

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2010

ypp e-newsletter

TAO-Pilipinas Young Professionals Program



In this photo, a box of donated stuffed toys awaits for new owners in Masagana, one of TAO-assisted communities in Tanza, Navotas City. The toys are among the items given by staff and friends for TAO's year-end activities that combined recycling, fundraising, and gift-giving this holiday season.

In this issue, we wrap a busy year for TAO-Pilipinas with project end-stage activities, results of collaboration with partner communities and the academe, and more good news about talented individuals who make up our Board of Trustees. As we close 2010 with holiday festivities, TAO looks forward to a busier and more eventful 2011 when we celebrate our decade-long existence.

Again, let this be our opportunity to thank the people who continuously support our projects --- funders and sponsors; community partners; academic partners; interns, trainees and student-volunteers; and family and friends who all share TAO's vision of sustainable human settlements.

Happy Holidays!

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quote this month

"And when we give each other Christmas gifts in His name, let us remember that He has given us the sun and the moon and the stars, and the earth with its forests and mountains and oceans--and all that lives and move upon them. He has given us all green things and everything that blossoms and bears fruit and all that we quarrel about and all that we have misused--and to save us from our foolishness, from all our sins, He came down to earth and gave us Himself."

- Sigrid Undset (1882-1949),
Norwegian novelist and 1928
Nobel Laureate

It's time for us to go to the people rather than ask the people, especially the poor, to come to us."

Students Propose Alternative Housing Designs for Informal Communities along Tullahan River and Manggahan Floodway

A class of 5th year architecture students from the University of the Philippines College of Architecture (UPCA) developed alternative design proposals to housing poor (majority of which are also income poor) communities living along the Manggahan Floodway in Pasig City and in the in-city resettlement area in Barangay Gulod, Quezon City. The Planning and Urban Design (Arch163) class, under the guidance of TAO Executive Director Arlene Lusterio, completed the design task by working with community groups belonging to the Alliance of People's Organizations Along Manggahan Floodway Pasig and the Gulod Urban Poor Alliance (GUPA). Their final designs were presented on October 19, 2010 at the College of Architecture Museum in UP Diliman to representatives of GUPA and the 10 people's organizations in Barangays Sta. Lucia, Maybunga, and Rosario in Pasig City. Guests who also graced the event and gave critiques included Ana Oliveros of Foundation for the Development of the Urban Poor, Luz Malibiran of Community Organizers Multiversity and Dennis Murphy of Urban Poor Associates.

The semester-long design exercise enabled the students to complete the course that specifically focused on the "Socio-Cultural and Institutional Aspects of Housing" and more importantly, gain insight into the actual situation and needs of informal communities struggling for security of tenure. Through site immersion, research, and consultations with the community groups, six design proposals were developed and unveiled during the October 19 presentation. Though not aimed at providing final solutions to the housing situation along the river and floodway, the students' proposals gave the community groups several design ideas that could be further enhanced and developed into feasible project proposals.

The six design proposals presented by the class were:

1. "Pagbubuklod, Itaguyod sa Gulod": A Responsive and Sustainable Community Proposal for Ernstville, Brgy. Gulod presented by Anthony M. Ceperiano and Gailord Benedict Bagcal;



UP Architecture student Rissa Espiritu present their design scheme for Barangay Maybunga



Community representatives examine the architectural designs printed on tarpaulin



The class conducted site visit and interviewed community leaders prior to designing

Please turn to page 4.

TAO-RP completes San Juan City Pride of Place and GSDI projects

TAO and UP-CA present joint research project to San Juan City LGU

On December 06, 2010, the Research and Publications staff of TAO-Pilipinas headed by Arch. Faith Varona together with the UP College of Architecture (UP-CA) History, Theory, and Criticism (HTC) Laboratory presented its research project to the local government unit of San Juan City. The research project which is entitled Searching for Genius Loci: San Juan City Pride of Place was presented by Prof. Emilio Ozaeta of the UP-CA HTC Laboratory. The audience was composed of Mayor Guia Gomez, Vice-Mayor Francis Zamora, city councilors, and the various department heads of San Juan City.

This research project which began early this year is funded by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA). The main objective of the project is to look for the spirit of place of San Juan through interviewing its residents and documenting the different areas in San Juan. TAO-Pilipinas through its Research and Publications program teamed up with the architecture students of UP-CA through the UP-CA HTC Laboratory headed by Prof. Emilio Ozaeta and Prof. Rene Mata. The student researchers went around the different barangays of San Juan during their initial site visit. The research team eventually decided to focus on Barangays Tibagan, Batis, and Balong-Bato as their area of study. After several site visits and field interviews, the research team came up with four themes based on the results of the field interviews to characterize the spirit of place of San Juan and these are: Alaala, Pamayanan at Pinuno, Tahanan, and Pagbabago. The research team also made use of water to symbolize the spirit of place of San Juan. Water figured prominently during the field interviews conducted by the student researchers.



The research team with Mayor Guia Gomez (3rd from left); Allenmarie Alejo, head of the Tourism Office of San Juan (leftmost); and Dr. Fernando Zialcita (2nd to the left) and Erik Akpedonou from the Ateneo Social Science Department

All of these results were presented to the LGU of San Juan. Recommendations were also given by the research team which included organizing a walking tour of San Juan, coming up with a coffee table book about San Juan, an audio-video presentation about San Juan, and a children's comic book that showcases the history of San Juan and its spirit of place. All in all, the LGU of San Juan led by its mayor, Guia Gomez, was very receptive of the research project and the possibilities that it offered.

Currently, the research project is at its final stage with the final report being written for submission to NCCA. The LGU will also receive a copy of the final report once it is finished. *(Angel Sales)*

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Survey on SDI needs of NGOs and LGUs finished

TAO-Pilipinas recently completed the conduct of a needs assessment survey on the Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) requirements of LGUs and the NGO sector in the country. The research forms part of a project grant from the Global Spatial Data Infrastructure Association. Almost thirty (30) non-government organizations and fifteen (15) local government units participated in the project whose goal is to recommend steps for the development and use of Geographic Information Technologies (GIT) and SDI-based services.

The survey results showed that all participants use maps in their work and that maps are obtained from both the public and private sectors. Survey participants also shared that information from the maps are usually insufficient and that most employees in their offices lack capability in handling maps and need to undergo training and skills enhancement. From the assessment survey, a new proposal will be developed for the next phase in building a spatial data infrastructure.

During the data gathering phase of the research, a blog site was built via the URL: www.sdi4philippines.blogspot.com. The site contains articles on how spatial data infrastructures and mapping help in development work, both internationally and locally. It also aims to inform the public about the benefits and opportunities of having a spatial data infrastructure. *(Bey de Castro)*

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Recognition for TAO Board members

Laura David cited as 2010 TOWNS awardee

TAO Board of Trustee (BOT) President Dr. Laura T. David and 10 other women were recipients of this year's The Outstanding Women in the Nation's Service (TOWNS) awards. His Excellency President Benigno Simeon C. Aquino III presented the awards at the ceremony held at the Malacañang Palace last November 5, 2010.

"The TOWNS award is presented by the TOWNS Foundation to outstanding Filipino women ages 21 to 45 years old who have contributed positively to strengthening national capability and in shaping the nation's future and served as catalysts for economic, social, and cultural development by providing pro bono their time, talent and resources to government, business media, the arts, the academe, sports, and non-government organizations." Every three years since 1974, TOWNS has already cited 138 outstanding women achievers who have made considerable contribution to national development. (<http://www.towns.org.ph/>)

Dr. Lau David is the first female oceanographer in the country and a faculty member in the UP Marine Science Institute. In 2007, she was also chosen by the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST) as one of the country's Outstanding Young Scientists for her work in Physical Oceanography.



Pres. Benigno Simeon C. Aquino III with the 2010 TOWNS awardees. Laura David is at extreme right. (photo from www.abs-cbnnews.com)

"Kakaiba din talaga ang nararamdaman kapag kapwa mo babae ang nagbibigay pugay sa iyong mga nagawa na sa buhay na ito. Nagbibigay inspirasyon at lakas para tuluyan mong tahakin ang landas na minithi. Sa ganang ito gusto ko rin ihandog ang karangalang ito sa mga babaeng nagpapatunay ng ganap ng katatagan ng Filipina: sa aking nanay at biyanan, sa aking mga ka-trabaho lalo na sa UP Marine Science Institute, sa mga tapat kong nagniningning na mga kaibigan, sa mga masugid na propesyonal ng TAO-Pilipinas, at higit sa lahat sa mga manang ng mga komunidad na siya naming kasangga tungo sa ikauunlad ng kinabukasan", Ms. Lau said in an emailed statement to TAO.

The awardees were screened by a six-member panel of judges, composed of Chief Justice Renato Corona, former health secretary Esperanza Cabral, CHED chair Patricia Licuanan, Management Association of the Philippines president Eusebio Tan, TOWNS president Carmina Aquino and TOWNS search committee chair Imelda Villar. (*Rosalyn Veneracion*)

Ellen Ramos honored as independent filmmaker in PDI tribute

TAO Board of Trustee (BOT) member Architect Ellen Ramos is included in the list of honorees for the 1st Inquirer Indie Tribute. Twenty-five independent filmmakers are being honored by the Philippine Daily Inquirer on the occasion of its 25th anniversary.

Ellen is part of this select list of indie filmmakers who have won accolades in numerous international and local film festivals. Her films, co-directed with Paolo Villaluna, include "Ilusyon" (2005), "Selda" (2007), and "Walang Hanggang Paalam" (2009). "Ilusyon" was also the first digital film to receive an "A" rating from the Cinema Evaluation Board. Her latest work is "Ganap na Babae" which was shown in Cinemalaya 2010. Aside from being an architect, Ellen is also a multi-awarded graphic designer. (*Ge Matabang*)

TAO holds Rummage Sale and Gift-giving for Masagana kids

A Pre-Christmas Rummage Sale was held last December 3, 4 & 11, 2010 at the TAO office in Quezon City. This activity was carried out to support a series of events planned by the organization to mark its 10th Anniversary celebration. The events, scheduled to run from August to December 2011, include a Partners Forum, YP Reunion, Photo Exhibit, Community Products Fair, and a special 10th issue of TAO Shelter Magazine.



The rummage sale items were donated by the staff as well as generous friends and partners of TAO. (See list of donors on page 8.) Items were set up at the office garage and were sold at urban poor-friendly prices. The first day of the sale was opened to partner communities so that they have the first option to buy items in the sale. First day buyers were mostly from the TAO-assisted communities in Navotas City. Succeeding sale days were then opened to all interested shoppers within the vicinity. The 3-day activity generated about Php16,000 in sales.

TAO also organized a gift-giving event for children in MASAGANA, one the TAO-assisted communities in Navotas City. Donations of used toys, books, clothes and vitamins were packaged into eighty (80) Christmas gift packs which were given away on December 17, 2010. The kids gave impromptu dance numbers as they received the gifts from TAO staff and volunteers.

TAO is looking into making these regular events during the Christmas season to benefit partner communities and generate additional funds for small activities. *(Rosalyn Veneracion, Ge Matabang)*

Students Propose Alternative Housing... (From page 2)

2. "Bagong Bahay, Bagong Buhay": An Alternative Housing and Berm Development Approach for Brgy. Rosario presented by Myra Elisse Anit and Florence Anne Reyes;
3. Bamboo Housing Project for Manggahan Floodway (Sta. Lucia East, Purok 1,2 and Pinagbuklod) presented by Keith Ann Aquino and Catherine Marie Reyes;
4. Urban Design Schemes for Barangay Sta. Lucia Purok 3-6 presented by Maria Christina Alombro and Glenda Lozano;
5. "Pag-asa sa Mabuting Bunga": Disaster Risk Reduction Applied to Lowcost Housing in Barangay Maybunga Blocks 1-4 presented by Rissa Espiritu and Laura May Venus; and
6. "Bagong Bunga sa Maybunga": A Community Development Project for Barangay Maybunga Blocks 5-9 presented by Vittoria Lou Mawis and Rebecca Cantalejo.

The presentation materials developed by the students (including exhibit posters printed on tarpaulins) were turned over to the community groups. UPCA College Secretary Nicolo del Castillo, in his closing remarks, encouraged similar collaborations with community groups as a venue for students to come up with more socially-responsive designs. *(Ge Matabang)*

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Children on top styrofoam rafts troop to the activity site.



(L-R): Gifts unloaded from service jeep and carried by Masagana community members to activity site; TAO staff and volunteer host gift-giving activity; Children receiving their Christmas gift packs.

YP Reading List

Every issue, the YP e-newsletter features a selection of TAO Resource Center & Library materials as reviewed by TAO staff and volunteers. The TAO Resource Center & Library is now open for students and researchers' use. Library use is by appointment and guidelines may be viewed at <http://www.tao-pilipinas.org/resources/library>. You may call Angel Sales at 441-0998 / 436-7301 or email lib@tao-pilipinas.org to schedule your visit.



Title: **Cool It: The Skeptical Environmentalist's Guide to Global Warming**

Author: **Bjorn Lomborg**

Publisher: **Alfred A. Knopf (2007)**

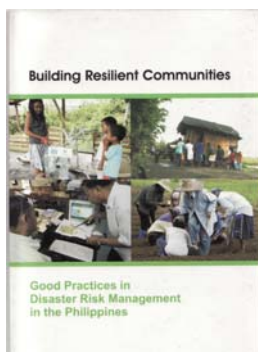
About the author: Bjorn Lomborg is a Danish author, director of the Copenhagen Consensus Center, and adjunct professor at Copenhagen Business School.

In the book *Cool It*, author Bjorn Lomborg strikes a middle ground between the “deniers” and the “alarmists” in the global warming debate. Lomborg acknowledges global warming to be real and man-made but questions why policy actions are singularly focused on reducing carbon emissions. Much of the book is an argument (based on cost-benefit analysis) against policies on carbon cuts such as the Kyoto Protocol as very expensive solutions that will do very little far into the future (i.e. reduction in temperature increase will be miniscule and will only postpone expected temperature increase by five years, from 2100 to 2105). Lomborg also laments the hyped and apocalyptic portrayal of global warming by the media and politicians like Al Gore. He contends that climate change is a problem but not the end of civilization; and global warming is but one issue which humanity needs to deal with, overshadowing more pressing problems like poverty, hunger and disease.

Cool It offers an alternative view into the climate change discussion, especially now that many disaster events are being directly attributed to global warming. One such scenario is the increasing severity of hurricanes/tropical cyclones resulting in greater and more widespread damage. Lomborg puts into perspective the societal factors that play a larger role in the increasing global cost of climate-related disasters --- as more people move into risk-prone areas, more assets will be harmed. Thus, addressing societal factors through adaptation measures (e.g. land use and zoning, improved building codes) rather than climate policies will be the more sensible solution.

The book argues for cheaper and simple measures that can yield bigger benefits and that will ultimately improve the environment and the quality of life for humanity. Instead of carbon cuts, it proposes boosting spending on research and development (R&D) of alternative non-carbon emitting energy technologies to make them affordable for all countries. Lomborg also says that the smarter strategy is to prioritize poverty reduction, access to safe water, sanitation and health care so that societies would be better equipped to tackle the impacts of inevitable climate change.

Not all readers may agree with the author's point of view but the book surely lives up to its title. After all the firestorm of compelling documentaries on global warming to spur every human being to take action, *Cool It* is a dose of water to make you stop and take a skeptical approach. Quite effective that in the end, the reader is bound to question whether the very proposals put forth by the author are genuinely effective solutions to combat climate change. *(Ge Matabang)*



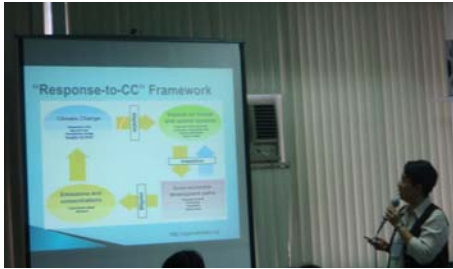
Title: **Building Resilient Communities: Good Practices in Disaster Risk Management in the Philippines**

Author/Publisher: **Oxfam Great Britain Philippines Programme**

Building Resilient Communities is the output of a project implemented by Oxfam Great Britain in the Philippines and funded by the European Commission Humanitarian Aid department through its disaster preparedness program, DIPECHO (Disaster Preparedness Program of the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Department). It is a collection of stories of good practices in disaster risk management which community organizations, government and non-government organizations in different parts of the country have developed over time. It is also accompanied by a 10-minute video documentary that features the same stories and giving it (as stated in the book) “a human dimension: the face of the person, the feel of the place where the hazard exists, the sentiments and insights expressed directly by the actual people who lived through a

disaster and learned from it.”

What I particularly like about the compilation is its organized such that each story consisted of Implementation Steps; Results and Outcomes; and Lessons and Challenges that would guide the readers in forming their own community-based initiatives. The story of a functional literacy program that integrates disaster risk management in Camarines Sur included their estimated budget for each step as well. The stories in this publication show that even in spite of poverty and despair, people can do something if they work together with their community and other institutions to develop their capacities and achieve their goals. They provide lessons and experiences to ease the readers' access to information on disaster risk reduction that would help generate replicable strategies or even better practices that apply in the readers' own situations. *(Rosalyn Veneracion)*



MO Holds Roundtable Discussion on Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction

The Manila Observatory, in cooperation with Christian Aid UK Philippines and the Province of Albay, hosted a Climate Change-Disaster Risk Reduction roundtable discussion entitled “The 2nd Scientists' and Community Development Practitioners' Roundtable on Climate Change Adaptation and Risk Reduction” last October 15, 2010 at the Klima Climate Change Center, Manila Observatory, Ateneo de Manila University Campus in Quezon City. The whole day conference brought together experts and practitioners from institutions working on the different aspects of climate change and disaster risk reduction to cover issues such as physics, impacts, scientific infrastructure, tools and innovations.

The conference topics were divided into three (3) main themes. The first group of topics mainly covered the existing *Science Infrastructures*, *Atmospheric Climate Models*, and *CCA-DRR Strategies & Frameworks* in the country. These were presented by Mr. Bayani Lara of the Department of Science & Technology-Advanced Science & Technology Institute (DOST-ASTI), Dr. Gemma Narisma and Dr. Rosa Perez of the Manila Observatory (MO). The second group focused on the impacts of CCA-DRR to various areas such as *Hydrogeology*, which was discussed by Dr. Fernando Siringan of the University of the Philippines-Marine Science Institute (UP-MSI); *Agriculture* by Ms. Lourdes Tibig of MO; *Forestry* by Mr. Lawrence Ramos of World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF); *Fisheries* by Dr. Jose Ingles of World Wildlife Fund (WWF); *Food Science* by Dr. Emeliza Lozada of UP Visayas; *Modeling Rice Yields* by Ms. Grace Centeno of International Rice Research Institute (IRRI); and *Public Health* by Dr. John Wong of Ateneo School of Public Health. The third set of lectures talked about *CCA-DRR Tools and Innovations* that would help address the gaps in adaptation and risk reduction. These were presented by Architect Paolo Alcazaren of PGAA Creative Design, Dr. Greg Tangonan of Ateneo Innovation Center and Dr. Mahar Lagmay of UP-National Institute of Geological Sciences (NIGS). The speakers presented their research and projects as well as the progress and gaps in their activities.

This event was also a follow up activity to the 1st Scientists and Community Development Practitioners on Climate Change Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation Roundtable Discussion organized by the Centre for Initiatives and Research on Climate Change Adaptation (CIRCA) held at Legazpi City, Albay in 2008. (*Rosalyn Veneracion*)

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Announcements

YP Activities for 2011

TAO Young Professionals program will start a new round of YP Lectures for Metro Manila universities on February-March 2011.

Interested architecture/engineering colleges may email grmatabang@gmail.com to arrange a lecture for their students.

The next Young Professionals Workshop on Social Housing is scheduled to be held on May 2011. Community immersion venues will be in Metro Manila. Applications for the workshop slots will open by February 2011. (A maximum of 30 participants will be selected.) Visit www.ypws.tao-pilipinas.org for updates on the workshop schedule, theme and program.

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Maraming Salamat!

Many thanks to all generous friends and donors who supported the 2010 TAO Christmas Rummage Sale and Gift-giving!



Michelle Abon
Lorelei Arceo
Jay Arididon
Jennifer Azarraga
Mia Bunao
Lily Cardenas
Lino Cardenas
Ariel David
Laura David, MSI and Friends
Ana Dizon
Marie Enriquez
Audrey Esteban
Carol Gaw
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William Huang
Genevieve Lorenzo
Arlene Lusterio
Roselle-Frances Marcelo
Alberto Matabang
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