



DISASTER RELIEF

CASE REPORT

Philippines-Tropical Storm & Floods
November/December 1973

*figure for Seventh-Day
Adventist not included
as volac total.*

Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523

PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

Tropical Storm

—November 20-21, 1973

Floods

—December 21-26, 1973

More than 240 people lost their lives and 30 were reported missing and presumed dead in the wake of tropical storm "Vera's" two-day west-northwest passage through the central Visayas. A combination of strong winds and continuous heavy rains caused extensive damage to infrastructure, crops, and private property throughout the affected area which has a population of over 3.4 million people.

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.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Value of U.S. Government

Assistance\$63,629

Value of U.S. Voluntary Agencies

Assistance ~~8,000~~
9228
92532

The storm, packing center winds of 75 kilometers per hour, was most intense in the Central Philippine islands of Samar, Leyte, Negros, and Panay. Accompanying rains caused severe flooding in the Provinces of Negros Occidental in Negros; Iloilo, Aklan, and Capiz in Panay; Misamis Oriental and Lanao del Norte in Mindanao; and Cagayan, Isabela, and Nueva Vizcaya in Northern Luzon.

Before tropical storm "Vera" moved out to the South China Sea on November 22, it hovered over the Sibuyan Sea for ten hours between the Panay and Romblon Islands. Local weathermen attributed "Vera's" erratic movement to a weakening of winds pushing the storm at upper levels, a cold front over Luzon, and a high pressure area that built up over the South China Sea.

One month later, during the period of December 21-26, 1973, torrential rains again caused flooding in large portions of Capiz Province which was still suffering from tropical storm "Vera" losses. Three lives were lost, and property and crop losses were extensive.

ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PHILIPPINES AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS:

Response by the Government of the Philippines (GOP) to aid the storm-ravaged areas was prompt and effective. The National Disaster Control Center (NDCC) at Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City, quickly mobilized to coordinate all relief efforts. The Center was authorized to utilize all available and necessary material resources, equipment, and manpower of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, including those of other government agencies and those that could be generated from the private sector.

By November 25 situation reports from most affected areas arrived at the NDCC disclosing some of the following:

- Lanao del Norte-Misamis Oriental border—218 houses and bridges were carried away by rambling flood waters
- Borongan, Samar—extensive damage to public and private property
- Cebu City—15 houses were washed away by overflowing waters from the Butuanon River
- Jaro, Iloilo—193 families were evacuated to public buildings
- Surigao del Sur—roads were closed to traffic because of inundation and landslides
- Cebu—rice seedlings destroyed; 30 percent of banana trees and 10 percent of coconut trees destroyed
- Jolo, Sulu—402 families were given relief aid by the Philippine Red Cross
- Mindoro Oriental—8 people drowned and an undetermined number of families were homeless
- Roxas, Capiz—heavy losses to rice crop harvest and extensive damage to fish-pond crops and facilities
- Tuguegarao, Cagayan—8 percent of the city flooded.

The Philippine Red Cross National Headquarters in Manila authorized local chapters to utilize all relief goods on hand and to purchase additional supplies needed to care for people in reception centers.

Since the disaster affected practically all provinces in the Philippines, transportation problems were encountered by the GOP in providing emergency relief assistance to flood victims. The movement of relief supplies by trucks was impossible in many provinces where roads and bridges were impassable. At the same time, there was an acute fuel shortage because of the international "energy crisis," and special fuel allocations had to be provided by the GOP for relief activities. Where feasible in terms of time and location and to conserve gasoline, boat transport was used. In harder hit areas,



A bridge destroyed by flood waters in Capiz Province.

inaccessible by surface transport, the Philippine Air Force furnished fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters to ferry food, medical supplies, clothing, and other goods to designated places where relief agencies were set up to help the flood victims.

On November 27 President Ferdinand E. Marcos declared a state of emergency, directing all government and welfare agencies to implement and execute their rescue and relief operations.

The GOP intensified relief efforts to the harder hit areas. More planeloads of relief goods provided by the Philippine Depart-

ment of Social Welfare were dispatched to the Provinces of Aklan, Capiz, Cagayan, and Iloilo. The Philippine Air Force fielded medical teams to reduce medical deficiencies in stricken areas where outbreaks of respiratory infection and gastroenteritis had been reported.

To ease demands on the internal transportation of food, the National Grain Authority (NGA), in cooperation with the Agency for International Development (A.I.D.), released large quantities of foodstuffs from provincial warehouses to be replaced at a later date from U.S. voluntary agency stocks in Manila. This arrangement was preplanned by the



Children formed a human conveyer belt to unload nutribuns off a U.S. Air Force C-130 cargo plane.

GOP, A.I.D., and U.S. voluntary agencies to quicken the disaster response and eliminate costly and difficult in-country transport of foodstuffs.

The nutribun, which has been used so successfully in school-feeding programs throughout the Philippines and as sustenance during past disasters, was again prepared, baked, and distributed by the thousands to the stricken, cut-off villagers. The production of the nutribuns in local bakeries eliminated many airlifts from Manila to affected areas.

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

Even though the impact of the devastating floods in 1972 was not yet over, the U.S. Mission lost no time in demonstrating once

again its commitment to Philippine-American cooperation. An A.I.D. Disaster Relief Evaluation Team accompanying GOP officials flew to Capiz Province on November 23 to survey the damage. They reported towns closest to the mountains sustained the most damage and destruction. One town had floodwaters as high as 14 feet. Within the entire Province, the Team estimated that more than 1,500 houses had been destroyed, leaving more than 3,500 people homeless. Crop losses were heavy, many schools and other buildings were ruined, and roads and bridges were washed away.

At Nichols Air Base (AB) in Pasay City, A.I.D. positioned food commodities including canned meats and vegetables provided by the Pacific Utilization and Redistribution Agency (PURA). Because the Philippine Air Force and Navy had limited aircraft available

for airlifting the PURA foodstuffs and other supplies, the NDCC requested air support from the U.S. military forces. A C-130 Hercules was dispatched from Clark Air Force Base (AFB) in Pampanga to Nichols AB where 22,000 pounds of food were loaded aboard. Several hours later the plane arrived over Roxas City, Capiz, and the pilot had to make two passes over the airfield before making his landing. A C-130 requires 5,000 feet of airstrip for landings, and the field in Roxas City was only 3,800 feet long. The plane was loaded with some difficulty and off-loaded by area Philippine Air Force personnel and Roxas City Chamber of Commerce volunteers.

A U.S. Air Force helicopter from Clark AFB rushed 4,000 pounds of nutribuns, medical supplies, rice, and clothing to Cagayan Province where an estimated 60,000 persons had been evacuated from their homes. Accompanying the airlift was an A.I.D. officer who assisted with the distribution of the goods.

At Tuguegarao, the provincial capital city, the Governor of Cagayan Province and the National Secretary of Social Welfare joined the flight for an aerial survey of the Province. Adverse weather conditions, approaching darkness, and low fuel delayed the return of the helicopter to Clark. The mission was completed the next day.

On November 27 Ambassador William H. Sullivan determined that the flooding was of sufficient magnitude to warrant U.S. Government assistance. The Ambassador authorized the expenditure of up to \$25,000 from A.I.D. contingency funds to support the GOP's emergency relief operation. Part of

the funds was used for baking 170,000 nutribuns, \$4,476 was held in reserve, and the balance was allocated to six provinces per recommendations of provincial governors and A.I.D. officials. As a result of more flooding in December, the reserve funds were released to give relief aid to the victims in Capiz Province.

Summary of U.S. Government Assistance:

A.I.D. Contingency Fund

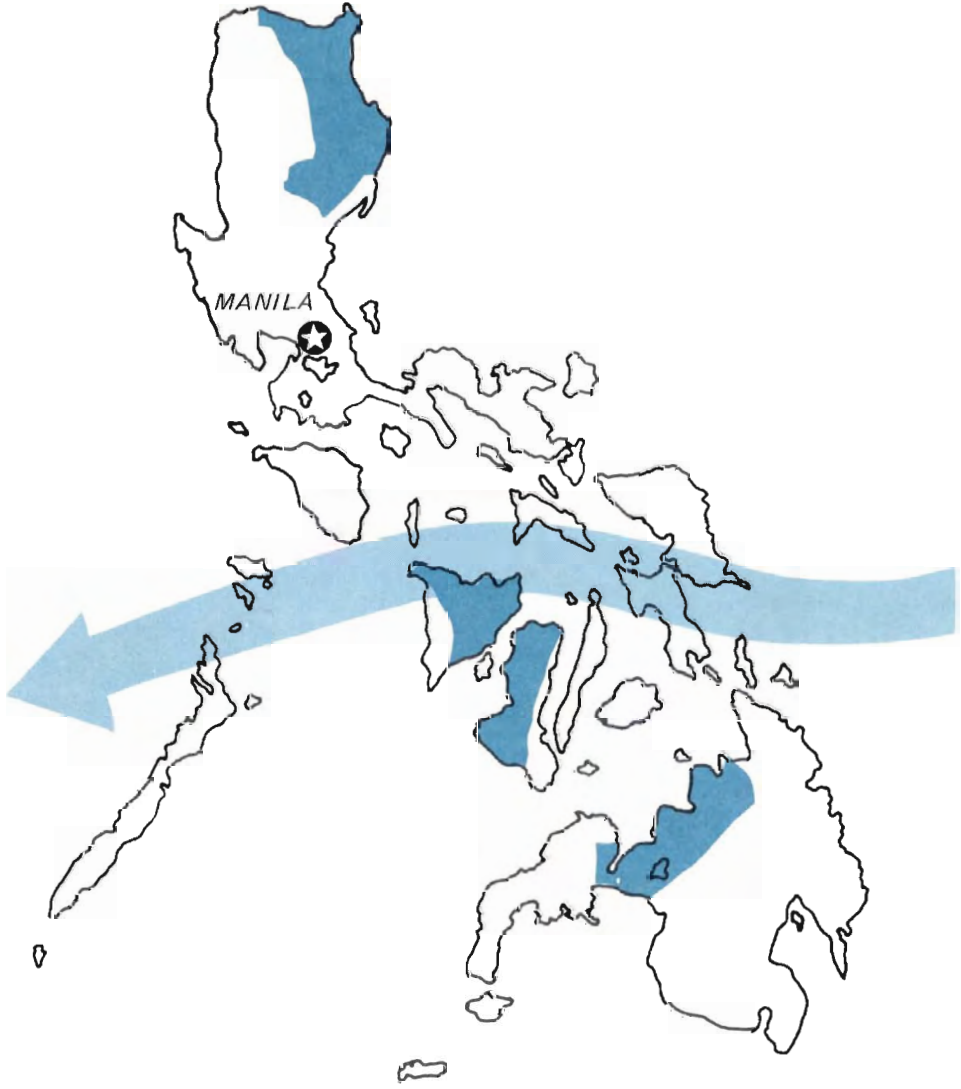
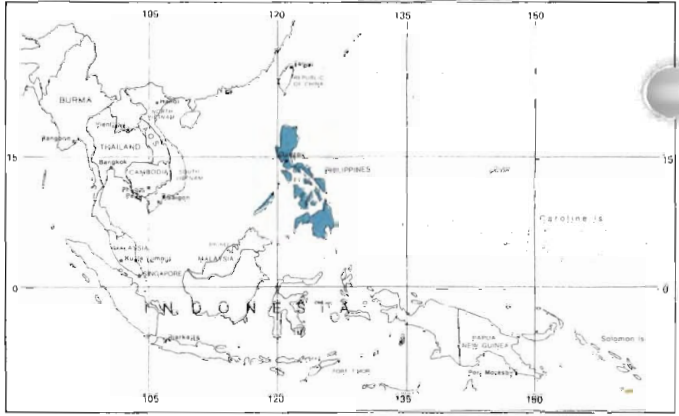
Allocations to the Provinces of Aklan, Cagayan, Capiz, Iloilo, Isabela, and Negros Occidental	\$23,216
Nutribun baking cost	1,784
PL 480, Title II Food for Peace	34,359
Pacific Utilization and Redistribution foodstuffs	4,270

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY U.S. VOLUNTARY AGENCIES:

As in prior disasters, U.S. voluntary agencies in the Philippines played a major role in the relief effort. The fast and dependable provision of cash, nutribuns, clothing, and foodstuffs was most effective during the emergency phase of the relief operation. Even after the crisis was over, the agencies continued to help the flood-affected populace through food-for-work projects.

Following is the commodity and cash value of assistance provided by the voluntary agencies:

C.A.R.E.	\$ 325
Catholic Relief Services	5,275
Church World Service	1,910
The Salvation Army	500
Seventh-Day Adventist Welfare Service	1,218



PHILIPPINES