



TAO-PILIPINAS, INC.

# YP YOUNG PROFESSIONALS eNEWSLETTER

OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2020



Alternative building materials were used to construct Masagana facilities: ecobricks for the multi-purpose community facility (left structure), and earthbags & micro-concrete roof tiles for the community-based resource center (right structure).

## Ecobricks in Masagana small community infrastructures—exploring its viability as an alternative building material

by Angelus Sales

LAST JULY 2019, TAO-PILIPINAS posted on their Facebook page a [call for ecobricks donation](#) to be used for the construction of the community kitchen and toilet of Masagana in Angat, Bulacan. In just two weeks, the donation drive was able to gather 36 sacks of ecobricks of varying sizes. Donated ecobricks filled the driveway of the TAO office and the brief campaign successfully generated the 600 pieces of ecobricks needed for the project.

### Upcycling plastic into ecobricks

Plastic was first synthetically produced in 1907. Since then, there has been a rise in global production with half of all plastics ever made produced in the last fifteen years. The Philippines is among the biggest polluters; we generate 2.7 million metric tonnes of plastic waste each year, ranking third next to China and Indonesia. This statistic has pushed people to look for various means to lessen plastic waste and one method is turning them into ecobricks.

An ecobrick is made of PET (polyethylene terephthalate) bottles filled with clean and dry discarded plastics and then packed tightly. Ecobricks have been used as material for furniture, plant boxes, or even structures such as schools or houses. In the Philippines, various projects using them as a building material have been made as early as 2010 when Russel Maier and Irene Bakisan made a guide to integrate ecobrick-making in the local school curriculum of the Cordillera region. TAO-Pilipinas explored its use in 2019 for the construction of small infrastructures in Masagana community supported by the Direct Aid Program of the Australian Embassy.

### Ecobrick use in Masagana

From the 36 sacks of ecobrick donations, 1.5 liter-bottle size ecobricks weighing at least half a kilo were used to build the walls of the community kitchen and toilet. Smaller size ecobricks were used by Masagana for their community and backyard gardens.

Masagana began the construction of the community kitchen and toilet in 2020, experiencing delays brought on by the pandemic. The design required around 600 pieces of 1.5L ecobricks, replacing the conventional concrete hollow blocks as walls of the structure.

To build the walls of the community kitchen and toilet, the ecobricks were enclosed in a three millimeter (3mm) wire mesh with 10mm reinforcing bars. The ecobricks with wire mesh were then plastered with one inch (1in) cement covering both of its sides. As of writing, the structure is almost done and projected to be completed by the end of December 2020.

Masagana members have also used 1.5L ecobricks that did not meet the half-kilo weight requirement and smaller ecobricks for their home gardens. Plant boxes made of ecobricks were constructed by individual members, improving the overall aesthetics of their houses. Ecobricks were also embedded in the ground to serve as planters for edible and flowering plants.

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## Masagana HOA oriented on SHFC's Community Mortgage Program

AS MEMBER-FAMILIES OF MASAGANA of Angat Homeowners Association incrementally develop their community in Angat, Bulacan, they continue to explore financing assistance for site development and housing construction. An option they requested to learn more about is the Community Mortgage Program (CMP) of the Social Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC). The CMP assists legally organized low-income communities in developing a portion of land through people-led housing finance and community development program.

With the assistance of TAO together with CMP mobilizer Foundation for the Development of the Urban Poor (FDUP), a virtual online meeting was held on September 29 between Masagana HOA members and representatives of SHFC to orient the community about CMP. Mr. Cesar Macaspac, SHFC's OIC manager

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"As the world continues to strive for a 'better normal' amid the COVID-19 pandemic, we see the various ways that cities across the globe are adapting to the situation. If and when we do arrive at a post-pandemic world, what do you think would Philippine cities look like?"



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## Ecobricks in Masagana... *(continued from page 1)*

### Building structures using ecobricks

Across the country, various organizations have also built structures using ecobricks. The hostel chain of Circle Hostel in Zambales, La Union and Baler has used ecobricks in the construction of bathroom walls and shower stalls of their hostels.

Play areas constructed by Mondelez Philippines with First Balfour have used ecobricks for their children's playground in a program they dubbed as Joy Schools. The first play area was installed in Camp Claudio Elementary School in Parañaque City on August 2019.

### A growing movement and critics

Creating ecobricks have jumpstarted a global environmental movement. But even with widespread influence, there are still detractors who claim that this is just a fad and does not really solve the plastic waste problem.

Ecobricks began as a low-grade recycling method to show people the extent of single-use plastic consumption. The intention is to gradually reduce their consumption until they are no longer able to make ecobricks. Detractors however, are saying that the ecobrick movement is being used as an excuse, especially by large corporations, for continued

plastic production and use. Since there is a simple way to recycle plastic now, these corporations might not pursue alternative means to replace single-use plastic.

### Pros and cons as a building material

With regards to its viability as a building material, there are both advantages and disadvantages in using ecobricks in the construction industry. It is inexpensive, easy to work with, lightweight, and it can be reused depending on how you installed the ecobricks. On the downside, it is highly flammable and will melt when exposed to high temperatures, may release harmful fumes when burned, and may eventually become brittle when exposed regularly to sunlight. Ecobrick advocates recommend using it with natural materials such as mud as binders, especially if the construction is only temporary so they can be easily dismantled and reused for other structures.

In spite of these disadvantages, the use of ecobricks lessens plastic wastes turning up in our oceans and other coastal areas. It is a much greater reason to continue with this alternative until we can find another inexpensive method to recycle plastic wastes. Low-grade recycling is still better than no recycling at all. (AMPS)



Ecobricks that did not meet the standard weight were used by the community as plant boxes for their gardens.



Community members of Masagana work together to build the wall of their multi-purpose community facility which is made of ecobricks.

## Some references to read about Plastic Pollution and Ecobricks

[Beat plastic pollution](#) by UN Environment

[The World's Plastic Pollution Crisis Explained](#) by Laura Parker

[Plastic Pollution](#) by Hannah Ritchie and Max Roser

[Stemming the Tide: land-based strategies for a plastic-free ocean](#) by McKinsey Center for Business and Environment

[Global Ecobrick Alliance](#)

[Ecobricks transforms plastic waste to building blocks](#)

[Joy Schools play areas: from plastic waste to delightful ecobricks slide](#) in Business Mirror

[Are ecobricks the answer to plastic pollution](#) by Schalk Mouton

## ...SHFC's CMP *(continued from page 1)*

for Insurance and Community Enhancement Division, presided over the meeting and discussed the different programs of the agency.

Mr. Macaspac presented the different CMP modalities offered. These are on-site and site upgrading/development CMP, special projects CMP, LGU CMP, farm lot CMP, vertical CMP, sectoral CMP, mixed-used CMP, culturally sensitive CMP, housing for peace process and nation building CMP, post-disaster rehabilitation and reconstruction CMP, industrial workers CMP, and turn-key CMP.

The discussion covered an overview of the eligibility and loan system for the different modalities. The community was informed on the details of the on-site CMP wherein a loanable amount of Php 400,000 per family is offered. It has an interest rate of 6% per annum payable for 25 years but only for applicants aged 18 to 59 years old. Applicants over 59 require an underwriting for the same

loan amount payable for only ten years. SHFC may also extend financial literacy training for the community association.

Participants in the virtual meeting were required by SHFC to answer pre- and post-orientation tests. They must score an average of ten points in the evaluation test to receive their orientation certificates. The certificate serves as proof of attendance, understanding of the topics discussed, and is one of the requirements needed to avail of SHFC programs. Community members with further questions about CMP can send their queries online to SHFC.

Mr. Macaspac also shared the agency will open a branch in Bulacan, giving Masagana HOA more access to SHFC services. Members have expressed their interest in getting a CMP loan for site development. Currently, the community is in the process of completing the requirements for on-site CMP loan application. (DMPS)





## DAP project nearing completion

THE CONSTRUCTION OF MASAGANA'S multi-purpose community facility (MCF) and greenhouse continues despite ongoing implementation of a General Community Quarantine (GCQ) in Bulacan and the rainy season. The two small infrastructures are part of the deliverables for the "Sustainable Community Development of the Masagana of Angat Homeowners Association, Inc." project funded by the 2019 Direct Aid Program (DAP) of the Australian Embassy in the Philippines.

The four-storey MCF, with a footprint of 12.5 square meters, was designed for optimal utilization. It has a community kitchen and toilet, an office for the community organization, and an elevated water tank.

Last year, the community members agreed to each contribute 10 pieces of ecobricks in 1.5-liter bottles to lessen the cost of construction while TAO-Pilipinas started an ecobrick donation drive which gained attention on Facebook. During their bayanihan activities, the ecobricks were installed by the community members as exterior and partition walls on the ground floor. Sanitary lines were installed prior to the concreting of the slab-on-grade. Presently, all the structural components of the MCF have been completed, along with the cistern and septic tanks.

### Construction work during quarantine

The varying levels of community quarantine hindered the mobility of the members living outside the Angat site to contribute to construction bayanihan. It also lessened the ability of suppliers to deliver construction materials on time. The project team made some changes in the structure's design due to difficulties in finding suppliers. These included changes in the ladder and staircase designs of the MCF.

The project at first depended solely on community bayanihan for construction labor, but this became untenable with the pandemic restrictions. Budget realignment was done to hire a few workers to augment community members already working on the project. Even with these adjustments, there was shortage of available workers. Hence, the laborious construction method of installing a wall made of glass bottles was replaced with conventional concrete hollow blocks which are easier to lay.

As the MCF was four-storey high, apprehension by some workers on working in the higher floors was also reported. Budget limits also compelled workers to improvise and reuse materials. Formworks were used at least twice. Galvanized iron pipes



The workers secure the formworks for the cistern prior to concrete pouring. (Photo credit: Masagana)

which were bought for the greenhouse, were initially used as scaffolds.

The source of electricity required to weld galvanized iron pipes was secured when one community member offered to use her electrical line for welding. This helped construction work since the line from the community-based resource center (CBRC) was farther and less stable.

On the other hand, the layout, staking, and excavation for the pedestals of the greenhouse were already completed before the implementation of the community quarantine. Unfortunately, inactivity in the site and rains caused the excessive growth of grass and weeds



The ecobricks have been used in the ground floor of multi-purpose community facility.

while the excavated areas became filled with soil and water. So, the community had to redo the layout, staking, and excavation.

### Work remaining

The workload ahead for the MCF includes construction of the kitchen counter using leftover ecobricks; installation of fiber-cement boards on the second floor; setting the railing and concrete topping for the decks on the third and fourth floors; and fitting in fixtures.

The target date of project turn-over is on the third week of December 2020. (MLPH)

## Masagana Community Post-Ulysses Update

The community experienced heavy rainfall and strong winds when typhoon Ulysses (Vamco) battered Luzon last November 11. During the height of the typhoon, some roofs were blown off by the strong winds. Affected households were able to repair them.

The electricity in the community was cut off for a week, so the community members had to rely on their solar powered radio and power banks. Some visited their neighbors on the side of Sta. Maria, Bulacan to charge their gadgets. Solar street lights from [Project Recharge](#) also provided illumination for the community during the week without power in Masagana Area.

Branches of trees littered the whole community while the trees and bamboos planted in the steep slopes on the northern part of the site slanted while some fell with the soil. The threat of erosion in this area had been worrying the community because the slope has started to get closer to the houses. In 2017, slope stabilization measures were implemented through planting of vetiver and bamboo. However, the plants did not flourish mostly because the area was shaded by older trees.

The concrete pipes that the community installed along the creek that bounds Sta. Maria and Angat, Bulacan also became misaligned. It was suspected to have been moved by the flow of water during the typhoon. (MLPH)



The trees in the area were greatly affected by the strong winds. (Photo credit: Masagana)



The concrete pipes along with some of the soil were moved by the flow of water. (Photo credit: Masagana)

**Title: A Higher Loyalty: Truth, Lies, and Leadership**

**Author: James Comey**

**Publisher: Flatiron Books (2018)**

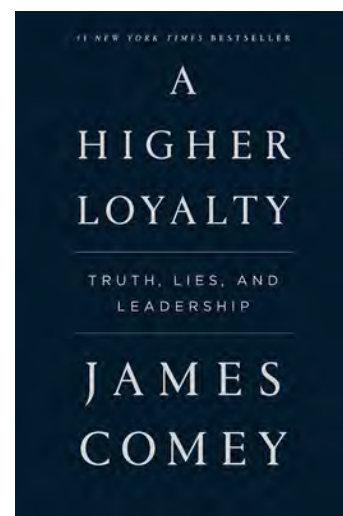
Three years into Donald Trump's presidency, the world has seen that the current US president is a habitual liar and an unethical leader. A Higher Loyalty is an engaging commentary on ethical leadership and the institutional values that must be upheld by public officials. The book is written by James Comey, the controversial former Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) director, whose dismissal by Trump in 2017 was due to his alleged refusal to give a "pledge of loyalty" to the president (hence, the book's title). The book is not entirely about the Trump presidency but it does serve as the backdrop to illustrate how a leader with

a tenuous relationship with the truth can inflict damage to a country.

The book is actually autobiographical; Comey narrates personal events from his early years that helped shape his convictions about personal integrity, justice, and leadership. The author also fleshes out encounters in his tenure as a public official, from criminal cases he has prosecuted as deputy attorney general, FBI investigations he has handled, to his meetings with Trump. The stories are well-written and absorbing, with some scenes that are almost cinematic. Readers also get snapshots of the varying

leadership styles of Bush, Obama, and Trump. A relative level of familiarity with American politics, institutions, and recent history is helpful for the reader to fully appreciate the context of experiences narrated here.

The author's insights on what makes great leaders and the principles of effective leadership that he lays out in the book, including the adherence to truth, come across as sincere and inspiring. A very worthwhile read and something I think I'd flick through again especially in times when great leaders are wanting. (GRM)



\*Books and other materials featured in this section are available at the TAO Resource Center & Library. Library use is by appointment only. You may call Therese Julia at 8287-6446 to schedule your visit.

## WEBINAR TAKEAWAYS

### How to #BuildABetterNormal in Housing and Education

MakeSense Webinar | September 10, 2020 | 5:00 p.m.

The COVID-19 pandemic as a humanitarian crisis highlighted the pressing issue of social inequality plaguing the marginalized in our society. During this crisis, mobilization from different sectors are vital to help at risk communities.

MakeSense Organization featuring other NGOs (Project Smile, Laraw sa Isla, and CitiHub Dormitory Housing) described their efforts to better communities during the pandemic by making education accessible to the poor and providing affordable

housing for the working class. While making impact as an organization, they recognize volunteers as the most important aspect of their programs.

The webinar emphasizes how collective small efforts bring upon big results that are making direct impact to the communities. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to threaten the already fragile conditions of the marginalized, there is always something we can do to contribute along with other people with the same advocacy as we have. (Marianne Turiano)



### Sandblast: An Online Discussion on the Environmental and Human Effects of Using Dolomite as Beach Nourishment Strategy for the Rehabilitation of Manila Bay

UP College of Architecture Webinar | October 5, 2020 | 6:00 p.m.

This webinar is a timely and science-based discussion tackling the controversy generated by the multi-million government project dumping dolomite sand on Manila Bay in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. Marine and coastal geology expert Dr. Fernando Siringan provided basic understanding of Manila Bay beach sediment properties and movement, and how dolomite mud particles are of heavier density and prone to dissolution, breakage, and abrasion. Landscape architect Paulo Alcazaren presented a historical context of Manila Bay's development from the 19th century to future planned reclamations, while biogeographer Dr. Benjamin Vallejo explained the current Manila Bay coastal development strategy. These are valuable inputs that should guide decision makers regarding the impact of further interventions. Physician Dr. Mithi Zamora discussed the health effects of dolomite and clarified harmful exposure, potential chronic effects, and which populations are at risk.



The webinar underscored the need for government to rethink its Manila Bay rehabilitation strategy and to consult scientists to make informed decisions. High-maintenance beach nourishment was an ill-considered project and overall, it calls attention to reclamation as a problematic engineering and economic intervention. (GRM)



## Local struggles for housing rights in the context of climate change, urbanization and environmental degradation: How do we create “resilient” communities in the face of multiple crises, including COVID-19?

Misereor Webinar | October 5, 2020 | 9:00 p.m.

This webinar presents the climate crisis as also a crisis of social justice and emphasizes climate policies and actions have to be rights-respecting. Through two presentations about community-led housing in the Philippines and in Peru, the importance of community involvement and people's participation in planning was highlighted. They also show that solutions to housing potentially lie with the communities themselves, hence they should be enabled to co-own the planning process.

Speakers from UNRISD and UN-Habitat also offered reflections on the webinar theme, doubling down on the call for development interventions to be shaped in human rights. They assailed the eviction and forced resettlement of poor communities in the name of climate change. Meaningfully addressing the climate and housing



crises necessitate understanding of community capacities and participation and government accountability. (GRM)

## Alternative Development or Alternatives to Development?

Ateneo Department of Sociology and Anthropology Webinar  
October 13, 2020 | 2:00 p.m.

Ateneo DSA's webinar is rich with insights that expand the discourse on alternative development (ie housing by the urban poor) and offer alternative perspectives on people-led development.

While profoundly acknowledging the significance of alternative development, Dr. Anna Karaos posits that participatory modes disproportionately place the burden of development on the poor. Concepts like “participation” and “resilience” provide opportunities for the poor to access formal housing, but they also tend to reinforce privatizing a social problem. Dr. Karaos reminds us not to lose sight of society's implicit injustices and the structural conditions that facilitate exclusion of the poor from development.

On the other hand, Dr. Melissa Navarra discusses case studies of disadvantageously resettled families finding alternative solutions to their



housing issues. Common denominators include engagement through community organizing, community-led counter-proposals, and access to social networks. She notes that ultimately, the paradigm for socialized housing must be adaptive to context and predicated on people's knowledge and examination of their situation. (TRJ)

## Walk The Talk: Mobility and Access to Parks and Open Space in the New Normal

UP College of Architecture Webinar | October 20, 2020 | 9:30 a.m.

Landscape architect and urban planner Paulo Alcazaren leads an enlightening discussion on why green infrastructure is an overall good investment and how the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for more parks and open spaces. He talks

us through successfully implemented local pedestrianization and greenway projects (many his own) that show we can recover open space and create infrastructure for non-motorized transport systems (eg bikeways).

The highly focused presentation offered many takeaways. Along with the physical measures like reconfiguring our streets, there's the need to take into account stakeholder engagement and citizen education on the use of public spaces—not just policing street vendors but also car owners and building owners. Solutions entail a comprehensive planning mindset and an urban design approach that ensures equitable access to open spaces. The ushering in of a post-Covid new normal also calls for a shift of government priorities from big transportation infrastructure projects to green infra that is less costly but deliver multiple benefits—health, economic, environmental. (GRM)



## Fratelli Tutti (Kapatid Lahat): Pakikipagkapatiran at Panlipunang Pagkakaibigan

JJCCSI Webinar | November 7, 2020 | 10:00 a.m.

Fratelli Tutti or Brothers All is the new papal encyclical (teaching document) of Pope Francis which essentially calls for greater fraternity and solidarity in a post-pandemic world. Fr. Albert Alejo of Ateneo introduces the themes and key

messages of Fratelli Tutti, while VP Leni Robredo and economist Dr. Cielito Habito give its socio-political and economic implications in the Philippine context. Fr. Alejo focused on just two chapters of the encyclical, giving new insights on the Good Samaritan catechism to emphasize the important role of institutions in societal care, and explaining Pope Francis' call for spirituality in politics. Dr. Habito espouses for more community-driven development and societal effort to address hunger and malnutrition, by far the biggest problem of the country.

This webinar is an introductory talk about Fratelli Tutti wherein Pope Francis wades into political issues and exposes the lack of concern for the poor and vulnerable in both populism and liberalism. It's a clarion call for a 'better kind of politics' and politicians should take heed. (GRM)





**As the world continues to strive for a 'better normal' amid the COVID-19 pandemic, we see the various ways that cities across the globe are adapting to the situation. If and when we do arrive at a post-pandemic world, what do you think would Philippine cities look like?**

Sustainability and eco-friendly options are few of the growing trends in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many people started to grow their food at home and some are coping during these difficult times by taking care of their plants indoors or in their yards. The pandemic also brought upon the rise of bicycle use, which even called for the share of bike lanes in our roads. With the unprecedented opportunity to restructure during the transition to the "new normal" and the growing consensus around the importance of sustainability, we may anchor our policies to promote and actually enjoy green cities.

**MARIANNE TURIANO, 25, PROJECT STAFF**

I think that in the Post Pandemic world, Philippines Cities would have learned that sustainability plays a huge part in cities. Homes are becoming self-sufficient right now with more people learning farming in their backyard due to scare from virus exposure. People are also interested in buying from local farms and having them delivered to their doors. We can see this trend even after the lockdowns. Additionally, people have turned their homes as workplaces and classrooms. There is more focus now on family well-being at home and because of that, families tend to create safe spaces by redecorating their houses to focus on comfort. The focus on homes being the primary activator of cities is a big factor on what Philippines cities would look like.

**GLORYROSE DY-METILLA, 34, ARCHITECT**

In a Post-Pandemic world, I could imagine Philippine Cities focusing more on Health and Sustainability above all else. Hopefully, this will translate to tangible changes in cities, better healthcare facilities, sanitation spaces to wash hands or disinfect, more public parks rather than enclosed malls. I do hope there will be better transportation planning considering bike lanes, pedestrians, and greenery in the cities. It would be also a perfect time to rethink how we build our buildings and homes, to value natural light and ventilation, introduce urban home gardening, prepare for natural disasters, and reduce waste.

**SAMANTHA KAY LISAY, 27, ARCHITECT**

A better normal in the context of the Philippines will have a strong spatial justice component. The COVID19 Pandemic puts into greater [focus] how inequality will doom us all given that health is a global common: how the health of one member of a society bodes well for everyone, and how the infirmity of one can affect us all. The need for healthy space was also seen in sharper focus. This signals the need to look at housing as a public good; that investing in well-designed communities is essential for the health and well-being of our nation. Space is not a luxury or an amenity, rather it is essential in maintaining public welfare. This means that our future cities will manage densities well. It is not the general lack of space on our urban centers that is the issue, rather it is how space is unequally or unjustly distributed that is the root of the ills we face as a society: with few members hogging all the biggest chunks while the rest are left to precarious shelter in unhealthy, cramped, dangerous, leftover spaces. This extends to how our roads will be redesigned from its current car-centric orientation that serves the car owner niche while leaving the rest of the nation with very few options constrained in tiny PUV strips and almost non-existent pedestrian sidewalks. The need for spatial justice, highlighted by this pandemic, will have to be decisively addressed in the Post-COVID19 era if we are to transition into a better, stronger nation.

**GEOMILIE TUMAMAO-GUITTAP, 40, ARCHITECT AND ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNER**

The post pandemic Philippines should focus more on the importance of green and open space. This pandemic highlights the importance of green and open space in terms of economy and public health. Green and open space gives the city to be flexible and be more resilient in time of calamity. This should not just be a trend but also a standard in designing built environment.

**RAMSES PAUL PERALTA, 29, FREELANCE ARCHITECT**

This pandemic has brought out both the good and the bad side of humanity. Even though there are a lot of issues that came into light because of the pandemic, these are actually old uncured social ills systematised throughout generations and made worse during these desperate times. As we realize what should be from our struggles during this pandemic, we also realize that genuine change comes not as easily as we think of it. It is a balance of being hopeful and idealistic for a better post-pandemic future and being grounded on our challenging present realities.

During this pandemic, the concept of "city" evolved more in our consciousness. It is no longer just a physical built-environment where our houses are located or landmarks can be found. It is now where we associate ourselves on our day to day activities. It is where we seek social services from our local governments. Individual cities have their own policies relative to the needs of their local citizens. The fact that cities are where people LIVE, where needs and wants are provided, where people interact with each other and the society are being highlighted now more than ever.

This pandemic has paved the way for us to have a deeper understanding of human needs. As we were forced to go back to our basic needs which made us appreciate the small things we have been taking for granted, we also realize that having physical needs met is not enough for a fulfilling life. Our mental, social and other aspects of our well-being is also important. We can only last so much without fulfilling our needs in those aspects. With that said, I imagine post-pandemic cities in the Philippine look like a canvas showing the lessons from the past and present realities, and the beginning of our collective stride to a sustainable future responsive to human needs: with more open (green) public spaces that can serve both as social and physical break amidst the fast-paced, congested concrete jungle of cities, pedestrian-oriented public roads with proper structures to implement a good system of public transportation (bus stops, bike lane etc.), barangay open areas for community-led activities (farming, local business etc.), more support (infrastructures among others) to local industries of other areas in the country which will boost its development.

**MIN MALUNHAO, 25, ARCHITECTURAL DESIGNER**

In a post pandemic world, our homes will be a crucial component in our life as we learned to work remotely. We have learned to cope being stuck in our own spaces by mostly relying on courier services, decorating and reorganizing our areas to meet our needs, and moving to the digital space as a new platform to interact with people. This new concept has shown us how important it is to have a safe place to live in this pandemic. Apart from the health and environmental concerns, shelter is also a big issue here in the Philippines especially for the informal settlers. I hope to see a growing Philippine city not only focused on improving to be sustainable, green, and healthy but also trying to be a safe and habitable city for everyone to coexist and live in.

**DIANE KATE GO, 22, ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN ASSOCIATE AND FREELANCE GRAPHIC DESIGNER**

In one way or another, the pandemic made many realize how important it is to have accessible public parks and open spaces. Green spaces will not only provide opportunity for better physical distancing but also a good way to help us improve our mental and physical health. If there is no available space to accommodate parks at least the buildings and infrastructures can provide and incorporate landscape greenery to their developments. There are a lot of scientific studies that prove that interacting, experiencing, and appreciating time with nature can help us become a healthier and happier person. With this, I'm looking forward to developments who's one of their priorities is to provide enough green spaces for people.

**PAMELA PAGANA, 30, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT**

*Disclaimer: The views and opinions presented do not necessarily reflect the views of TAO-Pilipinas, Inc.*



## Challenges of conducting technical assistance to communities during the pandemic (Masagana Experience)

by Dessica Salvador



Dessica Salvador measures the depth of a footing excavation during a site visit in Masagana just before the enhanced community quarantine.



Juana Cavallida (center) gives an update on materials delivery during an online meeting with the project team and Masagana HOA officers.



Juana Cavallida (left), Masagana HOA president, helps monitor the laying of sewer pipes on site.



A worker asks about the ties to be used for the column of the multipurpose community facility (MCF).



Maricel Alejandro, a Masagana HOA officer, documents the construction works.

Being on-site to monitor construction is a demanding job that requires a lot of patience, effort, and most of all, a sense of responsibility. It has not been a year since I graduated from college when a task to help monitor projects in Bulacan, specifically in Angat, was assigned to me. At first, I am thrilled, well, excited was the right word to describe how I felt during that time. But somehow, I was also nervous and afraid to make a mistake as I do not have any experience in monitoring construction.

On my first month of monitoring projects in our partner community, I was able to talk to the workers and the community, guide and give instruction based on the engineering plans, monitor delivered and used materials, and document details of every construction activity on-site. I was slowly grasping my role in construction monitoring when the pandemic happened. The government had imposed an enhanced community quarantine halting all movements to combat the growing cases of Covid-19 in the country. Several months have passed as the month-long lockdown turned into a series of lockdowns. These have greatly affected the construction works. We were beyond our schedule. Thankfully, the funder understood the situation and had given us an extension. But the real question was, how could we provide technical assistance and properly monitor construction on-site in this new normal?

It was a big challenge to develop a system that works with the current situation. Add to that problem was the lack of technology that is easily accessible to the community. Keep in mind that we were working with a community and not professionals or skilled workers that could read and understand engineering plans, give minimal supervision, and could easily follow instructions. Moreover, we are running out of time to finish the projects on time. Because of that, our project team decided to monitor the construction remotely in the community. But the problem with remote monitoring was the dissemination of data with the never-ending difficulty in getting a good signal reception and internet connection. These factors are all communication risks that can threaten the trust and would cause misunderstanding with each other.

With all problems surrounding remote monitoring, we have asked for the cooperation and help of Masagana HOA officers, our partner community, to help us monitor the on-going projects. We made use of the available technology in providing technical assistance and to document the current situation on-site. We set up online meetings with the members beforehand to discuss their part in overseeing the project. We gave each of them their roles so that they could focus and better fulfill their role assigned to them. We gave out instructions and reminders through messages, calls, and sometimes video calls. But all of this was not enough to address complaints from workers over their repeated mistakes.

It was hard to give out directions through calls and messages, especially when dealing with complicated instructions, more so if you are not directly facing each other. Frustrations lead to stress that causes some of the workers to withdraw or lose interest in the project. I guess it was also our fault for assuming that they clearly understood the directions given to them. We also forgot the fact that only a few of the workers know how to read two-dimensional plans. And because of this, we have decided to generate three-dimensional drawings to aid them in visualizing the engineering plans. We send it online a week before the construction, giving them more time to study and understand the illustrations. We saw this set-up working for months, though we still experience problems and complaints but manageable.

What I learned during the process was to become a flexible thinker in addressing problems, the importance of communicating, and most of all, the significance of each other's roles. It is also a good thing to get advice from the community since they are the ones who understand the stance of the workers, and appreciate their points and suggestions, for they were also part of the building process. The new normal had taken us to realize new possibilities in improving our way of living. We could say that the pandemic had given us time to reflect and expand the way we think and overcome challenges ahead. I hope that the ideas we gather during our reflection time may develop into something more useful and beneficial for everyone. (DMPS)



## UNITED ARCHITECTS OF THE PHILIPPINES STUDENT AUXILIARY

THE DULY RECOGNIZED STUDENT ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED  
ARCHITECTS OF THE PHILIPPINES

# OUTREACH PROGRAM

**KALINGA:** Transcending Challenges as One

### IN PARTNERSHIP WITH: TAO-Pilipinas

For this year's National Architecture Week, UAPSA partnered with TAO-Pilipinas, a women-led, non-stock, non-profit, non-government organization of technical design professionals. TAO-Pilipinas assists urban and rural poor communities in the physical planning, development, and management of their communities. TAO also develops publications and knowledge products to build awareness, guide community action, and share learning on sustainable human settlements development. In this year's donation drive, UAPSA aims to help TAO-Pilipinas and its partner communities around the country.



Attendees who wish to donate in cash may transfer through these accounts:



**GCash Account**  
Fernando Escover  
09174826929



**Banco De Oro (BDO Unibank)**  
Hannah Lynn G. Enano  
005990169168  
Branch: Sorsogon City

For tracking purposes, please send your proof of donation to  
[uapsa.nt.escover@gmail.com](mailto:uapsa.nt.escover@gmail.com), cc: [uapsa.outreach.trovela@gmail.com](mailto:uapsa.outreach.trovela@gmail.com)

Donation tracker can be viewed through this link: <https://tinyurl.com/KALINGAtracker>

**UAPSA members** can also avail book bundles from 6 selections of TAO-Pilipinas or order separately. Please fill out the order form through this qr code:



#NAW2020  
#NawNormal  
#TranscendUAPSA

All proceeds will be for the benefit of TAO-Pilipinas, in hopes that it will help them and their partner communities around the country.





# CALL FOR DONATIONS

## TAO's Annual Christmas Gift Giving

Each year, we organize a Christmas gift-giving activity for the kids of our partner communities. 2020 has been a rough year for everyone so we hope to spread the Christmas cheer to MASAGANA in Angat, Bulacan; APOLA in Taytay, Rizal; and PPVHOA in Binondo, Manila. We aim to distribute at least 140 gift packs containing clothes and school supplies with your support.

### FOR IN-KIND DONATIONS, we accept:

School bag; notebook; pencil, eraser, & sharpener; ballpen; black/white writing board; chalk; whiteboard marker & eraser; drawing/sketch book; colored pencils; crayons; watercolor paint set; coloring books; activity books for kids

You may drop off your donations at 27A Matiyaga St., Brgy. Central, Diliman, Quezon City. Our office is open at 9am–6pm from Tuesday to Friday.

### FOR CASH DONATIONS, you may deposit the amount to the following account:

BPI Current Account  
Account name: TAO-Pilipinas, Inc.  
Account number: 4431-0074-31

Upon deposit of your donation, kindly e-mail a photo of your deposit slip along with your name to [yp@tao-pilipinas.org](mailto:yp@tao-pilipinas.org) for accounting purposes.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION, e-mail [yp@tao-pilipinas.org](mailto:yp@tao-pilipinas.org) or call us at 8287-6446.



# TAO e-books

available on Amazon Kindle Store

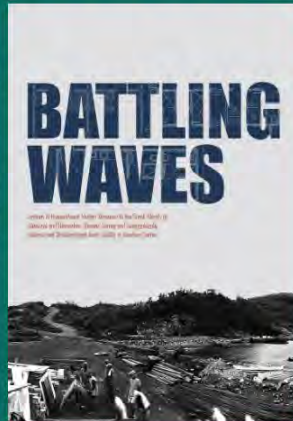


US\$ 9.99

**TAO-Pilipinas: architects in the margins** highlights TAO's unique participatory approach in taking on various projects that require the skills of technical planning and design professionals. From resettlement, to rehabilitation, to education – this book captures the triumphs, failures, and the lessons that came with them; sharing a rich body of knowledge that hopes to inspire others to take the path less travelled.

This coffee table book marks TAO's 16th year, and documents the organization's journey towards sustainable human settlements development.

*Also available in hardcover print for PHP 1500. DM on Instagram @architectsinthemargins*

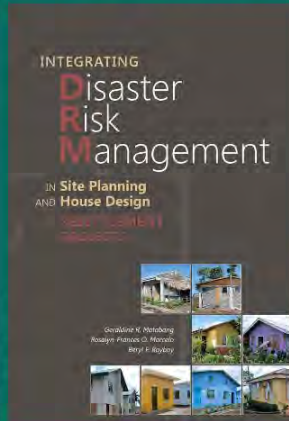


US\$ 4.99

**Battling Waves: Lessons in Humanitarian Shelter Response** chronicles TAO's four-year journey with Northern and Eastern Samar communities, as they transition from mere survival to recovery, and eventually to resilience – in the aftermath of the most devastating natural disasters to hit the Philippines and the world.

Traversing the tricky path between humanitarian and developmental actions and approaches, and between social and technical concerns and methods – this book is a raw and gritty account of the real struggle for safe, comfortable shelter in the midst of mounting environmental, economic, and socio-political pressures.

*Also available in paperback for PHP 1500. DM on Instagram @architectsinthemargins*



US\$ 2.99

**Integrating DRM in Site Planning and House Design in Resettlement Projects** brings together the outputs of the TAO-Pilipinas research team that looked into the post-disaster rehabilitation efforts that took place in Albay a year after Typhoon Reming (Durian) struck the province in November 2006 and buried villages in mud and lahar that flowed from Mayon Volcano. The team studied two resettlement sites for the displaced communities, documented eight types of shelter units constructed in Taysan and Anislag by different aid groups, and examined how the resettled families coped with the conditions in the resettlement sites. It also covers a set of recommendations for disaster-resilient shelter design and construction in the context of Albay's vulnerability to typhoon and volcanic hazards.



US\$ 14.99

**TAO Shelter** is a magazine that aims to promote the vision of sustainable human settlements development. It was launched in 2006 and was published (on print) twice a year by TAO-Pilipinas, Inc. until 2012. The magazine featured technical knowledge, experiences, good practices and perspectives on issues related to the planning and design of sustainable communities, particularly those of the urban and rural poor and other marginalized communities.

The **TAO Shelter Magazine Collection** includes: Water Issue | Disaster Risk Management | Solid Waste Management | Preparing for Extreme Hazards | Climate Change | Water and Sanitation | Managing Flood Risks | Living with Earthquakes | Special Tenth Anniversary Issue | Resettlement and Housing



# WE WANT YOU.

# AND YOU.

## TAO-Pilipinas has 2 open positions.

1. Project Team Leader for Young Professionals Formation (PTL-YPF)

[See Terms of Reference for the above position here.](#)

2. YP Formation Assistant and Social Media Officer (PS-YPF)

[See Terms of Reference for the above position here.](#)

To apply, e-mail us at:

[hr@tao-pilipinas.org](mailto:hr@tao-pilipinas.org)

### Not ready to commit? No pressure.

If you would like to be contacted for job (full/part-time\*) or volunteer opportunities, you may sign up to our Young Professionals Volunteers and Consultants Pool.

\*For part-time services, we usually require the ff:

CAD drafting and rendering, model-making, graphic design, documentation

## URGENT APPEAL Typhoon Ulysses

Community Organizers Multiversity (COM) Areas



### CASH DONATIONS

Please inform the contact person for documentation  
Contact Person: Bryan Teodosio (+63917-278-0942)

Account Name: Community Organizers Multiversity, Inc.  
Bank: BPI, Kalayaan Q.C.  
Account Number: 1991-0111-68

### IMMEDIATE NEEDS

*Basic Food items, Drinking Water, and Milk for infant/babies*

*Thermal kit (Sleeping Mats, Blankets, Trapal, Mosquito nets)*

*Medicine kit (Anti-Flu and Anti-Leptospirosis)*

*Hygiene kit*

*Clothes*

*Kitchen utensils*

*Rechargeable Flashlight and Radio*

*Rain Boots (Bota)*

*Face-shield, Face masks, and Rubbing Alcohol*

*Construction materials*



Source:

COM | November 12, 2020



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Urgent appeal of partner organizations for  
**TYPHOON ULYSSES-AFFECTED AREAS**



## URGENT APPEAL Typhoon Ulysses

Community Organizers Multiversity (COM) Areas

### Drop-off points for assistance

#135 Pulong Kendi 2, Brgy. Sta. Ana, Taguig City

#155 San Nicolas St. Valderama, Binondo, Manila

#42 Kapiligan St. Brgy. Doña Imelda, Quezon City

3182 Westbank Road Floodway,  
Brgy. Rosario, Pasig City

Kasiglahan Village, 1 Block 10 Lot 18, Phase 1B,  
Brgy San Jose,  
Montalban, Rizal

Block 11 Brgy Purok EastbankRoad,  
Riverside Exodus,  
Taytay, Rizal

Brgy. Sta. Ana, Taytay Rizal

### Contact Persons

Malou Rivera | 09292054559

Jonjon Elago | 09218202998

Ricky Calinaya | 09215907047

Liezel Junio | 09194410288

Evangeline Serrtano | 09073419838

Merlyn Molas | 09463914487

Marlon Quirante | 09182875350

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Urgent appeal of partner organizations for  
**TYPHOON ULYSSES-AFFECTED AREAS**

## URGENT APPEAL Typhoon Ulysses

Community Organizers Multiversity (COM) Areas

### Drop-off points for assistance

Pag asa HOA Office, Egypt St.Bgy. Sta. Ana  
Taytay, Rizal

SILAY Office, Blk 17 Purok2 (aC6 Road), Lupang  
Arenda, Brgy. Sta. Ana, Taytay, Rizal

Block 13, Sitio Lumang IlogManggahan  
Floodway,Taytay Rizal (Damayan HOA Office)

Block 57 Maharlika Homeowners Association  
Office, Taytay, Rizal

Plaza Aldea/ Sitio Waray, Tanay, Rizal

Brgy. Malaban Hall, Biñan, Laguna

Brgy. Sampiruhan Hall, Calamba City, Laguna

Purok 6, Brgy. Caingin, Santa Rosa, Laguna

### Contact Persons

Libora Gomez | 09204185980

Vicente Enteng Barlos | 09437091266

Adelqueen Constillas | 09564193150

Rowena Nevado | 09087686418

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Annaliza Sante | 09388056398

Larry Dumalaon | 09227327434

Jacinto Almodovar | 09095970808

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Source:  
COM | November 12, 2020



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**TYPHOON ULYSSES-AFFECTED AREAS**



## URGENT APPEAL Typhoon Ulysses

NORTHVILLE 9 HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION | PMPI NCR-Urban Cluster



PayMaya

### CASH DONATIONS

Please inform the contact person when cash donations are made.

Account Name: JOSEPHOTOS C. NILO

Account Number: 0916 849 5194

Drop-off location: NORTHVILLE 9, Calumpit, Bulacan

### IMMEDIATE NEEDS

## RELIEF GOODS



Basic Food items, Drinking Water, and Milk for infant/babies  
Face-shield, Face masks, and Rubbing Alcohol  
Medicine kit (Anti-Flu and Anti-Leptospirosis)  
Hygiene kit, Clothes



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**TYPHOON ULYSSES-AFFECTED AREAS**



# URGENT APPEAL FOR AID

## TROPICAL STORM ULYSSES

RODRIGUEZ, RIZAL | BIÑAN, STA. ROSA LAGUNA | CALUMPIT, BULACAN



*"You have not lived today until you have done something for someone who can never repay you." - John Bunyan*

## IMMEDIATE NEEDS:

- BASIC FOOD ITEMS, DRINKING WATER, AND MILK FOR INFANT/BABIES
- FACE-SHIELD, FACE MASKS, AND RUBBING ALCOHOL
- MEDICINE KIT (ANTI-FLU AND ANTI-FUNGAL CREAM)
- HYGIENE KIT



ACCOUNT NAME: YOLANDA R. ESGUERRA  
ACCOUNT NUMBER: +63 917 632 8236



ACCOUNT NAME: PHILIPPINE MISEREOR  
PARTNERSHIP INC.  
ACCOUNT NUMBER: 4983 0543 02