

SITUATION REPORT #10 HUNGA-TONGA-HUNGA-HA'APAI VOLCANO AND TSUNAMI RESPONSE

24 JUNE 2022



Tonga Red Cross staff briefing prior to conducting post-distribution monitoring in affected communities.
Photo:TRCS

Background

The eruption of the Hunga-Tonga-Hunga-Ha'apai (HTHH) volcano on Saturday, 15 January 2022 resulted ash cloud reaching 15km and covering an area of 5km. It was followed by a tsunami with waves reaching up to 15 metres in some parts of Tonga. The Tonga National Emergency Response Office (NEMO) estimated 84,776 people were affected by the volcanic eruption and ashfall. The most affected areas were the west coast of Tongatapu, the Ha'apai island group and parts of the west coast of 'Eua. Some households who were displaced from villages on the Fonoifua, Nomuka, Kotu and Mango islands, remain on Tongatapu.

COVID-19

As of 14 June, there have been 12,079 reported confirmed COVID-19 cases and 12 reported deaths in Tonga. Daily new cases have continued to decline over the past month – On 14 June, there were 234 active cases including 36 daily new cases.

There has been further easing in COVID-19 restrictions in Tonga. Both primary and secondary schools have reopened. The quarantine period for people entering the country has been reduced to five days and will further decrease to three days from 30 June. A night-time curfew from midnight to 5am remains in place.

As of 14 June, the Ministry of Health reported that 98 per cent of the eligible population had received at least one dose of vaccine and 91 per cent had received two doses. In addition, 58 per cent of the eligible population had received booster shots. As of 14 June, 47 per cent of children aged 5-11 years old had received at least one dose of vaccine, while 3 per cent had received two doses.

Needs assessment and broader response

The Tongan National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) has reported that a total of 466 household shelters have been damaged or destroyed. The Government of Tonga's Recovery Plan, which focuses on housing recovery, food security, livelihoods, tourism and public infrastructure, has a budget of TOP 565.8 million. Housing reconstruction has commenced.

Response

On 6 June, a 40-foot container with bottled water, hand sanitiser, clothes, food and other items was received from the Tongan community in Hawai'i. The Ministry of Education has supported distribution of most of these donated items through the government schools.

Distribution of the items donated by MBF Bank in Fiji (2 containers including bottled water, breakfast crackers, and other items) was completed during June.



Tonga Red Cross staff and volunteers supporting the distribution of donations from the Tongan community in Hawai'i. Photo: TRCS

To date, more than 2,300 family kits donated by the Red Cross Society of China have been distributed. The kits contained a blanket, towels, moisture proof pad, toilet paper, nail scissors, slippers, laundry soap, perfumed soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, bowls, spoons, chopsticks, a flashlight, an umbrella, and a folding bucket. Distribution is continuing.

Between 31 March and 15 June, TRCS provided 830 special purpose hygiene kits and 106 blankets to the Ministry of Health for use by repatriates in quarantine.

Between 25 May and 1 June, TRCS distributed 270 basins to 134 households on three islands in the Ha'apai island group (Nomuka, Tungua and Fonoifua).

Tonga Red Cross has completed a household survey of 163 households with people living with disabilities (PWD) on Tongatapu. Tonga Red Cross is currently conducting surveys on some of the most affected outer islands. Plans are underway for a cash distribution to eligible households with PWD. During the survey, staff and volunteers recommended WASH assessments for a small number of households with a view to enhancing WASH facilities for PWD.



WASH surge delegate, Sam Cleary, providing training in the installation and use of household water filters. Photo: TRCS

On 1 June, 260 household water filters donated by the Red Cross Society of China arrived in Tonga. Four staff and nine volunteers participated in training on the installation and use of the water filters.

Tonga Red Cross has received TOP 250,000 from Digicel for the construction of two houses – one in Nomuka and one on Tungua. Planning activities are underway, and construction is expected to commence shortly.

Following the eruption on 15 January, the warehouse at National Headquarters was damaged by ash fall. Essential warehouse repairs were completed during the week ending 3 June. It is anticipated further work will be needed at a later date.

Due to the COVID-19 situation in Tonga, World Red Cross Day on 8 May was marked in a low contact way this year – Tonga Red Cross has participated in talk backs on radio and television. On 10 June, Tonga Red Cross marked World Blood Day by radio and television promotions and the team provided refreshments to donors during the Ministry of Health blood drive.

As Tonga Red Cross is moving from the emergency response phase into the early recovery phase of the operation, post distribution monitoring is underway in some communities. IFRC has procured and sent a further 10 tablets to Tonga Red Cross on 15 June to support data collection activities (bringing the total to 20). Tonga Red Cross staff have been trained in the use of tablets for electronic data collection and briefed regarding the monitoring process. Between 22-24 June, 7 staff and 7 volunteers have been conducting post distribution monitoring in the Ha'apai island group.

Other capacity building activities undertaken by the Tonga Red Cross since the start of May have included Microsoft office training (12 May), logistics (16 May), community engagement and accountability (completed 31 May), and psychological first aid/psychosocial support training (7 and 8 June).

The Operations Strategy for the response is currently being revised.

An internal lessons learned activity including key informant interviews and a team workshop has been completed with Tonga Red Cross.

IFRC Senior Finance Officer, Aradhana Devi, has arrived in Tonga and is working with Tonga Red Cross on finance and logistics activities.



Tonga Red Cross staff and volunteers supported the Ministry of Health blood drive by promoting the drive and providing refreshments to donors who had given blood. *Photo: TRCS.*

Emergency Appeal

As 24 June, hard pledges towards the CHF 4,000,000 appeal totalled CHF 3,784,593 (94.6 per cent coverage) and there was further interest which is expected to result in the appeal being fully covered.

Emergency Appeal documents are available [here](#).

Contact information

For further information, specifically related to this operation please contact:

In the Tonga National Society

- Sione Taumoevalu, Secretary General: email: sg@tongaredcross.to
- Marika Moala, Disaster Manager; email: dmo@tongaredcross.to

In the IFRC Country Cluster Delegation, Suva

- Katie Greenwood, Head of the Country Cluster Delegation: email: katie.greenwood@ifrc.org
- Soneel Ram, Communications Manager: email; soneel.ram@ifrc.org

In IFRC Regional Office for Asia Pacific, Kuala Lumpur

- Alexander Matheou, Regional Director; email: alexander.matheou@ifrc.org
- Joy Singhal, Head of Disaster, Climate, and Crisis; email: joy.singhal@ifrc.org
- Felipe Delcid, Manager, Operations; email: felipe.delcid@ifrc.org
- Nusrat HassanYuki Masuda, Operations Coordinator; email: OpsCoord.Pacific@ifrc.org
- Siokkun Jang, Logistics Manager, Regional Logistics Unit; email: siokkun.jang@ifrc.org
- Antony Balmain, Regional Communications Manager; email: antony.balmain@ifrc.org

In IFRC Geneva

- Christina Duschl, Senior Officer, Operations Coordination; email: christina.duschl@ifrc.org
- Karla Morizzo, Senior DREF Officer; email: karla.morizzo@ifrc.org

- Eszter Matyeka, Senior Officer, DREF; email: eszter.matyeka@ifrc.org

For IFRC Resource Mobilization and Pledges support

- Alice Ho, Partnership in Emergencies Coordinator: email: partnershipsEA.AP@ifrc.org