



*In the Philippines, Christian World Service wants our partner Developers to have what it needs to help communities prepare for an uncertain future. CWS partner Developers Foundation has worked to rebuild homes and livelihoods. But as climate change worsens, they are thinking about the next disaster and how to secure their survival.*

### **OUR STORY IS ONE OF RESILIENCE**

The memory of Typhoon Haiyan drives 74 year old Clarita. The 2013 typhoon, the worst to make landfall, had brushed across the northern coast of Aklan province where she lives in the Philippines. In a few days, record breaking winds and rain destroyed much of her home and the fruit tree and vegetable crops she had tended for decades. Thanks to your support Clarita has a home constructed out of rescued timber and covered with corrugated iron roofing donated by donors to CWS appeals.

Before the typhoon, she lived a largely subsistent life, dependent on the food she and her family grew. It was enough to feed them most days in the year. She also worked as a volunteer health worker in her community, part of Developers' self-help programme. Along with other members of her community, she has learnt a lot from Developers. They have a good understanding about their local environment and the effects climate change will have.

Typhoon Haiyan was the wakeup call. They know the temperatures are rising and that the typhoons will be more severe. Despite their economic poverty, they are determined to be better prepared for the next superstorm.

Clarita wants a cushion against future calamities. She is taking nothing for granted. Every day, she works on her land, tending her newly planted fruit trees and crops. Knowing how important the community is when disaster strikes, she participates in the planting drives organised by Developers. **For the last four years, their story has been only of disaster, but a new one is emerging.**

After Haiyan, they realised they could replace what they had lost or work to a bigger vision. They chose the big step. All sectors in each of five villages are developing an economic plan for the future. Groups of farmers, children, women and fisherfolk contribute to the effort.

The most visible sign is the new farmers' market built by local people with materials paid for from last year's Christmas Appeal. Instead of paying money to a middleman this inland market keeps funds in the local economy and helps three fishing families who bring their catch inland. Now they need funds to buy more fruit trees (banana and coconut) and root crops (cassava, sweet potato and taro) and learn skills so they process the fruit into products like banana chips. They want to replace mangroves that were cleared from the coasts to improve fish habitat and protect the foreshore from tidal surges. Always aware of possible disaster, they need to brush up on first aid skills and community disaster planning.



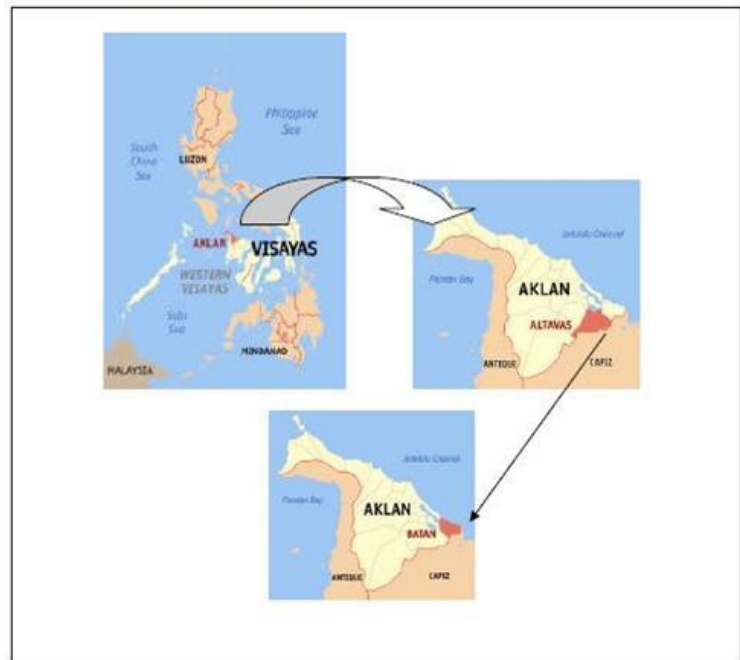
*Locals attend an investment seminar on banana and cassava.*

**Donations to the Christmas Appeal will train local people and give them the resources they need to improve their livelihoods and become more resilient.**

## BACKGROUND ON THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippines is made up of over 7,000 islands and home to 100.9 million people. It experiences approximately 20 typhoons a year. With climate change they are becoming more severe. In November 2013 Typhoon Haiyan (known locally as Yolanda) swept through the Visayas region. A Category 5 storm – it was one of the largest ever to make landfall with wind gusts reaching up to 300 kilometres an hour. Haiyan devastated the country – over 6,000 people lost their lives and around 4 million their homes. It affected more than 12 million people. Haiyan has made life harder for many.

The city of Tacloban was flattened – many news reports came from amidst the devastation. Other parts of the region were also badly damaged. CWS was able to give significant help to the National Council of Churches in the Philippines. ACT Alliance (Action by Churches Together) of which CWS and NCCP are part, provided food, shelter, healthcare and sanitation to over 1 million people. Work continues on assisting people to rebuild homes and community buildings, replant crops, replace lost animals, and set up businesses.



- 26.5% of the total population [lives](#) below the poverty line, including 10 million women.
- 13.9 million people do not [have](#) enough good food to eat.

## DEVELOPERS FOUNDATION

The Developers Foundation is part of the community. Work is now concentrating on five villages in the isolated northern coast of Aklan province in the Philippines. Before Typhoon Haiyan, Developers ran a piggery that sustained most of their work to improve livelihoods, protect the environment and train for natural disasters. The storm damaged or destroyed 94-98% of homes and the piggery. Crops and trees were devastated. Fishing equipment and farm materials were washed away.

Executive Director Teresa Naraval attributed the fact that only 14 people died in their area to the training they had done. Developers had excellent records of the community and was able to help local *barangay* or village captains undertake a rapid assessment of the situation. Together they made sure that everybody who needed help got it.



For decades, the people in its communities have lived on the fish they caught, the food they grew or what they could trade. But in recent years the hunger times had come more often as the fish declined. Clearing the mangroves had destroyed fish habitat and when the large storm blew, there was little to protect them from tidal surges. More recently, the catch has been declining and the typhoons more damaging. Staff from Developers have worked with the villages to improve environmental protection, and facilitating disaster and livelihood planning.

After the typhoon passed they helped families rebuild homes, schools and community facilities. They imported enough corrugated iron from Manila to provide 3 or 4 sheets to 3,061 families, protecting them from the frequent rain. Families shared fishing equipment and have worked together so no one has been left behind. Developers staff have helped some replace lost equipment thanks to donations to CWS. They have facilitated workshops so all sectors of the communities could have a say in the development plan including children. The farmers' market (pictured) is a success so far.



## DISASTER PREPAREDNESS



Scientists predict the Philippines will experience more violent storms as temperatures rise. After Typhoon Haiyan, Developers is working more closely with local councils and government agencies to prepare the communities for the future. Running first aid courses and upgrading disaster drills are part of the programme. The people want to plant more mangroves and improve income to add value to the crops they are

planting. Strong communities will mean they are better able to respond when the next storm strikes.

**Working together with people from the communities, we can make the hope of Christmas our story.**