



Resource Development (Phils.) Inc.

NEWS RELEASE

TVIRD-Agata COVID-19 Response Brings Relief to 10,000 Families, Livelihood to Rural Farmers

46 barangays, healthcare facilities and LGUs receive support from TVIRD Group of Companies



TVIRD-Agata sourced more than 11,000 kilos of assorted vegetables from beneficiary farmers under the company-supported Mabakas Organic Farm School. (in photo): Women of host Santiago Municipality show 'Thank you' signs for the assorted vegetables they received.

Tubay, Agusan del Norte/ May 2020 – At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Philippines – that brought the nation's economy to a virtual standstill and left thousands confined to hospitals, stricken with the deadly virus – communities in Mindanao have benefitted from an unexpected partner that immediately and actively responded to the government's call to unity: and that is the country's mining industry, which continues to support countrywide development.

As of this writing, the industry has realigned some Php247 million of its collective Social Development and Management Program (SDMP) funds to provide relief for thousands of Filipinos in and around mining communities and close to 70,000 frontliners across the country.

Immediate response

Prior to the realignment of SDMP to support relief operations, TVIRD's Agata Mining Ventures Inc. already dispatched various Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) from Manila as part of its immediate response to the needs of medical frontliners in the Mindanao region.

TVI Resource Development Philippines Inc. (TVIRD) has facilities in Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte; Bayog, Zamboanga del Sur; and the adjacent municipalities of Tubay, Jabonga and Santiago in Agusan del Norte Province where its Agata Nickel Project is located.

To date, the TVIRD Group of Companies has shored-up critical PPEs: N95 face masks, face shields and surgical and examinations gloves to support COVID-19 frontliners, including LGUs, volunteers, medical workers, police and civilian volunteers as well as checkpoint personnel.

It likewise sourced majority of its fresh vegetable from farmers and other goods from local establishments to provide relief to more than 10,000 families in its respective areas. The group's joint relief efforts aim to cushion the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and has reached some 46 barangays consisting of its primary and secondary communities.

Supporting local livelihood

While an estimated one million jobs have been "lost" as a result of the nationwide community quarantine, the challenges of a lockdown are even more pronounced in the hinterlands where a single day of lost livelihood can make or break agricultural and fishing communities who rely on their daily access to the market place. This is in addition to the challenge of putting food on their own tables for their families everyday.

Agata sought to bridge this need by sourcing organic vegetables from its TESDA-certified Mabakas Farm School and its graduates under the program. Together with its beneficiary farmers, locally-sourced *ampalaya* (bitter gourd), *kalabasa* (squash), okra, *sitaw* (string beans) and eggplants were included in relief packs – which were distributed to 2,647 families in its three host municipalities.

Recipients also included the company's employees in the mine site and the indigenous Mamanwas who are themselves farmers who would have otherwise faced the risk of spoilage of their produce due to ECQ restrictions on transportation.

Over 11,000 kilos of assorted vegetables were included in more than 5,200 relief and vegetable packs distributed by the company – a testament that its production model under the Mabakas framework is sustainable.

TVIRD likewise rolled-out a weeklong food distribution program and reached-out to almost 7,424 families in the Zamboanga Peninsula. The company's site personnel and officers sought to alleviate the residents' difficulties by providing rice, vegetables, canned goods and noodles.

Special attention was also given to the elderly, pregnant women, and persons with disabilities (PWDs) since they are limited to their homes under the GCQ Protocol. Beneficiaries also include nearly 1,400 Subanen families and farmers from Bayog Municipality whose produce are included in the relief packs.

Frontliners in Zamboanga Peninsula

Through its Balabag Office, TVIRD contributed several boxes of PPEs to major government hospitals, rural health units and birthing clinics in the Zamboanga Peninsula region.

Beneficiary institutions include the Zamboanga Sibugay Provincial Hospital, Wilfredo C. Palma Memorial Hospital in Diplahan, Rural Health Units (RHU) in the joint provinces, Zamboanga del Sur Provincial Hospital in Pagadian City, and Siocon District Hospital – which also serves patients from its 26 barangays and nearby Sirawai and Baliguian towns.

“TVIRD backs the government's campaign against the disease. We are one with the frontliners – and providing them with protection and food is our way of sharing their load,” said TVIRD Balabag Project Manager Engr. Hilario Gingo, Jr.

As the first company to be licensed under the Philippine Mining Law, TVIRD established its presence in the Zamboanga Peninsula some 25 years ago and has since fostered a deep relationship with its communities, especially the Subanon and Subanen tribes. The commercial operations of Agata marks the third consecutive project that TVIRD brought on-stream in a period of 10 years.

Today, TVIRD-Agata has cultivated strong and resilient communities, self-sustaining indigenous hosts tribe and over 1,300 graduates from its Mabakas Organic Farm School who are eligible for TESDA National Certification.

“*Starting it right and keeping the end in mind*’ has guided the company in achieving sustainable operations focused on progressive and final rehabilitation. By providing skills and infrastructure, we endeavour that our

communities can sustain themselves beyond the life of the mine,” according to Agata Assistant GM Anthony Quijano.

Press photos:



- 1 *Agata community frontliners load food packs intended to all 145 families of Brgy. Tagpangahoy – a coastal community of host Tubay Municipality. Agata distributed rice and vegetable packs to all 896 families located in its four coastal communities.*



- 2 *Agata Assistant GM Anthony B. Quijano leads the distribution of relief packs to every family in Barangay Lawigan in host Tubay Municipality. Each pack includes 15 kgs of rice and 4.25 kgs of organic vegetables produced by the company’s beneficiary farmers from Mabakas.*



- 3** *Jeremy Salas, a partner and beneficiary farmer of the Agata-supported Mabakas Organic Farm School welcomes the company's relief efforts to cushion the impact of COVID-19 on the communities. A resident of host Jabonga Municipality, Salas is one of the farmers whose home-grown produce made its way into more than 5,200 relief and vegetable packs distributed by Agata.*



- 4** *Scholars and staff from the Agata-supported Mabakas Organic Farm School prepare the day's harvest of beneficiary farmers. Nearly 3,000 families from eight host communities received vegetable packs to augment their daily needs.*



- 5 **A helping hand.** TVIRD Balabag Project Manager Engr. Hilario Gingo, Jr. and Safety Supervisor Kurt Zion V. Torres (Right and Left, respectively) sort-out the PPEs intended for Zamboanga Sibugay Provincial Hospital in Ipil – Sibugay's capital town.



- 6 **Priority: the elderly indigenous Subanens.** A Subanen IP from Barangay Bantal receives a food pack from TVIRD Community Relations Officer Lope Dizon right at his doorstep. Majority of residents in this barangay are the indigenous Subanens with whom the company shares a common development roadmap.



7 Safety Supervisor Kurt Zion V. Torres (Left) demonstrates how to use the face shield and other PPEs to police officers manning a Quarantine Control Point along the RT Lim-Ipil national road in Zamboanga del Norte.



8 **An Agata Story.** Mechanisms to help communities sustain themselves beyond the life of the mine has helped them survive the COVID-19 pandemic. The present challenges has brought Agata closer to its communities, improved cooperation and strengthened friendships.

About TVI in the Philippines

TVI Resource Development Philippines Inc. (“TVIRD”), is the local affiliate of TVI Pacific Inc. (TSX: TVI), a publicly-listed Canadian mining company focused on the exploration, development, and production of precious and base metals from district-scale, large-system, high-margin projects located in the Philippines. Concurrent ownership of ventures is shared with partner company, Prime Resource Holdings Inc.

The commercial operations of Agata Mining Ventures Inc. (AMVI) marks the third successful mining project that TVIRD brought on-stream in the past 10 years. The company is 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 its host communities.

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