



World Vision launches relief efforts for the thousands of children and communities affected by Taal Volcano eruption

To support the immediate needs of the people affected by Taal Volcano's unrest, child-focused World Vision has started distributing dust mask in evacuation centers in Batangas.

"World Vision is committed to support the families, especially the children, who are in a difficult situation because of the eruption. Our response team is already on the ground and will also be distributing hygiene kits, plastic mats, blankets, drinking water and other emergency essentials in the coming days," said World Vision Singapore's National Director, Lilian Chung.

Currently, Taal Volcano is under alert level 4 which means that hazardous explosive eruption is imminent within hours or days. The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PhiVolcs) has already reported more than 400 volcanic earthquakes and lava fountains generating 800-meter tall dark gray steam-laden plumes. The volcanic activities also prompted the education department to cancel the classes of more than seven million students across four regions.

Mandatory evacuations have been enforced in communities living within the 14-kilometre radius of Taal Volcano's crater. According to United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), there are at least 450,000 people within the danger zone who are the most vulnerable to "possible hazards of pyroclastic density currents and volcanic tsunami." More than 10,000 families or 43,000 individuals are now staying inside evacuation centres, says the national disaster risk reduction and management council (NDRRMC).

11-year old Princess from Laurel, Batangas shared, "I pray that this will be over so we can go home soon." Her family is taking refuge in a school turned evacuation center, sharing a classroom with seven other families. Princess says it's cold in the evening, she could barely sleep. She also gets terrified with the constant jolts caused by the restless Taal.

Ashes continue to envelope nearby villages, posing health concerns, especially among children. Prolonged exposure to ash falls could trigger respiratory illnesses and gastrointestinal problems due to ash-contaminated food and water. It can also cause eye irritation. Rommel Fuerte, World Vision's National Director in the Philippines says, "The volcanic eruption is putting a lot of people at risk because it is surrounded by populous communities. Children are particularly vulnerable to respiratory illnesses because of ash fall that has reached even Metro Manila. World Vision is already on the ground and we are committed to complement the on-going government-led response." He adds, "With the continuous volcanic activities, we do not know when the affected children and their families will be able to go back to their homes."

World Vision aims to initially support the immediate needs of 2,000 families or 10,000 individuals with provision of hygiene kits (bath and laundry soaps, toothbrushes and toothpastes, sanitary packs, nail cutter, undergarments and malong or tube skirt), non-food items (mosquito net, mats and blanket), dust mask and drinking water. Child-friendly spaces will also be set up to help children cope from the distress caused by the disaster while cash-for-work focusing on community clean-up will be implemented towards the early recovery phase of the response.

For more information contact:

- Fiona Soh – Resource Development and Communications Director, World Vision Singapore
+65-6922-0108, fiona.soh@worldvision.org.sg
- Matilda Leong – Resource Development and Communications Manager, World Vision Singapore
+65-6922-0114, matilda.leong@worldvision.org.sg

About World Vision

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