



For immediate release
Thursday October 1, 2009

OXFAM EMERGENCY STAFF RUSH TO SAMOA TODAY

International agency Oxfam is sending an emergency response team to Samoa today to help meet the urgent needs of people affected by yesterday's tsunami.

Oxfam will be working alongside our Samoan partner organisation, Women in Business Development Inc. (WIBDI), in Apia, to prepare for an appropriate and co-ordinated response.

Director of WIBDI, Adimaimalaga Tafunai, based in Apia, said they have three teams out today assessing the urgent needs and delivering water, food and clothing to those worst affected – and welcoming the arrival of Oxfam staff with their humanitarian expertise.

“The devastation is frightening,” says Mrs Tafunai. “Every family has been affected. One of my staff members has lost 13 members of her family.”

Oxfam and WIBDI are working closely with the Red Cross, UN agencies and Samoa's National Disaster Management Office.

Oxfam expects to help coordinate the supply of clean water and sanitation and has emergency supplies on hand for up to 10,000 people once the specific needs are identified. These include: buckets, tarpaulins, hygiene kits and mosquito nets.

Oxfam is appealing for donations from the New Zealand public for our Samoa Tsunami Appeal: online at www.oxfam.org.nz; by phone 0800 400 666; to make an automatic \$20 donation, please call 0900 600 20; or donations can be made at The Body Shop stores nationwide.

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EDITORS NOTES:

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Background:

- Women in Business Development works in 150 rural villages across Samoa, supporting a range of community-based projects aimed at alleviating poverty, creating sustainable village economies and revitalising the agricultural sector.