

Talisay's Baker King



AS EARLY AS 15 years old Clark Calaque, from Talisay, Mayorga, Leyte was supporting his family's bakery business by selling bread outside the family's store front to the members of his community. As Typhoon Yolanda struck, the family's business was instantly halted as the high-winds and

colossal flood waters destroyed essential equipment that they used for baking their breads. Looking for stable income in the absence of the family's business, Clark found a job as a baker in a commercial bakery in Palo, Leyte where he earned Php200 per day. From this experience, Clark learned to bake *Pandesal* and other local breads that the bakery sold.

As Clark continued his work at the commercial bakery, his family began the process of rebuilding their family's bakery business. At this time, Clark was approached by the Philippine Red Cross who asked if he was interested in participating in the organization's Skills Training and Enterprise Development (STED) program, a program designed to provide out-of-school youth with vocational training and grants for productive assets towards improved long-term economic security. Clark decided to join the program, receiving a grant for tuition payment for a TESDA-certified training course on the production of Bread and Pastries as well as a grant for the purchase of baking equipment.

"The STED program was a big help for me because I was able to procure an oven and helped my parents provide for our needs. The training alone was a big help because I gained additional knowledge especially on baking different cakes like chiffon and chocolate cakes", says Clark.

Currently, Clark's family has the only bakery in the community, ensuring that members of the community no longer need to travel to the marketplace just to buy bread.

Clark's family sells *Pandesal* every morning and *Pande Coco* every afternoon giving them sales of Php400 per day and Php500 per day respectively . Collectively, Clark's family now earns an average of of Php27,000 a month and is he is now able to support the

school fees of Clark's younger siblings, something that they struggled to do in the past. Clark additionally noted that the training that he attended has helped him to be more focused and business minded towards his family's bakery business and he now prefers to spend more



time on the family's business rather than idly spending time with friends.

"I will pursue baking because I can see that I can have a bright future on this craft". I am thinking of going back to school and continuing my studies", expressed Clark.

Clark also noted that the additional income has allowed him to set aside money for his plan to return to university to finish his studies. In the meantime, he spends time sharing the knowledge that he gained from the training to his mother and his friends and plans to to expand the business, gradually purchasing additional baking equipment and hopes to have a dough kneading machine as an input in their bakery in the future.

"I am grateful to the Red Cross and I hope that they continue conducting trainings so that many beneficiaries can reap from this initiative just like me", says Clark.

To date, there are 391 Individuals who have completed the skills training and received NCII certification through the Philippine Red Cross Typhoon Haiyan Operation.