



THE PHILIPPINES

Disaster Management Programmes

Disaster Context

The Philippines is beset by a host of severe natural disasters, including volcanic eruptions, tropical cyclones, earthquakes, floods, mudflows, fire and drought. This is due to the country's geographical location, where tropical cyclones are formed and where the Pacific Ring of Fire and several earthquake fault lines are found.

According to the Philippine Atmospheric and Geophysical Services Administration, the average tropical cyclone occurrence in the Philippines is 19 to 21 per year, of which two are super typhoons. Volcanic eruptions are strong, especially those in Mount Pinatubo (1991) and Mount Mayon (2000 and 2001), which displaced hundreds of thousands and tens of thousands, respectively. The earthquake that hit northern and central Luzon Island in 1990 destroyed hundreds of millions of dollars in infrastructure and other economic facilities. Hundreds of people died. The most recent large typhoon that hit the country was Ferie in July 2001, which caused hundreds of millions of dollars of damage to agriculture and agriculture-related products and activities especially in northern Luzon.

Project Titles

- Emergency Grant for the Eruption of the Mayon Volcano, Albay, Philippines (OCHA DPR 310)
- Strengthening Local Government Capacity for Disaster Preparedness and Mitigation (UNDESA INT/95/X51)
- Public Awareness and Preparedness (PHI/02/003)

Sectors

- Capacity-building
- Early warning systems
- Relief and rehabilitation
- Training
- Planning and coordination
- Brokering with other donors

Funding

- The Government of the Philippines, through UNDP, has received a \$20,000 grant from the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for relief and rehabilitation assistance to the victims of the Mayon Volcano eruption; the funds were intended to be disbursed within four months, from July-October 2001
- In addition to funding from UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), UNDP contributed \$3,500 from DSS and \$3,500 from TRAC 1.1.3 funds
- Another \$12,000 from TRAC funds were allocated for the production of a one-minute film and TV plug on earthquake preparedness; also, UNDP has also allocated \$2,000 for the conduct of a three-day workshop aimed at strengthening the community awareness network in 10 Crustal Stress Community Awareness Network (CSCAN) stations

Partners

- Office of Civil Defence
- Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology
- PAGASA
- Provincial Public Safety and Emergency Management Office, Province of Albay
- Department of Environment and Natural Resources
- Department of Interior and Local Government
- Philippine Information Agency
- NGOs

Programme Activities

- Although the Mayon Volcano project is considered a joint UN undertaking, the lead implementing agency is UNDP. UN assistance focuses on the following three areas:

- Provision of deep well in safer resettlement areas for affected families within the six-kilometre permanent danger zone
- Establishment of two school buildings in safer resettlement areas
- Provision of seeds and farm tools for affected families

UN assistance in initial rehabilitation aims to:

- Help affected people and schoolchildren regain a “normal” life and reduce dependency on relief
 - Find the best way to sustain relief assistance already provided by the Government, UNICEF and NGOs
 - Determine an efficient way to address the unfulfilled urgent needs in the affected areas
 - Create a means to achieve long-term effectiveness of UN initial rehabilitation assistance in the areas prone to volcanic eruptions.
- The Disaster Preparedness and Mitigation project is part of a global programme to encourage exchange of experiences in disaster mitigation, especially through monitoring, coordination and public awareness. It aims to increase the capacity of disaster-prone communities to anticipate and mitigate large and sudden natural disasters such as heavy rainstorms and earthquakes. This disaster anticipation project includes monitoring, raising public awareness and strengthening the capacity of local information networks to link communities, scientists and public administrators in natural disaster mitigation efforts
 - A film clip on earthquake preparedness was produced in partnership with the PIA. PHIVOLCS provided technical assistance in this project. It is currently being shown in 100 theatres and on three TV stations in Metro Manila and will soon be shown in 100 more theatres all over the Philippines. The film aims to create public awareness and preparedness on earthquakes in particular, and natural disasters in general.

A workshop on strengthening CSCAN included around 30 volunteers in the 10 CSCAN sites in Luzon, together with representatives from the local government units and relevant national government line agencies. Over three days they discussed the protocols to be adopted in disseminating information about CSCAN. This activity forms part of the

objective of the programme on strengthening community participation on disaster preparedness.