

Philippines: solidarity with the survivors of Super Typhoon Yolanda in Ormoc City & Leyte - Early Recovery and Rehabilitation Intervention Planed

Wednesday 5 March 2014, by [MiHANDs](#) (Date first published: 25 February 2014).

We are reproducing below Mi-HANDs's "Emergency Response Updates" n° 10 and 12. They present the ground work already done to enter into the Early Recovery and Rehabilitation Intervention stage of the solidarity in Ormoc City and Northen Leyte.

Mi-HANDs Emergency Response Update No. 12

The second team sent to the Province of Leyte and the city of Ormoc conducted basic area profiling in Barangay Lat-osan in the Municipality of Palompon, Barangay Bangkal in the municipality of Villaba and two barangays in Ormoc City namely Barangay Don Potenciano Larrazabal (DPL) and Barangay Tambulilid. The team used Focus Group Discussion (FGD) as a method of gathering data and divided the participants into two groups and each group was facilitated by two team members. Participants of the FGD were Barangay Officials, Barangay Health Workers, Day Care Workers, Senior Citizen, Women, Farmers, Fisher folks, Elementary School Teachers and Purok Leaders. The FGD was done in the morning while in the afternoon the team visited the Municipal Local Government Unit (MLGU), Barangay Local Government Unit (BLGU) and Municipal Social Welfare and Development (MSWD) for courtesy calls and additional information. The main objective of gathering basic profiles of the areas is to have concrete basis for concrete intervention of MiHANDs.



FGD in Barangay Lat-osan, Palompon

Based on the data gathered, Barangay Lat-osan, Palompon has 391 households and a population of about 1,564 individuals based on an average household size of four. About sixty five per cent (65%) of the population in this barangay are farmers and twenty-five per cent (25%) are fisher folks. The rest are construction workers with five per cent (5%) and drivers at five per cent (5%) also. Out of

the total number of farmers, ninety per cent 90% of them are coconut farmers.

Barangay Bangkal, Villaba has 143 households and an estimated population of 715 based on an average household size of five. Forty-five per cent (45%) of the population are farmers, 50% per cent are fisher folks and the remaining 5% have other jobs.

Barangay DPL in Ormoc City has 235 families in 181 households. Ninety per cent (90%) of its population are farm workers (sugar plantation workers), 5% construction workers and 5% “habal-habal” drivers (improvised motorcycles for FGD in Barangay Bangkal, Villaba passengers).

Barangay Tambulilid is also in Ormoc City and is a typical Urban Poor community. It has 3,228 households in 13 sitios. One of its sitio is called DSWD, it is a Muslim community and has a council dominated by women with only two male councillors.

Concerning knowledge of development and disaster risk reduction planning only two barangays (Bangkal and Tambulilid) out of the four barangay surveyed are familiar with these development activities. Barangay Lat-osan and DPL have not drafted a Barangay Development Plan and made Contingency Plan. They have not convened the Barangay Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (BDRRMC) and have not conducted any activities related to Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM). Although Barangay Bangkal is acquainted with DRRM its previous barangay officials had not re-echoed their knowledge to the newly elected officials and even official documents of the barangay was not turned over because the new set of Barangay officials are not allies of the current mayor of Villaba. Barangay Tambulilid has not reconstituted its BDRRMC and their early warning devices (megaphones and siren) are damaged.

The Team with DPL Barangay Captain Gertrudes L. Narido Land ownership is a big issue among the four barangays. More or less ninety per cent (90%) of the farmers in Lat-osan and Bangkal are landless and around 80% of them are farm workers. In DPL, all farmers are farm workers because the barangay is owned by Don Potenciano Larrazabal and they are paid P70 a day when working at the farm. DPL is covered by CARP but until now, the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) has not intervened on the situation of the barangay.

Barangay Tambulilid is another story, a big portion of the barangay is owned by the government so attaining ownership of the land where their houses are built is next to impossible. The farmers in each barangay except Tambulilid were never trained in new farming technologies and no support from the Department of Agriculture (DA). Officials from government agencies rarely come to these barangays. Farmers’ organizations were never organized in any of the target barangays. Even sectoral organizations rarely exist and if ever one is organized, it is not sustained. Civic organizations are practically dead in the abovementioned barangays.

Only the municipality of Villaba provided data on Community Based Coastal Resource Management (CBCRM). The mayor claimed that there was once a fish sanctuary established in Barangay Bangkal but it was not sustained after the change of the leadership in the barangay.

Issues related to health services are also presented as a problem. There are health centers in some of the barangays but not operational. The midwives assigned to each barangays rarely come on the scheduled day of every month. Not all houses have latrine, a common problem in rural areas and in urban poor communities.

Hospitalization is also a problem since government hospitals are usually located at the municipal centers not easily accessible by the people because of poor road conditions.

After Super Typhoon Yolanda hit the Visayas regions, the Province of Leyte was also severely affected. In the four barangays, surveyed most of the houses were damaged. Barangay Lat-osan has 89 households totally damaged while the rest of the 349 households were partially damaged. The degree of damage of each house has been the subject of debate between the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) because DSWD has a different set of criteria for a totally damage house which resulted in the withdrawal of IOM's support in Barangay DPL.

All crops were destroyed by the super typhoon. The DA has minimal support to the needs of the farmers. The farmers are asking for support in the form of dispersal of vegetable, rice, corn and coconut seeds, root crops and other plant seeds that can be easily grown for food.

International and local organizations have also visited the four barangays. The Swiss Government provided house repair kit for selected households and GMA Kapuso Foundation (GMA-KF), a humanitarian arm of a giant TV network in the country, provided relief in Barangay Lat-osan. The DA provided seedlings, Action Contre la Faim (ACF) provided Non-Food Items (NFI), Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE) provided food items, Children's Fund provided NFI, Red Cross provided rice and Mercy Group from Malaysia provided medical services in DPL. In Barangay Tambulilid GMA-KF, Turkish Government, Israel Forum for International Humanitarian Aid (IsraAid), Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) also came to provided food and non-food items. MiHANDs on the other hand provided food Items, NFI, Psychosocial and Health services.

The mayors of Palompon and Villaba were very happy to hear again about MiHANDs and the help it has provided to their constituents. They are supportive of the next form of intervention and their only request is that MiHANDs updates them regarding the previous and future activities that will be conducted in their barangays.

On its next intervention, MiHANDs hopes to provide the target barangays with knowledge on Sustainable Agriculture and farming technologies, Community Based Coastal Resource Management (CBCRM) and other capacity building trainings. It also hopes to organize farmers' organization, women, youth and other sectoral organizations. At present, MiHANDs is busy in recruiting the best team that could lay down the path that it hopes to follow as a guide as it ventures into the early recovery and rehabilitation stage of its intervention.

Before the team left for Mindanao, they had made a rental contract with the owner of a house, which will serve as the operational and physical center of its next intervention. This will serve as office and its location at the center of the City of Ormoc is best suited for this purpose.

Mi-HANDs Emergency Response Update No. 10

January 27, 2014 - After creating its Early Recovery and Rehabilitation Intervention Plan, the Mindanao Humanitarian Action Network against Disasters (Mi-HANDs) sent again to Ormoc City an Advance Team composed of four (4) persons on 25 January 2014. The team's mission is to do the very important preliminary activities such as to re-visit the affected population served by the phase 1 emergency response operation and re-establish coordination with Local Government Units, humanitarian agencies and local leaders. They will also initiate basic area profiling together with the people and to set-up the physical center that will serve as command post for the next phases of Mi-

HANDs' intervention.

Today, the team has visited the Mayor's Office and the City Social Welfare and Development (CSWD) Office in Ormoc City. At the mayor's office, they were received by Executive Secretary due to the in-availability of the mayor. CSWD head Ms. Mayette Legaspi also warmly welcomed the team in her office. The Mi-HANDs team was happy to find this ample moment to share with the local authorities in this city about its programs, services and other organizational information because during the previous times, it seemed that everyone was running and very busy trying to arrest the emergency needs of the populations.

The local government unit and its social welfare department (CSWD) appreciated the interventions of Mi-HANDs from its Relief Distribution Operation (RDO) in the last week of November to first week of December last year. They also expressed their willingness to facilitate and cooperate with MI-HANDs in order to have smooth and successful implementation of its upcoming services for the Super Typhoon Yolanda survivors. The team has observed that the LGU and line departments/agencies of Ormoc City have high respect to humanitarian organizations that rendered assistance and services to their local people.

The team also re-established its coordination with the United Nation Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) whose representative Murad Ullah the team met last December 2013. This time it was with another staff, Precious Dero. Mi-HANDs is now invited to join in the Protection Cluster meetings to collaborate and coordinate further its significant contribution in rebuilding the City of Ormoc and the island of Leyte, in general.

After which, the team proceeded to the rural villages of Barangays Lat-osan in the Municipality Palompon and Barangay Bangkal in the municipality of Villaba. This is for another round of courtesy calls and preparation for the conduct of community baseline profiling. The local executives of the two (2) barangays fervently responded to the team's request to set the schedules for the initial baseline profiling. It will be done through series of focus group discussions (FGDs) where representatives from different stakeholders such as the Barangay Local Government Units, the basic sectors like women, farmers, fisher folks, youth as well as church and health workers and other sectors in the community must have the opportunity to participate.

As the schedule of the FGDs were finally set in the morning of the following day; January 28, 2014 for Barangay Lat-osan, Palompon and in the afternoon of the same day for Barangay Bangkal, Villaba, the team knew that their vitality and versatility in this kind of work has been greatly challenged. Yet, they remained smiling and excited especially that the chairpersons of the barangays have promised that all sectors will be there to participate actively. This is important in order to generate the necessary information that will describe the comprehensive features of the communities especially the gaps in the capacity and vulnerability situation of the population.

To conclude the day, the team conducted a brief evaluation where they took notes of the day's outputs and learning. They also noted several challenges ahead of the upcoming Mi-HANDs implementation. It is not only the challenge that is laid before them by the tight schedule of the focus group discussions but also among practical things like the mobility of the team. One difficulty is in the public transportation that has been very limited.

Another is the high cost of transportation in the normal public utility transport or in the vehicles for rent in the area that are also limited in availability. Nevertheless, no amount of difficulties can falter away the happiness of being able to help the survivors of Super Typhoon Yolanda.

To send donations to support Mi-HANDs action

The international funding campaign continues. Donations can be sent through ESSF.

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We will keep you informed through our website of the state of the permanent solidarity fund and how it is utilized.

P.S.

* <http://www.mihands.org/>

* Mindanao Humanitarian Action Network against Disasters

Dr. 2 Maca-agir Apartment, 6th East Tubod, 9600 Iligan City

Tel: +63 64 223 3171/223-2508, Emails: rddrac mihands.org, tripod mihands.org, Website:

<http://www.mihands.org>