

HIGHLIGHTS

- Displaced people in Zamboanga continue to live in difficult conditions in overcrowded evacuation centres.
- Emergency threshold on health breached six times in Zamboanga over the past 12 months.
- Pacific Partnership 2014 rebuilding schools and hospital in Tacloban
- World Humanitarian Day on 19 August.

FUNDING

Typhoon Haiyan

781 million
requested (US\$)

60% funded

Zamboanga Action Plan (revised)

12.8 million
requested (US\$)

45% funded

Source: Financial Tracking Service



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Zamboanga one year on

On 9 September 2013 in Zamboanga city in Western Mindanao, fighting broke out between a faction of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). The fighting lasted three weeks leaving at least 140 people dead, over 10,000 houses completely destroyed and more than 120,000 people forcibly displaced during the height of the conflict.

One year later and over 26,000 people, mainly from the minority Moro ethnic group, remain displaced from their homes. They live in extremely difficult conditions in overcrowded evacuation centres and transitional sites with limited access to health services or adequate water and sanitation facilities. Women and children in particular, remain extremely vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

In addition to the people living in the centres there are a significant number of the displaced residing with host communities in the city. While ongoing assessments try to ascertain the precise numbers of people in the host community, (the figure could be as high as 30,000), the population of home-based IDPs remain difficult to access and assist.

With more than 10,000 homes destroyed or damaged in the September fighting, the Government does not expect to complete the return or permanent relocation of those displaced in Zamboanga until mid-2015.

Setbacks including the availability of suitable land and the process for constructing permanent housing continue to delay the plan's implementation. Currently about 295 families, among the most vulnerable in Zamboanga remain along the shoreline, awaiting further news of when they may be moved.

Some parts of the conflict area were categorized by the Government as "No Return Zones"; which prevents many of the 26,000 displaced in evacuation centres and transitional sites from returning to their areas of origin.

The Zamboanga Action Plan ended in August and will be replaced by a strategy designed to focus on more durable solutions in the medium term, as well as continuing to address outstanding humanitarian needs of the IDPs in the short term.

At the height of the conflict around 12,500 families were displaced, moving to the Grand Stand and Cawa-Cawa shoreline. The numbers currently stand at around 2,480 families. Throughout the past year humanitarian partners supported the city authorities in providing vital humanitarian assistance for shelter, food, healthcare, as well as water and sanitation.



Source: OCHA/ Orla Fagan, Zamboanga August 2014

Emergency threshold for under-5 death breached in Zamboanga

Concern over limited medical supplies and trained staff

Authorities are trying to reach out to traditional midwives to provide training in maternal and child health.

Since the beginning of the conflict and subsequent displacement last September, there were 158 recorded deaths among the IDPs with 50 per cent of these under-five children, according to the City Health Office in Zamboanga. The emergency threshold of deaths for children under age 5, (more than two cases per 10,000 per day), was breached six times, most recently in June 2014.

Access to healthcare remains a critical need amongst the displaced population. Of the 158 recorded deaths, 65 per cent died outside of health facilities. Pneumonia is the leading cause of death which claimed 32 lives since September 2013. The prevalence of acute gastro enteritis (AGE), an indicator of poor standards and conditions of water and sanitation, claimed a further 23 lives.

City health officials observed a rise in neonatal deaths (19 recorded to date), where women giving birth in tents in evacuation centres are supported only by traditional midwives and lack the level of healthcare required.

The insufficient numbers of medical staff in evacuation centres and transitional sites, and the limited supply of medicines, are some of the main concerns of health actors on the ground. In response, authorities are trying to reach out to traditional midwives and provide training in maternal and child health. IDPs receive free medical services from the Zamboanga City Medical Center and the City Health Office set up a temporary clinic in Masepla transitory site in Mampang *barangay* (village), staffed by medical personnel on a rotational basis. Mobile clinics were created with the support of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Philippine Red Cross (PRC), rotating twice weekly between the Grand Stand evacuation centre and Masepla transitional site.

With the ongoing transfer of IDPs from evacuation centres to transitional sites, there is a need to ensure access to healthcare is in place and medical personnel are available on-site. The City Health Office requested nurses and medical personnel from the Department of Health to augment staff in transitional sites.

Communications with Communities targeting young people

Providing a platform for youth to discuss and find ideas to tackle issues

Finding solutions to improve the living conditions of so many families living in the confines of the four-acre sports stadium in Zamboanga is difficult, but the Communication with Communities (CwC) initiative is listening to the voices of IDP youth, and encouraging them to take leadership roles in their communities. Uncovering issues that might not otherwise be openly discussed is helping to empower young people to work for change.

A two-day retreat on leadership was organised by IOM with a focus on communication and protection, giving 30 young people a platform to speak out on the issues they see in their communities and an opportunity to bring forward ideas of ways to tackle them.

Haylin, a 17 year old from the ethnic Tausug minority group, spoke about young girls involved in prostitution in the sports stadium. "I know that they are negatively influenced by other people and I feel helpless to stop it from happening," she explained at the workshop. Haylin wants to use her skills in song writing, singing and acting to raise awareness.

Rhamil, an 18 year old Tausug who dropped out of school, told the group that his friends have been turning to solvent abuse and drugs. Through discussing this with other young

people he was able to identify probable root causes and hopes that sport can be used to divert their energy into something more positive.

Haiko Magtrayo is the focal point for CwC with IOM Zamboanga and feels especially passionate about this project. “I’m proud to be supporting these brilliant ideas coming from young voices, which little by little can create ripples of change and a better tomorrow for all people displaced by the conflict in Zamboanga”.

Pacific Partnership 2014

Rebuilding classrooms and hospital in Tacloban

Typhoon Haiyan came crashing through the Philippines on 8 November 2014 causing havoc across a wide area of the Visayas. Tacloban city was particularly badly hit with the destruction of infrastructure, including homes, schools and hospitals.

In a gesture to assist the city rebuild the infrastructure; the largest annual multilateral humanitarian assistance and disaster relief preparedness military mission arrived in Tacloban on 4 July with the Pacific Partnership 2014 (PP14). The Pacific Partnership originated as a result of the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, one of the world’s most destructive natural disasters, which devastated parts of Southeast Asia.

The AFP hosted PP14 in Tacloban, a city devastated by Typhoon Haiyan nine months ago. The PP14 humanitarian exercise saw more than 200 Filipino hospital staff trained and 2,600 people treated at two free medical clinics in Leyte province.

Soldiers from the U.S. Army’s Amphibious Construction Battalion worked closely with the AFP on four construction projects in Tacloban city, rebuilding school classrooms that will better withstand the force of any future typhoon.



Source: OCHA/ Irene Talam, Tacloban, July 2014

“The PP14’s mission was fully realized in San Fernando Elementary School. We can assure them that we will take care and take pride in the school buildings because these were a labor of love,” said Ms. Imelda Gayas, principal of San Fernando Elementary School. “Thanks are not enough to express our gratitude. These classrooms will be used by several generations of students”

Meanwhile, Tacloban City Hospital Administrator, Ms. Belen Cabiluna, expressed her initial fear that the hospital would be closed down or downgraded to a clinic after the destruction of facilities after Haiyan. However, the arrival of PP14’s team brought them new hope. The infrastructure they built will be used for the Department of Health’s programs on anti-rabies vaccinations, immunizations and newborn screening, among others.

The emphasis of this year’s exercise was placed on knowledge transfer, as soldiers from the United States of America, Australia, Malaysia and Japan conducted medical, dental, veterinary and engineering projects to people affected by Typhoon Haiyan side-by-side with their Filipino hosts.

World Humanitarian Day

Celebrations of WHD across disaster-affected areas in the Philippines

Campaigns and activities to celebrate World Humanitarian Day (WHD) took place across the Philippines with large turnouts and wide local media coverage of the #humanitarianheroes theme. In Manila, a loop video with inputs from six humanitarian agencies was displayed in the foyer of the RCBC Plaza, on view to 20,000+ people who

pass through each day and thousands of motorists and pedestrians were able to view the all-day LED advertisements on giant TV screens along the busy Ayala Avenue in Manila.

In Tacloban, a one-hour radio programming was conducted in collaboration with the Peace and Conflict Journalism Network (PECOJON), in which members of various humanitarian agencies and working groups explained their work and motives. The celebration continued with a humanitarian sing-along karaoke contest and other activities engaging the IDPs residing in the National Housing Authority bunkhouse.

In Ormoc, WHD kicked off with a motorcade, in which vehicles of local and international organizations participated with WHD key messages on banners. The Mayor of Ormoc city opened a four-day-long WHD photo exhibition featuring humanitarian work in Western Leyte and Biliran provinces. Meanwhile in Guiuan, where Super Typhoon Haiyan first made landfall in November 2013, WHD started with a 7km 'Fun Walk' with 101 participants from the UN agencies, NGOs, Guiuan local government units, the PRC, police and other local organisations. This was followed by a WHD-themed poster making contest by school children and a basketball game between the members of international organizations and the local community.

In Iloilo, OCHA coordinated WHD celebrations attended by representatives of the regional and provincial governments, humanitarian organizations, Philippine Army and the private sector. Down south in Cotabato, humanitarian agencies and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao- Humanitarian Emergency Action Response Team held a press conference on WHD which was picked up by local news and TV stations. In Zamboanga, OCHA in partnership with the Zamboanga Mindanao Humanitarian Team spearheaded the WHD celebration event attended by over 100 participants from NGOs, civil society organizations, academia, students, City Government cluster-leads, media and various humanitarian agencies.



Source: OCHA/Orla Fagan, Manila, August 2014

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OCHA humanitarian bulletins are available at <http://philippines.humanitarianresponse.info> | www.unocha.org | www.reliefweb.int