Even as Super Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) took away people’s livelihoods, many displayed a firm resolve to secure alternative ways to earn a living. One such individual was Marina Tudtud of San Remigio, Northern Cebu.

She and her husband had been dependent on coconut farming all their lives. He would collect the coconut husks and copra, and she would help in selling them in the market. However, Haiyan felled thousands of coconut trees in their area, and it would take five to eight years for them to grow back.

“I had no idea how our family could cope, but thank goodness for the International Labour Organization’s (ILO) emergency employment,” said Marina who participated in the rubble-clearing sub-project in their community. “I saved the money I earned and with it bought a fishing boat for my husband.” He engaged in fishing to earn income for the family while they waited for the coconut trees to grow back.

A few months after the emergency employment phase, Marina also joined the ILO-supported reconstruction of a causeway in Barangay Batad, San Remigio. They repaired and widened the causeway that connected markets in surrounding barangays, facilitating the flow of agricultural goods between two municipalities by cutting the travel time from two hours to 30 minutes.

She and 224 other worker-beneficiaries received minimum wages of PHP340 per day, three months’ enrolment in social security, three months health insurance, and one year of accident insurance, as well as protective gear and equipment.

With assistance from the ILO, Marina, together with her husband, remained productive while simultaneously contributing to their community’s improvement.