

INFORMATION BULLETIN



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

THE PHILIPPINES: TROPICAL STORMS, FLOODS AND LANDSLIDES

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The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

In Brief

This Information Bulletin (no. 03/2004) is being issued based on the needs described below reflecting the information available at this time. CHF 150,000 has already been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF). Based on further updates and details from assessment reports, or should the situation deteriorate, the Federation may consider international support through an Emergency Appeal.

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

The Situation

An estimated 350 persons died and another 150 are missing following a succession of typhoons and tropical depressions that have affected the Philippines over the last few weeks. To date, approximately 180,595 families comprising some 828,285 persons from nine provinces in the eastern part of Luzon, Southern Tagalog, as well as the Bicol Region, have been affected. Almost 100,000 houses are reported either totally or partially destroyed.

Typhoon Muifa entered the Philippines on the 14 November and remained stationary over the country for several days with sustained winds of 110 km/h and gusts of up to 140 km/h. As it moved from east to west, a second typhoon, Unding, brought further havoc due to continuous torrential rains that caused extensive flooding in the provinces of Mindoro Oriental, Palawan, Camarines Sur and Camarines Sur. Some 148,811 families were affected.

As typhoon Unding unleashed its fury, tropical depression Violeta (international code name Merbok) entered the Philippines on 22 November. The heavy and continuous rainfall caused flooding and landslides. Some 24,000

families were affected in the provinces of Aurora and Nueva Ecija. In Aurora Province alone, some 57 died and 13 persons are still missing.

Less than a week after the destructive floods and landslides caused by Violeta, tropical depression Winnie brought further heavy rainfall which lasted for about 24 hours and resulted in further flooding and landslides also in the provinces of Quezon and Rizal. Over all, the passage of the three weather disturbances over the past weeks has not only resulted in high mortality, but also destroyed property and seriously damaged infrastructure, hampering the delivery of relief and other services.

Local authorities have declared a state of calamity in the provinces of Aurora, Camarines Sur, Catanduanes and in the town of Roxas in Mindoro Oriental, Nueva Ecija and Quezon. In the provinces of Mindoro Oriental, the island province of Catanduanes, and Camarines Sur, the local government units have started rehabilitation work on damaged infrastructure, are distributing relief supplies, and helping to rehabilitate damaged houses. A massive emergency operation has been ongoing in Nueva Ecija Province.

National and local government units in Aurora, Mindoro Oriental, Palawan, Camarines Sur, Nueva Ecija and Catanduanes have distributed food assistance to affected families and are rehabilitating basic services such as power supplies, communication, transportation and health. The government also provided calamity funds to those areas that qualify. Military and other services continue to search for those still missing. Local authorities have identified the following priorities: food and non-food items, clothing, and shelter. Close coordination with other agencies involved is maintained through the National and Local Disaster Coordinating Council.

A further threat to Luzon looms with the approach of typhoon Yoyong (international code name Nanmadol) which is expected to make landfall in Quezon and Aurora Provinces on the morning of Friday 3 December. It is anticipated that the situation in these already-affected provinces will worsen upon the impact of this next typhoon which is already showing a wind speed of 140kph with gusts of 165kph.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Due to the severity of the situation and difficulties in access, there were some delays in the response operations in the island of Mindoro. During the immediate aftermath of the disaster, BP5 compact food was distributed to some of the affected population. The PNRC national assessment team arrived 5 days after the first typhoon struck to conduct detailed needs assessment and initiate some relief distribution. The assessment team was able to identify post-emergency needs in the following sectors: food and non-food items, water and sanitation, health services, and shelter.

The Philippine National Red Cross (PNRC), through its chapters, is in the process of conducting assessments in each of the affected areas and has been able to provide some immediate relief to affected families. The local Red Cross chapters, as key members of the local disaster coordinating councils, have made links with the Local Government Units (LGUs) to try to ensure a well co-ordinated disaster relief effort. The action taken by both the PNRC national headquarters and the local chapters includes the following:

- deployment of disaster response teams to the affected areas to provide assistance including rescue and evacuation of affected families, first aid, immediate relief assistance, and psychosocial support to affected families.
- provision of relief assistance in the form of rice, noodles, sardines, biscuits, and compact food to some 3, 000 families comprising 15,610 persons.
- release of CHF 1,800 by the Disaster Management Services to the chapters to cover operational expenses.
- deployment of one minivan loaded with relief supplies to Mindoro Oriental (the vehicle will be assigned temporarily to the chapter to augment transport requirements).
- a national headquarters assessment team deployed to the worst affected areas to conduct a detailed assessment of the disaster situation to identify other needs as well as possible long-term interventions to assist the affected population.

A total of CHF 150,000 has been released from the Federation's Disaster relief Emergency Fund (DREF). Euro 12,000 has been provided by the Spanish Government through the provision of relief supplies to be distributed to the severely affected areas. The Spanish Red Cross provided funding for relief goods which were distributed

across Luzon and Mindoro Oriental. The remainder of these goods will be pre-positioned in Quezon and Aurora provinces in anticipation of the impact of typhoon Yoyong.

The PNRC Secretary General, together with the Director for Communication and three national society headquarters staff, proceeded to Mindoro Oriental to conduct a visual visit to the affected areas and assist in the distribution of various food assistance to the affected families. The food items distributed are donated from the Cooperacion Espanola and Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores of the Spanish government. A total of 880 families were served in two municipalities affected by Typhoon Unding (422 families in Brgy Cawayan, the town of Bongabong and 458 families in Brgy Wasig and to the town of Mansalay).

A two person team was deployed from the Federation's Southeast Asia regional disaster risk management unit (Bangkok) on 1 December, and are working with the PNRC's Disaster Management Services.

The PNRC (through chapters in the affected areas) have identified and are addressing the following challenges in the affected areas:

- insufficient provision of food items to the affected families: although a week since the occurrence of the disaster, the provision of food assistance is still limited, and so far inadequate numbers of affected families have received assistance. The LGU's, in co-ordination with the PNRC and other non-government agencies, are doing their best but are hampered by financial and other constraints.
- limited psychological intervention to the affected families, particularly to those families that experienced loss of their relatives and/or love ones: psychological support to the affected families is still one of the priorities needed in the affected areas. There is presently no continuous programme of support being undertaken. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the PNRC had initially provided "Critical Incident Stress Debriefing" (CISD) to such families during the emergency period or for the first four days following the disaster. The need for continuous psychological intervention is clear as affected families are in a state of shock.
- limited health services (personnel and facilities) and interventions: the lack of experienced and trained personnel to provide medical treatment and care to the affected populace is also noted. There is a scarcity of medicines, medical equipment and supplies for common emergencies. In Mindoro Oriental most health centres were damaged. There is a lack of water and sanitation facilities and/or good hygienic practice and limited presence of organized Barangay Health Workers in most of the affected areas.
- no organized Barangay Disaster Action Teams to assist and/or lead the affected population in managing their situation in the aftermath of the disaster: the PNRC relief services are now being extended to all the worst affected areas by the local chapters, in close co-ordination with the LGUs.
- to date, no provision of "Family Starter Sets" (basic household items)/housing reconstruction materials for affected families, particularly those whose houses were totally destroyed and/or affected families can no longer salvage their housing materials or appliances: the following items are recommended for relief distribution: food items (rice, sardines and noodles); non-food items (kitchen utensils, plastic plates, spoons and forks, plastic bowls, blankets, mosquito nets, plastic mats, soap, pales, water containers, cooking pots, frying pans and ladles); various medicines; housing reconstruction (roofing materials).

In preparation for the coming typhoon Nanmadol, the PNRC, in co-ordination with the LGUs and chapters in the area, are making efforts to respond and carry out assessments. The remainder of the Spanish Red Cross-contributed goods will be pre-positioned in Quezon and Aurora Provinces as a contingency in anticipation of the impact of typhoon Yoyong. Following is a proposed distribution list for targeted beneficiaries:

Chapter/ Province	No. of affected families	No. of target beneficiaries (for the food items)	No. of target beneficiaries (for the non- food items)	No. of target beneficiaries (for the medicines)	Target beneficiaries (for the provision of G.I Sheet for housing roofing)
Aurora	10,546	2,719	317	<i>To be identified later as to be coordinated with the local health office</i>	
Camarines Sur	102,308	23,472	11,504		
Catanduanes	6,841	1,309	423		
Mindoro Oriental	13,187	3,580	1,022		1,022
Palawan	1,982	1,982	None		
TOTAL	134,864	33,062	13,266		1,022