

Information bulletin

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Philippines: Typhoon Conson

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This is the final bulletin on Typhoon Conson. It is being issued for information only, and reflects the action of Philippine Red Cross (PRC) to date. Following consultation with concerned chapters, the PRC national headquarters has determined that external assistance from donors is not presently required.

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Typhoon Conson hit Philippines on the night of 13 July 2010 and moved out of Philippines' area of responsibility on 15 July 2010. By then, it had weakened into a tropical storm. Latest official figures indicate that over 53,000 families were affected across 12 provinces and three cities of the National Capital Region. Most of these families have returned to their respective homes as floodwaters subsided. Some 460 families remain in 15 evacuation centres.



Volunteers from the Laguna chapter of PRC undertake rapid assessments in Pagsanjan. Photo: Alexander Mikadze/IFRC

After determining the nature of needs on the ground, through rapid assessments, five chapters of PRC mobilized and distributed relief items. Plans are underway for the Laguna chapter to collaborate with local authorities to supply/distribute water in Luisiana Municipality.

The Situation

Typhoon Conson (local name, Basyang) hit the Philippines on the night of Tuesday, 13 July 2010, with winds of up to 120 km per hour. It swept across the National Capital Region as well as parts of Luzon, leaving a trail of destruction, displacing hundreds of families and causing tens of casualties. The typhoon weakened into a tropical storm as it moved out of the Philippines' area of responsibility on Thursday, 15 July 2010, blowing into the South China Sea with sustained winds of approximately 85 kph.

According to the national disaster coordinating council (NDCC), the effects of Conson – which is the first typhoon to cross Philippine's land this season – have left 79 people dead, 31 injured and 74 missing. Some 3,700 houses were destroyed and 27,800 damaged. Around 70 schools were damaged while agricultural production has been affected in seven provinces. It is estimated that 1,300 hectares of rice (299 metric tonnes) were completely damaged, 87 hectares of corn (17 metric tonnes) lost, 690 hectares of assorted vegetables and fruit lost, and fisheries affected due to loss of fishing gear. However, access was not significantly hampered as major roads and bridges in all affected provinces are passable.

In total, some 53,500 families were affected across 12 provinces [Aurora, Bataan, Batangas, Bulacan, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Catanduanes, Cavite, Laguna, Pampanga, Quezon and Rizal] and three cities of the National Capital Region [Manila, Muntinlupa and Pateros]. This figure includes families evacuated pre-emptively. Most have returned to their homes as floodwaters subsided. Initially, some 2,500 families were sheltered in 67 evacuation centres; but as of 21 July, most have returned to their homes with 462 families still remaining in 15 evacuation centres.

Table 1: Casualties and damage caused, as of 21 July 2010 (Source: NDCC)

Deaths	79
Injured	31
Missing	74
People affected	274,002 (53,486 families)
Initial no. of evacuation centres (with families sheltered)	67 (2,485 families)
Current no. of evacuation centres (with families sheltered)	15 (462 families)
Houses damaged	27,851
Houses destroyed	3,691

The most affected provinces are Cavite (17,000 families), Rizal (10,000 families), Bataan (9,000 families) and Laguna (7,000 families). It is worth noting that Laguna and Rizal were affected by Typhoon Ketsana in 2009. The strength of Typhoon Ketsana was only 105 kph; however, prior to its landfall, it brought more rainfall, which caused widespread flooding. In contrast, Typhoon Conson, while stronger, at 120 kph, brought less rainfall, thus causing minimal destruction.

Meanwhile, another weather disturbance crossed central Luzon on Sunday, 18 July. It brought heavy rains and strong winds to Aurora province, triggering the occurrence of flash floods. This prompted the evacuation of some 200 families to 10 evacuation centres. The active low-pressure area subsequently moved into South China Sea and intensified into a tropical depression as it left the Philippines' area of responsibility on Monday, 19 July; it was named Tropical Storm Chanthu (local name, Caloy). In the meantime, the people evacuated in Aurora returned to their respective homes as floodwaters subsided.

Action by authorities

To date, authorities have undertaken search, rescue and recovery operations – involving land, water and air teams. Other areas of action by authorities include, but are not limited to, the following: evacuation of affected families; distribution of medicines and body bags; provision of relief assistance; damage assessment and needs analysis; clearing operations along the roads/highways blocked by fallen trees/rocks and toppled electric posts; salvage and inspection of submerged sea vessels (for any oil leaks).

Red Cross and Red Crescent action



A volunteer from the Batangas chapter of PRC distributes relief goods to affected families. Photo: Andrew Mendoza/PRC

In the aftermath of the typhoon, PRC chapters in affected provinces mobilized volunteers to support local authorities in undertaking search and rescue operations. Following rapid assessments, five of the chapters – Bataan, Batangas, Cavite, Laguna and Rizal – mobilized resources locally and undertook the distribution of essential relief items. Among the items provided were food items such as beans, canned beef, coffee, cooking oil, drinking chocolate, juice, meat loaf, noodles, pasta, milk, rice, salt, sardines and sugar, and non-food items such as blankets, sanitary napkins, shampoo, soap, slippers, toothbrushes, toothpaste, towels and used clothes. Some of the items distributed by the chapters were part of stocks supplied by the national headquarters for pre-positioning.

In undertaking relief distributions, PRC chapters worked closely with respective provincial disaster coordinating councils and municipal disaster

coordinating councils. That way, they combined efforts, enhanced coordination and avoided duplication.

At the time of issuing this final bulletin, plans were underway for the Laguna chapter of PRC to collaborate with local authorities to supply drinking water in Luisiana Municipality, where a reservoir and some piping network were damaged. PRC will provide a 10 cubic metre water tank with two tap stands – each with six faucets – while the local authorities will do the water trucking.

As respective chapters conclude their response to Typhoon Conson, preparedness for the typhoon season has advanced. PRC national headquarters has a dedicated operations centre, which continues to monitor the situation, liaising with weather and disaster authorities. The national headquarters is in touch with its chapters to ensure that all have contingency plans for the typhoon season – this is a standard operating procedure.

On its part, the IFRC Philippine country office [which is assisting in the ongoing Typhoon Ketsana operation] has supported PRC in preparing for the worst-case scenario: well-equipped assessment teams and vehicles are on stand-by. A contingency stock of IFRC-supplied non-food relief items, sufficient to meet the needs of 10,000 families, is in place at the national headquarters level.

Meanwhile, it is worth noting that while the effects of Typhoon Conson – in terms of population affected, casualties and damages – are minimal compared to those of Typhoon Ketsana in 2009, some of the hardest-hit families in Laguna and Rizal were the same affected by Typhoon Ketsana. However, due to funding limitations (for the Typhoon Ketsana operation) assistance has not reached these families; just over half the target of 16,500 families could be assisted with the available resources. As such, additional support from partners – to [Emergency Appeal MDRPH005](#) – is much needed to meet the needs of these twice-hit families. *Please refer to Operations Update 14, available at <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/09/MDRPH00514.pdf>, for progress made under the Emergency Appeal operation.*

How we work

All International Federation 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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