Highlights

Tropical Cyclone Haima (locally named ‘Lawin’) entered the Philippine Area of Responsibility on 17 October and made landfall over Peñablanca, Cagayan as a Super Typhoon with moderate to heavy rains within the 600 km diameter of the Typhoon. This was the strongest typhoon to have hit the Philippines since Typhoon Haiyan in November 2013; and the fourth to have affected northern Luzon in a month.

A total number of 32,000 families (or 159,000 persons) were pre-emptively evacuated in Regions I, I, III, Calabarzon, V and Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR). Disaster preparedness by the Philippine Government has prevented significant loss of lives. As of 28 October, only 20 evacuation centres remain open, hosting 3,709 people, according to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). An additional 26,981 displaced people in Nueva Ecija and Pampanga provinces in Central Luzon are home-based, staying with friends and relatives. The official casualty has risen to 14. Among them were three children under the age of 5 and two adolescents (NDRRMC). The numbers of dead, injured and missing may rise as local reports continue to be validated.

The DSWD’s count of damaged or destroyed houses has jumped to 185,869 across northern and central Luzon. Majority of the reported damaged or destroyed houses were concentrated in Cagayan and Isabela provinces. So far, a total of 153 schools have been damaged and four destroyed according to field reports from non-governmental organisations; although awaiting further validation from the Department of Education (DepED).

The Government has concluded damage assessments and continues to monitor and coordinate response activities while planning for transition to early recovery and rehabilitation. Assessment reports highlight the damage to livelihoods, houses and schools and immediate needs being: access to shelter, safe and potable water, access to adequate sanitation, poor hygiene practices, the surveillance of communicable diseases in affected areas, and monitoring of increased protection risks especially for girls and women. There remains little information on the impact of the typhoon on vulnerable and marginalised populations, including indigenous communities and people with disabilities, as well as information on any protection issues.
Repeated onslaught of typhoons on Northern Luzon in the past months has compounded vulnerabilities and left families and communities strained in their capacity to prepare and recover.

UNICEF’s Response

- Although the Government has confirmed there will be no international appeal for assistance, local authorities have begun to approach UN agencies and NGO partners for assistance.
- UNICEF and the rest of the UN family are closely coordinating with the government for any assistance needed. UNICEF has taken the lead in supporting Government-led clusters in Education (with Save the Children), the Quad Cluster (Health, Nutrition, Water and Sanitation, Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support) and the Child Protection Sub-cluster.
- Existing emergency contingency activities in Partnership Cooperation Agreements (PCA) were activated to support rapid assessments.
- Through existing partnerships, UNICEF will support ACF and Relief International to extend urgent WASH assistance to at least 1,000 severely affected families in six municipalities in Cagayan and Kalinga provinces. In addition to distribution of water and hygiene kits and provision of materials for latrine repairs, support will be provided for water testing and disinfection and for hygiene promotion.
- The Disaster Risk Reduction programme has released US$10,000 through two NGO partners in the affected areas to support immediate relief needs; including food packs, tarpaulin and shelter materials. Around 1,000 families will benefit from this immediate support.

Remaining Gaps:

- Water quality monitoring needs to be significantly scaled up, and more detailed technical assessments of the damage to WASH infrastructure still have to be conducted.
- As the affected communities are prioritising shelter reconstruction and recovery of livelihoods, there is a danger that sanitation needs in particular will not be addressed in the short-term. Local health authorities need additional support to quickly scale up hygiene and sanitation promotion activities across the affected areas, and additional hygiene kits and latrine reconstruction materials are needed for vulnerable households.
- As international assistance has not been requested for this response, capacity of humanitarian shelter agencies in-country is limited to assessment and distribution of available contingency stocks. With no guarantee that these stocks can be replenished, there is the risk that the sector will be less prepared for future responses.
- The Department of Education will provide a detailed list of support needed by 4 November. This will be shared among cluster members for possible response.

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