

World Vision says hundreds affected by Solomon Islands quake

9 December 2016, by Nick Perry



In this photo provided by World Vision Solomon Islands, a house in Kirakira, Solomon Islands, is damaged after an earthquake on Friday, Dec. 9, 2016. Tsunami warnings for several Pacific islands, including those in Hawaii, were canceled Friday after authorities determined that a powerful magnitude 7.7 earthquake that struck near the Solomon Islands did not pose a broad tsunami threat. (Gray Nako/World Vision Solomon Islands via AP)

Hundreds of people in remote parts of the Solomon Islands have had their homes damaged or destroyed by a powerful magnitude 7.7 earthquake that struck Friday, an aid organization said.

There have been no deaths reported from the quake, which also caused some small tsunami waves in the Solomon Islands and other Pacific islands.

Speaking from the capital Honiara, Suzy Sainovski, World Vision's Pacific Timor-Leste spokeswoman, said it has been hard to get a full assessment from some more remote communities, some of which don't have cellphone coverage.

"There are some initial reports that 3,000 people have been affected," Sainovski said. "Some of these are traditional houses that are on stilts, and made with vegetation."

The quake struck near the island of Makira. Sainovski said in the town of Kirakira on the island, the quake damaged a hospital, a church and other buildings including the World Vision office. She said 20 people were evacuated from a hospital.

She said the quake had caused some power failures throughout the country.

Micha Maghe, World Vision's water sanitation and health project coordinator in Kirakira, said the quake had been terrifying.

"When I got outside I could hear children crying, people shouting," she said in a statement. "We assembled at a school and I saw people moving towards high ground. ... People just panicked and were frightened."

Sainovski said there continued to be a number of aftershocks and power cuts.

Tsunami warnings for several Pacific [islands](#), including Hawaii, were canceled Friday after authorities determined the earthquake didn't pose a broad tsunami threat.

The U.S. Geological Survey said the [quake](#) hit about 200 kilometers (120 miles) southeast of Honiara and about 68 kilometers (42 miles) from Kirakira.

The epicenter was relatively deep at 48 kilometers (30 miles) below the surface. Deeper quakes generally cause less damage on the ground.

The Solomon Islands are located in the Pacific's geologically active "Ring of Fire."

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