

Indonesia: Bureaucratic delays hinder quake relief

Wednesday 7 June 2006, by [BALOWSKI James](#) (Date first published: 7 June 2006).

Jakarta,

The official death toll from the massive earthquake that struck densely populated Yogyakarta and parts of Central Java on May 27 now stands at more than 6200, with more than 46,000 people injured - 33,000 seriously.

Measuring 6.3 on the Richter scale, the quake reduced thousands of homes to piles of rubble in less than a minute. Authorities say that some 647,000 people have been displaced and there is little hope of finding more survivors.

Despite a government pledge of US\$107.5 million in assistance, almost a week after the disaster many people were still desperately short of food, shelter and medical care.

A major obstacle has been bureaucratic delays, with residents required to "make proposals" or obtain written authorisation from local administrators before getting assistance.

Many have been forced to resort to desperate measures. In Klaten and throughout the badly damaged Bantul district, beggars held cardboard boxes daubed with the words, "Asking for aid". In other areas people put chairs, oil drums and stones on the road to slow drivers and ask for money.

Some of the fastest responses have been from smaller, locally based activists groups. Speaking to Green Left Weekly, Peoples Democratic Party (PRD) chairperson Dita Indah Sari, who is coordinating the PRD and affiliated local groups' relief efforts, said they were focusing on the hardest-hit areas.

In Bantul, a joint coordination post organised by the PRD, the National Student League for Democracy (LMND) and students from the Indonesian Arts Institute was established within a day of the quake. Around 50 sub-posts have been set up that have provided assistance to some 10,000 displaced people.

In Klaten, a post has been established as a joint endeavour of the Klaten Farmers Forum, the National Farmers Union, the PRD and the LNMD. Due to lack of resources, however, the post has been restricted to organising and distributing assistance to three sub-districts in the Klaten regency: Pedan, Karangdowo and Wedi.

Sari is urging the international community to assist the hundreds of thousands of victims who are currently facing the threat of hunger and exposure. "Whatever the form of aid, and however much, it will contribute to alleviating the suffering of the victims."

[Action in Solidarity with Asia and the Pacific is collecting donations for these projects. Commonwealth Bank account name: Peoples Power Fighting Fund. BSB: 062 026. Account number: 1006 0743. Please email [after donating](#) so we can identify where the money came from.]

P.S.

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