



ASIA/PHILIPPINES - Protecting the rights of vulnerable children and help them return to school

Cebu (Agenzia Fides) - Children are the most vulnerable to violence, exploitation and abuse and need more protection. A month after Typhoon Haiyan, Plan International, one of the world's largest international NGO that deals with safeguarding the rights of children, is collaborating with the Phillipine State with regards to a recovery programme. Currently there are 8 million displaced children on the islands who are exposed to violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect. The NGO has set up various "Child-friendly spaces", supported by staff and volunteers who offer children a place where to play, learn, receive psychological support and be able to say what happened, but in a safe environment. The primary objective is to protect the rights of children and help the children return to school. Unfortunately, due to the emigration of many parents looking for work outside the affected areas, the phenomenon of child trafficking is increasing. Many families have been left without any means of subsistence. Coconuts plantations were a major source of income in Eastern Samar, where the typhoon destroyed everything. All Plan Filipinas agencies on the site, in addition to 40 thousand beneficiaries of the organization projects, were affected in 4 provinces (Eastern Samar , West Samar , Cebu and Leyte). Each year, an average of 20 typhoons hit the Asian island, of which two or three are devastating. Haiyan, was the worst in 2013. Founded about 76 years ago in Spain, the NGO Plan International is present in 69 countries and brings direct aid to 84 million boys and girls through 9000 projects spread across 50 countries in Africa, America and Asia. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 18/12/2013)