

Oplan: Ondoy Ayos Bahay restores the homes of Ondoy victims

On February, 12, Springboard Foundation travelled to Laguna to attend the Oplan: Ondoy Ayos Bahay” event to distribute 11 home repair kits to victims of typhoon Ondoy, which devastated the homes of many families in Luzon in 2009. This operation was made possible thanks to the donation from Help Alliance.

The beneficiaries were beside themselves with joy for having received the repair kits. After enduring over a year of living in homes with broken walls and leaking roofs, they are now able to receive help from an organization that cares. Their quality of life have plummeted after typhoon Ondoy, and has spiraled downward ever since because they did not receive any help. This is why they were very happy when they heard that Springboard Foundation was going to help by providing building materials for repairing their homes. There were tears of joy in the eyes of many.

Two of the beneficiaries gave an account of their personal experiences during typhoon Ondoy, one being Nanay Ofelia Castro. This is her account of what happened to her family:



During typhoon Ondoy, we were so shocked at how fast the flood waters were rising. We didn't even realize that we were already on the roof of our house – we weren't at all concerned about trying to save any of our possessions. We called out for help, but no one could help us on account of the rising water levels; and everyone else was also on top of their rooftops.

My husband wasn't with us at the time because he was at work. I could do nothing but cry and accept the tragedy unfolding around us. I was so afraid, because I didn't know how much time we would have to stay on the rooftop, and how we were going to be saved. We lost everything we had worked so hard to attain, and now even our home was destroyed. I thank God for hearing our prayer and bringing us people like Springboard Foundation and the Help Alliance who will help fix our homes. I will never forget it what I experienced during Ondoy.

The following is a testimony from Concepcion Constantino:



I was shocked at how fast things were happening during typhoon Ondoy. As water levels quickly rose, I saw the walls of my house being torn off and the roof fly away with the wind. I didn't know which of my 4 children to save first. One of my children was so shocked that he fell from one of the makeshift bridges we made. We thought he would drown, but thank god someone was there to save him. I was so happy to see my son again, despite seeing our house swallowed up by the rising floodwaters. We couldn't salvage a single one of our possessions. Even our clothes were washed away by the flood. It's so hard to have to stay in an evacuation center, because of the all the people, but what could we do?

When the flood receded, we returned to our house and had to make do with what was left of it. We put up torn blankets to serve as walls and cardboard boxes to serve as a roof. I am very grateful that I was chosen as one of the beneficiaries to receive a repair kit to repair our home. It's so hard not to have a proper home. Everyday, we endure the heat, the cold and the elements, seeping through our makeshift walls made from old and torn blankets, which fall apart every time the wind blows through it. And every time it rains, we have to find temporary shelter to avoid getting wet. Our lives have been so hard since, especially with my 4 children. My husband does not earn much and most of the time it's not even enough for our food. That's why I am very grateful to Springboard and to all their partners and sponsors, for helping us start over again by rebuilding our homes. Thank you very much.

A short distribution program was held at the Malaban Elementary School to welcome the beneficiaries and organizations involved in the project.



Mr. Moises “Jun” Velasco, Executive Director of Hope Worldwide Philippines gave an informative talk about the project, followed by an inspirational message by Ms. Annette Helbig, President of Springboard Foundation.

Ms. Annette Helbig accompanied by JV Velasco, Des Dimaguila and Vice Mayor Arman Dimaguila accompanied the beneficiaries to the site of one of the houses, to try their hand in construction





Pictures were taken while Annette and the others helped with the construction of the houses; and refreshments were served at the end of the program.

Springboard will return to Laguna this week to monitor the progress of the project.