

Natural Disaster:
Assistance provided after Typhoon Soudelor
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Author Note

This paper was prepared for English 101, Online-01, taught by Dr. Kimberly-Bunts Anderson

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Abstract

A devastating natural disaster came across the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands on August 2, 2015 and left the island of Saipan in despair. The following paper will highlight a few of the many organizations that contributed in restoring the CNMI and providing relief for its people. It will contain information regarding the process of how citizens of the CNMI gained access to the assistance that was made available for them, their experiences, and how helpful it was to individuals or families. The research will contain data of funds that were contributed for households and the estimated amount of funds given to do repairs for the community. It will also include the donations or assistance given from citizens outside of the CNMI.

Natural Disaster: Assistance provided after Typhoon Soudelor

On August 2, 2015, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands were struck with one of the most devastating natural disasters named Typhoon Soudelor. The natural disaster left the island of Saipan in ruins with an unpleasant surprise for many citizens. Relief efforts were provided as soon as Typhoon Soudelor left. What did citizens have to undergo in order to receive the assistance they needed? What did citizens do with the assistance that was given to them? Most importantly, what types of assistance were provided after Typhoon Soudelor?

The Northern Mariana Islands have requested assistance from other federal organizations from the past when another natural disaster came across the islands known as Super Typhoon Chaba (2004). The super typhoon left many citizens homeless and initiated the efforts of the Northern Marianas Housing Corp. NMHC requested federal funds from the U.S. Department of Urban and Housing Development (HUD) for emergency housing assistance under the Housing Choice Voucher Program (NMHC, 2004). In order for the citizens to receive vouchers from NMHC, they needed to apply and answer a few questions regarding income, assets, and family composition (NMHC, 2004). Those questions would determine if the families were eligible for the voucher and the amount of assistance that could be provided. Vouchers were given out by names of people who applied, but NMHC realized there were only a limited amount of vouchers that were approved and they needed to create a standard in order to prioritize those who needed it instead of those waiting next in line (Zotomayor, 2012). NMHC board director, Diego Songao (2012) stated, "Let us offer these benefits by priorities." With past events that led up to requesting for assistance from the federal government, the Northern Mariana Islands received millions of dollars to rebuild. The Commonwealth previously received assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency in the form of grants and received Small Business

Administration loans for Super Typhoon Chaba. In 2004, FEMA issued grants for medical expenses that added up to over \$3.41 million, while the SBA issued loans totaling over \$2.12 million (A year, 2004). During that time the government also issued emergency food aid that cost nearly \$1 million to more than 19,000 household members. (A year, 2004). The estimate amount of damage done by super Typhoon Chaba was set to be \$18 million and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands was declared a disaster area by former President Bush (A year, 2004).

With the former super Typhoon being recorded and damages assessed, this opens up the idea to research how the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands dealt with the new disaster known as Typhoon Soudelor. The recorded damages from super Typhoon Chaba discussed the estimated amount of money given by FEMA, SBA, and HUD/NMHC. It does not fully state the details of how other organizations contributed or how previous citizens felt about the assistance that was provided for them. Many people do not recall the incident of Typhoon Chaba, but Typhoon Soudelor has proven to be a memory that will forever remain in many minds of residents of the Northern Mariana Islands. The research conducted about the assistance given to the people of the Commonwealth will give others the understanding of the application process others needed to undergo in order to obtain assistance from organizations such as FEMA, American Red Cross, or the Nutritional Assistance Program (NAP).

Method

Participants

Participants who were included to conduct this research ranged from ages 17 and up. Most participants are from a community college and had no specific qualifications in order to assist in conducting the research. Participants that were interviewed outside the community

college were working in one private sector and must have at least received one type of assistance from any organization that was available on the Northern Mariana Islands. Participants who did not receive any type of assistance were not included in interviews.

Materials

In order to receive general information regarding the assistance provided after the typhoon from various organizations in the Commonwealth, an online survey was created, then tested (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/79BYW96>). The survey was given to a group of students at Northern Marianas college and a two-week time frame was provided in order to complete the survey. The survey consisted of general questions regarding nonprofit organizations and their effectiveness in providing assistance. Participants of the survey were also asked about their personal opinions of the methods used in order for to obtain the help that was needed. Individuals were interviewed and asked what type of assistance was received, the length of time it took to be assisted, and what requirements were needed in order to qualify.

Result

After the survey was conducted and results were analyzed, it showed that 63% of the students are 18-20 years of age, 26% are 21-29 years of age, and 5% for 17 or younger, and 5% for 30-49 years of age (See Appendix A for chart). Most participants declared themselves as U.S. citizens and a few participants who were interviewed stated that their parents were the ones applying for financial assistance through FEMA, but FEMA needed an individual in the household to be a U.S. citizen. An individual commented on the online survey that assistance was not provided due to the fact that the individual is not a U.S. citizen. Another individual stated on the online survey that s/he could not receive any assistance due to their family income being above the necessary bracket. The only assistance that the individual was given were

supplies from the mother's workplace. The top two organizations, that was listed on the survey, that gave the most assistance was American Red Cross and the Nutritional Assistance Program (NAP). The Small Business Association also contributed and allowed businesses to borrow up to \$2 million worth to repair or replace any damages (MP, 2015). The NAP issued food stamp worth \$100-\$600 to individuals and household members of Saipan. For the NAP, you did not have to be a U.S. citizen to qualify. Most participants who were interviewed and received financial assistance from FEMA waited 1-3 months to be informed back from FEMA (For further information regarding the interviews, see Appendix B). Another participant who was interviewed and received assistance from American Red Cross practically went through the same process as others who received assistance from FEMA (For estimated cost of FEMA contribution in the Northern Mariana Islands, see Appendix C).

Many citizens of the Northern Mariana Islands received assistance from various organizations and found it to be a struggle due to the amount of time that had to be contributed in order for the application process to be done smoothly and effectively. Most citizens did receive assistance, whether it be financially or through supplies. With the amount of damage that the island sustained, the struggles and time are very common obstacles. Many organizations have contributed fondly to assist Saipan to rebuild and to make sure each citizen has been assisted in every way possible.

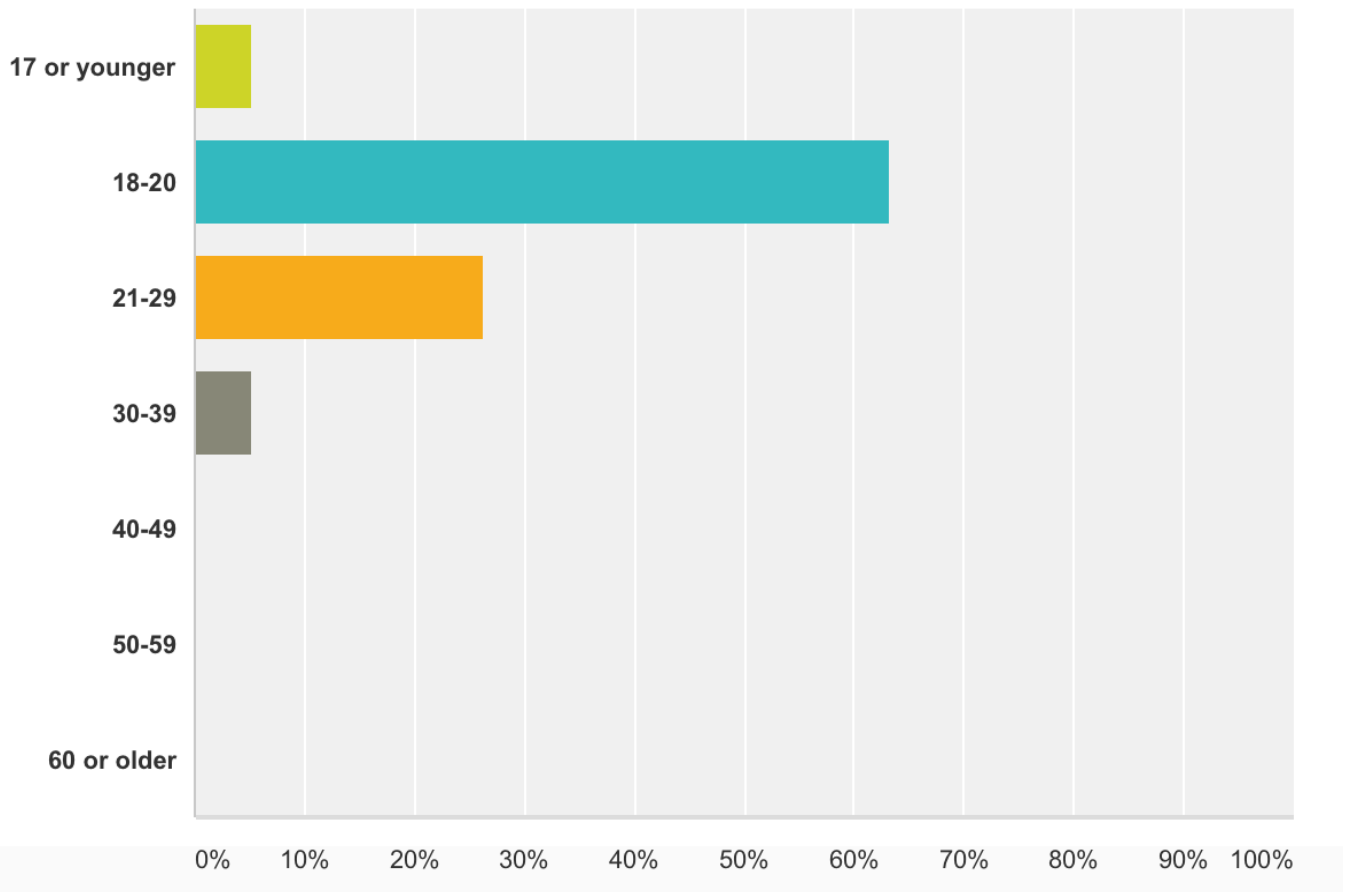
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- Zotomayor, A. (2012, June 26). NMHC mulls point system for voucher program. *Marianas Variety*. Retrieved from <http://www.mvariety.com/component/content/article/1/47533>
- Jenkins, R. (2015, August 6). SBA Stands Ready to Assist the Island of Saipan Businesses and Residents Affected by Typhoon Soudelor. *U.S. Small Business Administration*. Retrieved from <https://www.sba.gov/offices/disaster/dfocw/resources/1486108>
- A year of typhoons that laid the NMI low. (2004, December 30). *Saipan Tribune*. Retrieved from <http://www.saipantribune.com/index.php/a1d3a97b-1dfb-11e4-aedf-250bc8c9958e/>

Appendix A

What is your age?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 0



Appendix B

Participant A:

- Organization that assisted: FEMA
- Amount of time of application process and to receive assistance: 1 month
- How was application done: Through phone and then in person
- What requirements were needed: Social security number, address, contact number, must be a U.S. citizen
- Type of assistance: Financial (given \$2000)

Participant B

- Organization that assisted: FEMA
- Amount of time of application process and receive assistance: 3 months
- How was application done: Through phone and then in person (for damages to be assessed)
- What requirements were needed: Amount of house rent, power bill, name of house owner, and must be a U.S. citizen
- Type of assistance: Financial (given \$3000)

Participant C

- Organization that assisted: American Red Cross
- Age: 25 y/o
- Citizenship: U.S
- How was application done: Through phone – was asked location of place and damages sustained

- Amount of time of application process: 1 week to receive a call back from American Red Cross, then waited another 3 days for visitation from American Red Cross representatives
- Assistance received: Supplies (tarp, tents, cleaning supplies)

Participant D

- Organization that assisted: American Red Cross
- How was application done: waited in line, gave information, and waited for a call back
- How long was the application process: 1-2 weeks
- Assistance received: Food and cleaning supplies

Participant E

- Organization that assisted: Nutritional Assistance Program
- How was application done: Filled out an application form that was given, then must go to the scheduled day of when application was due to complete the process (interview in person)
- Amount of time of the application process: 2-4 hours
- Assistance received: Food stamp worth \$600

Appendix C

Individual Assistance - Dollars Approved

[Individual Assistance Definitions](#)

| | Total Individual Assistance (IA) - Applications Approved: | Total Individual & Households Program - Dollars Approved* | Total Housing Assistance - Dollars Approved* | Total Other Needs Assistance - Dollars Approved* |
|--------------|--|--|---|---|
| Total Amount | 4811 | \$24567329.02 | \$16990919.90 | \$7576409.12 |

Last Updated: Friday, December 18, 2015 - 02:07 (Updated daily)

Public Assistance - Dollars Approved

[Public Assistance Definitions](#)

| | Total Public Assistance Grants - Dollars Obligated* | Emergency Work (Categories A-B) - Dollars Obligated* | Permanent Work (Categories C-G) - Dollars Obligated* |
|--------------|--|---|---|
| Total Amount | \$12551206.51 | \$3881643.07 | \$8504010.44 |

E-Portfolio

Christine Roque

Northern Marianas College

EN101-ON01

Name @ ID = Christine Roque

(1st, 2nd or 3rd suggestion?)= 2nd

1. Topic Suggestion= Assistance that was given out after the typhoon.

2. Proposed research question(s) →

- What type of assistance was given out?
- Who qualified for these aides?
- What was the process in order to obtain certain aides?
- Pros and cons of any aid given

3. Ideas for primary research approach(es) →

- Interview those who received any type of aid
- Interview those who assisted in giving out aide
- Visit the nonprofit organizations who assisted those in need of help after the typhoon

4. List of literature and resources with their location you have found to support the topic suggested →

- Saipan Tribune

- Marianas Variety

- Financial Aid websites (such as FEMA)

❖ **Primary research question:**

- ❖ What type of assistances were available to the people of the CNMI after Typhoon Soudelor?

❖ **Secondary research questions:**

- ❖ What was the process that needed to be done to obtain the assistance?
- ❖ Did everyone qualify for the assistance?
- ❖ What struggles did a family/individual had to go through to ask for help?
- ❖ Did the right people get the right amount of attention needed to recover?
- ❖ Did anyone take advantage of the assistances offered?

| <u>Writing Schedule</u> | <u>Research Schedule</u> |
|---|--|
| October 14- Research Question submitted | November 4- Interview with citizens |
| October 18- Project Proposal submitted for peer review | November 9- Conduct approval of interview with nonprofit organizations |
| October 23- Draft of Research proposal Submitted | November 12- Tentative date for interviews with nonprofit organizations |
| October 31- Final Draft of Research proposal turned in | November 13- Review collected information and assess any missing info |

Interview Notes

Participant A:

- Organization that assisted: FEMA
- Amount of time of application process and to receive assistance: 1 month
- How was application done: Through phone and then in person
- What requirements were needed: Social security number, address, contact number, must be a U.S. citizen
- Type of assistance: Financial (given \$2000)

Participant B

- Organization that assisted: FEMA
- Amount of time of application process and receive assistance: 3 months
- How was application done: Through phone and then in person (for damages to be assessed)
- What requirements were needed: Amount of house rent, power bill, name of house owner, and must be a U.S. citizen
- Type of assistance: Financial (given \$3000)

Participant C

- Organization that assisted: American Red Cross
- Age: 25 y/o
- Citizenship: U.S
- How was application done: Through phone – was asked location of place and damages sustained

- Amount of time of application process: 1 week to receive a call back from American Red Cross, then waited another 3 days for visitation from American Red Cross representatives
- Assistance received: Supplies (tarp, tents, cleaning supplies)

Participant D

- Organization that assisted: American Red Cross
- How was application done: waited in line, gave information, and waited for a call back
- How long was the application process: 1-2 weeks
- Assistance received: Food and cleaning supplies

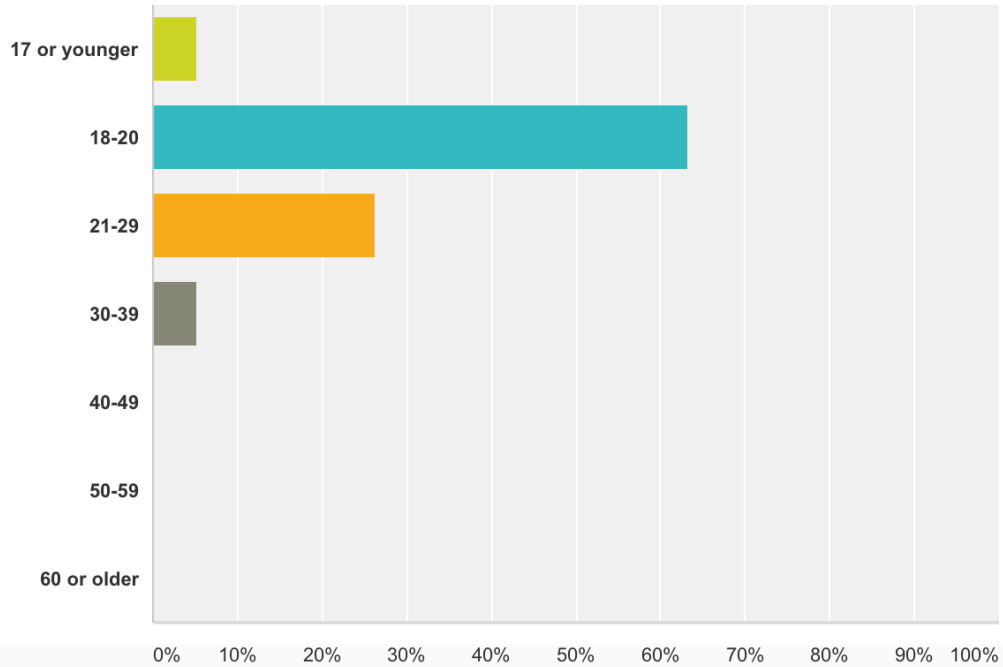
Participant E

- Organization that assisted: Nutritional Assistance Program
- How was application done: Filled out an application form that was given, then must go to the scheduled day of when application was due to complete the process (interview in person)
- Amount of time of the application process: 2-4 hours
- Assistance received: Food stamp worth \$600

Survey Results

What is your age?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 0



| | | | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|----|------|
| Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) | 0.00% 0 | 20.00% 3 | 26.67% 4 | 53.3% 3% 8 | 15 | 2.57 |
| — American Red Cross | 35.71% 5 | 7.14% 1 | 21.43% 3 | 35.7% 1% 5 | 14 | 1.78 |
| — Nutritional Assistance Program | 42.86% 6 | 14.29% 2 | 0.00% 0 | 42.8% 6% 6 | 14 | 1.25 |
| — Small Business Association | 0.00% 0 | 7.69% 1 | 0.00% 0 | 92.3% 1% 12 | 13 | 2.00 |

How did that organization/program assist you? (Ex. financial aid, clothes, food, house supplies, etc.)

Answered: 14 Skipped: 5

Responses (14)

Text Analysis

My Categories

PRO FEATURE

Use text analysis to search and categorize responses; see frequently-used words and phrases. To use Text Analysis, upgrade to a GOLD or PLATINUM plan.

Upgrade

[Learn more »](#)

Categorize as...

Filter by Category

Search responses



Showing 14 responses

Gave donations such as canned goods, home supplies, financial aid, small gas container, and generator

12/10/2015 9:25 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

save money for other needs

11/29/2015 11:35 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

Financial Aid

11/29/2015 8:19 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

They help us to have food and money to fix our shelter

11/28/2015 9:58 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

n/a

11/24/2015 2:17 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

They gave me Cleaning supplies and a tarp

11/24/2015 1:40 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

They gave me Cleaning supplies and a tarp

11/24/2015 1:33 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

Hyperlinks

- <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/79BYW96>
- <http://www.saipantribune.com/index.php/bank-red-tape-blocks-fema-aid/>
- <http://www.saipantribune.com/index.php/disaster-recovery-center-opens-today/>
- <https://www.sba.gov/offices/disaster/dfocw/resources/1486108>
- <http://www.redcross.org/mp/saipan>
- <http://www.fema.gov/disaster/4235>
- <http://www.saipantribune.com/index.php/a093f37b-1dfb-11e4-aedf-250bc8c9958e/>
- <http://www.mvariety.com/component/content/article/1/47533>
- <http://www.saipantribune.com/index.php/a1d3a97b-1dfb-11e4-aedf-250bc8c9958e/>