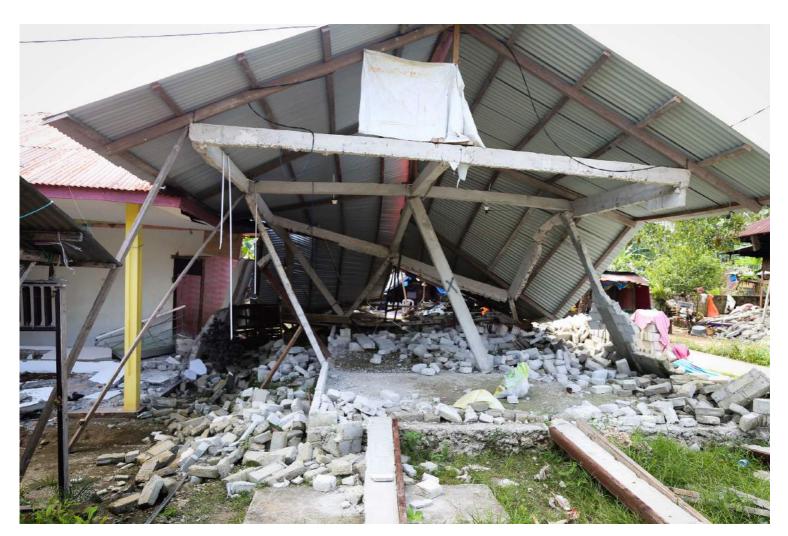


On September 26, 2019, a large-scale earthquake with a substantial magnitude of 6.5 struck Ambon, Maluku Province, with over 2,500 houses were damaged and 130,000 people were displaced, according to the National Agency for Disaster Management (BNPB).



Houses collapsed due to impact of the earthquake.

Ambon city, Central Maluku district, and West Seram district were among the most severely affected. A state of emergency was in effect at the provincial level.



Houses collapsed due to impact of the earthquake.



During humanitarian crises, women and children face grave risks such as increased rates of gender-based violence (GBV), unintended pregnancy, maternal morbidity and mortality, and in extreme cases, forced marriage. Therefore, the needs of women and girls should be prioritized and placed at the center of emergency response.



Many pregnant mothers were at risk of lifethreatening complications and lost access to contraceptive services, and even became more vulnerable to violence.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) was on the ground, under the coordination of The Ministry of Health as the Reproductive Health Sub Cluster Coordinator, to continue sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services and ensure the safety and dignity of women and girls.

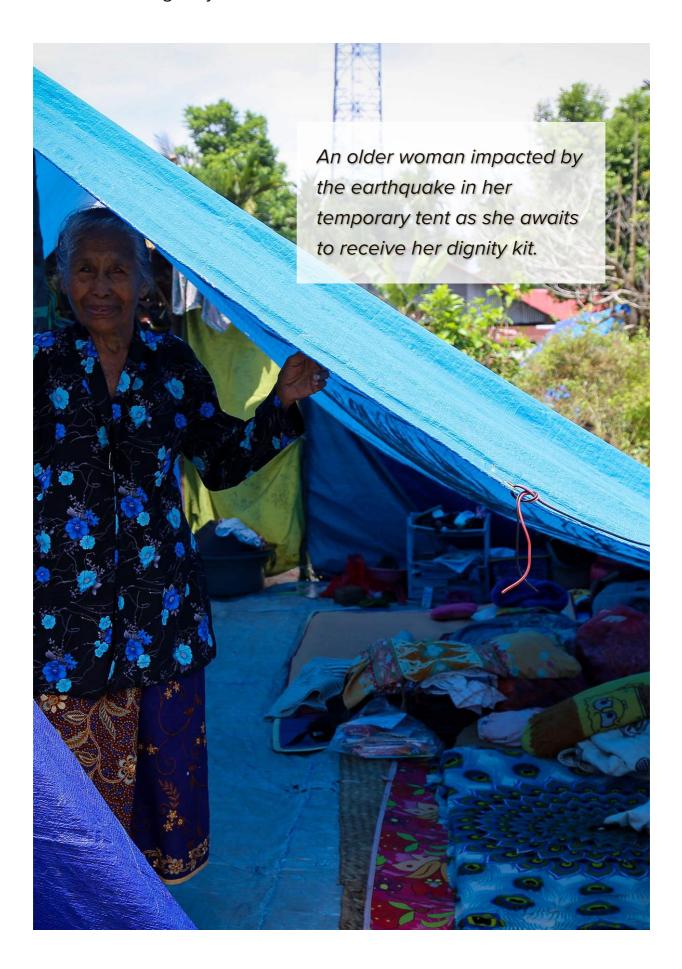


Dignity kits are delivered to affected women carefully yet swiftly.

Through funding from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and with support from UNFPA, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection distributed hygiene kits, maternity kits, post-delivery kits, and new-born kits, as well as established and administered three reproductive health (RH) tents to provide core lifesaving SRH services vital for the health and dignity of women and girls.

During the response, the RH and GBV Sub-Clusters were activated to facilitate and coordinate the response effort in the implementation of the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) for

Reproductive Health, and distribute aid such as prepositioned individual kits to the affected to ensure their health and hygiene during the emergency situation.



In disaster situations, physical conditions and longdistance health facilities could become barriers in accessing basic needs for older persons and persons with disabilities. Therefore, humanitarian responders should monitor their conditions closely and provide tailored assistance to each individual.

Based on such needs on the ground, UNFPA and the Ministry of Health also distributed elderly kits in addition to the distribution of kits for women of reproductive age to meet their health and hygiene needs.



https://youtu.be/iyHtmgOKQys

According to dr. Rosdiana Perau, Head of the Public Health Division of the Maluku Provincial Health Office, the prepositioned dignity kits are critical to women and girls since finding essential hygiene items such as towels, sheets, sanitary pads, and underwear is challenging during times of disaster. It is also difficult for them to raise the

concern of community leaders and humanitarian workers, as they are often men.



dr. Rosdiana Perau, Head of Maluku Province Public Health Sector conducting maternal health counseling to the displaced.

"With these kits, mothers, adolescent girls, and newborns can take full use of these items and maintain their hygiene and personal health," Rosdiana explained.



The earthquake left many health facilities partially or totally destroyed. Yet, women do not simply stop giving birth during humanitarian crises. Many women faced the hard truth of having to give birth in the middle of uncertainty, but when seeing their newborn child and the facilities provided, it's as if all the worries they had before faded away and were replaced with euphoria that were reflected on the mothers' faces.

When women give birth in displaced communities, they must be equipped with proper care and services to give birth safely. Trained and skilled health workers and midwives also play a massive role in ensuring pregnant mothers' well-being.



Christin Timisela, gave birth safely to a healthy child inside the UNFPA temporary health tent in Tulehu, Central Maluku.

Christin Timisela (in the picture) was due to have her fourth child in a couple of weeks when the earthquake struck her hometown. The earthquake tore down the district that she was living in, where the health facility collapsed. Immediately after the earthquake, UNFPA coordinated with the Ministry of Health to set up a temporary health shelter to fulfill the affected population's reproductive health needs. A few days after UNFPA established the RH tent, Christin conceived her fourth child, Francine Elora, safely.



Christin Timisela gave birth safely to a healthy child inside the UNFPA temporary health tent in Tulehu, Central Maluku. With the help of the equipment provided and professional support from health workers, Christin felt safe and assured in their care.

Through RH tents, health providers can provide RH services and information, conduct pregnancy checkups to avoid life-threatening pregnancy complications, and ensure people's access to family planning information and services.



Inside the RH tents, the Ministry of Health and Indonesian Midwives Association (IBI), with support from UNFPA, delivered awareness sessions, distributed maternity, post-delivery, and new-born kits, and facilitated pregnancy checkups in post-earthquake affected areas in Maluku.

Today, the residents are returning back to their houses, and some are still living with relatives, while hospitals, clinics, and schools are being reconstructed as a part of a programme implemented by the Ministry of Public Works and Housing.

"Providing Sexual and Reproductive Health interventions and ensuring the availability and accessibility of healthcare services and lifesaving interventions in humanitarian crises continues to be UNFPA's priority in emergency response", Anjali Sen, UNFPA Indonesia Representative emphasized.

- Lucky Putra, Media Assistant, UNFPA Indonesia



UNFPA, as the UN's reproductive health agency, works towards a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe, and every young person's potential is fulfilled. UNFPA's work is guided by the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action, which places rights and choices for all at the centre of sustainable development.



## Australian Aid Aid

**Credits:** 

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