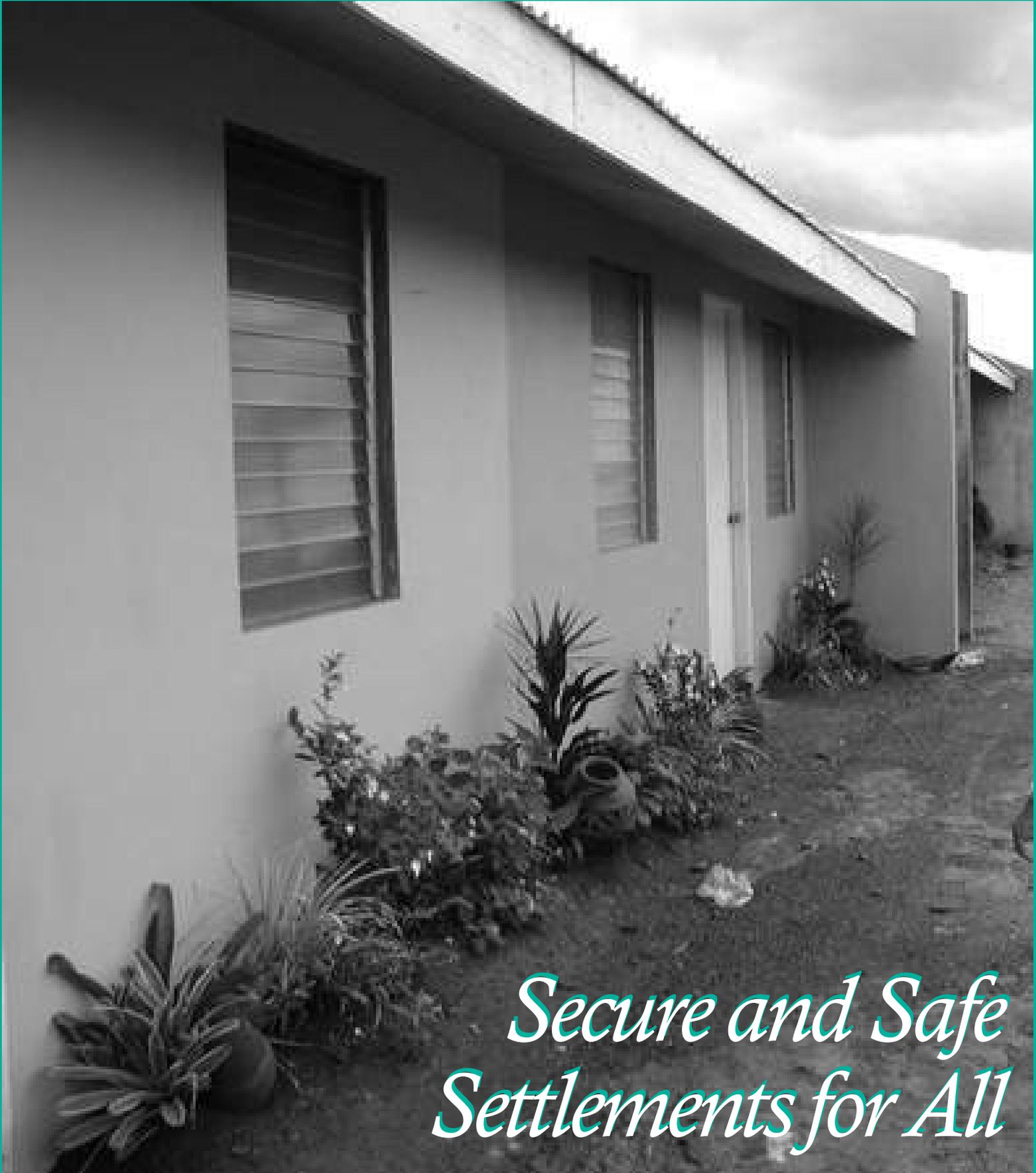




# Salin-Diwa

TRI-ANNUAL PUBLICATION OF THE PARTNERSHIP OF PHILIPPINE SUPPORT SERVICE AGENCIES, INC. (PHILSSA)



*Secure and Safe  
Settlements for All*

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The Partnership of Philippine Support Service Agencies, Inc. is a nonstock, nonprofit network of 56 social development NGOs based in urban centers and performing support service or intermediate functions to primary grassroots organizations. PHILSSA envisions a society based on justice and equality, operated through mechanisms that are participative and democratic. PHILSSA was founded on May 31, 1988 by 18 convenor NGOs, registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission on February 14, 1990 and accredited by the Quezon City council on May 26, 1993.

## Salin-Diwa

Salin-Diwa, which means the "flowing of learnings and ideas," has a threefold purpose: networking, advocacy, and capability building. Salin-Diwa comes out twice a year to tackle issues relating to people development and urban change. It welcomes comments and suggestions from its readers.

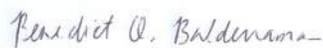
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PHILSSA is happy to share with you this *Salindiwa* issue for January to June 2013 with the theme, “**Secure and Safe Settlements for All**”.

In this issue, we are sharing with you three articles about proposed multi-storey densified in-city housing projects proposed under President Aquino’s Php 50-Billion fund for social housing projects for informal settler families in danger areas in Metro Manila. The first is an article of Benjosef Raposa of the Urban Poor Associates (UPA) and Filomena Cinco of Nagkakaisang Mamamayan ng Legarda (NML) about their social housing project near Estero de San Miguel with Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). The second is by Jastene Joy Simon of Foundation for Development Alternatives (FDA) on the Marangal Village with the Home along the Riverway Initiative Coalition (HARICO) of Malabon City. The third is piece by Ana Teresa Pondosa of Foundation for the Development of the Urban Poor (FDUP) on Ernestville Homes in Barangay Gulod, Quezon City, which is being developed with Social Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC). The Estero de San Miguel and Ernestville Homes projects were also supported by the Fund to Assist in Social and Technical Preparation for Social Housing (FAST.Housing) initiative of PHILSSA with the Peace and Equity Foundation (PEF).

We also include in this issue two other related articles related to the theme of secure and safe settlement. Ferdie Escoton writes on the agenda, plans and proposals of Laguna Lake fisherfolk federations on the issue of *fisherfolk settlement and people’s planning*. I contributed an article on PHILSSA’s project with Give2Asia on *Post-Sendong Rehabilitation Initiatives* in Northern Mindanao.

These are various articles on diverse initiatives of PHILSSA and its member-NGOs on several related topics of people’s plans and community issue agenda for social housing projects addressing disaster risks and security of tenure. These embody the passion, innovation, commitment and creativity of PHILSSA and its member-NGOS in working with informal settler families and communities, as well as other stakeholders, towards **SECURE AND SAFE SETTLEMENTS FOR ALL**.



Dick Balderrama  
PHILSSA National Coordinator

# Nagkakaisang Mamamayan ng Legarda Estero de San Miguel-Legarda, City of Manila

## I. Project Background

### **Location:**

Estero de San Miguel-Legarda is located along Legarda St., behind San Beda College, and is surrounded by San Lorenzo Student Catholic Center and C.M. Recto High School. It covers Barangays 412 and 416 in Zone 42 of the fourth district of Manila, and has 160 families along and within the three-meter easement of Estero de San Miguel. Most families have lived there for 16 to 25 years while some residents have spent as much as 50 to 60 years in the community.

### **Association History and Community Issues:**

Prior to the establishment of their organization, the residents had been informally organized in a religious movement called Imaculada Concepcion Marian Crusade. It was year 2000 when the community experienced their first threat of demolition. They negotiated with the City government and held a vigil, with women and children in front as guards and men at the back as a sign of their resistance to the demolition. Luckily, the demolition did not push through. After that incident, the people vowed to organize themselves, saying this threat was just one of many more to come. This was the time when the *Nagkakaisang Mamamayan ng Legarda* (NML) was born.

A lot more demolition threats were faced by the Nagkakaisang Mamamayan ng Legarda. One was the mandamus order circa 2008 (GR Nos. 171947-48, *MMDA v. Concerned Residents of Manila Bay*, December 18, 2008) issued by the Supreme Court telling concerned government agencies to clean up Manila Bay and all the rivers and tributaries connected to it. This was followed by the Presidential Decree No. 1067 Article 51 mandating the strict observance of the 3-meter easement, waterway communities again became targets for relocation.

A more concrete and immediate threat of demolition came when the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) led by Gina Lopez started its campaign to beautify Estero de Paco. They also targeted estero communities surrounding Malacañang Palace, which included Estero de San Miguel. The desire to clean the river would cause the relocation of communities to distant relocation sites such as Calauan, Laguna. The communities were totally opposed to this given that their livelihood and employment opportunities were located near their communities. This coincided with Urban Poor Associates (UPA)'s efforts to identify communities along waterway and educate them about their housing rights and their right to be involved in decisions affecting their welfare.





## II. Community-Initiated Housing Project

UPA facilitated the consolidation of ideas from the community about the kind of housing they wanted for themselves that did not encroach on the 3-meter easement rule. They also connected Nagkakaisang Mamamayan ng Legarda with the architecture firm Palafox Associates. Palafox Associates visited the estero communities and developed the people's plan into Palafox Housing Design which allowed the communities to stay on-site. Since then, this housing design has been used by the communities to persuade PRRC and different government agencies to allow them to stay in their communities. UPA also brought NML to Mapua Institute of Technology for the enhancement of the Palafox design.

The Estero Housing Design of Palafox Associates was among

those discussed during a meeting between the Urban Poor Alliance (UP-ALL), a network of NGOs and POs to which UPA and NML belong, and President Benigno Aquino III in December 23, 2010. The President promised



government cooperation as far as technical and legal aspects were concerned thus, a Technical Working Group (TWG) was created to look into different housing proposals, including the proposal for Estero de San Miguel. UPA and NML coordinated with private companies and government

agencies that could provide the needed technical and legal basis for the project. Through this, NML was able to secure a geo-hazard report of the project site from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) of DENR, saying the area was far from any potential source of earthquakes. They were also able to avail of a free soil test from DPWH and a free land survey from DENR-NCR.

Even with ongoing negotiations of the estero communities with different government agencies, PRRC was adamant in pushing for their planned beautification of Estero de San Miguel in Legarda, telling the people to leave the area and avail of the off-city relocation. On May 14, 2012, Gina Lopez had the chance to talk to Arch. Felino Palafox and Arch. Albert Zambrano of Mapua, who explained to her that the proposed housing project shall respect the 3-meter easement and

shall have proper storage for solid wastes and a treatment design for liquid wastes.

With government officials proposing for an easement zone wider than 3-meters, the estero communities, collectively known as PASE or *Pinag-isang Alyansang Samahan ng mga Taga-Estero*, lobbied to the City Council for the strict observance of the 3-meter easement zone. This led to the passage of City Ordinance 8276.

On September 29, 2012, the group was able to meet with DSWD Sec.

Dinky Soliman and presented to her the details of the people's proposal for their estero on-site housing project. Sec. Soliman decided to adopt the project under the Disaster Mitigation Program of the Department. On February 14, 2013, with the help of DSWD, DILG and the LGU, the Nagkakaisang Mamamayan ng Legarda Housing Project had its groundbreaking event. Years of struggle ended in a concrete achievement as their plans were buried in a time capsule. Negotiations are still undergoing, but the SARO for the project had

already been released to DSWD and the people are now waiting for project implementation.

The estero housing also gained international support after the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) filmed a segment about slums on May 2011. The segment showed the kind of lives estero residents lead and what they want to achieve with their on-site socialized housing proposal. It also cited how the people's plan in Estero de San Miguel could be an answer to the housing needs of the residents while responding to the environmental concerns of the government.

There are two proposed sites for the MNL Housing Project. The first site is on-site beyond the 3-meter easement which is located in Brgy. 412, Zone 42, District IV, Manila, with an area of 1,435 sq.m. The accretion lot is beyond the 3-meter legal easement and can hold 20 structures of 3-storey micro mid-rise buildings (MRBs) that can each house 2 families, 40 families in all. Each unit has a floor area of 16 sq.m. and costs Php 490,000 each. The total cost for the 20 micro MRBs is Php 19,600,000.00. The second site is off-site near the present community. It is located on a private lot at J.P. Laurel St. cor. Legarda St., San Miguel, Manila. It has an area of 1,500 sq.m. and is owned by Bakerite Corporation. The lot is still being negotiated with the owner but the selling price is pegged at Php 37,000,000. DSWD will buy the land and offer it to the residents under usufruct. Total micro MRB cost would amount to Php 39,200,000.00, with 80 units priced at Php 490,000.00 each.





### III. Project Assessment

The social preparations and tenorial arrangement with DSWD facilitated the progress of the project.

Being a community-led project, the social preparations conducted had contributed a lot in inculcating in the community's mindset that this kind of project will elevate their status in life and give them secure tenure. Among the efforts that they have been doing are estero clean-ups thrice a week, savings scheme with members saving Php 500 per month and another Php 100 for their emergency fund and preparations for estate management.

Total ownership of land is problematic given the cost of the structure. DSWD agreed to use usufruct; thus, the cost of land acquisition is not included in cost recovery. Arrangement for repayment is still being discussed.



Project **Pabahay at Hanapbuhay**



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### IV. Recommendations

Given the people's capacity to pay, more flexible terms of payment depending on the beneficiary's capacity to pay are necessary. The residents of Estero de San Miguel are fortunate that they are using usufruct so the cost of the land is not factored in their repayments.

For other development-oriented organizations, one should really be able to start from where the people are, and from there journey with them as they struggle to realize what they themselves have wanted and decided for themselves. As long

as the goals and values are clear for the project proponents, no matter what the opposition is, then the good shall prevail.

It is also beneficial to expand the current network of alliances, not only in the private sector but more so with government agencies. Social capital played a crucial role in the commencement and continuation of NML's housing effort; important technical and legal requirements could not have been met were it not for the cooperation of all the other government agencies involved.

# Home Along the Riverway Initiative Coalition (Harico) Marangal Village, Barangay Longos, City of Malabon

## I. Project Background

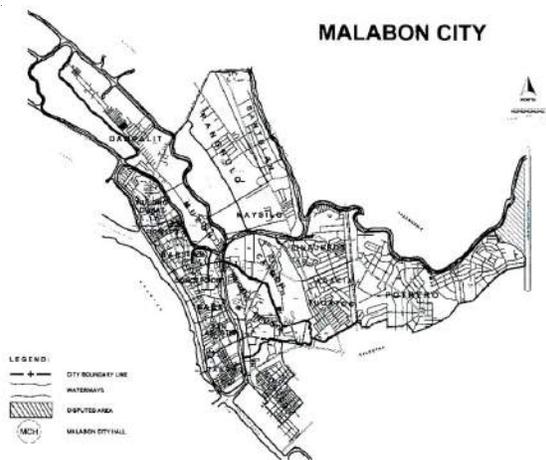
### Location:

Malabon is a first class urban city located at the northern part of Metro Manila and part of the de facto sub-group called CAMANAVA. The cities included in the CAMANAVA sub-region are Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas, and Valenzuela.

Malabon is commonly referred to as the “City of Water” and “Local Venice” because of its year-long flooding due to its close proximity to the sea and the surrounding three major waterways – Malabon, Tullahan, and Tinajeros. In addition, because of its geographical location - being located at the downstream and end line of the waterways system that traverses Metro Manila, the three major waterways in Malabon are prone to water pollution.

### Supreme Court Mandamus for Manila Bay Clean-Up

As part of the small grants provided by the UK’s Department for International Development (DFID) administered through the Partnership of Philippine Support Service Agencies, Inc. (PHILSSA), Foundation for Development Alternatives (FDA) with its partner urban poor alliance in Malabon (AIMM), initiated a research project called Poverty Mapping in the city. This is to



help the local government of Malabon in determining the magnitude and location of its urban poor that will guide the city in its planning activities, whether in developing programs that will address the needs for

basic services or in the creation of the city shelter plan. The implementation of the project coincided with the release of the Supreme Court Mandamus ordering national government agencies to act according to their mandated roles and responsibilities in “cleaning, rehabilitating, and restoring Manila Bay.” It was in February 15, 2011 when the Supreme Court strengthened its December 2008 decision by rendering national government agencies, with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) assigned to create the master plan, to set the timeframe in executing their tasks. The writ of continuing mandamus aimed to ensure that the Manila-Bay clean-up be fully effected.

The mandamus ordered the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA), one of the eleven (11) agencies tasked to implement the Mandamus, “dismantle and