

# e-newsletter

APRIL – MAY 2013

ACCA Navotas youth group in R. Domingo, Tangos set-up areas for seedling propagation to grow container gardens within the community vacant spaces.



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## TAO introduces Historic Preservation to network partners

TAO-PILIPINAS INTRODUCED HISTORIC PRESERVATION TO ITS NETWORK PARTNERS through a workshop held on March 5, 2013 at the Mapua Institute of Technology in Intramuros. Dubbed as a "Dialogue on Historic Preservation", the workshop was organized in collaboration with Bakás Pilipinas, a non-profit organization based in the US that promotes the preservation of historic architecture and sites in the Philippines. The Mapua School of Architecture, Industrial Design and the Built Environment co-sponsored the workshop.

**Pls. turn to page 2.**

## ACCA-Navotas youth groups to revive community container gardens

TAO-PILIPINAS RECENTLY ORGANIZED AN URBAN CONTAINER GARDENING Workshop for the youth leaders of the Asian Coalition for Community Action (ACCA) Navotas Network. The activity was a continuation of the community-based solid waste management (CBSWM) project of TAO-Pilipinas with Give2Asia and Starbucks Philippines that was started in 2011. The CBSWM project involved initiating community composting centers

**Pls. turn to page 3.**

### In this issue:

Dialogue on historic preservation  
Community container gardens \*  
\* PDA project in Pulo \* Second  
Regional CAN Meeting \* HDM-  
Lund Course Field Study \* OIO  
Workshop

#### Network Activities:

PMPI E-Scrap Recycling Campaign  
\* SHFC Loan Documentation  
Workshop \* PHILSSA Orientation on  
People's Planning

#### YP Reading List:

Lepik's *Small Scale Big Change*  
Well's *Lives of The Trees*

“ This is a very economical way to upgrade, increase community resilience and work to reduce poverty. It's far more economical than traditional methods of trying to formalize the informal. Formalization methods are not working; we need to change the way the establishment thinks. But how do we do that? ”

- DILG Undersecretary **Francisco Fernandez**, during the Pulo project presentation at ADB

# TAO introduces historic preservation... (From page 1)

## Network partners

Attended by close to 60 participants, the workshop was carried out to respond to the results of a survey on heritage conservation that TAO-Pilipinas conducted among its NGO network partners last December. In that survey, several of its network partners expressed a need to learn more about heritage conservation as it relates to community development and urban poor issues. Among those who attended the workshop were representatives of Community Organizers Multiversity (COM); Philippine Partnership for Support Service Agencies (PHILSSA); Foundation for the Development of the Urban Poor (FDUP); Urban Poor Associates (UPA); and Socio-Pastoral Institute (SPI). Participants from the academe likewise attended, representing PUP College of Architecture and Fine Arts; UP College of Architecture; UST College of Architecture; and the UP Archaeological Studies Program.

## Program and speakers

TAO-Pilipinas tapped Bakás Pilipinas as resource person. The survey results were shared with them and they designed a day-long program with topics covering the various learning needs identified in the survey. The program was divided into five major topics: Introduction to Historic Preservation; Preservation of Architectural Heritage; Preservation of Intangible Heritage; Urban Heritage Conservation; and Disaster Relief for Heritage Properties.

Presenters consisted of the Bakás Pilipinas team, namely Roz Li, retired former Principal of Li/Saltzman Architects; Cristina Paterno, Executive Director of San Sebastian Basilica Conservation and Development Fund; Pascale Montadert, Anthropologist Consultant; and Trix Rosen, Architectural Photographer. They brought to the workshop valuable knowledge and expertise gained from years of experience as historic preservationists.



The resource persons from Bakás Pilipina: (L-R) Tina Paterno, Roz Li, Trix Rosen, Pascale Montadert

## Preservation projects

Roz Li led the team in presenting the different aspects of historic preservation. She discussed the significance of historic preservation, the criteria for determining historic structures and sites, and the scale of intervention. She explained the different types of intervention from the no-intervention approach to reconstruction and replication. She gave examples of historic preservation projects to highlight these various interventions. She stressed the need to establish the preservation philosophy of a project to determine the appropriate type of intervention to be done.

Many of the projects she presented were those undertaken by her firm, including landmark preservation projects in the New York City metropolitan area that have received preservation awards. One of the most interesting projects that she featured was the Tenement Museum in New York, a tenement building which housed immigrant families in the 1860s-1930s that has been restored as a historical landmark. The building reflects early 20<sup>th</sup> century living conditions and is considered as a three-dimensional museum of housing laws development in New York City.

Ms. Li highlighted historic preservation as an interdisciplinary field, entailing the involvement of historians, architects, archaeologists, conservators/conservation scientists and anthropologists. These diverse expertises are needed throughout the preservation process, especially in the steps prior to the restoration of a historic building or site.

Urban heritage conservation was also discussed by Roz Li. She explained the various levels of landmark designation and highlighted the role of NGOs in community-based preservation projects, giving several examples of successful urban preservation projects in the US. She likewise featured projects that addressed disaster relief for heritage properties and the various funding strategies that can be tapped for preservation projects.

## San Sebastian Restoration

Conservator Tina Paterno presented the investigative work being done for the restoration of San Sebastian Basilica which is the initial project of Bakás Pilipinas. The basilica, a religious and architectural landmark, is an all-metal structure built in 1891 and has survived 11 major earthquakes. Ms. Paterno identified deferred maintenance and inappropriate repairs as the major challenges to conservation. In the San Sebastian

Sebastian project, she showed the deterioration and damage from severe corrosion and water leaks. She presented the historical research, photo-documentation and laser scanning of the whole structure that have been done as part of the diagnostic survey as she stressed that “the treatment or repair will only be good as its diagnosis”.

## Intangible heritage

Anthropologist Pascale Montadert talked about the preservation of intangible cultural heritage or ICH. She explained the areas covered by ICH (oral traditions, performing arts, traditional crafts, social rituals, festive events, etc.) and the challenges to its preservation. She stressed that communities themselves must recognize their intangible cultural heritage and should decide for themselves what is their heritage. Further highlighting the challenges to preserving indigenous culture, photographer Trix Rosen showed a photo-essay of her journeys to Kalinga, Cordillera region in the 1980s and in the 2000s. Rosen’s series of photographs of the Kalinga tribal landscapes, peoples, and vernacular architecture documented the changes that have taken place in the villages she visited in between a 20-year period. Ms. Rosen also gave tips to participants on the photographic documentation of historic sites and buildings, showing how photos can capture the character-defining features of a place.



Focus group during the break-out sessions.

## Break-out sessions

After the presentations by the resource persons, the participants were divided into focus groups to discuss the challenges related to preservation affecting their work. Six groups were formed and each group shared the results of their discussion to the plenary. Among the issues that came out included the elitist perception about historic preservation and the need to broaden the public’s understanding of it. Political will of govern-

**Pls. turn to page 5.**

## ACCA-Navotas youth... (From page 1)



The youth groups learn container gardening and seedling propagation at Buklod Tao Livelihood Center in Banaba, San Mateo.



The groups studying the photos of various container gardening images



The groups making sketch plans of their proposed plant nursery; a group member presenting their design scheme to TAO-Pilipinas

and urban gardens in the ACCA Navotas Network communities which include Masagana in Angat, Bulacan; Pulo in Tanza, Navotas; and R. Domingo and Pantalan Uno in Tangos, Navotas.

The current project targets a new batch of community youth leaders to spearhead the revival of the community urban gardens and maintain plant nurseries for container gardening in the four ACCA communities. In order to prepare them for the task, a workshop on urban container gardening was conducted on March 23, 2013. People's organization Buklod Tao was tapped as resource person to orient them on community based solid waste management (CBSWM) and share lessons and pointers from their success in doing container gardening.

Buklod Tao president Manuel "Ka Noli" Abinales gave a lecture on the philosophy behind urban container gardening and community based solid waste management. The concept of 3Rs – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle was introduced to the participants, as well as the impact of improper waste management on our environment. Aside from the basic concept of community-based solid waste management, Ka Noli also discussed how to make their own compost and liquid fertilizer which the youth leaders could use for their urban container gardening project.

A hands-on demonstration of seedling propagation was included and youth leaders were taught how to plant and transfer seedlings. They were provided with "tetra pots" (rectangular containers made of tetra packs sewn together) and garden soil, both of which are being sold by Buklod Tao. The women leaders of Buklod Tao who oversee the urban container gardening demonstrated how to put the right amount of soil in the tetra pots, place the seedlings, and cover it with plastic bottles to keep the seedlings properly hydrated. At end of the demonstration, the participants planned their next activities including firming up the schedules for a plant nursery design workshop and for setting-up urban gardens in their respective communities.

### *Plant nursery design workshop*

The plant nursery design workshop was conducted on April 20, 2013 at the UP College of Architecture. TAO-Pilipinas architects briefed the participants on designs considerations for a small-scale plant nursery such as the size and location of planting areas, space for compost preparation, selecting and organizing plants to grow in containers, watering system, tools storage, fencing and maintenance. They were divided according to their communities and each of the four groups drew a sketch plan of their proposed plant nursery layout. After their schemes were presented and TAO-Pilipinas critiqued their work, the groups then made a listing of all materials they needed to prepare to set-up their plant nurseries. They were also tasked to submit a cost estimate according to budget.

Action planning was done at the end of the design workshop. The groups outlined the preparatory activities that have to be undertaken prior to the nursery set-up. With schedules finalized and tasks clearly assigned, the groups set about to collect some of the recyclable containers that have been given by friends of TAO-Pilipinas. (*Angel Sales; Ge Matabang*)

# Results of PDA project in Pulo, Navotas presented

A KNOWLEDGE SHARING PRESENTATION AND FORUM WAS ORGANIZED BY THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK'S WATER FINANCING PROGRAM ON APRIL 17, 2013 AT THE ADB Headquarters Library K-Hub. The forum was an opportunity to present the results of the Pilot Demonstration Activity (PDA) entitled *Building Disaster-Resilient Communities in Flood-Prone Areas: A Demonstration and Pilot-testing of Local Design Innovations for Housing and Small Community Infrastructures*. The project was implemented by TAO-Pilipinas and commenced August 2011. With the people's organization SAMASAISIP in Pulo, Tanza as the target community, the local government of Navotas City supported the project.

## Presentations

Ms. Amy Leung, Director for Urban Development and Water Division, gave the opening remarks at the start of the program while Water Resources Officer Audrey Esteban introduced the project objectives and project implementer. The results and lessons learned from the PDA were presented by TAO-Pilipinas Executive Director Arlene Lusterio. She highlighted the main outputs of the project that included community capability-building activities on disaster risk reduction and four model disaster-resilient structures built in Pulo, namely

a 300-meter bamboo bridge, a livelihood center, a multi-purpose hall, and a retrofitted wooden bridge. TAO-Pilipinas also produced a toolkit on developing disaster-resilient building materials and technologies as applied in the PDA. The toolkit was written in Filipino since it is aimed to cater to local communities.

SAMASAISIP community leader Manuelito "Bong" Villanueva gave the response from the community beneficiaries. He expressed the community's gratitude for the enhancement of their disaster-resilience through improved access

and facilities. The active role of the community in the project implementation was also highlighted in his response. Architect Verna Sarraga of TAO-Pilipinas presented the action plan that the community developed at the end of the project and in response to insecure tenure posed by the government's clearing of danger areas and waterways. Two options were explored by the community, that of on-site upgrading following a negotiation with the current landowner; and alternatively, that of in-city resettlement that will still be near the coast since they mainly depend on fishing for livelihood.



PDA project presenters included (L-R) TAO Executive Director Arlene Lusterio, community leader Bong Villanueva, and TAO program staff Verna Sarraga



DILG Undersecretary Francisco Fernandez (seated at extreme right) gives his response and concluding remarks.

## Open forum

ADB Water CoP co-chair Gil-Hong Kim facilitated the open forum that followed the presentations. ADB Urban Development Specialist Michael White broached the possibility of continuing to pursue water supply and sanitation initiatives in Pulo while considering the issue of security of tenure of the community --- helping them to adapt to climate change rather than simply moving them away especially from their source of livelihood. He also stressed repair and maintenance of the community infrastructures built through the PDA, especially that of the bamboo bridge which should be kept by the community in good condition after each rainy season. Mr. White assessed that the next steps or follow-up activity should focus on more improvements in the Pulo community instead of scaling-up the PDA project in other sites.

Ms. Donna Mayor Gordove of DENR stressed the need for further studies on Pulo's site condition and land subsidence. Ms. Gordove also clarified that the mangroves that can be found in Pulo is the only natural mangrove area left in Metro Manila (and that there are planted mangroves in Las Pinas). She suggested that a constructed wetlands system near the mangroves area may be the appropriate sewerage system for the island community. She also mentioned that the bamboo bridge made access to the site easier for DENR to carry out volunteer work in Pulo.

Bong Villanueva agreed that waste management and sanitation projects are needed in their community to protect the children from diseases. He pointed out that their community has had great difficulty obtaining clean drinking water; time and effort is spent on getting drinking water instead of making a living. He also mentioned that their application for piped water system is stalled by right-of-way problems.

Architect Lusterio welcomed the idea of further site studies that will consider climate change effects. She stressed that population growth in the area should be a major consideration in scaling-up projects as more people living there increases the likelihood of damage to the site. She likewise brought up developing a role for the Pulo community as stewards of the mangrove area.

Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) Undersecretary Francisco Fernandez gave the concluding remarks for the activity. Usec. Fernandez commented that the PDA was a very cost-effective way of integrating people in development despite of legal constraints on land ownership and security of tenure issues. He emphasized that the challenge for his office was how to facilitate the institutional arrangements for these kinds of cost-effective projects to be replicated. (*Ge Matabang*)

# Community Architects Network set to hold 2<sup>nd</sup> Regional Workshop

THE SECOND REGIONAL MEETING/WORKSHOP OF THE Community Architects Network is set to be held on March 20-28, 2013 in the Philippines. Started in 2009, the Community Architects Network or CAN is a program under the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights that seeks to “create a platform to link architects, engineers, planners, universities and community artisans in Asia, who work with urban poor communities and believe that the poor should play a central role in planning their communities, and in finding solutions to build better settlements and more inclusive cities”.

The objectives of the CAN meeting/workshop are as follows:

- (1) Bring together active CAN groups in Asia and local groups in the Philippines in order to reflect on the value of their work of supporting the upgrading initiatives of communities;
- (2) Be able to share and apply planning and design skills of participants in finding solutions to actual local initiatives;
- (3) Expose participants to select city-wide or area-wide approach in finding community-driven solutions to shelter and built environment-related issues;
- (4) Use the opportunity to promote community-driven and participatory planning and design approaches and processes to local universities and to groups of technical professionals, with the view of expanding the local CAN network to better able cater to the technical support needs of urban poor communities; and
- (5) Promote community-driven processes in housing and upgrading, particularly in the areas of participatory planning and community-managed implementation to key government shelter agencies, with a

longer term view of influencing government shelter programs to adopt, institutionalize and make resources available for such processes.

The 9-day activity is expected to gather about 100 participants from 18 countries in Asia to exchange and share experiences, through community workshops. These will be done in collaboration with eight communities in Valenzuela City; Barangay 177 in Caloocan City; and Bocaue, Bulacan. The participants will be grouped into teams to provide technical support to actual housing or community upgrading initiatives in these communities. Field visits will be conducted in various local settlements and housing projects while CAN plenary meetings are to be held at Balay Kalinaw, UP Campus in Quezon City. A big forum and exhibit is also scheduled on May 28 which will highlight community presentations on the workshop results to LGUs, national shelter agencies, partners and other stakeholders.

## New batch of international participants in Metro Manila for *Architecture for Extreme Environments Course Field Study*

TWENTY-THREE EUROPEAN STUDENTS OF ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING, AND landscape architecture from Housing Development and Management-Lund University, Sweden spent three weeks of field study in Metro Manila from February 18 to March 8 as part of a regular course offered in Lund that started in January and will culminate in May 2013. The part of the course in Manila aims to provide the students with an actual venue for exposure and direct experience of housing and urban development issues in Philippine context.

The programme in Manila included lectures, site visits to government, private and NGO housing developments, interviews and observations, and an actual design project in collaboration with the Quezon City local government unit

and the National Housing Authority. For this year, the students visited NHA project sites in Smokey Mountain and PRTC-Kalayaan; private-sector developments like Bonifacio Global City (FBDC), Fort Victoria (NSJB), Royal Palm-Taguig (DMCI), Sofia Bellevue (Phinma); and NGO-initiated projects SHEC Phase 2 Housing Project in Pasay and Gawad-Kalinga in Baseco. Some lectures were hosted by the Vice Mayor Joy Belmonte of Quezon City followed by a visit to HURA Homes 2 medium-rise housing project in Vasra; UP College of Architecture lecture with Professors Michael Tomeldan and Zenaida Galingan as main resource speakers on urban planning and landscape architecture, and Ayala Land Inc. on its current housing/real estate developments.

This is the 5<sup>th</sup> year that HDM-Lund University has conducted its field study in the Philippines in partnership with TAO-Pilipinas, a women-led technical service NGO that assists urban poor communities in housing and land tenure issues and in cooperation with local government units and national housing agencies. (*Faith Varona*)

## Historic preservation...

(From page 2)

ment officials in supporting preservation was also highlighted, with the proposed reclamation projects that will alter the famed Manila Bay scenic views given as an example.

Archaeologists mentioned artifacts looting, vandalism, and control over privately-owned lots with heritage structures as among their challenges in preservation. NGO workers and community organizers on the other hand shared the challenge they see in the social acceptance of preservation projects by urban poor communities as these may be seen as less space for them in the cities and their struggle for basic needs takes priority over preservation initiatives. The need to explore opportunities for adaptive reuse of old structures for urban poor housing was therefore identified. Other challenges that the design professionals pointed out were the availability of materials to authentically restore heritage structures and the lack of research and focus on the interior design of heritage structures. These were all



*The participants in the dialogue on historic preservation*

noted by the Bakás Pilipinas team as inputs for future capacity building efforts.

The workshop closed with brief remarks from Ms. Ana Marie Dizon, a member of TAO-Pilipinas' Board of Trustees. Ms. Dizon expressed hope that the participants appreciated and will share the relevance of historic preservation and that the workshop would usher in similar awareness-building activities among the NGO network. (*Ge Matabang*)

### PMPI E-Scrap Recycling Campaign

THE PHILIPPINE MISEREOR PARTNERSHIP, INC. (PMPI) ORGANIZED A STUDY TOUR ON SCRAP METAL recycling in connection with the network's E-Scrap Recycling Campaign. PMPI cluster members, including TAO-Pilipinas, joined the tour on March 22, 2013 which featured by a plant visit to Integrated Recycling Industries, Inc. (IRII) in Laguna Techno Park, Binan, Laguna. IRII is one of the country's accredited metals recycling facilities.

At the IRII plant, its Vice President Mr. Lee Echiverri presented a brief lecture on electronic recycling in the Philippines. Mr. Echiverri's lecture highlighted current statistics on metals recycling, also referred to as "urban mining" or "mining above the ground". He discussed how electronic waste or e-scrap remains a largely untapped resource (i.e. only about 20% of the electronic waste stream is recycled and the rest goes to landfills and incinerators) and its environmental benefits in terms of preservation of forest cover and energy savings from less mining of virgin materials. Mr. Echiverri likewise emphasized the need to increase collection of e-scrap from households which is the biggest user of electronics but currently its smallest source of e-scrap.

Following the briefing, the group proceeded to the plant recycling area where manual pre-processing of electronic waste is done. The group observed how workers disassembled and segregated parts from electronic equipment and gadgets such as printers, copiers and cellphones. Some of the scrap collected goes through mechanical processing in the plant (shredding and smelting) while others are shipped to other countries with metals refinery facilities for further processing.



The tour was capped by a debriefing session and group discussion. With learning gained from the plant visit, the group led by PMPI convenor Archbishop Pabillo reflected on metals recycling as a viable alternative to opening up new mines. They also discussed developing the framework and strategies to heighten the network's advocacy against the negative impacts of large-scale mining. (*Ge Matabang*)

### SHFC Loan Documentation Workshop

THE PHILIPPINE PARTNERSHIP OF SUPPORT SERVICE AGENCIES (PHILSSA) AND THE SOCIAL HOUSING Finance Corporation (SHFC) jointly conducted an orientation workshop on Loan Documentation for High-Density Housing Projects last March 18-19 at the ISO in Ateneo de Manila University. The training was attended by NGO and PO members of PHILSSA and aimed to orient them on how to access the PhP50B housing fund for informal settler families (ISFs) living in danger areas in Metro Manila through SHFC. The government's ISF housing program targets relocating about 20,000 ISFs in six priority waterways, namely along San Juan River, Manggahan Floodway, Tullahan River, Pasig River, Marikina River, and Estero de San Miguel. In-city relocation, high-density or medium-rise housing, and a community-driven approach to housing development have been identified as the preferred solutions to housing the ISFs.

SHFC representatives, led by its president Ana Oliveros, outlined the process to completing the requirements in availing the SHFC housing loan. They provided the process flow and checklist of requirements for three loan types, namely Type 1-Building Construction; Type 2-Building Construction and Lot Acquisition; Type 3-Building Construction and Acquisition of Developed Land. They also explained the guidelines for high-density housing development.

Participants were also taught how to examine land titles (transfer certificate of title), lot plans with technical description, and other legal documents pertaining to land ownership. All in all, the two-day workshop briefed the participants on the following loan documentation procedures: background investigation and loan examination; site inspection and appraisal; mortgage examination; loan release; and amortization scheme. (*Ge Matabang*)

### TAO staff briefed on Outcome and Impact Orientation (OIO)

FROM APRIL 02 TO 04, 2013 TAO-PILIPINAS participated in an Outcome and Impact Orientation (OIO) Workshop conducted by Mr. John Mark Cajuat, Managing Director of Consulting Team Inc. (CTI). The purpose of the workshop was to give TAO-Pilipinas and its staff a general understanding of impact orientation and be able to apply what they have learned from this OIO Workshop into their daily work routine. The four-day workshop was held in R & R Resort in Bgy. Pansol, Calamba, Laguna.

The workshop began with an introduction about Outcome and Impact Orientation. Mr. Cajuat discussed that there is an on-going debate among international aid agencies with regards to the effectiveness of donor agencies and the assistance that they give. This debate is one of the reasons behind the shift of organizations to focus more on an outcome and impact orientation when doing project monitoring and evaluation. He then discussed the concepts and definition of terminologies used in OIO, differentiating terms used in project evaluation.

In line with TAO-Pilipinas developing new project proposals for funding, Mr. Cajuat facilitated evaluation exercises and the formulation of project indicators and a monitoring scheme. Throughout the entire workshop, the staff learned valuable tools and lessons about project monitoring and evaluation. They were taught how to fully incorporate a project monitoring system oriented towards outcome and impact in proposed projects. The workshop became a venue for the organization to review activities being done and enabled the staff to identify gaps and areas for improvement.

At the end of the three-day workshop, a better understanding of OIO was gained with the view that outcome and impact oriented project monitoring system will be integrated into the projects of TAO-Pilipinas. (*Angel Sales*)

## PHILSSA Orientation on People's Planning

AN ORIENTATION ON THE PEOPLE'S PLANNING PROCESS WAS GIVEN BY THE PHILIPPINE PARTNERSHIP OF Support Service Agencies (PHILSSA) and Christian Aid for its member-organizations and assisted communities that may possibly tap into the PhP50B fund for ISF housing. The formulation of a "People's Plan" has been made an integral requirement to accessing the government's ISF housing fund. TAO-Pilipinas acted as the resource person and facilitator for the activity in light of its experience in providing technical assistance to urban poor groups in formulating "people's plans" or otherwise called participatory community development planning. Five NGOs and eight PO groups were able to attend the orientation which was held at the ICSI Conference Room in Ateneo de Manila University on April 18-19, 2013.

Architect Arlene Lusterio started off the orientation with the definition and scope of the term "People's Plan". Arch. Lusterio outlined the contents of a people's plan and the process of people's planning which essentially includes 6 steps or stages: ISF Identification, Site Identification, Land Acquisition, People's Plan Formulation, Site Development and Building/House Construction, and Moving-in/Transfer. She emphasized that people's planning is not confined to technical processes but includes the social processes that the community needs to undergo to implement a participatory housing project. Architect Faith

Varona continued the discussion by presenting some sample cases of people's planning facilitated by TAO-Pilipinas. Arch. Varona cited as examples the people's plans developed with communities in BASECO, Tondo (2002); Marilao, Bulacan (2004); UP Campus (2004); Pineda, Pasig (2002); and Angat, Bulacan (2010).

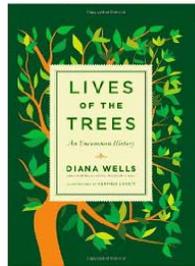
Architects Verna Sarraga and Angelus Sales gave technical inputs for the participants to better understand technical plans and planning and design standards especially for MRBs. Arch. Sarraga gave a lecture on reading

technical drawings with hands-on exercises on using the triangular scale. Arch. Sales explained the minimum standards on MRB housing design based on Batas Pambansa 220.

On the second day of the orientation, participants were divided into groups and underwent a simulated participatory design workshop. Drawing on the lessons learned from the first day of the orientation, the groups used planning tools to deliberate on and generate design schemes for an MRB housing project. They presented these schemes as TAO-Pilipinas facilitators commented on and critiqued the proposals.

The groups were also provided with a checklist on the people's planning process for them to assess the status and progress that their organizations have made so far. An action planning exercise followed their assessment. PHILSSA National Coordinator Benedict Balderrama concluded the activity with a brief closing remark reminding the groups that community action is critical for the ISF housing program to work. (*Ge Matabang*)

Books and other materials featured in this section are available at the TAO Resource Center & Library. 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](mailto:lib@tao-pilipinas.org) to schedule your visit.



Title: **Lives of the Trees: An Uncommon History**  
Author: **Diana Wells**  
Publisher: **Algonquin Books (2010)**  
Kindle Edition

Diana Well's *Lives of The Trees* offers a pleasant reading experience for anyone who appreciates trees. It is a very informative book about 100 tree species described in layman's terms. Interesting scientific facts and origins of the trees are presented along with folklore associated it and the tree's connection to literary works such as Biblical scriptures and Shakespearean writings. The author also explores the tree's history and significance in various cultures. It is written as if to portray the individual characters or "personalities" of the tree species, giving readers a charming way of getting to know each of them.

The only drawback to the book's presentation is the lack of photographs or full drawings of the trees to accompany the essays. For each of the tree featured, there is an illustration drawn by Heather Lovett which shows a detail of the tree's leaves with fruit or bud. A full illustration of the tree would have given better visualization especially for those who are unfamiliar with some of the tree species. (*Ge Matabang*)



Title: **Small Scale Big Change: New Architectures of Social Engagement**  
Author: **Andres Lepik**  
Publisher: **MoMA (2010)**

This book was published in conjunction with the exhibition (of the same title) curated by the author at the Museum of Modern Art, New York in 2010. Featuring eleven small-scale but highly innovative projects around the world, the book explores the social value of architecture and social responsibility of architects. The projects highlighted here focus not merely on the aesthetic value of the structures built but more importantly on the impact of architecture on the lives and environment of the communities they serve, with the architects featured offering practical, sustainable solutions to localized problems and working collaboratively with communities.

The 11 projects featured are Anna Heringer's METI-Handmade School in Bangladesh; Diebedo Francis Kere's Primary School in Burkina Faso; Hashim Sarkis' Housing for Fishermen in Lebanon; Noero Wolff Architects' Museum of Struggle in South Africa; Michael Maltzan's Inner City Arts in California; Rural Sudio's \$20K House in Alabama; Elemental's Quinta Monroy Housing in Chile; Estudio Teddy Cruz's Casa Familiar in California; Druot/Lacaton/Vassal's Tour Bois-le-Pretre in France; Jorge Mario Jauregui's Manguinhos Complex in Brazil; and Urban Think Tanks' Metro Cable in Venezuela.

This inspiring book sends the message that responding to the needs of communities, especially those that are underserved by the design professions, can produce architecture that is both aesthetically compelling and with the potential to serve as a catalyst for social change. (*Ge Matabang*)