



Emergency Management Cook Islands

Preliminary Report

-Overview on humanitarian needs-

Date: 12th February 2010

THE Team now on ground:

Charles Carlson (EMCI), Minako Kakuma (UNDAC), MOIP team lead by Ata Herman, MOH led by Helen Sinclair and Red Cross led by Charlie Numanga and the Aitutaki Disaster Management Council led by the Mayor Tai Herman

1. General Situation

Type of the Disaster: Tropical Cyclone Pat
Date of Disaster: 9th – 10th February 2010
Location of the Disaster: Aitutaki
Size of the area affected: The whole island
Number of Persons affected: The whole population of 1,671(580 households, 711 houses) in 19 villages on the main island

2. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide information of the situation and the needs required for immediate support and response to the island.

3. Introduction

The team led by Charles Carlson, Director Emergency Management Cook Islands, arrived on the island of Aitutaki at 1630hrs on Wednesday 10th February. A short brief was provided by two Police officers who arrived on the island a day before the cyclone. The team did a quick reconnaissance of the island and spoke with locals of their experiences. There was certainly a sense of hopelessness as people tried to gather what was left of their belongings from their damage homes. A meeting was held with the Mayor Mr. Tai Herman, Council members, Police and some of the leaders of the island at 1930 hrs to discuss the purpose of the visit by the team.

A second team of assessors arrived on the 11th February at 0930hrs made up of engineers from MOIP, Red Cross, Health and Telecom to carry out an initial damage assessment. The team was accompanied by two Cabinet Ministers, the Hon. William Heather and the Hon. Apii Piho. A meeting was held at the EOC, 1000 hrs with these agencies, cabinet ministers, the Mayor, Island Councillors and leaders in the community. The team was divided into 4 groups to do the disaster assessment.

The EOC on the islands is currently staffed with police officers. EMCI is taking the coordination role in partnership with the islands authorities (Mayor, Island Councils). National Disaster Risk Management Council including the cabinet and key stakeholders such as Red Cross and donors holds regular meetings in Rarotonga.

Coordination between the island and Rarotonga is made through Police Commissioner, who is the national controller with support of EMCI. An UNDAC team has been requested by EMCI to assist coordinate field operation and assessment on the island.

4. Estimated affected population:

- Total population on the islands (1,671) are affected
- Displaced population (residents of houses totally destroyed) to be confirmed!
- **504 domestic houses** among 711 with severe significant damaged within the 75 – 100% damage category

5. Immediate needs and response

The inspection and discussions with member of the community highlighted that the impact of TC Pat was far greater than what had been anticipated. Relief of items of high priority include:

a) EMERGENCY SHELTER:

- There is 87% homes or **504 domestic houses** with severe significant damaged within the 75 – 100% damage category, who will requires tarpaulins. Many homes have yet to be repaired and are missing parts or the entire roof.
- Those displaced live either at the community halls or neighbour's houses. There are only 2 community halls accommodating the displaced.
- **Roofing irons** and the like: repairs can be carried out immediately to buildings with roof damage only. These materials can be provided locally, however funding needs to be sourced to purchase the materials. In addition, if the demand exceeds the local supply, it is necessary to procure the roofing irons coils in New Zealand and to be cut to the size by a local supplier in Aitutaki.
- Support for homes with mortgage repayment need to be considered such as soft loan option.

Response:

- New Zealand Red Cross has provided 600 tarpaulins, which is arriving tomorrow at Rarotonga, and will cover 40% of total needs (which is estimated to be around 1,500 tarpaulins)
- The Red Cross requested 1,000 extra tarpaulins to NZAID, but not confirmed yet.

Further support required:

- At this moment, still **900 tarpaulins of the size of 6Mx8M are required. It needs to be accompanied with the ropes (81 rolls of 6ml.)**
- **Funding to be sourced to supply roofing Iron that can be locally supplied for an immediate response.** In the case of a shortage of supply, roofing iron coils can be flown in from NZ and can be cut to length by local supplier (*quantity to be confirmed within the next four hours at the completion of assessment*)
- Transitional shelter options need to be considered as the permanent house building will take time (tents)

b) NON FOOD ITEMS (NFIs)

- Buckets, beddings, cooking sets and blankets maybe needed for the part of the households affected, especially those whose houses were totally destroyed.

Response:

- Cook Islands Red Cross will distribute linens and blankets.

Further support required:

- Exact quantity and types of items required to be confirmed through the on-going assessment

c) FOOD:

- Most crops and fruits have been affected, so basic food assistance will be needed until the livelihood of the affected population is recovered for the most vulnerables especially those whose houses were totally destroyed and lost their belongings.

Further support required:

- Short term food distribution required

d) WATER, SANITATION AND HYGINE (WASH):

- **Lack of drinking water** is an urgent issue to be addressed. Water tanks which people usually rely on for drinking water has been severely damaged or destroyed at a total of 568 out of 711 houses
- **Lack of water for washing and cleaning:** The Island has been without electricity and it is causing problem because the water system is depending on the electricity.

Further support required:

- **Bottle water distribution** as a short term intervention to meet the immediate needs of drinking water
- **Water tanks and gutters/piping system** (amount to be confirmed by the on-going assessment)
- **Restoration of electricity** to pump water

e) HEALTH:

- Hospital infrastructure, equipment, machines and facilities need to be checked up and if necessary repaired.
- Health and nutritious conditions of the affected population needs to be closely monitored especially considering the **lack of clean drinking water and food shortage**. Special attention is required for children, lactating mothers and pregnant women.

Further support required:

- Urgent clean up and repairs required
- Checking up of the machines/facilities and reparation
- Basic medical kit supplies including domestos, janola, sterile gloves, cleaning gloves, handwash, paper hand towels, windowlene, etc.
- Health and nutritious status monitoring

f) LOGISTICS:

- At this moment, basic logistical needs are met.
- There are 4 commercial flights daily from Rarotonga to Aitutaki. **Cook Islands Patrol boat on standby. Transports available on island for relief distribution.**

- NZ Hercules on a standby or goods to be flown over by Air New Zealand.

g) CLEAN UP:

- Fallen trees and poles are blocking roads to affected areas and affect transportation. They are also a potential hazard.
- Debris from damaged/collapsed buildings are still laying around and need to be cleared.
- A proper disposal site needs to be identified. (Mauke Wood chipping?)

Further support required:

- Tools such as chainsaws(2x18 inches and 2x20 inches, fuels and chainsaws oil.
- Extra man power required to assist with the clean up

h) EDUCATION:

- It is informed that schools are damaged and yet to be assessed by the team

i) Communications:

- Mobile phone network has been recovered, but the use is restricted to relief operation related in order to avoid congestions.

FURTHER UPDATE OF THE ASSESSMENT TO BE RELEASED IN THE NEXT 4 HOUR