**ChildFund International**

**Humanitarian Situation Report**

**Humanitarian Situation Report # 3**

**Taal Volcano Phreatomagmatic Eruption – Philippines**

**July 23, 2021**

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**Overall Situation**

Following an eruption on 1 July that gave rise to a kilometer-high phreatomagmatic plume, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS) placed Taal Volcano under Alert Level 3. Four more eruptions were recorded in the evening of 1 July. The regional disaster risk reduction and management council (RDRRMC) convened an emergency meeting to discuss contingency measures as 1,502 people were evacuated from high-risk areas of two municipalities in Batangas province, of which 1,290 are catered in 11 evacuation centers as per Office of Civil Defense (IVA) data. Rescue teams from the Fire Service, Coast Guard, and Philippine Red Cross were dispatched to support local authorities in the evacuation.

As of July 3, a series of three (3) short phreatomagmatic bursts occurred at 10:25 AM, 10:47 AM, 11:01 AM yesterday and produced short, jetted plumes that rose 100 meters above the Main Crater Lake. In the past 24-hour period, the Taal Volcano Network recorded forty-eight (48) volcanic earthquakes, including two (2) volcano-tectonic earthquakes, forty (40) low frequency volcanic earthquakes, six (6) volcanic tremor events having durations up to four (4) minutes, and low-level background tremor that has persisted since 08 April 2021. High levels of volcanic sulfur dioxide or SO2 gas emissions and steam-rich plumes that rose as much as three thousand (3,000) meters high that drifted southwest and north-northwest were generated from the Taal Main Crater. Sulfur dioxide (SO2) emission averaged 10,254 tonnes/day on 02 July 2021. In addition, vog was observed over Taal Volcano and vicinity. Based on ground deformation parameters from electronic tilt, continuous GPS and InSAR monitoring, Taal Volcano Island has begun deflating in April 2021 while the Taal region continues to undergo very slow extension since 2020.

At Alert Level 3, magma extruding from the Main Crater could drive explosive eruption. The public is reminded that the entire Taal Volcano Island is a Permanent Danger Zone (PDZ), and entry into the island as well as into the high-risk barangays of Agoncillo and Laurel must be prohibited due to the hazards of pyroclastic density currents and volcanic tsunami should strong eruptions occur. All activities on Taal Lake should not be allowed at this time. Communities around the Taal Lake shores are advised to remain vigilant, take precautionary measures against possible airborne ash and vog and calmly prepare for possible evacuation should unrest intensify. Civil aviation authorities must advise pilots to avoid flying over Taal Volcano Island as airborne ash and ballistic fragments from sudden explosions and pyroclastic density currents such as base surges may pose hazards to aircraft. DOST-PHIVOLCS maintains its close monitoring of Taal Volcano and any new development will be communicated to all concerned stakeholders.

There are 4 Local Government Units that are affected (Agoncillo, Laurel, San Nicolas, Balete)and 18 barangays. Currently there are 345 families or 1,392 individuals. There are 317 families or 1,282 individuals staying in 11 evacuation centers. 28 families or 110 individuals are staying outside evacuation centers.

In its latest bulletin dated July 10 (8AM), PHIVOLCS reported that in the past 24-hour period, the Taal Volcano Network recorded seven (7) volcanic earthquakes, including two (2) low frequency volcanic earthquakes, four (4) volcanic tremor events having durations of one (1) to two (2) minutes, and low-level background tremor that has persisted since 07 July 2021. High levels of volcanic sulfur dioxide or SO2 gas emissions and steam-rich plumes that rose one thousand two hundred (1,200) meters before drifting generally west was generated from the Taal Main Crater. Sulfur dioxide (SO2) emission averaged 4,149 tons/day on 09 July 2021.

Taal Volcano remains under Alert Level 3 (Magmatic Unrest). PHIVOLCS reminded the public that the entire Taal Volcano Island is a Permanent Danger Zone (PDZ), and entry into the island as well as into the high-risk barangays of Agoncillo and Laurel must be prohibited due to the hazards of pyroclastic density currents and volcanic tsunami should strong eruptions occur.

As of July 8, sixty-six (66) barangays from 9 municipalities of Batangas Province are affected by the Taal Volcano activity. Around 7,010 people are internally displaced where 3,691 persons are staying in 22 EC’s and 3,319 persons staying outside EC’s have evacuated. Php4.4 million (USD92, 012) worth of relief assistance release from national and local gov’t already. ​Php42.9 million (USD894, 810) worth of FI-NFI augmentation support has been delivered DSWD-FO CALABARZON last July 7. (13,800 Family Food Packs, 300 family tents, 5,000 family kits, 5,000 hygiene kits, 4,279 sleeping kits). The Department of Health deployed 5 Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) teams visiting Evacuation Centers to conduct Psychosocial Support and Psychological First Aid sessions to IDP’s. ​As of this reporting, humanitarian clusters still not activated.

In its latest bulletin dated July 23 (8AM), PHIVOLCS reported that in the past 24-hour period, the Taal Volcano Network recorded ninety-five (95) volcanic earthquakes, including sixty-eight (68) volcanic tremor events having durations of one (1) to seventeen (17) minutes, twenty-six (26) low-frequency volcanic earthquakes, one (1) hybrid earthquake and low-level background tremor that has persisted since 07 July 2021. High levels of volcanic sulfur dioxide or SO2 gas emissions and steam-rich plumes that rose nine hundred (900) meters before drifting to the northeast and east were generated from the Taal Main Crater. Sulfur dioxide (SO2) emission averaged 5,286 tonnes/day on 20 July 2021. Based on ground deformation parameters from electronic tilt, continuous GPS and InSAR monitoring, Taal Volcano Island has begun deflating in April 2021 while the Taal region continues to undergo very slow extension since 2020.

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As of July 23, 148 barangays from 12 municipalities of Batangas Province are affected by the Taal Volcano activity. Around 14,805 people are internally displaced where 3,834 persons are staying in 23 EC’s and 10,971 persons staying outside EC’s have evacuated. ₱16,1 million (USD328,571) worth of assistance was provided to the affected families; of which, ₱3.6 million (USD74,653) was provided by DSWD, ₱7.1 million (USD144,897) from Local Government Units (LGUs) and ₱5.2 million (USD106,122) from Non-Government Organizations (NGOs). As of July 23, DSWD has Php806 million (USD16.4 million) stand-by funds from the central office, Php5.2 million (USD106, 122) from their filed office and Php43 million (USD877,551) in other DSWD-FOs which may support the relief needs of the displaced families due to Taal Volcano eruption through inter-Field Office augmentation.

Humanitarian clusters are still not activated as of this moment. UNOCHA shared in the Philippine INGO network meeting last July 21 that the alert level of Taal Volcano could be lowered to Alert Level 2 if the volcano sustains decreased activities in the next 14 days.

During the meeting of the National Child Protection Working Group (NCPWG) last July 21, the group noted that no external support is needed as the situation is still within the government’s ability to manage. The conduct of Child Protection Rapid Assessment (CPRA) is not a priority as of the moment.

​**Situation in Areas Where ChildFund Works**

No current program areas will be affected directly by the Volcanic eruption but a former local partner, YKBI, used to operate in the towns of **Agoncillo, Lemery, Taal, San Luis and San Nicolas,** all located along the coasts of the Taal lake. There are no alliance program areas affected by the eruption either. However, some 100 families affiliated with the Taiwan Fund for Children and Families (TFCF), a former alliance member, are from the affected areas. Our local partner GEMS Heart which is based in the National Capital Region (NCR) has an existing partnership with TFCF.

A staff member of GEMS Heart attempted to visit and conduct assessments in one of the municipalities affected but was not allowed entry by local government. Only those personnel authorized by the government are given access to the affected areas this time.

Based on the update provided by the community volunteers of GEMS Heart, not all the 100 member families associated with TFCF are staying in Evacuation Centers. Some of them chose to remain in their homes while some are staying with relatives and friends in different places within the province.

**ChildFund’s Response**

The current situation is still manageable within national and local government capacity and resources. But if the situation worsens most likely it will be needing support from humanitarian and civil society organizations. If this happens the CO will most likely launch a response. Currently the CO is preparing response action plans. Local partners near the area have been alerted and are on standby for possible deployment if needed.

If the situation worsens necessitating the CO to respond, we intend to focus our initial intervention on setting up child friendly spaces (CFS) and conduct of psycho-social sessions for children and their parents/caregivers. We implemented similar interventions when Taal Volcano erupted in January 2020. The CO will need around US$25,000 to start up the response.

While on standby and closely monitoring the situation, the CO will conduct virtual refresher trainings for the pool of trained CFS and MHPSS facilitators from GEMS Heart. The CO team will also meet with TFCF counterparts next week to explore the possibility of working together should an actual response becomes necessary.

Last July 20, CO technical staff facilitated an online virtual refresher training on CFS to 22 staff and volunteers of GEMS Heart as part of the CO’s preparedness activities for possible Taal eruption response. The training was also attended by two TFCF staff.

The planned meeting between the CO Team and TFCF counterparts mentioned in the previous report happened on July 15. It was agreed that ChildFund will prepare a concept note that will contain ChildFund’s proposed response in case the worst-case scenario (i.e. escalation of the Taal volcano alert to Level 4 or 5) will happen. It is also worth noting that TFCF expressed openness to the idea of TFCF collaborating with ChildFund Philippines in responding to future humanitarian crises beyond the Taal Volcano eruption, focusing on both emergency and recovery phases, including capacity-building to strengthen resilience of families and communities to future threats.

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* **Staffing and Security**

Currently no staff deployed yet and no staff are affected from event as well

* **Sponsorship and Grants**

N/A

* **Donors**

No Donors yet

* **Budget**

Currently no funds available

* **Media/Communications**

No Materials developed as of the moment

* **Support needed or requested from IO, GSS or Global Teams**

Current capacity of CO and local partner is enough to support this emergency if ever there is a decision to respond.