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Information bulletin

Philippines: Batanes Earthquakes

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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| Glide n° - | Date of issue: 27 July 2019 |
| Date of disaster: 27 July 2019 | Point of contact: Leonardo Ebajo, Director for Disaster Management Services |
| Operation start date: - | Expected timeframe: - |
| Category of disaster ¹ : Yellow | |
| Host National Society: Philippine Red Cross (PRC) | |
| Number of people affected: 2,867 ² | Number of people to be assisted: TBC |
| N° of National Societies currently involved in the operation (if available and relevant): - | |
| N° of other partner organizations involved in the operation (if available and relevant): Government of Philippines such as Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHILVOCS), National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), Department of Health (DOH), Department of Energy (DOE), Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) | |

This bulletin is being issued for information only and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Philippine Red Cross (PRC), with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), has determined that external assistance is not required, and is therefore not seeking funding or other assistance from donors at this time.

The situation

On Saturday, 27 July 2019, at 4:16am (local time), the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHILVOCS) reported a series of earthquakes struck the island of Batanes, the northernmost province in the Philippines; the first shock was of 5.4 magnitude with 12 km depth of focus, occurred at 4:16am, followed by the second shock, a 5.9 magnitude with 7 km depth at 7:37am, and the powerful shock was of 5.8 magnitude with 1 km depth tremor was felt after few hours, around 9:24am.

Two major earthquakes' epicentres were recorded in the east of Itbayat, Batanes while the latest was in the east of Basco, Batanes. In total, 13 aftershocks were recorded as at 11:19am on the same day on 27 July 2019. PHILVOCS reports that the strongest intensity was Intensity VII (destructive) that was felt in Itbayat, Batanes following the 5.9 magnitude earthquake past 7:00am in the morning.



¹ Based on the IFRC Secretariat's Operational Response Framework. This categorization implies that the response intervention is within the capacity of the National Society of an affected country to manage with resources available in-country. If requested, the IFRC Country Office may provide any necessary technical or management support to the National Society, and if required, the IFRC Regional Office may support the mobilization of regional disaster response tools, with Geneva supporting the allocation of Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF).

² It is estimated that all people in Itbayat, Batanes were affected by the earthquake.

Other reported intensities are:

| Earthquake | 5.4 magnitude earthquake | 5.9 magnitude earthquake |
|------------------------|---|---|
| Intensity and location | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intensity VI - Itbayat, Batanes Intensity III - Basco and Sabtang, Batanes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intensity VII in Itbayat, Batanes Intensity IV- Basco, Batanes |

No tsunami alert was issued but aftershocks and damages are expected. For reference purposes, please see the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS) Earthquake Intensity Scale through this [PEIS](#) link.

According to the NDRRMC, as of date eight deaths reported while 60 are injured. There is also major infrastructure damage is reported in Itbayat District Hospital. All patients have been evacuated in the open grounds outside the hospital. 60 patients are currently receiving treatments due to earthquake-related injuries while seven patients need to be for airlifted to Batanes General Hospital. Itbayat District Hospital urgent needs include tents for increased number of patients and additional medical supplies for suturing.

Immediately after first tremor, affected people were evacuated to the in Itbayat Evacuation Centre – in an open area like a plaza - where 500 people are seeking shelter. The local government is prohibiting evacuated people to return to their houses since more aftershocks and damages are still expected.

Four shelters, including ancestral homes, were reported to be damaged. Historical heritage is also damaged including the Santa Maria de Mayan Church, which was built in 1888.

There is power interruption reported in the entire municipality of Itbayat and mobile phone coverage is intermittently available.

PHIVOLCS continues to monitor seismic events and issues earthquake information and real-time updates. The NDRRMC is coordinating with the city, provincial, municipal, and barangay disaster risk reduction and management councils and issued situation reports. [NDRRMC](#) continues to release advisory on earthquake information. As of 12:00pm on 27 July 2019, the NDRRMC has raised the blue alert status - which means local government units (LGUs) have to prepare for a possible impact.

The Department of Health's trauma medical team is on-standby for possible deployment while the Department of Energy is currently coordinating with National Power Corporation and the National Electrification Administration to resume the power interruption in Itbayat. The Arm Forces of Philippine has deployed two search and rescue and one medical team to Itbayat on 27 July 2019. The provincial and municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Councils (DRRMCs) are currently conducting damage assessment as well as managing the search and rescue operation.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The operations centre (OpCen) at the PRC National Headquarters continues to collect information – from the chapters and directly from Red Cross 143 volunteers in the areas – and as of yet, has issued three disaster incident updates. Communications teams are also posting updates and photos of the situation on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Philippine Red Cross Batanes Chapter was able to activate their initial response activities such as coordination and impact assessment. PRC is coordinating with the NDRRMC OpCen for possible response cluster activation. Local chapter in Batanes is also doing coordination with their Municipal, and Provincial DRRMCs. Cagayan Chapter were alerted to coordinate with the Regional DRRMO in Region II regarding situation and possible support of Region to Batanes.

PRC is also on monitoring for the possible needs of the province of Batanes regarding the impact of earthquake. Response Team such as RCAT 143, NDRT's and other specialized PRC personnel's such as Relief, Shelter, WASH, Health and Welfare were alerted and are now on standby for possible augmentation. PRC is planning to deploy the following early morning on 28 July 2019:

- Operation and assessment team of two disaster response personnel to conduct assessment and support operations.
- Emergency telecommunications team of three personnel for establishment of radio communication in Basco and a unit of 5.5 KVA generator.
- 10 pieces of body/cadaver bags.



PRC is closely monitoring and assessing the situation on the ground, and at the same, coordinating with hospitals and Batanes LGU to identify the immediate needs in the area. *(Photo: PRC)*

The IFRC Philippine country office is coordinating with the PRC, in-country Movement partners and the Humanitarian Country Team to support PRC's coordination. The IFRC Philippine country office is also coordinating and providing regular updates to the IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. IFRC will provide technical support to PRC through the IFRC Philippine country office.



Damaged houses in Batanes due to the series of earthquakes the jolted the province early today. *(Photo: Steve Labrador, Executive Secretary of Gov. Marilou H. Cayco)*



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Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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How we work

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 Humanitarian 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:



Save lives.
protect livelihoods,
and strengthen recovery
from disaster and crises.



Enable **healthy**
and **safe** living.



Promote **social inclusion**
and a culture of
non-violence and **peace**.