

# ***INDONESIA: EARTHQUAKE***

*5 May, 2000*

## ***Information Bulletin N° 01***

### ***The Disaster***

An earthquake measuring 7.3 on the Richter scale struck Indonesia's eastern islands and triggered a tsunami at 12:21 pm (local time) on Thursday, 4 May. According to the United States Geological Survey, National Earthquake Information Centre, the quake was centred in the Sulawesi region about 100 miles (160 km) south-southeast of Gorontalo. This earthquake is the largest in this general area since a magnitude 7.8 event on November 29, 1998 located about 130 miles (210 km) southeast of today's earthquake. The 1998 earthquake killed 41 people and injured over 160.

The quake, which also triggered a tsunami, struck Sulawesi's coastal town of Luwuk and the neighbouring islands of Peleng and Banggai. Hundreds of homes on Banggai island are said to have been completely destroyed, and at least 15 people were reported dead. Whilst unconfirmed reports indicate that as many as 170,000 people have been made homeless, rescue teams are still searching wreckage, and the death toll is expected to rise as rescuers begin to reach the more isolated areas.

### ***Red Cross/Red Crescent Action***

The Indonesia Red Cross has sent staff from their Palau Chapter (central Sulawesi) to carry out an initial assessment. While they are expected to reach the area by Sunday, 7 May, they will be joined by a staff member from the Indonesian Red Cross headquarters as well as the Federation Head of Delegation on Monday, 8 May. The headquarters team will travel by plane and boat to reach this isolated area located 1,200 miles north-east of Jakarta. Depending on the outcome of the assessment, the National Society will consider the provision of food and shelter assistance.

### ***Needs***

The Indonesian Red Cross is expected to have access to some emergency food stocks based in Luwuk and is drawing on its own resources to carry out the assessment, but it is considered likely that further assistance in terms of shelter materials and immediate food will be required. The Federation and the Indonesian Red Cross will communicate further details as soon as information is available from the current assessment mission, and may consider launching an appeal based on the actual needs.

Peter Rees-Gildea  
Director  
Operations Funding and Reporting Department

Hiroshi Higashiura  
Director  
Asia and Pacific Department

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