

Emergency Employment and Sustainable Livelihoods after Super Typhoon Haiyan



While **Ponciano delos Santos, Jr's** participation in one of the International Labour Organization's (ILO) training programmes was thanks to a stroke of good luck, how he positioned himself to achieve his goals was the product of hard work and perseverance in the face of adversity, both natural and man-made.

Even before Super Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) devastated his home town in Bantayan Island, Northern Cebu, Ponciano had always lived a burdensome life with his stepfather, unemployed mother, and four siblings, only three of whom attended school.

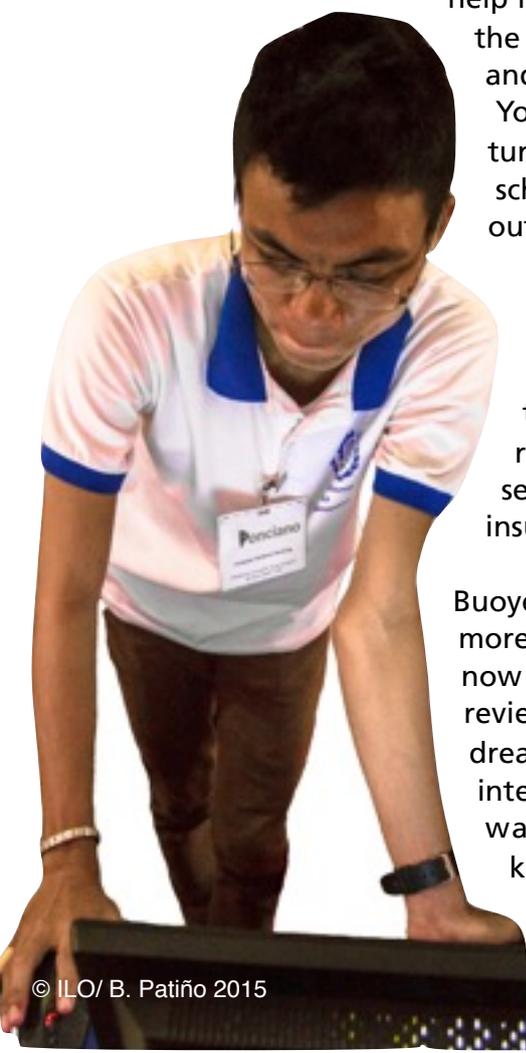
The 20-year-old Ponciano himself graduated with a degree in Elementary Education, but had to work as a construction worker while studying to pay for matriculation. After college, he made ends meet by continuing construction work and also by pedalling a *trisikad* (public utility pedi-cab). He dreamt of a teaching profession, but did not have enough money to finance his taking the government's Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET).

Haiyan only made things worse for his family, as it destroyed their house and left them with practically nothing to eat in the aftermath. They had to rely on government dole-outs to tide themselves over.

To help his family, Ponciano tried to participate in the ILO's training programme, Enhancing Self and Wage Employment Opportunities for Young People of Bantayan Island, but was turned down because it prioritised out-of-school youth. Only when a trainee dropped out of the roster was he able to get in.

He quickly applied himself to the course in Computer Hardware Servicing, while he received a daily allowance equivalent to the then-prevailing minimum wage rate, three months' enrolment in social security, three months' enrolment in health insurance, and one-year accident insurance.

Buoyed up by these benefits, Ponciano could more realistically plan for his future. He can now save money to help defray the cost of reviewing for and taking the LET. He can dream about eventually setting up his own internet cafe. And, as a true teacher, he wants to pass on his newly-acquired knowledge of computers to children.



Skills acquisition towards recovery



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