

<https://news.usm.my>

English News

08
MAR

APUCEN IN ACTION TO SUPPORT SURVIVORS OF TYPHOON PABLO IN ANDAP, PHILIPPINES



ANDAP, PHILIPPINES, 7 March 2016 - Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) through the Asia-Pacific University-Community Engagement Network (APUCEN) once again made its presence felt when it attended the groundbreaking ceremony, held in Andap, Philippines, recently to mark the commitment to build 10 permanent shelters for survivors of Typhoon Pablo, which hit Andap on December 4, 2012.

This noble effort initiated by San Pedro College (SPC), which is also a member of APUCEN, gave new hope to the typhoon victims.

According to the Executive Director of APUCEN, Associate Professor Dr. Aileen Tan Shau-Hwai, the "APUCEN-SPC Rebuilding Community Programme" was meant to heed the call of San Pedro College (SPC) through its Disaster Risk Reduction Management and Research Program (SPC-DRRMRP). San Pedro College's SPC-DRRMRP was the first to respond to the immediate needs of the victims in year 2012.

"USM through APUCEN is committed to provide relief and assistance as much as possible to lighten the burden and sufferings of the victims and their families, in helping them to rebuild their lives after the typhoon; this is in accordance with the objective of USM to share the available knowledge and expertise in global university-community engagement projects," said Aileen Tan, lecturer of USM School of Biological Sciences.

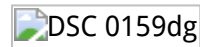
Aileen Tan, who is also the head of APUCEN delegation for this mission, added that the "APUCEN-SPC Rebuilding Community Programme" was officially announced by the USM Vice-Chancellor who is also the President of APUCEN, Professor Dato' Dr. Omar Osman during his keynote speech in the University-Community Engagement Conference 2015, and also while chairing the 7th Regional APUCEN Council Meeting in Gold Coast, Australia on November 3-4, 2015, urging members of APUCEN to be involved in a global humanitarian relief effort such as this.

"Yet despite the efforts of SPC-DRRMRP and the years gone by since the tragedy, many still remain in need of new homes. With so many of the previous residents desiring to come back and be nearer to their livelihood but had lost everything to the typhoon, many residents remain homeless in Andap.

"Thinking of the families and those who are in great need of our help has only fueled our determination to lend a hand and pull them up from such a devastating event.

"Coming face to face with the people who have lost so much and yet filled with an optimism that they will heal from that loss; one does not need to take a second glance at the residents to feel the urge to do everything in their power to help," she said.

Aileen Tan said that members of APUCEN especially Australian College of Applied Psychology (ACAP), Griffith University, Kyoto University of Foreign Studies (KUFS), Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), San Pedro College and USM have collectively provided contributions to this programme by allocating 10 permanent shelters to the residents of Andap.



The ground breaking ceremony was also attended by the government officials from Office of the Governor of Compostela Valley Province, the municipal officials headed by Mayor Lorenzo L. Balbin, the Barangay officials, Rev. Fr. Edgar L. Tuling, parish priest of Mary Mediatrix of All Graces Foundation, and the community members who came to share their words of thanks and encouragement to witness on the formal gathering to continue to support the people in need as part of the social responsibility.

Commenting further, Aileen Tan said, all APUCEN donors are very happy as the residents there were provided with permanent shelters, which were sturdier compared to the tent shelters.

"The feelings of joy could be seen on their faces as they held a special ceremony to honour the heartfelt assistance provided to them. There was an overwhelming spirit of gratitude and hope for everyone in the ceremony especially the recipients, who received a gift of love that though they lost their loved ones during the typhoon, life does not end there but they can always stand against it through the continued support of the community," she added.

This effort was also in line with the basic aim of APUCEN, to be a platform for global university-community engagements and be committed in efforts to transform community beyond geographical boundaries, cultural and ancestral beliefs by bringing together the expertise and knowledge from its member institutions.

"Participation of USM in this project reflected its determination to be involved with community engagement programmes, to assist the victims of natural disasters locally or abroad, such as giving assistance to the flood victims in the East Coast states of Malaysia at the end of 2014," stressed Aileen Tan further.

APUCEN was established in 2011 with the role to promote the culture of university-community engagement in a proactive way. Currently, its membership stands at 81 members from 18 countries within the Asia-Pacific region.

Text & Photos: Courtesy of Dr. Aileen Tan Shau-Hwai / Editing: Tan Ewe Hoe



Share This

Pusat Media dan Perhubungan Awam / Media and Public Relations Centre

Level 1, Building E42, Chancellory II, Universiti Sains Malaysia, 11800 USM, Pulau Pinang Malaysia

Tel : +604-653 3888 | Fax : +604-658 9666 | Email : pro@usm.my (<mailto:pro@usm.my>)

Laman Web Rasmi / Official Website : [Universiti Sains Malaysia \(http://www.usm.my\)](http://www.usm.my)

[Client Feedback / Comments \(http://web.usm.my/smbp/maklumbalas.asp\)](http://web.usm.my/smbp/maklumbalas.asp) | USM News Portal. Hakcipta Terpelihara USM 2015