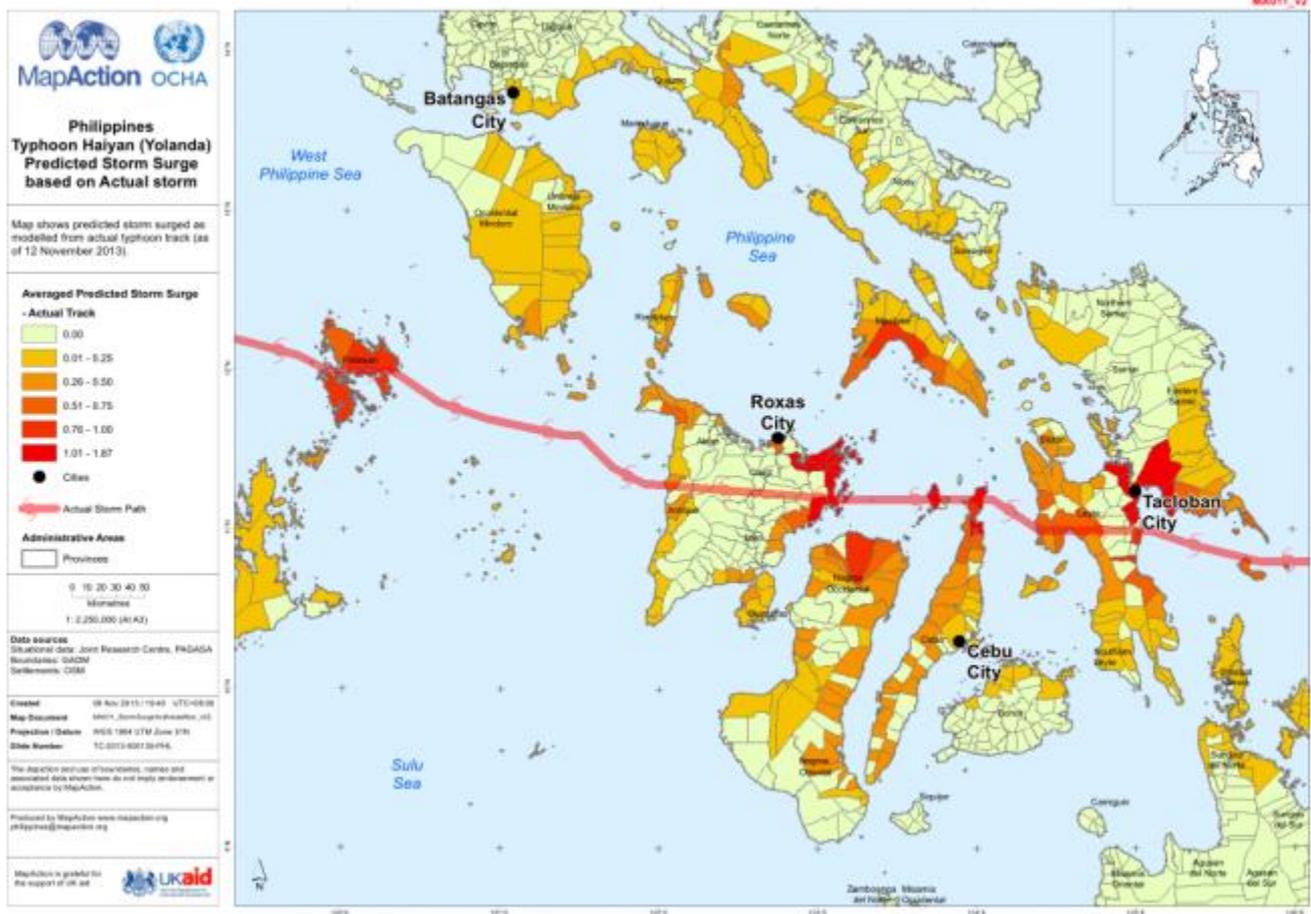


Disasters Emergency Committee Philippines Typhoon Response

Report on the first six months of the emergency response
(November 2013 - April 2014)



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Disasters Emergency Committee
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Philippines Typhoon Appeal – Report Summary

On the 8th November, Typhoon Haiyan, one of the fiercest typhoons to make landfall ripped through the centre of the Philippines archipelago causing devastation on a major scale. Thousands were killed, over four million people were displaced and people's homes and livelihoods completely destroyed.

On 12th November the Disaster Emergency Committee launched an appeal to the British public for funds to provide aid to the 14 million people affected by the typhoon. The appeal raised £95 million with £62 million channelled directly to the DEC and the remaining £33 million donated to DEC members. DEC funds have enabled member agencies to help 2,285,000 people in the first six months and will continue to be used to help people rebuild their lives over the next two and a half years.

Overcoming logistical problems that initially hampered aid delivery, in contrast to many humanitarian responses in other contexts, DEC member agencies were able to make a swift move from distribution of relief items (e.g. food, water, hygiene items and tarpaulins) to assisting longer-term recovery. This was due in part to the high degree of resilience amongst the Filipino population brought about by their frequent exposure to natural catastrophes and the consequent preparedness measures that had been put in place by communities and authorities. Delivery of cash transfers to affected households and the rate at which local markets recovered also helped speed this up.

However, with over one million homes damaged or destroyed¹, some 33 million coconut trees uprooted or damaged² and around 30 000 fishing boats wrecked³, re-housing people and re-establishing livelihoods pose a huge challenge; this has, therefore, been the major focus of the emergency response. In the first six months following Haiyan, DEC agencies distributed seeds and tools, repaired and replaced fishing boats and provided families with shelter kits with which to mend or rebuild their homes.

To ensure their programmes are the most appropriate and effective response to Typhoon Haiyan, DEC member agencies continuously monitor their emergency programmes, reassessing needs and conducting evaluations. To supplement this, an overarching review of the DEC agency response, known as the *Response Review* was commissioned by the DEC and carried out in February 2014, four months after the launch of the appeal. This review was not an evaluation but rather looked at the challenges faced by DEC agencies in their responses to the typhoon, how these had been addressed and what agencies had learned in the process. The review found that DEC member agencies have been effective and efficient in their response, providing timely essential assistance to those in need.

Background

The Philippines is subjected to frequent and multifarious natural disasters, including tropical storms and typhoons, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, flooding and landslides. This is due to its geographic location close to the equator on what is known as the Pacific Ring of Fire and Typhoon Belt. As a consequence of this volatile and hazardous environment the Filipino government has developed strong disaster risk reduction systems to mitigate against such devastating occurrences.

In the case of Haiyan, warnings were issued by the government and media in the days before the typhoon made landfall and steps were taken to protect the population. About 1 million people⁴ were evacuated to safer spaces such as schools and stadiums, however, whilst this saved many lives the extent of the tidal inundation and height of the storm surge were underestimated, with even some evacuation centres being flooded. Warnings were also largely misunderstood with many people not understanding the term 'storm surge'; had the warnings referred to a 'tsunami', which was not strictly correct, people would have been more likely to move away from the coast to higher shelters rather than

¹ Figures taken from *USAID Fact Sheet on Typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda in Philippines*, 18 February 2014

² Chris Howe and Salla Himberg (nd) *Coconut Lumber Technical Working Group, Yolanda Response, Philippines, 2013-2014 Report*, Early Recovery and Livelihood Cluster and Shelter Cluster

³ Oxfam (2014) *Rebuilding fishing communities and fisheries, post-Haiyan reconstruction in the Philippines*

⁴ Figure taken from *The Economist* Nov 16th 2013

remain in their homes.⁵

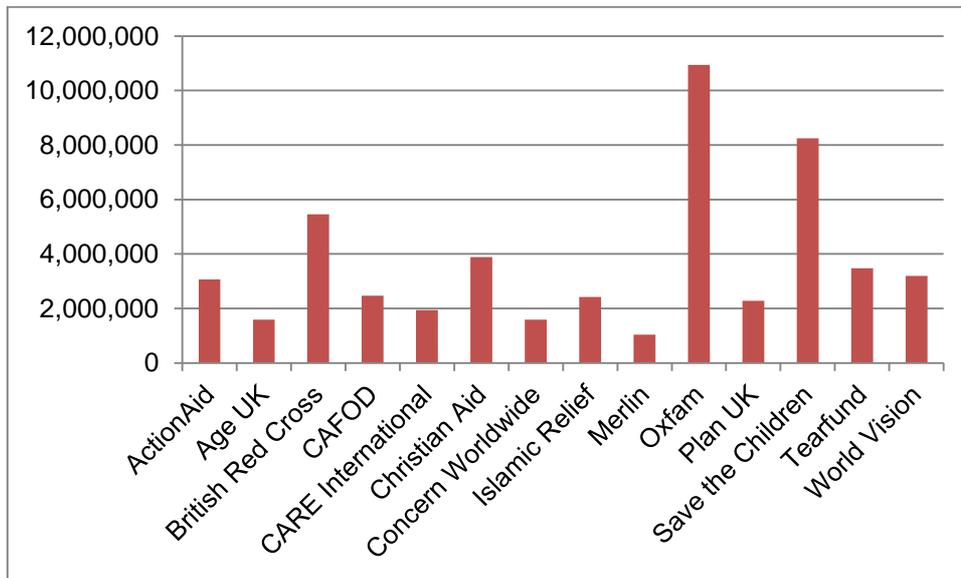
Once the storm had swept on towards Vietnam, a scene of utter destruction began to emerge. Over 6,000 people had been killed, parts of the city of Tacloban had been flattened with over a million homes destroyed both there and in many rural and coastal communities. In total, four million people were forced to seek shelter under tarpaulins or blankets, with family and friends, or in public buildings and government run ‘bunk houses’.

Typhoon Haiyan heavily impacted the Eastern and Western Visayas region, particularly the provinces of Samar, Leyte, Northern Cebu, Iloilo, Capiz, and Aklan. These are amongst the poorest provinces in the Philippines where people witnessed the complete destruction of their livelihoods. Fishing boats were destroyed, crops ruined and millions of coconut trees – one of the country’s biggest industries – uprooted. Major infrastructure including hospitals and schools were also severely damaged, roads blocked and power lines and communication networks down.

Phase 1 Response by Member Agencies

All 14 of the DEC member agencies took part in the Philippines Typhoon Appeal⁶ and response. 11 member agencies were already present in the Philippines with long-standing programmes, frequently working in partnership with local organisations. Some had been responding to an earthquake on the island of Bohol which occurred 24 days earlier on 15th October. Three agencies took the decision to respond in the Philippines despite not having an established presence due to the critical needs. All in all the DEC member agencies represent a large portion of the international relief delivery system responding to Typhoon Haiyan.

Figure 1: First allocation of DEC funds to Member Agencies (£GBP)

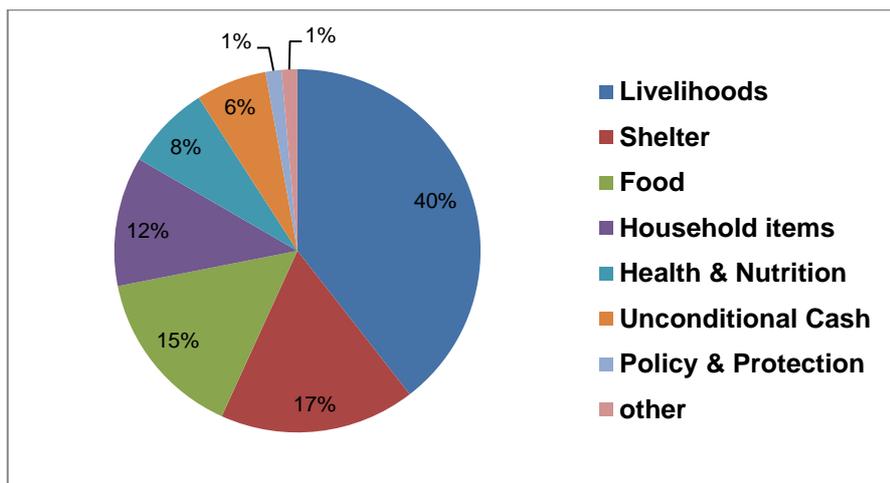


In the first six months, 40% of the first allocation of £51,600,063 has been expended with member agencies reaching over 2.2 million people. This first allocation was higher than usual, due to the speed and generosity of donations. The balance, which will be added to later donations, will be utilised over the subsequent 30 months⁷. DEC member agencies, worked closely⁷ with local partners and the Filipino authorities, to begin helping people rebuild their lives.

⁵ Assessment of Early Warning Efforts in Leyte for Typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda, German Cooperation May 2014

⁶ Merlin was still operational as a stand alone agency in the first months of the response, although the programme in the Philippines was then joined with that of Save the Children, in line with the corporate merger.

⁷ As in Haiti, where reconstruction needs were also substantial that the decision was made to extend the total response period from a 24 month timeframe to 36 months to allow time for quality reconstruction.

Figure 2: Expenditure of funds by type of activity

Food and Household items

A critical impact and major concern when the typhoon struck was the loss of food stocks, the destruction of food crops and the threat of imminent food insecurity. As a result of Haiyan's disruption to local markets, food interventions were necessary until those affected had the chance to return to an acceptable level of self-sufficiency. DEC agencies provided food packages to a total of 475,000 people. The British Red Cross combined assessments with the first food distribution to ascertain families who were in need of further food distributions. This enabled them to continuously monitor a fast-changing environment and adopt alternative strategies where markets were recovering, such as cash transfers. Concern, Christian Aid and British Red Cross distributed non-food items such as solar lamps, bedding, mosquito nets, jerry cans and kitchen sets to allow families to return to a certain level of normality and facilitate access to essential household functions such as safe water storage and food preparation. As both power-line and generator based electricity was wiped out by the typhoon, the solar lamps provided a much needed source of light.

Cash

The response to Typhoon Haiyan saw more agencies use cash transfers as a significant method of addressing critical needs. Whilst this mode of aid delivery has been used in previous humanitarian responses, in the Philippines agencies demonstrated a confidence and adeptness at implementing cash transfers in the knowledge that this is now a tried and tested approach that fosters dignity and flexibility, whilst also giving a much needed boost to the local economy. Several member agencies used DEC funds to provide unconditional cash grants to meet the needs of 525,000 people.

Cash for work was also used extensively by DEC member agencies. This provided a much-needed means of income and where this worked well, the work contributed towards meaningful improvements, including removing debris from roads, clearing coconut farms of fallen trees and unblocking drains.

Shelter

All communities, government bodies (mayors, local authorities etc.) national and international non-governmental organisations have cited shelter as the most pressing need alongside livelihoods, in the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan. As of March 2014, 493,912 homes were reported as partially damaged and 518,878 totally damaged⁸. At first a number of agencies provided tarpaulins, which are more flexible and cost-effective than tents, and then moved onto repairing damaged houses and improving services at government-provided temporary bunkhouses. DEC agencies also provided shelter kits, which are an innovative approach developed from the Haiti earthquake response. The intent was to build a strong frame that can withstand typhoons; the kits included nails, timber, corrugated iron and tools. Cash grants complimented this and enabled people to buy some materials locally and pay for skilled labour where needed.

⁸ Shelter cluster Philippines. *Strategic Operational Framework for Transition Post-Yolanda*. Draft 3.2, March 2014

Water, sanitation and hygiene

Water infrastructure remained relatively undamaged in urban areas and local government moved fast to rehabilitate water systems in many municipalities. However, in some of the poorer areas hard hit by the typhoon such as Eastern Samar, there were a higher number of families who did not have proper sanitation in their houses before the typhoon and many sanitation facilities that did exist were damaged. Christian Aid worked through partners to restore pipes and water points, whilst British Red Cross distributed hygiene kits and carried out emergency hygiene promotion activities.

Agency performance against objectives

In the first six months following the launch of the Appeal, DEC agencies assisted a total of 2,285,000 people affected by Typhoon Haiyan. This figure represents a 50% increase on what agencies had predicted in their original plans. This increase may be attributed to a number of varying factors and enabling conditions described in the sections below however, it is likely that agencies were conservative in their initial estimates.

Table1: Number of people reached per sector

Total people reached by all agencies across ALL SECTORS	Number of beneficiaries reached
	2,285,000
Water and Sanitation	45,000
Food	475,000
Health	193,000
Livelihoods	495,000
Shelter	165,000
Unconditional cash transfers	525,800
Policy and Protection	35,000
Education, training, capacity building	24,800
Household items	326,000

In a short time, Islamic Relief formed solid partnerships with the Provincial Government of Cebu and with at least two local government units in Bantayan. They developed two distinct approaches to shelter construction for identified households. The first is to build in relocation sites where these are deemed to be appropriate by the community. Government secured access and committed resources to support required infrastructure such as sanitation, water and roads. Land titles will be given to the relocated. The second is to build on existing locations of identified houses. For tenants, a tri-partite agreement has been developed with legal counsel to set expectations and a legal framework to protect beneficiaries. This is signed by beneficiaries and the landowner and the local authorities, securing a minimum of 10 years tenancy for beneficiaries.

Working in Partnership

The Philippines comprises a skilled and experienced civil society and several DEC agencies had relationships with partners established over years of working on development issues. This allowed them to spring into action within hours of the typhoon making landfall, since staff were already in affected areas and were able to respond rapidly. Local knowledge and a strong understanding of the context also helped agencies to provide an appropriate, locally driven response.

There are many examples to demonstrate where working with partners led to an effective and successful response. CARE's partnership with Pontevedra Multipurpose Cooperative (PVDCl) in Roxas has been truly collaborative and mutually reinforcing and Christian Aid's long standing relations with partners and their approach of accompaniment encouraged partners to fill gaps through targeting remoter or lesser served areas. Concern has worked extensively with local authorities in Panay which enabled a timely and appropriate response whilst reinforcing the role of the authorities as the coordinating hub of the response in the area.

Innovation

An open, proactive and resilient society, coupled with a fully functioning government and a flourishing engagement with digital and social media provided the opportunity for piloting new and innovative

projects and approaches. One example was the use of tablets and smart phones to expedite and improve the quality of programme monitoring. Software such as Open Data Kit, POIMapper, Last Mile Mobile Solutions were used to by a number of agencies in order to improve the efficiency of data collection by removing the need for duplicating data entry and reducing errors. In Tacloban, Save the Children reported that use of tablets led to quicker and more accurate information gathering. Because mobile phones and tablets are so common in the Philippines, agencies reported that using them for data gathering was viewed as acceptable and unobtrusive.

Innovation was also demonstrated in agency's livelihoods projects. Concern supported the re-establishment of the fishing industry in Conception by working with the municipal mayor, fishermen and women and boat builders to set up a temporary boat building production line. Households who lost their boats contributed by sanding-down and painting the boat to the design of their choice and fitting bamboo outriggers. Technical advice and on-going quality control ensured standards were adequate.

CARE's shelter programme is both innovative and exemplary in its approach to ensuring quality and accountability. CARE and its partners developed a participatory process for the roll-out of shelter kits by firstly establishing local committees to lead the process. These committees, which included local officials, health workers, Parent Teacher Community Alliance members and older people, were responsible for reaching decisions on who received the kits. Any complaints coming from the communities about the project were addressed with the complainant or in community-wide meetings. Community members who did not receive kits appreciated this transparent and well-coordinated, systematic approach. All community members were able to attend meetings and receive "Build Back Safer" tips.

Roving teams of community members were trained to undertake monitoring and provide technical support on construction. This helped to increase the community ownership of the process, building capacity to support vulnerable members.

Building the capacity of community members to undertake these roles increased the acceptance of the project and "building back safer" messages because they were promoted and encouraged internally by familiar people, rather than by outsiders.

Meanwhile, Christian Aid sought to maximise the impact of their fishing boat distribution in Samar by combining it with discussion and instructions on sustainable fishing practices and legal use of nets. In Iloilo, they provided patrol boats, which could be used by the local authorities to police the municipal waters for illegal fishing and address the very serious threat to the fish stocks from overfishing. This approach allowed for more sustainable progress in supporting communities to rebuild their lives.

Capacity building

The reason for DEC members partnering with local organisations is in part to tap into their expertise. In addition it provides an opportunity to build the capacity of those local organisations that have not had extensive experience in responding to humanitarian disasters. Christian Aid have found that targeted investment in their disaster preparedness 'Rapid Response Assessment' training for partners is critical so that partner organisations have a good platform from which to respond rapidly and at scale to major emergencies. By training partner staff they have been able to create a network of individuals who are ready to respond in the event of future disasters and emergencies.

Plan UK provided training for midwives to improve access to quality maternal and neonatal health services. The result is that local health staff,

responsible for restoring basic health services, are better prepared to provide safer healthcare during and following a disaster. Merlin and Save the Children have used a similar approach, providing mentoring and training on nutrition to healthcare workers as well as strengthening disease surveillance systems through which local staff generate daily and weekly reports on presenting illnesses for use by municipal and provincial health services.

The benefits of capacity building can be seen for civil society organisations but also in the case of local government. In the *Response Review*, commissioned by the DEC in February 2014, it was reported that officials repeatedly identified a strength of international and national aid actors' engagement to build skills, advance municipal development plans and better serve their constituents. It is clear that working with officials in this context has been smoother than other recent disasters elsewhere, and aid

organisations have on the whole capitalized on this opportunity to support government and build capacity.

Accountability to beneficiaries

The response to Typhoon Haiyan presented DEC member agencies and others with an opportunity to put to good practice the many lessons learnt on accountability to affected communities, built up over the years in various contexts.

DEC agencies were able to use their experience to feed into an initiative known as Communicating with Communities (CwC) involving Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Through CwC agencies shared information on complaints and feedback and were able to track issues flagged by communities as these came up in the response. Open and available information further contributed to transparent reporting of issues and encouraged greater accountability. This is the first time a response-wide effort has been made amongst humanitarian operations to consolidate and identify trends in complaints and feedback and adjust the response accordingly based on good analysis of the feedback received.

Agencies were quick to provide channels for Filipinos to give feedback and complaints, favouring telephone hotlines and text message feedback mechanisms once mobile networks were up and running (within two weeks of the typhoon). These methods of soliciting feedback are suitable in a culture where the majority of people have access to a mobile phone.⁹ Oxfam set up a hotline in Bantayan where people could text their feedback and complaints related to the response. A dedicated person ensured that enquiries and complaints were responded to. As many as 200 text messages per week were received. The mechanism also offered a non-threatening way of reporting complaints. Oxfam made sure people were aware of the service by promoting it locally using by posters, banners, feedback desks at distributions and through local radio.

World Vision along with OCHA (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) used radio stations in Guiuan and Tacloban to broadcast useful information such as hygiene awareness messages. It also had a 'text me' number and at times received up to 200 text messages in a day. Messages included information on gaps, needs and complaints which was fed back to OCHA.

There was an important emphasis placed on ensuring transparency in aid delivery. DEC agencies took the time to explain who they were, what they were planning to do and how households had been chosen to receive assistance. Activities included organised meetings, informal contact and the placing of information boards with details of beneficiary numbers and distributed items.

Action Aid demonstrated exemplary transparency when sharing information on their emergency response projects. Transparency boards were used displaying the target dates, the budget allocated for each activity, beneficiary selection criteria and a progress update. These boards were put in community halls, health and day-care centres, schools and distribution points. At distribution points, posters are displayed detailing the contents of the relief packs. ActionAid's partners were also instructed to share with communities photocopies of receipts for goods and services delivered in each community.

In order to ensure the concept of accountability was fully understood by their staff, Age International provided basic accountability training to all of their national team and community volunteers. The training focused on "Accountability Principles" and provided an overview of what accountability is and how to apply it in practice, in order to improve community involvement in key decisions and implementation of response programmes. Accountability Officers were also placed in Age International main field offices of Western and Eastern Leyte.

⁹ Many Filipinos are comfortable with texting: the Philippines is known by some as 'the text capital of the world.' The mechanism also offers a non-threatening way of reporting complaints, DEC Response Review

Adherence to Sector Standards

DEC member agencies all sign up to sector quality standards, including the International Red Cross, Red Crescent Movement Code of Conduct, Humanitarian Accountability Partnership benchmarks and Sphere Standards. As described above, there were great efforts made to ensure this response incorporated standards relating to accountability in a meaningful and practical way. In the Philippines Typhoon response, the main challenges in meeting Sphere standards were in terms of shelter. With a shift to providing shelter kits rather than ‘transitional shelter’, (such as the shed-like structures that featured strongly in the Haiti earthquake response), agencies gave affected families far greater autonomy in rebuilding their homes in accordance to individual household needs. However, whilst attempts were made to ensure people were employing techniques to build back safer housing, it was impossible to enforce sector shelter standards in every case.

Key challenges and lessons from the response

Generally the Philippines response has been well-organised with appropriate strategies and approaches.¹⁰ Nevertheless, the huge extent of the damage and loss of both homes and livelihoods has presented myriad challenges to affected communities, humanitarian actors and the Filipino government alike.

The *Response Review* commissioned by the DEC in February 2014, and regular reporting by DEC agencies to the DEC Secretariat identified challenges and lessons which member agencies continue to address as they move forward in their responses. Key examples are outlined below.

Coordination: With a fully functioning government and a strong civil society it was vital that international humanitarian agencies coordinate and share information at national, municipal and community level across geographical locations. This aims to ensure that pre-existing systems and structures are not undermined and that there is no duplication or disparity in the humanitarian assistance provided. It also offers an opportunity to foster cooperation and, importantly, define and set minimum and common standards in terms of relief support offered. Regular cluster coordination meetings took place under the direction and support of OCHA and other UN agencies. Each of these was chaired by an organisation with relevant experience in the sector and supported by the government.

All DEC members reported attending coordination meetings however aid agencies working in locations at a distance from the cluster hubs, such as Eastern Samar, spoke of the challenges of attending such meetings. Many felt that travelling to Guiuan or Tacloban for cluster meetings was neither easy nor convenient. There was a view that time was better spent in coordination at a municipal level or through one-to-one meetings with other organisations working in the same areas. However, one member stated that where actors did not report to meetings, confusion was created as to who was working where. Christian Aid made a concerted effort to promote local civil society and remind other international organisations of unintentionally dominating conversations.

Partnerships: Some challenges were reported where DEC agencies’ pre-existing partners shifted to affected areas where they had not worked before. It was noted that these partners were less effective where they lacked experience in humanitarian response or an on-going relationship with that community. Alternatively one Filipino civil-society network observed that too often the mode and content of the emergency response had been predetermined by international agencies before discussions with Filipinos took place. In these instances they argue that local expertise, knowledge and possible alternative approaches for response had been ignored. A clear lesson arising from the Response Review was that agencies should ensure they discuss recovery and rehabilitation plans in a timely manner with local stakeholders.

Reconstruction: The post-disaster reconstruction is riddled with challenges¹¹. The need for homes post-Haiyan is immense but reconstruction is greatly complicated by issues of land rights and tenure. In rural

¹⁰ DEC Response Review

¹¹ See for the example Ashdown *et al.* (2011) *Humanitarian Emergency Response Review*. London

areas poorer communities are almost always tenants, making land tenure for rebuilding an issue. In urban areas informal dwellers are usually living in cramped, poor quality conditions, often with insecure tenancies. Further confusing issues around land rights are the mixed messages and changing government position on proposed 'no-build zones' (coastal areas deemed too hazardous for housing).¹² These zones have been strictly enforced by some municipalities whilst others have allowed construction. Oxfam has identified land tenure and shelter as an area for advocacy.

The use of shelter kits allowed agencies to provide an affordable shelter response that aimed to 'build back safer', whilst involving disaster affected people in this process. Shelter kits presented a welcome advancement on transitional shelters and where they were done well adhered to developmental principles of a strong core from which to build. However, problems arose where initially shelter packages were provided to vulnerable households without the means to complete the rebuild. When asked her opinion, one DEC member's partner said, 'It's half the job done, if that'.¹³ Many agencies have made adjustments to their programmes to address this. The 'building back safer' element of such projects also relies heavily on agencies ensuring skilled expertise was on hand to carry out checks and give advice (see below).

Adaptation in a fast moving context: A notable characteristic of the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan was the speed at which communities picked themselves up and began the process of repairing and rebuilding their homes. This pace of recovery was more rapid than many agencies expected and those responding had to be flexible to keep up with the Filipinos, who showed remarkable resilience. On the whole, DEC member agencies were quick to adapt their programmes to ensure that they were providing timely and vital advice and training on incorporating safer building techniques. However, due to the far reaching need for shelter and the pace at which households endeavoured to rebuild, there were many situations where housing was repaired without adherence or knowledge of storm-proofing. In response to this, over the next months Age International, ActionAid, British Red Cross, CARE are concentrating on providing households with greater awareness, knowledge and skills in resilient home construction. Age International will train skilled labourers from within the community in safer construction techniques and then link these people up with older people whose houses require retro-fitting in terms of improvements to roofs and foundations.

Key Achievements

Table 2: Headline Achievements at 6 months

Healthcare	66,000 people have access to repaired health facilities.
	106,000 women received pre/post natal care
Water and Sanitation	7,500 people benefitted from access to safe water
	9,750 families received hygiene kits
	34,500 people benefitted from emergency hygiene promotion activities
Food	475,000 people received food packs
Livelihoods	320,600 people were employed in cash for work schemes
	17,200 people received rice seed and farming tools
	6,600 farmers received training in agricultural techniques or small business management
	24,700 people received cash assistance for boat repairs
Shelter	20,000 shelter kits distributed
	300 carpenters trained in disaster risk reduction construction techniques
Non-food Items	525,800 people benefitted from unconditional cash grants
	25,800 people benefitted from solar-lamps
Protection	5,500 children benefitted from child-friendly spaces
Education	16,200 schools were cleared of debris
Disaster Risk Reduction	4,000 families trained in disaster risk reduction measures and techniques
	140 local partner staff trained in disaster risk reduction management

¹² "No-build zones" confusion delays resettlement of Haiyan survivors', Reliefweb, 18th July 2014

¹³ DEC Response Review

Next Steps

In April 2014 a second allocation of £5,500,000 million was made to support members' programmes. This was added to funds carried forward from the first 6 months (Phase 1) to provide a total budget of £36,223,493 million for the remaining 30 months of the response (Phase 2).

