

# *Philippines: Volcanic Eruption*

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### *The Disaster*

Mayon Volcano, in Lagaspi province, at the south eastern tip of the main island of Luzon, has been spewing ash and lava since mid February. It erupted violently on 24 February, throwing out tons of ash and hot lava and boulders the size of houses, and again on 27 February and 1 March. This last eruption produced the largest eruption column so far, reaching a height of 14 km. Mayon is quiet now but experts predict that continued heavy rain will result in a serious lava/lahar flow.

The areas surrounding the volcano have been blanketed with thick ash, and thousands of hectares of farmland on its slopes and foothills have been destroyed. The government declared a 8km no-go zone before the major eruptions began and evacuated over 83,000 people. Due to the excellent disaster preparedness system of the national and local authorities and the Philippines National Red Cross (PNRC), who work in close co-ordination, there have been no casualties directly connected to the eruption.

### *Red Cross/Red Crescent Action*

The PNRC mobilised its assessment and Disaster Management Team when it became known that a violent eruption was imminent. As of 1 March, the PNRC Albay chapter had provided food, water and other basic amenities for 3,346 families (23,041 persons) from the municipalities of Guinobatan and Daraga. About 56,700 persons in all are directly affected by the eruption. The PNRC is continuously monitoring the situation and the conditions in the evacuation centres. It has also upgraded its communication facilities in the disaster area.

### *Needs*

The PNRC is playing a leading role in evacuation and relief assistance at evacuation centres and is able to cope at this stage. National Societies will be kept informed of developments.

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