

## Tzu Chi Helps to Clean Flooded Communities in Four Days

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation  
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The Tzu Chi Foundation organized a Cash Relief Program (CRP) for people in four barangays to enable them to clean their homes and communities after flash floods. They cleared mud and debris from the affected areas and completed the work within four days.

On August 11, Metro Manila and surrounding areas were inundated by floodwater caused by Typhoon Yagi and the monsoon it drew in. Thousands of people were forced to evacuate their homes. Tzu Chi volunteers immediately prepared bread, drinking water and packs of daily necessities for the people affected. They conducted a relief survey and decided to organize the CRP, in which residents were given 800 Philippine pesos a day for a full day of cleaning their homes and communities. The program began on August 16, in the worst-hit areas of Marikina City and San Mateo, Rizal. A total of 3,694 people took part; they cleared the mud and debris in the disaster-hit areas within four days. The volunteers worked together with the local governments to provide heavy machinery; they also prepared shovels, wheelbarrows, rain boots, gloves and clothing.



The CRP was held in the four worst-hit areas -- the barangays of Nangka, Tumana and Malanday in Marikina, and Barangay Banaba of San Mateo. Participants dug out the mud and removed waste from alleys and buildings, and moved them to the streets. This enabled the heavy machinery to clean the streets quickly. Many participants put the needs of others ahead of their own. They first went to clean houses worse hit than their own. The volunteers prepared food for them to regain their energy. Local policemen and firefighters also joined in the work to clean the community. The program showed the love between people at this time of difficulty.



One participant was Ricky, who suffers from physical disability due to polio infection. He rode his tricycle to help transport the waste. When he received the financial aid for the first day, he immediately went to purchase the items his family needed, as well as medicine for his son. A few days earlier, his son had been injured by falling into the river and needed the medicine. Rick said with gratitude that the money came at a time when he and his family needed it most. He thanked Master Cheng Yen and the Tzu Chi volunteers.

Another participant was Ju; she was in tears when she received the aid. She said her husband was unable to work, and that she was worried about her children's school fees.

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The Mayor of Marikina, Mr. Marcelino Teodoro, and the Mayor of San Mateo, Ms. Cristina Diaz, both joined a ceremony of prayer with those who had taken part in the program. On the afternoon of August 16, Diaz arrived with her staff and the deputy chief of police. She expressed that she saw the principles of gratefulness, respect, and love in Tzu Chi's disaster relief work, and her citizens were able to receive the relief materials they needed.



Teodoro and his team assisted in the work of the heavy trucks in cleaning the debris. He praised the relief work and said that the clean-up had been done very quickly and systematically. He shared his gratitude that the flood-affected residents could get back to their normal lives in so short a period.

Tzu Chi's Cash Relief Program not only offered financial aid to the victims but also provided a way for residents to clean their communities and their homes. During the prayer ceremony, despite the differences in religion, everyone prayed sincerely. During the clean-up drive, everyone helped each other and gave their community a new and fresh appearance.