

Information bulletin



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Philippines: Floods

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This bulletin is being issued for information only. It reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Philippine Red Cross (PRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) have determined that external assistance from donors is not presently required. PRC is currently undertaking detailed assessments in affected provinces. Assessment findings will determine whether further action or external assistance will be required.



Volunteers from the Valenzuela chapter of Philippine Red Cross rescue families whose homes were marooned.
(Photo: Jun Pacariem/Philippine Red Cross)

Summary: Over the past one month, parts of the Philippines have experienced heavy rains that have resulted in flash floods, with deadly impact in some cases. Monsoon rains bolstered by an inter-tropical convergence zone (ITCZ) and a series of storms that have affected Philippines in the past four weeks have caused the flash floods. The combined effect of these events have killed more than 40 people – mostly by drowning – and affected more than half a million families in several provinces of both Luzon and Mindanao islands. Davao City, on the island of Mindanao, is the latest area to be affected. Flash floods caused by heavy rains that poured in the city Tuesday night, 28 June, killed 25 people, including 14 children.

In response to needs brought about by the combined effect of these events, PRC mobilized trained volunteers and rescuers to extend help. Red Cross emergency response teams have rescued dozens of people from

drowning; served ready-to-eat meals to thousands of people in evacuation centres, and distributed food packages as well as relief supplies such as blankets, sleeping mats, jerry cans, and clothes to those in need. Red Cross community health volunteers have also provided water treatment solutions and essential medicines in areas where water contamination and waterborne diseases have been reported. Red Cross relief operations continue.

[<click here for contact information](#) and [here for a map of affected areas](#)>

The situation

Starting late May 2011, monsoon rains bolstered by an inter-tropical convergence zone (ITCZ) and a series of storms that have affected Philippines in the past four weeks have caused the flash floods, with deadly impact in some cases. Thousands of families in low-lying, flood-affected areas sought refuge in evacuation centres as they temporarily deserted their homes to escape rising floodwaters. While weather conditions have improved in some provinces and families that evacuated to safety have returned or are gradually returning to their homes, other areas remain marooned to date.

Chronological account of the rains and floods

Mindanao island: Starting the last week of May 2011, monsoon rains triggered by a low-pressure area affected four regions in the south of Philippines – Northern Mindanao (Region X), Davao Region (Region XI), SOCCSKSARGEN (Region XII) and Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) – resulting in floods that killed 12 people. The floods were escalated in part due to water hyacinths that have clogged Philippines’ second largest river system, Rio Grande de Mindanao.



More than 400 families still housed at Central Pilot Elementary School in Cotabato City are waiting to return to their homes after floodwater recedes. (Photo: Edwin Patalagsa/Philippine Red Cross)

According to the Philippine national disaster agency, the national disaster risk reduction and management council (NDRRMC), the floods affected around 136,000 families in 10 provinces, with 21,000 of them in Cotabato City. Some 4,000 families sought refuge in 13 evacuation centres, waiting to return to their homes after floodwater recedes. Four

weeks on, many families in Cotabato City remain in evacuation centres because their homes are still marooned. The situation for such families remains dire, as more potential rains would cause a further stretch to their coping capacities.

On the night of 28 June, fresh rains poured non-stop for three hours in Davao City, causing flash floods that caught many unaware. NDRRMC reports that these recent floods have killed 25 people, including 14 children, and affected up to 12,700 families. Hundreds of affected families were evacuated to centres established in elevated parts of the city, as rescue efforts continued. However, most families have returned or are returning to their homes as floodwater subsides.

Luzon island: Starting Thursday, 16 June 2011, and continuing into the weekend, non-stop heavy rains bolstered by Tropical Storm Maere (local name: Falcon) brought massive flash floods in Bicol and Central Luzon regions as well as the National Capital Region, Metro Manila. Latest figures from NDRRMC indicate that the floods have left seven people dead and four injured.

Up to 366,000 families were affected, most of them in Bulacan (115,235) and Pampanga (125,212) provinces.

The floods left a trail of destruction, including damage to 1,380 houses; 165 completely destroyed and 1,215 partially damaged. As well as Bulacan and Pampanga, other provinces in which damage to houses has been reported are Bataan, Tarlac and Zambales in Central Luzon (Region III), Batangas in CALABARZON (Region IV-A) and Albay in Bicol Region (Region V).

Meanwhile, continuous light to heavy rains at the highlands of Benguet resulted in the swelling of main rivers in La Union and Pangasinan provinces of Ilocos Region (Region I). Starting Saturday, 25 June, La Union and Pangasinan also experienced heavy monsoon rains, which caused flash floods, mainly in Pangasinan. NDRRMC reports that one person drowned in Pangasinan, where 15,631 families have been affected. The provincial government evacuated hundreds to centres established in elevated parts of affected municipalities. Many families have returned to their homes as floodwater recedes.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action



A person assisted signs, acknowledging receipt of relief items. Distributions have been orderly and sensitive to the needs of affected families. (Photo: Jun Pacariem/Philippine Red Cross)

Since the outset of the rains, the Philippine Red Cross (PRC) operations centre at the national headquarters has been monitoring the situation, receiving latest updates from its chapters in affected or on-alert provinces. Based on its analysis of information obtained from its network on the ground, the national society deployed three squads of its water search and rescue (WASAR) team. At the peak of the floods, WASAR squads equipped with rubber boats rescued some 64 persons from drowning.

With regard to floods in the island of Mindanao, local Red Cross chapters in affected provinces served ready-to-eat meals to people in evacuation

centres. Subsequently, the Cotabato City chapter distributed food packages, comprising rice, noodles and sardines, as well relief supplies such as jerry cans and tarpaulins to 7,000 families in Cotabato City. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) provided supplies for 2,600 families while the rest were mobilized using donations obtained locally by PRC's Cotabato City chapter. Community health volunteers have also provided water treatment solutions essential medicines to those in need. In addition, Red Cross social workers set up a welfare desk in one evacuation centre. To date, they have provided psychosocial support and critical incident stress management to 26 persons affected by the floods.

Following fresh rains and floods in Davao City, the Davao City chapter of PRC mobilized staff and more than 40 volunteers to support rescue operations and respond to immediate needs. The volunteers and staff – equipped with a rubber boat, rescue truck, ambulance and other service vehicles – assisted in the evacuation of affected families to centres established in elevated parts of the city, and served them with ready-to-eat meals. The chapter has since deployed multi-skilled staff and volunteers to conduct detailed assessments.

In the island of Luzon, Red Cross chapters in areas worst affected by floods complemented rescue efforts of their respective provincial authorities. Staff and volunteers also served ready-to-eat meals and assorted food items, such as biscuits and cookies, to some 10,000 people in evacuation centres. The chapters also distributed relief supplies such as clothes, blankets and sleeping mats to dozens of affected families. To address the social and welfare needs of affected persons, PRC chapters in Metro Manila and Zambales set up 14 welfare desks in various evacuation centres, from which they provided psychosocial support to 184 persons and assisted in tracing 11 persons and linking them with their families. Red Cross chapters that have responded to the floods in Luzon include Bataan, Bulacan, Catanduanes, Manila, Olongapo, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Pangasinan, Rizal, Valenzuela City and Zambales.

With the national weather and meteorological bureau projecting continued rains and 15 more potential storms, the PRC national headquarters is on high alert. It has in stock emergency supplies such as food, bedding and

hygiene items sufficient to serve 10,000 families. PRC national emergency response units and additional equipment [for water search and rescue], water treatment plants, ambulances and vehicles are on standby and ready for deployment to priority areas, should the need arise. The national society can also provide mobile toilets (portalets) to evacuation centres, and its community health volunteers are ready to conduct basic hygiene education to ensure proper maintenance of the facilities by families to be assisted.

IFRC is prepared to support PRC efforts, and has personnel, and additional emergency supplies available in-country and in the region. As Philippines braces for potential additional storms and rains, national disaster authorities have set up a technical working group to improve preparedness for natural and technological disasters. IFRC is a member of the group, which comprises seven government agencies with membership to NDRRMC and six UN or international agencies that are part of the humanitarian country team (HCT). IFRC's participation in the technical working group will improve Red Cross Red Crescent coordination with national and international partners. This will, in turn, enable addressing the needs of crises-affected people in the most effective and efficient manner.

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.

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.

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.

Contact information

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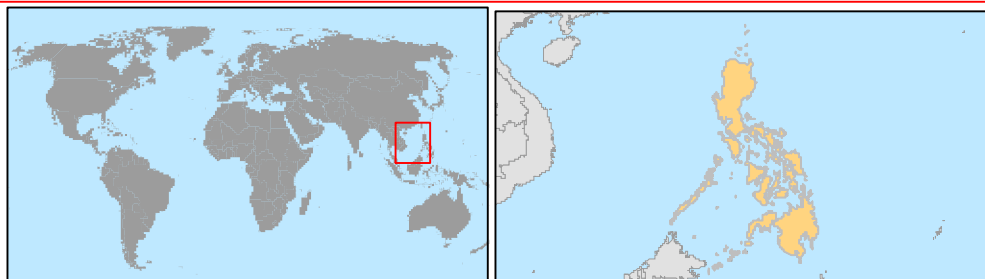
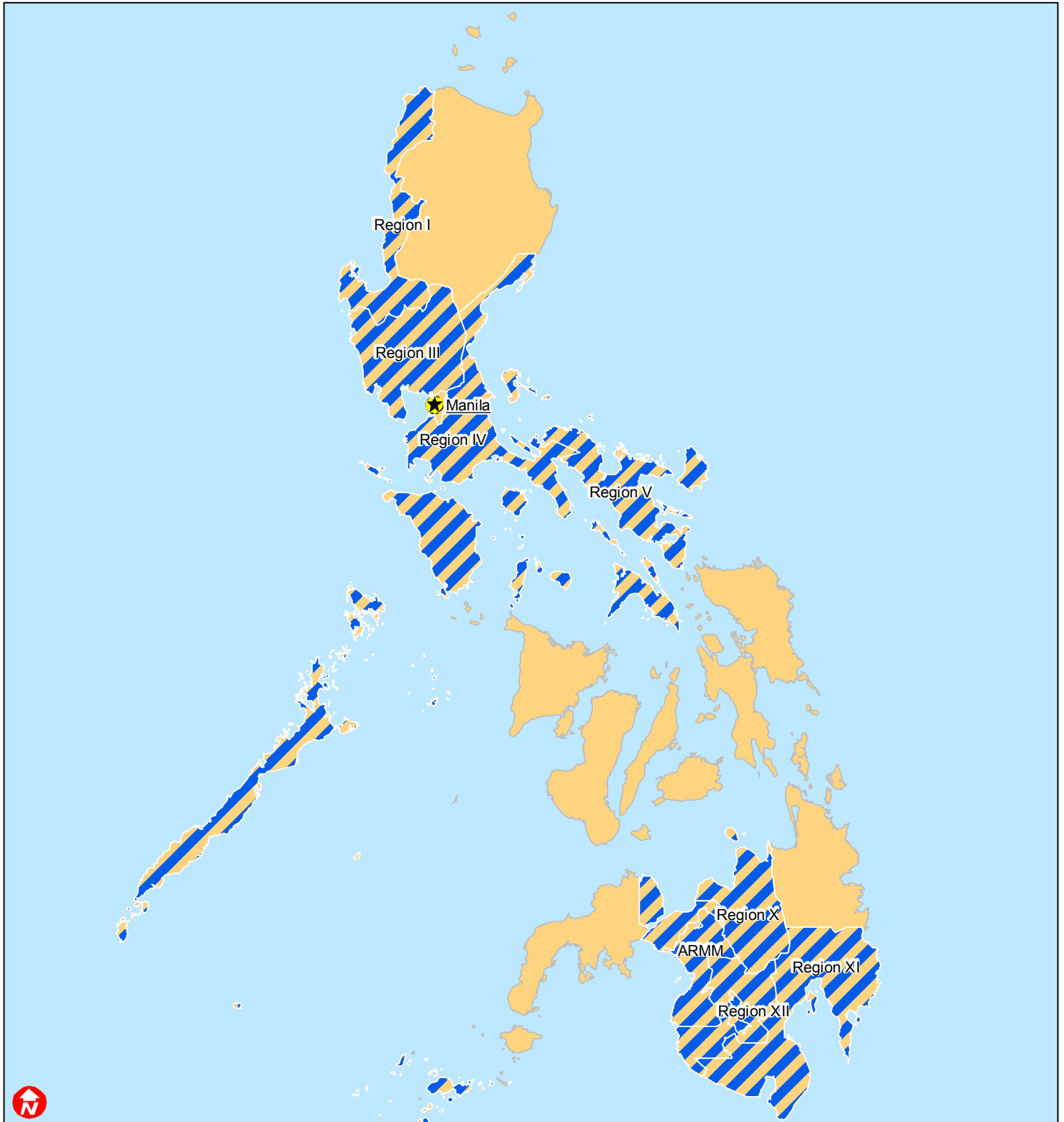
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[<map below; click here to return to the title page >](#)



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 Affected regions