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## Information bulletin

# Philippines: Typhoon Utor

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

**Information bulletin n° 1**  
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This bulletin is being issued for information only and reflects the current situation, preparedness measures put in place and details available at this time. The Philippine Red Cross (PRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) are presently not seeking external assistance from donors.

**Summary:** Typhoon Utor (locally known as Labuyo) made landfall in Casiguran municipality of Aurora province in the island of Luzon at 03:00hrs, Philippine time, today. Since the first day that the typhoon was spotted within the Philippine area of responsibility, Philippine Red Cross has been on alert to provide support to local chapters and communities as needed. In addition to issuing advisories to its chapters, volunteers and rescue teams have been put on standby for immediate action. Contingency stocks of bedding, water storage containers and hygiene kits have been readied to ensure a rapid response, should the needs on the ground arise. At the same time, PRC is supporting pre-emptive evacuations that have been ordered by disaster authorities in areas along the typhoon's path, and is encouraging communities to take responsibility for their safety by providing them with information to ensure that they are well-prepared. PRC and IFRC are also participating in preparedness for response meetings that are being held within the context of inter-agency coordination.



Philippine Red Cross conducts regular training on water search and rescue, enabling them to respond more effectively to disasters.  
Photo: PRC

[<click here for map of affected areas or contact information>](#)

## The situation

Typhoon Utor made landfall in the eastern coast of Luzon Island – at Casiguran, Aurora – on 11 August, two days after it was first spotted within the Philippine area of responsibility. It entered as a Category 4 typhoon, with maximum winds of 165 kilometres per hour (kph) near the centre and gusts of up to 200 kph. After making landfall, it weakened slightly as it traversed the landmass of Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) and Ilocos region. It is expected to leave landmass later today, and to exit the Philippine area of responsibility tomorrow, 13 August 2013.

According to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), the typhoon has so far left one person dead after a landslide in Benguet, and displaced 111 families in the province of Aurora after their homes were totally destroyed. Some 560 houses have been partially destroyed. Some remote towns and villages have been isolated, with telecommunications networks out of order, power supply interruptions or outages reported and some roads cut off by landslides.

Preparations for any eventualities began on Friday, 9 August, with the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Administration (PAGASA) and the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) issuing regular updates. As well as Aurora, all the other provinces in the Ilocos region (Region 1), Cagayan valley (Region 2) and Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) have been placed under [Public Warning Signal \(PWS\) No.3](#). This level of PWS implies, among others, cancellation of travels and outdoor activities, and evacuation of people in harm's way to safer shelters. The provinces Zambales, Tarlac and Nueva Ecija in Central Luzon (Region 3) are currently under [PWS No.2](#), which implies, among others, postponement of all outdoor activities for children. The national weather agency, PAGASA, has indicated that the typhoon may enhance the southwest monsoon which would bring moderate to heavy rains over South Luzon, including Metro Manila. In anticipation of heavy rains over Northern Luzon, the gates of Magat Dam in Isabela province have been opened. At the time of opening, the dam's water level was at 186.16 metres, which is below the maximum level of 193 metres. The authorities are monitoring water levels in other major dams.

In view of the public warning signals in place, authorities ordered pre-emptive evacuation of families in areas placed under PWS No. 3, which are expected to be hardest hit by the typhoon. NDRRMC has advised residents who are living in low-lying areas in these areas to take precautionary measures in the event of landslides and flash floods. More than 1,200 people were pre-emptively evacuated from their homes as the typhoon brought rains and strong winds. In Albay, some evacuation centres have already closed and evacuees are returning to their places of origin. On the day preceding the typhoon, some 8,000 passengers were stranded in the different ports of Bicol region due to bad weather updates although the number has now reduced to 1,100 after some have proceeded to their respective destinations as sea vessels have been allowed to sail. Some 30 areas in Luzon have suspended classes at all levels for Monday, 12 August, in line with the levels of public warning signals.

In October 2010, [Typhoon Megi](#) hit a similar area as a Category 5 super typhoon, one of the strongest on record with wind speeds of nearly 300 km/h. Around 30 people were killed and two million people affected.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Philippine Red Cross (PRC) has been monitoring the situation around the clock since the typhoon was sighted and meteorological projections indicated that it would enter Philippine territory. Through its operations centre at the national headquarters, PRC has maintained constant communication with concerned chapters in Northern Luzon, with real time information, advisories and response plans being relayed to teams on the ground. Chapters located along the projected typhoon path are also monitoring and reporting the situation on the ground to the operations centre to enable quick decision-making and to facilitate faster mobilization of resources and a coordinated response.

PRC chapters in areas placed under PWS No. 3 are supporting pre-emptive evacuations that have been ordered by disaster authorities, and are encouraging communities to take responsibility for their safety by providing them with information to ensure that they are well-prepared. The chapters are on full alert and have put their volunteers, rescue teams and medical teams on stand-by for immediate action in case of any eventuality. The personnel are equipped with personal protective equipment such as helmets and life vests for their safety and are backed up by support vehicles, ambulances and other equipment such as rubber boats.

Meanwhile, IFRC is ready to support PRC and has specialized personnel, additional emergency supplies and resources available in country and in the region. IFRC-supplied stocks of pre-positioned relief items such as blankets, jerry cans and sleeping mats available in country are sufficient to meet the needs of 20,000 families. Additional supplies can be airlifted into the country within 24 hours from IFRC's zone logistics unit (ZLU) in Kuala Lumpur. This afternoon, PRC and IFRC participated in a meeting of the humanitarian country team (HCT), which discussed, among others, possible response by the humanitarian community. PRC is preparing to deploy a multi-sector assessment team to the most affected province of Aurora. The team will comprise PRC staff and personnel of Movement partners with in-country presence.

## Contact information

**For further information, 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 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.

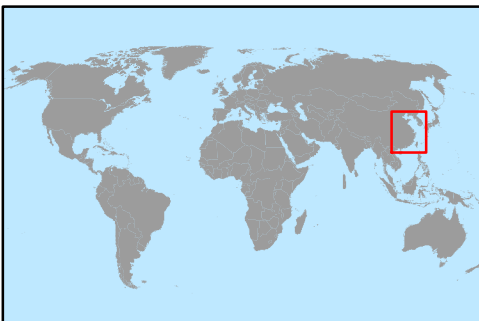
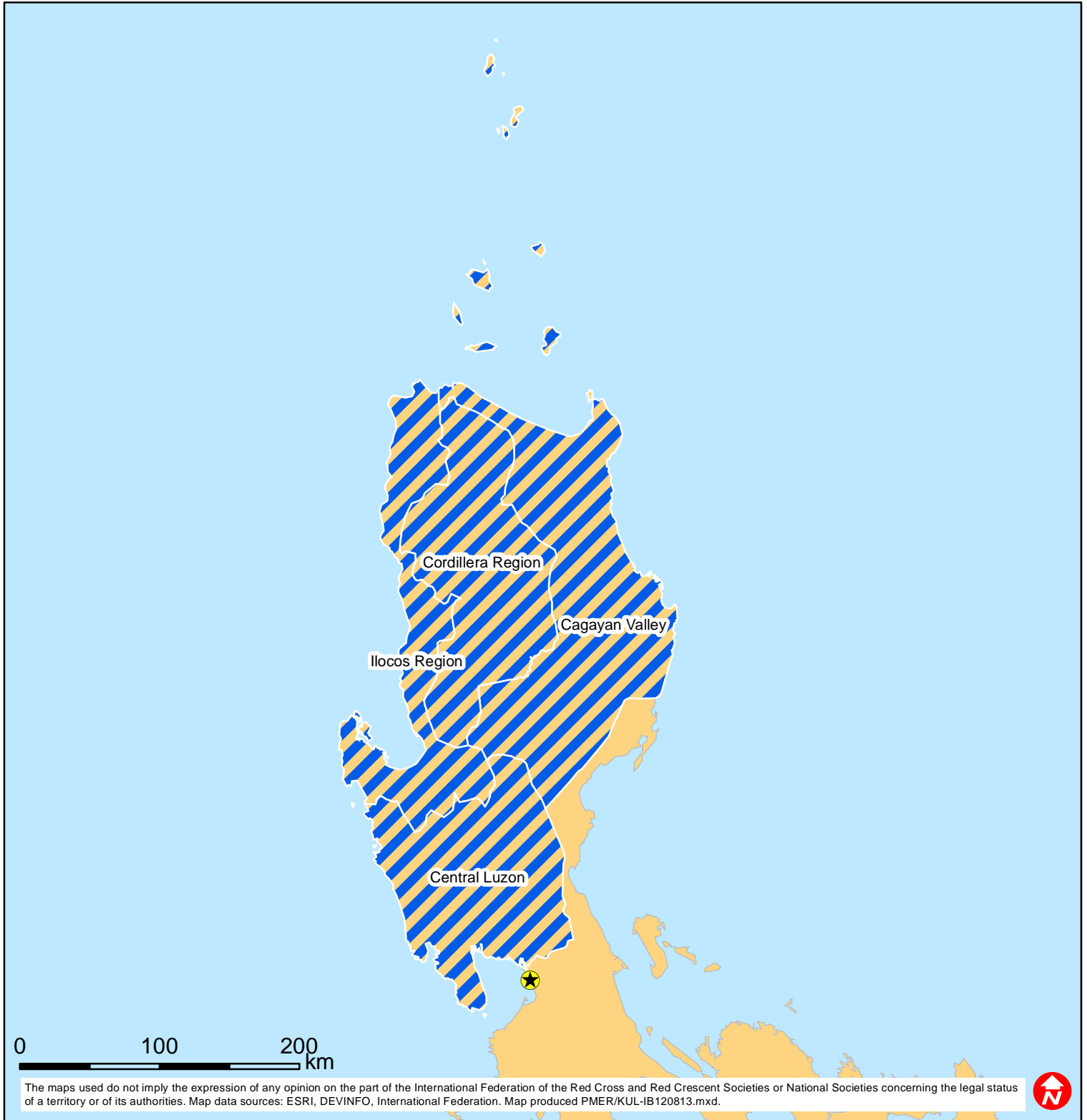




The IFRC's work is guided by [Strategy 2020](#), which puts forward three strategic aims:

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.



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-  Affected areas
-  Capitals