I. OVERVIEW

On November 2021, Siargao Islands was declared by Conde Nast as the #1 Island Destination in Asia and by TIME Magazine as 2021, one of the greatest places in earth.

On December 16th 2021, Supertyphoon Rai (known locally as Odette) ravaged through the Philippines, bringing torrential rains, violent winds, floods, and surges equivalent to a Category 5 storm. This catastrophic event claimed the lives of more than 400 people and injured approximately 1100 others. Island communities across the Philippines are continuing relief efforts to reconstruct homes and local infrastructure and ensure that its residents get the support they need to recover from this disaster. In Del Carmen and Siargao Islands, pre-disaster risk reduction efforts allowed low casualty impact as we learned from Super Typhoon Haiyan that hit the Philippines in 2013.

The community of Del Carmen, located on Siargao Island, was especially affected by Typhoon Rai with 95% of the community having lost their homes, public facilities have been heavily damaged or completely lost, and the lives of Del Carmenons has been heavily impacted. It has been more than 8 weeks since Typhoon Rai made landfall on Siargao Island.

II. ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OF DEL CARMEN

The impact of Typhoon Rai was exacerbated by the COVID-19 Pandemic which affected business, family and community dynamics and personal mental health.

Despite the severe damage and the negative impacts brought about by the Super Typhoon “Odette” to the properties, livelihood, and the life of the Del Carmenons in general, the Local Government of Del Carmen led massive efforts to ensure we have enough supply of food and water, functioning public health system, immediate rehabilitation support for shelters, and urgency of recovering our livelihood.

We have slowly addressed the physical infrastructure needs with construction supplies, hunger issues with food / water access, and priority public services with primary to tertiary care support for health, the mental and psycho-social impacts are yet to be addressed fully. Nonetheless, our programs allowed us to still address petty crimes, conduct of psychological first aid, sustain when it is needed the most.

Through the help and support of the local government unit and its leaders as well as several NGOs and private companies, the locals of Del Carmen were able to slowly get back on their feet. We
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are forever grateful for the generosity and kindness of the people and the organizations that have helped us in making us we are not alone in this time of great adversity.

We have achieved so far 0% involuntary hunger leading to 0% involuntary crime, no recorded health outbreak despite still with the threats of the COVID-19 pandemic, rehabilitation of 14 of the 20 villages ("barangays in the Philippines") including the 4 smaller island communities, and reopening out tourism last February 22, 2022 with shift from eco-tourism to social (impact) tourism.

We are far from being stable and there is still no food security especially with damaged agriculture having lost 80% of our coconut trees covering 270 square kilometers or 35% of our land area impacting almost 15% of our families. Tourism services are still recovering and the consistency of tourist arrivals is being monitored with our limited available accommodations and related services. Tertiary care is done out of a tent hospital and public health programs in spaces that had some roofing left of their public spaces.

III. CURRENT STATUS AS OF FEBRUARY 25, 2022

Infrastructure remains an important issue we must address with heavy damages to health centers, educational facilities and other public buildings to provide the quality public services, we are also highlighting major issues in other sectors. The need to protect the families at risk in identified danger zones must be immediately relocated prior to the next typhoon season from November to February.

Social, economic and environmental challenges are now on top of our priority list as we are entering early recovery phase as ground zero of the Typhoon Landfall. Social Impact is now being prioritized with the following efforts:

• Conduct of Psychological First Aid / Psychosocial Support for both Children and their Families to prepare the community for the reopening of face-to-face classes in schools which stopped in March 2020 due to COVID-19 threats
• Continuing Vaccination especially to Senior Citizens to lessen threat of COVID-19 impact and increase burden of care to our public health system
• Rehabilitation of Water Sources and Household Sanitation to manage water borne diseases and other health risks

We invite our tourists to visit Del Carmen and Siargao Islands! We are now driving the local Economic activity with social tourism promotion of “Join this Journey of Recovery with Us” campaign. The inclusivity of tourism and the loss of our agricultural industry for now, is our main gamble to promote economic recovery and activity. Our island has never lost its jewels – beautiful beaches, world class waves for surfing, access to the bounty of marine produce, and most importantly, we never lost of values of hospitality.

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Del Carmen Municipal Complex, Kilometer 2 Del Carmen
Siargao Islands, Surigao del Norte, Philippines 8416
www.visitdelcarmen.com
• For the Farmers, we are pushing for vegetable seedlings access, free land preparation and clearing operations of debris and additional livestock inputs to restart their farms.
• For the Fisherfolks, we are providing minimum rehabilitation kits assistance to their repair with fishing boats and support for fishing gears
• For the Small Businessmen, access to interest free loans are offered to help them restart their businesses

The natural resources which served as our shore protection with the mangrove forest cover of 5000 hectares, the watershed forest for our potable water holding area and our unique flora and fauna as a Key Biodiversity Area of the Philippines, all needs support and rehabilitation. Ongoing efforts for immediate assessment to identify appropriate recovery efforts are being done but parallel actions of replanting, clean ups and sustained management are also necessary.

*Our community can only do so much and thus access to expertise, funding and other necessary resources to ensure that our success in pre-disaster management will not be overwhelmed by lack of support in post disaster management. We need more help.*

IV. URGENT NEEDS AS OF FEBRUARY 25, 2022

We have anchored our response and recovery on the principles of Human Dignity and will continue to do as such to spousc the appropriate behavior as we move forward. We urgently need to build SAFE SPACES:

• SAFE SPACES FOR CHILDREN:
  o Setup of UNICEF standard temporary learning shelters to support immediate back to school program with intermediary curriculum from Elementary to High School Students. We are in need of at least 50 learning shelters with reading books, school supplies and teacher’s kits
  o Support the continuous Psycho-social support for Children with Toys for Play based Therapy, Feeding Program at the cost of $1 per meal per child covering 5000 children and reconstruction of playgrounds at the cost of $15,000 per playground for 20 community playgrounds in schools

• SAFE SPACES FOR FAMILIES:
  o Shelter Rehabilitation through Roofing Repair kits consisting of 10 pieces of GI Sheet per household for 2500 households costing US$100 per Shelter Roofing kit. We are also constructing 3 relocation sites which is estimated to host a total of 1000 families with a cost of US$1000 per new temporary home with Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Facilities.
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- Rehabilitation of Churches and Community Centers in terms of construction materials like GI Sheets for the roofing rehabilitation and with Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Facilities.

• SAFE SPACES FOR MICRO-BUSINESS:
  - Farmer Livelihood Recovery Kit support for farmers (vegetable seeds, coconut stalks, and livestock of chicken/hogs) costing US$100 for a pack of vegetable seeds, livestock support and land preparation
  - Fisherfolk Livelihood Recovery Kit fisherfolks (fishing gears, fishing / tourism boats) costing US$100 per for materials for fishing / tourism boat repair and minimum fishing gear

• SAFE SPACES FOR PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY:
  - FACILITIES that can hold up to Category 5 level storms or wind gustiness of 300 KPH and Earthquakes of at least magnitude 7: Construction of Vegetable Nurseries to support vulnerable families, Storage Building for rice and food packs, Communication Centers for remote data and mobile access
  - STRENGTHEN INTERNATIONAL Partnerships for on ground support (air and sea asset allocation) in transporting immediate response to communities during strong storms that also impacts public servants and government officers
  - TECHNICAL EXPERTISE in developing climate resilient supply chains for fish products and agriculture products supporting the micro-enterprises in island communities

V. CALL FOR HELP

Siargao Island is home to many people, not just to Siargaonons but to the many who have visited us and connected with our community. We invite everyone to visit Del Carmen and Siargao Islands! “Join this Journey of Recovery with Us”.

Our vision is to respond and recover fast without compromising our values and addressing inequities. We will have to face another typhoon season year after year from November to February and thus living with this disaster risk includes our need to strengthen our ability to respond and recover faster.
We ask help and support to allow us to continue our process of recovery of our homes, our livelihood and our families. Visit us and take part in our journey of recovery in Siargao Islands and in other areas devastated by Typhoon Odette or other natural calamities.

We will recover, we must recover. #bangondelcarmen (#riseupdelcarmen)

Here is how you can help with the recovery efforts in Del Carmen and Siargao Island. Please Contact us directly for coordinated response:

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*Email:* lgudelcarmen@gmail.com

*Alfredo Coro, Vice Mayor, Del Carmen, Siargao Islands, Philippines*

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