

## PNG EARTHQUAKE 2018

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# Oil Search ramps up relief efforts and supports coordination

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**March 8, 2018**

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Good weather over the past 24 hours has facilitated a massive ramp up of relief supplies to communities affected by the recent 7.5 earthquake.

Oil Search helicopters have reached over 20 communities and around 30,000 people with essential supplies of food, water and shelter provided by range of partners including the PNG national government, Oil Search, the Australian and New Zealand governments, non-government organisations and the private sector.

“A key and important challenge is ensuring information is shared and that there is strong on the ground coordination with all partners”, said Managing Director of Oil Search Peter Botten.

‘Many of the communities most severely impacted by the earthquake are very remote and it is still very hard to know what is happening on the ground’, he said. ‘Every time we go into a village we undertake a rapid assessment that includes important data such as immediate survival needs, road accessibility, food and water security, sanitation and health needs. We are providing this information to partners to assist them in planning their short and longer responses.

For example, we found in the village of Kekero roads are blocked and thousands of people are living without proper shelter. In the village of Paua, many people have been moved into the local school, do not have access to their gardens and are concerned about water contamination.

Mr Botten urged all partners to continue to support the relief effort and to start planning for recovery.

‘We are doing everything we can to support the emergency response, but it is essential we all start to plan how we will help communities get back on their feet as soon as possible. Recovery needs include rebuilding, safe water and sanitation facilities, repairing roads and infrastructure, ensuring health facilities and schools are open and helping to replant gardens.

While planning for recover, it is essential we keep the supply chain going for the emergency response, said Mr Botten. We are compiling and sending out detailed situation updates at the end of each day. These include an update on the villages reached during the day and those planned for distribution of supplies over the next 24 hours. Oil Search’s daily reports highlight issues with supplies, aircraft, coordination and other challenges such as security.

Working with the Hela provincial disaster coordinating committee, Oil Search has also provided food supplies to the Tari hospital for the patients.

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