

For Immediate Release

November 10, 2013

Contact: Valerie Francisco, GABRIELA-USA Chairperson
(925) 726-5768, chair@gabusa.org

GABRIELA-USA Calls for Urgent Relief Aid for Survivors of Haiyan

Filipino American women in GABRIELA-USA and their allies across the U.S.A. launches a relief campaign in the wake of Super Typhoon Haiyan. Reports from local areas affected by Haiyan, also referred to as Typhoon Yolanda in the Philippines, have already reached staggering death toll estimates of more than 10,000. In the immediate aftermath of Haiyan, survivors of the ordeal now face additional challenges of having no electricity, clean water, food, medicine, and other basic necessities. GABRIELA-USA calls on community members to assist in meeting the urgent needs of survivors by joining the relief campaign and making a contribution.

The path of destruction wrought by the Category 5 typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda is exacerbated by the retreat and abandonment of social infrastructure and services for the most oppressed people in the Visayas region. Women and children have long borne the brunt of government negligence. With the lack of government investment into Visayan livelihood, built environment and safety protocols, impoverished Filipino women have had to subsist at an atrocious level of poverty. Filipino women, at the helm of family structures, were not able to work and find the money to evacuate their families into safety or save up for emergencies such as these. Instead of prioritizing public social and physical safety, the Aquino regime has become infamous for the corruption in the misuse of public funds. Many in his political halls are culpable in the current and ongoing Pork Barrel scandals. The typhoon's consequences have become disastrous in part because of the failure of the Aquino administration to provide for the citizens of the Philippines.

Aquino's negligent management of funds have put Filipino citizens in danger. But the scope of the typhoon's damage coupled with the administration's ruin affects Filipinos worldwide, watching from afar, unable to help their families in the Philippines. Jennine Ventura, secretary general of Filipinas for Rights and Empowerment (FIRE) in New York City has relatives in the devastated areas. She states, "My mother and her family

are from Palo, Leyte and we are still trying to reach relatives who live there. The church that I visited as a child is now operating as a morgue.” Migrants and children of migrants who have been driven out to find work outside of the country are also worried. “Noynoy stated that Tacloban was not that prepared compared with other areas. In Leyte, there have been reports of flooding and ceiling collapses even at evacuation centers. Preparedness has not been a priority for Aquino, anywhere. This typhoon’s devastation is yet another failure of the Noynoy administration to carry out the core responsibility to protect the Filipino people,” Ventura added.

GABRIELA-USA turns to our community members and organizations in the U.S. for support. Our reliable and reputable partner organizations have long-standing history in serving the communities mostly affected by disasters, both natural and Aquino-made. The high mistrust in the Aquino government leads us to rely on our networks of community health workers, social workers, organizers and volunteers to provide swift response to the needs of Filipinos in Central Philippines.

GABRIELA-USA has partnered with the National Alliance for Filipino Concerns (NAFCON) to accept online donations. Our relief campaign will be directly sent to partner grassroots organizations in the Visayas region, the most affected areas. Cash and check donations can be submitted to the nearest local GABRIELA-USA chapter. (please see below for more details)

How to Donate:

To ensure aid reaches the Philippines as fast as possible, GABRIELA-USA is collecting and remitting monetary donations. GABRIELA-USA is partnering with NAFCON and the Bayanihan Relief campaign to accept online donations. Donations can be made through NAFCON’s Paypal account at <http://tinyurl.com/bayanihanrelieffort>.

Please make a note on the NAFCON paypal page that you heard about the relief effort through GABRIELA. Checks can be made payable to “St. George Fontana” and on the memo line, write “NAFCON Bayanihan Relief” and send check/cash donations to your nearest GABRIELA chapter. Please include your return address with your donation. For qualifying tax-deductible donations, please email trea@nafconusa.org for necessary documentation.

Babae-GABRIELA USA– San Francisco, CA
email: info@babaesf.org
[\(415\) 355-4221](tel:4153554221)

Filipinas for rights and Empowerment (FiRE)-GABRIELA USA – New York, NY

email: fire.nyc@gmail.com

(206) 321-2931

GABRIELA Washington DC - Washington DC

<https://www.facebook.com/ILAWDC/info>

Pinay sa Seattle-GABRIELA USA – Seattle, WA

email: pinayinfo@gmail.com

(360) 990-9424

Sisters of GABRIELA Awaken (SIGAW)-GABRIELA USA - Los Angeles, CA

email: sigaw.la@gmail.com

(213) 537-8278

GABRIELA-USA will contribute half of the money it has raised to LINGAP GABRIELA (Gabriela Philippines' own disaster relief program, which assists women and their families) and half to Balsa Philippines (to assist other sectors).

###