



Alma Sevillano (center) during the CBED training held at Dulag, Leyte, with the Microenterprise Assistance Asset Provision Program (MCAAPP), a livelihood project of UNDP, Philippines. (Photo: UNV Philippines, 2015)

## Volunteering for my country, Philippines

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**Manila, Philippines:** My name is Alma B. Sevillano, I am from the Philippines and I work as a UN Volunteer for the Haiyan Response and Recovery programme.

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UNDP offered me the possibility to become a UN Volunteer and this helped me to help other survivors. How? Reaching out to the community through the UNDP developmental projects with the funding from JAPAN, KOICA, the

European Union and many other countries. We provided shelter assistance, food, clothing, water, cash for work, food for work, livelihood and trainings on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR).

When Typhoon Yolanda hit Eastern Visayas, it caused extensive damage to life, housing, livelihoods and infrastructure. UNDP established projects such as the Cash For Work Program for the debris clearing and clean-up of canals and drainage systems, repairing of rural health centres, cleaning and clearing of roads, schools, churches, community halls in every barangays (or districts) in Tacloban, Palo, Tolosa, Tanauan, Dulag, Julita, Lapaz and MacArthur, all in the Province of Leyte.

Later on, UNDP devised a project called the Direct Employment Generation Project. This was an innovative pilot project which provided the unemployed informal sector workers affected by the typhoon with an opportunity to obtain a national certification through the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, and gain valuable on-the-job training and employment with local private sector firms. We carefully selected the trainees from the different barangays in Tacloban City based on their willingness to participate in the program. During the program, we give the trainees the basic tools needed and a stipend by UNDP. At the end of the program, the trainees will receive a National Certificate based on their chosen trade of course.

I could see, and was a participant, in the achievement and success of the projects facilitated by UNDP and other NGO's in helping people by providing them with an immediate livelihood. It has a big impact to the beneficiaries by giving them back the assets and livelihood that they had lost after the typhoon.

Furthermore, in the DRR program, UNDP facilitated trainings for people to be capacitated on how to be prepared for typhoon. And, although it was something new for them, they followed carefully our indications to the point that, when another recent typhoon, Hagupit (locally named in the Philippines as typhoon Ruby) hit the region two months ago, people were already prepared. They evacuated early before the typhoon arrived and applied and followed the early warning device and all the instructions they had learned from the trainings that we had conducted.

I am happy to contribute to the recovery of my country as a UN Volunteer through the assistance with the early recovery debris clearing and the livelihood projects. Also our trainings to the population related to the disaster risk reduction have contributed to the development of the community in Leyte, Region 8 of the Visayas Island of the Philippines, which

is a place visited by typhoon every year.

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• Philippines • DRR • typhoon • Japan • Republic of Korea • disaster risk reduction • UNDP

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