

Press Releases

DepEd Receives Educational Assistance for Conflict- and Calamity-Stricken Learners from USAID

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August 4, 2017

PASIG CITY, August 4, 2017 – To achieve the mutual development goals of ensuring inclusive and quality education for all and promoting lifelong learning, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) handed over 370 computer tablets, sample student chairs, and the scale model and design of a typhoon-resistant school building to the Department of Education (DepEd) on August 2 at the *Bulwagan ng Karunungan*, DepEd Central Office.

The full set of 6,500 chairs will be given to displaced students from Marawi to replace those that were destroyed as a result of the ongoing armed conflict. In addition, the school building design, developed by USAID for its post-Yolanda assistance, may be adopted by DepEd in other disaster affected communities.

As part of the ICT for Reading initiative under *Basa Pilipinas*, 370 tablet computers will be turned over to the City Division of San Fernando, La Union, which will benefit 26 schools, 60 Grade 3 teachers, and approximately 1,700 pupils.

Present during the handover ceremony were DepEd Undersecretaries Alain Pascua and Annalyn Sevilla, Assistant Secretaries Revsee Escobedo and G.H. Ambat, USAID Philippines Office of Education Director Brian Levey, and *Basa Pilipinas* Project Chief of Party Marcial Salvatierra.

Escobedo highlighted the event as a clear testament of and manifestation to the long history of cooperation, partnership and collaboration between DepEd and USAID.

In her presentation on the new ICT for reading pilot initiative, *Basa Pilipinas* Deputy Chief of Party Ces Ochoa said the tablets will be loaded with PDF copies of all *Basa Pilipinas*-developed Grade 3 leveled readers in English and Filipino, plus an interactive reading application (Vernacular) that will test and study the use of tablets to support students' literacy and learning.

On behalf of the US Embassy Manila's USAID, Levey emphasized the continuous commitment of USAID to helping the Department provide quality basic education, "The US government shares [DepEd's] determination and enthusiasm to continuously improve the quality of education for students throughout the Philippines."

Pascua explained that the result of the pilot program on the use of ICT in reading will be utilized in formulating the Department's programs, especially the use of ICT materials in the teaching and learning process.

Pascua added that he is discussing with DepEd-Education Facilities Division (EFD) the introduction of new school building designs for 2018. One of the designs is the scale model developed by USAID, where classrooms are elevated and will be built in flood-prone areas.

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