

## A.23 Philippines – 2013 - Typhoon - Overview

### Overview

**Emergency:** Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda), Philippines.

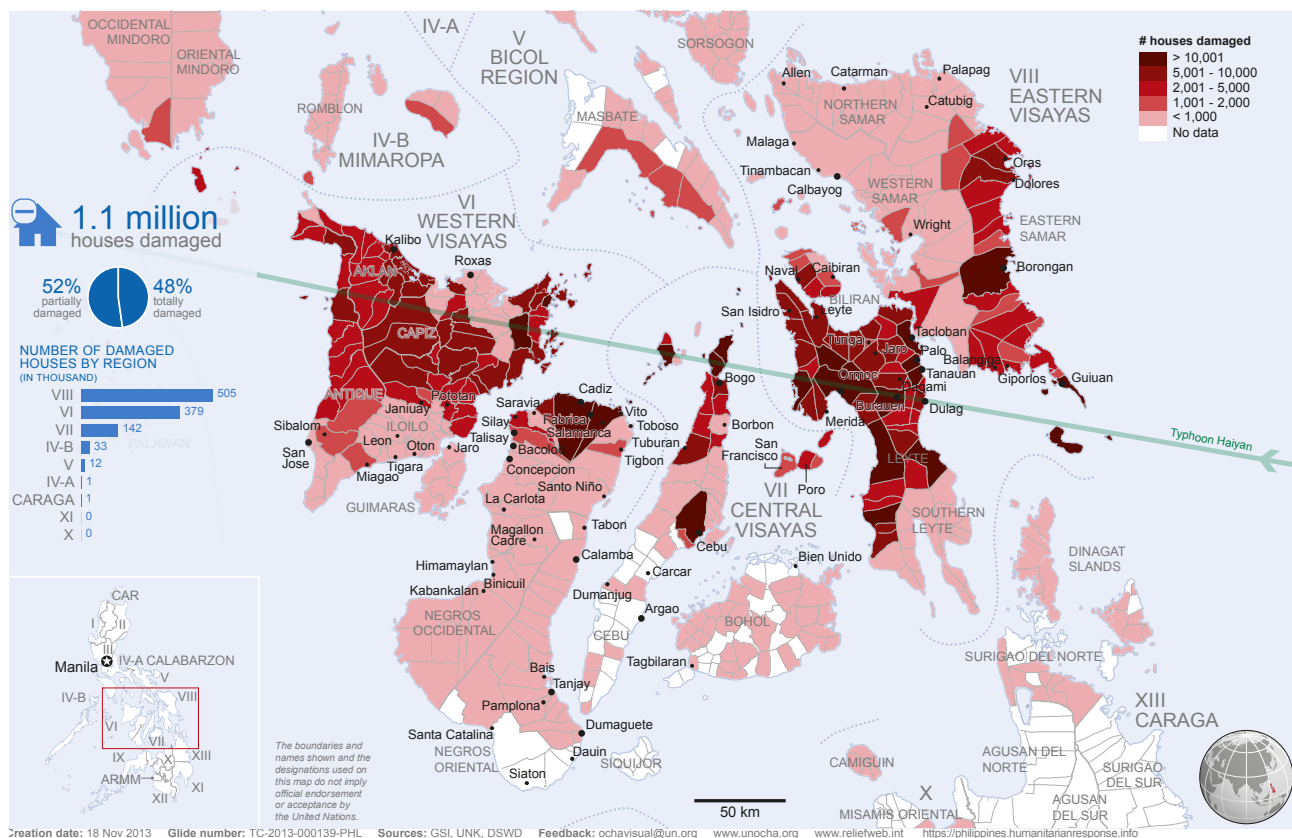
**Date:** 8th November 2013.

**Impact:** 1.12 million houses damaged. Over 4 million people displaced.

### Summary of emergency:

Typhoon Haiyan (locally known as Yolanda) was one of the largest typhoons ever to make landfall, and the deadliest in the history of the Philippines. It brought unprecedented levels of damage to a vast area of the country, affecting more than 10% of the population.

### PHILIPPINES: Damaged houses (as of 18 Nov 2013 18:00 UTC+8)



Graphic: OCHA

### Situation before the disaster

Philippines is a lower-middle income country that is highly prone to volcanic, tectonic and climatic disasters. Averaging more than 20 typhoons per year, the country has a well-developed disaster response capacity, though Typhoon Haiyan was exceptionally severe.

The country was still recovering from Typhoon Pablo (December 2012), the Zamboanga conflict (September 2013) and the Bohol Earthquake (October 2013).

Much of the affected rural and coastal population is highly dependent on fishing and coconut farming for their primary livelihoods. Land tenure is a major issue, with the majority of people living with varying levels of formal or informal tenure arrangements on other peoples' land.

### Emergency

Preparation and early warning systems led to the evacuation of 800,000 people. However, with sustained wind speeds of over 235km/hour, gusts over 300km/hour and a tidal surge of up to five metres

in some areas, over 6,000 people lost their lives, and over 25,000 were injured.

One-hundred-thousand people remained in evacuation centres, and many airports, seaports, roads and bridges were rendered unusable, leading to substantial logistical and transport issues.

Given the severity and scale, Haiyan was designated as a Level 3 disaster by the IASC.

### Damage

Haiyan left a swathe of damage from Leyte and Samar in the east of

the country right through to Palawan in the west. Over 1.1 million houses were damaged in the 100km corridor path, with more than 50% of these totally destroyed. An additional 300,000 houses were damaged outside of the 100km corridor.

Damage levels and typology varied greatly across the affected areas. Some areas were densely urban or peri-urban, comprised of a mixture of timber and masonry single- and multi-storey constructions such as in Tacloban, Guiuan and Ormoc. Other areas were remote, isolated island and mountain communities, with primarily single-storey timber or bamboo-framed huts. Informal settler communities by waterways were some of the most heavily affected, due to storm surges.

## Displacement

Over four million people were displaced by the typhoon, with many taking initial refuge in emergency evacuation centres and larger public facilities. Some evacuated to safe areas including Manila and Cebu.

Over the coming months many found themselves living in small tent cities, government-managed bunkhouses (emergency barracks), or with host families, though the majority remained on-site, living in self-made makeshift shelters.

A short time after the initial disaster a "No Build Zone" (NBZ) of 40 metres from the coast was declared across the affected area, leaving more than 200,000 families facing permanent relocation.

## Shelter strategy

The Philippines' Humanitarian Country Team Strategic Response Plan's overall goal was to ensure that 'Communities and local governments recover from the disaster, build back safer and avoid relapses while strengthening resilience'.

The Shelter Cluster strategy was developed within the first month, in consultation with Cluster partners and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD – the Government lead for the shelter cluster). Two objectives were formulated:

- Provide immediate, life-saving emergency shelter and NFIs to 300,000 of the most vulnerable households.
- Support for self-recovery to 500,000 households through incremental housing solutions using consultative and participatory processes.

A variety of recovery intervention types were proposed: the supply of materials for roofing and framing, salvaging lumber and debris for re-use, training of skilled and unskilled labour, awareness-raising in safer building practices, technical assistance, and cash-based programmes.

The overall aim for the Shelter Cluster was to promote self-recovery solutions and ultimately owner-driven reconstruction practices. This resulted in predominately the provision of shelter repair kits in the first year.

As the emergency phase receded, the Shelter Cluster consulted with organisations and government counterparts to develop recovery guidelines that advocated for prioritising permanent solutions, with adherence to key principles, and parameters around safety, adequacy, appropriateness and accessibility, where possible.

These Recovery Guidelines emphasised that temporary assistance in high-risk areas, where allowed, should include preparedness and evacuation plans.

The guidelines also used the Right to Adequate Housing as one of its underlying principles, and organisations were encouraged to ensure that assistance was provided regardless of tenure status.

Given the early Government announcement of a proposed 40m NBZ, the Shelter Cluster worked with the CCCM, Protection, WASH, and Early Recovery & Livelihoods Clusters in the development of three HCT endorsed inter-cluster advisories on:

- Recommended minimum standards for bunkhouses.
- Standards for relocation to transitional sites.

- NBZs to be determined by hazard mapping as opposed to an arbitrary 40m measurement.

Advocacy around durable solutions both in situ and in resettlement sites continued throughout the response, especially around themes of building back safer.

## Response phases

In the first 10 months 570,000 households were provided with emergency shelter, and 160,000 households were provided with a 'durable roofing solution'.

Funding and material constraints meant that at the time of publication approximately another 140,000 households will hopefully receive a shelter recovery solution (minor/major repair kit, core shelter or permanent house), and thus a total of 300,000 households will hopefully be assisted - 60% of the original target.

## Future developments and challenges

Disaster-resistant construction knowledge and practice remains low amongst much of the affected area. High background poverty levels, land rights' issues and poor enforcement of building regulations have combined to create a building culture of low quality construction.

Changes in dominant building materials, from timber and bamboo frames with 'nippa' thatched roofs and woven bamboo walls to materials such as plywood cladding, masonry walls and CGI roofing have occurred without corresponding changes in technical construction knowledge, increasing the risk of catastrophic failure when disasters strike.

Global warming is likely to increase the intensity and frequency of storms, whilst population growth and increasing urbanisation are predicted to increase vulnerable urban and peri-urban populations.

This, combined with poor building practices, may result in an increased risk of future displacement. Addressing these increasing risks in the housing sector remains a major challenge for the Philippine Government and other organisations.