Effects of Typhoon Soudelor: No Running Water

Angelyn Labadan

Northern Marianas College

“I can live without power, but give me my water!” yelled the residents of the island of Saipan during the aftermath of Typhoon Soudelor. Typhoon Soudelor threw the island into devastation after it’s rampage on August 2nd, 2015, resulting in a massive loss and destruction. Post typhoon consequences soon brought the local population to the realization that they had lost access to one of the most important resources: water. “Seventy-five percent of Earth is composed of water, yet eighty-five percent of Earth’s population live in the driest half of the planet.” United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Water cooperation facts and figures. Retrieved on October 15th, 2015 from http://www.unwater.org/water-cooperation-2013/water-cooperation/facts-and-figures/en/ On top of that, seven hundred eighty-three million people do not have access to clean water at all. Although Saipan’s mere population of roughly fifty thousand had the nicer end of a water bucket compared to the rest of the world during post typhoon consequences, questions addressing the lack of water, water quality, distribution and much more arise. This persuasive essay argues the importance of clean running water and addresses the serious issue of its absence due to Typhoon Soudelor, thus prompts research on the impact of a lack of water in a community, public opinion on water accessibility, and future preparations for the next water crisis.

Everyone on Saipan has experienced Typhoon Soudelor, thus there are a variety of stories all told from different perspectives. How did water suppliers approach the sudden increase in demand for water? How did others cope without water? How did a six year old react when he learned he could not take a bubble bath? Interviews to find out the opinions and reactions of the general public can be conducted in a timely manner and could produce interesting results. Surely, the diversity of the opinions can range from business managers to children. Reactions of the general public may not be the only thing to be inquired about either. Interviews with doctors and nurses may be able to shed some light on the possible negative impacts the lack of water combined with inadequate sanitation, as well as the benefits of having running water. Hearing about everyone’s opinions and reactions is definitely first-hand information, but hitting the books and searching the web is the next best bet.

Considering that water is one of the world’s most important resources, there is a large number of literature resources on it. There are books such as Water Wars, Water Atlas, and Water as a Resource where information about water quality can be found and puts an emphasis the importance of water on human survival. There was also ‘literature’ published in the island of Saipan after the typhoon’s effects which was the local newspaper. In addition, the student researcher found many articles that contained information about the current water availabilty, conditions, limitations, and supplies which can be thoroughly referrenced and is as easily accessible as the world wide web, where even more information on water and the rest of the world’s water crisis can be found.

Although Saipan’s water crisis is considered short-term, there is unique information to be found and future solutions to discover. Both can be further explored in the extent of this research project and performed in a prompt fashion. The project schedule can be found in the table below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Writing** | **Research** |
| Project Proposal (October 22) | Research Question  (October 10) |
| Organization of ideas, drafts, collected data (October 20 – 24) | Secondary Research Question (October 13) |
| Record project process (reflections)(October 30 – November 1) | Interviews , Surveys (October 22 – November 1) |
| Editing, revising drafts(November 5 – 8) | Collecting and Analyzing Data(November 1 – November 3) |
| Finalizing drafts(November 10 – 15) | Analyze Results( November 3 – 7) |

The schedule can always be adjusted and should be flexible enough to accomodate all the needs and requirements of the all areas allowing a reasonable end result.

What is an island without access to water? Possible answers to questions like these and as to why an island would be without water can be acknowledged and unveiled in the efforts of this research essay. In the undertaking of this research shall the possibility of delving deeper into understanding the importance of water and how it’s lack overall affected island of Saipan and it’s residents after Typhoon Soudelor can propose future solutions and effective preparations for the next water crisis.