

OPERATION UPDATE

Tonga | Volcano and Tsunami

<p>Emergency appeal №: MDRTO002 Emergency appeal launched: 21/01/2022 Operational Strategy published: 04/02/2022</p>	<p>Glide №: VO-2022-000005-TON</p>
<p>Operation update #2 Date of issue: 04/04/2022</p>	<p>Timeframe covered by this update: From 16/1/2022 to 18/3/2022</p>
<p>Operation timeframe: 24 months (23/01//2022 – 21/1/2024)</p>	<p>Number of people being assisted: 17,000</p>
<p>Funding requirements (CHF): CHF 2.5 million through the IFRC Emergency Appeal CHF 3.1 million Federation-wide</p>	<p>DREF amount initially allocated: CHF 430,666</p>



Tonga Red Cross staff and volunteers transporting water and breakfast crackers for distribution in affected communities. Photo: TRCS

This Emergency Appeal, which was seeking CHF 2,500,000, is now fully funded with assistance from generous donors. Accordingly, the earlier DREF funding of CHF 430,666 has now been repaid.

With the appeal funding, the Tonga Red Cross (TRCS) and IFRC will assist approximately 17,000 people (2,833 households) affected by the Hunga-Tonga-Hunga-Ha'apai (HTHH) volcano and tsunami. The funding contributions will meet the essential needs of the affected population, help them self-recover from the crisis sustainably and strengthen their resilience to future shocks. The operation also intends to strengthen TRCS response to future disasters and crises through preparedness, humanitarian assistance, and protection.

The Operational Strategy is available [here](#). Following receipt of additional information regarding the context, along with recent advice on the availability of further funding, it is expected that the Emergency Appeal and the Operational Strategy will be revised soon.

A. SITUATION ANALYSIS

Description of the crisis

On 20 December 2021, an eruption was observed at Hunga Tonga and Hunga Ha'apai, two sister volcanic islands in an uninhabited area approximately 65km north of Nuku'alofa, Tonga's capital. There was further volcanic activity on 14 January, resulting in tsunami waves of 30cm. An eruption of historic proportions occurred at 17:20 on 15 January 2022 and sent ash more than 20km into the air in a 5km plume.

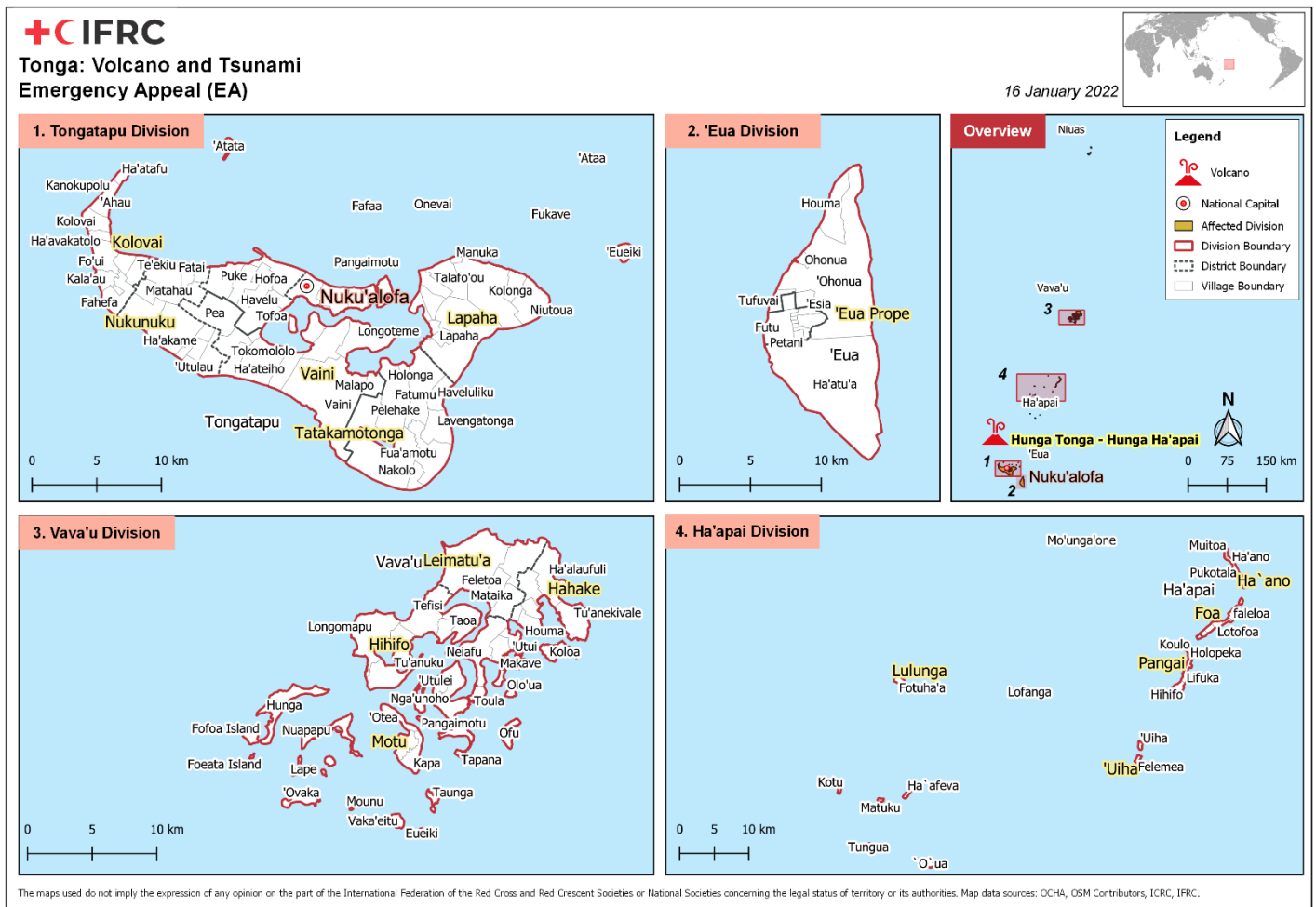
The eruption triggered a Pacific-wide Tsunami. Tsunami waves of up to 15m struck the west coasts of Tongatapu, 'Eua and Ha'apai. Ash cover reached up to 4-5cm in some areas. The eruption is believed to be the largest volcanic event in the past 30 years, and NASA reported the resulting ash cloud as the largest on record.

New Zealand Defence Force and Australian Defence Forces surveillance flights on 17 January showed significant damage to houses, roads, water tanks and other infrastructure on the west coast of Tongatapu, the Ha'apai island group and the west coast of 'Eua.

Early government estimates were that 84,176 people (84 per cent of the population) on Tongatapu, Ha'apai and 'Eua) had been affected, particularly by ashfall. Following the eruption, a Tongan naval ship conducted a reconnaissance mission to outer islands in the Ha'apai group, accompanied by Red Cross volunteers with essential supplies such as tents, drinking water and hygiene kits. The assessment team found devastating scenes of destruction, with all infrastructure and housing on three out of four islands destroyed.

On 18 January, the Prime Minister of Tonga declared a state of emergency effective from 16 January, extended until 14 March. The Tongan Government and the Tonga Red Cross (TRCS) requested international assistance.

Only three direct fatalities and one indirect fatality have been officially attributed to the volcano and tsunami. The low level of fatalities partly reflects Tonga's effective early warning systems and previous experience with natural disasters in Tonga.



The COVID-19 situation

The response is complicated by an outbreak of COVID-19 in the country. Two cases of COVID-19 (Omicron variant) were detected during routine testing of port workers on 2 February 2022. As of 25 March, there have been 4,872 reported COVID-19 cases on Tongatapu, Ha'apai and Vava'u, and there have been two deaths attributed to COVID-19. As of 25 March 2022, over 98 per cent of Tonga's eligible population have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, 90 per cent had received two doses, and 47 per cent had received booster doses.¹

Following the identification of the first cases of COVID-19, The Tongan government had established a set of COVID-19 restrictions on Tongatapu and Vava'u, including a rolling lockdown, a curfew, school and business closures and restrictions on events and gatherings. Some restrictions were subsequently eased but following an increase in daily new cases, a stringent lockdown commenced on 20 March for one week and was extended by a further week.

The COVID-19 restrictions impact Hunga-Tonga-Hunga-Ha'apai (HTHH) relief efforts, although The Tongan National Emergency Management Office (NEMO), Tonga Red Cross and others are committed to continuing relief activities. Tonga Red Cross has been granted an order from the National COVID-19 Lockdown Restrictions Directions issued on 2 February, enabling it to carry out critical response activities. However, to minimize COVID-19 risks, operations were largely suspended during the first lockdown.

¹ The figures on the PACIFIC HUBAPRO dashboard are for the percentage of the total population, not the percentage of the eligible population.

Summary of response

Overview of the host National Society and ongoing response

The TRCS headquarters in Nuku'alofa on Tongatapu is low lying, and there was flooding on the property following the tsunami. Nevertheless, essential household items for 1,200 households were previously prepositioned in 14 containers around Tonga, which enabled TRCS to commence distributions the day after the eruption.

The volcano and tsunami caused significant damage to both the international and domestic undersea telecommunications cables, which significantly impacted communications. In the immediate aftermath of the volcano, ash cloud impacted satellite communications. Once this eased, the TRCS satellite phones were activated, and TRCS commenced Restoring Family Links (RFL) using their satellite phones. Mobile phone services were subsequently restored.

New Zealand Red Cross has procured GX Explorer satellite telecommunications equipment for loan following disaster events as needed. It was initially anticipated that the equipment would be loaned to Tonga Red Cross. However, following the completion of repairs to the international undersea telecommunications cable on 22 February, it was no longer necessary to deploy the GX Explorer to Tonga.

It is anticipated that the domestic undersea cable is likely to take several months to repair. In the interim, challenges with internet connectivity to the outer islands continues.

The TRCS is responding proactively to the volcano and tsunami despite the challenges faced. The TRCS has 15 staff and around 80 volunteers. Earlier in the response, 30-40 volunteers were supporting the response on Tongatapu. There was limited information available regarding volunteer deployments on other island groups. Following increasing COVID-19 cases and the ensuing COVID-19 lockdown, the number of volunteers has been reduced (currently fewer than ten on Tongatapu) to ensure health and safety. However, more may be mobilized where activities and safety permit.



Tonga Red Cross staff and volunteers. Photo: TRCS

Tonga Red Cross began distributing relief items to the west coast of Tongatapu on 16 January. Relief items distributed include shelter toolkits, tarps, kitchen sets, blankets, jerry cans, buckets, hygiene kits and solar lanterns from prepositioned stocks². Distributions also occurred on Ha'apai and 'Eua.

NEMO and Tonga Red Cross commenced joint initial damage assessments on 17 January on the west coast of Tongatapu. Since that time, NEMO, in conjunction with others, has completed Initial Damage Assessments (IDA). The NEMO IDA report was released during March (refer below).

Tonga Red Cross has supported government authorities with water distribution to affected communities in Tongatapu and Ha'apai. In response to

² Essential household items for 1,200 households were previously prepositioned in 14 containers around Tonga.

the damage to infrastructure, Tonga Red Cross has provided nine portable toilets/latrines for use in affected communities.

As of 19 March 2022, distributions of Red Cross non-food items by Tonga Red Cross staff and volunteers were as follows:

Division/ Village	Immediate Needs Assisted with Distribution (# NFIs)									
	Shelter Tarps	Tent	Shelter Toolkit	Kitchen Set	Blanket	Solar Lamp	Hygiene Kit	Bucket	Water container	Mosq. Net
Tongatapu	232	71	59	203	604	163	160	26	38	6
Ha'apai (including evacuees on Tongatapu)	11	-	7	18	32	206	54	11	23	3
'Eua				40			40			
GRAND TOTAL	243	71	66	261	636	369	254	37	61	9

Tonga Red Cross distribution of non-food items by location. Source: TRCS

Tonga Red Cross has received donations of 3,000 buckets of breakfast crackers (shipped from Fiji). To date, more than 1,500 of these buckets have been distributed. Once empty, the buckets can be used for other purposes.

The Red Cross Society of China has donated 3,000 family kits to Tonga Red Cross. During the week of 14-19 March, staff and volunteers distributed 288 kits to families in Tongatapu and Siesia. Distribution is planned in other locations once the COVID situation permits.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

The Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners currently actively involved in the operation include the IFRC, ICRC, Australia Red Cross, New Zealand Red Cross, French Red Cross, and the Red Cross Society of China. The IFRC country cluster delegation Suva, which supports Pacific National Societies, provides remote support for the Tonga RC response activity, including planning, donor engagement, logistics, communications, planning, monitoring, evaluation, reporting, finance and cluster participation.



Tonga Red Cross staff and volunteers heading out on the road with a truckload of family kits donated by China Red Cross. Photo: TRCS

ICRC has supported the Tonga Red Cross with Restoring Family Links (RFL) services. From 26 January, 150 Tongan households made "safe and well" calls to family overseas using Tonga Red Cross satellite phones. In addition, enquiries were received from 42 international family members seeking news of Tongan relatives. The eruption and subsequent tsunami created significant communications challenges across Tonga, including for TRCS. While satellite phones in the TRCS headquarters were not operating initially, the TRCS satellite phones are now operating and have been used to support RFL calls and operational communications

Relief items have been shipped by Australia Red Cross, Red Cross Society of China, French Red Cross and New Zealand Red Cross.

Non-RCRC Actors

Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation are the Civil Society Forum of Tonga (CSFT), UNDP, UNICEF, IOM, Save the Children, WFP, FAO, WHO, UN Women, UNFPA, OCHA, Caritas, OXFAM, Act for Peace, Mainstreaming of Rural Development Initiative (MORDI), CARE international CARE Australia, Habitat for Humanity, SPC, SPREP, Pacific Disability Forum (PDF).

There have been a number of disaster events in Tonga in recent years, and the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) is experienced in disaster response. A tsunami warning system is in place in some of the most densely populated high-risk coastal areas.

The National Emergency Management Committee (NEMC) first met on 15 January. A full National Intercluster meeting was held on 18 January 2022, chaired by NEMO. The TRCS attended this meeting and participated as a leading agency within the National-Level Emergency Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFI) cluster, the WASH cluster and the Safety and Protection Cluster. The standing coordination mechanism in place for shelter is led by the National Emergency Management Office and co-led by TRCS. IFRC has been supporting co-leadership of the cluster, focusing on both preparedness and response. Several INGOs have programmes in Tonga. UN Agencies operating in Tonga include UNDP, UNICEF, UNOCHA, UN Women, WFP, WHO and WMO. Several local CSOs partner with INGOs during the response, including Mainstreaming of Rural Development Innovation (MORDI), the Women and Children's Crisis Counselling Centre, the Talitha Project³, and the Tonga Leitis Association (LTA) - Tonga's sole LGBTIQ+ organization. Many Tongans belong to Churches, and some Churches have provided support to their members since the disaster. The Royal family have also supported relief activities.

A desalination unit able to provide drinking water for 5,000 people was provided by the WASH cluster partners. The WASH cluster has also supported the distribution of hygiene kits. In addition to the extensive water distribution programme, the Tongan government has conducted distributions and clean-up activities in several locations.

Needs analysis

Shelter and settlement

The initial damage estimates in the Operations Strategy were based on early OCHA sitreps, NEMO sitreps and satellite images. Initially, it was estimated that 20 per cent of Tongatapu was affected, and 75 per cent of the E'ua and Ha'apai island groups. Based on this, it was decided that TRCS would target 25 per cent of affected households with shelter and essential household items.

2021 Population & Housing pre-census					Damage Estimations & Targets for TRCS support in Shelter and essential household items (HHI)					
Divisions	Male Pop.	Female Pop.	Total Pop.	Total HH	Pop. affected by damages/ destruction of homes	HH damages ⁴	People targeted (25%)	HH targeted (25%)	Integrated assistance Males	Integrated assistance Females
Tongatapu	36,032	38,422	74,454	12,409	14,891	2,482	3,723	620	1,802	1,921
Vava'u	7,089	7,194	14,283	2,381	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ha'apai	2,676	2,743	5,419	903	4,064	677	1,016	169	502	514
'Eua	2,406	2,497	4,903	817	3,677	613	919	153	451	468
Ongo Niua	574	576	1,150	192	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	48,777	51,432	100,209	16,702	22,632	3,772	5,658	942	2,755	2,903

³ The Talitha Project: an NGO dedicated to empowering young women

⁴ Based on satellite images and early reports.

The table outlines people and households targeted for TRCS shelter and HHI support, based on the population affected and damage estimates.

The targeted number of houses for shelter interventions was subsequently reduced in the Emergency Appeal budget to 500 households (approximately 2,850 people), having regard for others working in the response and early estimates of damage.

The Tongan National Emergency Management Office (NEMO), in conjunction with the Ministry of Meteorology, Energy, Information, Disaster Management, Environment, Climate Change, Communications, and CERT, has released the Initial Damage Assessments (IDA) report. The report states that 284 household shelters have been severely damaged or destroyed, while a further 182 household shelters have suffered minor or moderate damage.

Island	District	HH's with Minor damage	HH's with Moderate damage	HH's with Severe damage	HH's Completely destroyed	HH's damaged and destroyed
Ha'apai	Lifuka	7	3	2	5	17
	Lulunga	6	13	8	18	45
	Otumu'omu'a	11	6	5	55	77
	Uiha	4	0	0	0	4
Total Ha'apai		28	22	15	78	143
Tongatapu	Kolofo'ou	3	25	26	6	60
	Kolomotu'a	21	24	24	11	80
	Kolovai	7	15	41	41	104
	Lapaha	17	9	5	3	34
Total Tongatapu		48	73	96	61	278
'Eua	'Ohonua	5	6	6	28	45
Total 'Eua		5	6	6	28	45
Grand Total		81	101	117	167	466

Following the eruption, people were evacuated from several islands, including Mango, Fafa, Pangaimotu, Makaha Islands, and many others, relocated due to damage to their homes. As of 15 January, over 3,000 people were staying in evacuation centres, and this number fell to 2,390 people by 31 January. While many have returned home or are now staying with family and friends, some evacuation centres remain operational. An update on numbers still in evacuation centres is currently not available. People staying in evacuation centres receive support for essential needs, including food and hygiene.

On 14 March, the Royal family announced that it would support the relocation of people who had been relocated from severely affected islands as follows:

- Affected people from Kanokupolu will be able to relocate to one of the King's estates of Mataki'eua
- Affected people from Mango will be able to relocate to one of the King's estates of Tā'anga in 'Eua.
- Crown Prince Tupouto'a' Ulukalala has consented to relocate the affected people at Nomuka to higher ground on Nomuka.
- Prince Ata has consented to relocate the people from 'Atatā island to an elevated part of his estate of Kolovai on Tongatapu.

Livelihoods and basic needs

A number of families have suffered damage to livelihoods, including as a result of damage to crops. NEMO has advised that around 200 boats were destroyed or severely damaged, including fishing boats. The World Bank, D-RAS and Global Facility for Disaster Risk Reduction have estimated direct damage following the HTHH volcano and tsunami to be USD 90.4 million. Around 80 per cent of households are involved in their own food production in kitchen gardens. There has been extensive damage to above-soil crops, and saltwater inundation will affect the ability of some households to grow their own food. The Tongan government and other agencies in Tonga have been providing food support to targeted affected households. The New Zealand government has donated 1,500kg of seeds to assist with replanting crops.



The combined impacts of ashfall and the tsunami have impacted 85,000 people. Photo: TRCS

Health

All of the affected population have likely been affected psychologically. The combined impact of the volcano, tsunami, subsequent challenges in contacting family and friends, damage to personal property and the subsequent outbreak of COVID-19 have contributed to a need for psychosocial support.

Standing water arising from the tsunami is expected to contribute to an increased risk of infectious diseases in the coming weeks. The Ministry of Health has sprayed targeted affected communities to reduce the incidence of dengue fever.

There are high rates of COVID-19 vaccination coverage among adults in Tonga. However, there is an ongoing need for COVID-19 prevention messaging. MOH is progressing the booster vaccination rollout with support from UNICEF.

Water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH)

In developing the Operational Strategy, it was assumed that the damage to water and sanitation access would be greater than the shelter damage:

2021 Population & Housing pre-census					WASH Needs					
Divisions	Male pop.	Female pop.	Total pop.	Total HHs	Estimated pop. in need (84%)	Estimated HHs in need (84%)	Estimated pop. to be assisted (25%)	Estimated HHs to be assisted (25%)	Estimated male pop. To be assisted	Estimated female pop. To be assisted
Tongatapu	36,032	38,422	74,454	12,409	62,541	10,424	12,508	2,085	6,053	6,455
Vava'u	7,089	7,194	14,283	2,381	11,998	2,000	2,400	400	1,191	1,209
Ha'apai	2,676	2,743	5,419	903	4,552	759	910	152	450	461
'Eua	2,406	2,497	4,903	817	4,119	686	824	137	404	419
Ongo Niua	574	576	1,150	192	966	161	193	32	96	97
Total	48,777	51,432	100,209	16,702	84,176	14,030	16,835	2,806	8,194	8,641

The table outlines people and households targeted for TRCS WASH support based on population needs estimates.

Water has been a priority need during the immediate response due to the combined impacts of infrastructure damage, ashfall contamination, and seawater inundation following the tsunami. Many households are dependent on rainwater harvesting, while other households use bore water. There was an urgent need for lifesaving water and water containers following the eruption.

The IDA has since confirmed that there has been significant damage to water supply tanks, pipes, channels and local water supply (rainwater harvesting water tanks etc.). The government has undertaken chlorination of groundwater, and the aquifer is reported to be safe to drink. Infrastructure on some of the outer islands is believed to have been significantly damaged. OCHA Sitrep #4 (10 February) estimated that more than 30,000 people had received WASH assistance. The National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) reported that the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources conducted water testing in Ha'apai and found water to be contaminated by seawater in Fono'i, Tungua and Nomuka, so water is not suitable for drinking. COVID restrictions have slowed down WASH distributions, although some have continued.

While there are unlikely to be significant adverse health impacts from drinking tank water, provided that p water treatment measures are followed, some households' water tanks have been damaged, and some households require tarpaulins to cover water tanks in case of further volcanic ashfall. Infrastructure/housing damage has contributed to sanitation and hygiene needs. WASH needs are particularly critical in light of the recent outbreak of COVID-19, as strong hygiene measures can help reduce the spread. Some vulnerable households may need assistance with clean-up activities.

Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI)

OCHA reports indicate that a high number of the estimated 25,430 young adolescent girls (10-14years old) and women of reproductive age (15-49 years old) in the affected areas might require dignity kits and hygiene supplies. More detailed information is pending initial damage assessments. An estimated 1,470 pregnant women and 1,960 women with children under 12 months may require additional support such as sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services.

Risk reduction, climate adaptation and recovery

The volcano and subsequent tsunami and ashfall have impacted the livelihoods of many of the affected population. It is anticipated that those in the most affected areas will need livelihoods assistance and financial support in the coming months.

There continues to be the possibility of further volcanic activity. The cyclone season is also in progress. Accordingly, activities that rebuild and strengthen disaster preparedness will be crucial in the coming weeks. As part of this process, it will be important to replenish relief items as soon as possible.

Operational risk assessment

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating steps
Further eruption(s) and/or tsunamis cause further harm to the population and/or impact the response.	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring information relating to the volcano status, public health and other matters Ensuring relief items are received in Tonga as soon as possible Protection of water sources from ashes Ongoing communication to the extent possible to help in meeting the most critical needs

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In cooperation with SPREP repair and establishment of Early Warning System (EWS)
COVID-19 impacts the health and wellbeing of the team, and/or COVID-19 risks require team members to isolate or lockdown, potentially impacting planned activities.	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRCS has previously prepositioned personal protective equipment (PPE) • TRCS will implement COVID-safe programming to limit the spread of communicable diseases • TRCS has been promoting good hygiene practices and awareness-raising on COVID-19 • Compliance with government requirements on COVID-19 protocols for people and relief items is critical • Staff and volunteers have been encouraged to receive COVID-19 vaccinations.
COVID-19 impacts logistics, e.g. supply chains, ability to release items from ports, availability of shipping, the impact of COVID-19 lockdowns	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relief items have been prepositioned in 14 containers in Tonga • International logistics personnel are supporting procurement • TRCS will comply with all COVID-19 regulations regarding the movement and storage of goods
Supply chain issues impact the feasibility of cash and voucher assistance (CVA) interventions.	High	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct cash feasibility and market analysis before implementing CVA activities and regularly monitor local market conditions
Storms/heavy rainfall causes flooding in low lying areas already impacted by the volcano/tsunami	High	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution of tarpaulins and NFIs to support affected households • Monitor stocks of tarpaulins and NFIs
Health and safety risks to the response team, e.g., travel risks.	High	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of PPE to the response team • Briefing with the best available information • Use of technology to minimize unnecessary travel
Lack of situation information/communications challenges impacts planning and implementation.	High (short term)	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular times have been established for efforts to communicate with TRCS • While the appeal is based on the best information available, it is recognized that additional assessment information may result in the need for an operations update
Issues affecting the wellbeing of dislocated populations at evacuation centres, e.g., overcrowding, SGBV.	Medium (short/medium term)	Medium/High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist the government in possible relocation to other identified evacuation centres • Online messaging and support on safety, protection, psychosocial support and community and household preparedness and referrals given.
Cyclone or other disaster events during response adversely affects volcano and tsunami response.	Medium	Medium/High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRCS are experienced in responding to cyclone events and has trained staff, volunteers, and SOPs. • Replenishment of relief items will be progressed as soon as possible.
Insufficient trained personnel to implement a response plan of this magnitude, impacting implementation time frames	High	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRCS has experience in disaster preparedness, including using the PER approach • The response plan has been prepared with consideration for the likely resources

and/or resulting in burnout of personnel (e.g. due to difficulties in recruiting staff/volunteers during the COVID-19 outbreak)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surge support has been offered to support TRCS The Emergency Appeal budget includes provision for hiring some roles to support the response in country
Systems/processes do not meet the needs of a very large response, potentially delaying implementation.	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A PER simulation exercise was recently carried out in 2021, identifying weaknesses that have been addressed as part of this plan with the intent that the NS will be stronger by going through this response. Consideration has been given to the lessons learned during the TC Gita response. Surge support has been agreed with TRCS

B. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

Update on the strategy

The [Operations Strategy](#) was published on 4 February, and [Operations Update #1](#) was published on 25 February.

Operations Update #1 included the following minor changes to the Operations Strategy:


- The proposed activity of distributing mosquito nets has been broadened to include other forms of mosquito protection (e.g. coils), due to the recent hot climate which discourages some people from using nets.
- It is proposed that the water tanks will be for community use rather than individual household use, increasing the activity's reach.
- The activity relating to first aid provision was removed due to the small number of people injured following the volcano and tsunami.

Due to the outbreak of COVID-19 in Tonga following the volcanic eruption, COVID-19 considerations and related activities are now an integral part of the overall operational strategy. For example, health messaging now incorporates COVID-19 prevention messaging. The "COVID safe best practice guide" will be important in ensuring activities are met in a COVID-safe manner.

Following the advice of further funds raised to support the Tonga volcano and tsunami response, it has been decided to increase the appeal to CHF 4.0 million. Once contributions that are currently under discussion have been confirmed, it is expected that the Emergency Appeal will be fully covered. The additional funding will make it possible to strengthen the response and recovery programme. It is hoped to be able to support in-country partners with the response and recovery activities. Additional human resources within the Tonga Red Cross and the IFRC CCD will support the Tonga response and recovery effort and strengthen technical support across the Pacific. In addition, the increase in the Emergency Appeal will make it possible to broaden National Society strengthening activities.

C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL REPORT

STRATEGIC SECTORS OF INTERVENTION

	Shelter, Housing and Settlements	Females targeted: 5,851	Males targeted: 5,613
Objective:	<i>Communities in disaster and crisis affected areas restore and strengthen their safety, wellbeing and longer-term recovery through shelter and settlement solutions</i>		
Key indicators:	Indicator	Target	Actual
	# households provided with emergency shelter assistance (tents, tarps and toolkits)	500	n/a
	# households provided with essential household items (blankets, solar lanterns, kitchen sets)	500	n/a
	# households provided with safe and adequate shelter and settlements recovery support	500	0
	# households provided with technical support or guidance on safer shelter awareness appropriate to the type of shelter assistance given	500	0



Tonga Red Cross staff and volunteers have been distributing water and breakfast crackers to affected communities and vulnerable people. Photo: TRCS

The Tongan government's Initial Damage Assessment information is now available. As indicated above, NEMO has reported that 284 household shelters have been severely damaged or completely destroyed, while a further 182 household shelters have suffered minor or moderate damage.

Tonga Red Cross staff and volunteers have participated in assessments alongside government authorities.

As of 19 March 2022, the following emergency shelter assistance and essential household items had been distributed as per the table below:

Division/ Village	Immediate Needs assisted with Distribution (# NFIs)						
	Shelter Tarps	Tent	Shelter Toolkit	Kitchen Set	Blanket	Solar Lamp	Mosquito Net
Tongatapu	232	71	59	203	604	163	6


Ha'apai (including evacuees on Tongatapu)	11	-	7	18	32	206	3
Eua				40			
GRAND TOTAL	243	71	66	261	636	369	9


Following the identification of two cases of COVID-19 on 1 February 2022, the Tongan government issued a stay-at-home order, which restricted movements both within and between islands. Although Tonga Red Cross has an exemption from the movement restrictions in respect of this operation, distribution activities were largely suspended while planning was undertaken to ensure any activities are carried out in a COVID-safe manner. However, limited distributions have occurred based on need.

During the second week of February, six containers of relief items arrived in Nuku'alofa from Fiji. TRCS has subsequently been distributing donations of water, breakfast crackers, clothing and other items to affected communities on Tongatapu. Distributions are planned in other locations once it is possible to travel.

During February and early March, there was heavy rainfall in Tonga, which has compounded earlier flooding. Tonga Red Cross has supported affected families by distributing tarpaulins and other non-food items.


Ten Samsung tablets have been procured, which will be used to support data collection during the response, including needs assessment data and monitoring and evaluation data. Training will be provided to the TRCS team as soon as this is possible.

	Livelihoods	Females targeted: 2,904	Males targeted: 2,754
Objective:	<i>The most affected households are supported with re-establishing livelihoods</i>		
Key indicators:	Indicator	Target	Actual
	# households receiving livelihood support	1,000	0
As it is still early in the response, the needs analysis relating to livelihoods is yet to be completed. Once it has been conducted, a plan will be developed.			

	Multi-purpose Cash	Females targeted: 2,904	Males targeted: 2,754
Objective:	<i>Households are provided with unconditional/multipurpose cash grants to address their basic needs</i>		
Key indicators:	Indicator	Target	Actual
	# households receiving multipurpose cash grants	500	0

As it is still early in the response, the needs analysis is yet to be completed. This will be the first time that Tonga Red Cross will have implemented cash-based programming. It is expected that this activity will include cash feasibility and market assessments, training for staff and volunteers, and the distribution of multipurpose cash grants to targeted affected families.

To assist with planning the multipurpose cash grant activities, IFRC participates in a Cash Working Group supporting response activities in Tonga. IFRC/TRCS are engaging with other organizations involved in cash response activities to minimize duplication of activities.

	<p>Health & Care <i>Mental Health and Psychosocial Support / Community Health / Medical Services</i></p>	<p>Females targeted: 8,725</p>	<p>Males targeted: 8,275</p>
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Objective: *Strengthening individual and community health of the population impacted by the eruption through community level interventions*

Key indicators:	Indicator	Target	Actual
	# people reached with health messaging regarding disease prevention	3,000	n/a
	# people reached with direct psychological first aid (PFA) support	100	3
	# households provided with mosquito protection (including nets, coils etc)	1,000	9
	# masks provided to health facilities/community members	14,500	0

While it was previously anticipated that the provision of information regarding disease prevention would play an important role in the response, this has become critical following the outbreak of COVID-19. TRCS has been supporting the Ministry of Health with the translation of key messages. In addition, TRCS has distributed posters and other messaging in businesses, government offices and other sites. Posters in Tongan and English have been provided to 46 businesses/offices (90 locations) to date.

Some TRCS staff and volunteers are experienced in PFA/psychosocial support. It is being provided by volunteers as needed during distributions. Refresher training will be planned for additional volunteers, once possible.


Nine mosquito nets have been distributed to targeted households in Tongatapu with vulnerable family members (including pregnant women/infants), based on need. Due to the hot weather, it is expected that there will also be a need for mosquito coils.



Tonga Red Cross staff and volunteers distributing COVID-19 prevention messaging in businesses and offices. Photo: TRCS

The Health and Nutrition cluster are working closely with the Ministry of Health to identify support required for the COVID-19 response, including importing additional vaccines, swabs and health items. Response planning with local partners is proving difficult given the COVID-19-lockdown and communication challenges.

TRCS has conducted health briefings for staff and volunteers. The Ministry of Health has provided training in RAT testing for the health coordinator and two volunteers. This has enabled TRCS to provide COVID-19 testing for staff and volunteers at its headquarters building as required.

 Water, Sanitation and Hygiene		Females targeted: 8,725	Males targeted: 8,275
Objective:	<i>Ensure safe drinking water, proper sanitation, and adequate hygiene awareness of the communities during relief and recovery phases of the operation</i>		
Key indicators:	Indicator	Target	Actual
	# of people reached through hygiene promotion	20,000	n/a
	# of litres of safe water distributed	20,000	n/a
	# of households receiving WASH relief items (buckets, jerry cans, hygiene kits)	1,500	see below distributions
	# of water tanks (10,000L) and filtration installed in communities	20	0

TRCS has supported government authorities with water distribution to affected communities in Tongatapu and Ha'apai. TRCS staff and volunteers have supported the distribution of 6,780 litres of water to affected families in the first four days after the eruption (up to 19 January), benefiting more than 10,000 people. Updated information on litres distributed by TRCS is currently not available.

TRCS provided support to NEMO with water distribution until the COVID movement restrictions came into effect. TRCS is also supporting the government to distribute hygiene kits to those self-isolating.

It was hoped that TRCS staff and volunteers would accompany NEMO to the islands of Nomuka, Tungua and Fonoifua in the Ha'apai island group for the purpose of distributing water, food, clothing, and WASH supplies. Unfortunately, the trip was delayed initially due to bad weather and subsequently due to COVID-19.

TRCS is continuing to liaise with the Ministry of Health and UNICEF regarding the WASH response.

TRCS has hired and placed nine portable toilets for use in affected communities in the communities of Kanokupolu and Patangata (western Tongatapu), which are being serviced by an external provider. Six remain in use in Patangata.



TRCS has rented nine portaloos which are being used in two affected communities on Tongatapu. Photo: TRCS

As of 19 March, distributions of WASH non-food items were as follows:

Community name	Distributed items (Household data not yet available)		
	Hygiene kit	Bucket	Water container
Tongatapu	160	26	38
Ha'apai (including evacuees on Ha'apai)	54	11	23
'Eua	40	-	-
GRAND TOTAL	254	37	61

The WASH programme is being supported by an IFRC surge delegate from the Australian Red Cross.



Protection, Gender and Inclusion

Females targeted:
8,725

Males targeted:
8,275

Objective:

Communities identify the needs of the most at risk and particularly disadvantaged and marginalized groups, due to inequality, discrimination and other non-respect of their human rights and address their distinct needs

Key indicators:

Indicator

Target

Actual

households receiving special support and/or referrals

600

n/a

people accessing RFL services

200

192

With support from ICRC, Tonga Red Cross commenced Restoring Family Links (RFL) services on 20 January. From 26 January, 150 Tongan households made "safe and well" calls to family overseas using Tonga Red Cross satellite

phones. In addition, enquiries were received from 42 international family members seeking news of Tongan relatives. Along with other activities, RFL was temporarily suspended when lockdown commenced on 2 February. While the need for RFL has eased on Tongatapu, the ongoing challenges in communication with other island groups mean that Tonga Red Cross will continue to provide RFL support as needed.

Tonga Red Cross has collected gender-disaggregated data regarding individuals benefitting from relief distributions. The number of households receiving special services or referrals is not available.

Tonga Red Cross has run a school for people with disabilities for many years. Due to the eruption and COVID-19 outbreak, the students cannot attend school at present. Tonga Red Cross has reached out to provide support to the students and their families, e.g. by delivering breakfast crackers.

TRCS continues to support those that need to self-isolate with water and food at the request of the government



Disaster Risk Reduction

Females targeted:
8,725

Males targeted:
8,275

Objective:

The response contributes to reduced risk of further impacts of the volcano and tsunami and strengthens the capacity and capability of TRCS to respond to future disasters and crises.

Key indicators:

Indicator

Target

Actual

new TRCS procedures revised/developed

n/a

0

EWS repaired or established

n/a

0

PER results reviewed with a real-time PER and/or after-action PER

Yes

Not yet

The operation has been in the relief phase, and hence risk reduction activities have not yet commenced. The cyclone season is continuing, and hence it will be important that the relief items distributed from prepositioned stocks are replenished as soon as possible.

Enabling approaches



Community Engagement and Accountability

Objective:

Develop and deploy standardized approaches for community engagement and accountability for meaningful community participation throughout the operation, collection and use of community feedback data to better understand community perspectives and act on their needs

Key indicators:

Indicator

Actual

Target

of feedback messages received

100

0

	# staff and volunteers trained on CEA	40 (20 staff, 20 volunteers) at HQ and branches	0
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It is anticipated that a community feedback mechanism will be implemented in the coming months.

This activity is being supported by an IFRC surge delegate who has previously implemented community feedback mechanisms in the Asia Pacific region.



Coordination and Partnerships

Objective: *Strengthen Coordination and Partnerships within the movement and with relevant external actors*

IFRC and Tonga Red Cross continue to engage and coordinate with government authorities, INGOs with a presence in Tonga, and participate in the Pacific Humanitarian Team.



Shelter Cluster Coordination

Objective: *Ensure a coordinated and integrated approach to the shelter response following the Hunga-Tonga-Hunga-Ha'apai volcano and tsunami, including support for self-recovery through the provision of appropriate tools, materials, and complementary technical assistance to promote early recovery and complement the existing resilience in the affected population.*

Despite the challenges in communication with the Tonga Emergency Shelter and NFI Cluster, email communication with the focal points at NEMO Tonga (Government lead for the shelter cluster and inter-cluster) was established. Despite support offered to NEMO for coordinating the shelter cluster, no support was requested as the Government of Tonga sees the tsunami and volcano response as a WASH-heavy response. The communication breakdown and the travel restrictions imposed due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic would make remote coordination of the shelter cluster exceedingly difficult.

Despite this, the IFRC, as convener of the Pacific Regional Shelter Cluster, maintained contact with regional shelter partners and agencies in Tonga. IFRC attended the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT) Regional Inter-Cluster Coordinators Group (RICCG), PHT Principals, and extended donors' meetings. Therefore, the national and regional shelter's work and key advocacy points at national and regional shelter cluster agencies with working partners in Tonga is ensured and well represented.



National Society Strengthening

Objective: National Society capacity building and organizational development objectives are facilitated to ensure that the National Society has the necessary foundations, systems and structures, competences and capacities to plan and perform.

Key indicators:	Indicator	Target	Actual
	# volunteers mobilized and protected	80	n/a

National Society volunteer insurance is in place for 80 volunteers. The number of volunteers mobilized has fluctuated based on response needs and the impacts of the COVID-19 lockdown. Early in the response, 30-40 volunteers mobilized on Tongatapu.

New Zealand Red Cross has procured GX Explorer satellite telecommunications equipment for lending to Pacific National Societies as needed. It had been expected that this would be lent to Tonga Red Cross to support communications. However, following the repairs to the international undersea cable, the equipment was no longer required for this response.



Secretariat Services

Objective:

1. Strengthen Secretariat services to the operation to ensure TRCS provides relevant, timely, accountable services to those affected.
2. IFRC ensure that TRCS is stronger and more capable after this operation.

IFRC country cluster delegation in Suva, which supports Pacific National Societies, provides remote support for the HTHH response, including planning, donor engagement, logistics, communications, PMER, finance, and cluster participation. There are daily conversations between IFRC and Tonga Red Cross when telecommunications permit.

A disaster manager has been deployed from the IFRC country cluster delegation Suva to Tonga to support the operation. An appeal manager has been appointed, and Surge delegates support the WASH and communications functions.

D. FUNDING

On 9 February 2022, the first working advance of CHF 30,000 was paid to Tonga Red Cross, and a further working advance of CHF 30,000 was paid on 10 March. Financial information will be provided in future Operations Updates.

A mobilization table, including household water filters, tarpaulins, shelter toolkits and kitchen sets, has been launched and generously supported by donors. More information is available on [IFRC GO](#).

Contact information

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

In the Tonga National Society

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

In the IFRC Country Cluster Delegation, Suva

- Katie Greenwood, IFRC Head of CCD; 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
- Nusrat Hassan, Operations Coordinator; email: OpsCoord.Pacific@ifrc.org
- Siokkun Jang, Logistics Manager, Regional Logistics Unit; email: siokkun.jang@ifrc.org
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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

For Performance and Accountability support (planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting enquiries)

- In IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office: Fadzli Saari, PMER and Quality Assurance Manager, a.i; email: fadzli.saari@ifrc.org

Reference documents



Click [here](#) for key documents including Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA), Emergency Appeal, and Operations Strategy

How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere the **Code of Conduct** for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief, the **Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (Sphere)** in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable, to **Principles of Humanitarian Action** and **IFRC policies and procedures**. The IFRC'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.