

TYPHOON HAIYAN DISASTER

Save the Children Emergency Response

Updated: 14 November, Manila



Friday 8 November in the early morning hours the typhoon Haiyan, locally known as Yolanda, made landfall in the Philippines. With winds as strong as 275 km/h and storm surges several meters high, the Typhoon destroyed everything in its path.

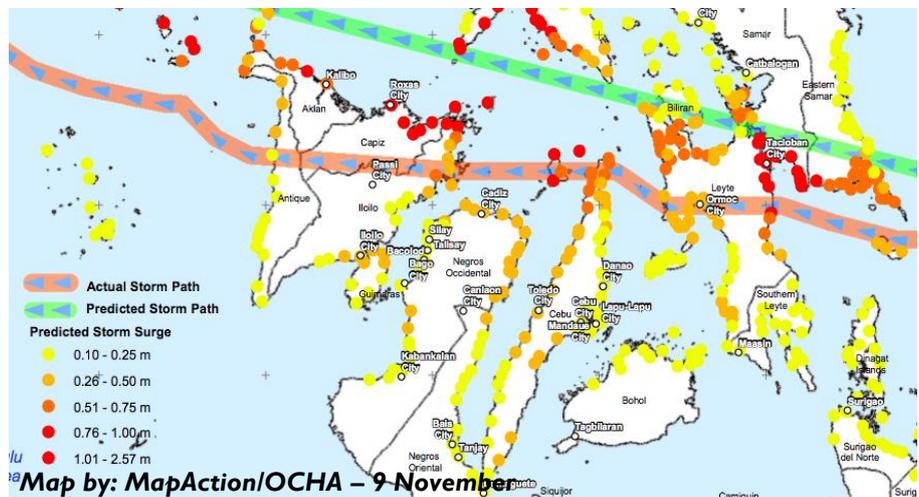


Jonathan Hyams/Save the Children

News is still coming in as remote areas reestablish communications, but so far the reports on damages are already devastating: 670,000 people forced from their homes, 10,000 feared killed and more than 11 million people affected by the lack of access to basic services including millions of children. The destruction of homes and infrastructure has been immense with 80% of Tacloban city, one of the hardest hit areas, completely destroyed. And in the Typhoon's path roads, ports, airports, power cables, water pipes and communication lines have been severely damaged, leaving the survivors extremely vulnerable and isolated.

We feel hopeless because our livelihoods have been destroyed. I hope someone will help us to rebuild, we are begging for help and will take anything.

Rebecca Bernejo, Living on Panay



Children are the most vulnerable in this situation. As looting spreads, the children are the last in line to get supplies and without adequate shelter and access to medicine the children will be amongst the most vulnerable when diseases spread. Pregnant and breastfeeding mothers are also highly vulnerable in this kind of situation. Surviving the typhoon is a traumatic experience in itself, and if children do not receive appropriate psychosocial help, the impact is likely to be long-term. They have witnessed horrifying scenes, some struggle to survive when buildings were collapsing and storm surges hit the coast. Given the high death toll, many have experienced loss of close relatives, and the trauma continues with bodies still visible in the street.

As daylight struck we saw the destruction brought by Haiyan. And as we drew closer to Tacloban the damage is staggering and the stench of death stronger.

Edwin Philip Horca,
Save the Children

How is Save the Children responding

Save the Children has launched an emergency appeal asking for \$30 million that will reach 500,000 people. We have deployed 100 staff to work on the relief effort, both from Manila and in the affected areas. Our response will focus on delivering critical help including Child protection, Education, Water/Sanitation/Hygiene, Food security & livelihoods, Health and Shelter across the three worst hit areas Leyte Island, Cebu Island and Panay Island.



The current status of our response

Still in the first phase of the response, Save the Children is establishing its response across the affected areas on Leyte, Cebu and Panay Islands. We have established an operational base on Leyte (in Tacloban city); we have established a logistics support team on Cebu Island that will soon be reinforced by a medical response team and we have deployed a response team to Panay Island.

The scene was one of utter and complete devastation, as families tried to reconcile with what happened and what had become of their lives. The tragedy was everywhere.

Evan Schurmann
Save the Children



Access is still extremely difficult, but with the successful deployment of teams we are now bringing in aid to the most affected areas. The first of several planes with aid carrying shelter items, medical supplies and water cleaning tablets have arrived on the 14 November in Cebu and we are now moving the stock towards Tacloban by ferry and truck. At the same time we have deployed an aid convoy with household kits and hygiene kits from Manila moving south towards Tacloban.

We have also dispatched 6 mobile health clinics towards Tacloban to deliver immediate medical relief. And a fourth rapid response element will be a 12-man medical expert team arriving in Cebu on Friday, and deploying to the northern parts of Cebu, as well as the coastal town of Palo, south of Tacloban.

This is just the first wave of a massive relief operation under way and in the coming days and weeks Save the Children will reach thousands of people affected by the Typhoon. It is also vital to remember that, once the emergency phase of the response has passed, lies the huge task of rehabilitating and rebuilding homes, schools, infrastructure and livelihoods.