



The **SASAKAWA** **AWARD**

*Recognizing excellence in reducing disaster risk
for a safer, more sustainable world.*

This competition is made possible by an endowment from the Nippon Foundation, Japan

Please fill out this section *only* if you are nominating an *institution*

Institution name **MOREFUNINQUEZON**

Website: <http://morefuninquezon.com/>

Address of headquarters No. 30 BLUE ST. GREEN HEIGHTS SUBDIVISION TAYABAS CITY 4320

PHILIPPINES

Date of creation **Jan 5, 2012**

Main Activity: **Leading a Social Network to address environmental**

Size **50,000 followers** Organization Structure **Social Network**

Annual Budget and sources of income **We rely on volunteers, sponsors and T-shirt sales**

Name and title of chief Executive Office **ERWIN L. DE RAMA**

For those submitting nominations, please provide your details

Nominator's Name: **Wenda S. De Torres**

Address Local Government Office of Tayabas City

Email adminbalinghoy@morefuninquezon.com

Present position Operation Manager

Previous posts and functions Operation Manager

In less than 800 words, please describe the remarkable and innovative effort carried out by the nominee to reduce the impact of disasters and build disaster resilience under the theme “*Shaping the Future.*”

Not all great projects started with a noble mission. Sometimes, great projects started by just having fun. Previously, the sole purpose of our Facebook page was to promote tourism in Quezon Province Philippines. But when our Facebook page reached a large number of followers (now we have 50,000) we realized that we need to focus on more pressing issues. We changed our priorities and harnessed the power of social network. We led the community on helpful activities like tree planting and online data gathering for the victims of typhoons in the Philippines.

The link of our Facebook page is

<https://www.facebook.com/morefuningquezonprovince?ref=hl>

It is a known fact that our environment is deteriorating in a rate that humans could hardly cope-up. Sea levels are rising, storms are getting stronger, flash-floods, volcanic eruptions and earthquakes are becoming news headlines. On this account, we initiated various projects that addressed environmental disasters. Since many people are following us, we realized that we have the opportunity to lead and **Shape the Future** of our community.

Being agents of change

Instead of ranting, raving, finger pointing or cursing in the internet, we gave the younger generation an option to share their time in worthwhile activities, to collaborate with their friends and build community resilience. It was a step by step. First is, we need an idea. The first idea is to save Mt Banahaw in the Philippines by planting trees.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_Banahaw

But tree planting is not an easy task, we need funds and we don't have it. That's why we decided we need to sell something online. Since, we have a Facebook page, that has 50,000 followers, we harnessed its power and sell our T-Shirts for Mt. Banahaw.

“For every T-shirt that we sold we plant One tree in Mt. Banahaw”

Acting ahead

With this initiative, we hope that we could help on the effects of climate change, prevent volcanic eruption, prevent flash floods, and loss of lives and properties resulting from these disasters. According to “Philippines Institute of Volcanology (Phivolcs)”, Mount Banahaw has erupted three times. The last eruption was in 1843. Phivolcs lists Mount Banahaw as one of 23 active volcanoes in the Philippines.

To provide transparency and accountability we have an online database to monitor who bought the T-Shirt and how many trees were planted. We have planted 247 trees so far and these efforts were published in our webpage.

<http://www.morefuninquezon.com/banahaw.asp>

Tackling uncertainty and Management of resources

While in the process of rehabilitating Mt.Banahaw, our nation was struck by the strongest tropical cyclones ever recorded in the history of mankind- TYPHOON HAIYAN. During this period of disaster, most organizations were focused on Relief Good Operations. We wanted to help but we don't have the resources to contribute on large scale relief operation. We decided that we could help in a different way. We noticed that there were lots of information about missing and survivors of Haiyan, from the internet. The problem was, no organization was consolidating the list. So we trigger the involvement of non-traditional actor - our young online community. We called for volunteer encoders, photo editors and programmers to consolidate information. We also uploaded and shared letters and photos of the survivors, captured by various photographers.

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.716990731657949.1073741901.335995119757514&type=3>

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.719166201440402.1073741905.335995119757514&type=3>

We know that survivor's relatives might saw them in the social media then we could transmit their messages online. To gather first-hand information, we went also to Evacuation Centres. Then we published our consolidated data in our webpage and in our facebook page.

In our search webpage, that we created, you could enter the name of the person missing and it would return his status, whether he survived or missing. This was created by our volunteer programmer and encoders.

The link is:

<http://www.morefuninquezon.com/listahan.asp>

On the same year, another typhoon named Typhoon Rammasun came and hit our very own Province. The entire Quezon province, had a power black-out, roads were not passable, mobile signals were down and no news came out from Quezon. We cannot call for our previous team of volunteers since we cannot communicate to our officers who were devastated by the typhoon themselves. Rather than sit down and wait for first hand information, one of our officers who was residing in Singapore acted proactively. He searched the social media for small bits of information regarding the situation of different towns and uploaded pictures of the aftermath. He was joined by other filipinos working in other countries and they exchanged and assessed information online. They also followed the relief operation of local officials and reported their activities in our site. With the use of Social Media, we helped our province by being the center of information in times of disaster. We also harnessed the spirit of volunteerism and citizenship. We have followers, we have leaders and now we have a noble mission.

In less than 400 words, please describe how the nominee's work is funded.

The first 1 to 3 tree planting events were successful. But typhoon Haiyan came. Our sales were affected. Nobody bought our T-shirts during this long period.

We temporarily stop our production. To sustain our project, we launched a new gimmick -a singing contest for Mt.Banahaw. We looked for sponsors and proposed that we will promote their business in our page which has 50,000 followers. We told them that the proceeds will go to our next planting activity. In this event, we were able to earn 150 USD. Haiyan pushed us to become creative and find alternative ways to seek funds.

Furthermore, during Haiyan, a Canadian-Filipina, gave us 500 USD to finance our search operation. Two members of our group were able to gather information from Evacuation Centres. The data was published in our page.

When Quezon province was devastated by another typhoon, Ramassun, the houses, of two of our administrators were badly damaged. We posted the pictures of their houses, after several minutes, the Governor of Quezon extended his help. He gave our two officers 100 USD each.

Recently, we also won 1000 USD in the ASEAN Community Disaster Resilience Photo Essay held in Brunei. The amount will be used to plant 200 trees.

<http://www.asean.org/news/asean-secretariat-news/item/asean-focuses-on-resilience-during-day-for-disaster-management>

If we win the 50,000 USD award, how are we going to use the money?

- 1) We will climb higher and plant more trees. Mt.Banahaw has a maximum elevation of 2,170 metres above sea level. Our young volunteers, with age range of 15 to 30 yrs old are planting on 400 to 500 metres elevation so far. We will ask the help of professional mountaineers to plant in higher area (600 metres to 800 metres elevation).

- 2) We will buy an 800 USD, portable electric generator. During typhoons, power black-out will occur and most of the electrical post will be destroyed. We want to stay online during typhoons to help our community. We will also buy 100 USD portable two way radio to keep the communication available.
- 3) We will register our organization as an advocacy cooperative. We will rent a 100 USD a month office/shop and sell our T-shirts here. Overall manpower cost will be 450 USD a month for the operation of the shop.
- 4) We will construct a Deep Well Water System to provide potable water to the community.