

Information bulletin

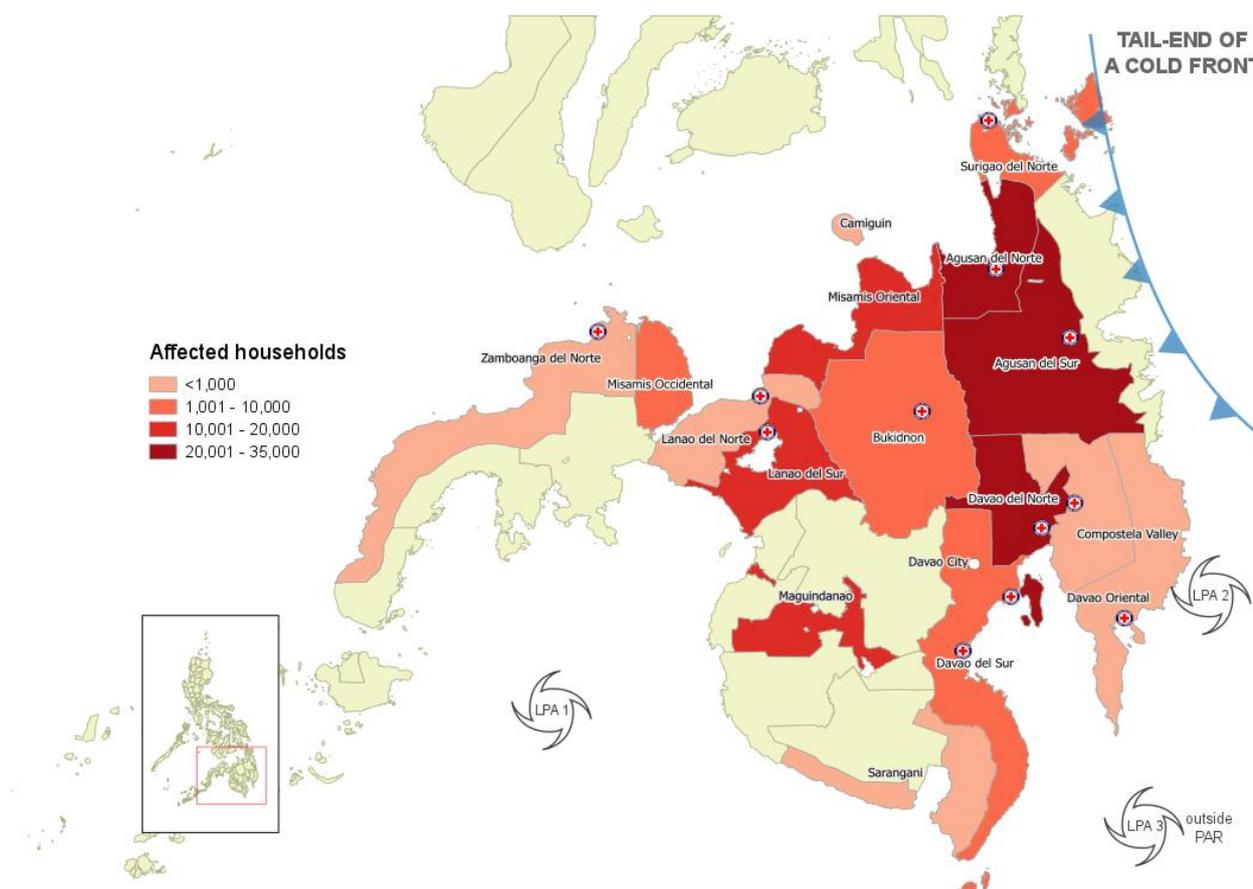
Philippines: Mindanao floods

Information bulletin n° 1	GLIDE n° FL-2017-000010-PHL
Date of issue: 3 February 2017	Date of disaster: 27 January 2017
Host National Society: Philippine Red Cross	Point of contact: Atty. Oscar Palabyab, Secretary General

This bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Philippine Red Cross (PRC), with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), has determined that external assistance is not required at this time, but continue to monitor the evolving situation.

The situation

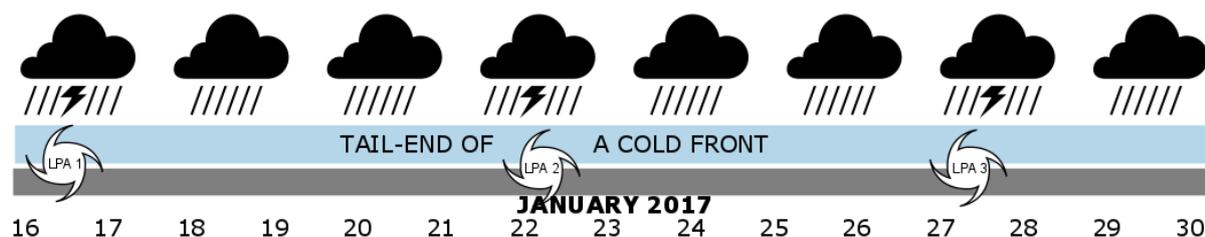
Moderate-to-heavy rains dumped by the tail end of a cold front and a series of low pressure areas have caused flooding in several provinces of Visayas and Mindanao islands in the Philippines, killing nine people, damaging more than 1,300 homes, temporarily displacing at least 334,000 people, washing away livelihoods and affecting more than 1.5 million people across nine regions.



While localized flooding in parts of Mindanao is not uncommon during January, this year the situation has been compounded by back-to-back low pressure areas – within a span of two weeks – that have interacted with the tail-end of a [cold front](#).

The initial floods were as a result of heavy rains brought by the interaction of a low pressure area (LPA) that tracked Mindanao on 16 January and the tail-end of a cold front that affected southern parts of the country during the same period. The weather system brought heavy rainstorms over Palawan, Visayas, Zamboanga Peninsula and northern Mindanao. While the LPA eventually dissipated, the tail-end of a cold front continued to affect Visayas and Mindanao, bringing moderate-to-heavy rains across nine regions, including parts of southern Luzon. Cagayan de Oro City, in the province of Misamis Oriental, received at least one month's worth of rain within 24 hours and as a result there was widespread flooding.

On 22 January, a second LPA entered the Philippines and again affected parts of Mindanao, bringing more rains with further flooding. The most impact was felt in CARAGA and Davao regions of Mindanao, especially the provinces of Agusan del Sur and Compostela Valley where massive flooding swept through several towns and caused significant damages. Without much reprieve, fresh heavy rains followed starting 27 January as a third LPA developed southeast of Mindanao and interacted with the tail-end of a cold front as it moved east before dissipating over Palawan. The new wave of rains compounded the situation, especially in CARAGA region.



According to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), the combined effects of the rains that have lashed starting mid-January resulted in at least nine deaths, injured 10 people, damaged homes and swept away livelihoods, mainly in CARAGA, Davao and Northern Mindanao regions. More than 320,000 households (1.5 million people) have been affected, with at least 1,300 houses damaged. The authorities pre-emptively evacuated over 17,000 households (85,000 people), with 53,200 people still remaining in evacuation centres or staying with host families. Parts of Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Compostela Valley, Davao Oriental, Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao provinces have been declared under the state of calamity. Initial estimates indicated that the cost of damage caused to agriculture alone is more than PHP 126 million (CHF 2.5 million). The numbers – including of people affected, houses damaged, and cost of damage – will likely increase as figures from provincial disaster risk reduction and management councils are collated.

Action by the authorities

The NDRRMC disseminated weather advisories, based on forecasts by the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), to regional DRRMCs urging them to continuously monitor the situation and undertake precautionary measures. Based on the advisories, local authorities undertook pre-emptive evacuation of people from flood and landslide prone areas in order to minimize potential loss of human lives. The NDRRMC and Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) have also kept track of the humanitarian impact of the floods, with NDRRMC issuing [Situation Report #11](#) on 26 January and [Situation Report #2](#) on 31 January. The DSWD's Disaster Response Operations Monitoring and Information Center (DROMIC) is also issuing regular updates, with the [latest](#) released on 3 February.

The authorities – at regional, provincial, municipal and barangay levels – have mobilized resources to provide immediate assistance to affected people, with parts of at least six provinces placed under the state of calamity, thereby allowing the authorities to release emergency funds. Priority has been put on evacuation, rescue and provision of immediate assistance, including food and non-food relief assistance. The Department of Health and Department of Agriculture have conducted rapid assessments on matters related to health and livelihoods respectively. NDRRMC continues to monitor the situation and update information.

In its latest forecast, issued at 17:00h local time on 3 February, PAGASA has indicated that a new weather system is developing off Mindanao and will likely strengthen to a tropical depression. As the context is evolving, PAGASA, NDRRMC and local government units are continuously monitoring the situation.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Philippine Red Cross (PRC) has been monitoring the situation since weather advisories were received from PAGASA and initial reports of heavy rains and flooding were sent by its chapters in the affected areas. The National Society coordinated with local DRRMCs, and alerted Red Cross 143 volunteers and members of the Red Cross Action Team (RCAT) 143 for possible deployment. Emergency responders, including specialized water search and rescue teams, were mobilized for immediate response.

PRC teams supported evacuation efforts, helped to rescue 16 people trapped in the floods, have provided welfare services to 140 individuals and served hot meals to more than 14,700 people in evacuation centres as of 31 January. A total of 164 staff members and volunteers have been mobilized.

As the impact of the floods emerged, PRC deployed teams to conduct rapid assessments to determine the immediate needs. Based on the assessments, the National Society dispatched food and non-food items – including blankets, jerry cans, hygiene kits, kitchen sets, mosquito nets and sleeping mats – from its prepositioned stocks for distribution to affected households in the provinces of Misamis Oriental, Surigao del Norte and Zamboanga del Norte. The items can

cover the needs of 1,500 households, and distributions are underway. The National Society is also readying to dispatch additional items to other affected provinces in northern Mindanao. Support for replenishing the items released from PRC's preparedness stocks will be sought from partners, including the IFRC.

Meantime, the IFRC is supporting PRC in disseminating updates to Movement partners and coordinating with the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT). Technical specialists in the IFRC country office are available to augment the National Society's response should the need arise. The IFRC continues to coordinate closely with the National Society and is ready to process a possible request for support. In addition, coordination is being maintained with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) through regular information-sharing. This coordination will continue during the response in accordance with agreed arrangements, especially in light of security concerns in parts of Mindanao.



Red Cross teams serve hot meals to evacuees in Agusan del Norte. As of 31 January, PRC had served hot meals to more than 14,700 people in evacuation centres. Photo: PRC

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How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The 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.

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**.
