



## Philippines

ECHO FACTSHEET

### EU humanitarian aid for the Philippines:

- Close to €75.3 million in response to natural disasters and € 26.45 million to assist victims of armed conflicts since 1997
- Over € 10 million for disaster preparedness between 1998 and 2017

#### In 2017:

- €1 775 000 for humanitarian assistance to displaced people in Mindanao

#### In 2016:

- €1.5 million in humanitarian assistance to victims of Typhoon Melor
- €1 million in support of emergency education in Mindanao
- €628 000 in response to Typhoons Meranti, Haima and Sariska

#### In 2015:

- €2.1 million in response to prolonged armed conflicts in Mindanao
- €500 000 for humanitarian response to Typhoon Koppu

#### In 2013-2014:

- €547 600 to assist IDPs in Zamboanga
- €30 million in relief aid and € 10 million in reconstruction for Typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda survivors

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Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) caused massive devastation to countless facilities, including school buildings, in the Philippines. The European Commission provided funding to ensure education remained accessible to children in affected areas. © European Union/ECHO/Pierre Prakash

### Key messages

- The Philippines is one of the **most disaster-prone countries** in the world, with several earthquakes and around 20 tropical cyclones per year among other natural calamities.
- In the last three years, the European Commission provided €4.875 million in response to the decades-long armed conflict in the southernmost island of Mindanao, which has displaced more than 495 000 individuals since 2012.
- Following **Typhoon Haiyan** (known locally as Yolanda) in **November 2013**, the European Commission provided **€40 million in relief assistance, early recovery and reconstruction** to help the most affected communities. The **EU Civil Protection Mechanism** was activated to coordinate the delivery of assistance by the EU member states, which provided personnel and material support in addition to financial assistance totaling more than **€ 180 million**.
- Since 1997, the European Commission has released close to **€75.3 million** in emergency relief interventions for survivors of natural disasters and **€26.45 million** to help victims of armed conflicts. Furthermore, **€10 million** have been allocated for local communities to better withstand future disasters (DIPECHO programme).

## Humanitarian situation and needs

### Background

The Philippines is located in one of the most disaster-prone regions in the world. It has well-developed crisis management capacities but with the incessant occurrence of strong cyclones and storms, the European Commission has recurrently stepped in to deliver urgently needed humanitarian assistance. Around 20 typhoons hit the country every year, many of them destructive. The deadliest one so far has been Typhoon Haiyan (known locally as Yolanda), which crossed the archipelago in November 2013 causing massive devastation. More recently, in late 2016, three powerful storms – Typhoon Meranti, Typhoon Sarika and Typhoon Haima (locally known as Ferdie, Karen and Lawin) caused large-scale devastation across Northern Luzon, leaving more than one million people affected. Earlier in mid-December 2015, Typhoon Melor (locally called 'Nona') hit central parts of the island nation, leaving behind a trail of destruction.

Despite on-going efforts to bring an end to decades of conflict between armed groups and the Philippines government in Mindanao, sporadic outbursts of violence regularly trigger displacements of communities in the Southern part of the archipelago. The Mindanao conflict, classified by the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations department as a 'forgotten crisis', has caused the displacement of close to a million people since 2012, including 467 000 in the aftermath of the Marawi crisis in mid 2017, when clashes between an armed group and the Philippines Armed Forces caused the entire population of the city to flee. These large scale forced displacements have increased humanitarian needs amongst the most vulnerable communities in the region. In addition, the prolonged crisis has also disrupted education of a number of children..

### Major challenges

Floods, landslides and the destruction of homes and livelihoods caused by frequent storms often leave people in need of temporary shelter, food and non-food items, clean water and sanitation facilities and primary health care, among others. Likewise, displacements due to socio-political turmoil in different zones trigger similar humanitarian needs among vulnerable populations.

## The European Union's humanitarian response

### Assisting victims of conflict

In 2017, the European commission provided a total of €1 775 000 in humanitarian assistance to civilians affected by the prolonged armed conflict in Mindanao, including those displaced by the large scale crisis in the region of Marawi since May 2017. These funds support the provision of food, water supply and sanitation facilities, health services, emergency livelihood support, and protection to almost 128 000 vulnerable individuals at evacuation and displacement sites. In 2015-2016, €2.1 million had already been provided to support such operations, while a further €1 million was allocated to support the delivery of quality education to children in the strife-ridden southern region, as part of the EU's Children of Peace initiative.

Over the last two years, the EU has provided close to €850 000 worth of humanitarian assistance to families displaced in 2013 in Zamboanga City, where some 10 000 houses were destroyed; over 11 000 people have still not been able to return. Most live in



evacuation and transitional sites in very difficult conditions. The EU-funded action provides internally displaced persons (IDPs) with food, livelihood support, health services and protection until the authorities can provide a more permanent solution.

## Responding to natural disasters

In response to three successive typhoons which struck the northern Philippines over a span of only a few weeks in September and October 2016- **Typhoons Sarika Haima, and Meranti** -, affecting over 1.8 million people and damaging hundreds of thousands of houses, the EU released a total of €628 000 to provide food and other essential items, such as tarpaulins, mosquito nets, sleeping mats blankets, hygiene kits, food packs and jerry cans to the impacted communities. Multi-purpose cash grants were also provided to selected vulnerable families.

**In December 2015**, €1.5 million had been made available following **Typhoon Melor**, and a further €500 000 a couple of months of earlier, to support small farmers who had been severely impacted by **Typhoon Koppu**, which had made landfall in the northern island of Luzon. The funds not only enabled the provision of food, safe drinking water and emergency shelter materials, but also helped the affected populations create alternative sources of income by the introduction of several initiatives, including vegetable gardening and poultry farming.

The most destructive cyclone to ever hit the Philippines was **Typhoon Haiyan**, in early November 2013. Despite preparedness measures and evacuations undertaken by the authorities, humanitarian impact was colossal: the government reported more than 6 200 dead, over 1 000 missing and about four million others displaced. In total, over 14 million people were affected by the disaster, including almost 6 million children.

The European Commission provided €30 million in humanitarian assistance, early recovery and rehabilitation for the survivors, while an additional €10 million from development funds were allocated to restore livelihoods in farming and fishing communities and in infrastructure reconstruction. Experts from the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations department were deployed to the worst-hit areas within hours to identify priority needs. The EU Civil Protection Mechanism was also activated to coordinate European relief efforts, following a request from the Philippines authorities. All 28 EU Member States extended their support, dispatching personnel or material assistance, such as water purification teams and medical supplies, and generous financial aid totalling over €180 million.

## Reducing the impact of natural disasters

The EU's [Disaster Preparedness Programme \(DIPECHO\)](#)\*, set up in 1996, aims at improving the capacities of communities to prepare for and protect themselves from natural catastrophes. For 2016-2017, the Commission is providing €850 000 to enhance disaster resilience of local government units and impoverished families living in high-risk urban areas in Metro Manila, through a series of activities such as local capacity building, early warning systems, education, public awareness campaigns and resilience livelihood planning. Between 2014 and 2015, more than €1 million were allocated to improve disaster preparedness capacity in the Philippines.



## Examples of EU-funded projects in the Philippines



When Typhoon Haiyan devastated Eastern Samar, one of the poorest provinces in the Philippines, in November 2013, almost all of schools in the area were reduced to rubble. Many schoolchildren suffered trauma and distress and were unable to resume their education. The European Commission and its humanitarian partners provided child-friendly spaces and psychological support to affected children. School buildings and day care centres were rebuilt and regular schooling resumed. This project ensured continued education for more than 12 000 children.

After losing their houses and belongings in the wake of Typhoon Haiyan, communities in Samar province, were assisted in rebuilding their shelters. With the “Build Back Better” approach, the shelters were built to become more resilient to future disasters. The European Commission supported its partners in implementing the project by constantly providing technical advice. About one year later, one of the communities that received the EU-funded support was hit again by another powerful typhoon called ‘Hagupit’. All houses constructed under the project survived the storm without any damage.



In late 2013, armed conflict in Zamboanga City in the strife-torn southernmost island of Mindanao left countless homes destroyed and populations displaced. More than 3 800 families were forced to flee their homes and lived in difficult conditions in congested evacuation centres. The European Commission provided funding to enable its humanitarian partners to implement projects to meet the most pressing needs of the affected populations. Support included the provision of shelter, protection as well as food, livelihood and health care assistance.

