

# Decentralized Shelter Provision through the Creation of Local Housing Boards



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## Introduction

In an attempt to crystallize our advocacy work in the provision of housing for the urban poor, I decided to work on a controversial housing strategy, the Local Housing Board. The UDHA was very specific in saying that it is the local government units who are the principal actors/ implementers of this law. But seventeen years after its passage, it has come up with very marginal results in terms of LGU's implementing housing in their respective cities and municipalities.

However, it is my belief that much can be done if only LGU's are made aware of their responsibility and how it will redound to more benefits to them having well planned, environmentally sound and economically progressive cities and municipalities if urban development is implemented. The poor long been neglected except during election time can be active partners in development. All that is needed is a local ordinance for its creation which ensures budget for urban development and housing.

## Shelter Situation Analysis in the Philippines



The Philippines is an independent island nation in the western Pacific about 800 km. off the coast of Southeast Asia. It constitutes an archipelago of 7,107 islands with a total land area of approximately 300,000 square kilometres. Capital city is Manila. It was named after Philip II of Spain by Ruy Lopez de Legaspi during his expedition to the country to honour the then Crown Prince. Over centuries foreign elements have been added to the indigenous Malay culture creating a cultural mosaic that reflects both Eastern and Western influences. Today, it has many affinities with the western world derived mainly from the cultures of Spain, Latin America and the United States. Roman Catholicism is the predominant religion. The two official languages in the Philippines are Filipino and English.

The Philippines has a presidential form of government where the President is both head of state and is commander in chief of the armed forces. Presidents are restricted to a single six year term. Legislative powers are through a bicameral congress composed of a Senate serving as the upper house and the House of Representatives which serves as the lower house. The judicial power is vested in the Supreme Court, composed of a Chief Justice and fourteen associate justices all appointed by the President.

The Philippines is divided into three island groups: Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. These are divided into 17 regions, 81 provinces, 136 cities, 1,494 municipalities and 41,995 barangays.

The population of the Philippines is increasing very rapidly making it to the world's 12<sup>th</sup> most populous country, with a population of over 85 million as of 2005. Population growth rate is 2.36 % in the last eight years placing great strains on the economy and social services. Life expectancy is 71.23 years with 71.6 years for females and 69.8 years for males. In 2004, live births numbered 1,710,994. This translated to 4,675 babies born per day, 195 births per hour or three babies per minute.

The Philippines is a newly industrialized country with an economy anchored on agriculture but with substantial contributions from mining, manufacturing, OFW remittances, tourism and business process outsourcing, to which it is known for having one of the most vibrant in Asia. According to the Latorilla Educational Development Fund Newsletter the Philippines is listed in the roster of "Next Eleven" economies. In 2007, it was ranked as the 37<sup>th</sup> largest economy by the International Monetary Fund according to purchasing power parity. It is the fastest growing economy in Southeast Asia posting a real GDP growth rate of 7.3% in 2007, its fastest pace in three decades. The government has also taken steps to distribute economic growth by promoting investments in other areas especially in the provinces. However, despite the growing economy, the Philippines will have to address chronic problems in the future. With an economy heavily reliant on remittances it needs to include improvements in infrastructure, more efficient tax system and furthering deregulation and liberalization program to attract foreign investment.

Table I Macroeconomic Indicators

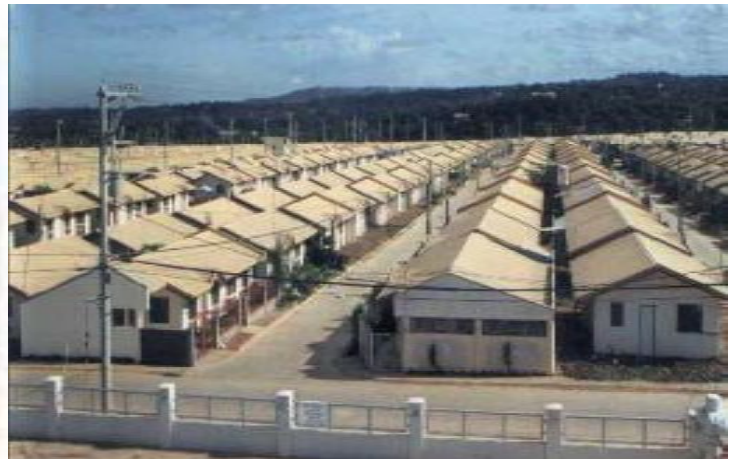
GDP at current market prices	Php 1,458.9 billion
Real GNP growth	14 percent
Consumer price inflation	7.5 percent
Exports fob	US\$ 11.1 billion
Import fob	US\$ 17.1 billion
Current Account	US\$ 1.85 billion
Gross international reserves	US\$ 4.9 billion
Total external Debt	US\$ 35.1 billion

Source: National Statistics Office

## Access to Shelter and its Cost

Housing is one issue that the government must address with urgency. With the rapid growth of our population, the demand for housing is so enormous that the housing sector cannot cope with it.

Based on government figures provided by the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council a total of 882,823 shelter security units were provided by the National Shelter Program against a target of 1.2 million housing units. Of the total output, 60% or 496 units went to socialized housing of which 93% (219,268 units) benefited the informal sector mainly through the Presidential Proclamation of 73 sites. Forty percent (200,865 units) was provided by PAG-IBIG, the largest output by a single institution involving Php.48.53 billion.



Housing provided by government, Habitat and Gawad Kalinga

Table I Housing Targets and Accomplishments

Housing Packages	Target HH 2001-2004	2001	2002	2003	2004	2001-2004
Socialized (below 225,000)	880,000	207,940	118,987	84,716	81,853	493,496
Low cost (225,000-2M)	320,000	54,447	74,306	114,507	146,067	389,327
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,200,000</b>	<b>262,387</b>	<b>193,293</b>	<b>199,223</b>	<b>227,920</b>	<b>882,823</b>

Source: Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council

Figures as of June 2004

The private sector through the Couples for Christ Gawad Kalinga 777 (GK 777) Project and Habitat for Humanity Project provided a total of 8,979 units for the improvement of the plight of slum dwellers.

Table II Program for Slum Dwellers

PROGRAM	2001	2002	2003	TOTAL
HUDCC Asset Reform Program	133,900	68,820	1,000	203,720
NHA Housing Program	47,771	25,356	15,205	88,332
Community Mortgage Program (CMP)	28,474	19,529	11,453	59,456
National Government Centre Proj.	8,739	2,049	410	11,198
North and South Rail Relocation	-	7,350	3,250	10,600
<b>Gawad Kalinga ( GK 777 )</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>1,032</b>	<b>2,963</b>	<b>4,995</b>
<b>Habitat for Humanity</b>	<b>1,878</b>	<b>1,087</b>	<b>1,019</b>	<b>3,984</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>221,762</b>	<b>125,223</b>	<b>35,300</b>	<b>382,285</b>

Source: HUDCC, Couples for Christ, Habitat for Humanity

To ensure shelter security for the Filipino people, access to affordable but decent housing must be provided. The private sector tends to provide complete shelter packages which are largely unaffordable to the poor. The banking system and other private sector groups participate minimally because they cannot compete with the subsidized rates of the government housing programs. With governments very limited resources a localized shelter program under a decentralized framework will effectively address the housing need of various clienteles. Effective programs are better implemented at the local level with the support of the private sector and NGO's. Efforts at the central level often do not meet the needs and preferences of the targeted beneficiaries. With an annual population growth rate estimated at 2.36

percent while urbanization rate is 52 percent, the housing need is projected to be 3.75 million units.

Table III Housing Need, 2005 - 2010

CATEGORY	TOTAL
Housing Backlog	984,466
- doubled Up Housing	387,315
- Replacement/ Informal Settlers	588,853
- Homeless	8,298
Substandard ( Upgrading )	186,334
New Households	2,585,272
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,756,072</b>

Source: HUDCC

## Policy Goal: Right to Housing

The State recognizes the right of every Filipino to own a decent house. Thus, this commitment is enshrined in the constitution, apart from being signatory to international conventions like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. In June 11, 1978 then President Ferdinand Marcos issued PD 1517 “Proclaiming Urban Land Reform in the Philippines and providing for the Implementing Machinery Thereof”. Even then government has initiated programs that will answer the issue of land and housing especially of the poor. However, as in other development programs failure occurs in its implementation. This policy has been updated and expanded with the Urban Land Reform and Housing Act which declares:

*Sec. 9, The State shall, by law, and for the common good, undertake in cooperation with the private sector, a continuing program, of urban land reform and housing which will make available at affordable cost decent housing and basic services to underprivileged and homeless citizens in urban centres and resettlement areas. It shall also promote adequate employment opportunities to such citizens. In the implementation of such program the State shall respect the rights of small property owners.*

With the passage of RA 7160 or the Local Government Code the provision of housing shifted to the Local Government Units mandating them to adopt a



comprehensive land use plan and enact zoning ordinances. The right to housing specifically of the poor was guaranteed by RA 8368 on October 27, 1997 with the repeal of the Anti Squatting Law PD 772 which penalizes a person squatting on private property with criminal offense. The new law decriminalizes squatting but maintains the sanctions against professional squatters embodied in Sec. 27 and 28 of UDHA. The passage of Republic Act 7279 or the Urban Development and Housing Act was viewed with great expectation by the majority of informal settlers because the law provides a glimmer of hope for that ever hoped for piece of land and a decent house to shelter a family against eviction.

However, seventeen years after the passage of the law, the UDHA yielded very marginal results in actual increases in land and housing allotted for the urban poor and still has no protection from eviction and the guaranty of relocation. Even proponent agencies with infrastructure projects are prone to violating the law. A number of Executive Order's signed by the president have been released to support the centre piece of her administration's poverty alleviation efforts – mass housing, but despite all these it cannot cope with the demand by an ever growing population.

In recent months the controversial Metro Manila Development Authority has been conducting demolition/ eviction without the proper and legal process, that is, securing first a certificate of compliance from the Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor. Because of these violations the Church has already stepped in to assist hundreds of affected families left along the side streets and to lobby with the proper agencies the provision of relocation. In a dialogue of the urban poor with the President a Metro Manila Inter- agency Committee was created with funding allocation to address the problem of relocation.

## **Shelter Design in the Philippines**

Architecture is an indice of economic affluence or its deficiency. Thus, housing structure and its design usually follows the financial capability of the user. Building materials and labour are considered as the major cost component for the housing structure itself. Traditional construction materials are hollow blocks, cement, sand, steel, plywood and corrugated roofs which are good for the tropical climate in the country. For those of more modest means, their structure is built of concrete materials with steel framed windows. For the low income housing it is

usually made of mixed materials like concrete on the lower part and wood and plyboard on the upper portion of the structure with galvanized iron as roofing. These are usually constructed in a 30 – 50 square meters lot with 20 – 36 square meters floor area. The use of indigenous materials for socialized housing is encouraged as it helps lower construction cost. Housing construction follows the specifications set by the National Building Code. Local zoning ordinances and other provisions are being implemented at the local level in accordance with the comprehensive land use plan of the city or municipality. BP 220 ensures provision of sites for socialized housing and provides the guidelines for a safe and secure community and the prevention of new communities into becoming blighted sites again.

It has been noted that in areas where tenurial status has been secured an incremental development follows for both housing and community development. Basic services and utilities also follows. Over a short period of time a new community emerges especially those where NGO intervention is seen.

Very recently we have been advocating for the greening of communities and advocating the zero waste management program. Regeneration of blighted communities must be infused with ecological balance thus in coordination with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Department of Agriculture, communities with secured tenure are provided with fruit bearing trees, ornamental plants and vegetable seedlings not just to green and beautify their communities but also to provide food for the table.







## Actors in Shelter Delivery and their Roles

- HUDCC – was created through Executive Order 90. It is the highest policy making and coordinating office on shelter.
- NHA – established by virtue of PD 757 and is the sole government agency to engage in shelter production focusing on homeless, low income families.
- SHFC - created under EO 277 on January 20, 2004 and made operational on October 18, 2005 as a relentless effort of the present administration in addressing social housing
- HDMF – was created on June 11, 1978 by virtue of PD 1530 and later amended by PD 1752 and RA 7742. Was created to address the nation’s basic concern, generation of savings and provision of shelter for workers.
- HLURB – tasked as the planning, regulatory and quasi judicial body for land use development and real estate and housing regulation

- PCUP – created through Executive Order 82, and is the direct link of the urban poor to the government in policy formulation and program implementation.
- DILG – responsible for promoting peace and order, ensuring public safety and ensuring the capabilities of local government units
- LGU – local government units
- NGO – private non- profit organizations engaged in social development work and providing assistance to urban poor families
- PO – organized community urban poor organizations or their aggrupations whose members are the homeless and underprivileged accredited with PCUP

## My Organization

The journey to the creation of the Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor was marked with history. The people or groups behind it has seen the worsening situation in the 1980's that they banded together in search of possible solutions to their problems as well as opportunities for consultations on matters affecting them especially violent demolitions. Hence, when the then President Marcos was overthrown through a bloodless revolution they were at the forefront to experience the dawn of a new beginning. The Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor was created through EO 82 during the revolutionary government of President Corazon Aquino on December 8, 1986. It was a culmination of a series of consultations by various urban poor groups pushing for the issues and concerns of their sector. Its creation marked the realization of their long struggle for a better life with hopes that it could be provided by the newly installed government. Its mandate is to serve as a direct link of the urban poor to the government in formulating policies and implementing programs which address their needs.

PCUP' s task as a coordinating agency is varied, diverse and complicated with a client universe of more than five million urban poor families as of 2006 PCUP data. As a link of government to the urban poor it has to coordinate various pro poor programs rendered by different government and non- government organizations with poverty alleviation initiatives. Such programs include PAGCOR's Serbisyo Muna, PCSO's Social Services, DSWD's CIDSS, NAPC's KALAHÍ and HUDCC's Asset Reform. Foremost though of its task is the promotion of land security and housing.

Several issuances provide impetus to this role foremost of which are the following: EO 364 PCUP as part of the Department of Land Reform and is in-charge of urban land reform, EO 131 which opens for disposition government owned lands for socialized housing, EO 153 which institutionalize the national drive to suppress and eradicate professional squatting and squatting syndicates where PCUP acts as the secretariat of the committee, Administrative Order 111 instructs all national government agencies and the local government units to support and coordinate with PCUP and actively participate in tri-sectoral dialogues specially on matters affecting the urban poor and Memorandum Order 74 directing HUDCC to formulate and adopt certain guidelines for the implementation of proclaimed areas for socialized housing and Republic Act 7279 . In all of these, PCUP played an important role especially on social preparation activities which sets and paves the way for the implementation of a successful program/ project for the poor. PCUP also sets to institutionalize its Alternative Dispute Resolution program to help urban poor families who opted to settle disputes and conflicts through its ADR specialists. PCUP is an active member of local and national inter agency committees, regional development councils and regularly coordinates with local government units.

PCUP has a manpower compliment of one hundred fifty five distributed at the head office in Quezon City and the regional offices in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. It is headed by a Chairman with three Commissioners all appointed by the President. Even with a very lean manpower, PCUP has been instrumental in providing security of tenure to various urban poor communities and avert violent demolitions. Accreditation of urban poor organizations is also one area where empowering the poor has been achieved towards a more substantial participation in local and national policy making bodies. Whatever it has accomplished, PCUP is still faced with the gargantuan task of providing assistance to an ever growing number of urban poor migrant families. It needs the support of all sectors to fulfil its mandate more effectively and efficiently to help translate pro poor programs into a genuinely progressive life for the poor.

## Shelter Problem

Present efforts toward alleviating poverty have consistently centred on housing as the primary need and the ultimate solution to the myriads of issues besetting the urban poor sector. There is an urgency, indeed, to address this issue while the ripples of other issues arising from it can still be contained. One indication which justifies this urgency is the alarming growth rate of urban population. Rural to urban migration occurs primarily because of income differentials between depressed rural and expanding urban economies. In some areas it is triggered by the peace and order situation forcing families in war torn areas to urban centres. The constant influx of migrants at six percent annually to urban centres is a strong indication creating a monstrous ordeal and urban dysfunction that the government has to contend with. It has put pressure not only on scarce resources but also on land resources.

But despite the dismal living condition, people still continue to flock to the urban centres because it is where they hope to find employment. Though ill equipped for urban employment they are able to provide the unskilled labour required by businesses and industries in cities. New migrants also engage in vending and are given a wider choice and opportunities for income generation. The urban poor though when employed does not command the wages commensurate to their needs. Low income then become the most common and quantifiable reason for their depressing situation. Thus when the reality of city living starts to sink in like higher cost of land and housing, rent, food, transportation, education and other necessities



## Current Shelter Situation

According to a 2006 survey of the National Statistics and Coordinating Board, 26.9% of the population live below the poverty line. In a highly urbanized city like Me they are forced to find places and spaces where they can live for free or at a very minimal cost. The need for shelter forced them to illegally occupy private and public properties which can be found in areas where informal settlements have sprouted. Such areas has proliferated in all of Metro Manila contributing to urban decay, air and noise pollution, degradation of natural resources and flooding because of clogged esteros, creeks and river systems. How they manage to survive in such dilapidated shelters and sometimes sub- human condition is as astounding as how they manage to multiply despite their condition.

A Manila a family needs more than twenty thousand pesos a month not to be considered poor. But in Metro Manila alone a total of 726,908 families (2000 NHA data) out of the 10 million urban population is considered poor. These huge numbers of squatter families are distributed in the following areas:

AREAS	PERCENTAGE %
1. Government lands	32.9%
2. Private lands	40.3%
3. Danger zones	19.8%
4. Govt. infra project	6.46%
5. Areas for Priority development	42.9%

Source: Metro Manila Slum Upgrading Project

Hence, when the need of the private owner for his illegally occupied property come, violent confrontation happened during demolitions because of the fear of displacement. It does not differ much even in demolitions at government infrastructure projects. Relocation is very rarely provided in such situations and local government units tasked to provide for them have nothing to offer. In a very recent data from the Metro Manila Development Authority seventy thousand families occupying danger areas are soon to be demolished. However, government has no prepared relocation sites for these families because they are not part of the flagship projects like Northrail and Southrail which has funding allocation and relocation

assistance. Financial assistance being provided by proponent agencies does not solve the problem since the demolished families will just find another site to build their makeshift houses. Such assistance only perpetuates squatting and breeds professional squatters and squatting syndicates. The National Housing Authority tasked with the provision of housing for the poor cannot accommodate them at their resettlement sites because resources are not sufficient. Government relocation sites are also another issue for most relocates because of the inadequate basic services and utilities being provided and a more compelling reason is the distance from their means of livelihood since job opportunities in the area is very nil or non-existent. Families are likely to return to where they previously reside creating a vicious cycle of squatting and a waste of government resources. PCUP estimates that government needs 26.76 billion pesos in land acquisition just to provide all of the identified informal settlers a decent relocation on a 32 square meter lot.

## Housing Provision through the LGU's

The problem of providing shelter is now the responsibility of the local government units by virtue of the Local Government Code of 1991 and Republic Act 7279. However, most local government units are not prepared and has taken the responsibly nor has it seriously considered the ramification this problem will have to cause if nothing is done. The national government has not forcefully taken action to correct the situation because it has generally finance urban development programs and projects. However it is also apparent that the central government alone given the level of resources cannot by itself adequately address the total needs for urban services and development.

The Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor has now taken the initiative in advocating for the creation of Local Housing Boards by each city or municipality. Shelter planning has primarily been the responsibility of the national government until the passage of the Local Government Code of 1991 and the Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992. This UDHA structure will best address the shelter security of the urban poor and provide the local government units a framework for urban development. A shelter plan provides the local government units a better perspective of the housing situation, the challenges posed and the options for improving the situation. Many local government units though lack the capability of how this can be



created and implemented hence the need to enable them. PCUP and other national government agencies are mandated to assist them

## Local Housing Board Creation

Local Housing Boards are special bodies tasked to formulate, develop, implement and monitor policies on the provision for housing and on the observance of the right of the underprivileged to a just and humane eviction and demolition. Its legal basis is Republic Act 7279 and the Local Government Code. With these two laws shelter planning is now the responsibility of the local government as they are tasked to implement programs and projects in low cost housing and other mass dwellings especially for the underprivileged and homeless. However, the design of plans for towns and cities should take into account broader or higher level plans and policies as these have important implications for local growth projections, over all land use allocations, natural resources management and economic strategies. This framework is designed to serve as a model for LGU's, the key implementer of RA7279 not just to provide shelter but also to facilitate the linkage of the local comprehensive land use plan to that of the national development framework plan.

The nature and complexity of urban development process calls for an active participation of all key players and stakeholders with the local government units leading the way and the national government organizations, peoples organizations, non- government organizations, the private sector and the constituency themselves giving their all out support. The extent of their participation however largely depends on the capacity and capability of the participating groups. Thus, the strategy is to build their capabilities considering the unequalled advantage of having informed, learned and capable institutions and groups. Such structure of multi-stakeholder participation is how the Local Housing Board is anchored. The Local Housing Board is chaired by the Mayor with the Vice- Mayor as co- chair and the Chairman of the Committee on Housing as member together with the heads of Planning, Engineering, Urban Poor Affairs Office and a representative from HUDCC, PCUP, Peoples Organization, Non- Government Organization and the private sector. The duties and functions of the board are as follows:

- As a policy making body it shall prepare local shelter plans consistent with the city/municipal development plans. The plan will be the

general framework which effectively provides step by step procedures on providing solutions to the city/ municipality housing problems.

- It shall provide technical assistance in the formulation of their comprehensive land use plans.
- As a regulatory body it shall approve preliminary and final subdivision schemes and development plans of subdivisions in accordance with BP 220. It shall also act as a clearing house for demolition and eviction of the underprivileged and homeless.
- It shall also conduct and inventory all lands within their respective localities, register UDHA beneficiaries and identify sites for socialized housing.
- It shall also monitor the progress of land development projects and ensure compliance of the Balanced Housing Requirement.
- It shall also advise the Council on matters of local taxation which may affect their local housing program and recommend schemes for land acquisition and disposition for socialized housing purposes.
- It shall also coordinate with government entities performing functions which Congress and may affect housing and urban development.

Funding which is almost always a problem in any development program will be taken from the local government units Internal Revenue Allotment. Other sources of funding will be through local taxes or other financial programs of the local government units. Accessing of funds from the national government through the Social Housing Finance Corporation and the private sector is another enabling strategy. The local chief executive is responsible in organizing their respective local housing boards. The members of the board will be responsible in creating the implementing rules and regulations necessary to effectively implement it. What is apparent though is that in cities or municipalities which have Local Housing Boards, not only do they get to provide housing for the poor but also to access funding as in the case of Naga City in Bicol Region which is a showcase for all LGU's nationwide for their very successful LHB implementation.

A bill has been filed at the Senate and Congress respectively Senate Bill No. 1607 and House Bill No. 7718 and once approved the law will be called the "Local Housing Board Act". This would facilitate things up because local government

units will be forced to implement it. Meanwhile, as it gathers dust in the Senate and Congress, PCUP will have to work doubly hard in reaching out more cities and municipalities in its advocacy for the creation of local housing boards. To drum up our advocacy for the creation of local housing boards at the local government units we have been going around and talking to local chief executives, the city/ municipal council especially the committee on housing and urban development, local planners, engineers and heads of their urban poor affairs offices to lobby, influence and educate on the need and importance of creating such a structure and to institutionalize it by creating a law or ordinance. Necessary and very useful in their role as lobbyist is the federation of urban poor organization which we consult on such important issues and whose participation we encourage and advocate. We are also coordinating with the Department of Interior and Local Government for a joint undertaking on this advocacy program. PCUP has come up with instructional materials and kits to help them appreciate and better understand how it can be created and implemented and it's relation to a bigger picture in urban development at the national level.

## **Proposal for Change and Improvement**

Because we have been closely working with local government units, we have in some ways had some influence on some of them and a good working relationship with the others. However, there are local government units that because of political affiliations we need to improve more our coordination activities. It is hard to propose that they can immediately be influenced hence; my paper will focus on an urban city in Metro Manila, the City of Malabon. There are no defined rules in how I have selected my model LGU. Malabon City as a thriving urban city has a good number of informal settlers which has been affected by demolitions without the provision of relocation. On the pipeline are thousands more to be demolished which are court ordered and hence no provision for relocation. This has what made me decide to choose it. The institutionalization of the local housing board in this city will be replicated in other local government units.

## Malabon City Shelter Situation

The City of Malabon is a coastal city situated in the northern part of Metro Manila with a population of 338,855 or 74,137 households based on the 2000 census. It is ranked number 7<sup>th</sup> in terms of population in Metro Manila with a growth rate of 1.92 percent. Employment rate is 80.1% while unemployment rate is 9.1%. The labour force is distributed as follows: female at 52.47% and male at 48.01%. Malabon is a thriving commercial industrial urban centre rich in fishery resources. It is also part of the wider industrial district in the northern part of Metro Manila that produces chemicals, plastics, cigarettes and other goods. Like other suburbs of Manila, Malabon's population has grown rapidly. Being also very close to the premier fishing port in Navotas and the ports in Manila has made the city attractive to migrants from the provinces. This has caused the creation of many informal settlements which the local government has to address and suppress. Based on the 2004 data from the Urban Poor Affairs Office the total urban poor population is 25,398 households with 18,681 households classified as informal settlers and 6,717 households classified as formal settlers.

However, the mechanism on how they can best resolve their housing problem is not in place and the stakeholders work are not in congruence with each other, thus at times duplicating the assistance being provided and limiting the coverage of those that are reached by these assistance. The local government in order to have a planned and systematic way of addressing their shelter problem will need the different stakeholders, in this case the central government, NGO's, private sector, the Church and the organized Peoples Organization themselves to sit as members of the Malabon City Local Housing Board.

## Malabon City (Implementing LHB as a Model)

The creation of the Malabon City Local Housing Board will to a great extent solve their shelter problem and this will make a lot of difference not only for the city itself but more so for its urban poor constituents and the whole of its constituency. This is the proposal for change that this paper aims to do. Embarking on a local development program is highly commendable in the sense that they have taken cognizance of their problem and is serious in trying to address the problem. The

regeneration or renewal of the blighted communities will be addressed as it solves the tenurial status of the poor and the development will in turn spur more economic activities on regenerated areas. Also the creation of this board will ensure that a certain amount will be provided just for housing purposes alone. With the active participation of other stakeholders, a convergence of manpower, resources and skills are readily available for the local government to be tapped.

It is fortunate that the decision makers from the City Mayor to the City Council is of one mind in their desire to address the problem of their urban poor constituency with urgency hence they passed an ordinance creating the Local Housing Board of the City of Malabon. This was followed by an Executive Order creating the City of Malabon Local Housing Board and defining its composition and function. The duly designated representatives from all sectors have been appointed and the challenge of embarking on a sectoral planning that will affect spatial, socio - economic, environmental and physical development for the city of Malabon has been set. A shelter plan for the city should now be formulated. It is notable that the city has an updated Comprehensive Land Use Plan which will aid the Board with their task. The Plan will help focus efforts of different agencies in shelter delivery towards better coordination. It also ensures realistic target setting.

The shelter plan formulation process basically involves six main activities:

- Data gathering – this basically involves retrieving and gathering data from different agencies which will be the basis or input for analysis
- Situational analysis- this is the process of looking at the current housing situation and housing need. Also critical is an assessment of the affordability and existing resources.
- Goal formulation- the vision and goals of the city as well as the objectives and targets are being set in view of its housing program.
- Generation of shelter strategies- this is undertaken after knowing the shelter needs of the city.
- Preparation of an implementation plan – this entails a detailed outline of the strategies to be undertaken.
- Monitoring and evaluation strategies- formulating a system that will provide the planners/implementers relevant information to ensure an effective and efficient delivery of shelter related services.

The first step in shelter planning entails a familiarization with the characteristics of the present housing situation and basic services as well as the target population. An assessment of such condition can be made available through different sources like the National Statistics Office, National Housing Authority, Planning Office and the Urban Poor Affairs Office. The Malabon City Local Housing Board has initial data on the number of informal settlers which has been classified as formal and informal. However, they intend to undertake a more comprehensive census to have a more reliable data. Another task that needs to be accomplished which is very important in data gathering is the inventory of lands both public and private for socialized housing purposes. Assessment of the housing stock will determine the land requirement needed for housing. Land is the most critical among the resources required for shelter program because the supply is a fixed quantity and also because of the competition to use the same for other purposes. Also crucial in its importance is the beneficiary listing. The outcome will give the Board an idea of the number of families that needs to be provided with housing units while identifying the areas that can be converted for housing development. Affordability levels of various identified groups will help the planners determine what affordable shelter options to be provided otherwise the program is likely to fail if shelter packages are not within their paying capacity. LGU- Malabon can also assess the resources it needs to allocate for its housing program. As the Local Housing Board gets down to business the following results are expected in its implementation:

- 1) More humane demolitions as provided for under Sec. 28 of UDHA.
- 2) Provision of relocation for families not part of flagship projects especially those affected by court ordered demolition.
- 3) Security of tenure at informal settlements and upgrading of infrastructure and structural improvement.
- 4) Regeneration of blighted communities and provision of basic services and livelihood opportunities.
- 5) Improvement of the environment as families living in danger areas like waterways, canals, esteros, railways are relocated to permanent housing sites.
- 6) Satellite economic zones will be created in new housing development areas.



- 7) Housing could generate downstream economic activities. More housing construction translates into more jobs and more taxes.
- 8) Protection of the environment is ensured. Conduct of orientation seminars on zero waste management and environment related activities such as tree planting will generate awareness of their obligation to protect mother earth.
- 9) Strict implementation of the law at the barangay level regarding the proliferation of new squatters. Creation of an anti squatting task force to prosecute squatting syndicates.
- 10) The Board being policy maker with recommendatory function should take these crucial matters for consideration: a good consultative and participatory process, good urban renewal plan with provision of more green areas, economic development and environmental management strategies. All these should be in congruence to the over all national development framework plan.

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## List of Acronyms

PCUP - Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor

HUDCC – Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council

NHA – National Housing Authority

HLURB – Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board

SHFC – Social Housing Finance Corporation

MMDA – Metro Manila Development Academy

MMUSP – Metro Manila Urban Settlements Project

OFW – Overseas Filipino Worker

LGU – Local Government Unit

PO – Peoples Organization

NGO – Non Government Organization

HDMF – Home Development Mutual Fund

EO – Executive Order

RA- Republic Act

PD – Presidential Decree

UDHA – Urban Development and Housing Act

UPAO – Urban Poor Affairs Office

DSWD – Department of Social Welfare and Development

PCSO – Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office

PAGCOR – Philippine Gaming Corporation

NAPC – National Anti Poverty Commission