



Earthquake in Mindanao, the Philippines

Earthquake in Mindanao, the Philippines in June to July, 2026

A strong magnitude 7.1 earthquake struck Mindanao, southern Philippines, causing widespread concern due to the region's high seismic activity. The earthquake was felt across several provinces in Mindanao and prompted emergency response measures while authorities assessed damage and monitored the possibility of additional seismic activity. According to the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS), the earthquake occurred along one of the country's active tectonic zones, where the Philippine Sea Plate interacts with the Sunda Plate, making Mindanao highly susceptible to large earthquakes.

On June 7-8, A major offshore earthquake struck southern Mindanao. Initial international estimates ranged from moment magnitude 7.3 (according to Reuters) while PHIVOLCS and USGS later determined the mainshock to be moment magnitude 7.8. Tsunami warnings were briefly issued for coastal areas before being cancelled after no destructive tsunami was observed. Within hours after the mainshock, numerous buildings, roads, schools, and public infrastructure sustained damage, particularly in Sarangani Province, General Santos City, and nearby municipalities. Rescue teams were deployed and classes and government operations were suspended in affected areas. On June 8, PHIVOLCS had already recorded 138 aftershocks, ranging from magnitude 1.3 to 6.7. Authorities warned residents to expect additional aftershocks over the following days. The aftershock sequence continued, with more than 200 aftershocks reported, including at least nine strong, felt aftershocks, the largest measuring magnitude 6.7. Damage assessments and humanitarian assistance continued as displaced residents were sheltered.

In July, several moderate earthquakes (around magnitude 5.8–6.0) occurred around Mindanao. PHIVOLCS reported these events as separate earthquakes and stated that no significant damage or notable aftershock sequence was expected from these later events.

Damage and losses

Impact on the affected area

The earthquake caused significant damage across southern Mindanao. Residential and commercial buildings suffered structural damage, roads and bridges were affected, and electricity and water services were disrupted in several communities. Rescue operations focused on collapsed structures and isolated municipalities, while thousands of residents were temporarily displaced to evacuation centers. Government agencies and humanitarian organizations, including the International Organization for Migration (IOM), coordinated emergency response, shelter assistance, and damage assessments.

Agricultural devastation

Agricultural land:

The Mindanao earthquake in June, 2026, caused localized but significant damage to the agricultural sector, particularly in the provinces of Sarangani, South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, and Davao Occidental. According to the Department of Agriculture (DA), the estimated agricultural losses reached PHP 29.5 million (USD 482,914.85 million) by June 17, 2026, affecting approximately 1,302 farmers and fisherfolk across the region.

Affected crops:

The earthquake damaged approximately 1,165 hectares of agricultural land, with crop losses accounting for the majority of the damage. The most severely affected commodities included:

- Rice (palay) damaged standing crops and irrigated rice fields.
- Corn (maize) losses in both production and planted areas.
- High-value crops and vegetables, particularly those cultivated in upland farming communities.
- Fisheries, including damage to fish cages, fishing boats, and other aquaculture facilities in coastal municipalities.

In addition to direct crop losses, the earthquake caused damage to farm-to-market roads, irrigation facilities, and agricultural infrastructure, disrupting transportation and delaying harvesting and marketing activities in several communities. These disruptions increased the risk of post-harvest losses and reduced farmers' access to local markets.

Damage was not uniform throughout Mindanao. For example, the Provincial Government of South Cotabato reported no significant agricultural damage despite experiencing strong ground shaking. Rapid assessments conducted by local agricultural offices confirmed that crop fields, livestock, and agricultural facilities in the province remained largely unaffected, demonstrating the localized nature of the earthquake's impacts.

Government responses and countermeasures

Following the earthquake, the Department of Agriculture immediately activated its Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) mechanisms and coordinated with regional field offices to conduct rapid damage and needs assessments. These assessments were used to identify affected farmers and prioritize emergency agricultural assistance.

To support recovery, the DA prepared a comprehensive assistance package, including:

- 29,827 bags of certified rice (palay) seeds.
- 20,331 bags of corn seeds.
- 16,500 packs of highland and lowland vegetable seeds.
- 307,153 kilograms of biological control agents for pest management.
- 37,500 kilograms of fertilizers and soil ameliorants to restore soil productivity.

The DA also made available additional recovery support through existing government programs, including:

- The Quick Response Fund (QRF) for emergency agricultural interventions.
- The Survival and Recovery (SURE) Assistance Program, which provides concessional loans to affected farmers and fisherfolk.

- The Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation (PCIC), which facilitates insurance claims for insured agricultural producers.
- the Agricultural Credit Policy Council (ACPC) and other financial assistance programs to help restore agricultural production.

At the regional level, DA Regional Field Office XII coordinated closely with local government units (LGUs) to verify damage reports, distribute agricultural inputs, and support rehabilitation planning. Local governments also carried out rapid field inspections to ensure that assistance was directed to the most severely affected farming communities while confirming areas where agriculture had remained largely unaffected.

In summary, the government's response focused on rapid damage assessment, immediate provision of agricultural inputs, financial and insurance assistance, and the rehabilitation of damaged agricultural infrastructure to enable affected farmers to resume production as quickly as possible.

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