*
AP050	Ensure warehousing, goods reception, forwarding, fleet, fuel costs, not related to a specific area of focus are well managed	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*
P&B Output Code	**Outcome S3.1: The IFRC secretariat, together with National Societies uses their unique position to influence decisions at local, national, and international levels that affect the most vulnerable.**							*# of communications pieces released regarding the drought situation and operational response (Target: 4)*									
	Output S3.1.1: IFRC and NS are visible, trusted, and effective advocates on humanitarian issues							*NS is present on social media regularly posting activities and needs (Target: yes)*									
	Activities planned Weeks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16

AP053	Communications work – photography and videography (includes collecting human interest stories from the ground)	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*												
P&B Output Code	**Output S4.1.3: Financial resources are safeguarded; quality financial and administrative support is provided contributing to efficient operations and ensuring effective use of assets; timely quality financial reporting to stakeholders**							*NS financial acquittals are submitted monthly (Target: yes)*									
	Activities planned Weeks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
AP064	Finance support and management work of cash flow for the operation	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*
AP065	Administration work support to the operation	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*
P&B Output Code	**Output S3.1.2: IFRC produces high-quality research and evaluation that informs advocacy, resource mobilization and programming.**							*# of lessons learned completed (Target: 1)*									
	Activities planned Weeks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
AP055	Lessons learned workshop is completed															*x*	*x*

Funding Requirements

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

all amounts in Swiss Francs (CHF)

DREF OPERATION

MDRMH001 - RMI- DROUGHT RESPONSE

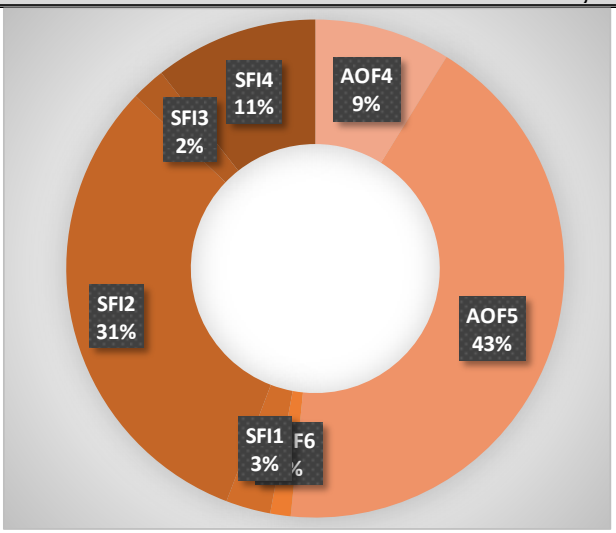
26/2/2022

Budget by Resource

Budget Group	Budget
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	50,153
Relief items, Construction, Supplies	**50,153**
Computers & Telecom	1,673
Land, vehicles & equipment	**1,673**
Distribution & Monitoring	4,597
Transport & Vehicles Costs	19,261
Logistics Services	34,937
Logistics, Transport & Storage	**58,795**
National Society Staff	10,541
Volunteers	24,373
Personnel	**34,914**
Workshops & Training	21,881
Workshops & Training	**21,881**
Travel	6,436
Information & Public Relations	3,218
Office Costs	25,053
Communications	5,332
Financial Charges	368
General Expenditure	**40,407**
DIRECT COSTS	207,824
INDIRECT COSTS	13,509
TOTAL BUDGET	**221,332**

Budget by Area of Intervention

AOF1	Disaster Risk Reduction	
AOF2	Shelter	
AOF3	Livelihoods and Basic Needs	
AOF4	Health	19,559
AOF5	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	94,596
AOF6	Protection, Gender and Inclusion	2,937
AOF7	Migration	
SFI1	Strengthen National Societies	6,423
SFI2	Effective International Disaster Management	69,422
SFI3	Influence others as leading strategic partners	4,896
SFI4	Ensure a strong IFRC	23,500
	TOTAL	**221,332**



Reference documents

Click here for:

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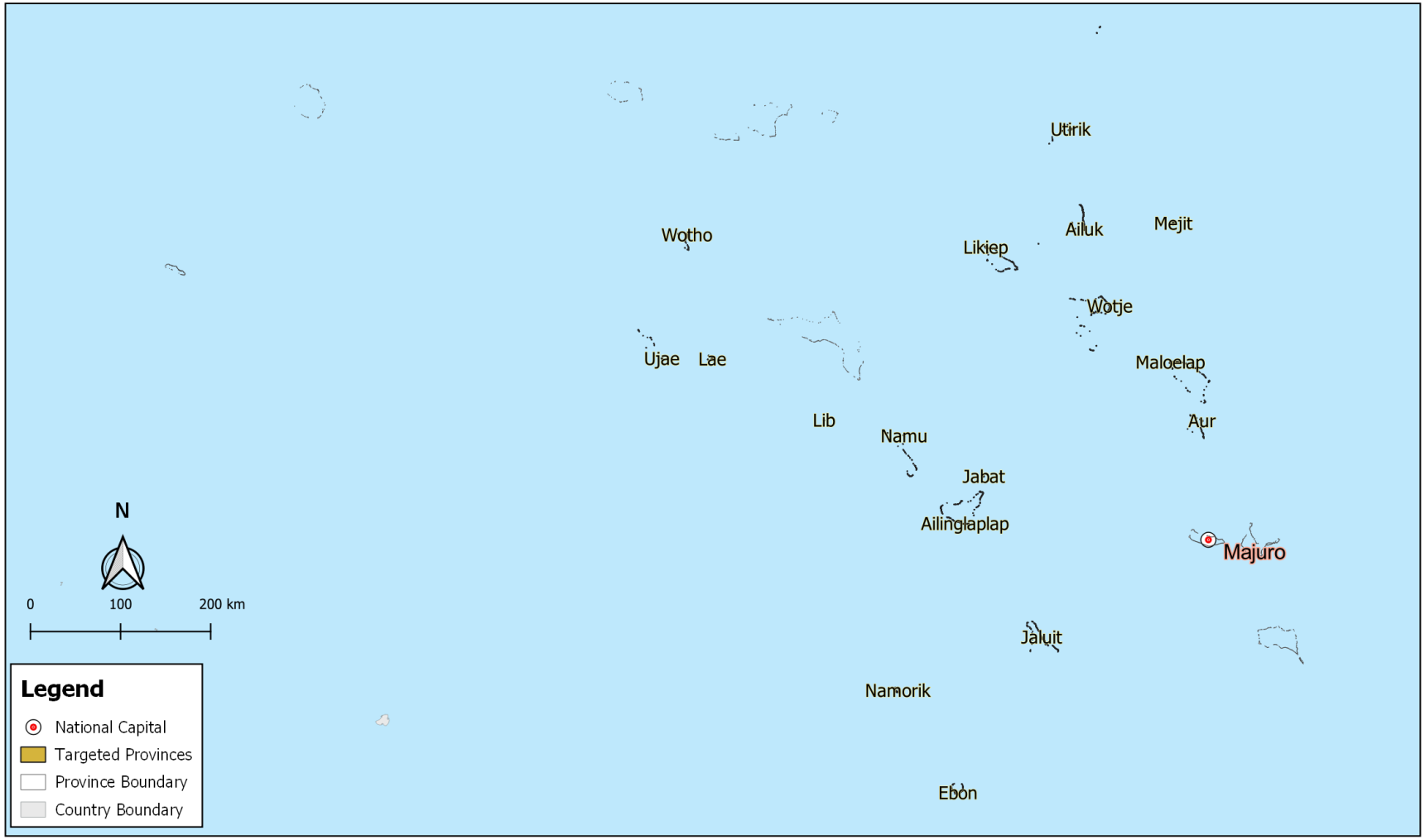
How we work

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 Humanitarian 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.

IFRC

Republic of the Marshall Islands: Drought Response Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA)

25 February 2022



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