

This report was issued by UNOCHA's Fiji Office. It covers the period from 6am 30/9/09 to 11.30 am 30/9/09.

I. HIGHLIGHTS/KEY PRIORITIES

- **An 8.3 magnitude earthquake has generated a tsunami wave in the Samoan region**
- **Unconfirmed reports of 19 dead in American Samoa and 17 dead in Western Samoa**
- **The Samoan Government is likely to declare a State of Disaster**
- **International Assistance is likely to be requested**

II. Situation Overview

An earthquake of magnitude 8.3 and depth 33 kms struck in the Samoa Islands Region, coordinates 15.3 SOUTH, 171.0 WEST at approximately 1748 GMT 29 SEP (5.48 am 30 Sept Fiji time).

This earthquake did generate a Tsunami. Forecast heights were between .7 and 1.57m.

American Samoa

In American Samoa wave heights were reported to be 1.57 metres. There are 19 reported, but unconfirmed fatalities, in Pago Pago, the capital. FEMA reports of widespread damage in low lying areas, including coastal roads to outlying villages. The water main is reported to have failed in the Pago Pago main village and a power outage is reported island wide. The FAA is reporting that the airport is closed with debris on the runway and TACAN navigation aid damaged. Work is underway to clear the runway.

Western Samoa

In Western Samoa the Samoan Red Cross and NZAID report that waves of a destructive size have struck the southern coast of Upolu Island. 17 deaths have been reported, and there are also reports of people missing and damage to houses. It is believed that the northern Island, Savaii, has also been affected although there is as yet no indication of potential deaths or casualties.

Fiji

Waves have also reached the Lau Group, Rotuma, Vanua Levu and Taveuni in Fiji. Residents of Vanabalavu (Lau Group) reported that a series of 10 waves entered the lagoon during low tide but did not breach the sea wall. No damage has been reported in Fiji so far.

Tonga

There is no significant damage reported. High sea levels in Ha'apai have affected low lying areas in Lifuka from Pangai to Hihifo side and also the areas between Tailulu college and the Hospital at Hihifo. The hospital is reported to be flooded. Water has reached the road at Hihifo although it appears unlikely it will breach the road.

Clear Areas

Reports have been received that Kiribati has not been affected by the Tsunami.

Reports have also been received that the Federated States of Micronesia has not been affected, and that the Marshall Islands have seen some high wave action, but have not been affected by the Tsunami or the current tropical storm.

III. Humanitarian Needs and Response

Clear information relating to humanitarian needs is still very limited, however:

Initial Assessment

NZAID have mobilised a P3 Orion to conduct a flyover of Southern Upolu. This aircraft is expected to arrive this evening. They are also considering mobilizing a C130 with relief supplies.

The Fourteenth Coast Guard District will be sending a C-130 from Oahu to Pago Pago today. The aircraft will be transporting supplies and relief workers from DoD, FEMA, and Coast Guard.

Emergency Shelter

- There is a confirmed need for emergency shelter in Southern Upolu. The NDMO is currently trying to set up emergency shelter sites.
- The Samoan Red Cross have mobilized over 100 volunteers to all evacuation areas to undertake registration and assess other needs.

Emergency Telecoms

- Telephone communication with Samoa is currently very difficult
- The Samoa NDMO has requested additional Satellite phone airtime as a matter of urgency

Food and Nutrition

- There are as yet no indications of food and nutrition needs, however,
- The Samoa Red Cross are also collecting coconuts to help meet early nutrition and water needs.

Health

- There is the potential for emergency medical care to be required

IV. Coordination

NZAID/NZ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade have established a crisis centre to co-ordinate NZ response.

Samoa Red Cross have called a board meeting and are planning their response

The IFRC in Suva and KL are on standby.

Oxfam Australia are on standby.

A UN Team coordination meeting will be called at 1pm (Fiji time) 2pm (Samoa time).

OCHA continues to provide information to PHT partners as it becomes available.

The National Disaster Council in Samoa will call a meeting with UN partners at 4pm this afternoon.

VI. Contact

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