



# Earthquake and tsunami hit Sulawesi island in Indonesia

Catholic Relief Services and our local Catholic partners are responding on Sulawesi in Indonesia, which has been hit by an earthquake and tsunami that have devastated the northern part of the island and killed over 1,200 people.



A survivor walks through the destruction left by the earthquake and tsunami in Palu, Central Sulawesi. The wave, reaching as high as 20 feet in some areas, swept away buildings and killed over 1,200 people. *Photo by AP Photo/Rifki*

## OVERVIEW

A devastating 7.5-magnitude earthquake struck the island of Sulawesi, in Indonesia, on September 28, triggering a deadly tsunami. With a current death toll of over 1,200 people, search and rescue efforts continue amid fears that number will rise sharply. At least 650,000 people have been directly affected across the city of Palu, the Donggala Regency, the coastal town of Mapaga, the province of Gorontalo and the city of Poso. Some 48,000 displaced people are being housed at 24 evacuation sites. Potentially, 1.5 million people are affected across 85 districts.



The Sulawesi earthquake occurred 2 months after a series of severe earthquakes hit the Indonesian island of Lombok, uprooting 390,000 people and destroying 149,000 homes. The disasters have strained the capacities of the government and humanitarian responders.

The city of Palu is among the hardest-hit areas. No markets there are functioning and banks are closed. People are waiting in lines for up to 2 hours for clean water, which is being rationed. Communications and access are major challenges. Phone towers are damaged, and there is no electricity to charge mobile phones. Without means of communication, families and friends are unable to find each other.

Limited road access due to landslides and damaged infrastructure is hampering assessment teams. Ongoing aftershocks increase the risk of landslides in the coastal areas due to soil instability. Severe shortages of fuel have been reported, with long lines at gas stations on the road from Palu to Mamuju Regency in the south.

The provincial government has declared a 2-week state of emergency to facilitate humanitarian operations. Airports in and around Palu are now open for humanitarian flights, but at reduced capacity, and support is required to bring relief items into the affected area. The government of Indonesia has welcomed specific offers of international assistance, but international humanitarian workers are still not allowed in the affected areas.

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# 1.5 million

PEOPLE HAVE BEEN AFFECTED AND URGENTLY  
NEED CLEAN WATER, FOOD, SHELTER  
AND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

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## CRS AND CARITAS RESPONSE

CRS Indonesia staff reached Palu on October 1, and began assessing needs with Caritas Makassar. We are also coordinating closely with Caritas Manabo, Caritas Indonesia (Karina), Muhammadiyah Disaster Management Center and local nongovernmental organization Posko Kemanusiaan Peduli Umat, as well as local authorities, and other humanitarian actors.

Priority needs include evacuation, medical treatment, clean water and food—including ready-to-eat halal meals. Displaced people are also in need of living supplies, emergency shelter, hygiene kits and emergency latrines, and counseling support.

CRS hopes to raise an initial **\$800,000** for this emergency relief effort.

CRS has worked with its local partners to support emergency and development efforts in Indonesia for decades.

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Between Donggala and Palu, the road is lined with people begging for food and water. They are asking every vehicle that passes for help. They are thirsty and afraid because they don't know when they will get reliable access to water. Many people have come from outside Palu to look for missing family members.

Fatwa Fadillah, Program Manager, CRS Indonesia

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### HOW TO HELP

To support the relief effort in Indonesia:

- Give online: [donate.crs.org](https://donate.crs.org)
- Give by phone: 1-877-HELP-CRS
- Give by check: Catholic Relief Services  
P.O. Box 17090 Baltimore, Maryland 21297-0303

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