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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 to update on the current situation following Typhoon Haiyan's landfall. CHF 475,495 has been released from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) [disaster relief emergency fund \(DREF\)](#) to support the National Society in deploying assessment teams and immediate supplies. An Emergency Appeal is expected to be launched in the coming days.

The situation

Typhoon Haiyan (locally known as Yolanda) – the strongest typhoon to hit the Philippines this year – made an initial landfall in Guiuan, Eastern Samar on Friday, 8 November 2013 with maximum sustained winds of 235 kph and gusts of up to 275 kph. It then tracked across Visayas, making multiple landfalls in the provinces of Leyte, Cebu and Iloilo before heading to Palawan and exiting to the sea west of Philippines. Its effects have extended to other provinces, including but not limited to Northern Samar, Samar, Southern Leyte, Bohol, Negros Occidental, Guimaras, Masbate, Biliran, Capiz, Aklan, Antique and Romblon.

While the overall impact of the typhoon has only started to emerge as responders reach the hardest-hit areas, Red Cross volunteers and staff in areas where the typhoon hit are reporting significant number of casualties and damages, with those in Tacloban City describing the impact as tsunami-like. Anecdotal reports from Red Cross teams on the ground indicate massive casualties in the city alone, although these are being verified. The city's airport has been significantly damaged, lifelines heavily impacted and roads rendered impassable due to debris. The Red Cross chapter building was not spared, and operations have had to be shifted to an alternative building.



Philippine Red Cross staff and volunteers conduct a rapid assessment in the province of Capiz in the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan. Photo Cred: Philippine Red Cross

According to the latest update released by the disaster risk reduction and response operations office (DRRRO) in the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), a total of 944,586 families or 4,283,290 people have been affected across 39 provinces, with 71,623 families or 330,914 people sheltered in 1,223 evacuation centres that are operational. A total of 3,438 houses are reported damaged – 2,055 of them completely destroyed.

In all, as a clearer picture emerges, indications are that the humanitarian impact of Typhoon Haiyan is massive. Besides the Tacloban City, significant casualties can be expected in areas where the eye of the storm passed, including Guiuan in Eastern Samar – a narrow peninsula where the typhoon first made landfall – and Bantayan Island

in the northern tip of Cebu. The national authorities have already indicated that they will accept international assistance. Furthermore, several affected provinces are declaring a state of calamity.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Philippine Red Cross (PRC) has been on the highest alert since the typhoon was sighted. The National Society has maintained close coordination with disaster authorities and participated in meetings of disaster risk reduction and management councils at national, provincial and municipal levels. Volunteers were activated to support pre-emptive evacuations by the authorities while disaster response teams were readied for rapid deployment. To support PRC in deploying assessment teams and immediate supplies, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has released CHF 475,495 from its disaster relief emergency fund (DREF).

So far, PRC chapters in the affected areas – including Antique, Cebu, Iloilo, Leyte, Masbate, Ormoc, Southern Leyte, Bohol – have served hot meals to people who were evacuated to safer shelters. Delivery of immediate relief continues alongside efforts to rescue people who are trapped. Red Cross rapid assessment teams are already reaching the worst affected areas. One team – which includes a shelter and water and sanitation surge delegate seconded by the British Red Cross to the IFRC – has already reached Tacloban City on Saturday 9 November afternoon while another team is on the way to the city from Northern Samar. A third team reached the northern tip of Cebu Island on Saturday, 9 November afternoon while the fourth team is set to arrive in Capiz on Sunday, 10 November morning. An emergency communications delegate will also reach Tacloban City on 10 November.

Dispatch of preparedness stocks to the affected areas was delayed due to canceled flights and sea travel, but deployment will proceed in full swing starting Sunday, 10 November as weather conditions have improved and both air and sea travel resume. The items being mobilized in-country include IFRC-provided blankets, jerry cans, hygiene kits and sleeping mats sufficient to meet the needs of 2,000 families as well as food packages (comprising corned beef, cooking oil, noodles, rice, sardine and soy sauce) sufficient to meet the needs of 12,000 families. The non-food items were prepositioned in Manila while the food items were prepositioned in Davao City.

Additional supplies, including jerry cans, hygiene kits, water bladders and tarpaulins, are being mobilized from the IFRC's Asia Pacific zone logistics unit (ZLU) via air. They are expected to arrive in Cebu in the course of the next four days for further dispatch and distribution in the most affected areas.

The IFRC Asia Pacific zone office continues to facilitate updates on PRC's preparedness, response and planned activities to Movement partners who do not have in-country presence in the Philippines. Besides the usual country team of delegates and staff, additional personnel mobilized to provide specific support for PRC response to Typhoon Haiyan include a shelter delegate and water and sanitation surge delegate. Also, an emergency communications delegate has been seconded by the British Red Cross to the IFRC and an IFRC operations coordinator has been deployed from the Asia Pacific zone office disaster management unit (DMU).

In fulfilment of its role as the co-convenor of the emergency shelter cluster, IFRC has assigned a team of three delegates to participate in rapid multi-sector assessments that are set to start on 10 November 2013. The team is led by the global shelter cluster regional focal point for Asia Pacific, who has been in the Philippines since 18 October 2013 supporting an ongoing activation relating to the Central Visayas earthquake. The team comprises of specialists who had been mobilized for the earthquake operation, and will join the UNDAC teams that have been deployed to the most affected areas.

To provide effective support to PRC, the IFRC has initiated the process of mobilizing international disaster response tools. Alerts have been sent out for probable deployment of several emergency response units (ERUs) as well as a surge team composed of experienced disaster responders. The surge team has been activated and is expected to arrive in the country within 48 hours to support PRC and the IFRC country team in mounting a swift operation.

PRC has organized meetings that have brought together Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners with presence in the Philippines to coordinate on-going and planned responses. These include the International Committee of the Red Cross as well as Australian Red Cross, German Red Cross, Finnish Red Cross, Netherlands Red Cross and the Spanish Red Cross. Offers of direct support have been received from several Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners, either through in-kind logistical support or with financial contributions towards the DREF. Many Partner National Societies are launching national fundraising appeals. The Finnish Red Cross is deploying a two-member communications support team to work with PRC while both German Red Cross and Spanish Red Cross are deploying two delegates each to provide additional support.

Considering that some of the affected areas are also affected by situations of violence, Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners have engaged extensively and reached a mutual agreement on how they will best work together

to meet humanitarian needs relating to Typhoon Haiyan. A joint statement – by the PRC, ICRC and the IFRC – will be issued within days to reinforce the coordination modalities.

In the meantime, an IFRC Emergency Appeal is expected to be launched within the next few days. It is worthwhile to note that over the past months, PRC has been responding to multiple disasters and crises, including typhoons and floods in Luzon, the crisis in Zamboanga and most recently the magnitude 7.2 earthquake that struck Bohol. As such, its capacity is stretched and it has sought the support to deliver assistance to those affected by Typhoon Haiyan. Partner National Societies, governments, institutional donors, foundations, corporations, private entities and individuals are encouraged to provide donations when the appeal is launched.

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[Click here](#)

1. [Map below](#)
2. [Return to the title page](#)

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.

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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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