

August to
October 2010

U.T.O.L UPDATE



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ONE YEAR AFTER TYPHOON ONDOY

The challenges remain...

One year after tropical storm Ondoy (International Name: Ketsana) wreaked havoc on the Philippines, the government says it has put in place more advanced weather monitoring systems that could trigger quicker emergency response to major disasters. Department of Science and Technology Minister Mario Montejo, who supervises the state weather bureau, says communications systems have been upgraded, more doppler radars installed and about 43 automatic weather stations throughout the country will provide a more accurate forecasting system that will save lives.

Ondoy or Ketsana struck the Philippines on 26 September 2009, dumping more than a month's worth of rain across the capital and nearby provinces in a matter of hours. It caused the Marikina and Pasig rivers in the heart of Manila as well as the Laguna de Bay south of the city, to burst their banks, triggering the country's worst flooding that covered about 80 percent of the capital.

In total, more than 1,000 people were killed, 600,000 displaced and up to 10 million affected. The country suffered an estimated US\$4.3 billion in economic damage, according to the World Bank.

The challenges...

The storms exposed the Philippines' poor weather forecasting infrastructure, with many pointing out that the population could have saved themselves had they been given a two-hour warning. The flooding put a spotlight on government's poor urban planning, as many of the casualties were from communities along major waterways and riverbanks, including slum areas that have grown in size over the years, unchecked by the local authorities. Now, a year later, despite repeated warnings from the government, hundreds of thousands of families are returning to these highly vulnerable areas.

One particular challenge is the availability of evacuation centres to house internally displaced persons (IDPs) in case of a repeat of the 2009 typhoons. Another potential problem is that the level of preparedness in areas outside those affected by the typhoons remains low. According to the state weather bureau, the Philippines is struck by 20 typhoons each year on average.

<http://www.irinnews.org>

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KNOW YOUR STORMS

Cyclone: Generic term for strong wind and storm system

Tropical Storm: Storm with winds more than 63km/hour

Typhoon: Storm with winds more than 118km/hour (same conditions as hurricane)

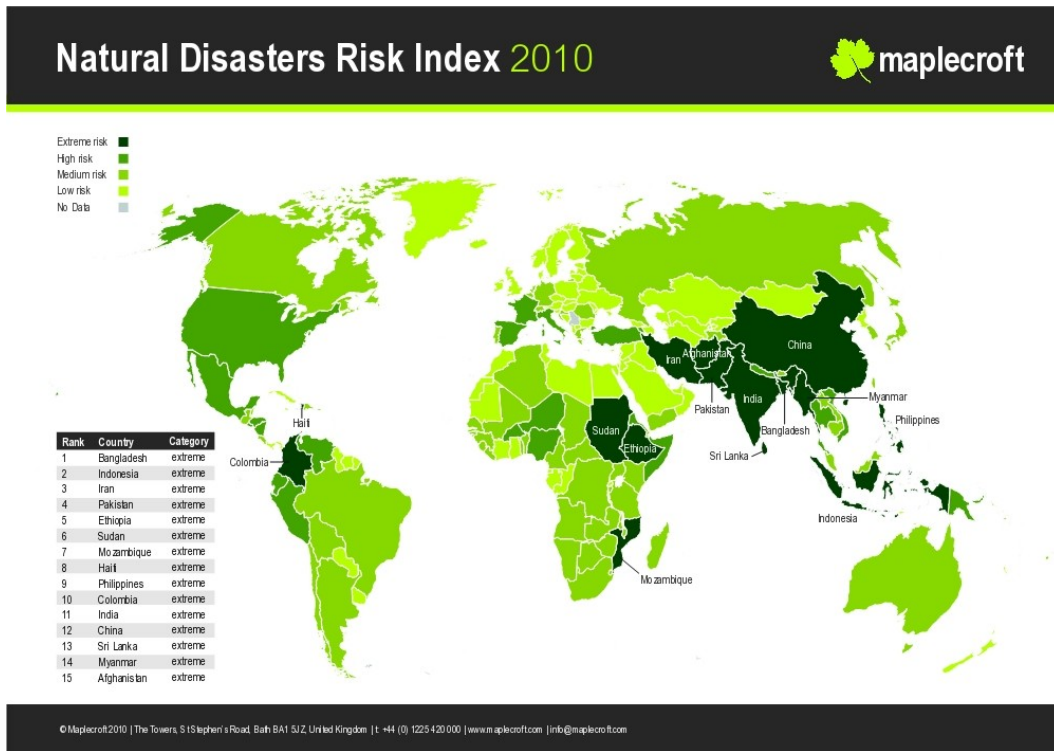
Super Typhoon: Storm with winds more than 240km/hour

Category 5: Winds that reach 250km/hour.



You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.

Isaiah 55:12



Fifteen countries are included in the extreme category of Natural Disasters. Philippines is on no. 9.



Tarlac Medical Mission with AFP reserved Command 104 Technical Service (104th TASBde, APFRESCOM)

PRAYER/PRAISE ITEMS



- ▶ Welcome Atty Jane Borje! She is now our new Board Secretary.
- ▶ Pray for the final opening of the UTOL Medical Clinic on 9th Avenue, Cubao Quezon City.
- ▶ Pray for Dr. Jun and Amy Sta. Romana as they migrate to the U.S. this November. Pray for provision and the path that they need to take.