

*This report was issued by OCHA New York. It covers the period from 01/10/09 to 02/10/09.*

## **I. HIGHLIGHTS/KEY PRIORITIES**

- **At least 129 people dead and over 15,000 people affected in Samoa.**
- **The Government of Samoa estimates the total damage at US\$ 70 million.**
- **Niuaotupapu is the most affected island in Tonga.**
- **Nine deaths reported in Tonga. An estimated 800 people are displaced.**
- **Emergency operations are ongoing in Samoa and Tonga; potable water is the priority concern.**

## **II. Situation Overview**

In the morning of 29 September, a powerful earthquake of 8.0 magnitude struck off the main Samoan Island chain. A series of quake-triggered tsunami waves hit Samoa, Tonga and American Samoa. The earthquake and the high waves, some of which are said to be as high as 6 metres, have caused serious casualty and damages to the affected Pacific Island countries.

### **Samoa**

As of 1 October, 129 people have been confirmed dead, and 310 people have been admitted to hospitals. About 15,000 people have been affected, out of a total population of 179,000. The Government of Samoa estimates the total damage to be around 170 million Tala (US\$ 70 million).

The worst hit areas are Aleipata, Saleapaga, Leap, Falealili, Siumu on the South Coast of Upolu and the island of Monono. The south eastern coast is particularly badly affected. In these areas most coastal houses are damaged and unlivable. Power lines are down, water supplies disrupted, and seawalls damaged. Landslides are also being reported in the area.

There is still no clarity on the number of displaced people, but the Samoa Red Cross FACT team has reported that 20 villages have been completely destroyed. The Government of Samoa estimates that up to 1,000 families could be homeless. There are currently 12 evacuation centres set up for the affected population. The Government continues to distribute food, tarpaulins, water, and other emergency relief items to all evacuation centres.

The Samoa Red Cross is also distributing tarpaulins, blankets, water containers, bags of clothing, rice, lanterns, kerosene and noodles to evacuees in shelters. Women In Business, in partnership with Oxfam New Zealand, are supporting families with food and other assistance.

New Zealand and Australian defense force assets are being used to assist in emergency operations – assisting in repatriation and assisting in humanitarian response. Civilian assets include medical assistance, search and rescue, and Disaster Victim Identification.

### **Tonga**

The island of Niuaotupapu, located 400 miles north of Nuku'alofa, appears to be the only island seriously affected. Two of the three villages on the island, Hihifo and Falehau, have sustained severe damage. The Red Cross reports that 76 homes have been destroyed and up to 800 people displaced. 38 homes are still in a livable condition. A total of 9 deaths have been reported and 5 people are said to be in a critical condition. A temporary hospital has been set up. The total population of Niuaotupapu is approximately 1,400.

There is no potable water left on the island and major damage to crops due to the inundation of sea water is expected. Water storage facilities have also been destroyed.

Personnel from the Red Cross, Police, Army and Ministry of Works have all arrived on the island.

The Red Cross has a container with relief supplies pre-positioned on the island. The contents, other than some cooking utensils, were not affected by the tsunami waves. A total of 200 blankets, 100 Hurricane Lamps, 100 Plastic Buckets, 200 Tarpaulins (6x4m), and 65 20L water containers have been distributed. The amount of the distributed items, however, is not enough to meet the immediate needs of the affected population.

Pending additional results from ongoing assessments, initial findings indicate that water, food, shelter, sanitary items and non-food items are the major needs.

### III. Humanitarian Needs and Response

#### Initial Assessments

##### Samoa

- The Red Cross has done village capacity assessments in most affected areas. They are currently doing more detailed assessments along the worst affected areas. The outcomes will be shared on 3 October.
- Royal New Zealand Air Force P3 Orion departed for Samoa on 1 October. It has conducted several aerial surveillance flights of Samoa, focusing on southern coasts of both Upolu and Savai'i.
- Initial assessments have taken place but data has not yet been compiled in a coordinated format.
- The UN System has offered to conduct assessment jointly with the Government in the areas of education, health, agriculture, environment, nutrition, water and sanitation, and early recovery.
- It is essential that all future assessments are coordinated through the National Disaster Management Office and UNDAC team for efficiency and to avoid duplication or gaps.

##### Tonga

- Staff from the Tongan Defence Service, Red Cross, Police and Ministry of Works are currently conducting an assessment in Niuatoputapu. Preliminary results should be available in the next few days.
- New Zealand P3 Orion conducted a flyover of Niuatoputapu on 2 October.

#### Logistics

##### Samoa

- There has been some damage to roads in Southern Upolu between Aleipata and Lepa. Only light vehicles will be permitted to pass until repairs are completed.
- The Red Cross is establishing a warehouse in Apia and volunteers are sorting and collecting donations.
- World Food Program is mobilizing a logistics specialist.

#### Emergency Shelter

##### Samoa

- 12 Evacuation Centres have been established – 9 in the district of Aileipata, 2 in Falealili and 1 in Siumu.
- Samoa Red Cross is doing the registration.
- Shelter Cluster is not officially functioning yet. IFRC and IOM have been contacted regarding the Cluster activation and support is needed for its operation.

##### Tonga

- The Tongan Red Cross reports that up to 800 may be displaced on Niuatoputapu.
- Displaced population is reported to be taking shelter in a local high school. It is unclear whether the school can accommodate all those affected.
- New Zealand AID will supply a generator. New Zealand Red Cross is providing tents, water containers and first aid kits.
- Australia is chartering a flight to take additional tents, radios, and marquees to Nuku'alofa.

#### Education

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## **Samoa**

- UNESCO will work with the Cluster Lead Agencies, UNICEF and Save the Children, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, and other interested partners, to conduct an assessment of education needs
- UNICEF is mobilizing an emergency education coordination expert.

## **Emergency Telecoms**

### **Samoa**

- Telecoms Sans Frontieres will arrive on 3 October to support emergency telecoms and the UNDAC team.

## **Food and Nutrition**

### **Samoa**

- The Government, Samoa Red Cross, and Women in Business, continue to distribute food to those in evacuation centres.

## **Health**

### **Samoa**

- Medical support is required, particularly for surgery. Aside from medical supplies, there is a need for surgeons and anaesthetists.
- RNZAF Hercules C-130 departed Whenuapai for Samoa around 0300 hrs on 2 October. It took up a 4-person medical team, consular staff, and a Ministry of Health medical assessment personnel.
- RNZAF Boeing 757 departed Whenuapai around 0840 hrs on 2 October carrying a medical evacuation team and medical search and rescue team, including medical supplies, tents, and stretchers.
- Medical teams from Australia and New Zealand have arrived. Additional medical staff on the way, including an MSF team from Australia which is due to arrive on 2 October.
- Pre-disaster measles immunisation coverage was less than 40%. UNICEF is planning a Measles Plus (including vitamin A) campaign to be coordinated by a Health/Nutrition Consultant in cooperation with the Ministry of Health.

### **Tonga**

- France is providing medical supplies and a medical assessment team, which will be transported by CASA plane to Nuku'alofa. Depending on the state of the air strip in Niuatoputapu, which Tongan authorities are trying to clear, Australia and New Zealand supplies and New Zealand personnel will either be transported on the CASA or on France's REVI ship currently docked in Nuku'alofa and due to leave 3 October.
- France has indicated that they can provide a 100-person field hospital as the hospital in Niuatoputapu was destroyed. It could be transported either by a second CASA or by the "Jacques Cartier" barge.

## **Protection**

### **Samoa**

- The Red Cross is working to restore family links.
- A protection-focused assessment is not conducted yet, hence protection problems are unknown at this stage.
- The Protection Cluster will send two staff to Samoa to assess the situation with an aim of getting protection issue integrated into the operation of all Clusters.
- UNICEF will work with Save the Children and other relevant agencies to assess and address child-based protection issues.
- New Zealand Police deployment departed for Samoa on Air NZ flight on 1 October. Deployment included 2 radio technicians, 30 portable radios, 2 disaster victim identification experts and Assistant Police Commissioner to assist Samoan Police at a strategic level.

## **Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene**

### **Samoa**

- There is a shortage of potable water in the disaster affected areas.
- Red Cross volunteers are working with fire service to deliver tanks, bladders and bottles of safe drinking water.
- The UN System has offered to support the Government in the provision of water.

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- UNICEF has prepositioned stocks of Oral Rehydration Tablets and Water Purification Tablets which can be deployed if the need arises.

#### **Tonga**

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### **IV. Coordination**

#### **Samoa**

- The Cluster System has been activated.
  - WASH is led by UNICEF/Oxfam.
  - Health and Nutrition is led by WHO/UNICEF with support from FAO.
  - Education is led by UNICEF/Save the Children.
  - Protection is led by OHCHR/UNICEF/UNHCR.
  - Early Recovery is led by UNDP.
- There is strong bilateral engagement between the Governments of Samoa, Australia and New Zealand.
- UN Disaster Management Team holds daily meetings 08.30 hrs (Samoa Time).
- UNDAC Team, Red Cross FACT team, and APHP ICT team are now in-country.
- Six UNICEF technical specialists, a Telecoms Sans Frontiers team, UNDP early recovery team, OHCHR/Procap team will all be arriving in the next 24 hours (by 3 October).
- WFP is sending a logistics specialist to lead the Logistics Cluster. The person is expected to arrive over the weekend or 5 October.

#### **Tonga**

- The Tongan Government has not yet requested for international assistance. Relief efforts are currently being coordinated by the Tongan Defence Force on a bilateral basis.
- UN Resident Coordinator has informed the Tongan Government that the UN System is standing by and ready to provide assistance.

### **V. Funding**

- Asian Development Bank has established a US\$ 1 million emergency fund for Samoa.
- UNICEF Education Pooled Fund has mobilized US\$ 200,000 for response for both Tonga and Samoa.
- UNESCO is working with the Government of Samoa to facilitate the direct access of US\$ 50,000. An additional US\$ 50,000 may be available once concrete needs have been identified.
- New Zealand is providing an initial NZ\$ 1 million for immediate disaster relief efforts in Samoa and Tonga. This emergency relief fund is being managed by NZAID. Additional NZ\$150,000 has been provided directly to the New Zealand Red Cross to support the work of their sister agencies in Samoa and Tonga. A further NZ\$ 600,000 for disaster relief projects in Samoa is being managed through a fast-track contestable process for New Zealand NGOs with in-country partners.
- Australia, in conjunction with AusAid, has extended the deployment of an Australian Youth Ambassador by two weeks to support UNOCHA Fiji Office in response to the current disaster in Samoa and Tonga.

*All humanitarian aid is tracked through OCHA's Financial Tracking Service (FTS) and is reliant on information provided by donors and recipient agencies. Please inform FTS of all contributions (cash and in-kind) by sending an email to: [fts@reliefweb.int](mailto:fts@reliefweb.int)*

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