

## QC OPENS HUMAN MILK BANK TO BABIES IN TAAL

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The local government of Quezon City said on Sunday that it had tapped its **human milk bank** to assist mothers struggling to breastfeed their children in areas affected by the eruption of Taal Volcano. Dr. Josephine Sabando, director of Quezon City General Hospital (QCGH) where the milk bank is located, said in a statement that they would donate an initial 40 bottles of 100 milliliters of pasteurized milk with 200 more available for immediate distribution.

The bottles will be given out to evacuation centers in Batangas province where tens of thousands of families are reeling from the weeklong unrest at Taal. **Mayor Joy Belmonte** said the donation was prompted by calls from the provincial government, which had highlighted a lack of mother's milk in evacuation centers.

“Part of the milk bank program at **QC General Hospital** is the provision of mother's milk during calamities to ensure the adequate nutrition of infants,” Sabando said. The milk bank, established in 2015, was primarily created to cater to mothers with premature or undernourished babies.

Though it was only the second city in Metro Manila to establish the facility—makati being the first—it has racked up a huge supply through continuous milk-letting activities, with QCGH ranking as the top provider of breast milk in the capital as of 2018. The government hospital distributed 29,250 ml of milk, higher than the combined amount of 37 other hospitals in Metro Manila, according to the city.