

The Taal Response

**KAPIT-BISIG**

As early as Jan. 13, 2020, a day after the Taal volcano first erupted, individuals and congregations of Iglesia Filipina Independiente South Central Luzon (SCL) began mounting humanitarian efforts targeting evacuees, who at one point breached the million mark.

The faithful have now implemented numerous programs. This is a summary of some of their accomplishments, as well as prospects for a continuing response.

**families assisted****3300****Services provided**

beddings



psychosocial support



hot meals



medical supplies and services



preloved clothes



volunteers



food packs



hygiene kits



Through the Ramento Project for Rights Defenders, SCL Bishops Conference and National Priests Organization SCL (NPO-SCL), separate efforts united under the program "Kapit-Bisig."

Kapit-Bisig now executes and coordinates humanitarian programs for communities adversely affected by the Taal eruption. While continuing to deliver relief and early recovery services to areas unreachable by government programs, it hopes to support people who are unable to rebuild their homes or restart their businesses.

Furthermore, the initiative will continue beyond the Taal response. Church leaders realized that environmental degradation and social inequality may contribute to more and worse disasters.

Thus, Kapit-Bisig will now be a continuing project of SCL. Through it, the dioceses of SCL will encourage the faithful to contribute to the upliftment of disaster-stricken and vulnerable communities as a crucial expression of faith in these times.

DONATE TO KAPIT-BISIG!

**Account Name: Iglesia Filipina Independiente
– Ramento Project for Rights Defenders**

Account Number: 002410123976
Account Type: Peso Savings Account
Bank and Branch: Banco de Oro Taft-Pedro Gil
Swift Code: BNORPHMM



C A V I T E

CAVITE is among the most densely populated provinces in the Philippines — an attractive, highly accessible address for millions just south of the nation's capital.

In Jan. 12, when Taal volcano spewed ash, the town of Silang and the city of Tagaytay, both in Cavite, were heavily affected. Shortly after sustained activity, on Jan. 15, Cavite declared a state of calamity, the provincial government mobilizing funds to support the evacuation centers from neighboring Batangas.

When Alert Level IV was in place, the lockdowns within a 14-km radius affected up to 14 towns in Batangas province, as well as Tagaytay. Some of the thousands displaced made their way to various places in Cavite, such as the upland towns of Maragondon, Silang, Magallanes and Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo.

Faith communities of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente in the Diocese of Cavite quickly pooled resources to help out.

600  **families assisted**

Services provided



Strengths

Overall, the efforts exhibited the Cavite churches' willingness to collaborate with one another, as well as with government agencies and other parties. It also showed the spirit of volunteerism among the faithful and their ability to establish connections with possible donors, such as Filipinos based abroad.

Prospects

Counselling

The Church must ably provide pastoral care to people in distress, thus the need for capacitation in counselling to persons of any age, culture and SSOGIE, among other diversities.

Systems

There was an observed lack protocol in pooling resources and assessing needs. All the efforts were done separately, lacking coordination from the diocesan level.

Early recovery

There is no certainty if the worst has passed, but the people affected would now like to go home. In their effort at normalcy, they will need support to repair their homes, food supply, opportunities to earn money and a jumpstart to their livelihood. **HELP WITH KAPIT-BISIG.**

social support



medical supplies services



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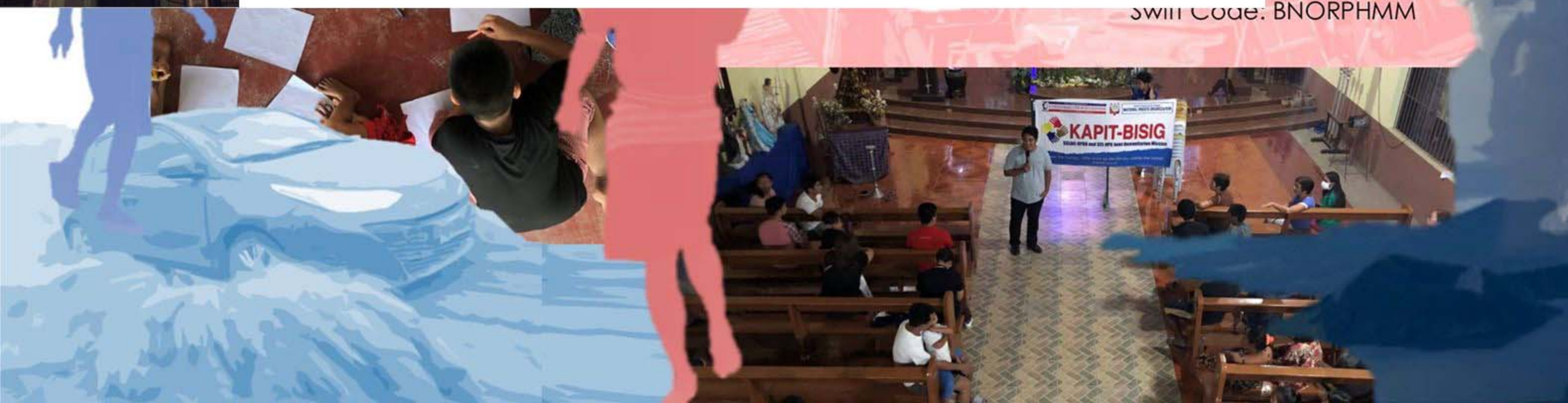
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Information on this material was gathered from interviews with IFI clergy and lay members, as well as internally displaced individuals.

KAPIT-BISIG!

Independiente's Defenders

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BATANGAS

BATANGAS is a province on the southwestern part of Luzon, bordered by the provinces of Cavite and Laguna to the north and Quezon to the east. It is a popular tourist destination near Metro Manila boasting ecological and historical wonders. Its many draws include Taal volcano.

Only a day after the explosive event that sent a plume of ash into the air on Jan. 12, a state of calamity was proclaimed across the province. At the peak of the disaster, a lockdown displaced residents in 11 towns and parts of one town and two cities. Over a million were either in evacuation sites or living with relatives and friends.

While the Iglesia Filipina Independiente (IFI) has only a few faith communities in the province, it joined the humanitarian effort.



Strengths

Despite its limitations, IFI's contribution to the humanitarian effort in Batangas was amplified because of networking. It has immediately joined the Roman Catholic Church and the National Council of Churches in the Philippines in the faith-based Tulungan sa Taal Network. IFI congregations, primarily in South Central Luzon, as well as friends from other civic organizations also contributed.

Prospects

Systems

A limited number of church leaders are hands on with the effort. Moreover, they work without a clear protocol. A system would improve the response, especially in terms of timeliness.

Capacity-building

Those who've participated in the Taal effort have expressed a need for amplified education on skills in humanitarian work, such as quick response, data-gathering and counselling, among others.

Early recovery

Much of the damage wrought by the disaster is in property and livelihood in Batangas. This is an opportunity for IFI to continue helping; the process of recovery is far from finished. **HELP WITH KAPIT-BISIG.**

 families assisted

2700

Services provided

 volunteers

food packs



hygiene kits

preloved clothes



medical supplies and services

psychosocial support



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