

International Medical Corps Heads to Tsunami-Affected Countries

International Medical Corps is responding to the situation in Japan and tsunami-warning areas, following an earthquake that struck Japan's coast, triggering a tsunami that devastated northern parts of the country and put a tsunami warning in effect for much of the Pacific.

"We are putting together relief teams, as well as supplies, and are in contact with partners in Japan and other affected countries to assess needs and coordinate our activities," says Nancy Aossey, president and CEO of International Medical Corps. "While Japan has a large capacity to manage a disaster of this scale, we will respond as needed."

The earthquake struck at 2:46 p.m. Tokyo time and hundreds of people are expected to have been killed in Japan, with officials reporting to the Associated Press that 200 to 300 bodies were found in Sendai, the northeastern port city closest to the epicenter. It has been described as the largest earthquake on record for Japan. Aftershocks continue to shake the country, with a second large earthquake of .

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center put a warning in effect for much of the Pacific Ocean, stating that the tsunami could affect Russia, Taiwan, Hawaii, Indonesia, the Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, and Australia. The agency later added the west coasts of the United States, Mexico, Central America, and South America as areas that could see tidal surges.

Tsunami waves of 2.5 feet were reported in Indonesia, while the Midway Islands registered a wave of approximately five feet. In Hawaii, coastal areas were evacuated and surges of

roughly four feet were reported. All countries report only minor damage.

Approximately 2 million people around Tokyo currently do not have electricity, while cell phone service is reported to be down across central and northern Japan. On Friday, President Barack Obama said the United States was ready to help however needed.