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Information Bulletin

Philippines: Typhoon Haiyan

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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This bulletin is being issued for information only and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Philippine Red Cross has placed its disaster response teams on standby for rapid deployment and preparedness stocks ready for dispatch, if required.

Summary: Typhoon Haiyan is currently making its way across the Pacific and has intensified into a category 5 typhoon (super typhoon). Forecasts indicate Typhoon Haiyan will make landfall in the Philippines on Friday, 8 November 2013. Known locally as Typhoon Yolanda, Haiyan is expected to track across Samar and Leyte provinces in Eastern Visayas region, packing maximum sustained winds of 240 kph (150 mph). It is expected to bring widespread torrential rain and damaging winds, and trigger life-threatening flash floods, as well as mudslides on higher terrain.

The Philippine Red Cross (PRC) has been on highest alert since the typhoon was sighted. The PRC is maintaining close coordination with disaster authorities and has alerted all its chapters in Visayas (Central, Eastern and Western Visayas) as

well as in Bicol, Mindoro, and Caraga regions for immediate response, if required. Red Cross disaster response teams, including water and search and rescue responders, are on standby, ready for rapid deployment. Disaster preparedness stocks have been mobilized and are being positioned in a regional warehouse in Cebu. Volunteers have been activated to support pre-emptive evacuations that are likely to be undertaken by the authorities, while additional staff and volunteers remain on high alert in Manila and in the region.



Preparedness stocks – which include standard relief items – are being transferred from the Philippine Red Cross central warehouse in Manila to a regional warehouse in Cebu for immediate dispatch to areas where they will be needed.
Photo: Joe Cropp/IFRC

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The situation

Typhoon Haiyan - the latest in a series of weather disturbances - is expected to hit the Philippines on Friday, 8 November. According to the Philippines Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), the eye of the typhoon over the Pacific Ocean was located this morning at 637 km east of Hinatuan, Surigao Del Sur with maximum sustained winds of 215 kph near the center and gusts of up to 250 kph. Known locally as Yolanda, Haiyan is forecast to move west northwest at 30 kph and expected to make landfall over Samar-Leyte provinces by Friday afternoon, and to exit the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR) by Sunday, 10

November 2013. Since August 2013, beginning with Typhoon Utor (local name Labuyo), a series of storms have crossed Luzon in northern Philippines at typhoon strength – the others being Usagi (local name Odette), Nari (local name Santi) and Krosa (local name Vinta).

The humanitarian impact of Typhoon Haiyan threatens to be colossal as it is expected to bring widespread torrential rain and damaging winds, and trigger life-threatening flash floods, as well as mudslides on higher terrain. It is worthwhile to note that earlier in the week, Tropical Storm Thirty (local name Wilma) moved over the Visayas dumping heavy rains in many areas, saturating the soil and increasing the risk of flooding.

The anticipated path of Haiyan will take it over the areas hardest hit by a powerful 7.2 magnitude earthquake which struck in Central Visayas on 15 October 2013. Its effects are therefore likely to be felt by thousands of people who are living in makeshift shelters following the earthquake.

Although forecasts currently indicate that the worst of the storm may bypass the capital city of Manila, damaging winds and heavy rainfall can be expected.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Philippine Red Cross (PRC) has been on the highest alert since the typhoon was sighted and meteorological projections indicated its imminent entry into PAR as a super typhoon. The National Society is maintaining close coordination with disaster authorities, and participated in a meeting called by the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) on Wednesday, 6 November, to discuss preparations for interventions.

Through its operations centre in the national headquarters, the PRC has alerted all its chapters in Visayas (Central, Eastern and Western Visayas), Bicol, Mindoro, and Caraga regions as well as in south Luzon to activate their disaster response teams and ready their supplies, assets and personnel available for immediate response. The chapters have been instructed to support the disaster risk reduction and management councils at various levels within their areas of responsibility in disseminating early warning alerts and making preparations for pre-emptive evacuations. The chapters are also readying staff and volunteers who can quickly set up welfare desks and first aid stations in evacuation centres, and making necessary arrangements to serve hot meals in evacuation centres, should the situation necessitate.

The PRC national headquarters is monitoring the situation closely and is on the highest alert. A team is on standby for immediate deployment, to help conduct a rapid assessment in the aftermath of the typhoon. Preparedness stocks – which include blankets, sleeping mats, jerry cans and hygiene kits – are being transferred from the PRC's central warehouse in Manila to a regional warehouse in Cebu for immediate dispatch to areas where they will be needed.

In Bohol, the teams already undertaking relief distributions in quake-affected municipalities have incorporated dissemination of preparedness messages in the orientation sessions. They are prepared for potential secondary impact due to the approaching typhoon.

Earlier on Thursday, 7 November, the IFRC participated in a Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and cluster leads meeting on the preparedness for response to Typhoon Haiyan. The IFRC Country Representative and the global shelter cluster regional focal point for Asia Pacific – who is in the Philippines since 18 October 2013 supporting an ongoing activation relating to the Central Visayas earthquake – participated. In preparation, the emergency shelter cluster has placed a team on standby to join rapid multi-sector assessment teams that are likely to be deployed in the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan.

Meanwhile, on Thursday afternoon, 7 November, the PRC and Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners with presence in the Philippines – Australian Red Cross, Finnish Red Cross, German Red Cross, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the Netherlands Red Cross and Spanish Red Cross – will have a meeting to define how they will best support the PRC in responding to potential humanitarian needs that will be wrought by the typhoon. In due course, partners will be updated on how the Movement components will coordinate possible interventions.

Contact information

For further information, please contact:

- **Philippine Red Cross (phone +63 2 525 5654; fax +63 2 527 0857):**
 - Gwendolyn Pang, Secretary-General; email: gwendolyn.pang@redcross.org.ph
- **IFRC Philippine country office, Manila (phone +63 2 336 8622):**
 - Bernd Schell, Country Representative; email: bernd.schell@ifrc.org
 - Necephor Mghendi, Operations Manager; email: necephor.mghendi@ifrc.org
- **IFRC regional office for Southeast Asia, Bangkok (phone +66 2661 8201):**
 - Anne Leclerc, Head of Regional Office; email: anne.leclerc@ifrc.org
- **IFRC Asia Pacific zone office, Kuala Lumpur (phone: +60 3 9207 5700, fax +60 3 2161 0670):**
 - Al Panico, Head of Operations; email: al.panico@ifrc.org
 - Christine Strater, Operations Coordinator, email: christine.strater@ifrc.org
 - Peter Ophoff, Head of Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER), email: peter.ophoff@ifrc.org



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All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGOs\) in Disaster Relief](#) and the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.



The IFRC's work is guided by [Strategy 2020](#), which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.