

National Disaster Management Office
Western and Choiseul Province Earthquake & Tsunami Report #15
17 April 2007

SITUATION

1. An earthquake measuring 8.1 struck 345km northwest of the Solomon Islands' capital Honiara at 0740 local time on 2 April 2007. (2040 GMT 1 April). The earthquake created a tsunami causing significant damage in the Solomon Islands.
2. The NDC reports that the affected area includes Gizo, Simbo, Ranogga, Shortlands, Munda, Noro, Vella la Vella, Kolombangarra and parts of the southern coast of Choiseul. Aerial surveillance shows that the worst-affected areas are the southern coast of Gizo, Simbo Island and the central southern coast of Choiseul between Moli and Posarae and Sasamungga.
3. 52 people have been confirmed dead in the April 2nd tsunami.

NATIONAL RESPONSE

4. The Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare has visited Gizo yesterday. Today he is due to visit Simbo and Ranongga.
5. The UNDAC Team is departing from Solomon Islands on 19 April. A representative from the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (UN OCHA) arrives in Honiara this afternoon to provide support to the NDMO during the transition from response to recovery activity after the UNDAC Team departs. The UN OCHA representative will be based in the NDMO in Honiara.
6. An NDMO officer is continuing to operate the airport reception centre to receive, register and guide incoming relief teams.
7. A report has been received from Simbo yesterday which includes detailed information on the affected Simbo communities. As the report is 23 pages long it will be available for discussion at tomorrow's stakeholders meeting being held at the NDMO at 2pm

REGIONAL RESPONSE:

8. World Vision Solomon Islands (WVSI) continues to reassure residents of Simbo that there is no increased threat of a volcanic eruption – based on reports and meetings with the National Volcanologist, Thomas Toba.

Health

9. Taro hospital has opened and operating .Sasamunga clinic was completely destroyed but a temporary facility has been set up by Australian Defence Force personnel. Of 62 clinics only 11 are operating, 26 are damaged, temporary facilities have been set up in those places, but to date there are 25 clinics from whom we have received no report, communication is very difficult.
10. Radios in the clinics have been removed for security reasons but many need to be reinstalled.
11. 36 expatriate personnel including doctors and nurses have been sent to Munda, Gizo and Taro.
12. Australian Defence Forces, SOS, Canada, will all be moving out this week.
13. Surveillance has been difficult, we continue to see a background of the kind of diseases that are common in the Solomons anyway. Malaria and diarrhoea are common. No other disease outbreaks at this stage. Ministry of Health are establishing a more rigorous disease prevention system. Out break has been minimal.
14. 13,000 bed nets have been distributed to the region. Extra nets have been provided from all the agencies and coverage is now adequate.
15. Drug distribution, first wave appears adequate.
16. Canoes and OBMs are arriving, vehicles, ships to assist in transportation of relief supplies.

Shelter

17. There are 756 displaced families in Gizo.
18. There are 53 individuals internally displaced that have traveled to Honiara. They are given a “one off” food parcel and basic family kit, and fare to travel to stay with family.
19. Shelter is being targeted to the Western Province. Sasamunga in Choiseul may need additional shelter supplies.
20. Shelter, household facilities and utilities continue to be a priority.

Transportation

21. MV Isabella has left yesterday to go to Bougainville to take donations from Sam Kauona and his community.
22. WVSI has also sent 100 bags of household kits, five chainsaws and 19 bags of household kits for Gizo, Simbo and Vella La Vella on Isabel II which left Honiara yesterday evening. Two of its staff who were sent earlier to Gizo had returned and two replacements have already left on Sunday 15th.

Logistics and Supplies

23. Oxfam International Solomon Islands has loaded 3 x 800 gals water tanks, 39 x 200 litre reject drums, 1x canoe and 1200 pieces of timber on the MV Isabella II which left for Gizo yesterday evening.
24. World Vision Solomon Islands (WVSI) is working on the affected islands of Simbo and Rinongga and is based in Gizo town. They are using two boats that are able to access hard to reach affected areas, such as on the Weather coast of Ranongga. They have distributed non-food items to affected communities on these two islands, including water containers, blankets, tarpaulins, rope, spades, bush knives, ORS, buckets and storage containers. They will soon deliver fishing gear to communities as well as equipment and shelter, tool kits, women's hygiene supplies and baby supplies and continues to compile a database on all affected communities in Simbo and Ranongga and what it is distributing to each location. This information is shared with the NDC and is also working to prepare communities on Simbo and Ranongga for the Ministry of Health measles campaign.

IN-COUNTRY ASSISTANCE

25. The Solomon Kitano Mendana Hotel has donated \$70,000 worth of food items for Gizo Hospital patients.
26. WVSI continues to work in these areas in a relief capacity in the areas of watsan, hygiene promotion, shelter and meeting basic psychosocial needs. They also intend that this intervention will last for 3 months and they will target approx 500 families. The organisation is currently recruiting local staff to assist in the response.
27. Vulavu village, Lambi: has donated \$1000 collected from Sunday donations.
28. Longapolo Community Small Gala raised \$500 in a village collection.
29. Renbel Province has donated \$11,254.00 from a fundraising held at White River, west Honiara.

30. In the stakeholder meeting that was held at 2pm yesterday, the following updates were provided about in-country assistance:
31. Church of Melanesia: A team of people left Honiara last Thursday, to travel to the Western Province. Relief supplies valued at \$100,000 were loaded on MV Southern Cross which included: Rice, household items, clothing lamps, bush knives, utensils. Also 200 bags of rice were donated to WPDC. This is the 2nd lot. \$10,000 cash donation made earlier. Assessment made by Bishop of Isabelle of 5 Anglican villages.

IN-COUNTRY INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE

32. The Korean Ambassador has presented a cheque for US\$70,000 (SBD \$525,910) for the rehabilitation of affected areas to the Foreign Affairs Minister Patterson Oti.
33. Oxfam Australia has sent 6 tons of timber, 500 tents and a canoe to Gizo onboard MV Isabel II. It has already dispatched 2.3 tons of timber, 12 water tanks, 2 motorbikes, 1 hilux, 41 reject drums, 2 bicycles, some bags of cement and roofing iron to Gizo on the 13th of April onboard the MV Santos Star.
34. Association of Medical Doctors of Asia, AMDA, has helped in setting up medical services at Sasamunga, Choiseul. Another doctor is expected soon to go and work at Sasamunga their target area. AMDA has also discussed with the Australian High Commission to see whether or not they could leave some of their stuff such as bedding, tents, water containers and cooking utensils and toilet facilities.
35. In the stakeholder meeting that was held at 2pm yesterday, the following updates were provided:
36. NZAID: C130 came yesterday, and took the NZ offload team back to NZ. They brought 50 tents for Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education for schooling. The xray machine will come on a following flight. One generator also came and is available for use - Ministry of Health has been given first right of refusal. 100 shelter box kits. Cooking utensils and shelter – Munda
37. Save the Children: A team of 3 people (2 overseas and 1 SI) are to provide training on psychosocial aspects. These workshops will be held in Gizo. Any organisation interested in sending staff should contact SCA in Gizo office for training (5 days) for further information. SCA are developing a proposal for psychosocial support.
38. UNICEF: have been continuing to work with Ministry of Education and NZAID and SCA in the response phase. The Team went to Taro and just reported back this morning. Ministry of Health measles and vitamin A campaign starts next

week for children aged 6mth to 5 years. Information materials on health promotion being prepared for distribution to support the nutrition team in their work. UNICEF is also working with women to assist them in coordinating their response. UNICEF has offered that those working in the area of trauma support to communicate with the Ministry of Health to join the team. Working together with SCA at Gizo and Honiara level for 3 – 6 months.

39. WHO: 3 technical staff working with Ministry of Health on a number of issues.
40. Oxfam: Have received the materials to try to build a prototype for staff housing.
41. Red Cross: In Choiseul, they will be involved in non food items and shelter. Also Vella La Vella, Kolombangara for non food relief items. Red Cross will focus on 3 areas of recovery: WATSAN, health, and reconstruction.
42. ADRA has started a meeting on measured response on Choiseul.
43. The AusAID International SOS health team has brought needed equipment into Taro via a US helicopter yesterday. The team is travelling to Shortlands today.
44. The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) has offered assistance for post tsunami malaria programs in affected areas and will work with the Vector Borne Disease Control program staff of the Ministry of Health. SPC is the Principal recipient of Global Fund malaria grants to Solomon Islands. The SPC Global Fund section has also liaised with the Rotarians Against Malaria on interventions that they have proposed post-tsunami, and are now looking at how they can assist through the provision of GIS mapping of the affected areas.
45. The US helicopters are meeting with the NDC every night for instructions on next days freighting. They will be available for another 7 days if there are further distributions they can assist with.

TRANSITION TO RECOVERY

46. The NDC Technical Advisory Team has met yesterday afternoon. The Team is headed by Permanent Secretary for Development Planning.

NEXT NDMO SITUATION REPORT: Wednesday 18 April 2007

Agencies and stakeholders should send their updates to: ndc@solomon.com.sb