

Filipino Volunteers Store Rice from Taiwan

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation
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[Rice with Love from Taiwan](#)

Volunteers cleaned a warehouse in Manila harbor that is storing the first batch of 500 tonnes of rice which Tzu Chi has delivered from Taiwan to poor families in the Philippines. They worked through the night to load the rice, which will be distributed to the needy in early July.

Each year Taiwan's Agriculture & Food Agency, under the Council of Agriculture, donates a portion of the country's rice harvest as foreign aid. This year Tzu Chi applied for and received a quota of 6,800 tonnes of this rice to distribute to the poor and victims of natural disasters in four countries -- the Philippines, Indonesia, South Africa and Lesotho. Of this, 1,500 tonnes of high-quality rice will go for an assistance program that will benefit poor families in the Philippines.

The first 500 tonnes of rice were shipped from Taichung, Taiwan on April 28 and arrived at the Manila South Harbor on May 5. Tzu Chi Philippines was waiting for the Bureau of Customs to sign the necessary documents so that the rice could be transferred to the National Resource Operations Center of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in Parañaque City. These documents would allow the rice to be unloaded.



While waiting for the documents to be processed, 18 Chinese and Filipino volunteers worked hard to clean up the warehouse where the 500 tonnes of rice would be stored. The Filipino volunteers were survivors of Typhoon Ondoy (Ketsana); it struck the island of Luzon at the end of September 2009, leaving 710 dead and 37 missing and causing damage of US\$1.09 billion. It was one of the most devastating typhoons ever to hit Manila. The foundation played a major role in the reconstruction effort, distributing food, blankets and other goods and organizing a relief work program. The Filipino volunteers in the warehouse were among those who received help during Typhoon Ondoy. Taking part in Tzu Chi's missions is one way for people to give back the kindness shown them by the foundation and share their blessings with those who are in need.

In the scorching heat, the volunteers showed their respect to the future recipients of the rice assistance program by cleaning diligently the spacious warehouse. They dedicated every ounce of their strength and every drop of their sweat to help one another in putting plastic palettes on the floor where the sacks of rice will be stacked.

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