

**SOLAR CHARGERS DISTRIBUTION REPORT**  
**December 26-29, 2013**  
**Ibajay, Aklan and Ormoc City, Baybay City, Isabel, Tacloban City, Leyte**

**MISSION OVERVIEW**

Last December 26-29, 2013, the UMCOR team with collaboration with the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference and UMCOR Philippines went back to Leyte to provide relief to the survivors of Typhoon Yolanda. UMCOR's mission is to facilitate the distribution of 320 units of Solio Solar chargers donated by Google and Inveneo to the youth attending the Rise Up Christmas Institute happening simultaneously on 2 islands, in Ibajay, Aklan in the Western Visayas District and in Valencia, Ormoc City in the Eastern Visayas District. The remaining chargers will also be distributed to each family belonging in each local church in Isabel, Baybay City and Tacloban City.

**OUR WORK**

- **December 19**

Shipment from Inveneo arrived in Manila via China Airlines assigning UMCOR and Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) as co-consignee to the shipment for tax-exemption purposes.

- **December 23**

Coordination with our partner broker continues as we work double-time to beat the time before the Holiday break. Additional requirements asked by the DSWD from UMCOR regarding their application for accreditation status caused the delay therefore postponing the release of the chargers until the 26<sup>th</sup> of December.

- **December 26**

Series of Events:

A. Our broker was at the DSWD office by the airport at 8:30am and was granted the clearance to proceed to the next step of the release process. The documents need to be signed by an officer from the Department of Finance (DOF) to exempt it from duties and taxes since the items are donated for Yolanda relief in Central Philippines. Shortly past 9am, our documents were in line for the DOF officer's signature.

B. Regrettably, the DOF officer did not arrive until a few minutes before lunch creating a huge setback to the schedule of release for the shipment to catch its flight into Cebu later in the afternoon.

C. Shipment was released shortly before 4pm and missed its flight into Cebu for that day.

D. Coordinated with the Philippine Air Force in hopes to have the chargers sent to Tacloban directly. Process will take a few days since they operate on a first come, first served basis and possibly be sent to Tacloban after New Year's celebration.

E. Had to source out a forwarder who can send all 16 boxes to Leyte overnight. 2Go courier services offered the best deal but will transfer only to Cebu because they do not have operations in Leyte yet. The cargo is not guaranteed to be shipped overnight due to high volume of cargo going in Central Philippines and most of their staff is already on holiday break. I emphasized the importance of the chargers to reach its destination on or before the 28<sup>th</sup> without any assurance but I did the shipping anyway.

F. Booked the last flight out of Manila to Cebu to take the fast craft ferry the next day to Ormoc, Leyte.

- **December 27**

A. Upon arrival in Ormoc, we commuted to Visayas State University in Baybay City to show support to the youth during their Rise Up Christmas Institute.

B. Received a call from 2Go at 3:30pm to advise me that the chargers arrived in Cebu and is ready for pickup at their warehouse. Doubtful if I can make it back to Cebu on time, I decided to pick up the chargers the next day.

C. Connected with Rev. David Valera, Ciony Eduarte of UMCOR and youth leaders to plan logistics on how to get 100 chargers to the Western part of Visayas in Ibajay, Aklan, the other venue of the Christmas Institute.

- **December 28**

A. Plan set in motion to leave Baybay at 6:30am to catch the 8am ferry to Cebu. Trip took approximately 3 hours to get to Cebu.

B. A United Methodist Men lay leader in the person of Julito Tablada volunteered to help me transport the chargers from the warehouse in Cebu back at the port. Upon arrival in Cebu at 11am, we proceeded immediately at the warehouse located in Pier 7 to pick up the chargers and arrange for its deliveries in Ormoc, Leyte and Ibajay, Aklan.

C. 100 units or 5 boxes will be personally delivered by Mr. Tablada in Ibajay where the chargers will travel for 12 more hours on a large ferry and another 8 hours by land.

D. I arrived in Ormoc at 9:30pm and transported the chargers to Holy Mountain UMC where we distributed it immediately to the youth attending the Christmas Institute. Remaining chargers will be distributed the following day in Baybay and Tacloban.

- **December 29**

A. I facilitated another batch of distribution in Baybay in the morning and in Tacloban in the afternoon before my flight back to Manila,

B. The other batch of chargers reached Ibajay later during the day where it was distributed the following day – December 30 before the Christmas Institute draw to a close.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

More than half of the population in the storm-ravaged areas still does not have electricity restored back to their homes. According to the Department of Energy secretary, it will take up to 1 more year before they can fully restore back power in the hardest-hit locations. There is a great demand of solar-powered solutions among the survivors of the typhoon. These are indispensable solutions that will greatly improve their lives.

1. That more solar chargers will be distributed to more families in other areas. As the survivors rebuild their lives, we can provide more aid to help them improve their way of living. The 320 units of solar chargers were distributed to 320 chosen families in 6 areas. These chargers will sustain their communications with families and friends living in other places.

2. That solar lamps will also be distributed. There are 3 main benefits of using a solar-powered lamp to one family in Central Philippines:

- ✓ It improves security
- ✓ It saves them money because it cut their cost in buying candles or oil for their lamps
- ✓ It will prevent fire caused by inattentive use of candles or oil lamps

Prepared By:



**April Grace G. Mercado**

**Special Projects Manager  
UMCOM Philippines**