



**THE KINGDOM OF TONGA  
NATIONAL DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT OFFICE  
NATIONAL EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTRE**

**SITUATION REPORT**

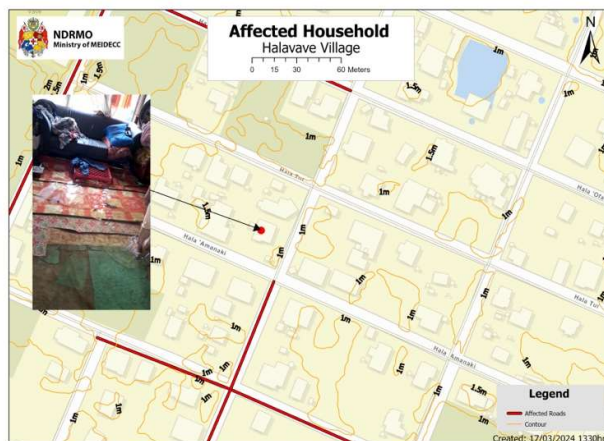
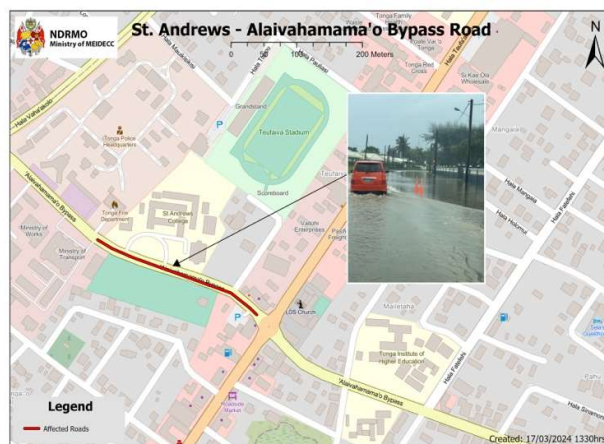
**Event:** Flash Flooding  
**Sit Rep No:** 01  
**Date:** 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2024

**Period:** 1:00am – 3:00pm

This situation report released by the National Disaster Risk Management Office (NEMO) is to inform operational partners on current situation of the prolonged heavy rainfall (15<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2024) and flash flooding in Tongatapu.

***Highlights***

- Prolonged heavy rainfall in Tongatapu lead to pluvial flash flooding in the villages of Kolomotu'a (*'Isileli, Tongataeapa and Hala'ovave*), Kolofo'ou, Ma'ufanga (*Popua*) and Pea were affected by the rising water.
- Rising waters have reached the foundations of some residential homes in the areas in central areas of Tongatapu; Kolofo'ou, Kolomotu'a and Pea, per assessment 1:00am -3:00am 17/03/2024.
- Three inundated residential homes in Pea, while 2 under threat of rising water flooding entering the homes.
- Total affected population in the inundated homes are 18; 11 males and 7 females
- Two inundated residential homes in Hala'ovave
- Town Officers have reported that none of the evacuation centres are open as no one in the community have moved to the ECs.
- Ministry of Infrastructure identifies inundated roads with signages and cones.
- Two Interagency teams were deployed to conduct a situation overview of flooding, 9:00am 17/03/2024
- Tonga Communication Cooperation reported that the mobile network is under normal operation and unaffected by the rain as all the backhaul are via fibre optic with minimal issues for landline and ADSL customers.



## A. Background

An active trough from a low pressure system lies over the Group. Associated cluds, heavy occasional rain, thunderstorms and strong gutsy winds will affect Vava'u, Ha'apai, Tongatapu and 'Eua groups today, *Weather Bulletin Issued at 6:00am Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2024.* The prolonged heavy rainfall lead flooding in low lying communities in Tongatapu.

Initial Rapid Situation Assessment conducted at 1:00am – 3:00am Sunday, 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2024 showed that rising waters have reached the foundation level of residential homes at low lying villages. However, two inter-agency teams were again deployed at 9:00am to provide a second initial rapid situation assessment overview.

## B. Current situation

### 1. Situation Overview Assessment Results

- Initial Situation Overview Assessment conducted by NDRMO to low lying areas at 1:00am – 3:00am 17<sup>th</sup>, March, 2024
- Two Interagency Situation Overview Assessment Teams were deployed to assess the whole of Tongatapu. Agencies consists of NDRMO, TFES, Tonga Police, MOH, MOI, MET, PMO and TRCS.
- Three residential homes in Pea have reported having water enter their homes, while 2 homes are under threat of homes becoming flooded
- Two inundated homes reported from Hala'ovave
- Affected homes are mainly in the central areas of Tongatapu.
- No evacuation centre have been activated, as affected people have not evacuated to the centers.
- Ripples created from vehicles driving by the road have entered residential homes situated at road side.
- Tonga Police Patrol to Folaha, Longoteme and Vaini have reported that these villages remain unaffected.
- Western and Eastern areas were reported by the assessment to be unaffected by the prolonged heavy rainfall.
- Police Department 6 have reported that there are no flooded areas in 'Eua, *Tonga Police; Police Operation Centre Situation Report 1, 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2024*
- Ha'apai Islands remains unaffected by prolonged heavy rainfall, *Local Governance – Town Officer's Reports, 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2024*

### 2. Tonga Meteorological Services – Fua'amotu Weather Forecasting Centre

- Reported that heavy rain warning is still in force for Tongatapu, 'Eua, Ha'apai and Vava'u until early next week.
- Gale force wind has also been issued today which is an upgrade from strong wind warning from yesterday
- The expected continuous heavy rain for the next two days may also help with the weakening of the cyclone as the MJO, a condition for tropical cyclone formation is still in our area of responsibility.
- Heavy rainfall pattern is still expected in the next hours.

### 3. Infrastructure

#### 3.1 Roads

- Inundated roads in the areas of Nuku'alofa, Kolomotu'a, Kolofo'u and Ma'ufanga (refer to Annex I - Inundated Roads Map)
- MOI have identified inundated roads and Tonga Police have identified these areas with cones and signages of inundated public roads
- Tonga Police have put cones and pump at the Bypass Road at Pahu to indicate and alert drivers of a big hole on the road in order to avoid accidents and damages to vehicles.

### 4. Communication

#### 4.1 Tonga Communication Corporation

	Island	Current Status Update
1.	Tongatapu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mobile network is under normal operation and unaffected by the Rain as all the backhaul are via fiber optic.</li><li>• Fixed Network is normal in terms of operation however, there may be some landline and ADSL customers that may be affected by the rain but will be minimal.</li></ul>
2.	Ha'apai	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Despite rain and strong winds, Ha'afeva and Nomuka Networks are both operating normally.</li><li>• Ha'apai Hahake Network are working fine.</li></ul>
3.	Vava'u	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Network is operating normally without any issue despite the rain this week.</li></ul>
4.	Niuaotuputu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All working fine since full restoration of voice issue on Friday</li><li>• TCC conducted a test call this morning; network still working fine.</li></ul>
5.	Niuafo'ou	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No report form NF as of this morning, call is however ringing indicating that network is reaching coverage in NG</li></ul>

#### Further updates

The next Sitrep will be provided when new information have been received.

***List of Annexes***

1. ANNEX 1: Map of Tongatapu
2. ANNEX II : Inundated Roads of Tongatapu
3. ANNEX III: Affected Households – Hala’ovave (Kolomotu’a)
4. ANNEX IV: Affected Households - Pea