

STY Rai (Odette) Aftermath

Emergency Situation Report

Reporting Period: 20 December–24 December 2021, Issue No. 2

CURRENT SITUATION

The estimated total affected population in Caraga Region due to Super Typhoon Rai (locally known as Odette) has increased to 112% as of 24 December 2021. From the reported 77,000 affected families, DSWD Caraga reported around 163,000 families (approximately 625,000 persons) in 749 barangays from the 5 provinces in the region. The increase is attributed to minimal improvement in the communication network in severely affected provinces in the region which enables transmittal of reports from the field. While there is a significant increase in the estimated number of affected population, the reported displaced population has decreased to 62%. Around 25,000 families (approximately 95,000 persons) from the previously reported 66,000 families (approximately 255,000 persons) have sought refuge in 438 evacuation centers or in home-based settings. A week after the landfall, many have returned home already but documentation of the actual number remains to be determined. While others have gone home, displaced population whose houses were severely damaged remain to find themselves in makeshift shelters and evacuation centers. Since the last report on 22 December, there is a noted increase of around 7,000 in the counting of totally damaged houses. As humanitarian partners are scaling up their assessment figures, this is estimated to increase in the coming days.

With the support augmentation of both the government offices from other unaffected regions and the humanitarian community, lifelines are slowly being restored. For the entire region, power interruption has been restored to 19 out of 48 cities/municipalities. Communication network in Surigao City has also been restored but remains intermittent in other areas. Also, around 70% of the water supply interruption has been addressed already by the city government. In island barangays of the city, access remains limited.

The need for humanitarian support continues to be high, particularly in coastal and island communities. If not addressed immediately it may result to the further deterioration of the overall humanitarian situation. Both the government and the wider humanitarian community are doing its best to reach the severely affected population. For the past two days, the humanitarian support from various sectors has started to scale up however, while efforts are increasing to address the most vulnerable, displaced families in the mainland continue to appeal for humanitarian support. Three days after the first mission of UNHCR in Surigao City, negative coping mechanism such as begging along the national highway was already observed. This poses risks to the physical safety of the residents especially children.

Many displaced and affected families, most of them are children, are seen begging along the street, and asking food or any assistance from motorists and travelers. They are exposed to risks like road accidents.



PROTECTION ISSUES AND NEEDS



ACCESS TO LIFELINES

1. While power restoration is ongoing, both the displaced and affected population especially those in remote and island communities are needing alternative lights like solar lamps and generators.
2. Logistics support to facilitate the speedy delivery of support to Siargao and Dinagat island as well as in island barangays of Surigao City still needs strengthening;



ACCESS TO SHELTERS / NON-FOOD ITEMS

1. Many families started to rebuild their damaged houses using salvaged materials available/ debris. As observed, roofs and walling are still inadequate to protect them from heat and heavy downpours exposing children and other sick people to health risks.
2. Support to DSWD in activating the CCCM in evacuation center is needed.
3. Families whose houses were partially and total damaged are in need of urgent shelter support like tarps as temporary roofing and walling, shelter kits and financial assistance to rebuild their houses.



ACCESS TO LIVELIHOOD

1. Livelihood activities and sources of income of IDPs have been severely affected. In coastal and island barangays of Surigao City fishing implements were damaged and lost during typhoon making it difficult for them to recover.
2. Daily wage-earners are greatly affected too as firms and companies temporarily halted their operations. As a result, affected families are relying to aid from the government and humanitarian agencies.



ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

1. Schools are damaged but are still being utilized as evacuation centers. This poses risks to IDPs' safety and security. Debris clearing is a must.
2. Many IDPs and affected families are either uninformed, misinformed, or unaware about the on-going humanitarian assistance and programs of the government.



ACCESS TO FOOD AID AND NUTRITION

1. Food is still one of the most pressing needs by the IDPs and affected population. Affected and displaced population have started to complain about the slow delivery of food aid and the prioritization of provisions. Many of them are feeling neglected and less prioritized.
2. In Surigao City, many IDPs and affected families, most of them are children, are seen begging along the street, and asking food or any assistance from motorists and travelers. They are exposed to risks like road accidents.



ACCESS TO HEALTH

1. IDPs who stayed in evacuation centers continue to be exposed to gender-based violence and COVID-19 and other contagious illnesses due to lack of privacy and congestion.
2. Population in remote communities like those in island barangays do not have access to health services as health stations and stock medicines are damaged. Health related issues are very likely to increase due to absence of health facilities and medical personnel in these areas. Preventive health services like prenatal for pregnant women and regular vaccination for newly-born babies have been hampered.
3. Psychosocial support session must also be in place in support to typhoon survivors including the first responders.



ACCESS TO WATER AND SANITATION

1. Potable and water for domestic use remain a challenge in many locations like in Surigao City and island communities. Some people are using water from canals and unsafe sources exposing them to water-borne diseases. The lack of water supply also impacted the latrines and toilets using flush type bowls compelling the IDPs especially the children to defecate in open spaces. As a result, water and air-borne diseases brought about by unsanitary environment is likely to occur.
2. Sustained potable water provision and water tankering must be in place to address the scarcity of water.

“Thank you for your support. This is the first relief distribution we received so far. Thank you for reaching out to us,” shares one of the beneficiaries of core relief items distributed on 23 December.



UNHCR immediately responded to the needs of the severely affected population through core relief items composed of plastic tarpaulins, solar lamps, and mosquito nets.

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE



UNHCR, as the Protection Cluster co-lead agency, supported the DSWD Caraga in conducting the first Tri-Cluster (Food/NFI, CCCM, Protection) Coordination Meeting on 21 December 2021 in Butuan City which was attended by various government and humanitarian agencies. It was chaired by the DSWD Caraga Regional Director OIC Ramel Jamen himself with the presence of Undersecretary Felicisimo Budiongan. The meeting provided the opportunity to orient cluster partners on the organizational structure of DSWD Caraga in responding to this emergency. Also, this provided the avenue for partners to share updates and plans during the brief breakout session of the three clusters. In the end, DSWD Caraga agreed to conduct a regular meeting, every Wednesday.



As a result of the first Tri-Cluster Coordination Meeting, DSWD Caraga in agreement with the cluster partners agreed to conduct a multi-cluster rapid needs assessment in the mainland while access to Siargao and Dinagat island is still being addressed. On 22 December, UNHCR and its project partner, Community and Family Services International participated in the assessment in Surigao City. A Rapid Protection Assessment Tool was developed to harmonize the assessment of Protection Cluster partners. The result of the assessment will be the basis for the planned cluster-specific response plan.



UNHCR together with DSWD Caraga, ACCORD, and the city government of Surigao City provided core relief items to two of the severely affected island barangays of Surigao City on 23 December. A total of 300 families from the barangays of Lisondra and Buenavista received core relief items package consisting of mosquito nets, plastic tarpaulins, and solar lamps. The assistance complements the food assistance from Care International through ACCORD as well and the food packs and water provision from the DSWD Caraga. The support was well received by the displaced and the affected population who are currently dwelling in partially damaged evacuation center and residential houses. On the other hand, a total of 11 island barangays benefitted from the 4mX50m reinforced plastic sheets that could serve as temporary shelter covering especially for communal spaces.

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For more information, please visit the UNHCR Philippines website—www.unhcr.org/ph/typhoon-rai-odette or email us at PHICOPRC@unhcr.org.