



Humanitarian Aid and Rescue Project

Operation Final Chance

Location: Indonesia

Island: Palu

Impact Report

Operational Date: 8/2019 - 12/2019

The devastating magnitude 7.5 Mw Sulawesi earthquake struck Indonesia on September 28, 2018. With its epicenter situated approximately 80 km north of the City of Palu, the earthquake unleashed a series of catastrophic events, including a tsunami and liquefaction, resulting in extensive destruction across four regions in Central Sulawesi. The affected areas, namely the City of Palu, Donggala, Sigi, and Parigi Moutong, suffered immense devastation. Tragically, the earthquake, tsunami, and subsequent liquefaction claimed the lives of an estimated 4,340 individuals in Central Sulawesi, leaving a profound impact on the affected communities.

Introduction:

On October 7th, 2019, the Humanitarian Aid and Rescue Project (HARP) initiated a crucial mission called “Operation Final Chance” to the island of Palu, Indonesia. The primary objective was to locate, recover, and rescue civilians who found themselves trapped in the aftermath of a devastating 7.5-magnitude earthquake. This seismic event triggered a series of catastrophic occurrences, including a tsunami and liquefaction, which inflicted widespread destruction across four regions in Central Sulawesi. The tragic outcome of this disaster was the loss of over 4,340 lives, leaving a deeply profound impact on the affected communities. HARP's mission aimed to provide critical assistance and support to those affected by the disaster, prioritizing the rescue and welfare of the trapped individuals.

Requests:

HARP swiftly responded to urgent requests for assistance from esteemed NGOs and the Indonesia National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB). These appeals sought immediate support in locating, recovering, and ensuring the safety of trapped and endangered civilians within the debris-laden structures and the hazardous liquefaction zone. Understanding the criticality of the situation, HARP mobilized its resources and expertise to provide the necessary aid and rescue operations, working in close collaboration with the respective organizations. The primary focus was to identify and extract individuals in distress, prioritizing their safety and well-being during this challenging and perilous mission.

Methods:

HARP engaged in multiple communications with the Indonesia National Disaster Management Agency to thoroughly assess the potential risks involved in the operation. These crucial interactions provided HARP with the updated and critical information necessary for making accurate assessments of the situation. Furthermore, HARP conducted an in-depth study of local maps, enabling them to identify the most efficient and expedient routes to and from the disaster zones. This strategic planning and route optimization was essential in maximizing their operational efficiency, considering the high stakes and the lives at risk.

Moreover, recognizing the unique challenge posed by liquefaction, a phenomenon unfamiliar to HARP, the team swiftly acquired up-to-date knowledge on the nature of liquefaction, its occurrence, and the environmental effects it entails. This proactive approach allowed HARP to equip themselves with the necessary understanding and expertise to effectively navigate and mitigate the hazards associated with this specific occurrence. By combining their comprehensive knowledge of the disaster's characteristics and their commitment to safety, HARP demonstrated their unwavering dedication to conducting the operation with the utmost preparedness and effectiveness.

In addition to the existing challenges, HARP also had to consider another crucial variable during the operation. The central prison on the island of Palu, which housed high-ranking members of ISIS in Indonesia was severely damaged or destroyed as a result of the disaster. Recognizing the potential security risks associated with the presence of these individuals, the government exercised caution and restricted access to the island.

HARP was granted permission to operate on the island as a highly qualified organization with expertise in handling high-risk, complex, and sensitive situations. The government's decision was based on their trust in HARP's capabilities and understanding of the potential risks involved. By allowing only qualified organizations like HARP to participate in the rescue and recovery efforts, the government aimed to prevent any potential international incidents and ensure that the response to the situation was handled appropriately.

Results:

Thanks to HARP's dedicated rescue efforts, numerous lives were discovered amidst the rubble and successfully saved. The swift and efficient actions of the HARP team led to the rescue of dozens of individuals who were trapped and in immediate danger. These heroic efforts brought immense relief and hope to both the survivors and their families, who were anxiously awaiting news of their loved ones.

In addition to the successful rescues, HARP's commitment extended to recovering and retrieving those who unfortunately did not survive the devastating disaster. By diligently searching through the wreckage, HARP ensured that the remains of the deceased were respectfully recovered, allowing grieving families to properly mourn and find closure.

Impact:

At the conclusion of HARP's recovery efforts, HARP received commendations from the Indonesian National Disaster Management Agency for their exceptional effectiveness in saving the lives of Indonesian citizens. This recognition underscores HARP's operations' significant impact and success in providing critical assistance during the disaster.

In recognition of their expertise and accomplishments, HARP was invited to share their insights and knowledge with the Indonesian government and the Indonesian National Disaster Management Agency. They played a vital role in educating local governmental rescue teams on various aspects of disaster management, including risk assessment, situational awareness, and disaster assessment. Through these collaborative efforts, HARP contributed to strengthening the capabilities of local rescue teams and enhancing their preparedness in handling future disasters.

Challenges:

One of the most significant challenges faced by HARP during this operation was the unpredictable nature of the situation. The ongoing seismic activity in the area posed a constant threat, making it difficult to anticipate if and when another seismic event would occur and how it might impact the ongoing rescue operations. In response to this challenge, HARP implemented a strategic approach by creating two teams that would alternate their roles each day.

The first team worked in the field, actively conducting rescue operations and providing aid to those in need. While not directly involved in the field operations, the second team remained on standby to provide support, resources, and immediate assistance if another seismic event occurred or the field team required rescue.

This rotation system ensured that the field team had the necessary resources and backup support readily available, mitigating the risks associated with potential seismic events. By adopting this proactive approach, HARP aimed to maintain the safety and well-being of both their rescue personnel and the individuals they were assisting. The careful planning and preparedness demonstrated by HARP in addressing this challenge contributed to the overall success of the operation and the safety of all involved.

Conclusion:

HARP's success in rescuing and safeguarding the lives of people and livestock during the Thomas Fire was remarkable. Their commitment to saving lives and expertise in disaster response and rescue operations played a crucial role in mitigating the fire's devastating impact on human and animal lives. HARP's dedication and effectiveness in this operation serve as a testament to its mission and its positive impact on the communities they serve.

Future Missions -How You Can Help

You can contribute significantly to the Humanitarian Aid and Rescue Project (HARP) and support their future operations by donating a generous donation today at www.HarpRescue.org. Your donation will be crucial in enabling HARP to continue its life-saving work in providing aid and assistance to those in need. Your support will directly impact the lives of individuals affected by conflict, natural disasters, and other challenging circumstances. Visit the website now to make a meaningful difference and join HARP in its mission to bring hope, relief, and a brighter future to those who need it most.

