

Projects of Johanniter-Auslandshilfe

Philippines



Their geographical location make the Philippines particularly prone to natural disasters: the island state is regularly plagued by typhoons and tropical storms. As a consequence of climate change, the country is increasingly suffering from very heavy rainfall and floods. Poorer sections of the population are the hardest hit in these cases, people who cannot afford to live in settlement at higher elevations. A number of cities are characterised by slums: the houses are built from cheap chipboard panels or pieces of wood, they often have no sanitary facilities, electricity or running water. These houses cannot withstand the floods that follow in the wake of heavy rainfall of typhoons. During the dry season, fires are rampant on account of the use of candles and petroleum lamps, and these can have devastating effects on account of the density of the buildings. The recurrent destruction of their houses forces the inhabitants of the slums into a downward spiral of poverty.

Better Prepared for Disasters

Johanniter International Assistance has started its presence in the Philippines in 2010 and established most at all disaster preparedness activities in 2011 on the island of Mindanao. After the devastating typhoon Haiyan in 2013, an emergency medical team of Johanniter carried out urgent medical treatment in affected areas, followed by reconstruction efforts in combination with disaster preparedness on the islands of Leyte and Panay. Together with its partner organisation Tambayan, Johanniter International Assistance has been active in the slums in the island of Mindanao since 2016, helping people to be better prepared for the recurrent natural disasters in urban areas. Members of the community are



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trained in working with electricity and building structures appropriate for disasters, so that the houses can withstand the next typhoon. So-called 'Liter Lights' and solar cells protect against the risk of open fireplaces in the districts. What's more, Johanniter offers information events on disaster management through its partner. This is where the participants learn how to react in the event of a disaster.

The inadequate hygiene conditions also weaken the people on Mindanao. Toilets are often missing or have to be paid for. Nor is there any free water, which is why the people drink polluted river water. The consequence of this are acute respiratory illnesses, gastrointestinal diseases, pneumonia and Dengue fever. The lack of a public waste disposal service means that waste blocks the sewers and lead to flooding after rainfall. Johanniter helps to combat the effects of this lack of waste disposal services by building sanitary facilities.

In addition, there are further measures to improve the living conditions for the inhabitants. For example, 360 young people are currently being trained over a period of two years to prepare their own risk analyses for their districts. At the end of this period, they will explain the identified risks to inhabitants in their communities and jointly consider how to protect themselves against these or how to eliminate the risks so as to establish a culture of disaster prevention in the long term. A total of around 33.000 people profit from the project. It is financed with funds from the German Foreign Office, Aktion Deutschland Hilft and donations.

Here you can read more about our efforts to strengthen communities around the world.