AMURT & AMURTEL in the PHILIPPINES

Empowering People, Inspiring Change

SUPER TYPHOON RELIEF & REHABILITATION

Update: Dec. 8th, 2013

A word of explanation: It was only in the past week that telecommunication with some of the affected areas became easily possible. We now have a full-time staff volunteer dedicated to keeping the link with our donors and the worldwide community of support.

Since efforts began nearly one month ago approximately 75,000 people have been fed cooked meals or received basic medical assistance in over 50 local communities in four different provinces. Assessments and preparations are underway in Samar for the rehabilitation of schools, homes and livelihoods as well as psycho-social support for traumatized children. Building materials have been distributed on Kinatarcan Island (northern Cebu).

On Leyte Island our volunteers penetrate the interior and smaller Baranguays (geographic area within a municipality) to serve those who are receiving less assistance in this time of need. Many such families receive from the government only 2 or 3 Kg. of rice and a few tins of sardines for the entire week. In these areas which are 30 minutes and more from Tacloban we usually feed from 1,000 to 3,000 people each day. The meals provided are often their only source of vegetables and are always warmly appreciated. While food is distributed wounds and infections are treated. At times people have been brought into Tacloban for surgery.

In nearly every locality AMURT works hand in hand with local or international partners:

- in Tacloban (Leyte) - the Federation of Volunteers thru Radio Communications (FVRC) and the Massin Outdoors Organisation – a local group from Leyte itself. FVRC has coordinated most of the transport, logistical and security needs with exemplary ability.
- On Kinatarcan Island - local NGOs Sea Knights, PAUSE and SNAF who have been inspired by Father Tito, a dear friend and progressive priest in Cebu. Building materials for the reconstruction of their homes have been distributed to some of the 2,000 affected families there. Several thousands of people have also received food in the area north of Iloilo.

- In Samar our close working relations with Kinder Not Hilfe (KNH) of Germany and the Baranguay Captains (local government) pave the way toward a significant improvement of life for affected locals.

Samar is where the super storm first landed. Small coastal communities have been devastated – homes, schools and churches destroyed and coconut plantations levelled to the ground. The first phase of AMURT/EL's work here will be in Salcedo. Assessments are being conducted in most of the 32 Baranguays and budgets are being prepared for reconstruction of KGs and homes. Relocation of displaced families is already underway. Those who had lived on the beaches are now being resettled on donated plots. Dada Nirmalakrsnananda (Kurt Behringer) coordinates these efforts.

A program for the psycho-social care of traumatized children and families has begun with visits to schools and homes. Didi Ananda Shubra works closely with a child psychologist and team of 3 social workers.

Eight civil engineers, an accountant, the psychologist and social workers have been employed by AMURT from the local population.

Meetings and seminars have been held to help revive livelihoods. Seeds, tools and training are provided to catalyze new agricultural activity. It takes 8 to 10 years for the coconut plantations to produce and yield. Intercropping while the trees grow will provide food for both consumption and commercial sales. The municipal agricultural in-charge and an invited agricultural engineer conducted a seminar this past week.

KHN has pledged 1.8 million Euros (US$ 2.43 million) for the first phase of this work. The second phase will target Hernani, the municipality north of Salcedo.

Our ongoing work depends upon the generous contributions of our volunteers and donors. The level of devastation is difficult to comprehend, yet the smiles of both the victims and their benefactors reflect the noble spirit within each and every human being. Your continued support is deeply appreciated.

Other future plans under discussion include continued distribution of food and medicines, a mobile medical facililty capable of minor surgery, construction of child friendly day care centres and opening of a Neo-Humanist kindergarten.

Donations can be sent directly to:

AMURT in the Philippines
BDO Bank - Anonas Kamias Branch (US Dollar Savings Account)
Account No. 103980077734, Routing No: BNORPHMM (same as SWIFTCODE or IBAN)
Branch Address: Anonas Corner K6, Quezon City

International donations under $100 can be sent via this Paypal link:

https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=_s-xclick&hosted_button_id=CQJTPYK68ZLZS

CONTACTS: cebu@amurt.net +63 947 747 1006 or +63 927 889 5995 (Dada Pramananda)