



BUSINESS BRIEF

RESPONSE TO TYPHOON HAIYAN

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Credit: OCHA/Akiko Yoshida

This document provides a road map for companies in responding to Typhoon Haiyan. The focus of this brief is on effective partnership and on how companies can best participate in the humanitarian response.

CRITICAL REMINDERS

- The UN Secretary-General encourages companies to coordinate their response efforts with the United Nations in order to ensure coherence with priorities set by the Government of the Philippines and to minimize gaps and duplications with the many partners (bilateral, UN, Red Cross and NGOs) contributing to the international response
- All response activities should be guided by the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence.
- Stakeholder engagement is key to corporate engagement in humanitarian response. Relief efforts succeed when they collaboratively mobilize civil society.

BACKGROUND

Typhoon Haiyan (locally known as Yolanda) made landfall in the Philippines six times on 8 November, with wind speeds of 235 km/h, gusts of 275 km/h. Heavy rainfall at 10 to 30 mm/h and storm surges up to six metres were recorded. An estimated 13 million people are affected with 4 million displaced from their homes and 2.5 million in need of food. Initial reports indicate at least 4,460 people are dead with an unknown number of missing or injured people.

WHAT CAN BUSINESS LEADERS DO?

1. Make a financial contribution: In the early stages of the humanitarian response, relief specialists consider financial contributions to reputable aid agencies as the most valuable and effective form of response. The UN and partners' Typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda Action Plan seeks USD 301 million for actions in 15 aid sectors. Contact details for the 21 participating agencies are in the document: www.unocha.org/cap/appeals/philippines-typhoon-haiyan-action-plan-november-2013.
2. Provide direct support to employees and business partners in affected areas: Identifying and supporting affected people is one of the largest challenges in the short-term. Companies who have employees, suppliers, and customers in the region can often be most effective by reaching out to and supporting these groups directly.
3. Engage in rebuilding efforts: Longer term contributions of technical expertise, infrastructure (re)-development and economic investment can be useful but must be coordinated with national priorities and aligned with other partners' contributions (e.g. World Bank, UNDP).

WHAT CAN BUSINESSES DO IN THE IMMEDIATE/SHORT TERM

Life-saving humanitarian response starts immediately after a disaster strikes and, depending on the type and scale of the incident, can last for days or weeks. During this time, people are rescued, the trapped and injured are located and treated, and bodies are recovered. Early efforts are directed towards meeting basic human needs such as potable water, food and medical care. The rescue phase for this disaster is currently well underway and there is a strong need for cash donations. Monetary donations are the preferred action at this stage because:

- Disaster relief professionals can obtain what is most needed and what is culturally appropriate.
- Money is easily transferable and does not use scarce resources such as transportation, staff time or warehouse space.

www.unocha.org

The mission of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is to mobilize and coordinate effective and principled humanitarian action in partnership with national and international actors.

Coordination Saves Lives

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At this early stage, most companies will undertake externally focused activities to channel money and in-kind donations to appropriate local organizations directly involved in providing immediate relief. While much of a company's attention may be directed at affected communities at large, a company might also provide assistance to affected employees as well as conducting necessary risk/impact assessments to its own operations and supply chain partners who were directly affected.

The United Nations can assist in confirming agreed priority needs and reputable grant recipients. Resources include:

- Real time updates on the crisis: www.unocha.org/crisis/typhoonhaiyan
- The "Guide for Giving" advises on cash and in-kind support, including the Action Plan and the UN Central Emergency Response Fund: https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/Revised_Haiyan_GtG-final-12112013.pdf
- International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Appeal: www.ifrc.org/what-we-do/disaster-management/responding/ongoing-operations/typhoon-haiyan/
- <http://business.un.org> The UN-Business partnership platform is designed to work as a user-friendly interface to maximize the potential for partnerships. Its channeling function will match suitable company offers/partnership ideas with the needs and interests of UN entities. Companies can submit project offers for review by potential UN partners.
- All humanitarian contributions, including in-kind, should be recorded in the Financial Tracking Service (<http://fts.unocha.org/>) by sending an email to fts@un.org. This provides both coordination and visibility for all contributions to the disaster, allowing the national authorities and the international response partners a better overview of all incoming aid. (For in-kind donations, please provide as much detail as possible about type, quantities, and dispatch, so that the UN's LogIK system – which receives automatic updates from FTS – can track its physical progress.)

WHAT BUSINESS CAN DO IN THE MEDIUM TERM (TWO MONTHS ONWARD)

In this second stage, relief workers assess damage and coordinate efforts to meet human needs. The immediate needs for water, food, sanitation and shelter continue to take precedence. Preventing disease and repairing infrastructure are vitally important. Communications, logistics and other technical support become more pressing as well.

- Consider donating technical expertise, facilities, equipment or products/services – These donations are most helpful when the company's core competencies closely align with the needs of the relief effort.
- Work with local NGOs, relief agencies or government agencies, including the UN as well as with local company stakeholders (employees, suppliers and customers) to determine the best way to support the response.

WHAT BUSINESS CAN DO IN THE REHABILITATION AND RECOVERY PHASE (LONG TERM)

This phase focuses on rebuilding damaged infrastructure and regenerating the economy to enable a return to daily life. This phase is the critical in terms of the long-term health of the affected region. Global businesses are well positioned to make significant and lasting contributions.

- **Leverage Knowledge** – Build on lessons and relationships from earlier phases.
- **Take Stock** – Evaluate activities on an ongoing basis. Incorporate lessons learned into ongoing and new activities and engage with stakeholders continuously – including staff, customers, local government, etc.
- **Avoid Duplication** – Coordinate with other companies to avoid duplication and to ensure that one geographic area is not receiving support over another. Coordinate efforts with the Humanitarian Action Plan and any subsequent national reconstruction plan.
- **Plan for Sustainability** – Great opportunity exists to make investment decisions (such as siting operations and supplier choice) with due consideration to the impact on affected communities.
- **Consider Partnerships** – Identify and explore opportunities for public-private partnerships. Please check www.business.un.org for a list of needs.
- **Measure Again** – Track activities and investments from the beginning to determine where the most impact was achieved.

For further questions and advice, UN Staff are happy to assist. Please contact: Karen Smith, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Private Sector Section, smith3@un.org, +1 917 367-8117