



ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

As the Odette-ravaged Local Government Units (LGUs) recover from the impacts of the typhoon in early January of 2022, the Philippine Air Force airlifted a Regional Interagency Team to the Province of Dinagat Islands on January 13, 2022, and Siargao Islands, Surigao del Norte on January 14, 2022 to provide assistance and assessment. Said team is composed of representatives from the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), National Economic and Development Authority, Office of Civil Defense, Philippine National Police, Department of Health, and Philippine Air Force Caraga, as well as several officials from the DILG and DSWD Central Offices.

The team went to these LGUs which still had no power and communication lines and discussed with their LGU officials the issues and concerns relative to the ongoing response, relief, and early recovery operations. After the meetings, the DSWD distributed relief goods and financial assistance.

Among those present were DILG Usec. Jonathan Malaya and Regional Director (RD) Lilibeth Famacion, DSWD Usec. Felicisimo Budiongan, Dinagat Islands Provincial Administrator Aimee A. Jimeno, and Gov. Francisco T. Matugas of Surigao del Norte.

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Two main issues highlighted during the visit were: (1) the implementation of LBC No. 140¹ and 141² which covered the financial assistance to LGUs in three tranches; and (2) the undelivered relief goods for the Provinces.

Usec. Budiongan, Usec. Malaya, RD Famacion, and DBM representative Ms. Edna Jamolin answered questions related to financial assistance and also clarified specific items of the guidelines. Meanwhile, DSWD RD Ramel Jamen covered the status of undelivered relief goods. The parties agreed on how the local chief executives should handle the assistance.

Before leaving the Islands, the group also made a quick visit to nearby barangays to see the extent of damages on the households and livelihood of Dinagatnons and Siargaonons. Cable wires littered the streets, people queued for potable water in Dinagat, and the once lush green mountains were now full of uprooted trees and debris.

Nevertheless, children and families greeted the visitors with smiles and excitement as if they had never experienced a disaster. For now, they see a distressing view. But they know they are resilient and optimistic for the future of their beloved hometowns. Indeed, the collaborative efforts of government agencies always bring measurable results.

^{1/} Guidelines on the Release and Utilization of the Financial Assistance to Local Government Units (LGUs) that were Affected by Typhoon Odette, Charged Against the Contingent Fund Under the FY 2021 General Appropriations Act (GAA), Republic Act (RA) No. 11518

^{2/} Guidelines on the Release and Utilization of the Financial Assistance to Cities and Municipalities that were Affected by Typhoon Odette, Charged Against the FY 2021 Unprogrammed Appropriations (UA)



IN ACTION: Meeting of the Regional Interagency Team together with the LCEs of municipalities in Siargao Islands



San Jose, Dinagat Islands



Members of the Regional Interagency Team



Ceremonial distribution of calamity aid for Dinagatnons and Siarganons with Usec. Malaya, Usec. Budiongan, RD Jamen, and RD Famacion

