

## UST CE students share initial results of low-carbon research to communities

by Angelus Maria P. Sales

LAST APRIL 30, THESIS students from the Department of Civil Engineering of the University of Santo Tomas (UST) presented to partner communities their initial research for TAO's Low Carbon Community Innovation Initiative (LCCII). The LCCII project, designed to be implemented in two phases, was launched last year during

a roundtable discussion with academe partners (See [YP Enewsletter May – June 2021 Issue](#)). Project implementation was subsequently delayed by another series of lockdowns and surge of Covid-19 cases. For now, Phase 1 of the project is still being completed by participating academe partners including UST Department of Civil Engineering.

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## TAO receives ACT grant for Co-Design project

by Arlene Christy D. Lusterio

TAO-PILIPINAS HAS recently been awarded a grant from the Asian Community Trust (ACT). ACT is a national public fundraising trust established in 1979 and financed by Japanese contributions to help people in need in developing Asian countries. ACT aims to build a "bridge of mutual help and resource sharing" in civil societies across Asia. It assists projects developed by local people,

NGOs and other civil society organizations with the purpose of improving people's quality of life in their own communities and sharing their successes with others.

TAO's ACT-assisted project is entitled *Co-Design: Empowering Community Women and Students on Participatory Mapping and Design for Site Upgrading*. The project aims to: (1) create

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## TAO among CHR gender ombud kakampi awardees

by Therese R. Julia

CULMINATING THE celebration of National Women's Month, the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) carried out "Gabi ng Parangal: Pagkilala ng mga Kakampi at Katuwang sa Gender Ombud Work" on March 31. The awards night sought to recognize and pay tribute to allies and partners of CHR's gender ombud work through advocating for the rights of women and the LGBTQI (lesbian, gay, transgender, queer, and intersex) sector. The event was concurrently held virtually via Zoom and physically at the CHR grounds in the UP Complex, Diliman, Quezon City from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. TAO-Pilipinas was among the non-government organizations (NGOs) at the national level recognized as a 'gender ombud kakampi.'

The gender ombud kakampi awardees comprised international organizations, NGOs, people's

organizations, academic institutions, government offices, individuals, and the private sector. They were selected for having at least two activities with CHR on advancing the rights of women and the LGBTQI sector from 2015 to 2022, the period of the 5th Commission under which CHR has served as gender ombud.

TAO-Pilipinas was recognized as a gender ombud kakampi for mainstreaming gender in housing. Marking the organization's 18th anniversary in 2019, TAO partnered with CHR Center for Gender Equality and Women's Human Rights to conduct two activities that aimed to integrate a more gender-responsive approach to TAO's technical assistance (See [YP Enewsletter July – September 2019 Issue](#)). The first activity was a focus group discussion on gender analysis with TAO's partner communities held on August 20. The second one was

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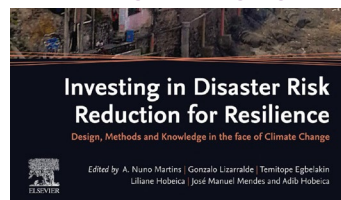
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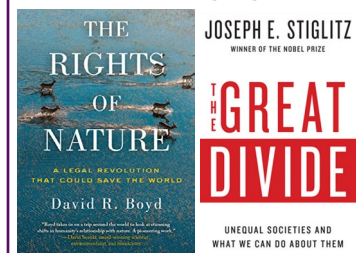
### WEBINAR TAKEAWAYS



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## DENR awards land titles to 41 SAMATHOA members in Lupang Arenda

by Marianne C. Turiano

TAO'S COMMUNITY PARTNER Alliance of People's Organizations in Lupang Arenda (APOLA) reached a key milestone in their struggle for security of tenure with the recent awarding of original certificates of titles (OCT) to one of their member-HOAs. Last March 4, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), applying the residential free patent law, awarded OCTs to 41 members of Samahang Masigasig of Tapayan Homeowners Association (SAMATHOA) in Lupang Arenda.

The ceremony was facilitated by Urban Poor Affairs Office (UPAO) Rizal and held beside the quarantine facilities along

C6 road in Purok 8, Lupang Arenda. It was attended by officers from APOLA, Taytay City councilors, provincial board members, and representatives from Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) Rizal, Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD), and DENR.

Among the speakers in the awarding ceremony were Taytay mayor George Gacula II, Rizal governor Rebecca Ynares, district representative Jack Duavit, chief of Registry of Deeds Anthony Andal, Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) general

manager Jaime C. Medina, DENR undersecretary Benny Antiporda, and Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor (PCUP) chairman Alvin Feliciano.

The awarding ceremony was conducted following DENR authorization of the disposition of a 2-hectare land above the 12.5-meter reglementary elevation of Laguna Lake to members of SAMATHOA. There are 300 lots within the 2-hectare portion occupied by SAMATHOA whose 67 members applied for the processing of land titles. With the assistance of APOLA, the first batch of 41 members had paid for the real estate tax as required

for OCT awarding. APOLA leaders believe that the awarding will encourage others to also pay their real estate tax which accounts for the hesitancy among members who have not applied for residential free patent. The land titling process for the remaining lots within the 2-hectare area is currently underway.

The disposition of another 3-hectare area will be authorized upon completion of updated mapping by the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA).

## Masagana of Angat HOA consider CMP application

by Dessica Marie P. Salvador

NEARLY TWO YEARS AGO TAO conducted an online orientation about the Community Mortgage Program (CMP) for Masagana of Angat HOA as part of the community's search for financing assistance for site development. The discussion covered an overview of various CMP modalities and its loan system. The community became interested in the site development loan of CMP and thus, looked to pursue the program. They asked the Foundation for the Development of the Urban Poor (FDUP) to be their CMP mobilizer, to which FDUP gladly accepted.

With the easing of restrictions on mass gatherings, TAO was able to organize a face-to-face CMP orientation for Masagana to raise their questions and decide whether or not to join the program. The meeting took place at a vacant lot in the Masagana Angat site on April 29, 2022. A total of 63 participants attended the program, including SHFC, FDUP, and TAO representatives. Mr. Cesar Macaspac, SHFC's OIC manager for the Insurance and Community Enhancement Division, presided over the meeting.

The SHFC presentation included the roles and differences of various government house financing agencies, which are the National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation (NHMFC), Home Development Mutual Fund (HDMF), National Housing Authority (NHA), and Social Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC). SHFC is the implementing agency of the CMP that assists legally organized low-income communities in developing a portion of land through the community ownership concept.

The discussion mainly focused on CMP modalities, loan systems, the application process, and requirements. Mr. Macaspac informed Masagana that CMP applicants must be a registered homeowners association (HOA) under the Department of Human Settlement and Urban Development (DSHUD) and should undergo training on Republic Act 9904 or the Magna Carta for Homeowners and Homeowners Association. The approval processing for a CMP application takes 90 days. SHFC will also provide financial management training for CMP beneficiaries.



Invited speakers during the recent CMP orientation for Masagana of Angat HOA. **Left:** Mr. Cesar Macaspac of SHFC. **Right:** Mr. Oscarito Pasahol of FDUP.

Mr. Macaspac also shared the new minimum interest rate of 2%, payable for 30-35 years for an off-site CMP loan, while the interest rate for an on-site CMP loan is 6% of the remaining balance and payable in 25 years. He also mentioned that the community could avail of the home improvement loan of CMP only if majority (at least 50% + 1) of their total members will apply. In addition, the state of their land acquisition and site development will also be reviewed before their application for home improvement is approved. He also understood that not all members of the community have fixed incomes. He suggested creating a board resolution that seeks to consider members in similar situations to pay beyond the prescribed period to avoid the member becoming a

delinquent. He also encouraged the members to create community savings to fund expenses in documents processing.

A short meeting in the afternoon was led by TAO executive director Ar. Arlene Lusterio and FDUP representative Mr. Oscarito Pasahol to address further questions from the members. The community came to an agreement that they would first focus on applying for CMP's on-site land acquisition and parcelize the mother title if they would continue with CMP. TAO set another meeting on June 5, 2022 for their final decision. For now, the community will attend to completing the CMP application requirements and household profile.



## TAO designs rice storage and seed bank for RWAN

by Arlene Christy D. Lusterio

TAO-PILIPINAS WAS ENGAGED by Rice Watch Action Network (RWAN) to design a rice storage and seed bank for local farmers in partnership with the municipal local government unit. RWAN is an organization that pursues policy changes particularly in the area of trade and the nature of rice farming systems in the Philippines. It aims to promote sustainable and equitable farming systems and arrangements. With funds from the Department of Agriculture, RWAN plans to build 3 rice storage and seed banks in two municipalities in Sorsogon and another in Ormoc.

As part of its climate-resilient response, the seed bank is intended to store rice seeds to ensure its availability to local farmers in case a typhoon hits and devastates rice farms in the region. The rice seeds will be stored inside the hermetically sealed GrainPro Cocoon unit, essentially a large plastic bag, durable against tears and damage from sunlight. The storage facility has a capacity of 10 metric tons. The typical design takes into consideration the frequent

typhoons crossing the locality, the quality of soil in the site, and protection from rodents and other crawling pests. The structure will be elevated from the ground through stilts provided with a ratguard, a derivative from the architecture of the Ifugao house which also serves as their rice granary. Fixed louvers line the walls of the rice storage to facilitate passive ventilation. Engineer Ramon Nolido prepared the structural plans and Engineer Cesar Tadeo prepared the electrical plans.

Land will be donated by the local farmers' organization. The current war in Ukraine, disruptions in global oil and energy supply and the pandemic affect material prices especially those coming from outside the country. Though the structure is designed to be permanent, some components may be adjusted to lower the cost and realize the project. RWAN is currently canvassing the prices of materials in Sorsogon.



**Top photo:** Site visit to Sta. Magdalena in Sorsogon where one of the rice storage structures will be built. **Bottom photo:** Representatives from Sta. Magdalena together with RWAN staff, Sonny (in grey polo shirt) during the project briefing.

## TAO receives ACT grant... [\(continued from page 1\)](#)

awareness among young technical professionals and community women on social and technical issues affecting informal settlements; and (2) explore opportunities towards responsive professional practice and meaningful women participation in community development.

In the short-term, the project aims to (1) train technical students in participatory research processes and apply the knowledge in site data gathering and assessment for upgrading; and (2) encourage community women to actively lead in site investigation and assessment of their community and participate in measures to improve their living condition. Aside from increasing capabilities of young professionals and women, it also aims to implement small site upgrading projects along with government-funded

projects sourced by the local homeowners' association.

The project will be implemented in one year, starting April 2022. It targets to directly engage 35 community women and 46 technical students from different universities. Community women

and student teams will work together to gather data, plan and design the site development, and implement small road or drainage improvement projects in their communities in Lupang Arenda.

TAO-Pilipinas will work in collaboration with the Alliance of People's Organization in Lupang Arenda (APOLA), Community

Organizer's Multiversity (COM), the local government of Taytay and other concerned government agencies, and academic partners. TAO is calling on interested civil and electrical engineering and landscape architecture students to join this project.



Photos showing the types of drainage found in Lupang Arenda which will be mapped in the project funded by Asian Community Trust. Photo source: Maria Kristiana Caras



## UST CE students share initial results...

(continued from page 1)

The presentation of the initial research by seven teams was done via Zoom platform. Thirty-six thesis students and two faculty representatives from the civil engineering department attended the presentation. They were joined by twenty-five community representatives from Masagana of Angat Homeowners Association, twelve from Alliance of People's Organization in Lupang Arenda (APOLA), and one community representative from People's Plan Ville Homeowners Association (PPVHOA). Six TAO staff and three representatives from Community Organizers Multiversity (COM) were also present for the online presentation.

### Masagana waste study

The first to present their research titled "A Feasibility Study on the Utilization of Biodegradable Waste through Waste to Energy Technology in Masagana" was Group 7 led by their team leader Mc Kenneth Manuel. The group presented their waste analysis and characterization study (WACS) of Masagana. They discussed how they were able to conduct a three-day WACS with Masagana leaders and the findings from the study. With the data they gathered, the student-researchers are hoping to come up with appropriate design for an anaerobic digester for the community.

### Lupang Arenda case studies

The succeeding groups featured Lupang Arenda in Taytay, Rizal as the case study area for their researches on low carbon development. Group 6 led by Reiven Izak Mariano presented their research on "Implementation of Bicycle Pedal Power Generation", a feasibility study on using bicycle pedal as

source of renewable energy. Their group explored using stationary bikes as energy source to power certain areas of the community.

The next group to present a research on "Utilization of Textile Waste as a Roofing Insulation Material in the Households of Lupang Arenda" was Group 5 with Joshua Luke Haquihaca as project team leader. Their group explored the possibility of using textile wastes as roof insulators. With the textile waste given to them by APOLA, they will be testing the viability of discarded cloth (retaso) as roof insulators by making a prototype model. Findings from this research can be beneficial for Taytay since they are considered as the garments capital of the country and generate significant amount of textile waste.

### Survey research for baseline data

Another group that had Lupang Arenda as site for their thesis is Group 2 with a research on "Development of Gender and Age-Specific Carbon Emissions Calculation Program for the Residents of APOLA Community". The group led by Jac Gerald Zarate conducted an in-depth survey of the daily activities of the residents of Lupang Arenda. The data gathered will help the group in determining the carbon emission of Lupang Arenda residents with a gender perspective.

The next group to present a "Study on The Awareness of GHG and Carbon Footprints Emissions" was Group 3 with Gerard Chua leading the presentation. The group focused on finding out the awareness level of Lupang Arenda residents with regards to greenhouse gas emissions and their carbon footprint. Findings from their study will be used

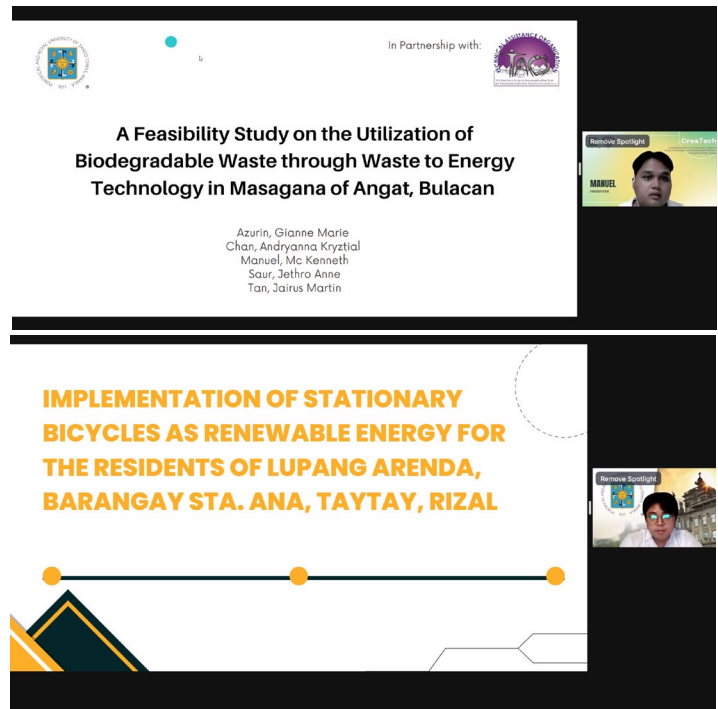
## TAO among CHR gender... (continued from page 1)

the CPD (continuing professional development) seminar-workshop "Gender Perspectives in Spatial Planning and Design" with built environment professionals held on September 14.

As the appointed Gender and Development Ombud under the Magna Carta of Women

(R.A. 9710), CHR hopes that the recognition of gender ombud allies and partners will inspire strengthened cooperation and continuation of the fight for the rights of the vulnerable sectors.

Screenshot of online attendees for the Gabi ng Parangal: Pagkilala ng mga Kakampi at Katuwang sa Gender Ombud Work.



Screenshots from the online presentation of UST CE students for LCCII project. Top: Presentation of Group 7. Bottom: Presentation of Group 6.

to draft programs that can help increase the awareness level of the residents.

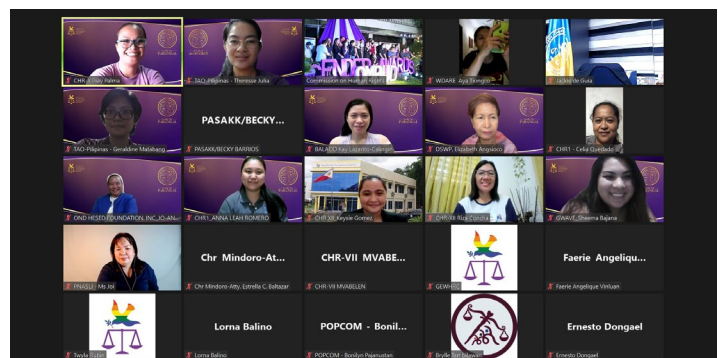
The last group to present their research for a "Proposal for Multicab Usage as an Alternative to Tricycle in Lupang Arenda" was Group 4 led by Denise Grace Vizconde. The group conducted a survey with tricycle drivers that were servicing the area to study multi-cab vehicles as alternative to tricycles. They focused on four TODA (tricycle operators and driver association) terminals. The results of the survey will help their group in determining not only the feasibility but acceptability as well of using multi-cab vehicles for public transport.

### Critiquing and recommendations

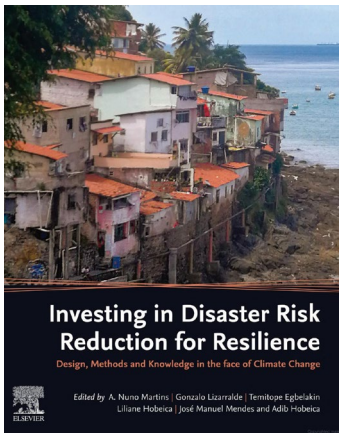
After each presentation, the audience was given a chance to ask questions for each group. Since the presentation focused

on initial results, most of the comments pertained to the possible directions that their researches may lead to. Innovative solutions like roof insulation made from textile waste and renewable energy from stationary bikes garnered several inquiries and feedback from the audience. Studies for gathering baseline data were also commended by TAO staff as beneficial to stakeholders implementing low carbon development projects in Lupang Arenda.

The online presentation concluded with a commitment from partner communities to help the thesis groups in finishing their survey activities. The faculty representatives also expressed gratitude to partner communities for sharing useful feedback that would help improve the studies done by each group. The next step for the students will be their thesis defense within the month of May.



# TAO contributes to Elsevier publication on disaster risk reduction and resilience



Book cover of the Elsevier publication

ELSEVIER, THE ACADEMIC publishing company specializing in scientific and technical journals, published a new book on disaster risk reduction and resilience. Freshly released on March 2022, *Investing in Disaster*

*Risk Reduction for Resilience: Design, Methods and Knowledge in the face of Climate Change* centers on the third principle of the 2014-2030 Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The book's international team of editors is led by A. Nuno Martins.

In 2020, Dr. Martins invited TAO-Pilipinas to contribute a chapter in the book's section named "Investing in design for disaster risk reduction". TAO's Arlene Lusterio and Geraldine Matabang, along with Amor Tan Singco of DRRNetPhils worked on a chapter titled "Investing in community participation for disaster recovery". They were guided by Liliane Hobeica and Adib Hobeica who were the editors in charge of reviewing the chapter.

TAO's contribution (chapter 1 in the book) focused on "how disaster recovery through participatory planning and design can support DRR decisions and investments". The chapter highlights localized solutions and the consortium approach in implementing the Sendai Framework's all-of-society engagement and partnership principle. The writers present the lessons from participatory disaster recovery efforts (after Tropical Storm Ketsana and Super Typhoon Haiyan) carried out with a consortium of local civil society organizations.

The Elsevier editors A. Nuno Martins, Liliane Hobeica and Adib Hobeica initially encountered the work of TAO-Pilipinas when they managed

the 2018 Marielle Franco Community-Design Award. TAO was one of the shortlisted nominees for the Lisbon-based international prize. They presented the experiences of the shortlisted nominees in a research paper titled "Women-led humanitarian architecture in disaster-prone environments: Learning from the Marielle Franco Community-Design Award". This was included as a journal article in the *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction* Volume 59 published by Science Direct.

The publication *Investing in Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience* has [paperback and Kindle versions](#). It is also available in the Elsevier website. (GRMatabang)

# TAO joins INAM-CCC health education series; INAM presents TAO health profile

A THREE-PART WEBINAR series on health education dubbed "Pagmalay" (consciousness) was hosted by Integrative Medicine for Alternative Healthcare Systems (INAM) Philippines from February to March. These online health education sessions form part of the services under INAM's Caring for the Community Carers (CCC) project, of with TAO-Pilipinas is one of the participating organizations.

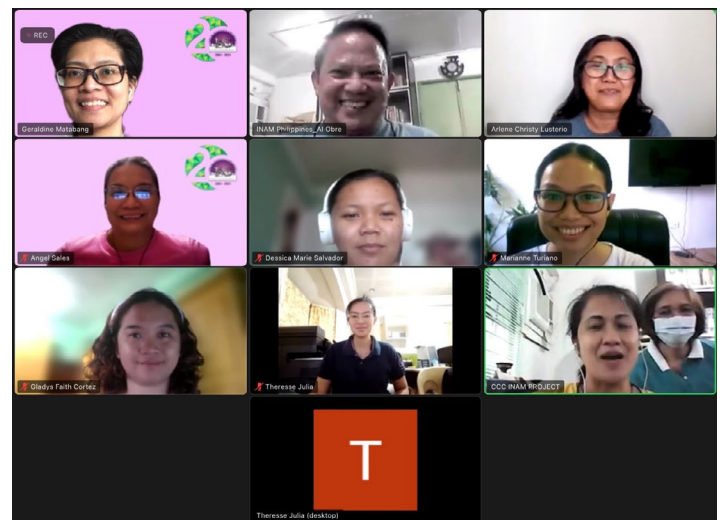
## Webinar series

The first session was held on February 17 and discussed the right to health and the determinants of health. (Due to conflicting schedules, the TAO staff watched the recording of the first session at a later time.) The resource person was Ms. Edeliza Hernandez of Medical Action Group who gave a presentation about "Kalusugan Bilang Karapatan at Pananagutan" (health as a right and responsibility).

TAO attended the second session on March 10 which tackled the different aspects of holistic health.

Dr. Isidro Sia of INAM Philippines gave the key lecture, "Holistikong Kalusugan at mga Salik ng Kalusugan". Dr. Sia explained what holistic health means and how the interconnectedness of one's body, mind and spirit, and relationship with others and the Creator contribute to a person's wellness. He emphasized that holistic treatments address these different aspects of health and must consider economy (affordable), science (safe and effective) and culture (acceptable).

The third session focused on understanding the laws governing the practice of traditional, complementary and integrative medicine in the Philippines. The webinar was held on March 17 with INAM's Ms. Anicia Sollestre discussing RA 8423 or the TAMA Law (Traditional and Alternative Medicine Act of 1997). She presented Filipino indigenous treatment (eg herbal, hilot) and traditional Chinese medicine (eg acupuncture) as recognized health systems. She also stressed that health promotion should not only



Screenshot of the online meeting for the health profile of TAO staff.

focus on individual healthy lifestyle but also include community-managed health programs.

## TAO health profile

The CCC project likewise includes the health profiling and development of a health program for TAO. Last March 9, CCC project coordinator Mr. Al Obre presented to TAO staff

the organization's health profile. He discussed the health data analysis and interpretation based from the results of the integrated profiling (physical check-ups and traditional Chinese medicine) which the staff underwent since October 2021. The health profile establishes the basis for case management and the ongoing health program development for TAO. (GRMatabang)



## People, Place, and Culture Shaping the Architecture: Cases of Nepal and the Philippines

International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) Philippines | April 18, 2022 | 5:00PM-7:00PM



This webinar on heritage and climate change was organized as part of the celebration for the International Day for Monuments and Sites and featured two ICOMOS chapters, Nepal and the Philippines. Both countries presented interesting case studies with Nepal featuring the long term effects of climate change to their heritage sites.

Representing Nepal was Anie Joshi, secretary of ICOMOS Nepal; conservation architect Shristina Shrestha; and architect Prakriti Bhandari. The speakers featured the regional vernacular architecture of Nepal—the mud huts of Materiaya in Kalaiya as well as Himalaya architecture of Western Nepal. They also focused on the localized impact of climate change in each region, mentioning how some areas now experience unpredictable precipitation patterns, longer drought periods, and erratic monsoon. The use of roof tiles was introduced instead of thatch for the mud huts to withstand stronger winds and heavier rainfall. For the Himalaya architecture, the shift to a sloped roof instead of the traditional flat mud roof was done in one of the houses in the community to mitigate heavy rains not previously experienced in the area. But issues of authenticity and maintaining the traditional look of Himalaya architecture became a problem for the community who still preferred their traditional flat roofs.

For the case study presented by the Philippines, Erik Akpedonu of the Department of Fine Arts Institute of Philippine Culture in Ateneo de

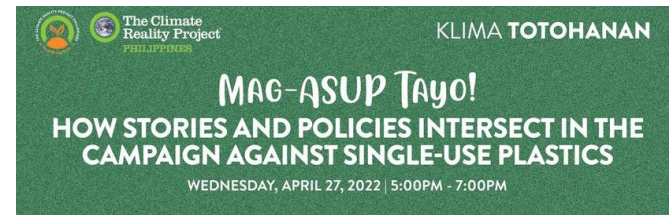
Manila University discussed the rapid damage assessment that ICOMOS Philippines did in Bohol after typhoon Odette. The team assessed 84 heritage houses and 4 churches in March 2022. Mr. Akpedonu focused on the ancestral houses in Bohol and mentioned that around 49% of the observed houses had no damage from the typhoon; 15% show minor to significant (but manageable) damage; and 13% had massive damage or almost completely destroyed. A comparison of the metal Dutch hip roof and thatch roof was also shown. Houses with thatch roof were blown off and experienced massive damage such as the Clarin house.

The next speaker was Engr. Rodolfo Mendoza of Petro Jikken who did a post disaster assessment of Bohol heritage churches and houses. He presented the assessment plan and the methodology utilized by their team. He then discussed the results of the assessment, giving detailed accounts for Baclayon Church, Albuquerque Church, Dauis Church, and Dimiao Church. He gave special focus on the roof systems in each church and the effect of roof fasteners in withstanding stronger winds. He recommended future studies including about the uplift capacity of roof fasteners.

The webinar ended with an open forum where most of the online participants fielded questions for the speakers from Nepal. (AMPSales)

## Mag-ASUP Tayo! How stories and policies intersect in the campaign against single-use plastics

The Climate Reality Project | April 27, 2022 | 5:00PM



This webinar provided an overview of existing LGU ordinances on single-use plastics in hopes of impacting local and national policymakers while highlighting the experiences of the everyday Filipino. An analysis of three LGUs (Marikina, Makati, and Quezon City) covered different city ordinances on plastic waste management, its effects on businesses and their constituents.

The presentation of Climate Reality Project Philippines highlighted adaptation of best practices to improve other LGUs' plastic waste management. The group recommended banning plastic waste instead of prohibiting specific types of plastic as is commonly stipulated in LGU

ordinances. A ban on plastic waste prevents any loopholes or leeway on the distribution of single-use plastic in establishments. Additionally, having a common definition of single-use plastic in LGU ordinances will further intensify the anti-single-use plastic campaign.

Their study pushed for the nationwide implementation of a systematized anti-single-use plastic policy. The group's campaign includes urging the legislation of House Bill 9147 that bans single-use plastics, the issuance of a list of non-environmentally acceptable products (NEAP), and funding for research and development of viable plastic alternatives. (DMPSalvador)

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Title: **The Rights of Nature: A Legal Revolution That Could Save the World**

Author: **David R. Boyd**

Publisher: **ECW Press (2017)**

*Nature has inherent value regardless of its use to human beings*—this is the central idea underpinning the movement to grant legal rights to ecosystems and other species. Environmental lawyer David Boyd's *The Rights of Nature* explores the new legal doctrine that reshapes humanity's relationship with nature. Recognition of rights of nature challenges prevailing wisdom in Western legal systems. It is presented as a groundbreaking approach to protecting the planet and addressing the climate crisis.

Boyd starts off with the assertion that today's ecological crises are rooted in three ideas—(1) anthropocentrism or that humans are separate from and superior to nature; (2) nature as human property, and (3) the pursuit of limitless economic growth. He presents a powerful argument that existing environmental laws don't actually protect the environment but legitimizes inherently harmful activities and merely delays environmental damage. He then takes us through stories of laws slowly evolving in some countries to reflect the shift in how societies regard nature.

In the US for instance, recognition of animals as sentient beings has pushed the expansion of animal rights and the filing of lawsuits against animal cruelty and exploitation. Court decisions have

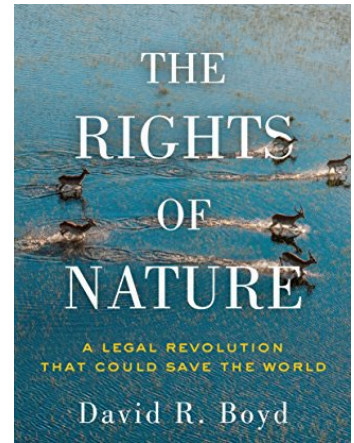
upheld the protection of endangered species against logging and oil companies. However, some American courts still reject the idea that animals or rivers have legal standing to sue. On the other hand, the US grants non-human entities like corporations and ships specific rights as a "legal person".

Boyd shows us how the rights of nature movement has advanced more rapidly in societies influenced by indigenous worldviews—in New Zealand, Ecuador and Bolivia. The Maori of Aotearoa/New Zealand does not view nature as simply natural resource to be owned or exploited. The relationship is based on kinship and stewardship and the Maori accord the same respect for nature as with fellow humans. Boyd writes about New Zealand's gradual acceptance of the Maori worldview in legislation, culminating in 2017 when the Whanganui river, the third longest in the country, was given the legal status of a person. This legal personality meant that the river with its ecosystem is owned by itself, has legal rights and standing and can be represented in court to uphold its interest for its own sake.

Ecuador in 2008, and followed by Bolivia in 2013, enshrined the rights of nature in their respective constitutions. Both countries run through the Amazon river and rainforest and have large indigenous groups. The book

gives an absorbing account of the enlightened political leadership and social movement that led to articulating the rights of Pachamama (Mother Earth) in the highest law of the nation. Provisions in their constitutions laid out the government's responsibilities and the duties and obligations of individual citizens and corporations to respect the rights of Mother Earth and promote harmony with nature. However, the process of change towards ecological models of development in both countries is fraught with inconsistencies in the implementation of the law, as Boyd describes in the book. Dependence on resource extraction and in the oil, gas and mining industries is a major obstacle that has undermined rights of nature as a fundamental principle.

Nevertheless, Boyd keeps an optimistic view of the path forward as the concept of rights of nature is spreading in many other countries. He writes of the Philippine Supreme Court which has adopted in 2010 the writ of *kalikasan* (nature) as a legal remedy to protect one's constitutional right to a "balanced and healthy ecology". There are also a growing number of organizations that support the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth which calls for a radical rethinking of our connection to nature and of



sustainable development. Boyd also introduces the International Rights of Nature Tribunal created by the Global Alliance for Rights of Nature and which hears cases on alleged violations of rights of nature. Though not established by law and thus lacking authority, the tribunal provides a stage to educate governments and the public about rights of nature.

Laudato Si, an encyclical by Pope Francis, sees human-caused environmental degradation as a moral issue. The climate crisis compels us to reexamine our treatment of nature and how we view our relationship with the natural world. This remarkably inspiring book gives hope that if nature is respected and accorded legally enforceable rights, humans will care for her in a truly sustainable way. (GRMatabang)

Title: **The Great Divide: Unequal Societies and What We Can Do About Them**

Author: **Joseph E. Stiglitz**

Publisher: **W. W. Norton & Company (2015)**

*The Great Divide* is an anthology of articles and essays by acclaimed economist Joseph Stiglitz on the economics (and inseparably, the politics) of inequality. Primarily in the context of the United States, the written pieces were initially released in various periodicals like Vanity Fair, The New York Times, and Project Syndicate over the past few years of the book's publication.

The articles and essays are arranged into eight parts. Stiglitz prefaces each chapter to contextualize the pieces and facilitate a coherent flow throughout the book. As a prelude, the anthology opens with a diagnosis of the Great Recession (2007-2009) precipitated by the bursting of the US housing bubble and the ensuing global financial crisis. The author proceeds to examine across the chapters the various dimensions, causes, and consequences of inequality not only in the US but also in the highly globalized

world. Stiglitz then discusses policy recommendations and other economic prescriptions to close the "yawning gap between the rich and the poor." The book also draws lessons and insights from various regions and countries across the globe, such as Scandinavia, Australia, Singapore, and Mauritius, a small island nation in East Africa with free education and healthcare.

Stiglitz concludes the book with a previously published interview (Q&A format) as an afterword wherein he addresses "the fallacy that the top 1 percent drives innovation," referring to this as the 21st-century version of trickle-down economics. He also discusses why the Reagan administration, which brought Reaganomics, represented the turning point for widening inequality in the US.

Ultimately, the growing inequality is the result of policies and politics—the overarching theme recurrent

throughout the book. The policies that governing bodies choose to enact and the politics that command these policies, as driven by those with power, create the great divide. In the same vein, policies and politics will ultimately close this gap.

Because the articles were initially released in popular media outlets, the prose is generally layperson-friendly. Economic jargon, while minimal, is explained to keep the readers in the loop of discussions. As expected from a collection of stand-alone articles around an issue, the book tends to become repetitive. As a result, however, it proves to be effective in instilling its eye-opening ideas. The book also lacks an index section which would have helped the reader navigate particular topics. Weaving the articles into seamless chapters can only do so much given the redundant nature of the content. Regardless, the book is teeming with sharp insights and policy

**JOSEPH E. STIGLITZ**

WINNER OF THE NOBEL PRIZE



**UNEQUAL SOCIETIES AND  
WHAT WE CAN DO ABOUT THEM**

recommendations covering an array of topics. It might be of particular interest to those working in the development sector and anyone remotely curious about the issue of inequality. (TRJulia)



## Fundraiser for print version of TAO Shelter Magazine 20th anniversary issue

Last March, we released the e-publication [TAO Shelter Magazine 20th Anniversary Edition: Stories of Change](#) (or TSM20) which was made available on Amazon Kindle Store as a Print Replica. Unfortunately, TAO lacked the resources to publish the magazine in print and disseminate copies to community partners.

We appeal for support in helping us publish print copies of TSM20 to accommodate requests for its printed version. TAO needs at least PHP 40,000 for a one-color print of the magazine (100 copies). For full color printing TAO needs to raise PHP 96,000.

In the [Donate](#) page of the TAO-Pilipinas website, you may directly give any amount via Paypal or fund transfer. For cash or check donations, please deposit to the **Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI) account TAO-Pilipinas, Inc. with account number 4431-0074-31.**

For an individual contribution amounting to at least PHP 5,000, we will send you (or your representative) a

complete set of TAO-Pilipinas publications except out-of-print issues. This gift set can be delivered only to areas covered by courier services within the Philippines. Just email proof of payment to [taopublications@gmail.com](mailto:taopublications@gmail.com) together with the complete shipping information.

We hope you consider this appeal. Your vital support means that through our publications, TAO can fulfill its mission to build awareness, guide community action, and share learning on participatory planning and design and sustainable communities with various stakeholders. Every contribution, however big or small, pushes this advocacy. Thank you.

Follow our Instagram account [@architectsinthemargins](#) and stay up-do-date with TAO's publications work.

**Fundraising update:** As of May 30, 2022, we have raised Php 8,431.00 (21% of minimum fundraising target).

### REQUEST FOR SUPPORT

**Help us publish the special issue of TAO Shelter Magazine (TSM20) in print**

**Any amount** contributed will allow TAO to distribute TSM20 to community partners.

Help us reach our target  
**PHP 96,000**

Send donations to  
TAO-Pilipinas, Inc  
BPI account no. 4431-0074-31

#### Special offer:

For individuals contributing at least PHP 5,000, TAO will send a complete set of publications except out-of-print issues. This gift is limited to Philippine addresses covered by courier services.





# MORE eNEWSLETTERS

Check out our previous issues

Subscribe [here](https://tao-pilipinas.org/contact-us/) to get notified of our new releases. If you have any comments and suggestions for our eNewsletters, please feel free to send your feedback at <https://tao-pilipinas.org/contact-us/>



## TAO LECTURE SERIES LAUNCHED AS ACCREDITED CPD PROGRAM

The initial offering of the TAO Lecture Series was held on November 14, 2018, at the TAO Training Center in the TAO Training Center. The series was launched as an accredited CPD program by the Philippine Institute of Architects (PIA) and the Philippine Institute of Engineers (PIE). The series is a series of lectures on various topics related to the TAO program, including the TAO program's history, its goals, and its impact on the community. The series is a series of lectures on various topics related to the TAO program, including the TAO program's history, its goals, and its impact on the community.

## Co-Design Project begins implementation

The Young Professionals Program of TAO-Pilipinas is launching a project entitled, "Co-Design: Empowering Community Health and Disaster Resilience." The project was introduced to the community during a recent meeting. The project is a series of lectures on various topics related to the TAO program, including the TAO program's history, its goals, and its impact on the community.



## TECHNICAL STUDENT VOLUNTEERS VISIT LUPANG ARENDA FOR CO-DESIGN PROJECT

One of the ways to ensure a sustainable future is to have a strong foundation of technical skills. This is why TAO-Pilipinas is launching a project entitled, "Co-Design: Empowering Community Health and Disaster Resilience." The project was introduced to the community during a recent meeting. The project is a series of lectures on various topics related to the TAO program, including the TAO program's history, its goals, and its impact on the community.



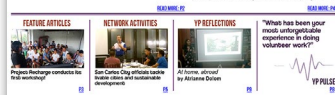
## PPVHDA lives up to its name: creates "People's Plan"

A kind of group participation, the PPVHDA (People's Planning and Development) is a project that was introduced to the community during a recent meeting. The project is a series of lectures on various topics related to the TAO program, including the TAO program's history, its goals, and its impact on the community.



## TAO partners with the Commission on Human Rights in its 18th Anniversary Forum

TAO-Pilipinas is partnering with the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) in its 18th Anniversary Forum. The forum is a series of lectures on various topics related to the TAO program, including the TAO program's history, its goals, and its impact on the community.

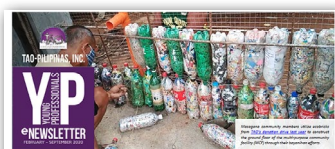


## OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2018

## JANUARY - MARCH 2019

## APRIL - JUNE 2019

## JULY - SEPTEMBER 2019

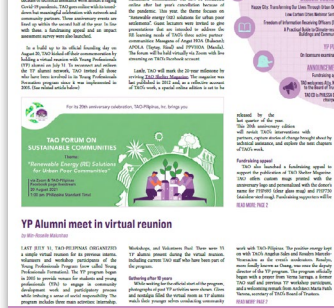
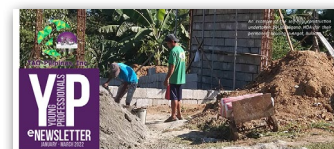
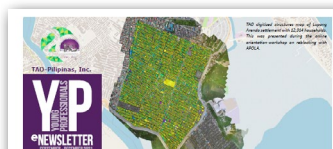


## FEBRUARY - SEPTEMBER 2020

## OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2020

## JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2021

## MARCH - APRIL 2021



## MAY - JUNE 2021

## JULY - AUGUST 2021

## SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2021

## JANUARY - MARCH 2022