

UN extends call for help to Typhoon Vamco-affected areas in Northern Luzon



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MANILA, 27 November 2020 – Three weeks after launching its response to help address the immediate and early recovery needs of communities worst hit by Super Typhoon Goni (Rolly), the United Nations and its humanitarian partners today released a revised Humanitarian Needs and Priorities (HNP) plan, further extending support to areas severely affected by Typhoon Vamco (Ulysses) in Northern Luzon.

In its support to the government-led response to Typhoons Goni and Vamco, country-based humanitarian partners under the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) umbrella will focus on lifesaving and time-critical recovery needs of people, especially women and girls, living in the hardest-hit provinces of Albay and Catanduanes in Bicol Region and the most affected areas of the province of Cagayan in Cagayan Valley Region.

The revised HNP brings together collective humanitarian activities from November 2020 to April 2021 with a new total funding request of US\$52.6 million (PhP 2.5 billion). The call for resources will directly assist 278,100 affected people in terms of food, access to clean watersanitation-hygiene (WASH) facilities, emergency shelter and livelihood, health and early recovery. Following a review of overall needs, 18,100 most vulnerable people who were severely affected by Typhoon Vamco in Cagayan were added to the original target of 260,000 people in Albay and Catanduanes.

On 23 November, the UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC) Gustavo Gonzalez joined the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF) and Ambassadors from Germany and Netherlands visited Tuguegarao to directly coordinate with the provincial government of Cagayan in identifying the needs and gaps as well as prioritize humanitarian interventions in the flood-affected areas. This followed visit earlier in November to see at first hand the impact of Typhoon Goni on communities in Albay. “I had the opportunity to visit Tuguegarao and consult with local government officials and people directly affected by the floods. This and my earlier visit to Albay highlighted to me the extraordinary efforts made by the government at all levels to protect vulnerable communities. I was also impressed by the spirit of Filipinos as they worked within their battered communities to recover and rebuild their lives”, said Mr. Gonzalez.

As various agencies continue to support response efforts for the two typhoons and to accelerate the stabilization of conditions faced by affected population, UN Under-Secretary General and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mark Lowcock, has approved an allocation of \$3.1 million (Php 150 million) for the Philippines from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

The CERF funding was awarded to UNICEF, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the UN World Food Programme (WFP) prioritizing water supplies, sanitation services, hygiene, emergency shelter and food to address time-critical needs. All three agencies are mandated under the CERF to focus on life-saving assistance of the most vulnerable, particularly the poorest single-headed households, elderly and people with disabilities in the hardest hit areas of Albay and Catanduanes. Related needs such as mental health, nutrition and psychosocial support, COVID-19 infection prevention and control, camp management for larger and congested evacuation centres and logistics will be addressed through a collaborative and multi-sectoral approach. The agencies will work with local implementing partners.

Other recent contributions include donor agencies, such as ECHO and USAID, that have raised additional funding support for humanitarian response and recovery efforts, \$1.3 million (Php 60 million) and \$3.5 million (Php 169 million) respectively, which will enable local humanitarian partners in providing relief to displaced communities and people-at-risk in the most affected areas.

A total of US \$11.6 million (Php 562 million) has been successfully mobilized through the HNP to date.

Humanitarian partners in the country – the United Nations, non-governmental organizations, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the private sector – are supporting national and local authorities with the response to the typhoons, building on established partnership agreements and relationships strengthened over years of collaboration. “With continuing influence of La Niña, this may not be the last major storm we have seen this season. The UN and humanitarian partners in the Philippines are not waiting and we are already adapting our approach to meet such challenges, including by building on partnerships for resilience.”, UN RC/HC Gonzalez added.