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Information bulletin

Philippines: Surigao Earthquake

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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Host National Society: Philippine Red Cross	Point of contact: Atty. Oscar Palabyab, Secretary General
Categorization of disaster ¹ : Yellow	

This bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Philippine Red Cross (PRC) is currently conducting needs assessment. Based on the findings, PRC and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) will determine whether external assistance is required.

The situation

At 22:00h local time Friday 10 February 2017, a 6.7 magnitude earthquake struck off the coast of north-easternmost Mindanao, Philippines. According to the Philippines Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS), the earthquake was relatively shallow, with a depth of 10 kilometres, and its epicentre was about 14 kilometres from Surigao City, the capital of Surigao del Norte Province with over 140,000 inhabitants and located about 700 kilometres (km) south of Manila. No tsunami alert was issued.

Surigao City was placed under a state of calamity on 11 February. Search and rescue operations are still ongoing, with multiagency rescue workers involved. The humanitarian impact wrought by the quake is emerging as government teams, Red Cross personnel and emergency responders from other agencies continue to undertake assessments.



Affected people being treated in the temporary tent setup outside CARAGA Regional hospital. **Photo: PRC.**

Based on updates issued by the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) and Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), there is no change in the number of deaths – six – while the number of injuries has increased to 202. The quake left a total of 1,034 **houses damaged** in 54 barangays (villages) across the region of CARAGA; 155 are totally and 879 partially. The 5,170 people **displaced** due to the damage to their homes are currently staying in open areas near their homes or with host families.

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).

As regards **lifelines**, **electricity** supply remains disrupted in parts of Surigao City while there are still total blackouts in the adjacent municipalities of Malimono, Placer, San Francisco, Sison and Tagana-an. **Water supply** has also been badly disrupted in Surigao City as well as in the municipalities Malimono, Mainit and San Francisco, mainly due to damaged pipelines. Some **telecommunication** lines are still disrupted in affected areas.

Damage to critical **infrastructure** extends to the **airport, bridges and roads, churches, commercial buildings, a port and schools**. Specifically, six bridges and five roads have been damaged while a total of 12 schools are reported damaged. The collapse of the Anao-aon bridge, in particular, has isolated the municipalities of Malimono and San Francisco from Surigao City. The runway of the Surigao City Domestic Airport has been damaged, and currently it can only be used by helicopters. Passenger and cargo flights have been diverted to Butuan Airport in Agusan del Norte Province, some two-to-three-hour drive to Surigao City, pending rehabilitation works. Operations of passenger ferries from the port of Lipata have been disrupted due to a damaged passenger terminal and partially damaged roads, with ferry services now being provided from the Port of Surigao.

It should be noted that some of the areas outside of Surigao City have yet to be assessed or reported on. These areas are likely to have experienced the same magnitude level of earthquake as Surigao City. Assessments continue and will reveal more information on the impact in the surrounding smaller towns or rural areas. While the figures on damages and casualties will likely increase, PHIVOLCS has projected that based on historical data, the extent of damage will not be major.

Action by the authorities

PHIVOLCS continues to monitor seismic events and issuing earthquake information and real-time [updates](#), including on aftershocks. The NDRRMC is coordinating with the city, provincial, municipal and barangay disaster risk reduction and management councils and issued situation reports. The latest, [situation report # 3](#) was issued on 12 February morning. DSWD is consolidating data on displacement and assistance provided, with its [updates](#) being issued by the disaster response operations monitoring and information center (DROMIC).

Relief efforts by the authorities are intensifying and earlier on 12 February, the President of Philippines visited the affected areas. Furthermore, relief supplies were dispatched from Manila in a C-130 aircraft. The supplies include high energy biscuits, rice, blankets, mosquito nets, sleeping mats, generator sets and solar lamps. The aircraft landed at the Butuan Airport then the suppliers were transported by road to Surigao City.

In view of disrupted water supply, the CARAGA regional office of DSWD has negotiated the purchase of 2,500 gallons of bottled water for immediate distribution to affected families in Surigao City, pending restoration of supply. The Surigao Metropolitan Water District has announced that supply will be restored by 13 February.

The regional Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) is working closely provincial authorities to build a detour that will restore access to the municipalities of Malimono and San Francisco from Surigao City following the collapse of Anao-aon bridge. This will facilitate the movement of relief supplies to areas affected by the earthquake. DPWH has also announced that some roads that were partially damaged by the earthquake are now passable to all types of vehicles.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Philippine Red Cross (PRC) continues providing humanitarian assistance in the quake affected areas. The PRC operations centre continues to collect information – from the chapters and directly from Red Cross 143 volunteers in the areas – and has so far issued six disaster incident updates and two situation reports.

The chapter's Red Cross 143 volunteers and staff are currently rolling out the standard PRC services, including setting up of two welfare desks at CARAGA Regional Hospital. The desks serve as one-stop for registering affected people, determining their immediate needs and referring them to the relevant PRC department or another agency for assistance). The trained volunteers from the chapter have reached 15 people with psychosocial support (PSP).

Based on the initial assessment and urgent needs identified, PRC NHQ has immediately deployed water treatment units, ambulances and assessment teams from other chapters to Surigao City. PRC is working to support the traumatised and displaced families, with cash advance processed to support the relief operation.

In responding to the disrupted water supply in Surigao City, PRC NHQ has deployed four generators, two water tankers, one water treatment unit and six water bladders to provide safe drinking water. The water tanker, water treatment unit and personnel was deployed from Tacloban City and have arrived in Surigao City today, 12 February. One water tanker with 10,000-liter capacity from Zamboanga City Chapter and two water tankers of similar capacity from Cebu City Chapter are en-route to Surigao City and are expected to arrive on 13 February. Meanwhile, WASH equipment in Davao City, including a 6-wheeler truck, and in Iligan City will also be deployed on 13 February 2017. Coordination with City water district is on-going for the areas to set up the equipment.



PRC welfare desk at the CARAGA Regional Hospital in Surigao City.

Photo: PRC.

Two ambulances from Agusan del Norte and Agusan del Sur Red Cross Chapters were deployed to provide medical treatment to the injured. In addition, other nearby ambulances are on standby if further needs arise. As some affected families are sleeping in the open, PRC are mobilising tents as emergency shelter solution. Seven family tents have been setup in the evening of 11 February by the PRC Surigao del Norte Chapter to accommodate the evacuated population, particularly children, elderly and women.

The assessment teams from Bukidnon Chapter led by trained National Disaster Response Team (NDRT) and Red Cross Action Team (RCAT) members have been mobilized and arrived in Surigao City at 17:00h local time, 12 February. In addition, Davao City Chapter is mobilising additional NDRT and RCAT trained personnel to conduct assessments in areas outside Surigao City. The team is expected to arrive on Monday 13 February.



Many of the evacuees are still sleeping in the open outside the capital building.

Photo: PRC.

PRC NHQ has alerted all the warehouses for possible mobilization of essential household items such as blankets, tents, plastic sheeting. The nearest biggest warehouse is Cebu Warehouse which route and shipping lines is already identified for faster deployment. These items are scheduled to dispatch from Manila at 06:00h local time, 13 February, along with the deployment of two trained camp management personnel.

In Surigao, the Red Cross chapter is coordinating with the city authorities and has sent out assessment teams alongside those of the public authorities and other actors. Blood bank is still functional in Surigao and continue to support any blood supply needs. The chapter's Red Cross 143 volunteers and

staff have been deployed since the earthquake struck in assisting in the mass evacuation and setting up welfare desk in hospital to assist patients. They are working around the clock in providing first aid, PSP services and hot meals in the evacuation centre.

The IFRC Country Office is supporting PRC in disseminating updates to Movement partners with in-country presence and the Asia Pacific Regional Office (APRO) in Kuala Lumpur. The Country Office is also in close contact with ICRC on any security-related considerations and with the Netherlands Red Cross, which supports PRC programmes in Surigao City and normally has a delegate stationed there.

The IFRC Country Office continues to coordinate closely with PRC and is ready to provide support, including personnel and relief supplies, should there be a request from the National Society. IFRC will continue to analyze with PRC the option of undertaking an aerial assessment in areas outside Surigao City since the information available until now has been focused on Surigao City.

At the moment, the situation remains within the response capacity of local authorities and agencies. However, as more information comes in from PRC chapters, assessment teams, the government and other actors, and IFRC will review and plan accordingly.

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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.
