The Taal Volcano Protected Landscape Knowledge Center

Pusod, Inc. is an environmental non-profit organization based in Lipa City, Batangas. Established in 2004, Pusod does conservation work in Taal Volcano Protected Landscape (TVPL), Mt. Malarayat Forest Reserve, and Verde Island Passage. Pusod employs the strategy of building centers that allow communities to manage their environment in a conscious and caring way. They support an organization of small fishers in Taal Lake in their organizing efforts and assist a public interest environmental law office in capacitating the Protected Area Management Board and conducting community consultations for the management plan.

**Project Goals and Objectives**

The community-run information and training center is an initiative of Pusod to the communities living in the Taal Volcano Island and nearby municipalities. The goal is to have an information hub that contributes to efficient implementation of the TVPL Management Plan and to protect national and cultural heritage. The specific objective of this project is to:

- Provide a physical venue for consolidating all types of information related to TVPL and its management;
- Improve and fully enforce the Management Plan, specifically the provisions on conservation and protection of the ecosystem and increase disaster response capacity;
- Engage communities to participate in high priority action solutions concerning current issues in TVPL.

**Changes and Results**

The work of Pusod has resulted to the following significant changes in the community:

- Established a venue, the community knowledge center, for training on disaster response, ecotourism and conservation;
- Increased involvement of communities in the Volcano Island and nearby municipalities in disaster response related activities i.e. trainings on DRRM and First Aid and Rescue;
- Community managed ecotourism activity that showcases the Volcano Island;
- Engaged community members into social enterprise.

**Key Lessons**

Building good relationship with the communities, earning their trust, and actively involving them in project planning and implementation, ensure project success and replication.

The ecosystem conservation project brought people together and made it possible to work for common goals.

**PUSOD, Inc.**

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