

Philippines: Prioritizing Student with Special Ability in Earthquake Drill

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San Francisco, Cebu, Philippines-To boost disaster awareness and preparedness in the Municipality of San Francisco, the Nationwide Simultaneous Earthquake Drill (NSED) for San Francisco Central School Sped Center was held on Thursday, November 14, 2019 at exactly 2:00P.M as part for the nationwide calls for disaster preparedness. This last quarter drill focused on the student with differently able such as hearing impaired, blind and physical handicapped.



Students from San Francisco School SPED Center in a circular formation during the assembly phase. (Photo by: Thomas Niel L. Tampus)

The Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (MDRRMO), along with Municipal Government Agencies like the Philippine National Police (PNP), Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), and Camotes Island Response Team (CiERT) are set to lead the earthquake drill. It was participated a total of 716 persons these are the students and the teachers of the said school. MDRRMO aimed that teachers are trained, equipped and prepared in response this earthquake hazard. Mayor Alfredo A. Arquillano, Jr, the UNISDR Asia Pacific Champion program in strengthen the school disaster risk management as one of his top priority seeing the situation that the schools have a greater population where children are one of the vulnerable group.

The facilitating team composed of 35 personalities coming from different agencies observed the said drill if the following phases are properly executed. Teachers and students were being observed on how they executed the six phases such as alarm phase, response phase

evacuation phase, assembly phase, head count and evaluation. These following phases should need to be mastered by teachers and student for them to prepare in times or earthquake and to minimize panic on the actual situation.



First Aider Teacher response to a wounded student at the triage area, during the actual drill as part of the scenario.

The drill was carried out simultaneously and smoothly. All grade levels occupied the designated area for them based on the school evacuation plan. On 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon during the class of every grade levels a loud sound of CiERT rescue ambulance blurted for one minute as a signal that an earthquake is currently happening. Everybody in their respective classes ducked and covered themselves under their armchairs and tables. After that, at the count of ten the teachers led their advisory classes in heading to the designated evacuation area located in the school ground.



(Teacher and the facilitating team from four agencies posed after the Evaluation Phase)

They were grouped together according to the class where they belong. Then, while the teachers did a headcount to make sure that all pupils are accounted for, the children are singing a song for them to keep calm in the situation. After doing the headcount it was reported that there are one missing and one injured but it was treated and retrieved by the trained First Aider Teachers and CiERT.

The drill was successfully implemented because the routines were systematic and everybody was cooperative during the activity. It was ended by doing an evaluation of every participating organization.