

PRESS RELEASE

At Camp HARAYA, Baguio's Young Women Redefine What Leadership Looks Like

SEPTEMBER 14, 2026 | Baguio City — Twenty-seven young women leaders spent two days building the skills to lead their city through crisis and change at the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation's (PDRF) 3rd Camp HARAYA (Harnessing Advocacy and Resilience for the Advancement of Youth in Action), held on September 9–10, 2026, at the Ridgewood Hotel in Baguio City.



In photo: Mayor Benjamin Magalong (center) and the BRIDGE Project Team with the women youth leaders of Baguio City during the Camp HARAYA Resilience Bootcamp. Photo Taken on 11 September 2026, Baguio City.

Camp HARAYA, also known as the Baguio City Youth Resilience Bootcamp, is organized by PDRF through its Building Resilience through Inclusive Development and Gender Equality (BRIDGE) Project, in partnership with the Government of Canada, the City Government of Baguio, and the SIGLAT Baguio Youth Innovation Hub. The program equips Baguio's women youth leaders to support the city's resilience agenda, strengthening competencies in Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM), Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) through Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), and Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI).

“Through the BRIDGE Project, Canada is working with PDRF to strengthen local capacity to address climate change and disaster risks. A key principle of this work is that lasting solutions require the participation of a wide range of stakeholders, including young people. That is why Camp HARAYA is so important – it creates opportunities for young people to lead, influence

decisions, and develop solutions to challenges facing their communities. Canada is proud to support young Filipinos as partners in building a more sustainable future.” — Ms. Isabel Hernando, Global Affairs Canada, Embassy of Canada.

Ms. Samantha Hamada, Chief of Staff for the Office of the City Mayor, delivered the keynote address on behalf of Baguio City's local government.

“The journey in public service is not without its trials. But it’s with our unwavering commitment to our why’s that empower us to rise above adversity. As you delve in your experience in Camp HARAYA, keep in mind your why’s. Let that be resounding – let it drive you, empower you, and push you forward in your meaningful journey of service as fabulous, tenacious, strong, kikay, women leaders.” — Ms. Samantha Hamada, Chief of Staff, Office of the City Mayor.

Day 1 immersed participants in the fundamentals of the issues shaping Baguio's future. Arch. Donna Tabangin, Head of the City Planning, Development, and Sustainability Office (CPDSO), walked participants through the city's official development vision, before Engr. Charles Caramé, Head of the City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (CDRRMO), grounded the group in the fundamentals of DRR-CCA. Denise Navarro, BRIDGE Gender Specialist, followed with a discussion on GESI in leadership, and the morning closed with a session on systems thinking in youth leadership for resilience with Ms. Van Payno of Country Club.

The afternoon turned participants from listeners into builders. Ms. Micaela Gay Rimando of SIGLAT-CPDSO led a session on "The Resilience We Want: Youth Leadership for 2043," then guided participants directly into an extended workshop where they began shaping their own vision for a livable city. Day 1 closed with a special hands-on session with CDRRMO on youth emergency response and Basic Life Support training.

The second day opened with sessions on youth leadership for climate resilience and "Leadership Under Pressure: The First 72 Hours," featuring a tabletop emergency-response exercise led by Ms. Ruth Anne Salimbangon of the Quezon City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (QCDRRMO).

Participants then took the stage themselves in a panel on Youth Leadership for Resilience, moderated by Mr. Alex Czar Masiglat, BRIDGE Project Manager, with panelists Ms. Claudine Talaran (Sustainability Specialist, foodpanda), Ms. Ruth Anne Salimbangon (QCDRRMO), and Mr. June Domingo Jr. of Baguio's Local Youth Development Office.

Moderated by Ms. Anna Katrina Aspuria, BRIDGE Project Director, the bootcamp culminated in a direct dialogue on leadership between five youth representatives and Mayor Benjie Magalong tracing his own leadership journey alongside the realities of young women leaders face today. It was a moment of learning from

each other, highlighting that resilient leadership looks the same at any age: showing up, listening, and staying the course.

"Leadership isn't something you grow into someday — many of you already have it, right now. Leadership has nothing to do with age, and nothing to do with position. It's about influence, and what you choose to do with it. Start with one person, then two, and that influence can grow into something that inspires communities to act." — Mayor Benjie Magalong, City of Baguio

After two days spent studying the city's hazards, vulnerabilities, and official development vision, the young women leaders presented their own vision for a resilient, livable, inclusive, and creative Baguio by 2043.

"Leadership needs both a poet and a plumber. The poet dreams the vision while the plumber lays the pipes underneath that make the dream survive. A poet without a plumber never builds anything. A plumber without a poet builds systems nobody remembers the why of. The leaders we need are both: people who still feel the fire, and people willing to do the unglamorous work underneath the dream." — Ms. Anna Katrina Aspuria, Project Director, PDRF

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About BRIDGE Project

Supported by the Global Affairs Canada, the Building Resilience through Inclusive Development and Gender Equality (BRIDGE) Project is a four-year project implemented by PDRF to enhance the disaster and climate resilience of Baguio City by strengthening the IWRM capacities of communities (IPLC & women) and local institutions (LGU, PS, CSO); and applying gender-responsive practices.

About PHILIPPINE DISASTER RESILIENCE FOUNDATION

The Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF) is the country's major private sector vehicle and coordinator for disaster resilience. As an alliance of businesses dedicated to building the disaster risk management capabilities of the private sector in the country, PDRF aims to contribute to the sustainable development and the general welfare of the Filipino people. For more information, visit www.pdrf.org.

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