

DOST is also looking at enhancing its flood forecasting system to determine expected impact to local communities. This includes the use of several techniques such as the use of 3D maps.

On the reported dam collapse, Sec. Montejo said that the continuous rains may have caused the accumulation and build up of water upstream of the dam.

“At some point, the dams may have collapsed when the trapped water filled with debris overtopped the dam. This could have led to dam breakage and failure,” Sec. Montejo explained.

When the large volume of water trapped behind the landslide debris dams was released, it triggered the flashfloods. The landslide dam break mechanism caused the flashfloods, which would explain the sudden surge of water reported by survivors in Cagayan de Oro,” Montejo added.

Sec. Montejo pointed out that survivors described the flashfloods as “sudden surge”, while post-disaster pictures showed large amounts of mud and debris, including trees, that were carried by the flashfloods.

He also clarified that although the rainfall brought by Sendong was not like Typhoon Ondoy that generated 181 mm of rain for one day that caused the disastrous flashfloods in 2009. The landslide dam break that happened in Sendong had happened during the 2004 Infanta, Quezon and 2008 Iloilo flashfloods, he said. *(S&T Media Service)*