

Project report on disaster-relief efforts for Typhoon Yolanda victims



Project period: 1-12 September 2014

International Volunteer University Student Association (IVUSA)

Summary of project

【Period】 1-12 September 2014

【Project sites】 Barangay Buga Buga, Villiaba city, Leyte, and Barangay Pinagbayanan and Sicong Municipality of Laor, Nueva Ecija, Republic of the Philippines

【Theme】 To build tomorrow, to protect future

【Background】

On 8 November 2013, Typhoon Haiyan (local name: Yolanda) had made a landfall on Guiuan, Eastern Samar, and across Visayan region in central Philippines, which brought so much destruction to properties and lives.

According to National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), as of January 14 2014, the death toll from Typhoon Yolanda has reached 6,201, the number of injured persons has been 28,626, missing 1,785, total number of afflicted 16,078,181(3,420,000 families), and evacuated 3,927,827(838,811 families). The number of damaged houses has been 1,140,332 including those 55,928 which were totally destroyed. The overall area of distress covers 44 provinces and 648 cities over Leyte, Samar, Northern Cebu, Northern Negros, Panay, Mindoro and Northern Mindanao. (http://jphilnet.org/news/20131220_310.php)

To respond immediately to this calamity, IVUSA formed a group, raised money and donated 334,883 Yen through Japan Red Cross Society. In addition, it made a plan of dispatching student volunteers in affected areas. In preparation to implement this plan, IVUSA sent a representative to Leyte in January 2014, two months after the typhoon, to have meetings with local NGOs and to make an arrangement for possible projects in affected areas. With a theme, *to build tomorrow, to protect future*, the planned project is set to assist people to get back some sense of normalcy and to build a disaster-resilient community.

【Major Activities】

- Had a workshop with youth of partner NGO, Earth Village, in Batug, Leyte, where there was a sharing of experiences. On one hand, Filipino youth shared their experiences of typhoon Yolanda. Japanese youth, on the other hand, shared their experiences of Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake and the Great East Japan Earthquake.
- Had a class session with elementary school children (Grade 1-6) in Brangay Buga Buga highlighting the importance of environmental protection and disaster preparedness, and the group planted 550 trees in the area
- Visited the World War II memorials and had a moment of silence.
- Planted 1,000 trees with local high school students in Siclong, Laur, Nueva Ecija and cut weeds to help the newly-planted trees grow in an area designated and chosen by Department of Environment and Natural Resources(DENR).
- Had a cleanup activity with local residents and students to advocate the importance of environment, beautification of community and cooperative work.
- Had a workshop to discuss what local (youth) can do towards disaster preparedness and risk reduction. About 90 local residents and youth attended this workshop.

【Breakdown of donation】

Seedlings	40,000 pesos
Tools for tree planting	7,890 pesos
Transportation(round trip, Manila and Leyte)	132,808 pesos
Total	180,698 pesos(431,868yen 1 peso = 2.39 yen)

*We allocated the planned budget to Transportation (round trip flight Manila to Leyte) since Department of Environment and Natural Resources(DENR) prepared part of seedlings while local NGO and its counterparts prepared the tools.

Schedule and activities

September 1, Departed Narita Airport for Manila, Philippines. Stayed one night in Manila

September 2, Left for Tacloban, Leyte by airplane /had a workshop with NGO Earth Village youth, which shared experiences of disaster /paid courtesy call to Mayor of Villaba /Moved to Barangay Buga Buga, Villiaba.



September 3, Opening and welcome ceremony/ Community tour to get familiar with the area/ Tree planting / Built Basketball ring and board



September 4, workshop on environment and disaster preparedness in the elementary school/Tree planting with pupils/ clean up activity



September 5, heard the experience of WWII from elders/ Closing ceremony/ Cleanup



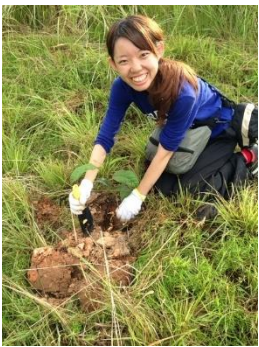
September 6, Visited war memorials/ traveled to Manila



September 7, Moved to Laur, Nueva Ecija from Manila by Bus/ Orientation



September 8, Planted trees with local students/ visited the Mayor of Laur



September 9, Cleanup



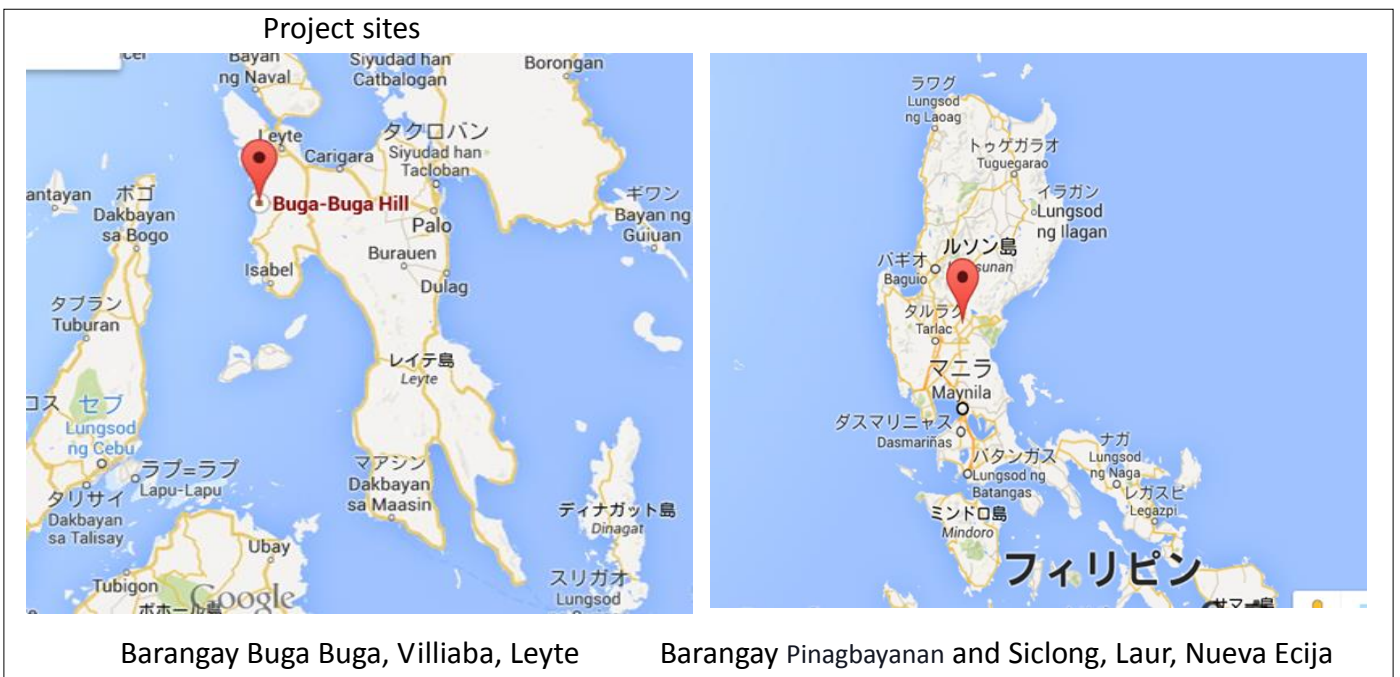
September 10, Cleanup/ Disaster preparedness and reduction workshop/ solidarity night



September 11, Visited the river in the community which has shifted its course because of typhoon Sendong/ Moved to Manila



September 12, Left for Narita



Barangay Buga Buga, Villiaba, Leyte

Barangay Pinagbayanan and Siclong, Laur, Nueva Ecija

Reflection of participants

I could have various of experiences through the entire stay. To encounter different cultures and values was very challenging, which made me feel difficult and confounded. However, I found these experiences very precious. In addition, this project widened my view and made me learn there is strong link between disaster and environment. I realized the importance of continuity of what we implemented with local partners and I want to be a part of the second batch of Philippines project.

(Wakana Suzuki, sophomore of Gunma Prefectural Women's University)

This is the first time that IVUSA had a project in the Philippines. We learned things by experience because they were surely different from other ongoing international projects. We found the gap between what we imagined and what we saw in the field. Then, we needed to change drastically some of our plans which were made before coming to the Philippines. On the process of going through these challenges, I gained various new findings and became open to understand values of local people. I think I can connect these findings and experiences to the project in the future.

(Natsumi Sasahara, 3rd year of Meiji Gakuin University)

This project taught me that each place has certainly different cultures, practices, way of thinking toward disaster preparedness and response. Additionally, I realized that there are differences on responding disaster in individual, community and national levels. The learning might serve as the guideline for the next project in the Philippines. I want to find out possibilities where youth can make a difference in the Filipino society. (Yuki Kitamura, 4th year of Ritsumeikan University)

Media Exposure

【Japan】

- ◆ Katsushika FM On Air August 29th
- ◆ J-WAVE On Air September 15th

【Philippines】

- ◆ Visayan Business Post Published September 3rd

<http://visayanbizpost.com/villaba-leyte-news-japanese-student-volunteers-begin-immersion-work-in-vi-p341-101.htm>

General overview

Now, the concept of Mainstreaming Disaster Reduction has been promoted in the field of international cooperation, which considers disaster prevention as a priority issue in the policy making, including it in the development policy and plan. It also receives an increased budget .

For the past twenty years, IVUSA has been working in the field of disaster risk reduction in Japan. IVUSA realized the necessity to expand this project to respond to the needs of recurrent disasters not only inside Japan also also outside. Therefore, this Philippine project was pioneering to see how we could efficiently respond disaster abroad.

Workshop on disaster preparedness during this project was highlighted among other activities. Trilingual environment, i.e. Tagalog, English and Japanese, was very challenging. However, with the help of local NGO, discussion was fruitful. On the other hand, it was very regrettable that the cancellation of flight going back to Manila due to repair of runway of Tacloban Airport happened and caused necessary adjustments and cancellation of some of our planned activities.

IVUSA aspires to build transnational networks among University student and youth committed to respond to disaster through cooperation for recovery, reduction of destruction and disaster preparedness. To step forward, we are preparing for youth session with partner NGOs in March 2015 during the United Nations Disaster Prevention conference in Sendai, Japan.

We thank your kind support.

October 10, 2014

Non-profit Organization, International Volunteer University Association (IVUSA)

Executive board member

Akira Ito