

TYPHOON HAIYAN - Q & A

QUICK INFO

Emergency Appeal now open (from 11 Nov)

Website: www.oxfam.org.au/haiyan

Phone: **1800 034 034** (lines open Mon - Fri, 9am - 5pm AEDT)

Q & A

WHAT'S THE SITUATION ON THE GROUND?

This is one of the worst natural disasters in years to hit the region and it will be a race against time to get help to the communities that have been devastated. There is limited power and running water, forcing people to take desperate measures, like trying to puncture pipes to get water or drinking contaminated water

Current estimates are that around 11 million people have been affected and thousands have been injured or killed, though the toll from this tragedy has not yet been confirmed.

The most urgent needs are for food, water and shelter. Communities also need power and communications fully restored, and roads to be cleared so that aid can get through. These are major logistical challenges, with some airports and seaports not operating.

HOW IS OXFAM RESPONDING?

Oxfam's rapid assessment teams have been deployed to Leyte and Northern Cebu to provide emergency supplies of water, sanitation and shelter. Oxfam has already prepositioned water kits, hygiene kits, sleeping mats and blankets to distribute.

We will soon be starting to support ongoing livelihoods recovery and ultimately Oxfam aims to help 500,000 people in the Philippines affected by the typhoon, in Leyte, Northern Cebu and Samar.

WHAT WAS OXFAM'S PROGRAM IN THE PHILIPPINES PRIOR TO HAIYAN/YOLANDA?

Oxfam started operations in the Philippines in 1987 and has 25 years of experience in delivering development programs and emergency responses, including disaster risk

reduction and emergency preparedness. Oxfam works in partnerships with local organisations and in collaboration with government authorities.

WHY IS THE DESTRUCTION AND LOSS OF LIFE SO HIGH? WERE PEOPLE PREPARED AND WARNED?

Typhoon Haiyan was the strongest storm on record with winds of up to 300 km/h recorded and there was a huge (and unexpected) storm surge. The communities did have warnings and thousands were evacuated however the sheer force of the wind and the storm surge meant many people perished in the storm. People and authorities had not experienced a storm of this intensity before.

ARE NGOS AND THE GOVERNMENT WORKING TOGETHER?

Oxfam is working very closely with Philippines authorities and local and international NGOs who are part of the response. Oxfam is a recognised global leader in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (known as WASH); this will be our main contribution and focus.

HOW HAS THIS AFFECTED COMMUNITIES AFFECTED BY PREVIOUS DISASTERS?

The Typhoon hit the Eastern Visayas region, with the islands of Leyte, Samar, Cebu and Iloilo hardest hit. Thankfully the communities recovering from the earthquake in Bohol were not badly affected by the typhoon. Last year a typhoon (Typhoon Bopha) hit Eastern Mindanao- this area was not affected badly by this typhoon.

HOW CAN AUSTRALIANS HELP?

Oxfam has opened an international appeal, and requires over \$17M for the immediate relief effort. Australians can support the Philippines by donating to Oxfam's Typhoon Appeal – go to www.oxfam.org.au or phone **1800 034 034**. People can set up their own fundraisers, and raise donations at www.oxfam.org.au/act/event-fundraising-page

HOW IS THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HELPING?

The Australian Government has committed \$10 million to the relief effort. We see this as an initial contribution and hope that, given the massive scale of the emergency, and after a clearer assessment of the humanitarian needs on the ground, it will contribute more.