

Date: 12 September 2006

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## OCHA Situation Report No. 1 Indonesia – Bengkulu Earthquake

This report is based on information received from the UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator's Office and OCHA in Jakarta, Indonesia, as well as from the Indonesian news reports.

### SITUATION

1. According to the Meteorology and Geophysics Agency and U.S. Geological Service, an 8.4 RS earthquake affected southern coast of Sumatra, Indonesia at 6pm local time. The earthquake epicenter was 105km off the coast of Sumatra. There have been several aftershocks, measuring from 5.6 to 6.6 RS. The earthquake and the 6.6RS aftershock generated Tsunami alerts that were subsequently called off. The earthquake took place in the evening, prior to the first day of the holy month of Ramadan.
2. The earthquake was felt in four Provinces (Jambi, Riau, Bengkulu and West Sumatra), as well as in the capital city of Indonesia, Jakarta. At least 7 people are reported killed in Bengkulu and Padang districts. In Bengkulu, the earthquake collapsed at least one building and severely damaged houses and public buildings. According to the local residents, some 40% of the buildings in the Haga Makmur District were damaged by the earthquake.
3. In Padang, numerous casualties are expected further to a collapse of several major buildings. Thousands of residents of the city of Padang remain on high ground for fear of Tsunami and aftershocks. The Andalas Plaza shopping mall in Padang city has reportedly been severely damaged. Minor damage to homes and buildings are reported throughout the city.
4. In Mentawi islands, off the cost of Sumatra, major damage to houses, roads, buildings and infrastructure has been reported. Local authorities are experiencing difficulty to access earthquake affected areas. Local residents are reported to have fled to higher ground fearing tsunami and aftershocks and are setting up tents in the hills.
5. Further to the tsunami alert, the Governments of India and Sri Lanka evacuated the residents from low-lying areas. India issued a tsunami warning for the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and began evacuating people in Tamil Nadu state to higher ground. In Sri Lanka, the authorities moved people away from its east and southern coastline. The tsunami alerts were subsequently called off.
6. Electricity and telephone services were disrupted in a large area. The services began to be re-established some two hours after the earthquake. At the same time, the local residents were informed there was no threat of a Tsunami.

7. The Bengkulu Province was affected by a 7.9 RS earthquake in June 2000, followed by a 6.7 RS aftershock, which killed more than 100 people, injured nearly 2,800 and damaged more than 40,000 buildings.

## NATIONAL RESPONSE

8. President of Indonesia Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono instructed Menko kesra (Coordinating Ministry for Emergency Response), the national Police and Army (TNI) to prepare for deployment to the earthquake-affected regions to assist, initiate search-and-rescue operations and assess the needs of the people displaced by the earthquake. Several Ministers are expected to fly to the earthquake affected region at daybreak tomorrow.
9. Department of Social Affairs (DepSos) is sending search and rescue team along with medical teams to Bengkulu. Depsos is attempting to acquire more accurate information on the impact of the earthquake.
10. The Governor of Bengkulu reports that the earthquake response system in Bengkulu province was activated immediately after the earthquake and is operating well.
11. The Indonesian Air Force has two C-130 Hercules transport aircraft on standby for medical evacuation purposes.

## INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

12. A United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) flight with an assessment team and humanitarian supplies will depart Aceh to Bengkulu early morning tomorrow.
13. The UNDAC team for Asia-Pacific has been put on standby.
14. OCHA Indonesia is liaising with the Government disaster response agency. OCHA Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok has put two staff on standby for possible deployment to Indonesia. Three TSF staff may be available for deployment, if required.

This situation report, together with further information on ongoing emergencies, is also available on the OCHA Internet Website at <http://www.reliefweb.int>.

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