

One of the strongest tropical storms or cyclones ever recorded hit the Philippines in 2013. Large areas of the country were devastated. It was the deadliest typhoon recorded in the Philippines in modern history. The death toll was at least 6,300 people and bodies were still being found three months later.

The following factors may have been responsible for the high death toll:

Causes of the high death toll?	
A lack of electricity	Low storm surge
A lack of nearby higher land	Low wind speed
Cliffs on coastline	Many coastal fishing villages
Difficult access to remote communities	No mobile phone signal
Funnel shaped bays	No transport to move inland
High population density	Poor communications
High storm surge	Roads blocked with debris
High wind speeds	Short term aid available
Light weight building materials	Storm path was not as predicted
Long term aid available	Strong economy
Low lying land	Sturdy building materials
Low population density	Warning of the tropical storm

Student activities

1. Identify the factors that will have contributed to a high death toll.
2. Which single factor do you think caused the most deaths?
3. List two other factors that were also important in explaining the high death toll.