

The Impact of Typhoon Ketsana

Typhoon Ketsana (local codename: Ondoy) made its landfall in the Luzon Region of the Philippines around midday of September 26, 2009 and in a matter of hours brought on widespread flooding in Metro Manila and nearby provinces in Bulacan, Rizal, Laguna and Southern Luzon. Based on government data as of September 29, 2009, the typhoon left **246 persons dead, 38 missing and 5 injured.**



Landslides and severe floods due to the typhoon have **affected 332,164 families** consisting of 1,928,944 individuals in Luzon, as of the latest count. According to government data 3,272 houses had been totally or partially damaged.



The impact of the typhoon in the country has been most extensive with 27 provinces in 5 regions and Metro Manila (or National Capital Region) being placed under a state of calamity.

STATISTICS OF AFFECTED POPULATION IN LUZON REGION*

REGION	Affected		
	Brgys.	Families	Persons
<i>REGION 1</i>	6	84	253
<i>REGION 11</i>	2	140	700
<i>NCR</i>	171	42,666	176,894
<i>REGION III</i>	219	51,594	247,284
<i>REGION 1V-A</i>	569	235,769	1,493,772
<i>REGION IV-B</i>	4	720	3,600
<i>REGION V</i>	3	1,191	6,441
<i>TOTAL AFFECTED</i>	974	332,164	1,928,944

*Data from the National Disaster Coordinating Council as of September 29, 2009

HPFPI Priority Areas

The HPFPI has focused its efforts to help affected urban poor communities in its priority areas in Quezon City in the National Capital Region (NCR); Bulacan in Region III and Montalban, Rizal in Region IV. The federation conducted site visits in these areas not only to provide relief support but also to identify families that completely lost their homes during the disaster and will need immediate assistance in rebuilding the same.

Quezon City, Metro Manila

In Quezon City, 23 barangays, 14,561 families and 72,805 individuals were affected by the typhoon, the highest number registered, among the 17 cities in the Metro Manila or the National Capital Region (NCR).

Among the hardest hit by the typhoon in the city are Barangays Bagong Silangan and Bahay Toro. About 800 families have been evacuated due to flooding in Barangay Bagong Silangan in District II, where the largest number of informal settlers resides.

Meanwhile, about 200 families in Barangay Bahay Toro in District I sought refuge in a nearby church when floods threatened their safety during the height of the typhoon.



Montalban, Rizal

In Kasiglahan Village, a 50-hectare, government resettlement site in Montalban, Rizal for former dumpsite residents from Payatas, Quezon City, an estimated 4,000 families evacuated to higher ground as floodwaters rose up to the level of their roofs. A community member reported that about 60 residents in the areas were killed due to the floods. About 9 years ago, residents in this low-lying area have already experienced similar flooding also brought about by a typhoon.



Bulacan, Central Luzon

A total of 31,553 families consisting of 159,486 individuals from 113 barangays in the province of Bulacan in Central Luzon were also affected by severe floods. In the municipality of Marilao floods drowned out the homes of about 5,945 families who were evacuated to safety as Typhoon Ketsana raged on. This number includes those residing in Northville-4 Subdivision, Barangay Lambakin, a national government relocation site for families living along the railways. Residents, later on returned to their homes when the floodwaters subsided, but are now faced with the problems of access to water services and electricity.

Families residing in shanties just outside of the relocation site suffered the most as their homes were completely washed out by the raging floodwaters.

Also included in the priority areas of the HPFPI are the communities of the network partners which were also devastated by the typhoon Ondoy. The communities of ULAP for instance were greatly affected because they live the riverbank and were the first to be flooded due to their dangerous and risky location.

More typhoons are expected to hit the Philippines in the succeeding months. In fact another storm is brewing within the Philippines's area of responsibility and will hit the country this week. This gives the federation

and the network a very limited window of opportunity to respond to the victims' needs.

Responses

The initial nationwide and international responses to typhoon Ondoy have been focused on immediate relief like rescue operations and provision of food and clothing for victims. The money coming from private individuals and organizations abroad will more likely be channeled to relief as well.

Immediate Needs (other than relief)

The Federation and the network thus want to focus more on the medium and long term rehabilitation of typhoon victims. Among the expressed needs of the communities in the priority areas of the Alliance and the network which no organization or sector is focusing on are the following:

- 1. Provision for transitory shelter** that will provide safe and sanitary residence for families who do not have a place to stay either because their houses were completely destroyed or located in highly dangerous areas like creeksides and riverbanks. The transitory housing will give communities a safe place while they negotiate and plan for a sustainable solution to their problems in collaboration with the government and other city stakeholders.
- 2. Fund for house repair/reinforcement** for families whose houses were partly damaged but are unfit for habitation due to the danger posed by weakened structure.
- 3. Operational fund to mobilize the immediate response** to the victims. The HPFPI and network members who were spared from the disaster need to be mobilized to augment the manpower shortage in Luzon.

Challenges

The HPFPI and the IPON network members discussed in a meeting the steps they need to undertake to address the challenges that have arisen in the aftermath of the disaster including how best to collaborate with the local government units which are also ill-equipped to respond to the disaster.

Other challenges include:

- how to prioritize affected communities which need help given the magnitude of the destruction
- how to allocate the limited resources especially manpower since HPFPI and network members are victims as well and thus need to attend to their families' needs first

In the meantime, the challenge also lies with the local government to identify and locate a place for the temporary shelter of victims which will provide the people safe and sanitary residence while they are rebuilding or repairing their homes.