



Office of the President of the Philippines
NATIONAL ANTI-POVERTY COMMISSION



Victims of Disasters and Calamities Sector Council

POSITION STATEMENT

**National Anti-Poverty Commission - Victims of Disasters and Calamities (NAPC-VDC)
Supports the Community Pantry Initiative,
Condemns Harassment and Red Tagging of Organizers**

The National Anti-Poverty Commission-Victims of Disasters and Calamities (NAPC-VDC) sector fully supports the community pantries set up in various locations in the country. The idea of setting up a community pantry was fired up by ordinary peoples' genuine concern to help the most in need in these difficult times. The Community Pantry is bayanihan spirit in its purest form; a community based response which the NAPC VDC earnestly and resolutely promote.

More than one year of lockdown has taken its toll to the most vulnerable sectors in our society, people lost their jobs due to the closure of many businesses. People living a hand to mouth existence even before the COVID 19 pandemic are now in worst situation.

The first community pantry set up on April 14 in Maginhawa St. by Ms. Patricia Ann Non was welcomed by many of our countrymen and women who are tired of waiting for assistance for their basic needs. The idea was overwhelmingly supported by the public eager to contribute their share in alleviating the hardships of many kababayans. Many were inspired. Within just a few days, community pantries were set up in numerous neighborhoods outside the NCR. The Maginhawa community pantry was like a spark that started a prairie fire.

Then came the red tagging and harassment of community pantry organizers. The Maginhawa community pantry was forced to temporarily stop operating to protect its volunteers.

We strongly condemn these acts which threaten and clearly intend to sow fear among those who simply want to help people in dire need. At this time when many of our kababayans are struggling to keep body and soul together, all efforts must be directed towards improving their welfare. The community pantry has shown that people with so much less can do so much more when they work together.

NAPC VDC enjoins all concerned citizens to support the community pantries and resist all forms of harassment.



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Approved and Signed by the council members of the NAPC-VDC on 21 April 2021:

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