

Blog 2 from Hans in Samoa

We finally went out to the affected communities yesterday after several days of planning, developing checklists and carrying out some training of staff that will be carrying out the family visits.



Initial GIS information from the first assessment identified 427 displaced families. It is estimated that there are now well over 500. The second tsunami warning really confirmed with families not to return to the coast.

All families will be visited by the team of environmental health, nutrition and health promoters to provide advice and help out where needed. This team will be based in these new communities and will also link in with village chiefs and church groups.

Educating individuals in addition to the provision of clean water, food, waste disposal facilities, hygiene and mosquito and rodent control are seen as the key to prevent disease. Some limited supplies like mosquito nets, soap and water containers are given out when needed, with further needs being referred to various

other agencies.

The rain started yesterday and has been very heavy over night. Many plantation roads are just dirt and will now be mud.

Many families have not yet been able to build off the ground and rain also means mosquitoes over the next weeks. Ten-tonne water trucks may not be able to reach these areas now, and flooding and muddy conditions may lead to further risks for disease.

Surprisingly, there has not been an outbreak of illness yet. Water sample results taken four days ago have come back very poor with much tankered water reportedly being used for drinking. The locals do seem to have a built up resistance to bugs, however should illness occur, it will be very hard to control. A boil water notice is in place.



On a nicer note, we are overwhelmed by the positive nature of the families and their willingness to help others in these times. Rebuilding is happening very fast and I have seen truckloads of building supplies heading to the affected areas.

The Government is supporting a long-term solution. Kilometres of power supply are being put in to reach communities and there is an overwhelming supply of relief provisions in addition to monetary aide.

We will hopefully be visiting the affected areas again today.

That's all from me for now. See you all next week. Thanks for all your supportive comments.

See ya,
Hans