



DISASTER
RELIEF

CASE REPORT
Philippines-Floods
August 1974

Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523

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

The Coordinator acknowledges assistance received in the preparation of this and other case reports from the many public and private organizations in the United States and abroad engaged in foreign disaster relief.

PHILIPPINES

Floods—August 1974

More than 1.2 million people were affected by floods brought about by prolonged and intensified monsoon rains during mid-August 1974. Damages were estimated in excess of \$17.8 million.

Value of U.S. Government

Assistance \$253,300

Value of U.S. Voluntary Agencies

Assistance 104,080

Value of Assistance from the

International Community 426,386

Seasonal southwest monsoon rains which began about August 7 caused extensive flooding throughout Central Luzon affecting essentially the same areas as those struck by the devastating floods in 1972, but flooding was not as severe or prolonged. Because of the continuous downpour, major rivers overflowed their banks, spilling water into the lowlands and destroying crops valued at an estimated \$2,967,190.

Much of Greater Manila was under water by August 16 with the most serious flooding occurring along the historic drainage canals (esteros) which were congested by thousands of squatter shanties. More than 300 families lost their homes and were evacuated to schools and other reception centers. These shelters were under the supervision of the Philippine police, military, Red Cross, and Department of Social Welfare (DSW). Since it appeared the continuing rains might duplicate the 1972 floods, the National Disaster Coordinating Center (NDCC) was activated immediately and provided disaster assistance from the very first hour of the floods. The NDCC's main base of operations was established in the newly-opened Imelda Relief Operations Center at Nichols Air Base (AB) in Manila where basic relief supplies are permanently stored to service limited needs during a major disaster. This Center was dedicated during the summer of 1974 to the First Lady, Mrs. Imelda R. Marcos, as a birthday gift from the Philippine Air Force.

ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PHILIPPINES (GOP):

Disaster relief efforts were quickly organized at all levels of the government. By August 17 a cabinet-level meeting had been convened to determine what relief measures would be undertaken. Representatives from the Agency for International Development (A.I.D.) and U.S. voluntary agencies attended the meeting. Reports on damage and areas of need were given from information derived from aerial reconnaissance flights flown by the Philippine and U.S. Air Forces. All accounts indicated that most of Central Luzon was a continuum of water. Some localities in the lower Pampanga River basin, including southwest Balacan, Pampanga, and southwestern Nueva Ecija, appeared to have suffered greater damage than during the 1972 floods.

Philippine officials determined that the disaster would require the mobilization of all Philippine resources and assistance from A.I.D. and U.S. military forces in the Philippines. The Chairman of the NDCC informed



U.S. and Philippine Air Force personnel palletize nutribuns for C-130 lift from Manila to Clark Air Force Base relief staging area.

the assembly that nine reception centers had been established throughout Manila for the homeless flood victims. Relief operations in the provinces were under the direction of provincial governors and military commanders. The most pressing need was food for families who had been forced to abandon their dwellings and were unable to cook food.

The NDCC issued instructions to provincial officials and school authorities to release U.S. Food for Peace flour to bakeries to produce highly nutritious bread (nutribuns) for the hunger-gripped flood victims. The nutribun, devised by A.I.D. nutrition experts, had become a supplemental daily meal for over 1.5 million Filipino school children and had been used in previous emergencies.

Most of the nutribuns were baked in Manila and taken to Nichols AB or flown to Clark Air Force Base (AFB), another staging area, for distribution by helicopters or amphibious vehicles. They were specially packed in three individually-tied, watertight, polyethylene bags, ten buns per triple bag, to enable them to be airdropped without bursting. The entire operation of baking, packing, loading, and distribution was judged extremely efficient. A total of 1,310,000 nutribuns were airlifted and another 1,710,000 were moved by trucks and boats. Included in the airlifts were more than 150,000 pounds of assorted foodstuffs, clothing, and medicines.

On August 18 President Ferdinand Marcos proclaimed a state of emergency in 13 Luzon provinces including Manila. The President made the announcement on a nationwide radio/TV broadcast summarizing the effects of the flood and the action taken by the GOP to relocate evacuees and rehabilitate the infrastructure. Additionally, President Marcos announced that the food situation was relatively good and appealed to the public not to engage in panic buying.

The NDCC divided the country into two parts to allow for better control and coor-

dination of the entire operation. Rescue and food-drop missions were provided by helicopters and amphibious vehicles from Nichols AB to areas closest to Manila. Clark AFB performed similar missions where required in areas north of Manila. Both bases had a 24-hour-a-day operation to get food to the people—fast.

The airlifting of relief commodities was augmented by helicopters provided by the U.S. Navy from the USS Tripoli, USS San Jose, and Naval Air Station, Cubi Point, Bataan and Subic Naval Base. Continuous reconnaissance flights revealed that many roads were still under water or impassable because of potholes and stalled vehicles. The main highway from Manila to Clark AFB was partially opened but only to large, heavy vehicles.

U.S. Air Force C-130 cargo aircraft ferried nutribuns and other supplies from Nichols AB to Clark AFB until relief operations at Clark were terminated on August 22.

Occasional light rains prevailed over Central Luzon for several more days as the monsoon continued to weaken. By August 24 road conditions vastly improved, allowing GOP truck convoys to move to areas previously serviced only by aircraft. Isolated barrios were being supplied by amphibious vehicles or bancas. All mercy flights were now dispatched from Nichols AB. Helicopters continued to fly to the more remote areas where surface transportation was still nonexistent because of flood conditions. All airlifts of relief supplies were completed on August 31.

The GOP reported local relief efforts on the provincial level were operating effectively. As flood waters receded and more and more roads were opened, relief activities were expanded. GOP Department of Health inoculation teams were sent where outbreaks of gastroenteritis and cholera had been reported.

As in past disasters, Filipino civic groups, the mass media, and countless private citizens responded with volunteer contributions and services.



Nutribuns are moved from the Imelda Center to U.S. Marine helicopters for delivery to flood victims.

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT:

When the monsoon rains became more intensified, aerial surveillance flights were deployed from Clark AFB over Pampanga and Tarlac Provinces. Observers reported large tracts of land were inundated and people were being forced to leave their homes because of the rising waters.

Anticipating the GOP would require air support in rescuing people and ferrying relief supplies, the U.S. military manned disaster relief centers at Clark AFB and Subic Naval Base. Although GOP policy attempted to meet rescue and relief needs by surface transportation to save fuel and keep airlift costs at a minimum, on August 17 the U.S. Air Force at Clark AFB received a request for emergency rescue of persons stranded on rooftops in Concepcion, Tarlac Province.

After President Marcos declared a state of national emergency and the enormity of the

devastation would require relief measures and assistance from the world community, U.S. Ambassador William H. Sullivan on August 18 exercised his disaster relief authority releasing \$25,000 for nutribun baking costs and limited U.S. air support. The U.S. Navy immediately committed Navy and Marine helicopters to reinforce GOP airlifts.

The A.I.D. Mission quickly became actively engaged in various forms of assistance.

A.I.D. personnel were assigned to NDCC and Clark AFB to help coordinate relief supply movements. Other A.I.D. officers served as observers on Philippine and U.S. Air Force reconnaissance flights over the affected areas. The U.S. Defense Attaché Office positioned personnel at the Center to coordinate U.S. airlifts and assist A.I.D. and NDCC personnel in planning daily support operations.

To finance increased helicopter and C-130 airlifts and continue the on-going produc-

tion of nutribuns, Ambassador Sullivan requested and received approval from AID/ Washington on August 19 for an additional \$125,000 in U.S. contingency fund expenditures. Subsequently the Ambassador asked for an additional \$25,000 to continue U.S. Government agency assistance and out of that amount made a cash donation of approximately \$6,100 to the Philippine Red Cross.

By August 24, U.S. air support was terminated and the GOP assumed sole relief responsibilities. A total of 243 sorties were flown by U.S. helicopters. A.I.D. personnel worked tirelessly with the GOP for weeks afterward to get a definitive estimate of the destruction and to help with long-range planning for rebuilding disaster-torn Luzon.

Summary of USG Assistance:

USG PL 480, Title II Food for Peace—~~3,900~~³⁹⁰ tons of soy-fortified flour valued at \$78,300. Reimbursement to the U.S. Air Force and Navy for aircraft support and nutribun baking costs\$175,000

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY U.S. VOLUNTARY AGENCIES:

When much of Greater Manila started flooding, the Philippine Red Cross contacted A.I.D. and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) asking for assistance in providing nutribuns for distribution to the affected populace. Baking began immediately as CRS and C.A.R.E. released PL 480 foodstuffs from their stocks and provided personnel to supervise the baking and delivery of the buns to staging areas. Funds from A.I.D. paid for the local purchase of ingredients such as sugar, salt, oil, and yeast necessary for baking the nutribuns. CRS, C.A.R.E., and other voluntary agencies contributed from their own resources to the relief effort as follows:

American National Red Cross—
 cash donation\$ 10,000
 C.A.R.E.—300 dozen sets of clothing valued at \$1,000 and 200 boxes of carbohydrate supplements valued at \$500 for a total value of 1,500



Nutribuns arrive at a drop site.

Catholic Relief Services—180 bales of clothing valued at \$31,860 and cash donation of \$2,000 for local purchase of medicines for a total value of	33,860
Church World Services—231 bales of clothing valued at	24,000
The Salvation Army—Cash donation for local purchase of rice for food-for-work projects	6,200
World Vision Relief Organization—Cash donation	28,520
Total	\$104,080

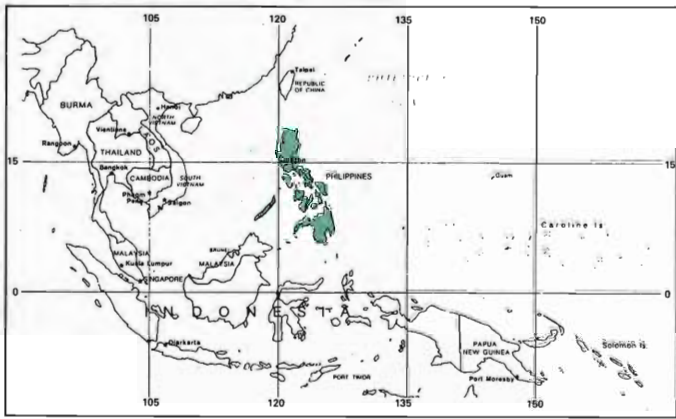
ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY:

Countries

Australia—Cash donation	\$ 14,881
China (Republic of)—Cash, food, seeds, and other relief material for a total value of	50,000
Germany (Federal Republic of)—Cash donation	7,493
Great Britain—Cash donation	5,000
Japan—Cash donation	20,000
Switzerland—Cash donation	4,805
Total	\$102,179

Organizations and Private Groups

League of Red Cross Societies—The Philippine Red Cross appealed to the League for assistance and 17 National Societies contributed cash and in-kind gifts for a total value of	\$171,207
Japanese private groups—Clothing, foodstuffs, medicines, and other relief materials for a total value of	130,000
Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO)—Cash donation	3,000
United Nations Disaster Relief Office (UNDRO)—Cash donation	20,000
Total	\$324,207



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