



**Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA)
East Asia and Pacific Region, Regional Office for Asia-Pacific, Bangkok, Thailand**

DISASTER RESPONSE

Volcano Assistance Provided to the Philippines

USAID/OFDA has provided \$100,000 to benefit families affected by Mayon volcano's related displacement.

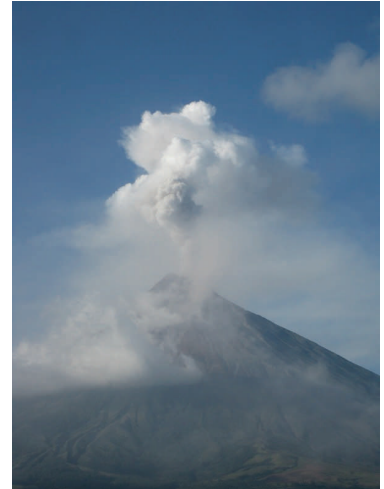
Following increased activity of the Mayon volcano in mid-December 2009, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS) raised the warning category for the volcano to Alert Level 3 on December 14, and instructed evacuations of local residents living within the six-km permanent danger zone. Following increases in seismic activity, gas emissions, and ash eruptions, PHIVOLCS raised the Alert Level to 4 on December 20—one step below full eruption. By December 22, the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council (PDCC) had evacuated more than 47,000 residents from within the permanent and extended danger zones.

The USAID/OFDA funds were assigned to the Philippine National Red

Cross (PNRC) and other relief organizations to support the provision of emergency relief supplies, shelter and settlements, and water, sanitation, and hygiene assistance to populations displaced due to the volcano. The PNRC distributed plastic mats, water containers and buckets, blankets, and mosquito nets to more than 22,000 people.

Albay provincial authorities provided each affected family with food, safe drinking water, medical care, and other relief assistance.

Two USAID/OFDA staff traveled to the Philippines between late December and early January to personally evaluate the situation in volcano-affected areas and meet with counterparts from USAID/Philippines, PNRC, and PHIVOLCS. The team also met with PDCC staff and visited



An ash plume rises during increased activity of Mayon volcano in mid-December 2009 (Photo by Ron Libby, USAID/OFDA).

(Continued on page 2)

DISASTER RESPONSE

Monitoring USAID/OFDA-funded Shelter Programs in Indonesia

From January 17 to 21, USAID/OFDA regional advisor Brian Heidel and disaster operations specialist Gavi Rosenthal traveled to West Sumatra, Indonesia, to monitor USAID/OFDA-funded programs, meet with implementing partners, and visit earthquake-affected areas.

(Continued on page 2)



With USAID/OFDA funds, Handicap International provided transitional shelters to earthquake-affected families.

Photo by Brian Heidel, USAID/OFDA

DISASTER RESPONSE

Helping Tsunami-affected Populations in Solomon Islands

On January 4, a magnitude 7.2 earthquake struck approximately 130 km southeast of the city of Gizo, Western Province. The strong earthquake generated a tsunami that measured five meters in height. Resulting waves traveled approximately 200 meters on to shore, sweeping away one village and damaging 243 houses on Rendova Island. A series of aftershocks of magnitude 5.0 or greater followed the initial earthquake, which contributed to numerous landslides on Rendova.

USAID/OFDA swiftly responded to an appeal from the Government of the Solomon Islands (GoSI), providing \$75,000 to implementing partner Solomon Islands Red Cross (SIRC) to assist with emergency and early recovery efforts. The SIRC distributed prepositioned family kits, water containers, and tarpaulins to affected households.

(Continued on page 2)

Programs in Indonesia

(Continued from page 1)

The magnitude 7.6 earthquake struck approximately 30 miles off the western coast of Sumatra Island near Padang, killing 1,117 people, injuring approximately 2,900 others, and damaging an estimated 181,000 houses, according to the Government of Indonesia. The quake disrupted livelihoods by damaging and destroying irrigation systems, rice paddies, markets, and household assets.

USAID/OFDA deployed a USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (USAID/DART) to Indonesia and activated a Washington, D.C.-based Response Management Team to support the USAID/DART.

To help meet immediate shelter needs while simultaneously restoring income-generating activities of earthquake survivors, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$3 million to a consortium of non-governmental organizations led by Mercy



Photo by Brian Heidel, USAID/OFDA

Shelter reconstruction activities benefit populations through livelihood restoration and increased household security.

Heidel said. U.N. Shelter Cluster members have built or are planning to build or provide materials for 42,000 transitional shelters. The U.N. Shelter Cluster has completed nearly half of these planned shelters to date.

Corps and nearly \$2 million to CHF International. Handicap International is also using part of a \$787,397 USAID/OFDA grant for shelter activities. The programs are helping to meet immediate needs while paving the way for long-term recovery and reconstruction.

“Beneficiaries expressed appreciation with the assistance and the quality of the shelters,”

Assistance to the Philippines

(Continued from page 1)

two evacuation centers. By January 13, PHIVOLCS had lowered the warning category to Alert Level 2, following further and sustained declines in Mayon’s activity since January 2.

Disaster Preparedness in Action

The Albay provincial government routinely evacuates residents in advance of Mayon volcano’s eruptions, which are predicted with assistance from USAID/OFDA-funded volcano monitoring equipment and training provided to PHIVOLCS through the Volcano Disaster Assistance Project (VDAP). Implemented by the U.S. Geological Survey, VDAP provides technical assistance to national volcano monitoring organizations. The prompt evacuation of residents living within the danger zone helped alleviate the potential for significant loss of life had a full eruption occurred.

Helping Populations in Solomon Islands

(Continued from page 1)

Al Dwyer, USAID/OFDA principal regional advisor for East Asia and Pacific, visited the capital city of Honiara and affected areas of Gizo, Munda, and Rendova from January 7 to 13 to assess humanitarian conditions and response capacity. Dwyer also met with other international donors, GoSI officials, disaster response organizations, and beneficiaries.



Resulting waves caused by a tsunami resulted in property damage in Western Province in Solomon Islands.

USAID/OFDA archive photo

USAID/OFDA WELCOMES NEW REGIONAL ADVISOR

USAID/OFDA welcomes Brian Heidel to the East Asia and Pacific team, based in Bangkok. Heidel has spent 19 years in Asia, overseeing disaster responses as well as long-term development programs. Heidel has worked in Thailand, Cambodia, India, and Burma, where he conducted research on civil society and wrote the only book on this topic based on original research. Heidel has a Master’s degree in international development studies with a focus on Southeast Asia and speaks Thai, Khmer, and Burmese.

Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance Regional Office for Asia-Pacific

USAID’s Regional Development Mission for Asia (RDMA)
Bangkok, Thailand
Tel: +66-2-257-3000
Internet: www.usaid.gov



DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Strengthening Disaster Management in China

In January, USAID/OFDA provided \$575,000 to The Asia Foundation (TAF) to support and strengthen the capacity of the National Institute of Emergency Management (NIEM), which is part of the China National Administrative School.

Established following the magnitude 7.9 earthquake that killed nearly 70,000 people and caused severe damage in Sichuan Province in May 2008, NIEM is the Government of China’s office responsible for conducting research, providing training, and recommending policies on disaster management.

TAF plans to provide a series of strategic planning, experience sharing, training design, pilot training delivery, and comparative research activities.