

DISASTER
RELIEF

CASE REPORT
Philippines-Typhoon
December 3, 1972

Agency for International Development
Washington, D.C. 20523



Flood waters in Mindanao forced more than 27,000 from their homes

Foreign Disaster Case Reports are publications of the Office of the Foreign Disaster Relief Coordinator, Agency for International Development. This office has responsibility for coordinating U.S. Government foreign disaster relief responses and for the further coordination of such activities with those of the U.S. private and international disaster relief communities.

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PHILIPPINES

TYPHOON — December 3, 1972

Typhoon Therese, accompanied by heavy rains, caused severe flooding in several areas of the Philippines in December 1972. More than 100 people were killed, 650 were injured, 27,000 were left homeless, and 60,000 were evacuated. Property damage was estimated at \$10 million, \$7 million of which occurred in Misamis Oriental Province on Mindanao.

Value of U.S. Government

Assistance \$150,000

Value of Assistance from U.S. Voluntary

Agencies \$125,185

Late season Typhoon Therese swept westward across the Southern Philippines on December 3 and 4. It struck Northeastern Mindanao directly with winds up to 75 knots, principally affecting Misamis Oriental Province. Other areas affected were Southeastern Visayas and Cuyo Islands of Palawan. Northeastern Mindanao is south of the usual typhoon belt and is seldom hit by typhoons, so houses in this area are not built to withstand strong winds nor is the population otherwise prepared for them. Although Therese's winds were not particularly strong, the heavy rains accompanying the typhoon caused flash flooding in the steep, coastal mountains of eastern Misamis Oriental Province.

Flood waters carrying mud, boulders, and huge logs roared out of the steep and narrow canyons on the evening of December 3, and rose to four or five feet above the normal river banks. A number of barrios along the banks of the flood plains, which are four to 12 kilometers wide between the mountains and the sea, were swept away. Many of the 1,422 houses destroyed were family dwellings that had stood safely above the rivers for decades. The people living in these barrios felt so secure that they had not

bothered to build the simplest rock dikes even though the riverbeds are full of stone suited for such construction. Within an hour, 97 people were killed and hundreds injured. Though several other provinces were also hit, only three deaths occurred outside Misamis Oriental. In these provinces, losses were mainly the result of wind damage to light buildings and tree crops such as coconuts.

ACTION TAKEN BY THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS:

Local, provincial, and national response was prompt and efficient. The Philippine National Red Cross, the Department of Social Welfare, the new Presidential Regional Officers for Development task force, and local military commands brought in outside assistance to augment the local relief efforts of Provincial and Municipal Disaster Committees. Except in Misamis Oriental, these relief agencies reached the disaster scene from Manila within 24 hours, bringing with them food and medicines. In Misamis the floods caused major damage to provincial infrastructure such as highways, bridges, water and electric supply so that a week elapsed before some of the affected towns could be reached and damage assessed. Misamis Oriental Province, however, is oriented toward social and economic progress and organized itself for positive action. The local relief efforts were reported to be commendable, similar to those witnessed in Central Luzon during the record summer floods of 1972. The Provincial Government also assisted the National Government in making repairs to bridges and national highways in the province by making its motor pool equipment available.

Cash grants were made to families with relatives killed or injured or whose houses had been destroyed or severely damaged. Specifics of in-country assistance and its dollar value are not available.

**ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY
THE U.S. GOVERNMENT:**

USAID/Philippines personnel participated with the Philippine Government in on-the-spot surveys in Misamis Oriental Province, confirming that the severity of losses and damage in that province was beyond local capabilities for quick restoration.

Ambassador Henry Byroade exercised his disaster relief authority donating \$25,000 to the Misamis Oriental Provincial Disaster Control Coordinating Committee to be used for the construction of three or more nutri-bun production centers; the repair of 22 school buildings, bridges, roads, hospital lighting, and municipal water systems; and the removal of debris from rivers.

A.I.D. also donated approximately \$26,000 worth of P.L. 480 food commodities through U.S. voluntary agencies for emergency feeding and food-for-work projects. The Mission estimated that this food assistance and the provision of cement and steel bars would total about \$125,000 in 1973. The work projects included rebuilding barrios and homes, replanting fields, repairing roads and, for the first time in many areas, constructing dikes and other flood control structures.

**ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY
U.S. VOLUNTARY AGENCIES:**

C.A.R.E., Catholic Relief Services (CRS), and Church World Service (CWS) utilized USG-

donated bulgur, CSM, flour, and rolled oats for emergency feeding and food-for-work projects. Seven thousand nutribuns were baked daily during the emergency period. C.A.R.E. also undertook school feeding activities in some of the disaster areas. CRS assisted in food-for-work projects for people who were rebuilding their barrios and homes and replanting their fields. CRS also sent two men to the provinces to work full-time with local church social action workers and provincial and municipal officials on projects which focused on rebuilding roads and constructing dikes, and other flood control structures to prevent future floods.

From their own resources the voluntary agencies provided:

C.A.R.E.

1,440 children's polo shirts, estimated value\$1,440

Catholic Relief Services

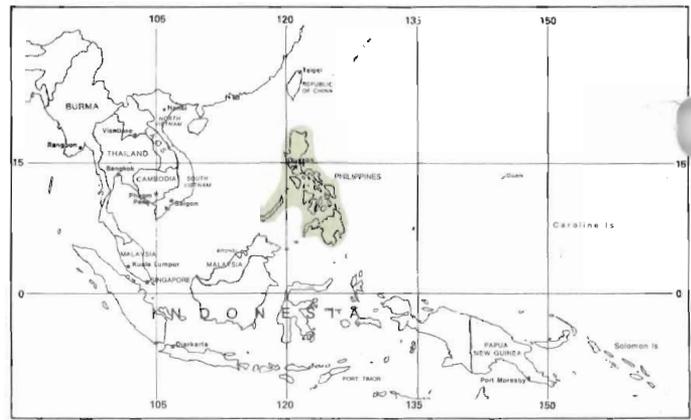
64,022 pounds of used clothing, valued at \$95,764, and 2,113 pounds of medical supplies valued at \$24,846, for a total of\$120,610

Church World Service

Clothing, blankets, valued at\$ 3,135
TOTAL \$125,185



Typhoon winds of intense force caused an estimated \$10 million in property damage



PHILIPPINES