



Resource Development (Phils.) Inc.

## NEWS RELEASE

### Subanon Chieftain Grateful for New Tribal Hall

*TVIRD constructs hub for the preservation of Subanon culture*



**For future generations.** TVIRD Community Relations Manager Joel Alasco turns-over the ceremonial key of the new tribal hall to Timuay Erdulfo Comisas, Sr. who commits to preserve the hall for the next generation of Subanons.

**Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte / December 2013** – Describing the tribal hall as a local hub for preserving Subanon culture, a tribal leader expressed his gratitude to TVI Resource Development Philippines Inc. (TVIRD) for providing them with the building – the first for the Subanons in Siocon town, Zamboanga del Norte province. The tribe, the biggest group of *lumads* (natives) in the Zamboanga Peninsula, hosts the company’s copper-zinc mining operations in this municipality.

In a recent turnover ceremony, Subanon Chieftain Erdulfo Comisas, Sr. said TVIRD’s latest infrastructure project greatly benefits the tribe in that it will be their place to hold activities based on their customs and

beliefs, and thus preserving their centuries-old traditions. The ceremony was held in Sitio Dunggoan, Barangay Makiang.

### **Oral tradition**

*“Modakol salamat sa TVIRD. Kining tribal hall daku ug kapuslanan alang kanamo diha sa pagpreserbar sa among kultura nga among gibilin sa among mga kabataan pinaagi lang sa mga pulong. Dinhi sa tribal hall namo himoa ang mga kalihokan subay sa among kultura isip mga lumad,”* (Thank you very much to TVIRD. This tribal hall is important to us because it will help us preserve our culture, which we hand down to our children orally. In this hall, we will conduct activities according to our custom and traditions.) added Comisas.

The tribal hall was constructed earlier by the company’s Community Relations and Development Office (CREDO) for the Subanons in Makiang – a village inhabited mostly by members of the tribe. Makiang is a village along Lituban River, one of the two biggest rivers in Siocon. It was constructed upon the request of Comisas, in behalf of his people who were clamoring for the hall two years ago.

“Our population is 2,000 – forty percent of these are Subanons while the 60% is shared by our Muslim and Christian brothers. So the building is really important for the people here,” said Barangay Chairman Brady Comisas, son of the chieftain.

“Construction of the hall is part of the 2013 budget of our Social Development Management Program (SDMP) disclosed Community Relations Manager Joel Alasco. He added that it is one of the numerous TVIRD projects turned-over to the ‘impact barangays’ of the company’s mining operations and built according to the Barangay Development Plan (BDP).

### **A place to unite**

“We’ll see to it that it will last for years so the next generations of Subanons can benefit from it too,” Timuay (chieftain) Comisas said in his acceptance speech, assuring Alasco that he will take care of the tribal hall. He also revealed that the tribal hall will be their place for solemnizing Subanon weddings, in settling disputes among tribal members and in planning the various activities of the tribe.

A son of a timuay, Comisas Sr. is an accredited solemnizing officer of the National Census and Statistics Office (NSO). He has been solemnizing Subanon marriages for years. He also currently serves as member and Subanon community representative of the Multi-Partite Monitoring Team (MMT), a body organized by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) to monitor the environmental protection programs of TVIRD during mining operations.

### **On public health and sustainability**

As the Subanons celebrate the inauguration of their new tribal hall in Barangay Makiang, residents of Barangay A.L. Micubo also of Siocon town celebrated TVIRD's turnover of their new health center.

Barangay Chairman Andresito Micubo received the project on behalf of his constituents and showed his appreciation for the mining firm, which he said has done so much for Siocon since it began its mining operations in 2004.

"This edifice is a testament that TVIRD cares for the people of Siocon. During its stay here, it opened our town to great opportunities, especially for business," Micubo said.

TVIRD built barangay health centers, day care centers, barangay halls, school buildings, water systems and several other infrastructure in Siocon town, including farm-to-market roads.

"Most of these projects were conducted through public-private partnerships (PPPs). Recipient barangays contributed a counterpart, in terms of labor or funds in implementing the projects. By doing so, we are encouraging participation of project beneficiaries and that the project is not a dole-out of the company," Alasco added.

"People understood that one has to share something for projects that will benefit everybody in the community," Alasco also noted that this cost-sharing system worked well in Siocon.

Water system projects built in Siocon barangays applied TVIRD's 'cost sharing' system. To make the project self-sufficient, barangay folks have to shell out Php20 to Php30 per month for system maintenance, according to the company.

"It is being applied to Candiz, Tibangao, Tagaytay and other barangays. The pay is minimal compared to other water systems in the country, but it is working since the payment from barangay residents establishes ownership on their part, thus making the model more sustainable," Alasco concluded.

TVIRD's long list of community projects and beneficiaries demonstrate a model geared towards the overall long-term sustainability of Siocon, its people and its natural environment – to last beyond the life of its mine.

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**Press photos:**



- 1 *The new Subanon Tribal Hall in Sitio Dunggoan, Barangay Makiang is a short ride away from TVIRD's mine site in the same town of Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte.*



- 2 *A.L. Micubo Barangay Chairman Andresito Micubo: Our barangay health center is a testament that TVIRD cares for the people of Siocon.*

**About TVI**

TVI Resource Development (Phils.) Inc., is the Philippine affiliate of TVI Pacific Inc. (TSX: TVI), a publicly-listed Canadian mining company focused on the exploration and production of precious and base metals from district-scale large-system, high-margin projects located in the Philippines.

We are committed to exploration and mining practices that promote transparency, responsible stewardship of the environment, and the inalienable rights to life, dignity, and sustainable development of our host communities.

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