

This report is produced by OCHA in collaboration with humanitarian partners. It was issued by OCHA Philippines. It covers the period from 16 to 18 December 2011. The next report will be issued on or around 20 December.

I. HIGHLIGHTS/KEY PRIORITIES

- The Government of the Philippines is leading a major emergency rescue, evacuation and response operation in southern Philippines following the devastation caused by Tropical Storm Washi, known locally as *Sendong*.
- The death toll has risen to 508 people, with an additional 468 missing, seven injured and 4,249 passengers stranded in ports, according to Government reports.
- There are 51,035 people in 46 evacuation centers, the majority of whom are in the worst-affected cities of Cagayan de Oro and Iligan in Northern Mindanao region. An estimated 146,550 people have been affected across six regions in Mindanao and Visayas, reports the Government, but these figures are expected to increase.
- In Iligan City, food, water, clothing, blankets, lights and mosquito nets are urgently needed, according to assessment teams fielded by the Philippine Red Cross.
- The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council and the Philippine Humanitarian Country Team will undertake a joint multi-sectoral rapid needs assessment in the worst-affected areas on 19 December.

II. Situation Overview

The Government of the Philippines is leading a major emergency rescue, evacuation and response operation in southern Philippines as devastating Tropical Storm Washi, known locally as *Sendong*, swept across Mindanao region from 16 to 18 December 2011, bringing strong winds and heavy rains that caused massive flooding, flash floods and landslides.

According to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), Tropical Storm Washi entered the Philippine Area of Responsibility as a tropical depression on 15 December and shortly intensified into a tropical storm. It slowly moved west at 22 to 24 kilometres per hour with maximum winds of 65 kph near the centre and gustiness of up to 80 kph.

The storm made its first landfall in Surigao del Sur province, Caraga region (Region XIII) on the northeastern coast of Mindanao facing the Philippine Sea on 16 December. The second landfall followed on 17 December on the island province of Palawan in Mimaropa region (Region IV-B) that lies between the Sulu Sea and the South China Sea.

Impact of the tropical storm

The Government has confirmed a death toll of 508 people, with an additional 468 missing, seven injured, and 4,249 passengers stranded in ports as of 18 December. Currently,



Table 1: Number of casualties, injuries, missing and rescued by region

Regions	Deaths	Injured	Missing	Rescued
Region VII (Central Visayas)	29	3	14	30
Region IX (Zamboanga Peninsula)	3			
Region X (Northern Mindanao)				
• Cagayan de Oro City	252			383
• Iligan City*	214	3	447	18
Region XI (Davao Region)	5			
Region XIII (Caraga)	1	1		
Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao	4		7	
Total	508	7	468	431

Source: NDRRMC Sitrep No. 7, 18 December 2011

* Source: Number of deaths and missing are from Philippine Information Agency Region X, 18 December 2011

51,035 people are in 46 evacuation centers in regions IX, X and XIII, and another 1,585 people displaced outside of evacuation centers in regions X and XIII. Overall, 146,550 people have been affected in 13 provinces across regions VI, VII, IX, X, XI, XIII and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). These figures are likely to rise as national authorities gather and consolidate additional information. Information on affected people disaggregated by gender, age and other vulnerability is not yet available. (See tables 1 and 2).

The worst affected areas to date are Cagayan de Oro and Iligan cities on the coast of Northern Mindanao region (Region X). More than a month's worth of average rains fell in 12 hours that in early 17 December,

Mandulog and Agus river systems overflowed and flooded the cities with mud water at an alarming rate, according to media reports. The flooding drowned residents in their sleep, sweeping away homes made of light materials, while others tried to escape by climbing onto rooftops.

In Cagayan de Oro, World Vision conducted an assessment along the riverbanks and identified lack of water and sanitation as a major concern. People are reportedly covered in mud and water is unavailable for drinking or cleaning. Aquatabs may be insufficient to produce drinking water in this circumstance. Members of the joint NDRRMC and Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) assessment teams have also observed evacuation centers overflowing with evacuees. In Iligan City, which has been placed under State of Calamity on 17 December, food, water, clothing, blankets, lights and mosquito nets are urgently needed, according to the Philippine Red Cross (PRC).

Preliminary government reports indicate that 4,404 houses have been damaged in regions VII, IX, X, XI, XIII and ARMM. Three quarters of the 1,334 totally damaged houses are in Iligan City (993 houses), and half of 3,070 partially damaged houses are in Dumaguete City in Negros Oriental province, Central Visayas region.

Power, water and communication lines remain partially cut off in regions VII, X, XI and XIII. In Cagayan de Oro, 80 per cent of the city is without water and 20 per cent is without electricity, according to Office of Civil Defense Region X. Several bridges and roads in the affected regions have been damaged or are closed due to flooding, and a number of domestic flights have been cancelled. Extensive damage is expected on agriculture, particularly to the local staple crops of rice and corn.

In addition to Iligan City, a State of Calamity has been declared in Dumaguete City and Valencia municipality in Negros Oriental province in Central Visayas region (Region VII).

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) has downgraded all Public Storm Warning Signals for Mindanao, Visayas and Luzon regions by 17 December, except for Palawan, where Signal No. 1 that warns 45-60 kph winds remains in effect. The storm is expected to exit the Philippine Area of Responsibility in the evening of 18 December and head towards southern Viet Nam. While flood waters have reportedly receded in some locations in regions IX and XI, the impact of the storm in Palawan province is still unknown.

Tropical Storm Washi is the 19th tropical cyclone to hit the Philippines in 2011, coming late in the typhoon season, which usually peaks in September to November. Most of the 20 cyclones that annually pass through the Philippines take a northerly track and cross Luzon Region. In Mindanao, tropical storms and flooding of this magnitude are very rare and residents are not accustomed to act on early warnings, which might explain the high number of casualties.

While there are no new weather disturbances developing in the region, PAGASA warns that the northeast monsoon will continue to bring rain to parts of the country, including Metro Manila.

Table 2: Number of evacuees, evacuation centers (ECs), people affected and affected *barangays* by region

Regions	Evacuees inside ECs	ECs	Affected people	Affected <i>barangays</i>
Region VI (Western Visayas)				15
Region VII (Central Visayas)			35,070	15
Region IX (Zamboanga Peninsula)	300	1	1,607	12
Region X (Northern Mindanao)				
• Cagayan de Oro City	34,291	19	30,403	29
• Iligan City*	12,306	16	54,426	23
• Others	3,888	9	13,708	22
Region XI (Davao Region)			4,550	15
Region XIII (Caraga)	250	1	6,781	12
Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao			5	5
Total	51,035	46	146,550	148

Source: NDRRMC Sitrep No. 7, 18 December 2011

* Source: Number of evacuees and evacuation centers are from the Philippine Information Agency Region X, 18 December 2011; Estimated the number of people with an average of 6 persons per family

Government response

Government agencies are coordinating with regional and local authorities concerned to assist in the search and rescue, evacuation and relief operations, and debris clearance. The army deployed thousands of soldiers for search and rescue operations in Cagayan de Oro and along the north shore of Mindanao, where many people and entire villages in some places have been swept into the sea by torrents.

President Aquino III expressed concern at the extent of the disaster and, through a meeting with NDRRMC on 17 December, ordered government agencies to map areas in the country most vulnerable to natural disasters and look into mitigation measures. The President plans to visit the affected communities in Cagayan de Oro and Iligan cities on 27 December.

Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin has undertaken an aerial assessment of the affected areas in Iligan City on 18 December. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Field Office Region X is coordinating the mobilization and delivery of relief items with logistical support from the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), which is considering making available a mobile storage tent, water collapsible tanks, pre-fabricated offices and trucks.

WFP has also donated 3.12 tons of high-energy biscuits in stock in-country as immediate food support for 1,560 of the worst-affected families, or about 7,800 people, upon DSWD's request. The stock was carried from Manila to Cagayan de Oro on a government aircraft on 18 December.

III. Coordination

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council and the Philippine Humanitarian Country Team will undertake a joint multi-sectoral rapid needs assessment in the worst-affected areas in Cagayan de Oro and Iligan cities on 19 December. The cluster members of the HCT and the Mindanao Humanitarian Team are supporting this community-level assessment. Two assessment teams will gather in Cagayan de Oro for an assessment planning meeting on 18 December, undertake assessments on 19 December, and discuss initial findings and agree on next steps on 20 and 21 December.

The Office of Civil Defense Region X, supported by OCHA, has established an operation centre in Cagayan de Oro on 18 December to provide coordination and information management support to the ongoing needs assessments and humanitarian response.

Philippine Red Cross Chairman and his team will also travel to Mindanao on 19 December to assess the situation in Cagayan de Oro and Iligan cities. Nearly 500 staff and 143 Red Cross volunteers are already undertaking search and rescue operations and assessments, and providing hot meals to evacuees in affected areas. The Red Cross has also set up welfare desks and first aid stations in the evacuation centers.

In Manila, the HCT will meet on 19 December at 4 p.m. to discuss the initial findings of the inter-agency rapid needs assessments, and agree on next steps in support of the Government. The Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) and Spanish non-governmental organizations will also meet on 19 December to plan their response.

The United States Government is prepared to assist Philippine authorities in the response, according to a press statement issued by the Secretary of State on 17 December. The Embassy of Japan in Manila is also exploring options to support national response efforts.

IV. Funding

The Philippine Red Cross launched an appeal for cash donations on 17 December to support its ongoing efforts to provide relief and recovery aid to the affected communities. PRC will distribute family Christmas packs that include food, clothing, sleeping materials, blankets, and school supplies and footwear for children. Visit: <http://www.redcross.org.ph/donatenow>

All humanitarian partners including donors and recipient agencies are encouraged to inform FTS of cash and in-kind contributions by sending an e-mail to: fts@un.org.

VI. Contact

Please contact:

Manila: David Carden, Head, OCHA Philippines
carden@un.org, +63-917-513-9924

Manila: Akiko Yoshida, Humanitarian Affairs Officer, OCHA Philippines
palacio@un.org, +63-917-543-7251

Cagayan de Oro: Melindi Malang, Humanitarian Affairs Analyst, OCHA Philippines
malang@un.org, +63-917-543-7234

New York: Alf Blikberg, Humanitarian Affairs Officer, Coordination and Response Division, OCHA New York
blikberg@un.org, +1-917-388-5543

For more information, please visit <http://ph.one.un.org/response/>, <http://reliefweb.int/>

To be added or deleted from this sit rep mailing list, please e-mail: addawe@un.org