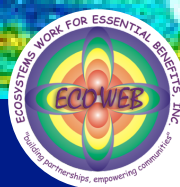


Image: Rappler.com



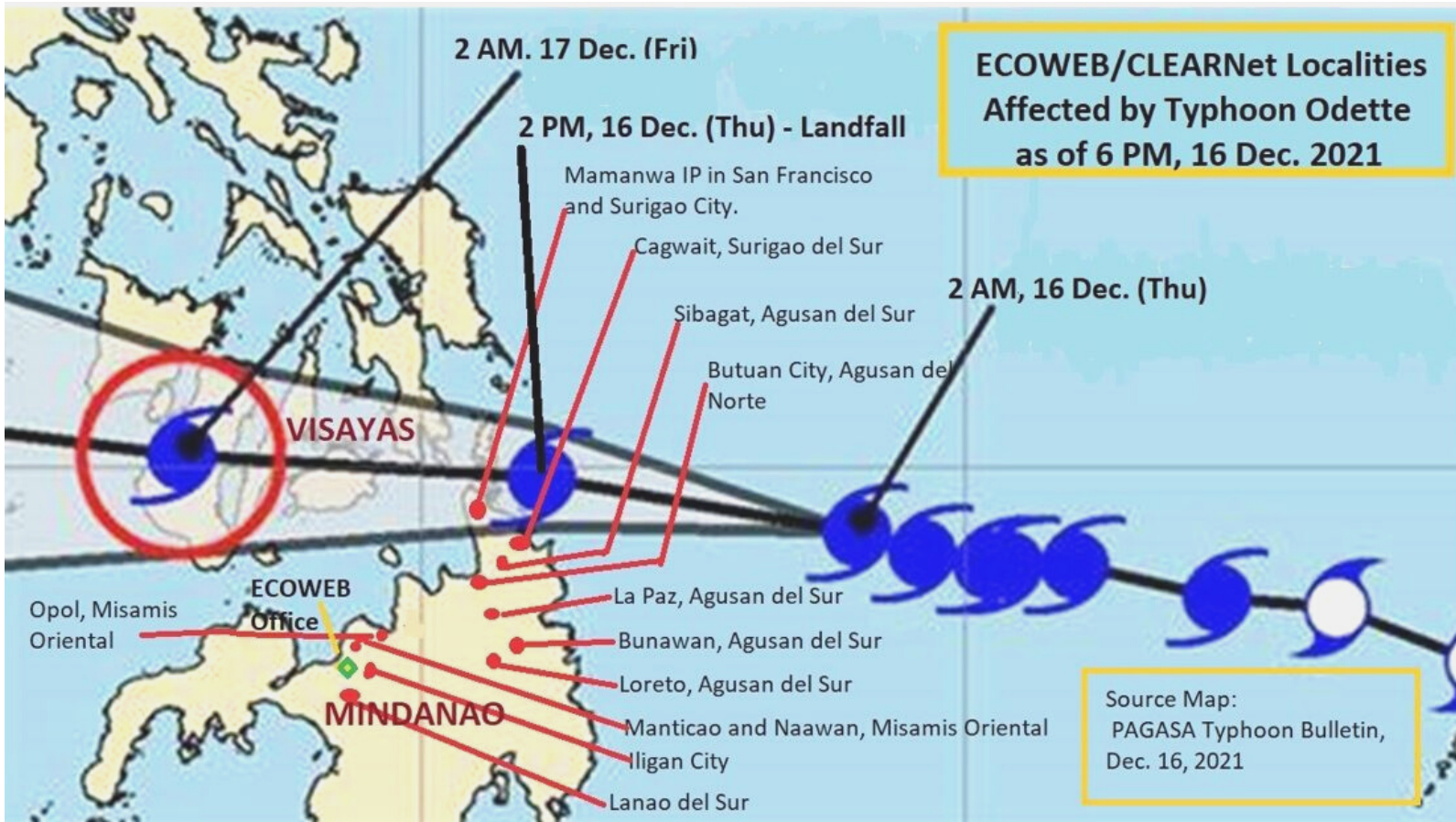
**ECOWEB SITREP NO. 1:
TYPHOON ODETTE (RAI)**

ECOWEB PARTNER COMMUNITIES IN FOUR REGIONS BATTERED BY STRONG WINDS AND HEAVY RAIN AS TYPHOON ODETTE MADE LANDFALL

TYPHOON ODETTE MADE 3 LANDFALLS

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Service Administration (PAGASA) in its 2 PM Bulletin reported that tropical cyclone Odette (International Name: Rai), the 15th that entered into the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR) in 2021 packing maximum sustained winds of 195 kilometers per hour (kph) near the center and gustiness of up to 240 kph made landfall in the vicinity of Siargao Island in Surigao del Norte province at around 1:30 PM, Thursday, December 16, exactly 10 years after Typhoon Sendong also made landfall in 2011. Like its predecessor, Odette is also accompanied by flood-causing heavy rain that battered the places of its path since the day before.

As of 8 PM, Typhoon Odette, considered as the strongest typhoon of to hit the country this year, has already made 3 landfalls – first, in Siargao Island, Surigao del Norte; second, in Dinagat Island Province, and third, in Liloan, Southern Leyte. The typhoon maintained its strength as it continued to move westward at 30 kph battering provinces in the Visayas, Central Philippines.



ECOWEB STAFF STRANDED BY FLOOD WATERS IN LANA DEL SUR

Two ECOWEB staff of its 2-year old Marawi Response Program (MRP) coming from Butig, a municipality in Lanao del Sur covered by MRP, were stranded as the road passing through Bubong on the way back to Marawi City was totally impassable due to rising flood water.

“We have to seek refuge to other safer communities and stay overnight as water is still rising,”

reports Ashdy Manda, a community development officer of MRP, a project implemented by PLAN International and funded by USAID where ECOWEB is one of the implementer in Lanao del Sur.

“In Bubong, Lanao del Sur, floodwater in the town center is already at roof-top level and at hips-deep in most places, hundreds of families fled to higher and safer grounds as water along the Ragain River overflows affecting 36 barangays,” reports Bae Padoman Paporo of the Lanao del Sur Women’s Council, a member of CLEARNet.

Other than the municipality of Bubong at least 5 other municipalities in the province of Lanao del Sur covered by MRP are also experiencing flooding as super typhoon Odette made landfall in Surigao, 420 kilometers away.



Photo : Photo-collage of Flooded town center of the Municipality of Bubong, Lanao del Sur. (Credit: Bubong MDRMO)

ECOWEB COMMUNITIES AFFECTED, CLEARNET ACTIVATED

At least 50 partner communities of ECOWEB in the four regions – Caraga, Northern Mindanao, Eastern Samar and the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) – were battered by strong winds and heavy rains carried by Typhoon Odette, international named Rai, as it made landfall 3 times as of 6 PM, Thursday, December 16, 2021. ECOWEB gets direct information from its localities of operation through the Talk to Loop Philippines digital feedbacking platform and Community-Led Empowering Action for Resilience Network (CLEARNet). CLEARNet is a national network of locally-led organizations operating in 8 of the 17 regions in the Philippines and Talk-to-Loop-Philippines operates in the whole Philippines. ECOWEB serves as the hub of both CLEARNet and Loop Philippines.

As of 3:00 PM of Thursday, December 16, an estimated 60,000 families consisting of roughly 300,000 individuals from at least 50 communities in 7 provinces in 4 regions where CLEARNet operates are severely affected by the flood-causing heavy rain and strong wind. Severely affected are the livelihoods of these families who are already railing from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Among those badly affected are indigenous peoples communities of the Manobo, Mamanwa and Higaunon tribes of Mindanao.

“Through CLEARNet, we are constantly in-touch with the affected communities,” says Renefe Padilla, ECOWEB’s Humanitarian Response Coordinator. “ECOWEB is also in contact with our donor partners and we are providing them updates. We acted as the bridge between our affected community partners and our donors abroad.”



Photo: BDRRMC meeting in Eastern Samar on the morning of December 17 and monitoring to evac areas. (Credit: Feliza of KAKASA)

RESPONDING TO THE EMERGENCY SITUATION

ECOWEB convened an emergency management meeting on Wednesday, the day before the estimated landfall of Typhoon Odette. In response to the situation, the organization activated its humanitarian team and immediately established contacts with members of the CLEARNet in the five regions expected to be affected by Typhoon Odette.

The organization also set up an online digital monitoring and feedback system through Talk To Loop Philippines where communities all over the country could send text messages through its short messaging service (SMS) system and other channels such as Facebook-Messenger.



Photo SEQ Figure * ARABIC 2: Raft rescue at Purok 13, Poblacion, Sibagar, Agusan del Sur. (Source: PTV Agusan del Sur)

“We need direct information from the ground on an hourly basis, to make our response timely and effective. Our community and survivor-led response need direct community support.”

says Regina Antequisa, ECOWEB’s Executive Director

talkto loop

Any feedback and impact of Severe Tropical Storm ODETTE?

Share it thru Loop’s channels:

2158-0002

Globe and TM subscribers

22565-0002

Other networks

Type ‘LOOP’ to start the message

You can also SEND us a message thru:

@TalkToLoopPhilippines
 talkto loop.org

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES HEAVILY AFFECTED BY TYPHOON ODETTA

Among those heavily impacted by Typhoon Odette are communities of indigenous peoples where ECOWEB is working to help them strengthen their governance and increase their resilience to climate-induced hazards.



Photo SEQ Photo * ARABIC 2: Sibulao River in Bunawan, Agusan del Sur is about to overflow threatening hundreds of Manobo indigenous communities along its banks. (Source: PASAKK, Inc)

Manobo in Agusan del Sur

At least 20 communities within the ancestral domain of the Manobo people in La Paz and Loreto, Agusan del Sur are now on red alert as water of the Agusan marsh is increasing after 2 days of continued heavy rain. "The Agusan River is now overflowing and many of its tributaries are also at critical level," said Bae Gerlyn Coguit, a member of the Council of the Manobo community in La Paz, Agusan del Sur where ECOWEB conducted an emergency relief operation in 2016 where the survivor-led response was piloted. In this approach, the Manobo communities were the one who planned the relief operation including the budgeting and procurement. Since then, most of ECOWEB's emergency response followed the principles of survivor-led response approach.

PASAKK, an indigenous peoples organization of Manobos based in Bunawan, Agusan del Sur and a member of CLEARNet, reported that the Simulao River, a major tributary to the Agusan River, is already swollen and Manobo communities are already warned to evacuate anytime if the water continue to rise. PASAKK works in at least 20 communities in the Agusan Marsh area, also reported that the water of the marsh is rising affecting communities along its banks.

Mamanwa of Surigao del Norte

At least 10 communities of Mamanua tribal people in the mountainous region of San Francisco, Malimono and Surigao City are badly affected by strong winds," reported Darlene Madrona, a member of ECOWEB who works in Surigao City. The Mamanwa tribe, a close relative of the Aeta also called Negritoes, in Luzon, spread in many communities in Surigao del Norte, Surigao del Sur and Agusan del Norte, is among the poorest and most vulnerable group of indigenous peoples in Mindanao. With low literacy rate and suffering from discrimination due to their black skin and curly hairs, have difficulty in accessing support.

In the municipality of Sibagat, Agusan del Sur, the Mayor reported that as of noontime on Thursday, 12 barangays located along the Wawa River started evacuating as the river started to overflow mid-morning today. About half of the affected population are Manobo living along the Wawa River and its tributaries. The local government unit of Sibagat is ECOWEB's partner in the climate change adaptation project supported by AVVO International.

Urban residents in Butuan City are seeking refuge to higher grounds as the water level of the Agusan River, Mindanao's biggest river, continues to overflow its banks flooding many villages and rendering most of the city's roads passable only by boats!



Higaunons in Iligan City and Misamis Oriental

In the hinterlands of Iligan where ECOWEB's Abaca Production Project is implemented, Higaunon leaders reported that some roads are rendered temporarily impassable due to landslides. "We hardly feel strong wind but the rain is continuous and torrential," reports Jun Acot, a leader of one of the abaca production guild organized under the project funded by Bread for the World.

Upland communities of the Higaunon people were also badly affected by the torrential heavy rain for almost two days. Rivers are swelling and many portions of the roads leading to their communities are impassable due to land-slides and collapsed embankments.

Photo SEQ Figure 1* ARABIC 3: Crack in the Madulog Bridge in Iligan City. The bridge is a major link of Iligan City to Cagayan de Oro City. Another bridge in the same river collapsed due to the rampaging floodwater caused by Typhoon Sendong on December 17, 2011. (Credit: Valbert Galorio)

COMMUNITIES BATTERED BY STRONG WINDS, HEAVY RAINS AND THREATENED BY SPREAD OF COVID

Eastern Samar

"Strong winds accompanied by heavy rains started increasing intensity here in Eastern Samar, communities in the coastal area are now evacuating and some communities along the major rivers are advised to evacuate as water level is reaching critical level," reports ESDEV, a CLEARNet member based in Eastern Samar.

Surigao del Norte

"The wind is getting stronger, streets are flooded and many communities have started evacuating here in Surigao City. The local government started distributing relief goods to affected communities, who are now in evacuation centers," reports Darlene Madrona.



Photo Grab: Philippine Coast Guard rescues residents in one of the affected areas in Surigao. (Credit: Being Filipino - Boyet Saavedra)

"We are expecting landslides in many areas where mining is operating," reported a community volunteer from Save Mindanao Volunteers, a member of CLEARNet. Surigao del Norte is the province that hosts the Surigao Mining Reservation making it the province with the most number of active mining operations in the country.

Misamis Oriental



Photo Grab: An overflowing river was captured during the Oplan Paghalasa Bagyong Odette in Naawan, Misamis Oriental (Credit: BFR R10-Naawan)

In the municipalities of Naawan, Manticao and Lugait, all in Misamis Oriental, the major rivers in the three municipalities started to overflow and residents were evacuated to higher ground. Heavy rain in the municipalities started yesterday and continued without stopping for more than 24 hours.

Dinagat Island

"I was in contact with our community partners in Dinagat Island since yesterday but starting around noon time, I could not contact them anymore," reported Ruel Hipulan, CLEARNet's focal person in the Caraga Region. "At least 20 communities where our Save Mindanao Volunteers (SVM) are working have evacuated to safer grounds," concluded Ruel. SVM is CLEARNet's member in the Caraga Region.

Iligan City

In Iligan City, 120 families evacuated in Bayug Island and two dead bodies were discovered along Lumbatin Creek in Barangay Pugaan. Bayug Island is an area totally wiped out by a rampaging flood caused by heavy rains accompanying Typhoon Sendong exactly 10 years ago today. The island was already declared a non-man's-land after Typhoon Sendong in 2011 that killed more than 600 people in the City. After 10 years, people are back despite the high risk posed by rampaging flood water and storm surge.

Late in the afternoon today, a crack in the Mandulog Bridge, a major link of Iligan City to Cagayan de Oro City and other areas in Northern Mindanao. Local authorities immediately closed the bridge to traffic.

“All barangays along the city’s two major rivers are advised to evacuate to higher grounds as the City Government closed offices this afternoon, department stores, restaurants and banks are already closed in the downtown area,” reports Leah Mehila, a staff of ECOWEB. “As of 6 PM, a total of 987 families with 3,481 individuals have evacuated in Iligan City. Some families rushed to crowded evacuation centers without COVID-protective gears nor social distancing.

“This is a worrying situation,” says Renefe Padilla, ECOWEB’s Humanitarian Response Coordinator. “There is so much crowding in the evacuation centers and many of the people are still unvaccinated making them more vulnerable to COVID than Typhoon Odette’s wrath. This is a new condition that humanitarian responders need to consider in the current emergency situation.”



Photo: Newly arrive evacuees at Tambacan Elementary School, in Iligan City. Many do not have face masks and not observing social distancing. (Source: Beverly , ICCW Inc.)

CONCLUSION

With the majority of the affected communities being confronted by two major disasters: COVID-19 pandemic and supertyphoon Odette (Rai), and some even have to face other hazards and vulnerabilities such as to conflict or recovering from preceding typhoon or other natural hazards, the affected communities certainly need not only relief assistance but also sustaining support especially the most vulnerable to increase their capacity to bounce back.

Through the survivor and community-led response, it ensures that those at the forefront, the communities and people affected by Supertyphoon Odette, will create an empowering space to plan and manage their own actions towards speedy recovery responses and increased responsiveness on their current needs. Hence, supporting locally-led survival to allow the affected populations to build their resilience.