

NEGROS RELIEF MISSION INITIAL REPORT

Guihulngan City, Negros Oriental

February 09-12, 2012



Simbahang Lingkod ng Bayan
Loyola House of Studies, Ateneo de Manila University

Introduction

The Simbahang Lingkod ng Bayan (SLB) unites itself once more with our fellow Filipino citizens who are in dire need of assistance in the midst of atrocity. In partnership with Globe Telecom, the SLB delivered a total of 500 packs of relief goods in three (3) identified informal settlements within Guihulngan City, Negros Oriental.

At about 11:49 AM last February 6, 2012, a magnitude 6.9 earthquake tore down the city's tranquility to rubbles. Day after day since then, the people from Guihulngan and other municipalities that suffered worse from the impact of the earthquake, try to live by the aftershocks they now experience routinely as well the fear of tsunami surge. Many families have temporarily abandoned their houses for fear of the strong earthquake happening again. Constrained by the same trauma, the operations of the public market, local stores and other business enterprises have been shut down. This resulted to a widespread scarceness on the daily basic needs such as, but not limited to, food and water- a condition that now forces people to rely on external help as even the local government unit's operations seem to have been impaired by the disorientation caused by the earthquake.

To help our brothers and sisters who are now struggling to get by each day, and to somehow close in the gap between the certainties and uncertainties of being in their situation, SLB and Globe Telecom instantly deployed a batch of relief goods which was served deployed last February 11, 2012.

Brief Situationer

Unlike hydro-meteorological hazards such as storm surges and typhoons, one can never be ready for a strong earthquake. That is why to most of our fellow Filipinos in Negros Oriental, the physical losses and the human casualties due to the earthquake that strucked them, cannot really tell the story of how their lives have been damaged.

In Guihulngan City, 17 individuals have already been confirmed dead and 28 are still missing due to the landslide that resulted from the earthquake shock. The city's water supply system was totally damaged. Telecom Services as well as electricity have only been restored on February 12. Latest update from the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) shows that as of the aforementioned date, there are already a total of 25, 698 families displaced by the earthquake or a total

of 128, 080 individuals. These figures are inclusive of those who are staying within and outside the 74 evacuation centers identified in Region VII. Refer to Table 1 for details.

	Within Evacuation Centers	Outside Evacuation Centers	Total
Number of Families Affected	25, 698	128, 080	34, 507
Number of Individuals Affected	17, 229	86,035	128, 080

Table 1: Total Number of Affected Families in Region VII as of February 12, 2012

The figures tend to vary among each evacuation center as people normally come and go. There are reports of families only coming into some evacuation centers because of relief goods distribution. Other times, they choose to camp out nearby their houses. Because of this condition, relief efforts required further assessments on the ground for a more accurate set of data.

SLB partners with Globe Telecom

On February 9, SLB sent one of its staffs to Guihulngan City to conduct a rapid needs assessment in the area. This is done together with a team from Globe Telecom who will also be setting up *Libreng Tawag* stations on identified evacuation centers. Initial data from Region VII Earthquake Hotline through the Department of Social Welfare and Development indicated that there are a total of 3, 296 affected families in the city of Guihulngan. These families are said to be spread out among six (6) evacuation centers within the city. However, information from the local DSWD and the regional disaster risk reduction and management council indicated only three (3) major evacuation centers located at the Poblacion area. Based from the team's assessment, the three centers combined house approximately 2, 720 families. The remaining figure of about 576 families are located randomly on other parts of the city, either on the

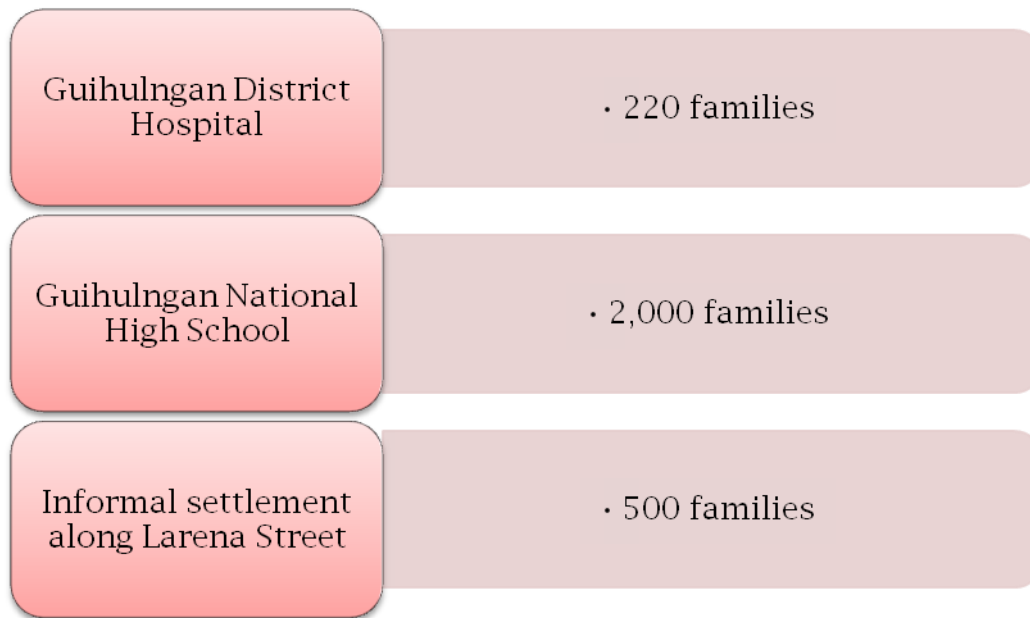


Figure 1: Major Evacuation Centers in Guihulngan City, Negros Oriental

streets, uphill or in other public places such as the cemetery. Refer to the diagram above.

As mentioned earlier, the situation in these evacuation centers are very volatile in a sense that families come and go, and when they do, the concentration of evacuees tends to change. On the other hand, evacuees in Guihulngan National High School and along Larena Street are identified to be getting most of the relief aids that are coming in for the affected families in the city.

Further assessment, in coordination with the parish of Guihulngan through Fr. Raul Ingan, allowed the team to identify three (3) settlement locations with their respective number of families for relief distribution. The total number of families adds up to 376 for the three locations. Refer to Figure 2.

Figure 2: Target Population for Relief Distribution

Guihulngan District Hospital Sitio Cadre, Poblacion, Guihulngan	· 242 families (220 evacuees, 22 displaced patients)
Guihulngan Public Cemetery Sitio Nagkalhin, Kalubinhana, Guihulngan	· 119 families
Parish Compound Sitio Bukana, Poblacion, Guihulngan	· 15 families

From the team's visit to these evacuation centers, the actual needs of the families affected have been identified. Interviews conducted among affected families and the leaders among them suggest that due to the casualties and damages to infrastructure caused by the earthquake, families have decided to abandon what used to be their home and settled in their make-shift houses. These improvised settlements are usually composed of a tarpaulin which serves as roof, and any type of sheet, i.e. blanket, mat, soft padding or cushion) to cover the ground.



Fear is what keeps them out of their own houses. Earthquake aftershocks that are continuously being experienced make them uncertain of the safety of their surroundings. Classes have been suspended until the city engineer is able to inspect school buildings and declare them to be safe for occupancy. Even the public market, local stores and business establishments have temporarily been shut down for fear that people might get trapped inside in case they collapse. This resulted to a growing hunger and thirst among the population of Guihulngan as their condition deprives them of their daily basic needs.

SLB in partnership with Robinsons Supermarket

The relief delivery operation is made possible by SLB's partnership with Robinsons Supermarket. After the needs had been established among target population of affected families, orders have been placed through Robinsons Bacolod. The partner supplier took charge in the procurement, sorting and repacking of relief items. The store employees also assisted in the loading of relief goods in the transport truck.



The cost of the relief goods served amounted to a total of 250, 000 Php. Each relief pack contains the following items with their corresponding quantity.

Table 2: Relief Items Served as of February 11, 2012

Item	Quantity/pack
Rice	2 kg
Water	1.5 L
Sugar	1 kg
Canned Goods	5 pieces
Biscuits	2 packs
Bath Soap	3 bars
Alcohol	1 piece

Relief Delivery Operations

SLB and Globe Telecom were able to distribute a total of 500 relief packs on February 11, 2012. The distribution of goods is detailed in the table below.

Location	Number of Families Served
Guihulngan District Hospital	250
Guihulngan Public Cemetery	120
Guihulngan Parish Compound	100
c/o Globe Telecom	30

Table 3: Summary of Relief Goods Distribution

Modes of Distribution

With the assistance of SLB and Globe volunteers, as well as the security provided by a few members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the undertaking of the relief distribution happened successfully on all three locations. Each area took a unique form of distribution process.

a. Guihulngan District Hospital

The distribution of relief goods was led by Dr. Edgardo P. Pialago, Chief of Hospital, with the assistance of the administrative staffs of the hospital. Two hundred fifty (250) families were provided with stubs in order to claim their relief package. The claim stubs were given according to the list of families registered as occupying the 5 hectare premises of the hospital. This total number of beneficiaries is inclusive of the 22 displaced patients of the hospital both before and after the earthquake. Claim stubs were then collected by an assigned volunteer as each beneficiary was being provided with the relief pack.



b. Guihulngan Public Cemetery

Based from the listing of the 120 most indigent families settling at the cemetery, head of households were called one by one to receive their relief package. Identified leader of the group may receive the relief packs on behalf of a family who do not have representative- either none is present or the representative present is too old or too young to claim the package. The names are then being crossed out of the list by the same person from among them who was calling out each name on the list.



c. Guihulngan Parish Compound

From the initial number of 15 relief packs allocated for the families occupying the parish compound, the team decided to apportion an additional of 85 packs, placed under the supervision of Fr. Raul Ingan and Ms. Rose Omadlao, as the settlers within the compound reached to more than 100 families. During the distribution, most of the occupants are out of the parish doing the daily work that they can still do- washing clothes for most women and fixing their

temporarily abandoned houses for the men. It has been agreed that all 100 packages will be left under the care of Ms. Omadlao. She will be the one to distribute them to each household, just as she does her medicine rounds to them. She also said that this will keep outsiders from crowding in to the parish compound while distribution is taking place.

A sort of human chain had been employed to transport all 100 relief packs from the truck to the parish storage. Before 12 noon on February 11, all packs had been served to beneficiary families.



d. Care of Globe Telecom

The remaining 30 relief packs were randomly distributed by Globe Telecom volunteers among evacuees on the side of the major roads of Guihulngan. These families are the ones who do not feel safe inside their houses but do not want to abandon them either, so they stay at a safe distance away from their dwellings but not belonging to any cluster of evacuees within and outside evacuation centers.

Conclusion and Recommendation

As of February 13, 2012, roads to La Libertad- located north of Guihulngan- are already accessible to vehicles. This municipality, along with Guihulngan, Tayasan, Jimalalud, Bindoy and Ayongon, is among the hardly hit by the earthquake in Negros Oriental. So far, Guihulngan City had been the most accessible among them that is why it has been getting most of the relief aids being sent by various benefactors. In this regard, SLB may have to do another undertaking which will respond and give priority to the needs of any of the previously isolated municipalities beyond Guihulngan.

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