



DEAREST GERMAN FRIENDS: WARAY EMPOWERMENT NETWORK,

Our hearts are filled with so much gratitude when you respond to our call for help.

After we were severely hit again by a strong typhoon, we once again look up the sky thinking how can we pick ourselves back when we haven't moved forward yet from the devastating intense tropical cyclones in our lives - Strongest Super Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) in 2013 and Super Typhoon Ruby (Hagupit) in 2014, and the most recent Typhoon Phanfone (Ursula) in 2019.

This is the third time where we celebrated our Christmas in total darkness and silence. As someone who always waits for this most anticipated season of the year, it also pains me seeing how children do house chores instead of singing Christmas carols or visiting their godparents in the supposed wonderful time of the annum. Instead of holding small gatherings and family reunions, we indulged ourselves looking for our roofs, saving our clothes and materials, and embracing the hammer in an attempt to build an immediate shelter when the dark comes.

It has never been easy especially to families who don't have much and financially struggling. It always seems that our lives are put into games we don't know the rules. Our withstanding attitude has long been stretched and we can't just remain enduring all the time, because, like anybody else, we also get tired from all of this.

When I post a status on facebook (right after the network are slowly resumed) on December 27, 2019, I received a lot of messages expressing their good thoughts and prayers for us, and some wanted to share help. At that time, I honestly don't know what to say because there's so much to tell. But when I got the courage to see the entire situation it's when I asked for help, not just for us but for our neighbors, our community who also needs assistance.





With all honesty, I am overwhelmed and emotional when you, my friends, expressed their desire to help. I know how good are your hearts but it still amazes me how you would care for others you probably haven't met yet. Although this is never new to me but at that time, where most of us don't find any reason to move forward, it brings so much emotion that led us into realization - that Bayanihan is still indeed alive, it may be in different form but the essence is still the same.

This is why I am bringing the words of our community folks in Sta Cruz, Quinapondan, Eastern Samar, our sincerest thanks to your good soul, for keeping us part of your prayers and good thoughts.

Your good deeds have paved a way into reaching over 240 House Holds providing them relief goods (rice, canned goods, and instant noodles), and a total of 24 Families where roofing materials (galvanized sheet metal and umbrella nails) were provided.

Truly, we are beyond thankful for these and the trust you have on me. This enables our fellow to find more reasons to move forward despite the challenges we have to hurdle.

And as we progress, please be a witness of another moving story that has to unfold yet. When we look at the twinkling star at night, we will surely remember that a group of young and empowered leaders, a friend - the Waray Empowerment Network, has once helped us in keeping our guiding light shines the brightest.

Together, we will continue to rise up and fight the climate crisis.

Padayon!

Yours in Making a Difference,

Ronan Renz Napoto

