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Philippines Braces for Devastation as Super Typhoon Mangkhut Approaches, Bringing Winds Of Up To 287km/h

Communities in northern parts of the Filipino island of Luzon are preparing for heavy rains, flooding and landslides as they await the arrival of Super Typhoon Mangkhut, the most powerful storm of 2018.

The slow moving typhoon strengthened to category 5 status on Wednesday, with sustained winds of up to 287km/h, and looks set to pummel coastal communities in the province of Cagayan. Current modelling has the storm making landfall as a category 4 typhoon on Saturday morning.

“We haven’t seen a typhoon this powerful hit the Philippines in some time. We’re particularly concerned about those living coastal and low-lying communities, which are set to face ferocious winds, heavy rainfall and flooding, as well as the risk of storm surge,” Save the Children Philippines CEO Alberto Muyot said.

“Families living in the path of the storm are urged to take shelter in evacuation centres. This typhoon has the potential to cause large-scale damage, and every precaution needs to be taken prior to landfall.”

Save the Children is in the process of deploying a five-member emergency team to Santiago, Luzon, ahead of the storm’s arrival, and has pre-position relief items positioned across the country, including thousands of household, hygiene and back-to-school kits.

“We are hoping for the best but preparing for the worst. Once the storm passes, our team will work with local authorities and other aid agencies to assess the scale of devastation caused by the typhoon, and determine what the needs are of those affected,” Mr Muyot said.

“Save the Children has a long history of responding to typhoons and other disasters in the Philippines, and our team stands ready to respond once again. Depending on the extent of the damage, a major humanitarian response may be required.”

The Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System issued a ‘red alert’ for the storm on Wednesday, warning that more than 42 million people could be affected across the Philippines and southern China. The Government of the Philippines has also issued its highest level of alert.

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