

## **Philippines: UMCOR Grant Meets Emergency Needs**

November 11, 2013—The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) approved an emergency grant in response to Super Typhoon Haiyan, a category 5 storm, which barreled through the Philippines on Friday, November 8.

The \$97,000 grant will provide emergency food, water, and water purification tablets to 7,500 individuals (or 1,500 families) in Tacloban City, Leyte Province, an area worst hit by the typhoon. To ensure that food is delivered in a timely fashion, it has been UMCOR's strategy to purchase food locally to support local economies, and provide culturally-appropriate food to those who lack ready access in the aftermath of a disaster.

UMCOR funding will also build the capacity of local UMCOR Philippines' staff and volunteers for meeting emergency needs. In the coming days, UMCOR will be conducting needs assessments and planning additional assistance, including material assistance through the [UMCOR Relief-Supply Network](#).

UMCOR Assistant General Secretary for International Disaster Response, Rev. Jack Amick, and UMCOR Philippines Head of Mission, Ciony Eduarte, remained in contact over the weekend to discuss a strategic response that would get relief to where it is needed most. Amick is traveling to the Philippines office tomorrow, November 12, to work with field staff, partners, and needs assessment. UMCOR is also exploring a partnership with GlobalMedic to establish safe water points in critical areas.

"Every disaster teaches us something new about the effectiveness of disaster risk reduction strategies," said Amick. "As we work in the trenches of this great tragedy to support the needs of survivors, we are also thinking ahead on how to further reduce disaster risk and improve local response efforts," he said.

While emergency efforts are underway to stabilize the areas affected by Haiyan, long-term rehabilitation is a top priority of discussion, according to Amick. UMCOR Philippines will be examining possible rehabilitation projects in the months ahead.

Typhoon Haiyan, known locally as Yolanda, made landfall in the Philippines on the east coast and traveled over eastern, central and western Visayas, Bicol, and southern Tagalog. The typhoon carried high speed winds and torrential rain, which caused massive flash flooding and landslides. The city of Tacloban suffered the most significant fatalities with estimates of casualties topping 10,000. Across the country, more than 600,000 people were displaced by the storm and some have no access to food, water, or medicine, according to the United Nations.

### **Disaster Risk Reduction**

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) is an important element of UMCOR's work in humanitarian response to disaster. DRR institutes a system of life-preserving strategies so that communities can be ready to respond effectively when disaster strikes. UMCOR helps communities learn how to identify vulnerabilities, develop a systematic response plan, organize on-the-ground resources and form partnerships to help people in need. Since 2009, the UMCOR Philippines office has put UMCOR's DRR training into action on several occasions, since the Philippines experiences disasters and typhoons year after year.

You can support UMCOR's relief and recovery work in the Philippines by contributing your donation to [International Disaster Response, Advance #982450](#). All of your gift, 100 percent, will be used to help those in need.