One Month After
Typhoon Haiyan, Philippines
Progress Report - updated as of 9 December 2013
Introduction
Super typhoon, the most powerful ever known

Communities across the Central Philippines are still struggling to pick up the pieces, one month after Typhoon Haiyan (local name Yolanda) wreaked devastation on lives and livelihoods and wiped out infrastructure and facilities on 8 November 2013.

Termed a “Super Typhoon”, Haiyan was among the most forceful and destructive typhoons ever recorded. Even in the Philippines, a country visited by typhoons and other natural disasters every year, the level of devastation was unexpected. Typhoon Haiyan made multiple landfalls, leaving a trail of wreckage in six different coastal and inland areas in the provinces of Samar, Leyte, Cebu, Iloilo and Palawan. One month later, Tacloban city in Leyte Province, which was among the hardest hit, is now the major humanitarian response hub.

At present the confirmed death toll is over 5,600, with a staggering 14.1 million people remain affected and 3.9 million people displaced. An estimated 5.9 million children were among those affected and close to 1.6 million children were displaced. The devastation occurred in some of poorest regions and communities in the Philippines, where, prior to the Typhoon, more than 40 per cent of children lived in poverty. This poverty has been exacerbated as many displaced families have now lost their homes and their livelihoods.

The timing of Typhoon Haiyan also posed great challenges. Just two months before the Typhoon, in October 2013, Bohol Island Province in the Philippines was hit by a major earthquake that affected 3.2 million people. In September 2013, internal conflict in Zamboanga city resulted in the displacement of more than 100,000 people.

National and international disaster response capacities were already stretched when Typhoon Haiyan affected 14 million people.

The total number of affected people in need of support after all three disasters now stands at over 18 million.

Despite being already overstretched by the need to simultaneously respond to all three emergencies, UNICEF immediately drew on the last of its prepositioned emergency supplies for a first response to support Haiyan-affected communities. There were formidable logistics and communications obstacles to getting these supplies to the people most in need, however. For days following the storm, roads, airports and bridges, the very means by which supplies could be transported to affected children and their families, were blocked or destroyed. Communication with affected areas was also extremely difficult. In the midst of death, debris and devastation, people searched for loved ones, water, food, medicines and shelter.
As soon as access was possible, UNICEF was on the ground, working alongside government agencies and other local and international partners, to help provide clean water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) equipment, education materials and health, nutrition and child protection support.

As disaster experts gained access to affected areas and communications improved every day, the scale and extent of loss, damage and destruction became clearer. On 11 November, UNICEF declared Typhoon Haiyan a Level 3 Emergency, activating the highest organization-wide priority response. Emergency staff support and financial resources were mobilized globally, and critical supplies were urgently procured. To accelerate the response, field offices were established in Tacloban and Roxas City, and a logistics hub was established in Cebu. UNICEF Philippines received additional specialized emergency staff, including from stand-by partners, who joined colleagues that were already working around the clock, to reach people with immediate and life-saving services.

UNICEF worked closely with partners to mobilize the response and was part of the UN system-wide Level 3 declaration, leading WASH, the response and was part of the UN system-wide Level 3 declaration, leading WASH, the response and was part of the UN system-wide Level 3 declaration, leading WASH, the response and was part of the UN system-wide Level 3 declaration, leading WASH, the response. UNICEF quickly became a major concern. Given the high risk of cholera in this context, UNICEF and partners’ WASH interventions contributed to the prevention of diarrhoea and other water borne disease outbreaks.

As the WASH cluster lead, UNICEF quickly implemented a robust WASH cluster at the national and sub-national levels, bringing together more than 25 national and international organizations involved in the response. Working with the City Department of Social Welfare and Development and the US Agency for International Development (USAID), within a week, UNICEF helped secure fuel during a two week period when fuel was not commercially available, and restore a major water treatment plant, providing water for some 200,000 people in Tacloban. These efforts brought life back to the destroyed city.

By the one month mark, UNICEF has also enabled 438,500 people to access safe water, out of a target of more than 1 million people, through the provision of mobile water treatment plants, generators to power water systems, water bladders for communal storage, household water treatment supplies (aquatabs/hyposol), toilet slabs and portable toilets for 58,600 people, and hygiene kits for 137,000 people. At UNICEF’s request, the Veolia Foundation, a Paris-based emergency standby partner, assessed damages to water systems in 21 municipalities and prepared the requirements for repairs, which will be undertaken by government, UNICEF and partners.

Moving forward, UNICEF’s strategy is to focus on supplying generators and chlorine to urban and rural piped water systems, as well as pumps, pipes and spare parts for basic rehabilitation. The distribution of household water storage and treatment, basic hygiene supplies and hygiene promotion are essential parts of the emergency phase. The strategy will also focus on the elimination of open defecation through the construction of toilets in densely populated areas such as evacuation centres and urban areas. As the emergency phase moves towards early recovery, the sanitation programme will focus on rural areas at the household level, by involving communities in constructing their own toilets. Finally, UNICEF will focus on providing WASH services to tented and semi-permanent school learning spaces. The recovery phase will also include a strong focus on strengthening the resilience of communities and local governments.

UNICEF will continue to work closely with partners, community members and government to provide affected populations, particularly children, women and other vulnerable groups, with access to safe water, basic sanitation and hygiene promotion.
At the Rizal evacuation centre that used to be a school and now is the home for 3,000 people, Maria May is happy and relieved that her children got vaccinated. “It comforts me because I know that my children are now free from germs,” she says while she cradles Jerzel, one year old, and gives her hand to Justin Max, three years old.

Maria May found out about the vaccination campaign by the barangay (village) council. It’s always heartbreaking to see children crying when the syringe pierces their arms but it was amazing to see that not even one tear fell from little Justin Max’s eyes when it was his turn. I had the impression he knew it was something important and he needed to be strong.

Things haven’t been easy in Maria May’s life. “My house is totally damaged,” she said. “The only thing I would like is to have a home again and not having to be in the evacuation centre. I am worried that children need to come back to school. Where will I go then?”

In the Typhoon’s aftermath, the increased risk of infectious diseases and the need to protect children from preventable illnesses posed significant challenges for UNICEF. Overcrowding and poor sanitation in affected areas can give rise to childhood illnesses like pneumonia, diarrhoea, measles and even neonatal tetanus, all of which can lead to death if not prevented or given timely and appropriate treatment.

Based on UNICEF’s mandate and comparative advantage in the areas of maternal, newborn and child health, UNICEF staff members were deployed in Tacloban City, Roxas City and Cebu City to work with partners involved in primary health care provision, to contribute to health cluster coordination and to support needs assessment activities, mass immunization, cold chain assessments and logistics. UNICEF immediately procured emergency health kits for the worst-affected areas, benefiting over half a million children and adults for a period of three months.

On 26 November, a vaccination campaign was launched by the Government with support from UNICEF, the World Health Organisation (WHO) and other partners. As of 11 December, over 35,000 children under 5 have been vaccinated against polio and measles and 24,000 children have received vitamin A supplementation. The vaccination campaign has been carried out in the most at-risk areas, including evacuation centres, and is ongoing in priority locations. Furthermore, children are being reached through support to routine immunization efforts.

UNICEF and WHO are supporting the Department of Health to restore the cold chain, a critical process that keeps vaccines at the correct temperature and guarantees their effectiveness. In Leyte alone, preliminary assessments show a complete breakdown of this process at cold chain facilities in 31 out of 40 municipalities. UNICEF’s team of cold chain engineers have already assessed over 100 health units at regional, provincial and municipal levels in four provinces. The estimated cost of restoring the cold chain in the affected regions is US$8.19 million in the short term to enable routine immunizations in the affected regions.

At the one month mark, UNICEF has provided generators, refrigerators, electronic temperature monitoring devices that record 30-day readings for vaccine stability, and vaccine carriers for use in Tacloban, Eastern Samar, Leyte, Roxas and Cebu. At the Government’s request, UNICEF also purchased over US$2 million worth of vaccines to replenish the in-country stocks that are currently being used for the immunisation campaign.

UNICEF will continue to provide essential medicines and supplies for childhood illnesses and newborn care, and will continue to preposition supplies for potential outbreaks of major diseases. This will be complemented by trainings for health workers, including community health workers, on support for services for vulnerable groups. Over the long term, UNICEF plans to improve the cold chain to make it more disaster-resilient and to meet the population’s future routine immunization needs in Typhoon-affected areas.

Even before Typhoon Hayyan struck, malnutrition in affected areas were as high as 11 per cent of Global Acute Malnutrition. Wasting rates were between 7.8 per cent and 8.5 per cent, 10 per cent of lactating women were malnourished; and 16 to 33 per cent of pregnant women were at risk of malnutrition based on weight-for-height measurements. A high proportion of women aged 15 to 19 years, 10 per cent, are reported to have given birth or experienced pregnancy. This combination of factors increases the risk of poor pregnancy outcomes, including obstructed labour, premature and/or low birth weight, and postpartum haemorrhage, and significantly increases the risk of inter-generational undernutrition.

The nutrition cluster estimates that 2.94 million individuals are at risk of malnutrition in affected areas. It is estimated that up to 12,000 boys and girls between 6 to 59 months suffer from severe acute malnutrition (SAM), up to 50,000 boys and girls between 6 and 59 months suffer from moderate acute malnutrition (MAM), and more than 100,000 pregnant and lactating women are at risk of malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies in seven severely affected provinces. More accurate estimates will be available once detailed nutrition assessments are completed. Aggravating factors such as the likely rise in water borne illnesses and other infections, limited access to safe water, reduced food intake (quantity and quality), increased time away from young children, psychological stress, limited access to health care and difficulty with adequately promoting, protecting and supporting optimal infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices, will significantly undermine the nutritional status of young children and mothers.

Even though exclusive breastfeeding is estimated to be between 50 to 70 per cent in affected areas, reports of uncontrolled distribution of infant formula to affected families indicate a potentially great risk to the health of infants and young children. Such donations would discourage mothers from breastfeeding exclusively, exacerbate risks of morbidity and mortality among infants, and contribute to increased levels of acute malnutrition. Immediate measures must be taken to protect the nutritional situation of young children and mothers.

UNICEF and its partners have strongly advocated for compliance with the Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Philippines National Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes, to protect and promote appropriate infant and young child feeding practices at a time when children are at risk of increased illness. Uncontrolled distribution of breast milk substitutes can have life-threatening consequences.

To address these issues, UNICEF quickly deployed dedicated nutrition cluster coordination and information management systems at the national level and in the three subnational humanitarian hubs. The coordinators are working closely with the local authorities to strengthen their capacity to target the nutrition response to the most vulnerable.

The emergency nutrition cluster, coordinated by UNICEF, began screening children under 5 in the affected areas for malnutrition, using UNICEF-supplied equipment, including mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) tapes and weighing scales. Screening was also included in the measles and polio immunisation campaign.

The screening, which involves measuring children’s MUAC, is a lightweight, easy-to-use method of identifying children who need treatment for undernutrition.

In one month, more than 38,000 children under 5 have been screened, and 172 have been found to be suffering from SAM. An additional 671 have been diagnosed with MAM. The children in need of urgent care have been enrolled in treatment programmes.

UNICEF is supporting partners to treat an estimated 6,000 children with SAM with supplies, including ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF). Iron folic acid has been supplied for pregnant and lactating mothers.

UNICEF is advocating for the installation of maternal-child breastfeeding spaces/tents in all evacuation centres. As Municipal Nutrition Action Officers (MNAO) and Barangay Nutrition Scholars (BNS), who were themselves displaced, slowly return to work, they will be supported by UNICEF and partners from non-governmental organisations to provide infant and young child feeding counselling in the evacuation centres and barangays (communities).
Following Typhoon Haiyan, children in the most affected areas are at greater risk of exploitation, abuse and trafficking. Up to 40 per cent of children in the affected areas were already living in impoverished circumstances before the Typhoon. Badly affected areas, such as Leyte, are known hotspots for trafficking of women and children and other forms of gender-based violence (GBV). Children arriving at transit and evacuation locations without parents and caregivers (primary separation) or those left behind when parents migrate to look for work (secondary separation) are at greatest risk.

Family separation, loss of family and friends, incredible levels of destruction and devastation, and prolonged displacement, have all adversely impacted the psychosocial well-being of millions of children and their caregivers. About 70 cases of children separated from their primary caregivers have been documented and are being followed-up on by trained female police officers from the Social Welfare Protection Desks (WCPD) and staff members from Social Welfare Development (SWD). In the majority of cases, the children are being cared for by adult relatives and therefore do not require interim care, but are being referred for psychosocial support and more specialized services as needed. Police and social welfare experts are using UNICEF’s innovative mobile Rapid Family Tracing and Reunification (Rapid FTR) technology, an open-source mobile phone application and data storage system used to document and share information on unaccompanied and separated children. This will support children to be registered for care and reunited with their families.

Further work is required to scan all areas affected by the Typhoon for potential separation cases and to provide appropriate care and protection to all identified children, especially as survivors are still transient and children remain highly vulnerable. In the immediate aftermath of the emergency, UNICEF and NGO partners trained WCPD and SWD child protection focal points and day care workers from 22 municipalities and three cities in Leyte and Eastern/Western Samar on identifying and documenting cases of children separated from their families, and on establishing ‘child-friendly spaces’ (CFS). These spaces are located at evacuation sites, central community locations and in transit hubs. They provide structured activities for children (recreation, play, discussion and informal learning) to promote their psychosocial recovery, and serve as an essential safe place for children, particularly as schools have not yet become fully operational. There are currently eight child friendly spaces (CFS) directly operated by Tacloban City Social Welfare and Development (CSWD) and one CFS established in Villamor Airbase in Manila with UNICEF support. UNICEF is supporting an additional 14 CFS’s operated by NGOs in Guian,Ormoc, Tacloban and Roxas, which have received supplies, including CFS kits and/or tents. As a result of these efforts an estimated 5,000 children are benefiting from safe and protective environments in the worst affected areas. UNICEF continues to provide coaching for government CFS staff on programming activities for different age groups, especially adolescents, and on how to handle difficult questions from the children.

UNICEF is working with community-based child protection networks, government and other partners to provide at least 75,000 children with structured psychosocial support during the immediate phase and throughout the recovery process. This will be complemented by support to the strengthening of national and sub-national capacity on delivering psychosocial support, including support to caregivers and service providers working with children. This support will be provided through CFSs, child/youth clubs, community centres and learning centres, with a particular focus on support to distressed adolescent boys and girls and excluded and marginalized families. Reunification and support to families through interim care and the FTR systems will continue. To prevent violence, exploitation and abuse of children, including trafficking, UNICEF will work to strengthen a coordinated and integrated multi-disciplinary approach to child protection services, which will include awareness raising, case management and referral mechanisms.

With the destruction of over 3,200 schools and day care centres as a result of Typhoon Haiyan, over a million pre-schoolers (aged 3 to 5) and school-aged children (aged 6 to 17) found themselves lacking learning opportunities. The destruction interrupted children’s learning, impacted their psycho-social well-being, and undermined school retention and enrollment. More than 35,000 teachers were affected. Many teachers who survived the storm became involved in emergency response efforts and school buildings that survived have been designated as evacuation centres. Resuming education is an important way to help children regain a sense of normalcy and stability after disasters. Schools also provide a framework for psychosocial support that children need to recover. Confident that their children are in safe and protective learning environments allows parents to focus on resuming family livelihoods.

Under the leadership of the Government and working with Save the Children and other partners, UNICEF supported the ‘soft’ opening of schools in affected regions on 2 December 2013. This also facilitated tracking of students and teachers still missing after the Typhoon, and the provision of initial psychosocial interventions to students. Following a two-day teacher orientation, more than 10,000 children returned to school in UNICEF-provided ‘temporary learning spaces’ equipped with school-in-a-box materials (including stationery, reading materials, arithmetic and numeric learning tools), early learning and care development (ECCD) kits (including educational toys, story books and musical instruments) and recreation kits containing footballs, handballs, volleyball nets, frisbees and skipping ropes, so that children can play individually or in groups. A total of 54 ‘temporary learning spaces’ have been set up for these children, focusing on the affected areas of Region VI (Aklan, Capiz and Iloilo City) and Region VIII (Eastern Samar which includes Guian) and Leyte (which includes Tacloban City). UNICEF’s VaSH team is aligning plans with the education sector so that all returning students benefit from appropriate water and sanitation facilities in schools including clean water supply, clean toilets, hand-washing stands and hygiene education for girls and boys.

UNICEF will continue to pursue a major drive to support affected pre-and school-aged children to go back to school in January 2014, as well as out-school children and youth. Working closely with government ministries and partners, UNICEF will play a key role in contributing to the restoration and improvement of affected children’s access to quality and protective learning environments. Temporary learning spaces will be supported with minor repairs and rehabilitation, including water, sanitation and hygiene facilities. Children and teachers will be provided with the necessary teaching, learning and recreational materials to regain their sense of normalcy, as well as psychosocial support.

5 Source: Philippines Department of Education Situation Report No. 12: Typhoon Yolanda, as of 2 December 2013

Alexa and Carl are bouncing around the entrance of Palo Central School, excited about the new school tent and seeing their friends again.

“I am happy to be back to school because my classmates survived,” says Alexa, 8.

In areas of the Philippines affected by the typhoon, about 90 per cent of school buildings were damaged – more than 3,200 schools in all – leaving over a million pupils and 34,000 teachers with no place for learning. In Leyte province alone, 760 schools were damaged. The Philippine Government, with the support of UNICEF and other partners, has worked to get children back to a normal schedule as quickly as possible, first with a ‘soft’ opening of schools in December, to be followed by a full reopening in January.
UNICEF Funding requirements for Philippines Typhoon Haiyan

UNICEF’s appeal to respond to Typhoon Haiyan increased to US$119 million following extensive need assessments on the ground and recognition of the need to build back better and safer by working closely with communities to strengthen their resilience and build their capacities for long-term results. UNICEF’s revised response, as part of the United Nations Strategic Response Plan, outlines a plan for a scaled up response that addresses the humanitarian and early recovery needs of the affected population for a period of twelve months, from November 2013 to November 2014.

Acknowledgement

UNICEF has received generous support from Governments, corporations and individual donors to respond to the disaster left behind by Typhoon Haiyan. We acknowledge and sincerely appreciate the rapid and very generous support received thus far, without which the immediate phase of the response would not have been possible and support to recovery initiatives could not have been initiated. UNICEF encourages donors to give flexible funding to allow UNICEF and partners to build resilience across the Philippines, including in other areas affected by emergencies, such as the Mindanao conflict and Bohol earthquake.
Syrian children in a makeshift encampment for Syrian refugees in eastern Lebanon, close to the Syrian border.

For further information, please contact:

UNICEF Philippines
31/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza
6819 Ayala Avenue
1200 Makati City, Philippines
Tel: +63 2 901 0100
www.unicef.ph
www.unicef.org/appeals/philippines.html
www.facebook.com/unicefphilippines

Tomoo Hozumi
Representative
UNICEF Philippines
Tel: +63 2 901 0124
Email: thozumi@unicef.org

Abdul Alim
Deputy Representative
UNICEF Philippines
Tel: +63 2 901 0126
Email: aalim@unicef.org

Zafrin Chowdhury
Chief of Communication
UNICEF Philippines
Tel: +632 901 01 77
Email: zchowdhury@unicef.org

Cover Photo:
On 6 December, Frederick Amarilla, 8, fetches water from a tapstand, in Tacloban City – among the areas worst affected by the disaster – in Leyte Province, Eastern Visayas Region.