

✉ J. Pimentel-Paredes

Medical Missions for the Victims of Typhoon Ondoy Medizinische Hilfe für die Opfer des Taifuns „Ondoy“

In September 26, 2009, “Ketsana” (Typhoon “Ondoy”) traversed the Philippines affecting most parts of Luzon including the National Capital Region. 512,092 families were affected and several barangays (smallest governmental unit in Philippines similar to a village or city quarter) were evacuated after the incessant rains caused heavy flooding in Metro Manila and other parts of Luzon. The 40-year record-breaking 41.6-centimeters total rainfall in a single day left many Filipinos homeless.

The total cost of damage is estimated at P108.9M (US\$ 2.3 million). According to Social Watch Philippines, the government will have to allocate additional P11.4 billion (US\$ 242 million) in the 2010 national budget to mitigate possible disasters in the future. This budget does not include yet the moral damages, the lost hope and the broken dreams of the Filipinos who were badly affected by the calamity.

Relief operations have sprung up from every corner of the world. People from different sectors, civil society organizations and other professional organizations expressed their willingness to help and offer whatever they can to ease and share the burden of the less fortunate, especially those who were affected by the typhoon.

One of the civil society organizations who has been extending its services to the typhoon affected communities is the “Integrative Medicine for Alternative Health Care Systems, (INAM Philippines Inc.)”. INAM is a non-stock, non-profit, non government organization providing alternative healthcare services to the marginalized sectors of our society. For almost 25 years, INAM has been providing both clinic and training services on alternative healthcare to its different partner organizations nationwide and already served almost 100,000 patients since 1984. INAM has provided trainings on Traditional Chinese Medicine acupuncture to almost 100 partner organizations – mostly community based health programs, peoples’ organizations and non-government organizations.

INAM conducted a medical mission last October 9, 2009 at Sitio Batasin, Barangay San Juan, Taytay, Rizal. Three hundred families (300) were affected by the flood and up to this time are still recovering from the damages incurred by typhoon Ondoy. The families are residing 800 meters away from the flood way and their source of income is mostly from fishing, “kangkong”(water spinach) harvesting and seasonal jobs such as carpentry, construction workers, etc. A total of two hundred fifty four (254) patients were served, one hundred seventy two (172) or 67.71 % were children complaining of fever, cough, colds, loose bowel movement and skin diseases. Eighty two (82) or 32.29 % were adults complaining of skin diseases, hypertension,



Photos 1, 2 and 3: Serving the people in a disaster stricken area with NADA acupuncture.

muscle/joint pains and symptoms of upper respiratory tract infection. Modern medical consultation, health education on diarrhea and breast feeding, and medicines were provided in the community.

INAM also participated in the medical mission organized by the Citizen's Disaster Response Center (CDRC) last October 11, 2009 in **Barangay Tatalon, Quezon City**.

Relief goods were distributed to 500 families in the community. A feeding program for 350 children was also conducted. 112 patients were treated with the NADA Protocol for stress and trauma management.

Barangay Tatalon is also being considered as a prospective partner community of INAM Philippines especially for the Community Based Recovery Program.

In October 17, 2009, INAM together with its volunteer doctors and nurses went to **Barangay Banaba, San Mateo, Rizal** to provide integrated health services to the affected families of the barangay. The medical mission was conducted in a private school located within the vicinity of the barangay. **Stress debriefing** was held for community members who were traumatized by the flood and ensuing disaster. This process became very helpful for the survivors in order to socialize their experience and normalize their lives. **Health education** on Upper Respiratory Tract Infection and symptoms of Leptospirosis were also presented to the community members. **The NADA protocol** for stress and trauma were made available to community members. Around **290 patients** availed the services and consulted the medical doctors. Out of the total number of patients, **124 or 42.75 %** were **children** complaining of loose bowel movement, cough, colds, fever and skin rashes. **166 or 57.24 %** patients were **adults** mostly diagnosed with hypertension, upper respiratory tract infection, gastroenteritis, skin diseases and musculoskeletal disorders.

INAM coordinated with Buklod Tao, a people's organization with 170 active members. the organization has strived to mitigate the environmental degradation of their community and has educated people on disaster preparedness. Buklod Tao is being considered as a prospective partner organization of INAM Philippines given its rich experience in community organizing, disaster preparedness and environment advocacy.

NADA

There were a total of 23 NADA practitioners who were involved in giving treatments last Sept. to November 2009, during the heavy flooding of metro manila and the Cordilleras brought about by typhoons Ondoy and Pepeng.

Trained in the NADA protocol were staff of our non government organization, INAM Philippines Inc., volunteers, and mothers in a community.

There is a body now that certifies doctors and non-doctors who have been practicing, did studies and training in acupuncture. The body that certifies is the Philippine Institute for Traditional and Alternative Health Care (PITAHC) under our Department of Health.

Last November 2009, an organization was set up The Philippine Acupuncture Academy (PAA) during an Acu-



Photo 4: The author as instructor. This is one of the trainings in a community where 10 mothers and 3 social workers of another NGO learned the NADA protocol.

puncture conference that elected 9 board members to PAA. 7 were doctors and 2 were non MDs.

The victims of the typhoon last year were stressed, emotionally traumatized after they lost their properties, and family members. With proper orientation before giving the NADA protocol, the victims responded very well. They felt relaxed, calm, most of them sleepy during treatment, many relieved of their different ailments, they felt rested, had a good night sleep, some had mild diarrhea as a form of release, some perspired and felt warm during treatment. The majority felt safe and responded well to the treatment.

Author information (STRICTA requirements)

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Training as Acupuncture Detoxification Specialist (ADS), Lincoln Recovery Center, South Bronx, New York, 2004. Certified Registered Trainer Status of NADA International to teach the NADA Protocol, June 2009, Brighton Hospital, Michigan U.S.A.

Present Positions:

Member of the Executive Committee of the Integrative Medicine for Alternative Health Care Systems, Philippines, Inc. (INAM), formerly the Acupuncture Therapeutic and Research Center (ATRC);
 Acupuncture Detoxification Specialist;
 National Acupuncture Detoxification Association (NADA) Registered Trainer
 Trainer/Instructor of Traditional Chinese Medicine and its different modalities
 Trainer/Instructor of Basic Counseling Skills
 Executive Committee member, Philippine Acupuncture Academy (PAA)