

Press Information



Building on Strong Foundations to Tackle the Consequences of Climate Change

- The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, together with the TUI Care Foundation and Plan International support initiative, to improve crisis preparedness
- Rehabilitation of the ecosystem on two islands of western province of Samar, through the empowerment of local communities
- Multidimensional initiative helps to tackle various aspects of climate change

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In the province of Samar in the east of the Philippines, most of the villages lie along the coastline on small islands, where deforestation is a serious and growing issue. This makes them extremely vulnerable to tropical cyclones and floods, such as in 2013 when the Philippines were hit by one of the strongest cyclones ever recorded: Typhoon Haiyan.

In a project based in the western province of Samar and in collaboration with Plan International and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, TUI Care Foundation supports 2,200 families to protect themselves against the consequences of climate change – in a sustainable and future-proof way. Working hand in hand with the communities, this multidimensional project is tackling various consequences of climate change at the same time.

The aim of the project is to improve resilience against future disasters. Furthermore, the project aims to improve the livelihoods of marginalised families, with a special focus on women. To achieve these goals, first aid and rescue training, as well as support for the implementation of community-based disaster reaction plans, is taking place. Moreover, Plan, in cooperation with a local partner organisation, trains the inhabitants in sustainable farming and fishing. As part of the initiative, 20 huts are being built in the villages to promote awareness of climate change and to store items for first aid rescue teams and coast protection.

In one of these huts, a resource mapping activity, supported by the TUI Care Foundation, recently took place. Whilst this occurred, Jerry Estrada, a fisherman and active member of the community, clearly explained the relevance of these spaces after attending some training activities organised by Plan. He explains: "As a father and a concerned citizen, I will continue to educate my family and my fellow fishers in protecting the environment by stopping illegal fishing practices and to continuing to push government officials to actively enforce fishing laws so we, fishers, our children and the future generations, will continue to benefit from the gifts of nature." Jerry is 56-year-old and a former village official.

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Notably, this project builds on the conviction that it takes strong women to lead a society out of poverty. That is why Mothers Savings Groups were set up. Prior to being further supported by the TUI Care Foundation, the group had already helped people such as Lydia, a local mother, after her husband Salvador disappeared. A storm had pulled him from his fishing boat and only after four long days did the happy news arrive: he had survived! It took him months to recover, but the savings group lent the family money to pay for food and for their boat to be repaired. Salvador is a natural born fisher. But Lydia has just started her new business, selling groceries in the village. This way, both Lydia and Salvador help to support their family economically. Aiding people to help themselves enables them to become independent in the long run – one of the major objectives of the TUI Care Foundation.

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Nurseries for local trees and plants are also being established to support reforestation works. Seedlings for forest trees and fruit trees now grow in 17 places. In the future, forest trees will protect mountain slopes from erosion, while fruit trees will contribute to the food supply. 35 tree nurseries will be installed by 2019.

Numerous fish species bustle about in the waters, but the deforestation of mangrove forests is destroying their spawning grounds. Stocks are shrinking and, for the local fishermen community, work is becoming increasingly precarious. Therefore, the project also creates coastal protection areas for regenerating fish stocks. Such a measure is crucial to help protect the income source of most local families. Moreover, in order to promote knowledge about the use of trees in society, the project involves children in its work. "Some of the trees are really big. We are proud of this", says Sharmaine, glancing at a group of older trees. In her free time, she currently leads groups of younger children into the shore zones.

Disasters like Typhoon Haiyan have especially hard effects on poor and undeveloped regions of the world. Climate change will further expose these vulnerable areas to natural disasters and there are no simple solutions to this challenge. But, integrated and multifaceted projects can help to prepare local communities to cope with the impacts of climate change.

About TUI Care Foundation

Building on the potential of tourism as a force for good, the TUI Care Foundation supports and initiates partnerships and projects which create new opportunities for the young generation and contribute to thriving destinations all over the world. Connecting holidaymakers to good causes, the TUI Care Foundation fosters education and training initiatives to open up new opportunities and perspectives for young people, the protection of the natural environment in holiday destinations and sustainable livelihoods in thriving destinations where local communities can benefit even more from tourism. The TUI Care Foundation works global and acts local - it

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builds on strong partnerships with local and international organisations to create meaningful and long-lasting impacts. The charitable foundation values transparency and the efficient use of funds. Therefore, 100% of the donations go to partners and projects with all operating costs of the foundation covered by TUI. The TUI Care Foundation was founded by TUI, the world's leading tourism business, and is based in the Netherlands.

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