

PAPUA NEW GUINEA: TIDAL WAVE

15 January 1999

appeal no. 22/98

situation report no. 6

period covered: 1 - 31 December 1998

Projects to improve water and sanitation made progress, community health training continued, and initiatives to help those with injuries or disabilities were developed. Planning for 1999 gained momentum.

The context

The tsunami which struck the area around the Sissano Lagoon near Aitape, Sandaun Province, on 17 July 1998 left 2,182 people dead and 9,199 homeless.

The response, domestically and internationally, was rapid and overwhelming. The PNGRCS, supported by the International Federation, immediately provided emergency assistance, before moving on to the current phase of the operation, which is providing medium to long term assistance to those affected by the disaster and will seek to optimise the utilisation of the substantial donor funds available through the Federation Appeal and PNGRCS. With the exception of Red Cross, most organisations began closing down their relief activities.

Latest events

The main focus during this period was to strengthen the Red Cross capacity in preparation for 1999. Because of the impending withdrawal of services by other organisations, Red Cross will have to take on a more active role in co-ordinating and monitoring to ensure that no communities are marginalised or left without access to aid.

Following the lifting of the State of Emergency in the area, there have been no incidents or any sign of deterioration in the security situation.

Aitape District Disaster Committee •

Due to the prolonged absence of key District personnel, there has been no meeting of the Aitape District Disaster Committee during the month.

Health •

There have been no further reported outbreaks of diarrhoea since the last situation report.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Water & Sanitation •

The Federation/PNGRCS water and sanitation project has focused on water supply, latrine construction, and drainage. In the newly settled villages, potable water -- rain water collected from plastic sheeting roofs at the household level -- is now supplemented by eight public and centrally located rain water catchment facilities, each of 9,000 litre capacity. In the two former host villages, five 9,000 litre rain catchment tanks have been rehabilitated.

More than 250 pit latrines are under construction in the new villages, backed by the dissemination of complementary sanitation health messages. In Barupu village, two main drainage ditches along the village roadway totalling 3.5 kilometres in length have been excavated using heavy operating equipment in order to improve drainage in portions of that area.

Overall, the main water and sanitation measures necessary for the remaining five months of the rainy season have been taken, and plans are now being formulated to develop water supplies for the ensuing drier months of the year.

Community Health •

The third community based health workshop was conducted 25-26 November, for women from Barupu and Ramo. The programme outline was largely the same as for the previous two workshops. Topics covered included basic health education on the prevention of diarrhoea, malaria, and skin diseases, the improvement of children's nutrition, and HIV/AIDS. Environmental factors in relation to the Sissano lagoon, trees, drainage, and potential river lagoon/river pollution from the washing of treated mosquito nets were also discussed. The programme also included practical instruction on bread making over an open fire place, nutritious cooking, sewing machine maintenance and basic consumer education.

Follow-up health checks of 120 previously identified persons with ongoing physical pain, infected injuries and disabilities requiring physiotherapy have been carried out. Some were directly transported to the Raihu Health Centre for elective surgery.

Nutrition •

The ban on fishing in the Sissano lagoon imposed by the Provincial Health authorities remains in effect and the proposed sampling of fish and shellfish has yet to take place. In the meantime, concerns have been raised regarding protein sources should government food distributions be discontinued in early 1999.

Disability Services •

The PNGRCS Outreach Disabilities Services Co-ordinator completed her assessments and returned to Port Moresby on 24 November. As a result of the findings community based outreach disability services will be carried out as from end January.

Psycho-Social Needs •

The psycho-social needs assessment, carried out by a National Society volunteer, was completed on 28 November and a full report is now under preparation.

Distributions •

The distribution of sago beaters, together with canoe scrapers manufactured locally from old car springs, has continued as they become available. Distribution of the 500 treated mosquito nets was completed on 5 December.

Transportation •

The availability of helicopter transport to Red Cross personnel at no cost continued until 16 December when, due to decreasing demand for this means of transport as a result of the phasing out of distributions prior to Christmas, operations ceased.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

The Federation and the PNGRCS continue to enjoy good working relations with the Government authorities at national and local level. Individual contacts with the principal District Health personnel are being maintained, particularly in matters of community health and water and sanitation. Regular meetings with those agencies engaged in water and sanitation projects are continuing.

Conclusion

Generally the operation is proceeding satisfactorily, with continued progress in both Water and Sanitation and Community Health initiatives.

There is growing evidence that some villages are being marginalised due to religious and political differences. Attempts have also been noted in some communities to exclude certain groups from access to Red Cross distributions. The Federation/PNGRCS will continue to closely monitor the health and nutritional situation as well as the total restoration programme.

As from 1 January the Federation delegation began working on the programmes outlined in the Emergency Appeal 1999, 01.35/99. This is therefore the last situation report on the operation covered by Appeal 22/98 before the issue of a final report, scheduled for the end of February.

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TIDAL WAVE**APPEAL No. 22/98****PLEDGES
RECEIVED**

15/01/99

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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CASH

REQUESTED IN APPEAL				907,000		
AUSTRALIAN - RC		250,000	AUD	220,700	28/07/98	
BRAZILIAN - RC		500.00	USD	750.00	24/07/98	
BRITISH - RC/GOVT		75,000	GBP	184,035	23/07/98	VILLAGE REHAB. KITS
CANADIAN - RC		2,000	CAD	2,049	22/07/98	
CANADIAN - GOVT		100,000	CAD	102,460	24/07/98	
COOK ISLANDS RC				11,880	07/08/98	USD 3.886 + NZD 7.628
GERMANY - RC/PRIVATE		1,000	DEM	826.00	09/10/98	
ICELANDIC - RC		200,000	ISK	4,164	22/07/98	
ITALIAN GOVT/Emergency Fund		80,000	USD	110,400	21/07/98	
JAPANESE - RC		10,000,000	JPY	107,760	13/08/08	
MONACO -RC		30,000	FRF	7,389	23/09/98	
NORWEGIAN RC/GOVT		1,298,701	NOK	254,000	22/07/98	Refurbishment of DREF
NEW ZEALAND - RC		817,661	NZD	609,566	25/07/98	PUBLIC DONATIONS
PALAU - RC				809.00	01/09/98	
POLISH - RC		1,000	USD	1,500	22/07/98	
AMERICAN - RC		75,000	USD	112,500	24/07/98	
REP. OF KOREA - RC		20,000	CHF	20,000	28/07/98	
SAMOA - RC		87,050	SAT	40,200	07/08/98	PUBLIC DONATIONS
SAMOA - RC				1,499	27/08/98	PUBLIC DONATIONS
PRIVATE DONOR		250.00	CHF	250.00	28/07/98	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				1,792,737	CHF	

**KIND AND SERVICES
(INCL. PERSONNEL)**

JAPANESE - RC	1 DEL X 1 MONTH	5,000
NEW ZEALAND - RC	2 DEL X 2 MONTHS	20,000
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES		25,000 CHF

**NOT REQUESTED IN
APPEAL**

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
JAPANESE - RC	PLASTIC SHEETING			175,000	31/07/98	INCLUDING TRANSPORT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				175,000 CHF		