

PDRF highlights MSME resilience during climate change forum



22 APRIL 2021, MANILA—The Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF) presented its various projects supporting micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in a recent online forum on climate change organized by the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP).

The webinar, “Incorporation of Disaster Risk Reduction to Philippine Resiliency” was the first part of the “Catching Up to Climate Change” online series which tackled the impact of climate change on the country and how businesses can best adapt to the global crisis. During the session, a distinguished panel of speakers discussed the Philippines’ vulnerability to climate change, services to protect the country from natural disasters, proper implementation of disaster preparedness programs from the government to the private sectors, preparation of businesses against natural disasters, climate change resiliency for the Asia-Pacific Region and underlying disaster risk precautions, and information dissemination.

PDRF Executive Director Veronica Gabaldon highlighted the importance of creating an enabling environment for businesses to implement and support measures that adapt to the risks created by climate change.

Furthermore, Gabaldon contextualized the impact of climate change on the global supply chain and elaborated on why MSMEs are among the hardest hit by this crisis. MSMEs often lack the resources to develop long-term strategies and to manage risks comprehensively. But because MSMEs are localized players and strongly integrated into their communities, they can be crucial drivers for social cohesion. When MSMEs are mobilized, they can drive innovation, community resilience, and partnerships with the public sector.

“PDRF believes that the private sector plays a crucial role in contributing to our country’s growth and development efforts and is a key actor that can truly help society build resilience to climate change,” said Gabaldon. “Supporting the public sector and adopting a whole-of-society approach, PDRF champions initiatives that help support businesses, more specifically MSMEs, as they face the brunt of the destruction caused by various crises,” Gabaldon added.

Among the PDRF initiatives presented were the MSME Guidebook, a comic book on business continuity, and the SIKAP program, Synergizing Recovery Initiatives, Knowledge, and Adaptation Practices for MSMEs—a unified online resilience hub that provides information on the latest available loans, programs, and online events specifically for MSMEs in the Philippines. SIKAP also offers mentorship opportunities for MSMEs provided by industry leaders and experts. The SIKAP program was created in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and the Connecting Business Initiative.

Other speakers present in the event include Office of Civil Defense Policy Development and Planning Service Director Atty. Tecson John Lim, Northern Luzon PAG-ASA Regional Services Division Weather Services Chief Thelma Cinco, The Indonesian Agency for Meteorology Climatology and Geophysics Research and Development Director Nelly Florida Riama, and Manila Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office Climate Change Adaptation Section Chief, BSAST, DipAst Manager Christian John Evangelista.

The event was supported by Advantage Austria, the Belgian-Filipino Business Club, and the Chambers of Commerce of France, Germany, Spain, Norway, the Netherlands, the Nordic countries, and the United Kingdom in the Philippines.

The resources presented during the webinar are available for download on the SIKAP platform. Users may sign up for free to access these materials by going to <https://sikap.com.ph/>.