

ISSN 1908-3432

ISSUE NO. 2 / NOVEMBER 2006 - APRIL 2007

# TAO Shelter

The Magazine for Sustainable Human Settlements

## DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

Bagong konsepto sa DRM • Hazard maps: paano gamitin  
• Modelong komunidad sa San Mateo • Disaster-resilient housing

**PLUS!** Halimbawa ng pagpapalano ng mga komunidad  
sa Caracas, Venezuela at Mekong Delta, Vietnam

# Notes from the Editor

**“Pagtitiyagaan na lang namin” (We will just bear it),** replied Ate Edna, resident of a resettlement site in Barangay Tanza, Navotas, when we asked if she intended to keep living there with her family despite the hazards in the area. **Waist-high floods lasted for more than a month here after strong storms in July. During Typhoon Milenyo, strong winds blowing across the open plain tore off her roof, and heavily damaged a number of other houses. (See “Surviving the Storm,” p8 for the full story.)**

For Ate Edna and her family, and the community of settlers in the Tanza site, disaster risk management is not just a seminar topic, or a magazine theme – it is necessary for survival. Poverty and the lack of available land and affordable housing have forced them to live in an extremely vulnerable area. They have no choice but to adapt, and become more resilient. This is a situation that is common not only in urban poor communities, but in rural areas as well.

Technical professionals like us have the social responsibility to give these people a fighting chance. Hazard mapping and assessment (See “Hazard Maps” and “READY ka na ba?” on p6 and p7) is a necessary step, but communities themselves have to have the capability to manage the risks. The story of Buklod Tao (p11), a people’s organization in San Mateo, is a good example of a community who has taken an active role in managing the risks of frequent floods in their area.

Government intervention can play a role in large-scale disaster risk management, like what is happening in Vietnam’s Mekong Delta (p16), but planners and architects working with communities can make a difference within specific sites as well, such as in a slum upgrading project in Caracas, Venezuela (“Ang Pagsasaayos ng San Rafael-Unido,” p14). Within the Philippines, much work needs to be done, especially in the provision of social housing for vulnerable populations living within high-risk areas. Our organization, TAO-Pilipinas, has recently been active in strengthening the link between social housing and community-based disaster risk management through the Young Professional’s Orientation and Training Workshop (p22).

It has often been said that the Philippines is one of the most hazard-prone countries in the world. But it need not be the most disaster-prone. Kailangan lang natin pagtitiyagaan. (We need to learn our lessons, and work on it.)

**Amillah S. Rodil**

## THE PUBLISHER

*TAO Pilipinas is a women-led, non-stock, non-profit, non-government organization of professionals in the field of architecture, planning, engineering and community development offering technical assistance in the planning and development of settlements to the urban and rural poor.*



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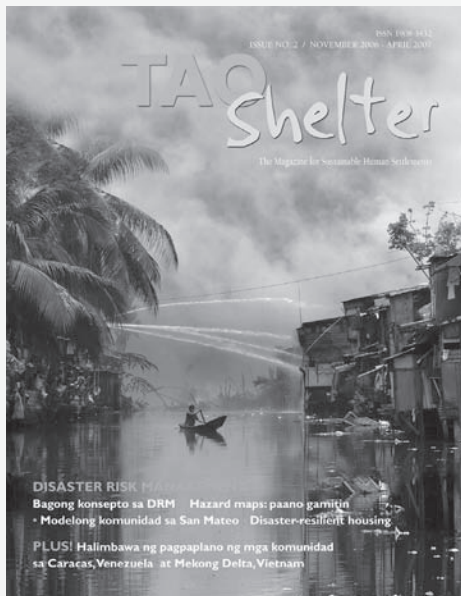
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COVER PHOTO BY REM ZAMORA

## ABOUT THE COVER

*Disasters are not only caused by natural hazards. Every year, there is at least one informal settlement in Metro Manila that burns down. Informal settlements in urban areas are prone to huge fires because of the crowded houses and lack of access roads for fire trucks. In this fire in Tondo, Manila, firemen resort to putting out the fire from across a creek.*

## ABOUT TAO SHELTER

TAO Shelter is a magazine that aims to promote the vision of sustainable human settlements that are inclusive, people-centered, environment-friendly and promotes equitable distribution of and access to resources. It is a venue to share technical knowledge, experiences, good practices and perspectives on issues confronting the planning and development of human settlements. It is published twice a year by TAO Pilipinas, Inc.

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2006



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