

## DÓCHAS

*The Irish Association of Non-Governmental Development Organisations*

PRESS STATEMENT

20 November 2013

### Philippines Typhoon

## Irish NGOs ask the public to give money rather than send material goods to the Philippines

**As Irish aid agencies' experienced emergency response teams work to assist victims of the typhoon in the Philippines, Dóchas, the umbrella group of 51 Irish aid agencies, is asking members of the public to give money rather than send material goods, and to check the website [howyoucanhelp.ie](http://howyoucanhelp.ie) for information.**

Following reports of the devastation caused by the Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, Hans Zomer, Director of Dóchas, has said that giving money and not material donation is the best way to help in a time of crisis.

"People in Ireland have once again shown their generosity when there is a need to assist victims of disaster, hunger or conflict. The support from the public is the foundation of the work of Irish aid agencies. At the same time, our experience as Irish NGOs also shows that this high level of public support is not always matched by a high level of understanding of the needs of the communities affected by the disaster."

"If material items are donated that have not specifically been requested by an aid agency, it may actually prevent the transportation of essential items. In the Philippines, roads have been damaged or have been rendered un-passable and there is a real risk of them becoming jammed with shipments of non-priority items, such as second hand clothes," Hans Zomer said.

Donated money enables professional relief organisations to purchase exactly what disaster victims need most urgently. That way, the supplies arrive quickly, transport and storage costs are kept to a minimum and the goods are guaranteed to be suitable for local conditions in the Philippines, said Dóchas.

Irish NGOs are also encouraging the public to visit the [HowYouCanHelp.ie](http://HowYouCanHelp.ie) website, which is hosted by the 51 members of Dóchas and gives details on what to do, and what not to do to assist those affected in times of disaster.

"The [HowYouCanHelp](http://HowYouCanHelp) website sets out the principles of good emergency relief, and the many ways in which members of the public can assist the Irish aid agencies to do their work" Hans Zomer said.

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#### **Notes for the Editor**

- Dóchas is the association of Irish Non-Governmental Development Organisations. It provides a forum for consultation and cooperation between its 51 member organisations, and helps them to speak with a single voice on development issues. For more information, visit: <http://www.dochas.ie>
- Information on what to do and what not to do to help in times of a disaster can be found at: <http://www.howyoucanhelp.ie/howyoucanhelp.html>

- The website [www.HowYouCanHelp.ie](http://www.HowYouCanHelp.ie) was developed in order to enhance the provision of information about aid coordination. It sets out how Irish aid agencies and the Irish government respond to emergencies, and it presents some of the basic principles of Irish aid.
- The website [HowYouCanHelp.ie](http://www.HowYouCanHelp.ie) was developed by Dóchas, and sponsored by Irish Aid, the government's overseas development programme
- A list of Dóchas members can be found at : <http://dochas.ie/membership/our-members/>
- For more details of how professional emergency aid organisations work together, see <http://www.HowYouCanHelp.ie>