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Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA)

Federated States of Micronesia: Typhoon Maysak

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF operation n° MDRFM001	Glide n° TC-2015-000028-FSM
Date of issue: 4 April 2015	Date of disaster: 29 March 2015
Manager responsible for this DREF operation: Victoria Bannon, IFRC Representative to the North Pacific	Point of contact: Isao Frank Executive Director, Micronesia Red Cross Society
Operation start date: 3 April 2015	Operation end date: 3 July 2015
Operation budget: CHF 150,382	DREF allocated: CHF 150,382
Number of people to be assisted: 6,000 people (approximately 1,000 households)	
Host National Society: The Micronesia Red Cross Society has four staff members in its national office based at the capital, Pohnpei, with active chapters on Chuuk, Yap and Kosrae states.	
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) in this response.	

A. Situation analysis

Description of the disaster

On Friday, 27 March 2015, a tropical depression was noted forming in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), near Pohnpei state and the national capital in Palikir. The storm continued gathering strength and developed into a strong and dangerous typhoon – Typhoon Maysak – which was upgraded to a super typhoon. From Pohnpei it tracked west hitting Chuuk lagoon on Sunday 29 March 2015. Chuuk state has the largest population in Micronesia with approximately 50,000 people, spread across 11 major islands and many smaller islands. The core of the storm moved directly over the lagoon with damaging winds and torrential rainfall. Many outer islands also experienced strong destructive winds and damage.

The typhoon then continued on its path west towards Yap State (population of approximately 11,000) making landfall on Tuesday 31 March and Wednesday the 1 April 2015. Yap consists of 14 outer islands (mostly atolls) reaching to the east and south for some 800 km, covering 102 km². The typhoon is believed to have made landfall in Ulithi atoll in the north-west (consisting of approximately 900 people across the islands of Mogmog, Asor, Falalop and Fedrai), with strong destructive winds also reported on neighbouring islands and the main island of Yap.

On 30 March, the President of FSM issued an emergency declaration, allocating USD 100,000 for relief efforts and establishing a National Emergency Taskforce, following the declaration of a state of emergency by the Governors of Chuuk and Yap.

Impact of the disaster

Communications with the affected areas have been limited due to power outages and damaged communications systems. Assessments are underway but it could be some time before the full extent of damage across all islands and atolls is known.

The following is based on the provisional information received by Micronesia Red Cross Society (MRCS) and government assessment teams:

Situation in Chuuk State

- Preliminary assessments to date have been limited to the main island of Weno and surrounding islands, revealing widespread destruction to houses, infrastructure, crops and water sources.
- In the immediate aftermath of the typhoon, the Chuuk governor declared a state of emergency with “extensive damage to private and public properties including schools, health facilities, public utilities, private residences, and the sinking of several fishing, passenger, and dive ships.”
- National authorities confirmed five deaths due to severe injuries sustained at the height of the typhoon.
- Following rapid needs assessments in the state capital of Weno, it has been estimated that between 60 to 80 per cent houses are badly damaged, with over 800 homes completely destroyed and more than 6,000 people displaced and taking refuge with relatives or in over-crowded emergency shelters.
- The population of Chuuk is highly reliant on subsistence farming, and reports of 90 per cent damage to crops has left many with no alternative food sources.
- There is reported to be some contamination of water sources from water catchment and wells on the main island and in the lagoon.

Situation in Yap State

- The Ulithi Atoll took the most direct hit from the typhoon, with the majority of homes destroyed and reports of significant and widespread damage to crops and infrastructure as well as possible contamination of food and water sources.
- The main island of Yap and other outlying islands including Ifaluk, Fais, Faraulep, Tamatam and Fathrai also felt strong destructive winds, with reports of substantial damage to crops, buildings and water sources.
- While many displaced families are currently staying with friends and relatives, there are a significant number of people remaining in overcrowded shelters. Thus emergency shelter has been determined as a high priority.
- There are no reports of serious injuries or casualties from Yap at this stage, and health infrastructure (including hospitals and dispensaries) remains operational.

While Typhoon Maysak has long passed through the FSM, of significant concern is a recent, new, storm formation alert which has been issued for the region. This has resulted in local travel warnings for Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kosrae over the coming week, which could significantly impact travel and access to affected locations over the coming days.

Summary of the current response

Overview of Host National Society

The Micronesia Red Cross Society (MRCS) has its national office in Pohnpei and chapters in the States of Kosrae, Chuuk and Yap, with staff and volunteers trained in disaster response. MRCS also has prepositioned disaster preparedness containers in Chuuk and Yap, stocked with a small number of emergency relief items including blankets, buckets, jerry cans, kitchen sets and tarpaulins.

MRCS chapter coordinators and volunteers were mobilized before the typhoon to support preparedness and public awareness efforts in coordination with the State Emergency Operations Committees and undertook a stock inventory. The MRCS national office has also been monitoring the situation and has joined the National Emergency Taskforce to support the coordination of relief efforts.

The National Society’s disaster management officer deployed to Chuuk is leading initial assessments and relief distributions in the main islands of Weno. MRCS also sent relief items to Chuuk aboard a local FSM patrol boat carrying other relief supplies and personnel provided by the government. The supplies included 120 blankets, 50 cooking sets, 50 jerry cans and 75 tarpaulins. Initial assessments are still being carried out in Yap and relief supplies are expected to be distributed within the next few days.

MRCS relief stocks are insufficient to meet the needs of the affected populations and will be quickly depleted. Moreover, limitations of transport and available personnel will place significant strain on MRCS capacities. MRCS is therefore requesting financial and technical support from the IFRC and partners to enable a scaling up of its response.

Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in the region

The IFRC has a sub-regional office for the North Pacific covering the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia and Palau. The office is based in Majuro, Marshall Islands, and is also supported by the IFRC Pacific Regional Office (PRO) in Suva, Fiji and the Asia Pacific Zone office in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The IFRC North Pacific representative has been liaising with MRCS and providing regular updates on the situation to IFRC colleagues, Partner National Societies and regional organizations. The office has deployed its disaster management delegate to Pohnpei, on 2 April 2015, to support the MRCS in response planning.

Further deployments will be made as the situation requires. However, based on an analysis of the MRCS capacity, it is envisioned that some surge capacity will be deployed to support the National Society in undertaking detailed assessments and mounting a scaled-up response. The surge capacity will comprise a combination of a Field Assessment and Coordination Team (FACT) and persons from regional National Societies within the existing peer exchange mechanism. The main sectors for surge capacity would be shelter and logistics.

Coordination with other partners

MRCS is an auxiliary of FSM national authorities and therefore a member of the National Emergency Taskforce as well as State Emergency Operations Committees. As such, the National Society is participating in needs assessment and coordination activities, with the authorities. The IFRC sub-regional office for the North Pacific has maintained positive coordination and information sharing with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) as well as with USAID, which also have presence in FSM. The IFRC PRO is maintaining close coordination with UNOCHA and other regional partners of the Pacific Humanitarian Team in Suva, Fiji while the IFRC Asia Pacific Office is maintaining coordination with the regional support office for East, South-East Asia and Pacific of the European Commission for Humanitarian Aid Directorate-General (ECHO).

Needs analysis, beneficiary selection, risk assessment and scenario planning

The impact of this typhoon and the extent of the needs it has generated far exceed the current capacities of MRCS. This DREF operation seeks to support the initial response activities of MRCS while more detailed needs assessments and response plans are developed.

Needs assessments

Information is still being received from outer islands and assessments are ongoing. However, MRCS has identified the most urgent needs food and essential household items, safe water, emergency shelter, health and hygiene.

Given limited supplies and capacities on the ground, MRCS will focus initial efforts on the distribution of emergency shelter and essential household items as well as provision of safe water and health/hygiene promotion, as described further below.

Beneficiary selection

Given the widespread damage across many isolated islands and atolls and the predicted large number of affected families, MRCS will not be able to meet all immediate needs, and hence will need to prioritize its initial distributions.

Priority will be given to households that have been completely displaced, with special consideration given to families that are highly vulnerable due to gender, age, disability or other factors.

The logistical challenges of reaching the outer islands will mean that needs assessments and delivery of relief supplies may take longer to commence, thus initial distributions will focus on most accessible areas and then extend to outlying areas as capacities allow.

Risk assessment and scenario planning

The main challenge of this operation will be logistics. The dispersed nature of the affected communities across many small islands and atolls – spanning hundreds of kilometres – combined with limited transport capacity and uncertain weather conditions, will make this a very complex, costly and time consuming operation. While international relief supplies can be mobilized quickly through the IFRC's logistics hub in Malaysia, transport to the target locations will take considerable time. The urgency of the situation may also require more immediate local procurement of items that are available in the market at sufficient quantities and standard quality.

At the time of preparing this EPoA, there are indications of another weather system forming in the region, for which inter-islands travel warnings have already been issued for the Micronesian States of Pohnpei, Chuuk and Kosrae. This may further impede the progress of the operation, while at the same time, increase the vulnerability of the people already suffering the aftermath of Typhoon Maysak. The operational strategy and plan will therefore need to remain flexible to account for this and other unexpected scenarios.

B. Operational strategy and plan

Overall objective

This DREF operation will support MRCS to meet immediate needs of up to 1,000 displaced households (estimated 6,000 people) through the provision of emergency shelter materials and essential household non-food items. These items will include blankets, hygienic parcels, kitchen sets, mosquito nets, shelter toolkits, tarpaulins and water storage containers. The operation will also enable provision of safe water and health/hygiene promotion.

The operation will be implemented over three months, including initial preparedness activities, and will therefore be completed by 3 July 2015. Depending on the final outcome of needs assessments over the coming days, further support may be required to scale up the operation, potentially through an Emergency Appeal.

Proposed strategy

This DREF allocation will support replenishment of preparedness stocks already distributed by MRCS and the mobilization and distribution of additional supplies to meet the needs of the target beneficiaries. The DREF allocation will also support the cost of providing safe water, conducting health/hygiene promotion, volunteer mobilization, deployment of surge, freight and transportation to affected areas.

Operational support services

Human resources

MRCS disaster response volunteers from Chuuk and Yap chapters have already been mobilized as first responders, conducting needs assessments and distributing the available supplies. However, there will be a need to provide additional support to these small teams through the deployment of additional staff and volunteers, including surge capacity. This DREF allocation will cover insurance for volunteers who will be involved in the response. Consideration will also be given to ensure appropriate gender balance within the response teams.

MRCS has also requested additional technical support from IFRC, which is currently being provided by the Federation North Pacific Sub-Regional office based in nearby Marshall Islands. An IFRC disaster management delegate has already deployed to FSM and further deployments are likely over the coming week.

The surge capacity envisioned will comprise a combination of a Field Assessment and Coordination Team (FACT) and persons from regional National Societies within the existing peer exchange mechanism. The main sectors for surge capacity would be shelter and logistics.

Logistics and supply chain

As noted above, logistics will be a major cost and challenge for this operation. To the extent possible, all relief items will be procured/supplied by the IFRC's zone logistics unit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. However the urgency of the situation may necessitate some local procurement within MRCS or from other locations in the nearby region, which would be done in accordance with IFRC procurement procedures.

Information technology and telecommunications

New Zealand Red Cross supports telecommunication programmes across the region. Should support be required in this area, New Zealand Red Cross will be approached to assist.

Communications

Remote support will be provided by the IFRC Asia Pacific communications unit as well as the communications delegate being recruited by the IFRC PRO in Suva for the regional Tropical Cyclone Pam response.

Planning, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting (PMER)

Reporting on the operation will be made in accordance with the IFRC minimum reporting standards. An after-action review will be conducted at the end of the broader response operation (likely to extend beyond the scope of this DREF operation). One update will be issued during the operation's timeframe and a final report within three months of the end of the operation. However, if this operation evolves into an Emergency Appeal response, subsequent reporting will be done within the context of that Emergency Appeal.

Administration and Finance

The IFRC, through the department of finance, will provide the necessary operational support for review, validation of budgets, bank transfers, and technical assistance to MRCS on procedures for justification of expenditures, including the review and validation of invoices. Most National Societies have been supported for many years by the IFRC and are accustomed to these financial procedures.

ANNEX 1: ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS TABLE TEMPLATE

ASSUMPTIONS & RISKS	LIST IF SPECIFIC AFFECTED SECTORS OR STATE 'ALL'	Likelihood	Impact	CAN CONTROL; MITIGATE / INFLUENCE; OR ONLY FACTOR-IN
Access and logistics for travel of assessment teams as well as delivery of materials may be hampered by rough sea and/or bad weather conditions	All	H	H	Factor in response planning
Subsequent storms do not impact upon the same affected areas, distracting resources and implementation schedules	All	M	H	Factor in response planning

Contact information

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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 (NGOs) 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**.

The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:



Save lives,
protect livelihoods,
and strengthen recovery
from disaster and crises.



Enable **healthy**
and **safe** living.



Promote **social inclusion**
and a culture of
non-violence and **peace**.

DREF OPERATION

03/04/2015

APPEAL MDRFM001 - Typhoon Maysak

Budget Group	DREF Grant Budget CHF
Shelter - Relief	38,494
Clothing & Textiles	20,118
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	12,125
Utensils & Tools	13,498
Total RELIEF ITEMS, CONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLIES	84,235
Distribution & Monitoring	21,406
Transport & Vehicle Costs	8,245
Logistics Services	5,000
Total LOGISTICS, TRANSPORT AND STORAGE	34,651
Volunteers	5,374
Total PERSONNEL	5,374
Travel	11,200
Information & Public Relations	1,940
Office Costs	2,376
Communications	728
Financial Charges	700
Total GENERAL EXPENDITURES	16,944
Programme and Supplementary Services Recovery	9,178
Total INDIRECT COSTS	9,178
TOTAL BUDGET	150,382