



Tonga Trust Staff member Lina (right) sits with Muna in Sopo, on the edge of Nuku'alofa.

Tonga Appeal - One Year Report

Christian World Service is grateful to the generous donors who are supporting our local partner, Tonga Community Development Trust in its long term response to affected communities.

One year on, Tonga is grappling with many challenges following the eruption of Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai on January 15, 2022 – the largest on the planet in more than 100 years. Almost 85% of the population was affected and three people lost their lives. The eruption produced nearly 10 cubic kilometres of ash, rock and sediment from the sea floor – some of which reached space. Root crops survived in most cases but fruit trees and vegetables like cabbage and tomato were destroyed. The tsunami waves were up to 90 metres high.

Smaller waves caused extensive damage to homes and gardens, livelihoods and animals on the west coast of Tongatapu, 'Eua and Ha'apai,

Families have worked hard to clean up and repair their homes and livelihoods.

People from the islands of 'Atata and Mango are making new homes on Tongatapu and 'Eua after everything was destroyed in the catastrophe. Many people are living with trauma and others have lost jobs and livelihoods.

Project Outline

Home Gardens and Safe Water

Tonga Trust began working with 10 communities in low lying areas on Tongatapu. By the end of October, it had provided topsoil, 410 fruit trees and 3,450 vegetable plants.

Their survey found 100 households needed water tank repairs.

The shortage and expense of topsoil has delayed distribution on 'Eua and Ha'apai.

Psychosocial Support

"Are you okay?" is the way Tema begins conversations with individuals. She is the psychosocial support worker with Tonga Trust. It is identifying trainers to help people deal with trauma - children who will not go near the ocean, people frightened by noises or who cannot speak. Training will begin in February.

Income Generation

Tonga Trust is setting up new local 'Amatakiloa women's groups to extend and improve food security and income. It will run training events - eg in marketing traditional crafts. Programmes will include people living with disabilities who have missed out on assistance. Covid-19 has made economic recovery more difficult.

Assessment

In this initial phase, Tonga Trust has surveyed 417 people on Tongatapu (the main island), 100 on 'Eua and 12 on Ha'apai. Work has begun on Tongatapu. Plans are in place for 'Eua and being prepared for Ha'apai. The people of Ha'apai have received government and other support after the eruption.

Disaster Preparedness

With Japanese support, Tonga Trust distributed 350 emergency packages. Earlier training in Disaster Preparedness and previous experience meant communities responded well.

Tonga Trust will run further preparedness training including on first aid and evacuation procedures.

Chicken Houses

Tonga Trust is providing materials for chicken or duck houses and fencing for an initial 100 households on Tongatapu. A builder has begun work on the first 50 houses. The cost of materials has been higher than expected. CWS is raising more funds through its Gifted programme to assist more families.

Muna's Story

"The sea came through my house and I have another vegetable [garden] on the other side of my house, and all my vegetables were covered by the ash. And some were burned by the ash, like the pepper. Some we tried to harvest ... but most of them were burned by the ash...."

Muna is growing food for her family. "Yes. It is helpful for cooking. Some of this helps me to provide for my kids - especially their lunches - sandwiches with tomato. It's healthy.... Mostly we use it for soup! With a big family, you have to cook some soup," she says before laughing.



Muna lives with her husband and five children in Sopus. She received topsoil for her garden from Tonga Trust four months after the eruption. In November she was growing tomatoes, lettuce and more.



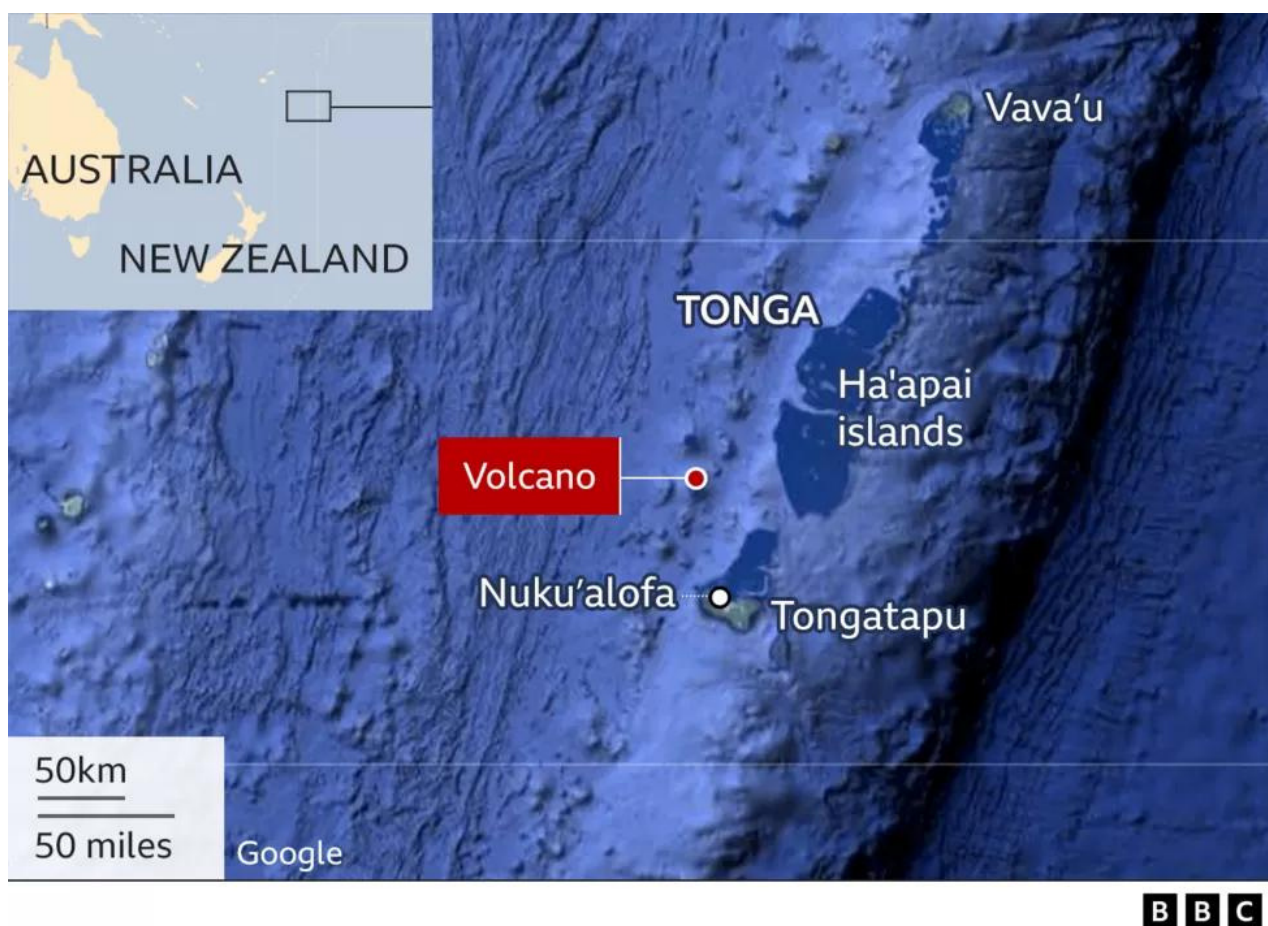
Thank you, Makalita

"...Here we live on Kings Road, we stay close to each other. For anybody who is in need, the neighbours will stand up and help.

So, we are so grateful for this great opportunity - that you people would donate all these things [referring to plants and gardening materials]

Since the volcanic ash and the tsunami - we still count it as a blessing. We are not dead yet.

We have been born from your good heart and good will."



CWS International Programmes staff, Lorraine Borrmeister and Rob Wayne, met with executive director Sione Faka'osi and the Tonga Community Development Trust in November 2022.



Lorraine and Luisa, the leader of the 'Amatakiloa group in Popua inspect the community garden on the edge of Nuku'alofa.