



HAIYAN: *One Year On*
FROM EMERGENCY TO RECOVERY



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Eleven-year old Cherry Mae Baba (in red shirt) and her brother Dave Baba, 9, walk with a friend Kate Bagyo through downed trees next to Somosa Elementary School, badly damaged during typhoon Haiyan.



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Six-year-old Carl and his friends run along the main street of Old Kawayan a community in Tacloban hit by typhoon Haiyan.



MARK NONKES / WORLD VISION

Introduction

On November 8, 2013, the world's strongest typhoon ever recorded devastated the Central Visayas region of the Philippines. Over 6,000 fatalities have been recorded, with close to 2,000 missing. The disaster has affected an estimated 14.1 million people and left 4 million displaced¹.

World Vision declared a global response, deploying local and international staff. The relief response initially targeted to assist 400,000 people (80,000 families) but eventually reached over 700,000 people.

The ongoing recovery and rehabilitation phase will assist 14,000 families with shelter, livelihood, education, health, water, sanitation & hygiene (WaSH), health and disaster risk reduction (DRR).

This book ushers us back to the tremendous challenge and misery faced by the survivors and brings the spotlight on the courage and grit of Filipinos despite the odds against them. Our hope is for us to learn from their stories and be inspired with their resilience.

As one community declared – *we are stronger than Haiyan.*

¹ (OCHA, 20 Nov 2013)



*When we first came here after Haiyan struck,
the picture was really one of desolation.*

Today we hear their stories and they are in tears,
but they are tears of joy.

*To all our donors and sponsors, we in the Philippines, thank
you from the bottom of our hearts and we are also very happy
to show you that everything you have given us
is accounted for.*

We invite you to come to the Philippines and see how you
made a difference in the lives of Filipinos.

Josaias Dela Cruz

Executive Director, World Vision Development Foundation



The faces you can't forget

Yvonne Duque
(The Guardian; Dec. 3, 2013)

There are faces you just can't forget, however briefly you set eyes on them. This was how I felt seeing the faces of children begging on the roads on our way to Ormoc city. These are not the usual children you see on the busy streets of a city.

Here, they're chasing passing vehicles, no matter how infrequently those vehicles pass, holding placards with the words, "tabang" (help), "food" and "water" written on whatever piece of cardboard or wooden plank they have managed to salvage from the rubble around them.

Over the past two weeks, since I've been deployed on World Vision's aid response to typhoon Haiyan, I've seen too many of those faces and those placards. But I seem to remember each face.

When I was making the long journey to northern Cebu to help set up our child-friendly spaces – large tents containing play materials and staffed

by trained counsellors, giving children a place just to be a child – some of those faces flashed up in my mind; the visible traces of dried tears mixed with sweat and dirt.

As soon as a smiling child is in front of me in one of those spaces, I suddenly feel energised again. We're hoping to set up more of these spaces on the island of Panay over the coming days, and another 40 in the runup to Christmas. In a mainly Christian country, Christmas is an important festival, even amid all the devastation.

As a doctor, a development worker, and a Filipina, the terrible devastation caused by Haiyan for children and their families has been immensely affecting for me. Children, especially those under five, are at high risk of diseases caught from unclean water, unsanitary or unhygienic living conditions, insufficient food and more. I've seen children in Ormoc pumping water from a source surrounded by broken toilets, garbage, debris, even corpses.

I have read the media reports suggesting that children here are at higher risk of being sexually abused. Their homes were damaged, so they're living in evacuation centres, or neighbours' houses. That displacement – the temporary living situation where privacy is lost and many family units are broken – puts children at risk.

Three days after Haiyan, I talked to four children in Ormoc. They have all lost their homes, and their only possessions are the clothes on their backs and the wet, torn books they try to dry out in the sun. I asked them if they were thinking about the future. They shared their dreams – among all the devastation – to become teachers, or dancers, for example. That was a huge relief for me. These children choose to be positive despite all the reasons to be negative around them. We adults need to learn from that.

Part of the reason why World Vision has set up child-friendly spaces amid the Haiyan disaster is that we really want to see children be children.



HASANTHI JAYAMAHA / WORLD VISION

Disasters of this scale regularly rob children of their childhood.

In our child-friendly spaces, you can hear children laughing and singing. They are painting, playing and listening to stories. They are slowly regaining trust and confidence. The teachers are as amazed as I am. The teachers we bring into these spaces are themselves in need of support, so I commend their passion and heart. But the spaces don't just benefit the children, because we have set up spaces next to them specifically for women, especially those who are breastfeeding.

Where so many have lost their homes, it's a safe place for mothers and children to live side by side, or for children who have lost their parents to remain within the reassuring environment of teachers, mothers and friends. I see in their faces that these spaces are a little heaven for them.



Joy is one of the 1,170 mothers who is regularly attends the women and young children space (WaYCS) session. She was able to salvage her children's medals, a symbol of pride for her and the family.

CRISLYN FELISILDA / WORLD VISION



Children play in one of World Vision's child-friendly spaces. The activities in these spaces help children cope with the distress of disaster.

HASANTHI JAYAMAHA / WORLD VISION



MARYANN ZAMORA / WORLD VISION

*“After five days of searching for them,
I knelt down and raised my hands,
thanking God for answering our prayer...”*

Patrick

Aid worker's diary: *Answered prayers*

Maryann Zamora
(World Vision Blog, Feb. 11, 2014)

When I met Patrick three months ago, he was desperate.

Between sobs, hunched over on the debris-littered ground, he told me he had been separated from his wife and children in the chaos after .

"I've been everywhere to look for my two children, my wife, and my mother," he said. "But I can't find them."

Here was a 27-year-old man begging for the Lord's mercy, worried that his wife and children were among the bodies I'd seen cast alongside the road, on a horrific journey to Tacloban.

I was stricken and deeply touched by his story. This man – my age – seemed to have lost everything he held dear:

As he huddled on an empty bag beside an uprooted tree, I shared a few of my biscuits and some water to help him fill his hungry stomach. As he started eating and I stood up to leave, a little voice told me to take another moment.

I asked Patrick if we could pray together, and he said yes. We cupped hands and embarked on a prayer that left us both in tears.

"Lord, I know what we gave him is not enough, but please give him comfort and his family. Help him find his mother, wife, and two little children," I prayed.

It was all I could offer before I had to rejoin the team. For the rest of the day, I saw more and more bodies and more people sobbing. I grew more devastated by the destruction.

When I left Tacloban a few days later and World Vision began providing disaster relief assistance to the thousands of survivors, I often remembered Patrick. To me, he was the face of the disaster – and I continued to pray for him.

I urged my friends and family to pray for him as well. I posted his photo and story on Facebook and asked for prayers for him as he searched for his family. I asked for prayers to give him strength and courage, and the same for all the typhoon survivors whose story is the same as his.

As the weeks went by, I thought less often about Patrick and his family.

But just last Sunday, almost three months after typhoon Haiyan, I returned to Tacloban. As the plane landed, I felt goosebumps. My experience

of Tacloban two days after typhoon Haiyan – walking through the debris and stepping over bodies – returned vividly.

A day after I arrived, a teammate and I walked into a local eatery for a late lunch. As I ate chicken curry, I looked up and saw a familiar face.

It was Patrick. He was working as a server at the small restaurant. When I saw him, a lump swelled in my throat.

He smiled widely and took a seat at our table.

“By God’s grace, I found my family, and they are safe. Our prayer was answered, ma’am,” he said.

My heart sang. I was overjoyed and trying to control my tears. I am amazed and still overwhelmed at how God revealed his power.

“As soon as I found them, after five days of being hungry and searching for them, I knelt down and raised my hands, thanking God for answering our prayer. At that time, ma’am, I was about to give up. I gave myself another three days to look for them.

I was just praying that in case I couldn’t find them that they would just be safe,” Patrick told me.

I asked him where his family is living now.

“We live in a World Vision-assisted area,” he said. “My family received relief goods from World Vision. We are very thankful to receive them; I wouldn’t have known where to look for food for my children if World Vision hadn’t helped us.”

That afternoon, my colleague and I visited Patrick’s home. We found him as he was hanging his children’s clothes to dry. We met 4-year-old CJ and 2-year-old James Patrick. We greeted his wife, Ana Rose, who came from washing the laundry along the river, just a few meters away from their small, makeshift house covered with a tarpaulin.

Ana Rose told us how they survived after typhoon Haiyan, while Patrick prepared lunch for CJ and James Patrick.

“We had been hungry for almost a week,” Ana Rose said. “Most of the time, for days after the typhoon, my neighbors would just share a plate

of rice for the four of us, but of course we couldn’t eat much because our priority was for our children. We didn’t care if we are hungry as long as our children were not.

The family received food, blankets, mosquito nets and a tarpaulin from World Vision. They use the tarpaulin as a roof on their house after it was destroyed by the storm’s strong winds.

Ana Rose said, “We really didn’t know how we would have survived if World Vision didn’t help us.

“Thank you so much to all of you and to God for helping us to survive and for keeping our family complete.”





World Vision staff, Crislyn Felisilda tries to cheer up the family of Janet Cruz and neighbor children. They tell her the story of their day of terror when typhoon Haiyan roared through Tabogon, North Cebu, the Philippines.



A diary of *devastation*, loss, and *hope*

Crislyn Felisilda
(*The Guardian*; Nov. 22, 2013)

I'm from Cagayan de Oro in Mindanao, and usually work in Manila, but I'm currently deployed in Cebu. I've been to a few of the areas affected by Haiyan and have seen the rawness of its impact.

From the air, I saw people walking through the debris. Coconut and banana trees, the main source of income for many poor families, were either bent or broken. Many houses had collapsed and roofs torn away. The typhoon flattened so many villages, and the loss and destruction is difficult to bear.

I'm proud to say that we Filipinos are resilient to disasters. But we've never before seen the likes of Haiyan – or Yolanda, as we call it here.

Until now, I've found the aftermath of the “monster-typhoon” hard to process. I couldn't erase the first heartbreaking scene I saw on

TV, of survivors weeping as they cradled the bodies of their children who had drowned in the deluge.

The storm swept away everything, even houses and tall buildings with strong walls came crashing to the ground. We still don't know the extent of the damage in some of the more remote areas of the archipelago as many communication lines are down.

I've heard horrifying survival stories: children recounting how they fled for safety while metal sheets from roofs swirled overhead. Some recall hiding inside a cave, sobbing with fear. Parents can't hold back their tears when they recall how their family came so close to death.

I'm not a stranger to these scenes of grief. I've been stationed in Mindanao for the past two

years as part of the World Vision response to the aftermath of typhoon Washi (Sendong) and typhoon Bopha (Pablo). I was also there to cover the devastation inflicted by tropical storm Ketsana (Ondoy) in Metro Manila and typhoon Megi (Juan) in the northern part of Luzon.

I'll never forget my first real typhoon experience during typhoon Fengshen (Frank) in Western Visayas five years ago. It's sad to say, but I think the impact of these disasters in my country is getting worse every year.

Some of our staff who responded to the earthquake in Bohol left their families during the typhoon. They assumed their loved ones would be fine because we're used to climatic events

here and know how to cope. But Haiyan was more fierce than we could have ever imagined.

World Vision Philippines has been doing back-to-back relief response, from typhoon Habagat, the Zamboanga siege, Bohol earthquake, and now, Haiyan. There's little space to breathe and more sleepless nights.

Although I find myself anxious about how to survive in the coming days, many others here still burst out laughing when our food supplies and hygiene kits arrive. They're just glad something has arrived to sustain them for a couple of weeks.

Children are smiling again now that we've just started to put up out the first child-friendly

spaces, and this eases my fatigue. Due to the devastation to buildings here, which we'd normally use for these spaces, they are simply large tents managed by our trained counsellors and containing some play materials.

Among all the pain and loss, several groups and individuals have launched initiatives to raise funds and supplies for survivors. The generosity from the international community is overwhelming. So many volunteers are here, tirelessly packing up relief supplies. I'm thankful that Filipinos can still manage to smile and be grateful even in the most dire circumstance. I think we've come through the worst, and we can rebuild our lives.



The happiness on their faces is evident as families affected by Haiyan carry home relief goods given to them by World Vision.



A child shows his artwork after a creative exercise World Vision's child-friendly space. Activities like this help children cope with the distress of disaster.



Six-year old Daniel, a World Vision-sponsored child, is all smiles as he cuddles with with a bag of relief goods.



On this hot, sunny day in Barangay Pal-anog 12, Tacloban City, survivors of typhoon Haiyan patiently line up to receive the relief goods from World Vision.

EUGENE COMBO AND CHRIS LETE / WORLD VISION

The magnitude of this disaster surprised all of us. It is important that we go beyond just responding to the need.

That our vision should be
how we build for the future.

*This job is too big for anyone.
Everybody has to work together.*

Trihadi Saptoadi

Regional Leader, South Asia and Pacific







Karen Rivera
(WWI.Org; Aug. 19, 2014)

A humanitarian's *close encounter* with *Haiyan*

Grace Baloro believes she was born to be a humanitarian worker.

Growing up in the province of Bicol, Philippines, she lived with the menacing threat of Mt. Mayon, one of the country's most active volcanoes and the ominous threat of typhoons that frequent her province.

In the midst of the chaos and destruction of her childhood, Grace witnessed how her mother would rush headlong to reach out to members of their community. These circumstances would shape and launch her career in humanitarian work.

In her 17 years of working with World Vision, Grace thought she had seen it all. But nothing would prepare her for the wrath of typhoon Haiyan.

Here is Grace's story...

Call of duty

"A week before typhoon Haiyan, I was set to leave for Bohol, to take part in the response for earthquake survivors. I had a heavy heart leaving my three kids (JJ, 13; Marie, 12; and Kairos, 3) with their nanny because my husband, who is also a humanitarian worker, was also going away for a trip.

"There was news of a super typhoon coming, but the call of duty can't be ignored. We left the kids with a supply of food and water and left instructions to the nanny to prepare their quick run bags in case things got worse.

"It was a decision that would haunt me and my husband in the ensuing days."

The deafening silence

On November 8, 2013, typhoon Haiyan hit Tacloban City and other parts of the Visayas region. Ferocious winds and the sudden rise of sea water wrecked havoc on Tacloban City

and provinces of Samar, Panay and the northern tip of Cebu. In an instant, it changed the entire landscape of Tacloban, the city that Grace and her family had settled in and called home.

“I kept calling my children and nanny starting at 6:30am of November 8 but their cell phones just kept on ringing. By 7am all the numbers I knew in Tacloban were dead. Panic and helplessness started to creep in as colleagues who are also from Tacloban reported the same. We were tormented with worry.

“Then came the afternoon and evening news of what was happening in Tacloban. I was numbed with worry with reports of extensive devastation. We decided to go home to Leyte, as soon as typhoon signal and travel restrictions were lifted in the morning. It was one agonizing night that we couldn't wait to be over.”

The long trip home

After taking a boat to Leyte, two days after the storm Grace and colleagues started for Tacloban. The trip that is normally a two- to three-hour drive, would take hours as their rented van drove through the destruction and mayhem along the road. In Tanauan, a damaged bridge forced them to abandon the vehicle and continue on foot.

“We were silenced by the devastation that slowly unfolded along the way. The nearer we got to Tacloban, the bigger the devastation we saw. We

started walking together with so many people. There were long lines of cars moving at a crawl. People were walking like zombies. Children were asking for food, crying. Men and women were at loss looking for their lost or missing love ones. The stench of death was everywhere. [We saw] dead people all around the roads together with so much garbage from the ocean. The heat was terrible. There were no trees standing around. People were also looting bags of rice in the area we passed through.”

Bargaining with God for the lives of her children

“The world seemed to stop spinning for me and reality sunk in. It was that moment that I offered to God the lives of my three children and nanny. It was that moment that I told God that whatever happened to my kids, I would accept everything but He must prepare my heart for the inevitable. I prayed that He would not let this day pass without me reaching our home.

“I was able to hitch a ride on a motorcycle from Tanauan and reached Palo at 5pm. From there, I was able to hitch a ride again to Tacloban. The scene of destruction in Tacloban was worse than what I passed through in Tanauan and Palo. There were more dead people on the road, the stench of death was heavier.

“The closer I got home, the lighter I felt. I no longer felt tired. Another prayer began to form in

my lips. I said, ‘Lord if you give my children and nanny a second chance in life, if I see them alive and safe tonight, I would still serve you in Tacloban.’

“A block away from home, I saw the flickering lights coming out of our home. In the darkness, I heard the sweetest sounds I thought I may never hear again. The voices and laughter of my three kids and their nanny while having dinner with my husband, who had managed to secure a flight home from Manila.”

After arriving home

Grace's house sustained damage from Haiyan. In the subdivision where they live in, a five foot high wall of water engulfed homes. Grace's children and nanny are lucky to have survived, unscathed. The next day, Grace and family scrambled for the first flight out of Tacloban to Manila. They left with nothing but the clothes on their back.

Her children continued on with their studies in Manila. In April, they started the repair work on their home in Tacloban.

Grace kept her promise, and is currently a team leader in Haiyan Response in Tacloban.



“I said, ‘Lord if you give my children a second chance in life, if I see them alive and safe tonight, I will serve you in Tacloban.’”

Grace Baloro

I learned the *smell of death*

Mikhaela De Leon
(*World Vision Magazine*; Nov. 13, 2013)

I wrote this in my diary while I was waiting to board the C-130 plane bound for Manila from Tacloban:

I learned the smell of death.

The stench of at least 1,000 dead bodies hung in the air as I took the longest and most depressing walk of my life. I will never forget that trip to the Tacloban Airport – it was noon, and the air was already humid and stale, a far cry from the billowing winds of two days prior.

A jeepney (transit) driver ahead told us to cover our noses as we passed, for the air reeked of the dead.

“Where are the bodies?” I asked him, as I didn’t see any.

“There, in the rubble, buried in those collapsed houses. Hundreds of them,” he said. I cringed. It didn’t take long before I actually saw them.

Dead bodies lined the streets. They were bloated and stiff, twisted in awkward poses. I had never

once imagined myself seeing such a ghastly scene: human corpses and dead animals lying side by side along the highway as though on exhibit.

“They were stubborn,” I heard someone say. “They were told to evacuate, but they didn’t listen.”

I looked away. It felt disrespectful to stare. I walked on.

I was only thinking one thing: Home.

In the wake of super typhoon Haiyan, which devastated the Philippines November 8, World Vision has launched a full-scale response to provide emergency aid to 400,000 people. With communications lines down, staff lost contact with several of their colleagues whose homes were in the storm’s path.




Janet Cruz weeps as she recalls the fury of typhoon Haiyan as it roared through Tabugon, north Cebu, the Philippines.



The Batican family walk through the rubble of their home destroyed by typhoon Haiyan in Ormoc, Philippines. Their son, Johpett Batican, 14, (left) is a World Vision sponsored child.



Days after Haiyan ravaged Tacloban City, mountains of debris are seen piled up on the roads. The city was virtually shut down, with electricity, communications and other basic utilities non-operational.



*“I was only thinking
one thing: **Home.**”*

Mikhaela De Leon



Voices of survivors:



“I was *shivering* and
looking at *flying roofs*.”

In the devastating wake of typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda), a small table in a cramped village hall serves as baby Patrick's new home. Curled in a corner, baby Patrick is in a deep sleep, unaware of what just happened in his hometown.

His mother, Rowena, sitting outside the hall that now shelters families left homeless from the storm, listens to a World Vision staff member speaking with a village official. After a few minutes, baby Patrick makes a sound. Rowena comes inside and rocks him back to sleep slowly in her arms. When all is quiet again, she puts him back in the middle of the table to keep him from falling.

Rowena and her one-month-old son, Patrick, ran to the village hall after typhoon Haiyan had blown away their whole house. A small table serves as baby Patrick's temporary bed.

Rowena recounts the day that typhoon Haiyan landed in the northern part of Cebu on November 9.

“We ran inside the gym, but minutes later the iron-sheet roof was also blown away. We ran again to the village hall to take cover. The wind and rain were strong and whistling. I just gave birth to Patrick through a caesarean procedure. I was running under the rain, carrying my baby. My husband was also running with our eldest son.

We feared then that if [Haiyan] would also blow away the roof of the village hall, we would have nowhere to go to that could protect us from [Haiyan's] rain and wind,” says Rowena.

Outside, many houses are badly damaged. Fallen trees, roofs, and house debris litter every corner of Libertad, a small village in Bogon City, where the wrath of Haiyan affected all 82,000 of its residents.

Toppled trees and electric poles leave the city stranded in total darkness at night. Communication is also a problem. There are

nearly 66,000 displaced people in Cebu alone, the Office of Civil Defense Central Visayas reports.

Rowena's husband, Jerry, sold coal for a living. He earned Php 130 (US\$3) a week. They used to grow vegetables in a small garden for food. Life was already difficult for them, but now it is much worse in the aftermath of Haiyan. Without money to buy food and no garden for vegetables, Rowena's family can only eat porridge supplied by the local government social welfare agency.

A few meters away from Rowena is a family whose house was also damaged by Haiyan. John, 4, points to his new home, which used to be their convenience store.

“We ran to grandma's house,” says John. “But her place was also damaged. Then we ran to the village hall. There were many people there. I was shivering and looking outside. I saw trees falling and roofs flying. We waited inside until the storm calmed.”



John stands in front of his grandmother's house, where they hid first. He and his parents ran to the nearest village hall after Haiyan was tearing apart his grandmother's house bit by bit.

"It was difficult," says John's mother, Nancy. "Everything that we have, our house, our appliances were destroyed in an instant."

Nancy's home, a 20-square meter house, was flattened by the storm. All their belongings, including clothes, a television, and wooden chairs, are lost. They were only able to salvage a few things, a wooden bed, and a cabinet.

"We just made the final payment on our home for Php18,000 (US\$400) and our TV for Php 6,000 (US\$133). I didn't know that we would still end up with nothing. All that money is now wasted," she adds.

Nancy's husband worked in a nearby water refilling station, which was one of the most important businesses among the communities devastated by typhoon Haiyan.

"Drinking water is difficult," says Nancy. "You are lucky to pay Php25 (less than a dollar) for five gallons of water. Most of the people here cannot buy it. So they just take water from the well, boil it, and drink."

The well that Nancy refers to has been left unused for years since people in her village had access to a running water system, but all the pipes were destroyed during the storm.

John comes to his mother drinking a cup of water from a mug that looks like a soccer ball. He smiles and runs again inside the house.

But Nancy looks pensive, glancing at her neighbor, whose house was also destroyed, and says, "It is difficult to recover, especially when you have no money and you're hungry."



Sadness is evident Jenny Ann Batican's face after their home was destroyed when coconut trees fell on it during the onslaught of typhoon Haiyan.



(World Vision Blog: Nov. 26, 2013)

Memories of Tacloban

Chris Weeks

My sole memories of Tacloban are from the last 24 hours. Anyone who's seen the city, two weeks after typhoon Haiyan ferociously tore it to the ground, will never forget it.

Unlike most of my World Vision colleagues here in the Philippines, I never knew this vibrant and cultural place before the storm. One of my co-workers – fighting back tears – tells me she used to go ballroom dancing here. Nor did I ever see its backdrop of beautiful green hills.

The Tacloban I arrived at yesterday was an endless, jumbled wasteland dotted with ragged tents and piles of debris where homes once stood. Its unsightly mass emanates a putrid and

unforgettable smell. And the once-lush hills that hugged the city are now barren and scarred.

Just minutes from the airport, I saw new body bags at the side of the road with a child's doll placed on top. Bodies are still being discovered in the debris strewn along every street.

This detritus looks like broken palm trees and foliage. But when you get closer, you see it's a flattened jumble of humanity itself. As well as rubble between the splintered branches, there are battered books, clothes, broken bits of furniture, smashed up motorbikes, and household appliances now compressed into the mush.

The stories we've been hearing as we walk from village to village are heartbreaking. But they also demonstrate the unbreakable spirit of Filipinos on Leyte Island.

As we edge along the outskirts of Tacloban, a 37-year-old man named Leo comes out to tell us that his mum and older sister were swept away by the 15-meter waves. Their bodies are in a large pile of debris right in front of us – but he can't get to them. He shows us a picture of 39-year-old Irene, gesturing toward the pile and repeating to us: "My beautiful sister."

Next door, in this village called Salvacion, my colleague meets four-year-old Hannah – the

sole survivor of three children. Similar stories are heard from nearly every family along this coastal stretch.

The true number of victims is still unknown. In a neighboring settlement, we find a mass grave where nearly 400 people are being buried next to a smashed-up school. 300 people are still missing – under the debris across the road, we're told.

As the media is reporting, aid is getting through and many survivors are starting to consider the future. While the devastation is still plain to see, scores of aid agencies are here and, along with World Vision, we're coordinating the effort to transport food, water, and shelter to those who need it most. The task seems overwhelming, but trucks are rolling and supplies are reaching people.

My colleague Cecil Laguardia – a seasoned emergency specialist from the Philippines with 15 years of experience – was shocked to see, as she arrived in Tacloban 72 hours ago, that some people were standing motionless amid the debris looking dazed, somehow unable to process what had happened two weeks earlier.

Just days later – while acknowledging the untold scale of the devastation – the mood seems to have shifted slightly. Families we met, while still grieving, are mustering strength to rebuild their lives.

For many, that means staying put in the Tacloban they know and love, come what may, and playing

their part in the collective effort to somehow resuscitate an entire city.

They know the task can be done, and that the city will become a symbol of the indomitable Filipino spirit that has been demonstrated to the world time and again.

Chris Weeks talks to Leo Quejada, Jr. His mother and sister were both killed by the 15-meter storm surge.



“The stories we’ve been hearing as we walk from village to village are heartbreaking. But they also demonstrate the unbreakable spirit of Filipinos.”

Chris Weeks

After Haiyan: *A father's miracle baby*

Leoniza Morales
(*Rappler.com*; Jun. 14, 2014)

"I am thankful we survived. I am still holding my baby now," 36-year-old Jennylyn Advincula shares.

They were sitting outside the small makeshift house in the coastal village of Dona Brigida in Tolosa town, Leyte province, when we stopped to ask how they were coping with typhoon Haiyan's impact. Tolosa is 24 kilometers from Tacloban City.

Jennylyn's family and neighbors evacuated to the daycare center the night before the typhoon made landfall, Friday, November 8.

During Yolanda

They all had a good sleep that night, but at around 5am, the violent wind and strong rain ripped the roof and knocked down the walls.

All of them huddled in one corner, but as the wind and rain grew more powerful, they decided to move to the house of the village councilor.

"I carried our baby, but the flood water was so strong. I thought we will all die. That was the first

time in my entire life that fear gripped my heart," 30-year-old Denmark recalled.

Baby in a bag

Then he saw an object floating towards him. When he realized it was a bag, he immediately grabbed and opened it and threw away the clothes. His neighbor angrily shouted at him.

Before putting Glaeza Mae, who was 7 month old that time inside the bag, Denmark told God, "if you're going to kill my baby, kill her right away so she wouldn't suffer more. But if you want to keep her alive, save her."

Then he put her in the bag as she was shivering and her face was already turning to blue. He knew any minute that she might die.

Miracle baby

Finally they reached the village councilor's house, Denmark shouted, "That's my daughter!" while throwing the bag to the open hands of the men trying to help them as the current seemed to overtake him.

That ordeal seemed to be eternity, but Glaiza Mae never cried. When they opened the bag, she was lying peacefully and her right thumb inside her mouth, oblivious that she and her family were unscathed and victoriously escaped Haiyan's wrath.

The community calls Glaiza Mae a miracle baby. They believe an angel was with her inside the bag.

"The typhoon took everything from us: our house and the variety (sari-sari) store, yet we will be forever grateful God protected our baby and gave us all second life. This gives us hope that we can overcome any hardship," says Denmark.

During the entire time we were listening to the couple, Glaiza Mae was looking at us, smiling, mumbling, and making sounds we can't understand. Perhaps she was sharing her experience while inside the bag.

Denmark and Jennylyn's was among the 425 families in their village who received rice rations from World Vision and the World Food Programme's general food distribution after typhoon Haiyan hit.



The community calls 7-month-old Glaiza Mae a miracle baby. They believe an angel was with her the entire time she was in a bag as her father struggled to keep afloat in the raging water, the day Haiyan struck their coastal village.

CHRIS LETE / WORLD VISION

Sustaining strength



with little sleep

Aaron Aspi
(*World Vision Magazine*; Nov. 25, 2013)

Hearing my teammates snore as we sleep every night is a welcome disturbance. It means winning another hard-fought day of assessments and relief distributions.

Relief operations are a race against time. As humanitarian workers, everyone is working so hard. I would often smile and prod my colleagues that with the obstacles we face, we might already be borrowing strength from our next day.

We cheered as we hurdled one challenge after another – working our way through the hardest hit islands of Panay, Cebu, Leyte, and Samar. We continue to overcome massive logistical challenges to sustain relief distributions while providing community-based interventions like women and young children spaces for breastfeeding moms and child-friendly spaces to restore children's wellbeing.

Every distributed relief pack means one less worry as we strive to reach out to thousands

displaced – that hungry children would no longer beg in the streets and work in peril to help their families. It means that a family would have nutritious food for two weeks and that they would be sleeping better as they use their plastic sheets, sleeping mats, blankets, and mosquito nets to protect them from extreme weather, illness, and mosquito bites, especially at night when it's cold.

Inside the child-friendly spaces, I listen to the children and look at their drawings, watch them dance, and hear them sing. Playing volleyball with the children, I'm grateful for their trust as they let me in their world, walking me through their stories of grief and loss; stories of healing, resilience, and enduring love. These stories help remind me why I chose to be a humanitarian worker.

Sometimes I had to go to a corner to catch my breath and fight away tears. There's no getting used to sharing tales of destruction, of seeing

children and families suffer. Relief workers are not insulated from the difficulties of our people. We feel their hunger and thirst, their pain and loss.

This experience of being with the disaster-affected communities rouses me early in the morning as I chase stories, and this keeps me energized till night while uploading resources, dodgy connectivity and all. This gives me courage to face the ever-changing contexts and understand the complex dynamics involved in mounting a massive emergency response. Knowing that I'm doing this for the disaster survivors, especially the children, makes me want to help more.

It is always my prayer to be led to the right people, to understand with my heart when words seem to escape my ears and twist my tongue. My faith is the strongest force working inside me, protecting me as I traverse from one island to another while I arrange field visits for

our media teams, CEOs, and journalists. The adrenaline rush of making last-minute decisions amidst difficult conditions is enough to keep you sleepless for days.

Deep inside, I had to overcome my introvert tendencies. The fear of speaking in public was easily pushed aside by the humanitarian imperative to provide information from the ground – highlighting the urgent needs and

seeking public support while providing a balanced perspective of what's happening on the ground.

During the onset of the disaster, I was getting non-stop media interviews from early dawn in to the wee hours of the night with only a candle by my side. "All the best to your team, good luck with your work and take care." Kind words from the media gave me comfort and strength. Who would've thought that I'd be talking to Anderson

Cooper, early in the morning and showerless for three days?

As a humanitarian worker, what keeps me going is the knowledge that there will come a time when the affected communities here in the Philippines will be able to get back on their feet, rebuild better communities, and thrive again.



An inquisitive and expectant Cyrah Mae Itang looks on as World Vision distributes relief goods to typhoon Haiyan-affected families.



World Vision distributes food and hygiene kits to families affected by typhoon Haiyan in Bantigui, Ormoc, on 26 November 2013.



These siblings, both studying in elementary school, live inside a neighbour's house that leaks every time it rains.

MARK NONKES / WORLD VISION



“I’m grateful for their trust as they let me in their world, walking me through their stories... These stories remind me why I chose to be a humanitarian worker.”

Aaron Aspi



Every disaster is unique. The fact that we'll be able to help a lot of people makes me proud because that's what we're called to do.

You are not alone.

This is the reason why we are here. We will go together on this journey, on this very difficult time.

Jimmy Nadapdap

Response Director, November 2013-January 2014

Desolation and bleakness engulf Tacloban

Cecil Laguardia
(*The Guardian*; Nov. 26, 2013)

While waiting for the C-130 military flight in a Cebu airbase, I talked with three men who had previously made a trip to bring goods to their stricken families in Tacloban, a city devastated by typhoon Haiyan. They described the experience as terrifying and recalled the howling winds that lifted tables off the ground.

I was travelling with two colleagues, Jimmy and Minnie, to a co-ordination meeting with Dinky Soliman, the secretary of the department of social welfare and development in the Philippines. The NGO World Vision has worked with the department on several occasions – on long-term projects as well as relief operations.

The lengthy queue of people, young and old, lining up near the aircraft with food and necessities almost made me cry. Some were bringing sacks of vegetables and tins of biscuits. One man carried a 50kg bag of rice. I saw a woman holding a mattress in one hand and her daughter in the other. How can they endure this suffering? Sadly this might only be the beginning of it.

When we touched down in Tacloban, the desolation and bleakness seemed to engulf a

wide area – it was no longer the city I knew. The airport was a mess: passengers had to clamber over broken chairs and rubble to get out, and most of the ceiling was gone.

Outside, cars were strewn upside down. Nearby a long line of people were waiting in temperatures topping 38C (100.4F) for another C-130 to fly them to Cebu.

The only local transport available was a tricycle: a motorcycle with a sidecar. The driver said the price of petrol had soared from 50 pesos (70p) to 200 pesos. Most of the tricycles had been damaged in the storm, he explained, so there were few drivers plying the route anymore.

There is only one, badly damaged road into Tacloban. With the number of aid trucks trying to get in – and the government's 72-hour limit that each truck is allowed to stay there – the road is choked with slow-moving traffic.


What really struck me was that despite it being two weeks since the typhoon hit, the city remained at a near standstill. People milled around aimlessly; a mother breastfeeding her baby against the backdrop of a damaged house

stared blankly into the distance. Piles of litter and rubble remained uncollected, and almost all of the houses had their roofs torn away.

Tacloban feels eerie, and the stench is overpowering. I saw three bodybags on the roadside. The unmistakable smell of death struck us as we passed. When we came to an old bridge, the driver explained it was where many dead bodies had been recovered. What were these people doing when Haiyan struck? Walking? Talking with friends?

The Tacloban I saw after typhoon Haiyan bore no resemblance to the city I once knew. As a fellow passenger on the C-130 had explained, many people heard the typhoon warning but underestimated its strength. Tacloban residents expected the storm to be more powerful than usual, but not a combination of a hurricane, tsunami and typhoon. Who could predict that?

Before the city was devastated by the superstorm, Tacloban was fast growing and one of the most urbanised part of the eastern Visayas islands. But when Haiyan struck, those developments were smashed to pieces.



“The lengthy queue of people, young and old, lining up near the aircraft with food and necessities almost made me cry... How can they endure this suffering?”

Cecile Laguardia

Darkness and destruction on the road to Tacloban

Leoniza Morales
(*The Guardian*; Dec. 8, 2013)

I'm finally home. I was in Ormoc city and Tacloban city for 10 days last month as one of WorldVision's first responders team. I've been a first responder in many disasters over my nine years as part of this organisation, but even as a Filipina, typhoon Haiyan is the worst I've known. I was there for our initial assessment of the need and our response, and now I'm back in Manila where I'm usually based – though I grew up in the province of Camarines Sur, in the Bicol region of Luzon Island – waiting to hear when I'll be deployed back to Tacloban.

The trip from Cebu to Ormoc took a lot longer than usual. The pier was packed with people waiting for their loved ones, who were bringing food. Then the two-hour trip getting from Ormoc to Tacloban turned into two days: six hours in a jeepney (our colourful buses), being stranded overnight, and then four hours in a habal-habal, a motorcycle taxi.

By 6am on my first day in Tacloban, more than 100 people were queuing in front of a bakery: some of them had been there since 4am. The owner only allowed each person 50 Philippine pesos (60p) worth of bread, so everyone got some. At the two petrol stations, hundreds of people – children and adults – were also queuing. When we left the city, we lost communication with the office.

My time in Tacloban brought an endless view of destruction – flattened houses, schools, government offices, hospitals, markets. Sugarcane, banana, coconut, bamboo and other trees were uprooted. I kept wondering: where are all the children? How can they survive? How and when can they go back to school? When did they have their last meal? Where are they sleeping now?

For six hours, we travelled in a jeepney, and stopped at Alangalang. A rice warehouse had

been looted. All that people wanted was to feed their hungry families. Two colleagues and I wanted to get back to Tacloban, but we couldn't find a habal-habal, so we agreed to head instead to a nearby town, Carigara, where a colleague's family live.

We found a jeepney driver who needed to get back to Ormoc city; his family were sleeping in the jeepney because their house had been damaged in the typhoon. Even so, the driver and his family welcomed us and shared their food with us. That was the last day we ate rice and had three meals a day.

Tacloban was in chaos. The road to city hall was littered with rubble, with the bodies of dead children and animals on both sides of the street; only some were covered up. Tacloban's convention centre had become the evacuation centre two days before the typhoon. In the dusk

light, I talked to a mother who was cooking instant noodles given to her by men who had looted a grocery store. Another was having dried fish for dinner, given by people who had looted the market. They told me the looters shared whatever they found, so everybody had something to eat. Men told me that they hadn't eaten for several days. What little food they had, they gave to their children.

When they asked me when food aid was arriving, I had to explain that it was extremely difficult to bring in aid because some roads were – and still are – not passable.

Apart from the light from cooking fires and the burning of old tyres for heat, Tacloban was in

total darkness when night fell. Soldiers and police officers were patrolling strategic roads and areas, and a curfew from 8pm and 5am had been imposed. Every village had organised groups of men to guard the entrance and exit points in their area.

Mildred, our programme officer, took us to her home. We had porridge for dinner, and bread and coffee for breakfast. When we reached the city hall at 3pm the next day, we ate the rest of the bread and canned food we had brought with us. I thought of all the children who would sleep hungry on the cold floors of the evacuation centres and makeshift houses that night, and prayed that it wouldn't rain.

Doing our assessment work in Tacloban was difficult. We could find motorcycles but we couldn't find any fuel. Many of our team walked miles to their meetings in different places. We relied on resourceful colleagues who would somehow rustle up some fried fish and rice, or come from their family home with cassava and vegetables to share.

As we left at the end of 10 days, having secured a lift in a military plane, I divided 20 biscuits I had among the team so that we would eat that day; I was lucky to enjoy a meal and a hotel bed once in Cebu before the last leg of our trip back to Manila and our families. But the children and families in Tacloban are still there, and they have no such escape.



A woman with long dark hair, wearing an orange t-shirt with a graphic, is sitting in a sugarcane field. She is holding a bundle of harvested sugarcane stalks. The background is filled with tall green sugarcane plants. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Gone with the wind:

The *plight* of the
sugarcane farmers

Annila Harris
(WVI.org; Feb. 6, 2014)

“It takes sugarcane 10 months to become ready for harvest. Planting the seedlings, cleaning, weeding, fertilization and constant care is needed for a good harvest. You know this was the time of harvest...”

Narcisa takes a deep breath, emulating a sense of dismay.

“And now, this year, after a 10 month investment, I am uncertain of the outcome because the typhoon has damaged the crops; the sugar processing unit is damaged too. I feel helpless and sad.”

Narcisa, 41, used to work on sugarcane plantations, earning a stable income. All that changed the day typhoon Haiyan hit Ormoc.

According to some media reports “In Ormoc alone the estimate damage to sugar industry is 1 billion USD. There is an estimate prediction of 40 percent decrease sugar production and 30 per cent loss of crop production.”

For fellow sugarcane plantation worker Christina, living just few blocks away from Narcisa, making two ends meet was a challenge. She has a family of 13 but the sugarcane plantation has been her saving grace.

Working in the plantations from a very early age, for 31 toiling years, it had become her identity, her world. Showing no mercy, the typhoon ripped her away the very thing she needed for sustenance. With the sugarcane crops damaged and the processing unit shut, the sugarcane operations were suspended.

“My house is damaged and parts of the crops damaged. This hurts my heart. The income from

the sugarcane plantations is my only means of survival. It has been taken away. The relief goods, given by World Vision are the only thing that is keeping us going. My husband has taken up some small jobs; which helps a little,” she says.

“The typhoon has put a stop to our work. The owner of the land where I work has been affected too. Because of the strong winds, the sugarcane crops fell. This will affect the quantity and the quality of the sugar it will produce. There is no work, activities are suspended. So now I go wash other people’s laundry to earn whatever little I can. My husband now helps with small repairs in other people’s homes,” she says.

Jessica, chairperson of Dacopa community, manages a savings and credit association in Dayhagan.

Most of the area has sugarcane plantations. The primary source of income for the families here is from these plantations.

“The community managed savings and credit association, like ours, initiated by World Vision, is trying to help its members back on their feet. Whatever savings we have, we are inter-loaning to members in need to rebuild their homes or buy food. Since the work in the plantations has been suspended, people are finding other odd jobs to earn whatever they can, like carpentry and laundry. It will take at least six to 10 months to get back to normal production,” Jessica says.

Not letting the typhoon get the better of them, with a positive outlook and street-smarts, the women adapt to the scenario vehemently placed them.

*“I will continue to fight
and not let the circumstance
around me win.”*

Narcisa

“I used to get 600 pesos (13 US dollars) from working in the sugarcane plantations. With that gone and now doing laundry I get only 200-300 pesos (4 to 6 US dollars). I make a lot less now, but I am spending the money wisely. I tell my children that we need to find joy and happiness in whatever little we have. They need to learn how to adjust. But there is always hope that someday we will be able to buy things we want, like we used to. Though we have less, we celebrate, thanking God for whatever He has given us and the healthy bodies we have. I will continue to fight and not let the circumstance around me win,” says Narcisa.

“My children are my motivation. Because of them I will not accept defeat. I will try my best to provide for them,” says Christina.



“People here cannot just sit and wait for help to come. Everyone must do their part.”

Wilma Paloma

Mother leads post-typhoon recovery

Aaron Aspi
(WVI.org; Jun. 14, 2014)

After typhoon Haiyan ravaged Wilma Paloma's village in the province of Aklan, Philippines in November 2013, she was left with the daunting task of leading her village towards recovery. She happened to be in her first term as leader of a village of 600 families when the typhoon hit.

Leadership and participation of women in village councils is gaining ground in the Philippines' most vulnerable and disaster-prone areas.

Still, however, emerging as a woman leader in a traditional farming community is no easy feat. Wilma's long history of helping the community has enabled her to win hearts and minds as the new leader.

“I was also a survivor of another strong storm that destroyed our house and the entire village 30 years ago. My aunt who was a health worker entrusted the upkeep of the village's health

center to me. I lived there with my husband for months learning the ropes of providing healthcare to those in need. I even learned how to give birth there;” she recalls.

From then on, Ms. Paloma dedicated her life in serving the needs of the village for more than 15 years as a local health worker and nine years as a village council member. She has been a strong partner of World Vision in previous community projects, including the building of day-care centres.

Recovery

The village health center was heavily damaged by typhoon Haiyan but the community organized to make temporary repairs.

Ms. Paloma helped organize the community so that now, the village roads that were blocked with typhoon debris are open and lined with

rows of golden rice grains being dried under the sun as the village transitions itself off of emergency assistance. She shares, "We have rice for the coming months but there's more work to be done. We need to repair our day-cares and health centre. We need livelihood programs."

Ms. Paloma and the village council have passed a resolution encouraging people to take part in cash-for-work initiatives set up by World Vision. They have also scheduled community meetings about the projects.

A devoted mother to her family, she ends her busy day with a family dinner. As the community's "mother", she strongly believes that her community can bounce back again: "People here in our community are doing what they can to restore their livelihood and houses. They cannot just sit and wait for help to come. Everyone must do their part for the village to be whole again."



Determined to help the family, a group of women decided to open a barbecue business after the typhoon.



A strong community takes on recovery

Kathryn Reid
(Crossmap, Nov. 17, 2013)

As a volunteer area leader in World Vision's development work in Tabugon, northern Cebu, Philippines, Bonifacia – her neighbours call her Pacing – monitors the welfare of children in her neighbourhood and encourages parents to provide responsible care.

Pacing has five sons of her own, including 15-year-old Jade, a sponsored child.

typhoon Haiyan took a terrible toll on her community, but people there support each other, she says.

"We couldn't stand to have something for ourselves and see our neighbours in need. We share food, shelter, and other necessities," Pacing says.

Pacing credits World Vision's sponsorship programme for helping to develop community cohesion that will see them through the hard times. As part of the program, more than 80 community members meet monthly to share problems and discuss solutions.

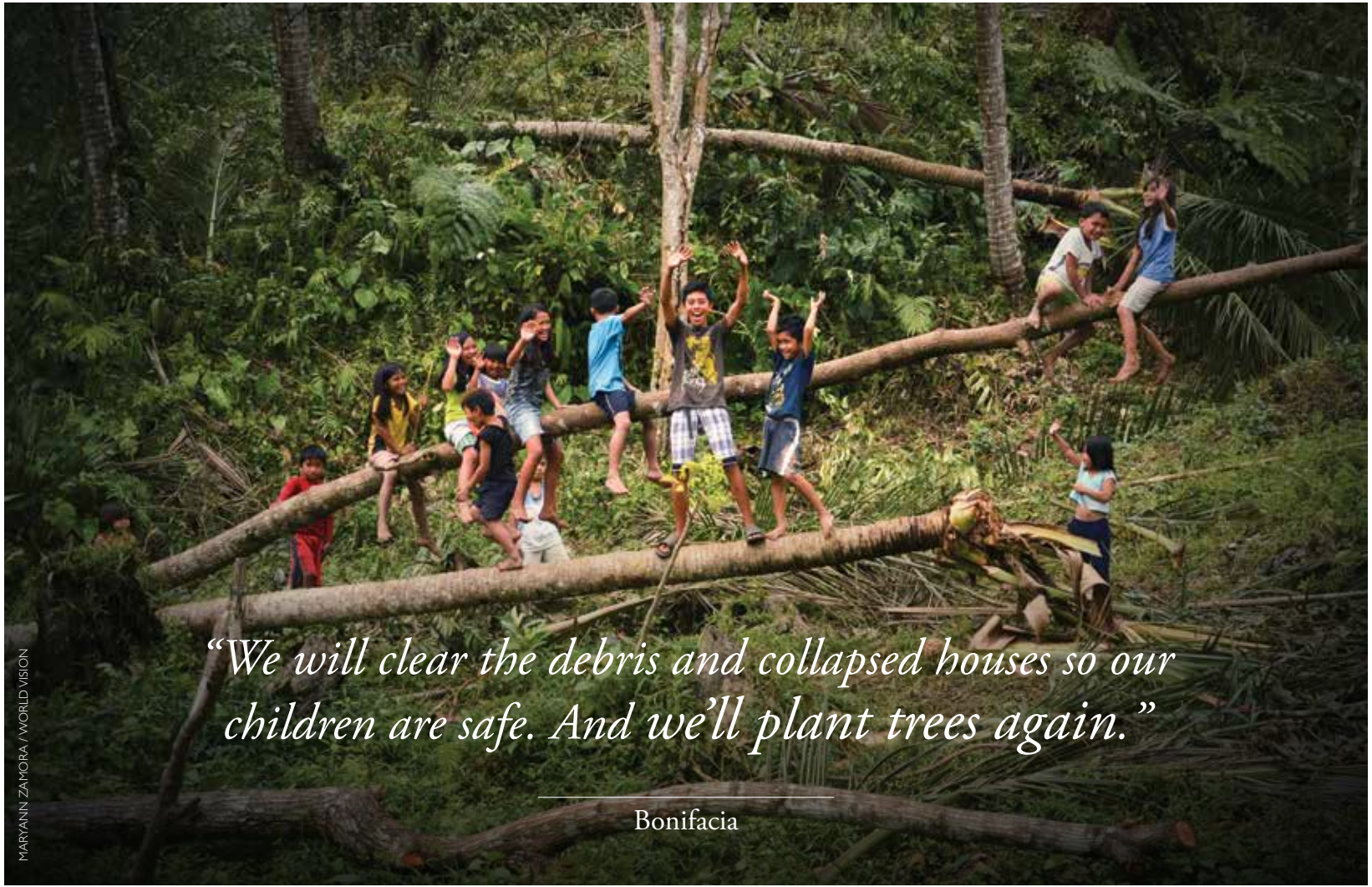
"We mapped the hazards of this place, and planned evacuation routes and warning systems," says Pacing of a workshop in disaster risk reduction that World Vision facilitated for the community.

Children learned how trees help prevent storm damage, floods, and soil erosion, and then took part by planting and caring for trees.

The trees they planted are gone, destroyed by Haiyan along with many others, including prized coconut, jackfruit, pomelo, banana, and starfruit trees.

"Now it's much hotter, because our trees fell down," Pacing says. "The children loved to climb those trees to pick and eat the fruit. Now, how can we afford to give them such healthy food?"

Will they replant? "Of course," she says. "We will clear the debris and collapsed houses so our children are safe. And we'll plant trees again."



“We will clear the debris and collapsed houses so our children are safe. And we’ll plant trees again.”

Bonifacia

Stronger than Haiyan

Hasanthy Jayamaha
(WVI.org; Nov. 25, 2013)



I'm at the child-friendly space in Tabogon. Laughter and joy rings through the air as children enjoy activities in this special space World Vision has created for them. Their mothers look on and nod with a thank you and a smile at every person who enters the premises with a World Vision logo on them.

It's been almost a week since I arrived in the Philippines and the massiveness of the disaster still overwhelms me. But the thing that amazes me most is the resilience of the communities and their determination to survive. So I talk to the group of mothers about their experience while they wait near the CFS.

"It reached our village on Friday morning," Nay, 35, starts the story while others pitch in, "We had already heard about it in the news and we were asked to evacuate to safer locations.

"We knew it was going to be a very big storm, but you really don't know how big and disastrous it is until it reaches your home. The typhoon reached our village before we could get to a

safer location. It started to blow the houses one by one."

"Most of us have husbands who go for work outside the village – mainly to the town. And they were not in the village that day. My husband was also at work [over 80 kilometres away], so I had to prepare for the emergency with my six children [ages 1-10]. It was the case for many mothers that day."

"When you have children to carry with you, you can't carry a lot of things. So I packed some food for my children and a towel to keep them dry."

"We mothers huddled our children together and started to walk trying to hide them from the storm with our bodies as we searched for a safer place. Any other difficult situation we mothers would have helped each other, but this time all of us were facing the same disaster and we had to take care of our own."

"I carried my two youngest children [ages one and five] while the other four held onto me and walked with me.

We reached one house where the mothers were gathered with their children, but couldn't stay there for long, as the roof got blown away. We all started walking to the next house pausing here and there to avoid falling trees and branches and flying roofs. My 10-year-old daughter got hit on the head by a piece of roof and got injured."

"At moments like this we [mothers] think only about our children's safety. A mother would do anything to protect her children. And it gives us strength to take risks. I never even for a moment debated what if we perish. That's not an option for a mother. We have to make sure our children survive."

"We walked like this from one location to another until we were all gathered in one house with a stronger structure. We were all drenched from the rain. There was no medicine so I found some herbal leaves in the garden, crushed them and put it on my daughter's head.

The house became crowded with mothers and children until there was no room for us to sit.

We all stayed standing holding our children in our arms. We kept praying for their safety. The air was filled with the cries of children because they were afraid and hungry. There was no space to put them to sleep. My four older ones sat on my feet and fell asleep holding onto my legs and I held my younger ones in my arms. All mothers stayed like that the whole night till morning.”

“The next day we could get out. But it was a horrible sight with trees pulled out from their roots and thrown around, demolished houses all over the place. Our roof had got completely blown off and all our clothes and everything that were in the house had got soaked in the rain.”

“We started to clean up and with the remaining parts of the house and with wood that we could find, started to build temporary sheds to keep our children safe. With no transportation and roads inaccessible, it took a few days for our husbands to reach back the village. My husband had walked the whole day from the town and reached the village on Monday – three days after the disaster.”

“We received food items from World Vision. It was a great comfort to us. We still have enough left.”

“The greatest need for us now is shelter. Many families use the polythene sacks for the roof. But when it rains (and it rains often) the water still leaks into the house. On such days we don’t have a place to sleep and the children keep awake.”

“But the main thing is we survived. We are so thankful to God for protecting us and our children through this. My husband returned to work in the town today.”

“This space (CFS) will help our children to enjoy and recover,” the mothers smile.

I smile.

Their children are in this space only because of their mothers were stubbornly determined to protect their lives. Mothers who refused to be defeated by a disaster; mothers whose strength is stronger than Haiyan.





Children showed a different aura after the child-friendly spaces were set up in the aftermath of typhoon Haiyan.

People are the agents of their own recovery.

They are the ones who will do most of the work to get back on their feet but we can come alongside and help them. And that's really crucial.

Mike Weickert

Response Director, January-March 2014



A photograph of a family of five standing in front of a makeshift wooden structure in a slum. The father is in the back center, the mother is in the front center, and three children are flanking them. The background shows a cluttered area with a blue tarp and various household items.

Why it's *crucial* to *save*
when *disaster* strikes

Cecil Laguardia

(Devex; Feb. 7, 2014)

Alicita Arcelo, her husband, Binson and her children Albinray, Almar, and Annamarie were able to rebuild a new house after typhoon Haiyan with the savings they had in World Vision-initiated Community Savings and Credit Association (COMSCA).

It is still fresh on my mind how a World Vision colleague has described typhoon Haiyan's impact at least a day before it hit the Philippines: "It's like standing next to a jet engine as the plane takes off." A douse of hot water seemed to have washed over me hearing this.

Haiyan's strength was a no-match for poverty-stricken, already struggling communities in the Philippine provinces of Leyte and Panay – so getting a mega-storm in the midst of such poverty was like whacking more pressure to a gaping wound. According to a recent report by the International Labor Organization, an estimated 6 million people lost their livelihoods after the typhoon, although most of them were already vulnerable.

You don't have to go far to see why. On our way from Tacloban to Ormoc last month, I saw part of the estimated 41,000 hectares of coconut plantations devastated. All the coconut trees looked like matchsticks, rendered useless even if they were still standing.

My father being a coconut farmer in Mindanao, I know fully – albeit painfully – well that it will take at least seven to 10 years before one can make a coconut farm productive again. Ten years? Most of these farmers, I surmise, are in their mid-30s to 60s, perhaps even older.

Much as I do not want to be a skeptic – I wonder how can they learn another skill, after

having performed the same job for such a long time? For these farmers and their families, the road to recovery seems arduous.

But there is one bright spot, particularly for this disaster and for the people involved. This could be the one most important thing that key actors helping the Philippines should keep in mind.

Filipinos, having gone through so much, personify the concept of resilience. The whole world saw this after Haiyan, when victims not only were observed picking up the pieces of the rubble that was once their homes but standing on their own and even cracking a joke about the things they had lost in the storm.

While most of us around the world are thinking big to help the survivors, 36-year old mother Alicita Arcelo and the 24 members of the community-managed savings association (COMSCA) in northwestern Leyte have figured out what to do. Out of their savings, they started preparing when they heard a typhoon was coming.

"When we heard about the super typhoon, we used our savings to prepare for the emergency," said Alicita. "We bought canned goods, flashlights and candles and other things that we might need after the disaster. We even bought nails and ropes."

Five days after Haiyan devastated their houses and swept their properties away, the group

started rebuilding their damaged houses using their own savings pooled by the association, one of 145 supported by World Vision through a 15-year community project dedicated to helping enhance child and maternal health, child education and family livelihoods by promoting savings consciousness.

Little did the COMSCA members know that this would play such a huge role in their recovery from the disaster. Now, with about 2,000 active members, the campaign is gaining ground, and kids are starting to help encourage the saving habit as part of disaster preparedness efforts among the local youth.

Alicita said it was difficult to save again after losing almost everything, but having realized the importance of putting aside money – literally, "for a rainy day" – she has already started to do so before the next calamity hits.

That's not all – she explained that people in her communities have realized that they must be able to survive on their own once all the aid groups leave. It's about learning to harness one's own resources to get on the real road to recovery.

Around this time every year, my family home in Manila glows with lights. I still remember how special Christmas was when I was growing up.

The celebrations lasted for days, catching up with loved ones and old friends. The Philippines is famous for its long Christmas period: you can hear Christmas songs on the radio as early as September.

This year will be different for me, because I'll be spending Christmas in the areas hit by typhoon Haiyan, having been on deployment with World Vision in Ormoc for the past few weeks. Power is still not fully restored, and I find the darkness unsettling. At night, most houses here use gas lamps and candles. Living without electricity for more than a month has definitely changed city life in this part of Leyte.

Instead of the rituals of decorating the house and wrapping presents, this Christmas is a time of rebuilding for thousands of families who have lost their homes. Every morning, I'm woken by the sound of heavy hammers and loud chainsaws: the rhythmic heartbeat of the city being rebuilt. The holiday hustle and bustle includes various recovery and rehabilitation activities going on five weeks after the typhoon.

Noche Buena, Christmas Eve, is when Filipinos usually have their big family meal, and maybe open some presents. Not many families affected by the typhoon will be able to do that. But we have heard of a devastated Leyte village where members of the community have made and hung lanterns, and encouraged others to write Christmas messages that hang by them.

Typhoon-affected houses are bereft of holiday decorations, but the genuine spirit of giving, sharing and love still abounds as people help one another out. Everywhere I look, people are busy cleaning up their yards, clearing debris from the road, and fixing the roofs of their homes.

There are no elaborately decorated Christmas trees. Out here, fallen trees are used as slabs of wood to rebuild family homes – including those of grandparents whom children usually visit on Christmas Day to share presents and chocolates.

But it's still hard for families in typhoon-stricken areas not to be able to have the best possible Christmas celebrations for their children this year. Haiyan took not only their homes but also their livelihoods. I wonder how mothers cope with this – we see them working so hard to fend for their children and make ends meet.

I met Jessa in an area where World Vision is providing special spaces for women and young children – for education, play, breastfeeding advice and more. She's due to give birth to her first child any day now, and her Christmas wish is simply a safe and healthy delivery. There are thousands of pregnant women in the affected areas of the Philippines who are due to give birth before the year is out. I can't even imagine how frightening it is to have your first baby amid all the destruction and uncertainty left by the world's strongest typhoon.

I chanced upon Brian, one of the few fathers who accompanied his wife and children to one of the safe spaces. His interest in being there clearly showed how much he loved his wife and two children. This is no ordinary Christmas.

It takes a community to raise children and nurture them back to some sort of normality after Haiyan took so much away. It takes a community to bring back Christmas as well.

Along with some colleagues, I am staying here over Christmas. We'll be in the field without our families, but the people here keep us going. They make us feel at home, even without tinsel and lights.



Putting on a *brave face*
on *Christmas*

Aaron Aspi
(*The Guardian*, Dec. 20, 2013)





(OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT)

Colorful ornaments and wrapping paper transform this dead tree into a festive symbol for Christmas – a reminder that although Haiyan may have taken lives, loved ones and possessions, there is still life and there is still hope after the storm.

Not even a typhoon can suppress creativity. Residents of Telegrafo in Mayorga, Leyte, made a Christmas tree out of discarded CDs where residents and visitors can write prayers, and messages of strength.

“Kahit binagyo, tuloy ang Pasko.” – The spirit of Christmas still lives despite the storm.

(THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT)

A boy attends Christmas mass in one of the towns in Leyte.

An appeal for help and a Christmas greeting sign are seen along the highway in Tolosa, Leyte.

In Bunlad in Palo, Leyte, one of the hardest hit communities after Haiyan, residents worked together to put up lanterns and a Christmas tree to transform a disaster zone into a festive Christmas village.



Back to school for survivors of Haiyan

Joy Toose
(World Vision Australia website Feb. 4, 2014)

Evelyn Matugas has a big job ahead of her. Three weeks after Haiyan hit she was appointed principal of the primary school where she has taught for 15 years. The school, catering for almost 890 students, lost over half of its classrooms in the typhoon. The day of my visit that stood – some roofless, some collapsed – in stark contrast to the intact buildings which are colourfully painted and immaculately looked after.

As I entered broken classrooms, it was clear that the damage extended beyond the structures. Hundreds of swollen textbooks and exercise books sat on shelves and desks, pages stuck together, ink running, useless.

In her first few weeks as principal, Evelyn did her best to keep the school running. She shortened timetables and adjusted classes so that grades were able to share the undamaged buildings. Roofless classrooms could be used for only short

periods, before children and teachers would be forced to take a break from the heat. With most school materials water-damaged, teachers shared limited resources.

I think these challenges would be enough for any new principal to contend with, but Evelyn also worries about the home-life of her students and teachers. She told me that many houses in the area were destroyed, leaving families homeless. Some stayed with family and friends while trying to rebuild and others slept in basic structures made from tarpaulins and bamboo or crowded evacuation centres. Some families have evacuated altogether, leaving the island of Leyte and heading to Manila or Cebu. Evelyn isn't sure whether the students from these families will ever return to her school.

Evelyn attributes an overall increase in absences to the storm. In the weeks following typhoon

Haiyan older children were often kept at home to help busy parents with chores, from finding timber for rebuilding to caring for younger siblings. In the lower grades attendance was more stable, with parents grateful for the opportunity to attend relief distributions and run other errands while their children are at school.

However the behaviour of younger children is shaped by lingering memories of the storm. Children who were previously confident and happy attending school now cry when their parents drop them at classrooms. Evelyn says that rainy days are the worst, when despite reassurances from parents and staff, younger children fear that the rain will develop into floods.

Despite ongoing challenges, staff at this primary school recognise how important it is for children to get back to school. "We don't want their education to be disrupted" says Evelyn,



*“School helps the
children feel normal.”*

Evelyn Matugas



The launch of the child friendly space at Evelyn's school was a big one. The children made paper aeroplanes, wrote on them their wishes for the future and launched them into the sky.



"Hope is not lost." These children patiently try to recover and dry textbooks that were drenched in the flood.

"It [school] also helps them feel normal." And the parents agree. They have rallied to support Evelyn and her staff volunteering on weekends to clear the debris left by the storm. Government officials have come to assess the damage and have committed to repairing the school, but with significant damage to most schools in the area Evelyn is not sure when this work will happen. In the meantime it's up to her, with staff, parents and students to make the best of their situation.

World Vision has helped bring some fun and hope to the recovery efforts by opening a child friendly space at the school. World Vision uses child friendly spaces in emergencies to provide children with a safe space where they can play together, relax and take a break from the stresses they and their families face.

In the aftermath of Haiyan, with severe damage to many schools, World Vision is working closely

with principals to use child friendly spaces to help kids get back to school. This means meeting with community leaders to gain support, recruiting and training volunteers and providing equipment like writing materials, sports equipment and musical instruments. The spaces provide relief for overstretched classrooms and teachers, and most importantly help make school a joyful experience for students again.

The launch of the child friendly space at Evelyn's school is energetic. High school students have joined the primary school children on the oval in front of the World Vision team. Led from the front the children make paper aeroplanes, write on them their wishes for the future and launch them into the sky.

After this activity the blue World Vision chests are opened to cheers and children collect volleyballs, footballs, building blocks and craft

materials. That afternoon the school grounds are filled with children and teachers playing and laughing together.

Evelyn is thankful for World Vision's support, as well as the staff and parents so committed to helping children get back to school. Appointed as principal of a school where classrooms are destroyed and many of her students and staff remain homeless,

Evelyn's first job is to rebuild the school. Rebuilding the physical structures is likely to take some time, but Evelyn has already made enormous progress in bringing the community together and strengthening their resolve to work to continue their children's education.



Students return to their damaged class-rooms for the official reopening of classes nearly two months after super typhoon Haiyan battered Leyte and other provinces in the Philippines.

Based on the data from Department of Education, a total of 492,482 students were affected by the typhoon in 1,697 schools in the provinces of Leyte and Samar in Region VIII.

ORLANDO DUCAY JR. / WORLDVISION

How *child-friendly* spaces



bring *recovery*

Annala Harris
(WVI.org; Jun. 2, 2014)

“Come Harvy, come. See, all the other children are drawing their wishes. Come draw yours here on this coloured paper,” gently coaxes Harvy’s teacher.

Gradually lifting his head, Harvy’s expressionless face reveals no sign of comprehension. He recalls the winds of the typhoon Haiyan: “It was cold and it was raining. The wind was strong. I was scared that the wind would take me away with the roof.”

Finding warmth and comfort in his grandmother’s embrace, Harvy and his sister bid goodbye to their home as water gushed in and then sought shelter in a neighbor’s house.

“The rain stopped and the water went back. I saw my house. The kitchen was destroyed by coconut trees. The roof, blown away,” says Harvy.

Harvy fears the wrath of the winds coming again and is reluctant to come to the elementary school, the site of World Vision’s child-friendly space. Assured of the benefits, his grandmother accompanies him daily.

“This program helps Harvy,” says his grandmother. “He comes back home and talks about what he did. He is talking more.”

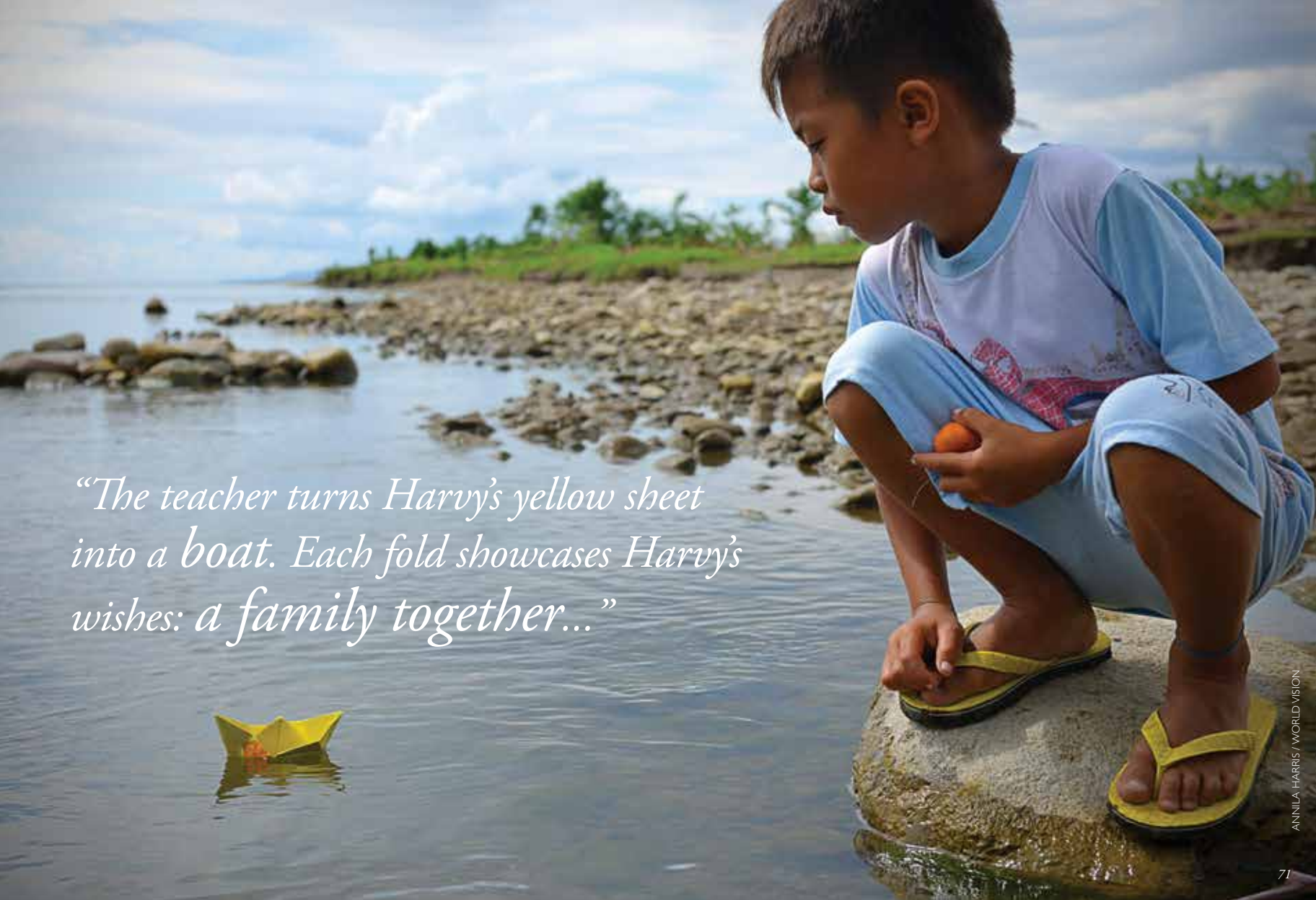
It is through colored paper and meeting his friends that Harvy is empowered to conquer his fears. “Drawing helps me feel good,” he says.

child-friendly spaces allow children to express themselves through art and play, and enable them to connect with other children facing similar distressing experiences. The volunteers are trained to observe and identify issues of child protection and stress among children after a catastrophic disaster and administer special care for them.

“When he started drawing, we understood what was bothering him. The child is afraid and traumatized with the typhoon because his parents are not here to comfort him. We have noted this and are trying to help Harvy through this difficult time in his life,” says Harvy’s teacher.

Fold by fold, the teacher turns Harvy’s yellow sheet into a boat ready to be released in the river. Each fold showcases Harvy’s wishes: a family together; his favorite toys and a pencil that symbolizes his hope of going to school and one day working in the city when he grows up.

Harvy travelled with his teacher to the river to release his wish boat into the vastness of the water, in the hope that someday his wishes will come true.

A young boy with dark hair, wearing a light blue t-shirt and shorts, is crouching on a large, wet rock at the edge of a body of water. He is holding a whole orange in his right hand and looking down at a small, yellow paper boat floating in the water. The background shows a rocky shoreline with some greenery and a cloudy sky. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

“The teacher turns Harvy’s yellow sheet into a boat. Each fold showcases Harvy’s wishes: a family together...”

A young boy stands on a dirt path in a wooded area. He is wearing a yellow sleeveless jersey with "LAKERS" written on it, light-colored shorts, and blue flip-flops. The path is surrounded by trees and brush, and there are some logs on the ground. The lighting is bright, suggesting daytime.

Honoring a *boy's* best friend

Joy Maluyo
(Rappler.com; Apr. 12, 2014)

Vincent would not be alive today if not for Budoy, his family's dog.

During typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan), Budoy's selflessness made him a hero.

"The water rose so fast," recalls Vincent's mother of that terrible morning. "From the waist level it reached our neck very quickly. We tried to hide in a small nipa hut when the roof of our house was taken by the wind. Still, the water came crashing in.

My husband took our youngest son to the barangay hall and asked me and Vincent to wait for him. I noticed that the water was just unstoppable so I decided to get Vincent and we followed them. It was very hard. We were swimming and at the same time avoiding the falling coconut trees."

Vincent's younger brother, Vince, and his father were swept away by the fast moving water. Vincent fainted at the site. Emily tried to stay afloat while trying to revive Vincent. Fortunately, he woke up. Meanwhile, her husband managed to hold on to a fallen electric post.

"Vincent and I were already tired by then. It felt like giving up was the easiest thing to do," recalled Emily.

Then came Budoy.

"We heard him barking, coming to us. The waves were taking him back but he just wouldn't stop swimming toward us. He was trying to get something from under the water. Then Vincent saw it was a cable. That gave us hope."

But swimming half a kilometer already drained their strength.

"Then Budoy started pushing Vincent. He pushed and pushed and pushed. All the while, he was on our back, trying to push us both while we were holding on to the cable. The struggle seemed to last for forever but Budoy pushed us until we reached the fallen electric post and we were able to hold on to it."

There, a rescuer was waiting for them.

When the pair was pulled to safety, they lost sight of Budoy, their family dog.

The following day, Vincent searched for his best friend. And there, amidst the rubble, he found Budoy's lifeless body.

"I sat beside him, speechless. He was just with me before the typhoon. I survived. He didn't," recalled Vincent.

When asked if Vincent missed Budoy, he lowered his head, played with a ball and started wiping his tears. He didn't say a word. His expression said it all.

"He could have swum for his life, too, but perhaps, he was too tired from pushing us back to safety. So he died. We are grateful that he came when Vincent and I were face-to-face with death," said Emily.

Vincent is a World Vision sponsored child. During the Typhoon he and his family lost all their belongings, including photos of Budoy; but the memories of his best friend will remain with Vincent forever.

"We heard [Budoy] barking... He was trying to get something from under the water... a cable. That gave us hope."



In the relief phase, it was all about saving lives. What we want to do now, in rehabilitation, is allow them to restore their dignity by being involved in their own recovery. We've been able to accomplish quite a bit but there's still a lot of work to be done.

Andrew Rosauer

Response Director



Listening helps heal

Leoniza Morales

(Rappler.com; May 17, 2014)

I felt like I opened her wounds. I asked a mother to relive the most painful thing she ever went through, and she gasped for air in between sobs.

She and her son struggled to stay afloat, but he was swept away by the raging waters of typhoon Haiyan. She couldn't do anything to save him, she said.

I didn't know how to react.

When the storm surge subsided, she found the boy's lifeless body near the school in Palo town. They sought refuge at the school where she teaches fourth grade pupils.

I knew for the rest of her life, she would not forget those moments.

Painful ordeal

As a communicator, my main task is to find, write, and share stories. This is quite simple and easy in

normal circumstances. But in a disaster, the duty becomes complex.

It was painful listening to what she went through. I tried very hard not to cry.

It was one of a series of horrific tales I heard in the wake of the typhoon.

I also talked to another mother in Tolosa town. She shared how her family huddled together near a mango tree during the worst parts of the storm while their house was being flattened by the strong wind.

While the mother was retelling their ordeal, her 10 year old daughter who was seated beside me suddenly cried. I hugged her; she was trembling. That was one month and three days after the typhoon. But for this girl, the memories were still very fresh.

I felt I took something very personal and precious from the survivors as they shared their stories.

I felt guilty. I made them cry and relive the most agonizing moments in their lives and left them feeling anxious.

I worried I might have made them realize they lost everything. I couldn't find the right words as they poured out their grief. I began to doubt my work – was it actually helping anyone?

Strong faith

One late afternoon the following week, we passed by a group of young and old women standing near a destroyed chapel. We asked the driver to pull over.

The roof and walls were totally blown by the typhoon's strong winds. The only thing left that revealed it was a chapel was the altar with the carved images of the saints, the concrete floor, and several pews.

It was drizzling; they were praying the novena.

When they were done praying, I approached the old woman leading the group. I introduced myself and told her I was stirred by their faith in the face of despair.

“This is our way of thanking the Lord for sparing our lives,” she said. “I want to inspire young people to have the faith that can withstand even the strongest typhoon.”

I asked her how they were coping and what their thoughts were about the future.

“I am not very sure how, but I am certain we will be fine and will emerge stronger after this,” she replied.

Relief and solace

We bade goodbye and apologized we didn't have anything to offer them.

“Giving relief to survivors like us does not only mean relief goods. By merely stopping by and asking questions, by just talking to me, you bring healing. It's the best relief I've received,” she said.

I was stunned, erasing all my doubts.

Without realizing it, we help survivors when we listen to the stories they generously share without expecting anything. It gives them solace.



*“By just talking to me,
you bring healing. It's the
best relief I've received.”*



Pregnant during typhoon Yolanda

Joy Maluyo
(Rappler.com; May 8, 2014)

Mothers were all around the tent and she was at the back, holding a pen and a piece of paper.

She was writing her first letter to her child – yet to be born.

“While you were still in my womb, I would talk to you and pray that we will always be safe. Do you know how excited I am to see you? When you finally see the world, I pray that everything will be fine with you,” she started.

For an expectant mother like Jessica, there is no greater joy than to feel the life in her womb, growing with each passing day.

“After the typhoon, I thought I would have to raise my child alone. I am too young to become a widow

but I told myself then that if my husband will not make it, I will work hard for my baby,” she recalled.

This was part of a culmination activity of the women and young children’s space (WaYCS) in Botongon, Estancia.

While Haiyan was ravaging Central Visayas on November 8, 2013, her husband was out fishing.

She was then two months pregnant.

The next day, she went out and was caught off guard when she saw dead bodies on the shore. “I was trembling. I scanned the place but I was too scared to get near the bodies. What if my husband was among them?”

Fortunately, her husband was alive.

She waited the whole afternoon and she was relieved when he came. His boat capsized during the typhoon but he was able to hold on to floating tree trunks and was swept to another town.

“I could not contain my happiness. My child did not lose their father.”

When she heard of World Vision’s WaYCS activity, she went and attended the different sessions. WAYCS is intended for lactating mothers and children under five years old.

It is also space where even pregnant women learn about breastfeeding.

"I never missed any class because I am interested to learn how to take care of my baby. The infant kit that I received will be very useful when I give birth."

According to the UN Population Fund's record, there are more than 250,000 pregnant women affected by Haiyan, while close to 170,000 are breastfeeding mothers.

The Department of Health (DOH) recorded 432 damaged health facilities 3 weeks after the typhoon.

Meanwhile, reports from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the National Disaster and Risk Reduction

Management Council (NDRRMC) have shown that 1.1 million houses were either partially or totally damaged.

These have put pregnant and breastfeeding women at higher risk.

For mothers like Jessica, not even Haiyan can discourage them.

"When things get really rough, I will be more than ready to endure the pains for you. I know that if you grow older, I will have to go through challenges in raising you but isn't that what love is all about?" she wrote.

Jessica is now on her seventh month of pregnancy and is excited to get on with life after Haiyan with her husband and coming child.

She completed the final part of her letter and put it inside a bottle she designed herself.

"When you grow old, I hope you can read this. This is where I wrote how much I love you. Always remember that I loved you even when you were in my womb. When you grow up and I am old, know that I will keep loving you."



Jessica wrote her first love letter for her child and put it in a bottle she designed. World Vision did the activity during the culmination program. Mothers were then allowed to bring home the bottles with their letters inside.

JOY MALUYO / WORLD VISION



Homebound moms after a WaYCS session with their children and infant kits in tow.

MONALINDA CADIZ / WORLD VISION



(World Vision Magazine; Mar. 26, 2014)

*Water still
brings life*

Mark Nonkes

Providing four children with safe drinking water, in the wake of typhoon Haiyan, was an expensive luxury. Every sip was carefully guarded.

MARK NONKES / WORLD VISION

Six-year old Alexander and his family guarded every drop of clean water.

Providing four children with fresh drinking water in the wake of typhoon Haiyan was an expensive luxury, says Alexander's mother, Ilene, 34.

Not one drop could be wasted.

"After the storm, the groundwater was contaminated; the waves reached the well," says Ilene. The family lives in Old Kawayan, Leyte, Philippines. "There was no clean drinking water left here."

The water crisis was one of many confronting the survivors living in Old Kawayan, a bayside village that bore the brunt of Haiyan's eight-foot waves.

"During the typhoon, our house was damaged and I got so scared," says Alexander, a World Vision sponsored child. "We went up the mountain, and I was crying hard because I was so scared. I could see a huge body of water from the mountain in our town."

Ilene elaborates, "During the typhoon, my kids were up in the mountain, and I was near the coast. We got separated. It was our first time to experience this kind of storm."

When the wind finally died down and the waves subsided, a scene of misery was revealed.

In the aftermath, all that was left of Ilene's family home were the corner pillars. The walls, the roof, and the furniture were smashed and swept away.

"We slept in the village hall for four days. Then my husband started rebuilding our house," Ilene says. "Even though all was destroyed, all our family was alive, and that's what was important."

The storm not only damaged their home, it also damaged the tricycle (three-wheeled motorcycle taxi) that Ilene's husband, Leonardo, 35, rents. His daily income of 150 pesos (\$3.35) was gone.

To get clean water, villagers cleared a one mile path through fallen trees and debris. Then, motorcycle drivers hauled water to the village, for a fee.

"We had exactly 300 pesos at that time. We used it all to buy water," Ilene says. Then the money ran out.

When Ilene's family of six ran out of money, they drew water from an old open well where the water was dirty. "Sometimes, the kids would get sick. But we had no choice. We had to use it," she says.

With help from World Vision, a generator was brought in to restart the village water pump one month after the storm. Three water tanks that hold more than 500 gallons each were set up for storage. Five water points were created: one

at the school, and four others throughout the community to supply the village of more than 500 people with clean water.

Every day, Ilene says her family of six uses 10.5 to 13 gallons for drinking, washing, and bathing.

World Vision brought food aid, tarpaulins, blankets, mosquito nets, and hygiene kits to Old Kawayan.

The organization set up a child-friendly space to help children recover from the emotional toll of the disaster. It attracted nearly every child in the village. At a Women and Young Child Space, mothers learned how to secure child health and nutrition in the wake of a natural disaster.

"I'm really happy for the help of World Vision, it's a big help," Ilene says. Her family has rebuilt their home, and her husband has found odd jobs to earn income for the family.



Organic farming: The answer to food insecurity after Haiyan

Leoniza Morales
(Rappler.com; Mar. 5, 2014)

The town of Dagami, Leyte, located 32 kilometers from Tacloban City, prides itself with verdant lands planted to coconut, rice, and corn. Yet the once plentiful harvest became a distant memory when typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan), the world's strongest typhoon in recent memory, brought about unprecedented destruction.

Eulita Dumpay, a 57-year old resident of Dagami, shared her family's struggle to make both ends meet when their only source of livelihood was destroyed. She worked as a farm laborer while her husband Paquito, 58, tended coconut trees owned by a landlord. She said work became scarce after the typhoon because even the landlords suffered great losses.

"All the hard work and sacrifices were blown away by Yolanda's fierce winds," Eulita said.

Eulita and her family is only one of the 3,423 coconut farmer families affected by the super typhoon. Around 793,699 coconut trees were completely damaged and only 50% of the 87,301 severely damaged trees are expected to recover and be productive after three to four years, according to the report of the Dagami Municipal Agriculture office.

Based on government data, damage to crops reached around P27 billion (\$607 million). Coconut farming suffered the most damage with P17.9 billion (\$402 million) in lost crops. It will take six to eight years for coconut trees to be productive.

Organic farming

Eulita said that seeing new sprouts spring from the ground is one of her sources of joy. So when

she learned about a lecture on organic farming, she came to listen and learn.

Around 40 people, mostly mothers, gathered outside the torn village hall as Reynaldo Cabudoc, a farmer and now a trainer and advocate of natural farming, explained the benefits of making and using organic fertilizers to regain the productivity of the soil.

World Vision linked farmer trainers – who have personally seen the benefits of using organic farming – to the communities to inspire the residents to make the same decision.

"We encourage farmers to plant fast growing vegetables to avert food insecurity," Haiyan Response Livelihoods manager Patricio Agustin said. Backyard gardening will also provide



School children are helping their parents maintain the vegetable garden, as an output of the cash for work project of World Vision.

families with nutritious food their children.

Dagami municipal agriculturist Leo Nevaliza said they are also persuading coconut farmers to grow cash crops like cassava, corn sweet potato, and even coffee as it only takes three to four years to harvest them.

“We welcome the efforts of non-government organizations (NGOs) and other private groups to assist our farmers in recovering their livelihoods. We invite them to sit with us so our work will complement, and to avoid duplication,” said Nevaliza.

Greener future

Armed with new knowledge, Eulita said she'll continue cultivating her land, which she knows

will once again reward them with good harvests.

“My husband and I will plant more vegetables this time and we'll make our own organic fertilizer. It's easy and good for the soil and make the produce free from chemicals,” she added.

To build the resilience and capacity of the families to restore their livelihood, vegetable seeds were provided for the community garden in the villages of Sawahon and Hiabangan. The farmers received technical assistance on vegetable production like planting techniques and planting bed preparation.

An orientation on proper preparation of community gardens was also conducted among 108 farmers in Fatima Village, Dulag town.

Agustin added that once the families' immediate

need for food is secured, inter-cropping will be done in upland areas. Other farmers will be taught to plant fruit-bearing trees to sustain their livelihood.

World Vision's recovery work now focuses on strengthening the resilience of typhoon-affected families through an integrated approach that supports needs in shelters, water, sanitation and hygiene, education and livelihood in the provinces of Leyte, north Cebu, Aklan and Iloilo.

Shattered school...



Unshakeable dreams

Joy Maluyo

(*Rappler.com*; Apr. 8, 2014)

They all looked beautiful in white.

I was watching them arrive, one by one. Some with their parents, some with their siblings, some with relatives. All the girls had their make up on while the young boys put an effort to their hairstyles.

Graduation songs started to play. I went to a corner and tried to observe. Parents were smiling. The graduates seemed excited.

I looked around. Destroyed classrooms. Scattered boats. Debris. Even after four months, the fury of typhoon Haiyan is still evident.

Then I met Romelia and Angel. The three of us went near the seashore.

"It's good to be back in our school for our graduation. It is sad to see how it looks like after the

typhoon but we're happy that we can still march here today," said Romelia, the class valedictorian.

They imagined this day to be grand – balloons, flowers, and a well-decorated stage. For Angel and Romelia, they envisioned themselves running to the seashore after the ceremony, taking one last shot as elementary students in the school that nurtured them for six years.

"This is not how I imagined it to be. The background for the photo will no longer be good. We missed this place after the typhoon, we were having classes in a tent, so we are all happy that we are here on our graduation day," Angel, the class salutatorian smiled.

After a while, the students were asked to position themselves with their parents for the procession. I

looked at Angel and Romelia from afar. They may be young but they view life with optimism.

Romelia's father died when she was younger. She was left under her grandmother's care when her mother had to work in another province.

"I wish they were here but I am still happy. My mother is going to visit me in April and I can give her my medals then."

Angel, on the other hand is the fourth of six children. Their house was destroyed when a power barge ran aground during the typhoon. Aside from the devastation caused by Haiyan, the people of Botongon in Estancia, Iloilo were also faced with health risks because of the oil spill.

“We lost our house. And because our place is near the shoreline, we were not allowed to go back. Until now, we are living in the tent city,” Angel said.

She's referring to the evacuation center. Some families like hers can no longer go back to where they used to live because their area was declared a danger zone, including the school site.

I began to wonder if their graduation day at least eased the struggles of the girls. When they started marching, I knew the answer was yes. That day spelled hope.

When they started going up on stage to receive their awards, I saw the glow in their eyes, including Romelia's grandmother and Angel's parents.

“Thank you to our parents, to our teachers and to you, classmates. Thank you to the many people who helped us after the typhoon,” said Angel in her speech.

When the ceremony ended, I asked them to take their photos as they have planned before. They obliged and they also shared their hopes for themselves and for their school.

“Both of us want to be teachers someday. We will teach here,” said Angel while smiling at Romelia.

“We hope that the younger students will have a school site and building soon because it is hot in the tent,” shared Romelia. We all looked at the photos. Yes, their background may be a shattered structure but the strength of their hearts,

including all other graduates in Haiyan-affected areas remains unshakeable.

World Vision has been working hand in hand with the community after typhoon Haiyan. Food and non-food items were distributed during the emergency phase while a child-friendly space was set up in the evacuation center to give children a safe place to play and express themselves.

A women and young children space also catered to mothers, pregnant women, and children below five years old.

In its recovery phase, World Vision is set to provide shelter kits and tools to more than 1,000 families in Estancia, Iloilo.



“When they started marching, I knew...that day spelled Hope.”

Joy Maluyo



More than just a *shelter program*

Joy Maluyo
(*Rappler.com*; Aug. 6, 2014)

While poverty is a sad reality, is there anything more painful than dealing with the emptiness of the heart?

Erlinda, 68, was all smiles when the team arrived to check the ongoing construction of her house, which World Vision provided for. She was at her usual self – bubbly, energetic and full of life.

Seated with her left foot up, her chin rested on her knee and her hands almost hugging her whole body, there was no hint of loneliness in Erlinda. There was a certain glow in her eyes – an inner strength that radiates from her choice to be happy despite the circumstances she was in.

Everyone knew how her makeshift house, located quite a distance from her neighbors,

easily leaks during the rainy season. But with all the smiles she can summon, she showed herself strong. Even when she talked about her experience during Yolanda (Haiyan), she laughed a lot. Erlinda's demeanor only changed when she was asked about her new house.

A grandmother's pain

"I never expected to have a house like this. I am used to having nothing but myself," she said suppressing her tears. Erlinda shared that her two children were both killed years ago and that her husband already passed away. Her daughters-in-law took her grandchildren, whom she considered her only source of happiness. She was told they would need to study in another place.

"I saw them once and I invited them in my house. They promised they'd be back. I always look forward to that day. I am excited to see this house not because I will have a good space for myself but because I can hopefully offer a good place for my grandchildren," she said.

"When they hear about my new house, I am sure they will come and visit."

Of mending and newfound friendship

When she started crying, a loud shout in between the sound of hammers came in: "Stop crying, you will no longer be beautiful. Don't worry, I admire you!"

The joke came from Jerry. He is one of the

carpenters training under the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) and will soon undertake the Carpentry National Certification (NCII) assessment. He received shelter tools and materials from World Vision.

When she heard him, Erlinda laughed. When she started to walk around her future house, Jerry shared her story.

“Her story is not new to our village. Everyone heard of how both her children were killed and how she’s been living alone since then. But it’s only when we started working on her house that I came to know her better,” Jerry said.

He added: “She talks and laughs a lot now. It’s understandable because it’s only now that she has people around her to talk to. She’s no longer just another story and I admire her strength. She deserves to be happy.”

Erlinda found not just a house but a company with all the carpenters working to help her. To Jerry, he found not just an opportunity for training or a job but he found deeper respect for a woman he got to know better – a mother and a grandmother whom he got to know better.

“It is my first time to see her breakdown in tears and in the few days that we were here, I felt like I am

her son who wants her heartache to stop. I want to thank World Vision on her behalf for the shelter.”

The support that World Vision and other organizations provide to Yolanda (Haiyan) survivors are more than just assistance. The story of Erlinda and Jerry shows it paves the way to finding a family, a friend and a refuge in time of adversity. Erlinda’s story went beyond a house being constructed to a story of two souls finding friendship and hope.



“She’s no longer just another story and I admire her strength. She deserves to be happy.”

Jerry



The *disaster* was *personal*

Eureka Fuentes
(WWI.org; Feb. 2014)

The TV blared. A storm was heading our way. It promised to be huge – a Category Four Typhoon, with winds surpassing 200km per hour. I looked at screen again – the storm’s pathway was heading directly to my parents’ province.

As a nutritionist who has worked on countless Filipino natural disasters during the last four years, I knew I had to remain calm. My job needs me to be collected, to make decisions to support those most affected by disasters.

This time though the disaster was personal.

I dialed my parents. They are retired farmers living in the countryside in Aklan province. I warned them to be prepared. My mom promised she would pack her bags, reassured me that they had enough medicine and food to withstand the storm.

I hung up worried. Not long after, the power was cut. typhoon Haiyan ripped through the Philippines – the wind roared, debris flew outside our window, windows were forced open by the power of the storm. In our Cebu headquarters, they started a generator. The first TV images started to stream. The devastation was overwhelming.

I clutched my cell phone, tried to call my parents again. No answer. I kept dialing. And each time

the sound on the other end was the same – deafening silence.

Soon, work decisions started to be made. I would join the assessment team. A project I had dreamed of running – to provide women affected by the disaster a safe space to learn about health, child nutrition and breastfeeding – was being discussed.

But my mind kept returning to my parents. I knew their health, knew they were alone. Each phone call went unanswered. I prayed endlessly with colleagues who were going through the same situation.

Nearly 24 hours after the storm passed, I reached my cousin who lived near my parents. They were okay, he told me. Their house was damaged, but they were okay. I breathed a sigh of relief.

Soon thereafter, I ventured to northern Cebu as part of the first team to assess the damage. Trees were toppled, the roadways blocked by wreckage and houses crushed. The families I met were close to my heart. I related to their emotional battle in a new way. I cried several nights after returning from the scenes of devastation. I was exhausted both physically and mentally.

Finally, after 48 hours, I got a hold of my parents. “We’re okay,” my mom said. The roof was damaged, but there was no flood. They worried about the others impacted.

I wanted to visit them immediately. But I can only pray and do my best as I continued to join the team for the response.

As we met more and more families affected, we knew we had to create a place for mothers and young children. In the weeks that followed, my team set up spaces for women to learn and interact with one another.

Together, the women learned how to maintain child nutrition in the wake of a disaster; how to take care of their children’s health and maintain their hygiene.

We conducted rapid nutrition assessments on children who were five to six years old with local health workers. We provided mothers with breastfeeding kits, gave infant kits that include mitts and baby clothes.

In these tents, we offered psychosocial support, talked about gender based violence, informed people how to prevent diseases such as diarrhea, measles and dengue.

Finally, we addressed emergency health issues and referred people with symptoms to health care providers.

I was very touched to see that even men attended some sessions and accompanied their children and wives. I am privileged again to meet the partners and know that when we work with them again things much easier. Despite our limited manpower, we reached more than 1,100 mothers in our first attempt to run the project in the Philippines.

Nearly a month after the typhoon hit, I returned to my parents’ village. One of our target areas was near their home, and for three hours we laughed, talked about our experiences, about the difficulty of finding a carpenter to fix the roof. Before I left, I hugged them tight. I was so glad to see them, and even more committed to help other parents.

A young woman with dark hair tied back in a bun with a red beaded hair tie is shown in profile, looking out over a lush rural landscape. The background features a field of tall grass or rice, a line of palm trees, and distant mountains under a cloudy sky. A banana plant is in the foreground to the right.

Six months after Haiyan:

*Coping with the
loss of a mother*

Joy Maluyo

(Huffington Post, May 9, 2014)

*“When I grow older, I want
to become a doctor. Maybe
Mama will be happy.”*

Fe

It is easy to say that a damaged structure or a destroyed livelihood is already in the recovery phase. But how can we define moving on or recovery for a child who lost her mother during the typhoon?

Six months have passed since typhoon Haiyan, which also means six months of longing for World Vision-sponsored child, Fe.

"I miss the food that she cooks. I miss the nights when we sleep together as a family and I just miss how she makes us laugh," says 13-year old Fe with longing in her voice.

Fe's mother, Jinky was one of the three people killed in her village by the typhoon. The April 2014 report from National Disaster Risk Reduction Management says 6,300 people were killed in the typhoon, while 1,601 remain missing.

"We went to the mountain the day before the typhoon came. Mama said we will be safer there."

The family, except for her father, went on the morning of November 7. But in the afternoon, Fe was asked by her eldest sister to accompany her to go back to their house to charge her cellphone.

"Mama asked us to come back early. We were supposed to go back with Papa, but it rained so hard that afternoon so we decided to stay home."

The following morning, Haiyan started to bear down on houses, frightening the people with its

fierce wind and heavy rain. Little did Fe know that while she and her sister together with their father were safe, her mother was struggling to keep their youngest sibling from the storm's fury.

"The house where they were staying was destroyed, and they ran outside, but no other house was left standing. Michael said they hid in the fallen coconut trees but Mama did not notice that another tree was falling. She got hit by it."

Michael, 10 is the youngest among them. He said his mother was still alive, but she could not endure the coldness. Panic started to take over until she succumbed to her injuries. The following morning, their father went to the mountain to look for them, and that's where he found Michael among the fallen trees, crying beside his dead mother.

Jinky's body was taken to the village's waiting shed together with two other relatives who were killed by flying iron sheets.

"I ran to my mother. I was begging her to wake up, but she wouldn't answer. I was sorry we never came back for them in the mountain. I was sorry we left them. I cried as loud as I can, but she won't open her eyes anymore," Fe said.

Fe remembers her mother as loving and caring. Although their family was struggling to make ends meet, they were happy.

"Mama used to tell us to study well. When I grow older, I want to become a doctor. Maybe Mama will be happy. There are times when I and my siblings would see other children laughing with their mothers and the three of us would silently cry in our room."

With the accident in the family, the eldest sister was forced to work to help their father who is a tricycle driver. The typhoon also took their house, so they are currently living with their grandmother. The humanitarian aid organization World Vision's on-going recovery phase targets to provide shelter tools and materials to 12,000 families, including Fe's family.

"I am excited to see our house but I know that it will never be the same again," says Fe, trying to suppress the tears. She plays with her fingers, looks away and then sets her eyes on the mountains.

Maybe, moving on for people like Fe who lost someone dear will never be as easy as reconstructing or building a new structure because a loved one is irreplaceable. But when they have their house built, Fe knows that she can still call it home because her mother will live on in their hearts and in their memories.



Leaving the tent city

Aaron Aspi
(WVI.org; Feb. 6, 2014)

Family members dismantle worn out tents that have turned dirty white from dust and mud while withstanding months of extreme weather brought by scorching sun and lashing rains. Mothers and fathers carry their children in an exodus from a place they've stayed for the last three months, bringing with them a few salvaged belongings and relief items that they've managed to hold on to.

They are heading home to their makeshift houses – places being rebuilt from salvaged wood, tin sheets and tarpaulins.

When they arrive at their former homes, now sites of destruction, they're reminded of that grim day when their homes were brutalized by fierce rains and winds.

The gales were so strong a barge went rampaging ashore, leaving an oil spill that engulfed the sea with black crude, further damaging livelihoods of the many involved in the fishing trade and leaving a lethal stain of grime behind.

Maricel Guardario, 34 years old, shares, "We have relied on the sea's bounty for as far as I could remember. Now, my husband had to resort to menial work and irregular carpentry jobs to augment for the low income that he gets from fishing."

Panay was the second-hardest hit island from typhoon Haiyan's rage. Around 15.5 billion pesos (est. US \$360 million) worth of damages in infrastructure and agriculture come from the heavy devastation in the island inhabited by more than four million people.

Fisherfolk are still reeling from the losses brought by lower fish catch in Estancia's troubled waters. Government clean-up drives have since helped mitigate environmental damages of the oil spill. But going back to their homes is not an easy task.

"I still worry about our future; raising five children in this environment would be difficult. I always worry about the safety of my children," Maricel says.

Rebuilding begins

World Vision's rebuilding efforts are now focused in providing shelter assistance for around 2,000 people in Panay. A sustainable livelihood program is also on the way to provide opportunities for skills training to restore farms and fishing trade and provide families income opportunities that would give them more income.

The government is still looking for a suitable relocation site for the displaced families who have nowhere to go, their devastated houses now lie in government declared no-build zones, off-limits to human settlements because of the foreseen danger that future disasters could bring.

Some 90 families remain in the tent city in a vacant lot inside a local college. World Vision is coordinating with the government in identifying alternative sites where people could rebuild their houses.

In Botongon, Estancia and in other highly devastated areas, World Vision is working with

the community to set up temporary learning spaces. For now children are holding classes in a partially damaged church. Classes are held three days a week with hours shortened to give way to six different grade levels with more than 100 students sharing the space.

“The oil spill is gone but the stench can be smelled in the school grounds especially when the sun hits its peak in the afternoon. It can get unbearable especially for children and may pose health risks to them.” explains Charlie Samillano, WorldVision staff. Consultations with teachers were held and one of the primary issues that were raised is children’s safety.

A suitable lot was identified in coordination with the local government and school management and now

parents and local village leaders and volunteers are mobilizing to clear the land and set up tents.

Dr.Yvonne Duque, manager of the child wellbeing team says “There is a need to ensure that schools are safe for the children as we head to the recovery phase of the emergency response. Temporary learning spaces should be set up in areas where schools remain damaged.”

These learning spaces would further improve school attendance in areas that are heavily hit by the typhoon. In Botongon, school attendance is already at 90 percent since January, with three schools registering good student attendance.

“Before, children would immediately run and head home at the first sign of rains but now children are

braving rainy days and would even walk in muddy roads just to be in class,” Samillano adds.

Annalyn Alenton, Education Specialist, says, “Aside from school repairs, we are also working with the school teachers and equip them to provide psychological first aid to be able to deal with children who still need regular counseling.”

“As we usher families back to their homes, more work needs to be done in their communities. We are looking into providing resiliency and life skills training for the families to get extra income as well,” Annalyn says. “Parent and teacher associations could be tapped for cash-for-work activities that involve school repairs, community-based construction trade and rehabilitation of fishing and farming in devastated areas.”





*“People were relying on us;
it is our responsibility to
provide information that
could save their lives.”*

Jazmin Bonifacio

LEONIZA MORALES' WORLD VISION

The last radio broadcast

Leoniza Morales
(Rappler.com; Jul. 18, 2014)

“Nahuhulos na kita!” (We are getting drenched!)

These were the last words heard on the airwaves before the furious winds and storm surge forced the last radio station in Tacloban City to sign off.

Jazmin Bonifacio, a broadcaster in Radyo Diwa uttered those words around 7am on November 8, 2013 as super typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan) made its disastrous landfall in Leyte province. She anchored the program which gave updates and safety reminders to the listeners that day.

“People were relying on us; it is our responsibility to provide information that could save their lives,” Jazmin said on working even beyond her time slot was a call of duty.

Until the last minute, even if the raging sea water reached the announcer’s booth and cut them off air, she fulfilled that duty to the listening public.

Escaping the deadly water

Everything happened very fast. The water smashed the building. Jazmin along with the radio station’s driver, guard, wives, and children of the technicians were almost overtaken by the storm surge.

“Our strength was no match to the flood’s fury,” she recalled. “I thought we were all going to die as we have nowhere to go.”

Yet by some miracle and sheer determination, all of them were able to climb the radio station’s rooftop. They all huddled together for what seemed to be an eternity, trembling and hungry as they helplessly saw children, men, and women swept and swallowed by the angry sea.

“It was a horrific sight. They were crying for help, but we can’t do anything,” Jazmin said.

They were lucky to have survived. Three broadcasters and one technician from other radio stations were killed while on duty.

Biggest disaster story

Desolation was all over the entire region. Damaged houses, buildings, piles of debris, stench of death, power supply, water system and communications lines down made the days after the typhoon heartbreaking and unbearable.

It was both frustrating and painful for journalists and broadcasters like Jazmin not being able to report about what happened.

“It felt like being mute, not being able to share to our listeners the faces of Haiyan’s enormous destruction - how people are coping (with the disaster), their struggles and needs so others can do something for them,” Jazmin shared.

She found a radio station in Cebu where she gave reports on the situation in Leyte and Samar provinces. But there were no indications if DYDW, popularly known as Radyo Diwa, will again sign on air: The station's building and equipment, including the transmitter, were all destroyed.

At some point, Jazmin thought she would never be able to broadcast on air again. It was the most distressing thought as she's aware how crucial the news are for the people who are rising and restoring their lives back from the ruins of Haiyan.

Stronger sense of purpose

"Hello, buhi ako. Ako ni Jaz, kausa niyo ha Radyo Diwa. Adi na ako ha FM station." (Hello, I'm alive. This is Jaz, your companion in Radyo Diwa. I'm now an FM station.)

These were her first words when she went on air last January 13, more than two months

after Haiyan. She was reported missing after the station went off the air as storm surge forced her to flee from the announcer's booth.

It was the first broadcast of Radyo Abante, the newest radio station in Eastern Visayas region launched by First Response Radio and Peace and Conflict Journalism Network (PECOJON) to address the need to inform communities. The newly established radio station also served as venue for broadcasters to get back to their profession. They were also given training on humanitarian response and accountability.

Jazmin and veteran broadcaster Fred Padernos host a program that tackles issues and concerns of the communities and various projects of non-government organizations. Listeners are encouraged to air out their concerns on several projects using text messaging.

The radio program makes Jazmin affirm her decision to leave a lucrative career and pursue her childhood dream to be a broadcaster 18 years ago.

"I am now more than happy to resume my work. Nothing is more fulfilling than helping the survivors find their voice on the issues that affect their lives," she said.

Revisiting the announcer's booth

Jazmin first hesitated to revisit the room where she nearly lost her life.

"I was afraid to go inside before since the thought that I could have died here always entered my mind. I realized I need to confront my fears now and the harrowing memories I have in this place," she said.

Her ordeal was a brush with death, but it made her more resolute to commit her profession to help fellow Haiyan survivors rebuild their lives.



During the worst part of Haiyan's landfall in Tacloban, Jaz, the Radyo Diwa staff and their families climbed the station's rooftop, to escape the floods.

LEONIZA MORALES / WORLD VISION



A widow honors the dead by moving on

Cecil Laguardia
(Rappler.com; Apr. 14, 2014)

She was holding a bunch of candles as she walked tentatively towards the graveyard in front of San Joaquin Catholic Church. I immediately assumed she was visiting someone among the countless who were buried hastily a day after typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) mercilessly struck the town of Palo in Leyte province.

According to history, Palo was established in the 16th century and was once Leyte's capital town before Tacloban City. Named after its patron saint, San Joaquin village is located 15 km south of Tacloban and has suffered the destructive onslaught of typhoon Haiyan/Haiyan, leaving countless people dead.

When I asked who she was visiting, she said, "My husband David and my mother-in-law Tarcela." Her eyes were moist, trying to defy the pain she was reeling from.

I marveled at her steady gaze. This one's a very strong woman, I thought. Her name is Maricel

Escaro, 44 years old and a mother of three children ages 10, six, and four.

She was very gracious and nodded readily when I asked if she could tell me her story. She smiled wanly.

Her story

After a long pause, she said the day the typhoon landed in San Joaquin, her husband hastily sent them to safety in their neighbor's house and ran back to fetch his 83-year old mother Tarcela who was alone at home. He never came back.

Maricel distinctly remembered the winds were howling around them. "We were very scared. It looked black around us and we could hardly see anything."

Her 52-year old husband and mother-in-law were found dead on the road, along with countless other bodies, many of them she knew,

when the typhoon left. Their house was totally destroyed. Nothing was saved.

The tears started coming when her friend Vilma beside her described David as a devoted and hard-working husband. Vilma said, "He would do house chores and doesn't mind doing laundry and cooking. A very good man."

For a while we ran out of words to say and kept quiet. We allowed Maricel a time for her grief, tinkering at the candles she earlier lit.

Standing alone

"We have a small store and my husband took care of everything. We all depended on him," Maricel said to me. She added that she realized women should learn to stand on their own and earn their own

income while their husbands are alive.

When he died, she was left with no choice but to pick up the pieces. She started a small business – selling dried fish to neighbors. Maricel brought her small children to her parents in Hilongos, a nearby town, so she could work.

All I needed was to look into her eyes to know that life is extremely difficult as a widow. The pain was all there – as well as all the uncertainty of their future.

The San Joaquin Catholic Church graciously agreed to convert its front yard into a graveyard when dead bodies started to line the road. Even the small fork on the road was also made into a burial place so people could have peace of mind laying their loved ones to rest.

Picking up the pieces

When the typhoon settled and she saw all the destruction around her, Maricel's first thought was how to move on. "I do not know where to begin. Everything looked bleak. I learned late that we need to take typhoon warnings seriously. When we decided it was too late."

I was just reassured by Maricel's words in a whisper: "*Babangon po kami* [We will rise up from this]," she said as the tears stopped.

It was raining hard when we left. Maricel and Vilma hurried home with their umbrellas. It must be tough enduring the bad weather that reminds them how a typhoon changed their lives in a day. Some lessons we take for granted could bring scars that would mar our lives forever.

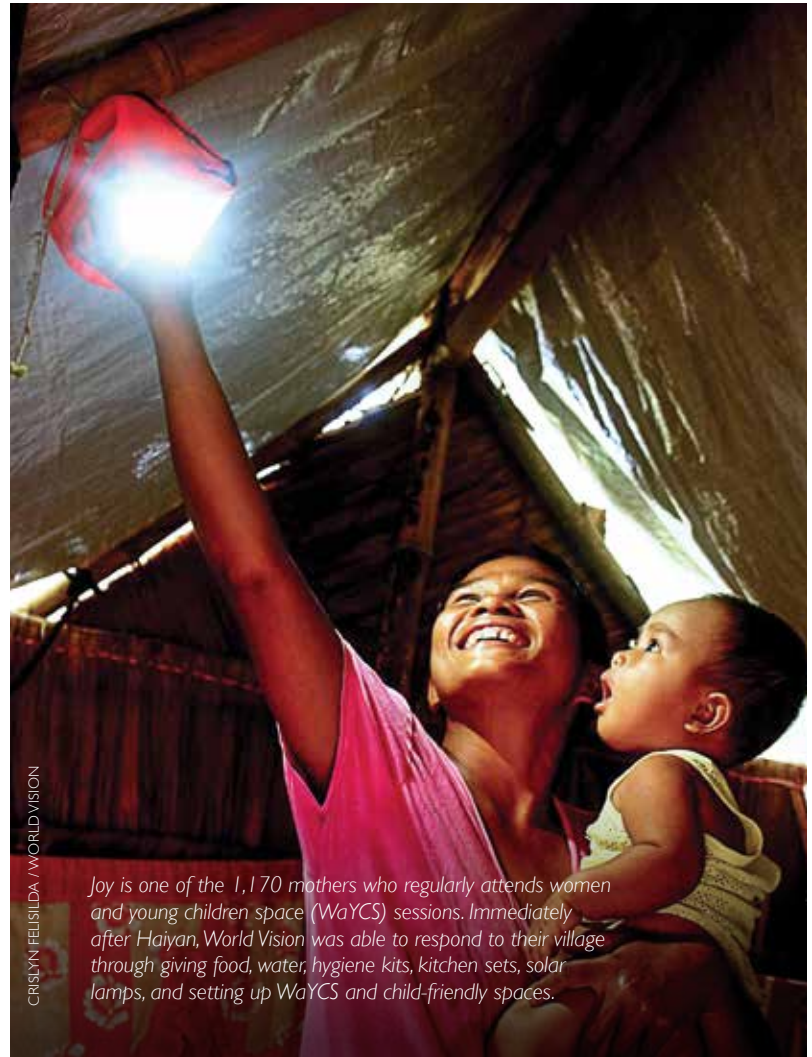
"Babangon po kami."





CRISLYN FELISILDA / WORLD VISION

Ten-year old Tato flies a kite made out of plastic scraps and broken twigs amid the rubble of Haiyan – a symbol of strength and hope despite overwhelming odds.



CRISLYN FELISILDA / WORLD VISION

Joy is one of the 1,170 mothers who regularly attends women and young children space (WaYCS) sessions. Immediately after Haiyan, World Vision was able to respond to their village through giving food, water, hygiene kits, kitchen sets, solar lamps, and setting up WaYCS and child-friendly spaces.



MARK NONIKES / WORLD VISION

Joy and her two-year old daughter Kimberly are on the road to recovery after their family was walloped by typhoon Haiyan.



JOY MALUYO / WORLD VISION

Days after the typhoon, children from Batan, Aklan would raise the Philippine flag to get the attention of responders

To the Filipino people, we are going to
walk with you through this.

Kevin Jenkins

President and CEO, World Vision International





World Vision is a Christian relief, development and advocacy organisation dedicated to working with children, families and communities to overcome poverty and injustice. World Vision serves all people regardless of religion, race, ethnicity or gender.