

e-newsletter

JANUARY – MARCH 2013



Local children in colourful garbs welcome the visiting participants of the Community Architects Network (CAN) Regional Workshop in India.

(Photo by Verna Sarraga)



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Regional Workshop for Community Architects and Artisans held in India

COMMUNITY ARCHITECTS AND ARTISANS FROM 10 COUNTRIES IN ASIA MET LAST December 2-9 in the charming cities of Ahmedabad and Bhuj in India to share ideas, experiences, and information that can bring support and collaborations for future activities. The regional workshop was hosted and organized by Community Architect's Network (CAN), Hunnar Shaala Foundation (HSF), Self-employed Women's Association of India (SEWA) and Indian Habitat Forum (INHAF).

The participants spent a day in Ahmedabad, the largest city and former capital of the Indian state of Gujarat for field visits and a heritage walk in the old city. They

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TAO conducts planning workshops in Caloocan City and Cagayan De Oro City

TAO-PILIPINAS STARTED 2013 WITH A SERIES OF PARTICIPATORY PLANNING workshops. Technical assistance was given to the Foundation for the Development of the Urban Poor in its proposed medium-rise building (MRB) housing project in Barangay 177, Camarin, Caloocan City. The housing project beneficiaries are composed of 76 displaced families living along Sto. Nino River in Barangay 177 and have formed the Bienina Homeowners Association. The project will be carried out through the com-

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“
After having repeatedly
examined my conscience
before God, I have come to the
certainty that my strengths, due to an
advanced age, are no longer suited to an
adequate exercise of the Petrine ministry.”

- POPE BENEDICT XVI,
announcing his resignation.

Regional Workshop... (From page 1)

also met and interacted with several local groups such as the City Heritage Center (CHC) which helps in restoring and protecting heritage buildings; SEWA wherein most of the women have construction skills; and members of Gujarat Institute of Civil Engineers and Architects (GICEA) and The Institution of Engineers who showed their utmost support for the activity. There were brief stopovers to the local Hindu temples, the splendid Jami Masjid, an Islamic worship place, and Sabarmati Ashram where Gandhi lived approximately 12 years of his life. The rest of the workshop was conducted in Bhuj, headquarters of Kutch which is the largest district in India. In Hunnar Shaala campus, the participants saw how alternative technologies were used in the campus buildings. Some of the techniques applied were wattle-daub, compressed stabilized earth brick (CSEB), mud roll, space frames and even the colorful Indian patent floorings (IPS).

The workshop presentations kicked off with the inaugural address of Shri Kantisen Shroff, the chairman of HSF. Concerns about urban issues in Southeast Asia region was presented by Somsook Boonyabancha, the Secretary General of Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR). Chief Officer Chetan Dudiya presented Bhuj's challenges and the approaches employed while Wardah Hafeez discussed how to work together with the urban poor communities. Chawanad Luansang provided the introduction of ACHR/CAN and the objectives of the workshop. Participants from Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Mongolia, Indonesia, Philippines, Cambodia, Thailand, Tibet Heritage Funds (THF) and India also shared the context of their works in relation to housing, community upgrading, ACCA projects and building technologies. The day ended with folk music concert at the hotel.

Participants also went to field visits and meetings in the communities of GIDC relocation sites. Most of the sites were under the Kutch Earthquake Rehabilitation program that was initiated after the Gujarat earthquake. The urban water shed management of Bhuj was deliberated upon a visit to Hamirsar Lake. Hands-on lectures about rammed earth, ferro-cement roofing and CSEB were also incorporated in the workshop activities.

There was an overflow of knowledge and experiences pooled by the enthusiastic speakers. Thematic issues included community development programs for the economically weaker section of society, sample projects of sustainable technologies, bamboo construction, traditional and alternative construction techniques. The reflection outputs from each country were presented at the end of the workshop. Participants identified activities to create a network for community builders and artisans that could lead to future collaborations, such as setting up an e-group and continuous exchanges between countries.

Participants also had an opportunity to visit several places of interest, including the Prag Mahal Palace, Fateh Mohhamed's House, Sham-e-Sarhad resort in Hodko village, and the Great Rann of Kutch.

The Philippine delegation included Honeyeth Ladiero of TAMPEI, Verna Lucia Sarraga of TAO-Pilipinas, Eric Perfinan, Rizalde Serrano and Menelo Abueva. *(Verna Sarraga)*



Delegates to the CAN Regional Workshop in India



One of the community meetings attended by the workshop participants



Architects Angel Sales and Arlene Lusterio of TAO-Pilipinas receive from Atty. Leni Robredo the plaque for the Urban Poor Person of the Year

TAO-Pilipinas receives Urban Poor Person of the Year Award

ON DECEMBER 07, 2012, TAO-PILIPINAS, INC. THROUGH ITS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ARCH. Arlene Christy Lusterio received the Urban Poor Person of the Year Award given by the Urban Poor Associates, Community Organizers Multiversity, and Community Organizers of the Philippines Enterprise. The award was given as recognition for the technical services rendered by TAO-Pilipinas in improving the lives of urban poor communities.

The award was given during the matinee performance of the play produced by Philippine Educational Theater Association (PETA) entitled "Maryosep". The play is a story of Christmas and the urban poor and mirrors the plight of the urban poor communities. Some of the cast in the play came from different people's organization.

The guest of honor for the award ceremony was Atty. Leni Robredo, the wife of the late DILG Secretary Jesse Robredo. Aside from TAO-Pilipinas, other awardees were Mapua Institute of Technology School of Architecture, Palafox Associates, and Roy Cuerpo. The awards were a way for urban poor communities to express their gratitude to all the people who have been helping them. A special recognition was also given to Sec. Jesse Robredo from the Urban Poor Alliance (UP-All). *(Angel Sales)*

ACCA-UPCA Country Process Meeting

PO and NGO city representatives gathered for the ASIAN COALITION FOR COMMUNITY ACTION – URBAN POOR COALITION ASIA (ACCA-UPCA) Country Process meeting in Bohol on November 13-15, 2012. The 3-day event was organized to provide updates on current ACCA-UPCA activities and to share experiences from the different groups implementing ACCA projects.

Ms. Ruby Haddad of HOMELESS PEOPLE'S FEDERATION PHILIPPINES, INCORPORATED (HPFPI) presented the draft of ACCA Phase 2 as ACCA Phase 1 geared up for its final year. The transition for the second phase was entitled "Expanding and Strengthening City-wide Community-driven Upgrading in Asian Cities". Some of the drafted objectives were to continue the city-wide slum upgrading and to strengthen alternative community finance system at different levels. The target opening of ACCA Phase 2 is on January 2013.

The participants' presentations were grouped into two categories – old and new ACCA projects. The old projects were presented by POs and NGOs from ACCA Navotas Network, HPFPI, FDUP, UPA and SMMI while the new projects were from Caloocan, Antique, Labo, Quezon City and Bohol. An open forum followed the presentations and paved the way for discussion and suggestions to strengthen the Philippine ACCA Network.

Aside from presentations and discussions, the participants also visited different project sites in Bohol. One of them was the housing project of Bohol Concerned Citizen Action for Progress (BCCAP) in Tagbilaran. Thirty houses were already built out of the planned 178 units through sweat equity and World Vision's financial aid. Another project visited was the newly acquired New Lourdes housing site which is approximately a 25-hectare land with around 1,369 beneficiaries. Community savings and ACCA big project loans have played a big part in carrying out not only the old projects but the new and incoming projects as well.

The participants were treated warmly by the Bohol host team and they also had an opportunity to see Chocolate Hills and the sleepy tarsiers in the conservation area in between the project site visits. They had lunch in the Loboc floating restaurant where everyone sang, danced, and had fun. (*Verna Sarraga*)



ADB Flood Management Knowledge Sharing Forum

Last December 4 and 5, TAO-Pilipinas, Inc. was invited by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to attend a forum entitled Philippine Flood Management Knowledge Sharing Forum. This forum was organized by the Department of Public Works and Highway (DPWH) together with ADB. The gathering brought together government officials from various national agencies (ex. DPWH, DENR, NEDA, DSWD), local government, civil society groups, and foreign donor agencies to talk about an integrated flood management plan.

Several foreign speakers were invited to share their experiences with flood management and among them was Professor Gerald Galloway of University of Maryland who discussed the flood management system employed for the Mississippi River and Missouri River. He discussed how certain portions of land in the Mississippi River Basin are intentionally flooded to save greater portions of land from being flooded. Owners of these intentionally flooded lands agreed to this kind of system wherein they are compensated by the government every time their lands are inundated. He also raised key points that they learned during the recent 2011 US flooding. One of them is that absolute protection

from floods is not possible. The government should plan for residual risks and should not rely on a single structural approach. It should implement a portfolio of measures with back-up systems in place.

Presentations were also given by local speakers coming from national government agencies. Flaviana Hilario, the Deputy Administrator for Research and Development of PAGASA, gave a presentation on climate risks in the Philippines and discussed the various PAGASA projects to improve weather forecasting. Director Patrick Gatan of DPWH gave a presentation about Metro Manila flood management projects and enumerated the floodgate structures and pumping stations already built by DPWH.

Most of the participants in the forum came from national government agencies and local government units, with a few coming from civil society groups. Over the course of two days, panelists discussed about an integrated Philippine flood management master plan which is already in the works but gave unclear details about the project. Two panelists represented the social aspect of flood management, Mary Racelis from Ateneo de Manila University and Undersecretary Bimbo Fernandez of DILG (Department of Interior and Local Government). They became the voices for informal settlers who are often seen as problems whenever flooding is being discussed. Overall, the forum became a venue for local participants to learn from the different flood management systems in other countries. (*Angel Sales*)

TAO conducts planning workshops... (From page 1)

munity Mortgage Program (CMP). On January 12-13, 2013 TAO-Pilipinas, together with Arch. May Domingo-Price of TAMPEI, facilitated a planning workshop where Bienina HOA members drew up their house design preferences and proposed the layout of a two to three storey building to be built on a 1,260 sqm lot within Barangay 177. The workshop was held at the barangay conference hall and supported by the Barangay 177 Land and Housing Office.

On February 8-10, 2013, TAO-Pilipinas also conducted planning workshops in Chali Resort, Cagayan De Oro City for three community associations undertaking CMP housing projects. The workshops are part of the continuing technical assistance that TAO-Pilipinas is providing the Social Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC). The three HOAs (Greenfield, Courage Water, Bermundo) are among the Typhoon Sendong affected families that are availing of SHFC's CMP housing loans. In the workshop, the housing project beneficiaries reviewed and assessed the proposed subdivision plans based on site conditions, MGB geohazard report findings and recommendations, and BP220 technical standards. Schemes for typical housing unit designs were also proposed by the beneficiaries after affordability considerations were discussed. The two-day workshop ended with action planning to complete the technical plans and documents required by SHFC for loan processing.

TAO-Pilipinas is scheduled to conduct another round of participatory planning workshops in Cagayan De Oro for four more community associations under SHFC's CMP expresslane projects. (*Ge Matabang*)



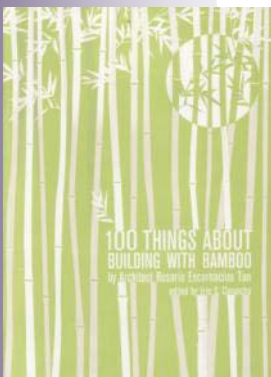
Caloocan Workshop: Bienina HOA members show the scaled models of their proposed housing unit design for the MRB project



CDO Workshop: Courage Water HOA members discuss housing design standards and affordability considerations as they create a scaled model of their preferred housing design

YP Reading List

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 to schedule your visit.



Title: **100 Things about Building with Bamboo**
Author: **Rosario Encarnacion-Tan**
Publication: Self-published (2012)

100 Things about Building with Bamboo is an informative book about bamboo and building with bamboo in general. It gives the reader an insight about living in a bamboo house based on the author's personal experience. In fact, the interesting part of the book is the story of Architect Tan's journey on how she ended up using bamboo as part of her design philosophy. A small and lightweight book, it has a simple yet beautiful cover design and layout.

The book is actually only a teaser and does not give you a detailed step-by-step instruction on how to build a house using bamboo. It gives you a prelude of what to expect when you use bamboo and the dos and don'ts when using bamboo as a building material. The good thing about the book is that it is a light read and you can finish it in one sitting. The only downside is there are no photos but the author explained that the book serves as a

straightforward introduction to bamboo and a coffee-table book about bamboo will be published later. But on its own, it is already a good source of information for people who have no idea of what bamboo is like as a building material.

You could also sense from how the book was written that all the information given in the book came from the author's years of experience working with bamboo and not merely based on theory. Rather than being a guidebook, it is more of a personal narration by the author, giving the readers a sense of intimacy with the author as if they are given a glimpse of her personal life. Overall, the book is most useful not only for architects and builders but for homeowners as well especially those who may want to have their houses constructed using bamboo but have no idea on the challenges they will encounter. (*Angel Sales*)

YP Reflections

BY VERNA LUCIA P. SARRAGA

It's automatic for me to observe four things in an unfamiliar place: food, land/cityscape, architecture and people. I find those things interesting and a source of new learning. There's something about going to places, something that could add up to your character as you go back home. Whether I go for vacation or for work, in some exotic place or in a little playground around the corner, it doesn't matter. Field visits are exciting to me. That is why I was totally grateful when I was given the privilege to join the team to be sent for the Regional Workshop for Community Artisans and Architects in India last December. How could I not be happy? I was going to India, a much farther place to visit than my usual project sites in Banaba, San Mateo or Pulo, Navotas. So here are the four things I observed in India.

FOOD. My survival rate in a place depends on whether I could enjoy the food or not. I would say that their food is very healthy. Most of the time, they were very spicy to the point that I was recalling the lesson of my 4th grade teacher: spicy is not actually a sense of taste. Even so, I enjoyed every food served to us.

LAND/CITYSCAPE. Their streets were very charming. I have never seen so much colorful clothes and intricate architectural details all together in my entire life. I was busy looking up to the structures most of the time. Once or twice I almost bumped into cows prowling around the street. It was such an organized chaos in the streets lined up with rickshaws, motorcycles, cows, dogs, merchants and confused foreign people like us.

ARCHITECTURE. We went to buildings and temples that were hundred years older than my grandfather. I somehow envied how they were able to preserve their architecture in India. I was in awe to know that they also have rainwater harvesting systems connected from the roofs down to a storage tank beneath the floors. If only we could do the same way in the Philippines... I particularly liked the campus of Hunnar Shaala. The first time I set my foot on that place, I felt I was in the wonderland of alternative building materials. The collaboration between their architects, engineers, craftsmen and artisans created a beautiful harmony as reflected in the buildings.

PEOPLE. The people I met were the most remarkable for me. They were from different countries with diverse backgrounds and culture but their hearts speak the same language and passion to reach out to the people and community. Their stories were very inspiring and they were beautiful to hear again and again.

If I were to describe my experience in India in one word, I would say **INCREDIBLE**. No, I am not promoting their tourism campaign slogan. Incredible India was true enough for me. However, I have this one thing that I wanted to ignore but was always present in every place that I went to - that's poverty. No matter how many masks it has, it cannot conceal its true form. It was a sad reality but every time I look up to the people, their eyes are filled with hope and dreams. Their spirits don't just give up and surrender even in struggle.

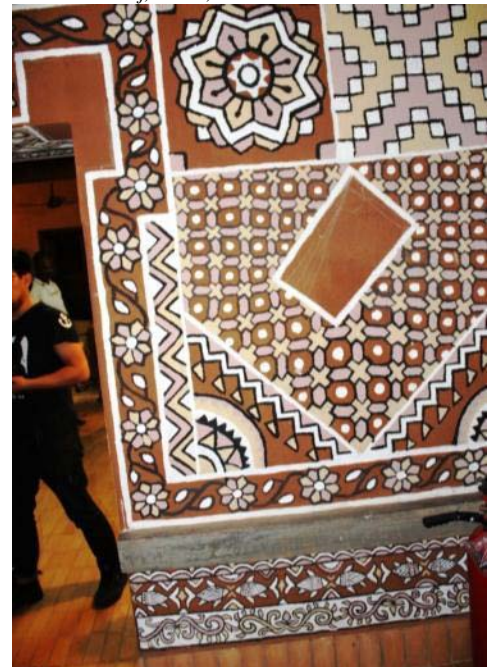
Aside from a handful of souvenirs and new learning, I would say that I went home with a renewed heart. Yes, there's something about going to places. It strengthens you to keep striding along the path you decided to take. And surely, poverty is curable and change is possible.



Our first dinner



A view in Bhuj, Kutch, India



The paint used in the walls of HunnarShaala was actually colored mud



Great people at the Great Rann of Kutch

TAO Shelter Magazine Issue # 11-12

A new issue of TAO Shelter Magazine is now available for purchase at the TAO Office. The latest issue tackles the theme of resettlement in the Philippines and housing programs by the government and features the following articles:

- Local Government-initiated Urban Revitalization by Nathaniel von Einsiedel
- The Evolution of Resettlement Policies and Program in the Philippines: Where Will It Take Us? By Faith Varona
- Pushing Towards Genuine Community-initiated Resettlement by Verna Lucia Sarraga
- Rule of Law in Public Administration: The Philippine Local Government Urban Poor Resettlement and Housing Program by Edna Estifania A. Co



Also included in the issue is a gallery of pictures from a resettlement site in Rodriguez, Rizal taken just days after the onslaught of southwest monsoon (*habagat*) last August and stories from community leaders of Kasiglahan Village in Rodriguez, Rizal describing their experience after relocating to the resettlement site. **The issue is available in printed format for 150Php. Delivery charges are not included.**

Historic Preservation Workshop

TAO-Pilipinas, in cooperation with Bakás Pilipinas and the Mapua Institute of Technology School of Architecture, Industrial Design, and the Built Environment (ARIDBE), is set to conduct a Historic Preservation Workshop for its NGO and academic partners on March 5, 2013 at the Plenary, 2/F South Building of Mapua in Intramuros Manila. Limited slots only and pre-workshop registration is required.

The workshop shall have architectural preservationists from Bakás Pilipinas as resource persons. The focus of the workshop is historic preservation as a tool for economic and community development. Topics will include defining criteria for identifying heritage sites, types of intervention, standards of conservation treatment, overview of conservation techniques for local materials, landmark designation, heritage conservation and community organizing, funding strategies and disaster preparedness and relief for historic structures. Case studies of successful projects will be presented, including the investigation phase of the restoration of San Sebastian Basilica. The workshop will devote time for break-out group discussions of preservation issues faced by participants, which will be presented to the general forum.

For pre-registration confirmation, please contact Mimi Abon of TAO-Pilipinas at (632) 4410998/4367301.

