

Information bulletin



Indonesia: Mentawai Earthquake and Tsunami

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This bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation. The Indonesian Red Cross, better known as *Palang Merah Indonesia* (PMI) in the native Bahasa Indonesia language, will, however, accept direct assistance to provide support to the affected population.

[<click here for detailed contact information>](#)

An earthquake off Mentawai Islands in Indonesia triggered a tsunami on 25 October. According to the government, the casualties stand at 112 dead and 520 missing. Communications is limited and access is poor, causing difficulty in getting information from affected areas.

The Situation

An earthquake measuring 7.2 on the Richter scale occurred off Mentawai Islands in West Sumatra on Monday, 25 October 2010. It also triggered a tsunami of up to three metres high, reaching as far as 400 metres in from the beach, affecting three sub-districts: Sikakap, Pagai Utara and Pagai Selatan. The government estimates up to 80 per cent damage in these areas.

Government figures put deaths at 112 people and missing at 520 people, while 502 households have been displaced. Initial assessments report 179 houses with severe damaged, 300 homes with minor damage, four houses of worship destroyed, three schools damaged, three medical offices destroyed and two resorts damaged.

Visiting tourists previously feared missing have now been found and rescued. Transportation to Mentawai Island is limited: a boat scheduled twice weekly departs to Mentawai from Padang seaport. There is an airport in Mentawai Island, but only chartered flight is available. In addition, communication is a concern as existing mobile phone coverage was already poor, with some areas completely uncovered. The only reliable information channel is the radio communication from the regional disaster management agency of Mentawai, which maintains communication with the national office in Jakarta. Electricity is also not fully functional.



PMI volunteers load relief equipment at Bungus Teluk Kabung sea port to dispatch to Mentawai Island. (Indonesian Red Cross)

Communications equipment (such as satellite communication) and transportation to reach Mentawai are identified urgent needs. In addition, basic need for the survivors are family kit, hygiene kit, water, food, tarpaulin, medical service, baby kit as well as baby food.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

On 26 October, PMI deployed five personnel together with the regional disaster management agency and provincial search and rescue agency (BASARDA) team to Mentawai to assess the damage caused by the earthquake and tsunami. This first PMI team brought 50 body bags to the affected areas. On the following day, 10 more PMI emergency response team (*Satgana*) personnel were deployed to Mentawai by boat carrying 400 body bags.

PMI West Sumatra is planning to deploy more *Satgana* with 1,000 family tents for the displaced people. PMI is also planning to conduct other activities such as restoring family links, relief distribution, psychosocial support and water and sanitation for the survivors of the earthquake and tsunami.

A meeting was held at PMI headquarters command post in Jakarta to decide on next steps. PMI now plans to transfer IDR 500 million (CHF 55,000) to PMI West Sumatra for operational costs of the response to Mentawai. In addition, there will be a transfer of another IDR 500 million to PMI Yogyakarta and IDR 500 million to PMI Central Java for the ongoing Mount Merapi volcanic eruption response operation. The headquarters will also deploy personnel to assist the chapters and branches in responding to the natural disasters in Sumatra as well as Java Island which are happening almost simultaneously.

How we work

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGOs\) in Disaster Relief](#) and the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The International Federation's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

The International Federation's work is guided by [Strategy 2020](#) which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.

Contact information

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