

Rehabilitation of Banaue Rice Terraces pushed

Manila Bulletin · 17 May 2018 · B-8 · By ZALDY COMANDA

BANAUE, Ifugao – The Terraces Restoration Initiative United Movement for the Preservation of the Heritage (TRIUMPH) is targeting to rehabilitate the 540 hectares of Banaue Rice Terraces with the aid of donations from different organizations, including the preservation of the UNESCO Heritage site.



Mayor Jerry Dalipog, said TRIUMPH is taking charge of what is called the “chawa” program, a 40-man team from the local government unit and the farmers, which will take care of cleaning and fixing the stone walls of the terraces, and re-planting the abandoned fields.

He said chawa was started as a program between the local government unit (LGU) and the owner of the abandoned fields with a 50-50 percent sharing in the harvest. Out of the 1,607 hectares of the Banaue Rice Terraces there are 540 hectares, which have been found to have been abandoned as of 2015 because most of these have been ravaged by typhoon, while others have been left in disrepair because of the huge costs to restore the ripraps.

“We hope to finish with the project in two years,” said Dalipog.

He added that as of now, they have worked for the rehabilitation of about 20 hectares, with eight hectares already being planted with rice, which is expected to be harvested in July.

Dapilog said the program was spearheaded with the help of Milagros Ong-How of Universal Harvest Inc. (UHI), through their corporate social responsibility program, and pledged the amount of R3 million for the restoration of the rice terraces at Barangay Viewpoint.

Dalipog said that the rehabilitation started in 2016 after some government officials were brought to Indonesia, Japan and China, to see how these countries were preserving their own rice terraces.

“We expecting another R3 million from the sponsor for the continuance of the rehabilitation project. The amount that will be earned from selling the rice harvest on the abandoned rice terraces will also be used for the rehabilitation,” Dalipog said.