

UBS Optimus Foundation

Emergency Rapid Response Fund – Update, 18 Aug 2014

Nine months ago the strongest typhoon ever to make landfall, hit the Philippines, causing more than 6,300 deaths and the displacement of 4.1 million people. With the country still recovering from Typhoon Haiyan, Typhoon Rammasun struck on 15 July 2014 and caused the death of 97 people while damaging or destroying more than 100,000 homes.

Despite these tragedies, the United Nations stated that the humanitarian situation has stabilized in the regions affected by Typhoon Haiyan. And, on a positive note, the recovery stage did not include the break-out of any epidemics, as is common in such calamities, and rule of law was maintained. In the city of Tacloban, businesses are re-opening and streets are filled with traffic again.

However, the devastation has left deep marks. Many people still live in tents and are struggling to rebuild their lives. Farmers and fishermen were most severely affected. More than 30 million coconut trees were wiped out – affecting the livelihood of almost 1 million people. It will take seven years for any newly planted coconut trees to bear fruit again. The fishing grounds were damaged because of the debris and pollution, and fishermen are not equipped to fish in deeper waters.

UBS Optimus Foundation donors support rehabilitation of maternal and childcare services

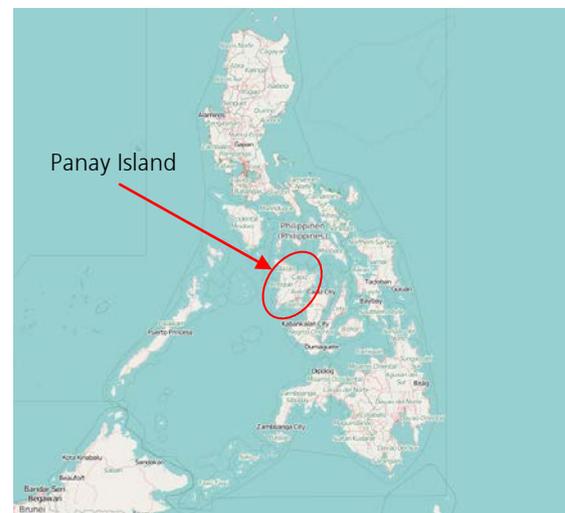
Panay Island was one of the areas worst hit by the typhoon, with 144,710 families (692,071 individuals) affected. More than 98,000 houses were destroyed and damage to infrastructure amounts to more than 52m CHF. As agriculture and fishing are the major resources on the island, the affected population is completely reliant on external assistance.

The UBS Optimus Foundation, with generous support from clients, employees and UBS, began the second phase of its emergency response in March 2014 by supporting Acción Contra el Hambre (Action Against Hunger, ACF) with a 1.2m CHF grant. The program is focusing on improving outcomes of young children by supporting pregnant and breastfeeding mothers and children under five.

In order to best address malnutrition, a screening of all children between 6 and 59 months on the island and adjacent coastal lands (see map) is being performed. The need for the intervention is particularly critical as the malnutrition rates in this area were already high prior to the typhoon. Now capacities and structures for the treatment of malnutrition are practically nonexistent.



Nutrition screening on Panay Island



Area of intervention in the Philippines

A wide array of measures benefiting more than 30,000 children

In particular, the program focuses on addressing the needs of under nourished children by training local health staff and volunteers to prevent and treat this devastating condition which can permanently damage children. The most affected families will receive food vouchers to increase the variety and nutritional value of consumed foods. ACF is also establishing "Parent-Baby Friendly Spaces" to provide much needed psychosocial support to the community which has lost so much.

In addition, the program includes ongoing monitoring and evaluation to assess its impact which seeks to benefit 9,000 pregnant and lactating women and 31,450 children under 5 years of age.



A child-friendly space providing psychosocial support

Outlook

The UBS Optimus Foundation is preparing a new program with Save the Children Switzerland, which will grant 600,000 CHF to provide quality Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) for young children in post-Haiyan Philippines. The program will focus on supporting children to reach their developmental milestones by ensuring that their social, health and nutritional needs are met, and that they are protected from maltreatment. As part of the program, day care workers and parents will be trained on how to provide proper stimulation to ensure children's young brains can develop to their full potential. In addition, La Salle University in Manila will conduct a rigorous evaluation to measure program impact.

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Our impact

The Emergency Rapid Response Fund of the UBS Optimus Foundation raised 2.9 million CHF from clients, staff and UBS matching funds.

Almost 100,000 children and caregivers were reached.

Phase 1: Immediate Relief. The following services were provided:

- distribution of essential needs kits and emergency nutrition biscuits
- medical treatment in mobile clinics
- vaccination

Partners: Médecins sans Frontières, Save the Children.

Phase 2: Rehabilitation. Focus on maternal and childcare services, including:

- training of local health staff and volunteers
- distribution of food vouchers
- establishment of "Parent-Baby Friendly Spaces" providing psychosocial support

Partners: Action against Hunger, Save the Children.



One of the island's health posts where community-based management of malnutrition is performed

Photo credit: ACF, OpenStreetMap