

SINGING THE

SAME SONG

REFLECTIONS OF TWO GENERATIONS OF  
NGO WORKERS IN THE PHILIPPINES

MARGARITA A. LOPA

Asian NGO Coalition (ANGOC)  
Philippine Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas  
(PhilDHRRA)

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# F O R E W O R D

 Social movements, we are told, are made up

people, events and ideas.

*People* – whether individual, class or caste – are the prime movers of social change. Without people, we simply see a flat world of fairly predictable, monotonous action.

*Events* are the external milestones that either draw a people together, or throw them apart. Such was the case in the Philippines' current history in the declaration of martial law, the assassination of Ninoy Aquino, and the EDSA People Power Revolution.

*Ideas* – including values, attitudes and dreams – provide the inner dynamism for social movements that enable the idealistic and stout-hearted, as well as the tyrannical and hard-hearted, to bring about the changes they want in society.

In this modest publication, the reader catches a glimpse of the intermingling of people, events, and ideas in the social movements that formed our nation over the last three and a half decades.

The narrative is inevitably impressionistic, and is limited to the perspectives of a few invited protagonists who do not necessarily represent the entire range of involvement of their generation. Yet hopefully, it does sketch a landscape to help us discern the silver lining in the horizon of continuing NGO involvement in nation-building in the mid-90s.

May this be the start of a continuing dialogue in our search for meaning for things that have already been, as well as for things that are still to come.

**ANTONIO J. LEDESMA, S.J.**

Chairperson, *Asian NGO Coalition for Rural Development*

# I N T R O D U C T I O N

*A* present, non-government

organizations (NGOs) in the Philippines are without a clear and unified vision of the future, and as such, are in a state of flux and confusion. Thus, NGOs seem to have lost the energy and visionary spirit which once served as a driving force in the democracy movement during Ferdinand Marcos's rule and the rebuilding process thereafter under Corazon Aquino's administration.

At the same time, the Ramos Administration's vision of a "newly-industrialized country" or "NIC-hood" status for the country by the year 2000 worries many NGO workers. While the government has picked up NGO catchwords such as "empowerment" and "people's participation" and has recruited prominent NGO personalities for government positions, many NGOs are concerned with the environmental and social consequences of taking a path similar to our neighbouring "tiger economies."

The serious fragmentation within the Philippine left, particularly within the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the National Democratic Front (NDF), has also introduced a new factor to the state of social movements in the Philippines. The conflicts have generally opened up channels for debate and for rethinking on old spheres, thereby introducing a flowering of new paradigms. This has had a profound influence, not only among like-minded NGOs directly affected by the "splits," but also among social development workers involved in various sectoral and issue-based fora.

**It is an opportune time  
in the history of  
Philippine NGOs to take  
a hard look at what has  
actually been achieved  
by NGOs**

While such a situation presents NGOs with numerous obstacles, it also presents a challenge and opportunity for NGOs to step back and take time to reflect, assess, and strategize toward defining the direction and vision for the community. It is an opportune time in the history of Philippine NGOs to take a hard look at what has actually been achieved by NGOs, the impact that these accomplishments have had on the people they work with, and the exciting innovations being undertaken by NGOs in the various fields in which they operate.

The nineties present opportunities for renewed growth among NGOs and for a clearer and more strategic vision situated in the context of a country that is gearing for NIC-hood. NGOs need to be engaged in the dialogues and discussions in more meaningful ways that will be listened to seriously by government and business. This can only come about with stronger and more powerful voices of the grassroots, a critical mass, as well as a substantive and well-thought-out policy advocacy.

## **The Reflection Retreat for Philippine NGOs**

The Reflection-Retreat for Philippine NGOs was designed as one of the major initiatives for NGOs to achieve this renewed growth and energy. The Reflection-Retreat for NGOs was organized by the Asian NGO Coalition (ANGOC) and the Philippine Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas (PhilDHRRA), as a national follow to an Asianregional initiative organized by ANGOC under an Asian NGO Regional Fellows Program.

This first phase was held in Baguio City, Philippines, where a selected number of Asian NGO personalities met for ten days for a quiet reflection and exchange of ideas on the challenges and future of Asia's NGO movement in the light of rapid global development changes.

**The nineties present opportunities for renewed growth among NGOs and for a clearer and more strategic vision.**

National Arts Center in Los Banos, Laguna, brought together various NGO personalities to discuss the past, the present, and the future prospects of the Philippine NGO community. It is significant in the sense that the participants were able to discuss in depth, the issues besetting the NGO movement.

## The Participants

This meeting brought together two "generations" of NGO persons to dialogue. The first generation was composed of the pioneers of the NGO and social development movement, who began their involvement in the 1960s up to the late 1970s. The second-generation NGO personalities were individuals who had joined NGOs in the 1980s and who have since evolved as NGO leaders in their own right over the years.

The "clustering" of personalities was important in that it highlighted the different contexts of involvement in development work (i.e. Marcos's era vis-a-vis Aquino era). It was deemed important to note the nuances in the development approaches and perspectives, as well as the motivations for involvement among these key individuals as they evolved over the years. However, in identifying mainstreaming roles of NGOs in the present and future contexts, a merging of views were seen as crucial.

The participants were invited in their individual capacities and as persons with extensive involvement in the NGO and social development movement. They were not invited as representatives of organizations

## The Reflection Process

The Reflection-Retreat was composed of a series of reflection-sharing sessions which were carried out by individuals, workshop groups, or

plenaries. It began with a levelling-off process, wherein participants introduced themselves and shared their expectations of the conference, their overriding concerns as professionals in particular fields and as social development workers, in general. The first part of the Retreat proper saw the participants taking time to reflect and look back on their experiences as individuals in social development work their entry into their involvement, their joys and difficulties, as well as their growth in that involvement. Discussions on the evolution and impact of social development in society formed the second part of the Reflection-Retreat. Workshop groups were conducted on the history of social development work in the Philippines, the breakdowns and breakthroughs in the different eras of that evolution, and future directions and strategies for development. The Reflection-Retreat was capped by a strategic planning session, which identified important steps for future action.

**Workshops were conducted on the history of social development work in the Philippines, the breakdowns and breakthroughs in the different eras of that evolution.**

### **The Limitations of the Process**

While the conference organizers gave careful attention to regional representation and identified key NGO personalities from Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao as participants, unforeseen circumstances prevented a considerable number of those invited from attending the Reflection-Retreat. The lack of appropriate participation from the regions were therefore identified as a major limitation of the exercise. Similarly, the original list of invited participants was intended to reflect the broadest possible spectrum of ideological affiliations and backgrounds. The perspectives expressed herein, however, can only claim to reflect the inputs of the actual participants. The product may then also be limited in that regard.

## The Publication

**May this book serve as a guide for those who continue to act and struggle, as an inspiration to those who continue to hope and believe, and a challenge for all those who will carry on.**

The Reflection Retreat was designed with five objectives in mind. These were:

- To identify strategic mainstreaming roles of Philippine NGOs in the nineties.
- To assess the impact of NGO work in the last twenty-five years.
- To engage in an introspection of the culture, capacity and constituency of the NGO community and relate these to the work of NGOs.
- To promote periodic personal and institutional self/internal examination among NGO personnel and organizations.
- To spur further in-depth discussion on the NGO movement by publishing and disseminating to the NGO community, the results of the Reflection-Retreat.

This publication seeks to fulfil the last of these five objectives. It does not attempt to include the full text of the reflection proceedings, but is designed to capture the essence of what was shared during the four-day Reflection-Retreat. While the actual text has been written with the assistance of documenters and the conference facilitators, its substance is culled from the collective experiences, ideas, and reflections of the participants to the process. It is their attempt to share the fruits of the Reflection-Retreat to those who were not part of the the exercise, but may have much to learn from it.

This book is a memorial to all those who have given up their lives for the struggle. It is hoped that, in its own special way, it may serve as a guide for those who continue to act and struggle, as an inspiration to those who continue to hope and believe, and a challenge for all those who will carry on in the future.



**KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

# K E Y N O T E A D D R E S S

## The Context of NGO Work in the Philippines Today

by **MARY RACELIS**

This is an edited  
version of the  
Keynote Address  
delivered at the  
Reflection Retreat  
for NGOs on June  
20, 1994

*When* I was asked to come and speak, I couldn't

resist. After all, a university social scientist can never resist anyone who is willing to listen. But more importantly, the people who are here are special individuals representing very special groups trying to forge a new vision of Philippine society and taking the steps and alternatives required to make that come about.

Since this is a reflection session on NGOs, I would like to toss out some of the ideas I have learned from you and your counterparts throughout the Philippines.

I think we all know that NGOs have had to deal with the wider political space since 1986. NGOs were taken aback by the new kind of openness which most of us were not prepared to address or deal with at the end of the 80s but which now appears to be a productive area of activity. We also know that government is not monolithic and the political space really must be tested through concrete

I think we're operating from a basis of strength; NGOs today have concrete experiences which can be utilized to plan for the future. How to deal with government. How to deal with other NGOs. How to deal with donors. Within the framework of Civil Society, people are trying to figure out a wide range of ways of dealing with government so that people are benefited.

In any case, if Civil Society is the fourth sector in society and it has a huge range of individual groupings making their statements to the three elite or control sectors about what is desirable and how it must happen and what we intend to do about it, then it seems to me that the learnings of development-of issue-based NGOs, community organizers, that whole group of society represented here-need to be brought into this much larger Debate NGOs, in a way, are alternative movements of group action. We have alternative health care, alternative economics, alternative agriculture. In other words, these elements of the counter-culture need to become mainstream. If so, then the debate should be much broader to reach the other sectors of society which are not in the alternative sector. Those who find themselves in the middle can be convinced to begin to accept the new values which the alternative groups are promoting. In time this middle fluctuating group, which occupy positions in the state, political and economic sectors themselves may begin to shift over. The alternative, which is more democratic, equitable, sustainable, ecologically-oriented and gender-sensitive, then becomes mainstream. We raise a lot of these learnings in reflection sessions such as this. Unfortunately, whenever conference proceedings, which try to capture some of these learnings, are printed (and they seldom are) they have only limited circulation.

**"The learnings of development, of issue-based NGOs, of community organizers-that whole group represented here-need to be brought into this much larger debate."**

"We now have the local government as an uncharted area. While there is a wary cautiousness, there's an optimism about this new arena."

Now, let me just go to some of the issues I think NGOs are grappling with. These are certainly not new to you. But they always say social scientists, sociologists in particular, state the obvious, but hopefully, in order to put it in some kind of framework.

Let me just clarify that NGOs are, to use Tony Quizon's definition, "private voluntary organizations, social development agencies, or alternative professional support or cause-oriented groups that are non-profit oriented or legal, which are committed to the task of development, and established primarily for socio-economic services, civic, religious, charitable and/or social welfare. "It's important to make this distinction because government or donor agencies have a very different understanding of what NGOs really are. So, the issue of definition is important. Ideally, this definition comes out of experience.

Many of you now face opportunities to work with the service-oriented, rural outreach departments of government such as the Departments of Agrarian Reform (DAR), Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Agriculture (DA), Health (DOH), and Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

These agencies are looking for NGO partnerships because they recognize, as a result of experience and the influence of worldwide trends, that they need to work with groups on site locally or national groups which have NGO connections. The documentation of these learnings, for instance, the experience of the Tripartite Partnership for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (TriPARRD) is quite valuable.

We now also have the local government as an uncharted area. There's a kind of ambivalence regarding this. On one hand, there are community organizers who say that we should be very careful of becoming co-opted. In the next breath they'll say, but with a good mayor or municipal councilors, or if they were from the NGO sector themselves, you can really go far. So while there's a wary cautiousness, there's an optimism about the new arena.

NGOs find that they can influence the type of investments or allocations that municipal development councils recommend. The same goes at the barangay, provincial, and regional level where there is money at the hands of local government officials. The question is, how far do you go without getting co-opted and so on. These things you have to work out as you go along. But I think many NGOs have found that it's desirable to organize in some way at the provincial and regional levels where a lot of allocation decisions are made. Some NGOs are coming into Sustainable Integrated Area Development (SIAD). Add to this the claim of some regional and provincial NGOs claiming "Manila imperialism" and the neglect of the dynamism of local NGOs. The issue of provincial and regional networks for NGOs is a very interesting and important one in devolution. The Low Income Upland Community Program (LIUCP) Project illustrates many of the difficulties between NGOs and government. The LIUCP project of DENR was the darling project of the ADB and foreign donor circles three to five years ago. The DENR entered into a partnership with six NGOs operating at the local level. The NGOs had the following tasks:

- a. to continue the community organizing of the Mindoro Mangyans;
- b. to help process the infrastructure building, as part of the quite large-scale funding;
- c. to reforest which was the DENR's major concern; and
- d. regulating land tenure.

The NGOs were pressured and encouraged to participate by other NGOs who said, you are on the ground and have been with the people.

**"The question is, how far do you go without getting coopted? These things you have to work out as you go along."**

Mangyans and the POs and their future. It was put to them as strongly as that and there was also pressure from the government representatives who were saying, we are trying to start a relationship with NGOs. Anyway, three years ago or so, they actually started the project.

Last December, five out of the six NGOs served notice that they would withdraw from the project. This created lots of problems and they were really blamed for being irresponsible. There were threats that cases would be filed in court. But the NGOs documented their experience and devoted a short statement to justify why they had withdrawn.

One problem was the nature of the relationship. The NGOs saw it as a partnership which the top levels of government accepted in principle. Yet at the project level, a control function was being exercised. NGOs were treated as employees. They were told what to do, badgered for not producing this or that, and were forced appeal to the government in numerous ways. It was unpleasant for all sides. The PENROs and CENROs, mainly stayed out of it because it was a vertical program and because they felt they were not a part of it. They didn't have much say and largely kept out of it. So there was little coordination even within the DENR.

In addition to this idea of control versus partnership, there were differences in outlook regarding product versus process. Government had certain targets in terms of number of trees planted, number of hectares to be covered in this particular set at a particular time. The NGOs agreed to that but also believed that targets should only be indicative as guidelines. Variations on the ground would make it impossible for people to fill the targets as shown.

On the other hand, they might go farther in some aspects that work well for a whole host of reasons and some less. But they felt that you had to look at it as a totality, where you win some and lose some. But in the end, you would have evolved towards this ideal. Mangyans and the POs and their future. It was put to them as strongly as that And there was also pressure from the government representatives who were saying, we are trying to start a relationship with NGOs. Anyway, three years ago or so, they actually started the project.

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The NGOs felt that they were performing in ways which were not valued or recognized by the DENR staff and the ADB. For instance, the DENK people pretty much ignored the tenure infrastructure and CO part, which the people considered to be most important for them. The argument was about product versus process. The government had this concept of social preparation that had to be completed in six to twelve months. And the NGOs felt that social preparation could be attained in three months or two years, depending on the level of organization of the people. But the government insisted that a decision be made, since there would no longer be any funds in six months. I feel that the whole concept of social preparation should never have come into the picture because it distorts the idea of community organizing as a continuous process of increasing sophistication and capacity. There's no cut-off time for community organizing. The notion of social preparation is strange in NGO terms. Thirdly, the bureaucracy favoured order, predictability, and accountability (i.e. in terms of COA regulations). On the other hand, NGOs were committed to flexibility in responding to specific needs and situations of people. NGOs were expected to bridge the funding for at least six to eight months, as a result of the slow processing of government papers, and the resultant delay in payments. The POs did not farm their kaingin because they were planting trees and working in infrastructure building projects, all the while, expecting to be paid. When they were left unpaid for six to eight months, they had no money and didn't have the food from the kaingin either.

"Government tends to have a different vision and set of experiences from which they emerged. Some are very difficult to change. Nonetheless, others are adaptable and adjustable."

"We embrace the rhetoric of empowerment, and yet the NGO that practices it is rare.

The empowering and autonomy of POs is the aim. But at what point does it actually become disempowerment and dependence?"

Tremendous amount of time away from the organizing activities that they were actually contracted to do.

In summary, government tends to have a different vision to start with and a different set of experiences from which they emerged. Some of their actions are dictated by the system and are very difficult to change. Nonetheless, others are adaptable and adjustable and look for solutions. That is the area of common concern that NGOs can explore.

Government assumed that NGOs have to be accountable to the government. To the NGOs, their first accountability is to the people and that orientation is very different. And they may grudgingly say that there should be some form of assurance that they're not just following the external donor dictates. This was more common during earlier times when there was all this fear that NGOs were all communists. They had to monitor the funding of all of these "leftist" groups. And there is still the underlying suspicion from that era. But that's going to come up again and again because that's a form of government control which makes NGOs vulnerable. At whose foreign dictates are you actually operating? Who are your external funding groups? The whole issue of accountability is one that's significant.

With regard to NGO-PO relations, one ASIAN NGO COALITION (ANGOC) book makes a very provocative statement which mentions NGOs as barriers. It's not unusual for NGOs to worry about real empowerment. Up to what point do you stay with the PO? At what point do you leave? That's very important.

Almost universally, we embrace the rhetoric of empowerment and yet the NGO that practices it is rare. Most of us serve primarily as intermediary service delivery conduits between donor agencies and dependent client populations. Our continuing existence depends on maintaining good relationships with our donors whom we dare not risk offending and keep our clients dependent and so on. The question of empowering and autonomy of POs is the aim. But at what tremendous amount of time away from the organizing activities that they were actually contracted to do.

In summary, government tends to have a different vision to start with and a different set of experiences from which they emerged. Some of their actions are dictated by the system and are very difficult to change. Nonetheless, others are adaptable and adjustable and look for solutions. That is the area of common concern that NGOs can explore.

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Point does it actually become disempowerment and dependence?

This certainly needs to be discussed. Certain questions need to be answered based on experience. For instance, at what point did you begin to see the need to withdraw or the need for a new kind of relationship. What were the indicators that led to that conclusion? Was there a time that POs could have taken over? How do you deal with succession crises not only in the NGO but in the PO itself? How do you resolve NGO-NGO or NGO social movement conflict to the benefit of the POs? What about the PO-PO sharing and coalition building themselves and again fund raising?

The gender issue still needs to be grappled with.

To conclude, if you were to ask me to answer the question, "Are we making a difference in Philippine society?" I think, of course, you are making a huge difference and I have mentioned that sometimes, as you struggle as NGOs in this country against all kinds of difficulties, it's easy to get discouraged. But as I said before, in the rest of Asia there is nothing near the equivalent of what's happening in the Philippines which is largely NGO-led. NGOs are formulating new concepts of how society should operate; that is, it must be people-centered and people-based.

There are many practical and specific kinds of experiences. Most recently, I think some of you were involved with the IPAS project, which is incredible from any other country's perspective. The World Bank, which is coursing the fund directly through a group of NGOs which have formed themselves to deal

"Many things can be said about NGO-Donor relations.

Over-dependence on donor funding needs to be questioned."

Many things can be said about NGO-donor relations. I just want to discuss this with reference to the Manila versus outside-Manila structure. It's not a question of "one should have and the other should not have resources," but "What is the kind of coalition or partnership that is most productive to peoples and community groups in the long run?" Over-dependence on donor funding needs to be questioned.

"All of these innovative and creative experiments seem to be working and are exerting a very strong influence in the debate taking place in Philippine society today."

With the IPAS areas in an acceptable, ecological, people-based and sustainable way. This is just incredible. It hasn't happened anywhere else; I think it happened once in the past 25 years in El Salvador. It's easy to get discouraged when you're stuck with the everyday struggles. But as you can see, all of these innovative and creative experiments seem to be working and are exerting a very strong influence in the debate taking place in Philippine

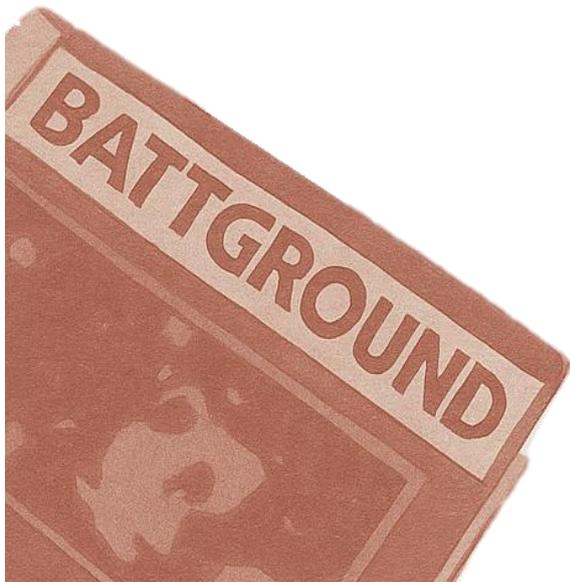
society today. The Philippines is one of the most dynamic countries in this regard. This is largely because this debate is concerned with new visions, new analyses of society which are being carried by the NGO sector. It is dynamic because it is coming from people who are actually linked to action with the grassroots groups, opposed to

academics who tend to be analytical in another way. So, NGOs need to promote their own understanding of what NGOs are trying to accomplish. That certainly means vis-a-vis the government too. There is a need to clarify the norms by which the government judges what is a genuine NGO. And I would suggest that the more specific you can get, the better. For instance, what should government do to make Philippines 2000 people-oriented? That means NGOs have to link up with sympathetic economists, alternative economists, alternative lawyers, alternative sociologists, alternative finance people and get them to use their expertise to give analytical strengths to

the advocacy position. I think that's where I would like to stop, saying only that the framework of civil society is to me a very intriguing one. It specifies plurality whereby

all kinds of groups have a say and a part to play in the decision-making process. NGOs are certainly the most dynamic and strongest sector here. Your reflections I think will help enhance that movement forward.

That means NGOs have to link up with sympathetic economists, alternative economists, alternative lawyers, alternative sociologists, alternative finance people and get



**THE DISCUSSANTS**

## The First Generation

**JUN ATIENZA.** Jun is currently Executive Director of Agricultural Missions, a small development organization based in New York, which supports people's organizations and NGOs in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, and rural USA. In early 1970, he worked with the Federation of Free Farmers as head of the Promotions Department and in the Philippine Senate as secretary of the Committee on Codes and Constitutional Amendments.

**MILO CASALS.** Milo Casals is currently with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) as its NGO Coordinator/Development Officer. He is backed by his extensive experience from previous involvements with the Philippine Development Assistance Program (PDAP), Social Development Index, and the Ateneo de Manila Office for Social Concern and Involvement, among others.

**DELFIN GANAPIN JR.** Delfin became one of the organizers and still currently serves as Executive Director of the Philippine Federation for Environmental Concerns (PFEC), the first and only coalition of environmental groups and individuals in the Philippines during the martial law period. His extensive involvement in social forestry led him to tackle the role of director of the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB), and later that of Assistant Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). He is, at present, the Executive Director of the Foundation for Philippine Environment (FPE).

**EUGENE GONZALES.** Eugene has 12 years of experience in project development and management, institutional development and policy analysis as a project team member, project leader, and as consultant. He has participated in the design and implementation of four grant-making mechanisms that have provided funds to Philippine NGOs and POs in the last six years. Eugene is currently Executive Director of the Philippines-Canada Human Resource Development Program (PCHRD) and sits as NGO representative in the Steering committee for the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan, as well as the Philippine Council for Sustainable Development (as alternate).

**RAUL GONZALES.** Raul is the Program Coordinator of the Philippine-Australian Community Assistance Program (PACAP), which provides him with the opportunity to utilize his skills in project development, monitoring and management. Previous to his stint with PACAP, Raul was involved with the Canadian Philippine Development Assistance Program (PDAP).

**GREG HONTIVEROS.** Greg finds his roots in social development work in his involvement with the Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) in Mindanao. At present, he is actively involved in community organizing and grassroots training, as well as issue advocacy in his role as Program Officer for the environment of the Associates for Integral Development. Based in Butuan City, Mindanao, Greg is also an advocate of community journalism.

**DINKY JULIANO-SOLIMAN.** Dinky started her pioneering work in social development as a community organizer in Bukidnon and in an urban poor community in Quezon City. Later, she was instrumental in establishing institutions such as the Agency for Community Educational Services (ACES) Foundation and PhilDHRRRA, as well as the Congress for a People's Agrarian Reform (CPAR). As a result of these efforts, Dinky has honed the craft of community organizing, negotiation and coalition-building in development work. She has come full-circle and is once again involved in the CO movement, this time by training next generations of COs, as Executive Director of CO-TRAIN.

**FR. TONY LEDESMA S.J.** From 1963 to 1972, Fr. Tony Ledesma supported the Federation of Free Farmers in their lobby for land reform, particularly in Luzon and Negros Occidental. He went on to conduct research and advocacy initiatives on AR policies particularly concerning landless worker and small farmers in Iloilo, Nueva Ecija and Zamboanga del Sur. Since that time, Fr. Tony has helped found PhilDHRRA and ANGOC. He is also the driving force behind SEARSOLIN, the regional training institute serving agricultural workers of the whole of South Asia. Fr. Tony is currently Executive Vice President of Xavier University and the Director of the its College of Agriculture Complex.

**FR. FRANCIS LUCAS.** After 20 years in development work, Fr. Francis' involvements continue to include his commitment to various issues and concerns such as agrarian reform and the environment, community organizing and development communications. He is currently involved with the Green Forum Philippines, PhilDHRRA, ANGOC, Philippine Federation of Catholic Broadcasters, World Association of Community Broadcasters, and the Infanta Community Development Administration, Inc., and the Community Organizing People's Enterprise (COPE).

**GING QUINTOS-DELES.** After her pioneering work with Social Development Index, Ging currently serves as the Executive Director of the Gaston Z. Ortigas Peace Institute (GZO-PI), which is also the secretariat for three national peace initiatives. She is also involved in advocacy for ancestral domains and natural resource management with partner indigenous cultural communities and NGOs in the Cordillera. A leader in the women's movement, she is active in promoting women's meaningful participation in the peace process. Her other involvements include sitting with the United Nations Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Peace Consortium, the Project Group on Women and Peace, the Philippine Council for Sustainable Development, and the National Movement for Filipino Women (PILIPINA).

**TONY QUIZON.** TQ joined his first public rally at 14, and got hooked on for the next 24 years in development work. In the 1970s he first worked as a community organizer and volunteer in the students' and farmers' movements, and later on joined the NGO sector through Impact Magazine, CENDHRRA and other small groups which he helped establish. He now engages in advocacy efforts on agrarian reform and sustainable development issues at the national and Asian levels, as Executive Director of the ANGOC. He helped initiate the NGO campaign on the ADB and is now involved with the World Bank/NGO Committee and the International Council of Voluntary Agencies. He continues volunteer work with several local Philippine-based NGOs.

**RENE SALAZAR.** Rene worked full time as a political activist dealing with issues of students, peasants and indigenous people from 1970 to 1975. He then went on to join the Community Organizers of the Philippines Enterprise (COPE) and in the process, engaged in open, legal and peaceful techniques of mass mobilization, conscientization and empowerment. In 1986, Rene became National Coordinator of SIBAT, a national NGO network on appropriate technology. At present, Rene is the coordinator of the "Seeds Program" that specializes on issues regarding plant genetic resources, conservation and development, biotechnology, intellectual property rights and other trade issues. His involvements range from assisting community projects to information and policy advocacy work at the local, national, regional and global levels.

## THE SECOND GENERATION

**NILDA ALBAO.** Nilda is currently the Executive Director of the Agency for Community Educational Services (ACES) Foundation, one of the pioneers of the community organizing (CO) strategy in the Philippines. Aside from her vast experience in rural organizing, Nilda also counts *Gender and Development* as among her areas of expertise.

**NANDY ALDABA.** Nandy's development work experience ranges from labor organizing to research and advocacy and to networking and coalition-building. After working for the Center for Community Services (CCS) for ten years (the last three as Director), he was instrumental in founding the Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO) and served as its first National Coordinator. He is at present the Executive Director of the Ateneo Center for Social Policy and Public Affairs (ACSPPA), and is finishing his doctoral studies in Economics. Nandy is currently the Chair of the political organization PANDAYAN.

**AL ALEGRE.** Al started out as a trade union organizer and educator serving workers' organizations in Metro Manila for eight years. He then became involved in several NGO-led campaigns related to various basic sector issues, alternative politics, the US Bases, and the Katipunan Centennial, while continuing his political activism as a member of PANDAYAN. He served as Coordinator or Director of various NGOs involved with popular education and training, cultural work, networking, and international work. After almost a decade and a half of political involvement and social development work, Al is working towards a master's degree in Philippine Studies.

**SOC BANZUELA.** Soc is currently Program Coordinator of the Philippine Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in the Rural Areas (PhilDHRRA). He is primarily involved with program advocacy and implementation as the Officer-in-Charge of the Tripartite Partnership for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (TRIPARRD) program of PhilDHRRA. Prior to this, Soc was active in farmers organizing with the Organizing for Rural Development program of the Center for Community Services (CCS), and fisherfolk organizing with the Service Bureau of Small Fisherfolk (SBSF)

**DAVE INGLES.** Straight out of college in 1984, Dave entered development work as the first program staff of PhilDHRRA. Dave is currently ANGOC Deputy Director responsible for program development in Asia. He is actively involved in promoting impact-oriented network-building strategies with NGOs in the region. He is also pursuing the upscaling of strategic capacities of NGOs in the field of area-based management. He served as Chairperson of the Philippine Development Assistance Program from 1992 to 1993 and is currently a board member of the International Association of Development Managers in Asia.

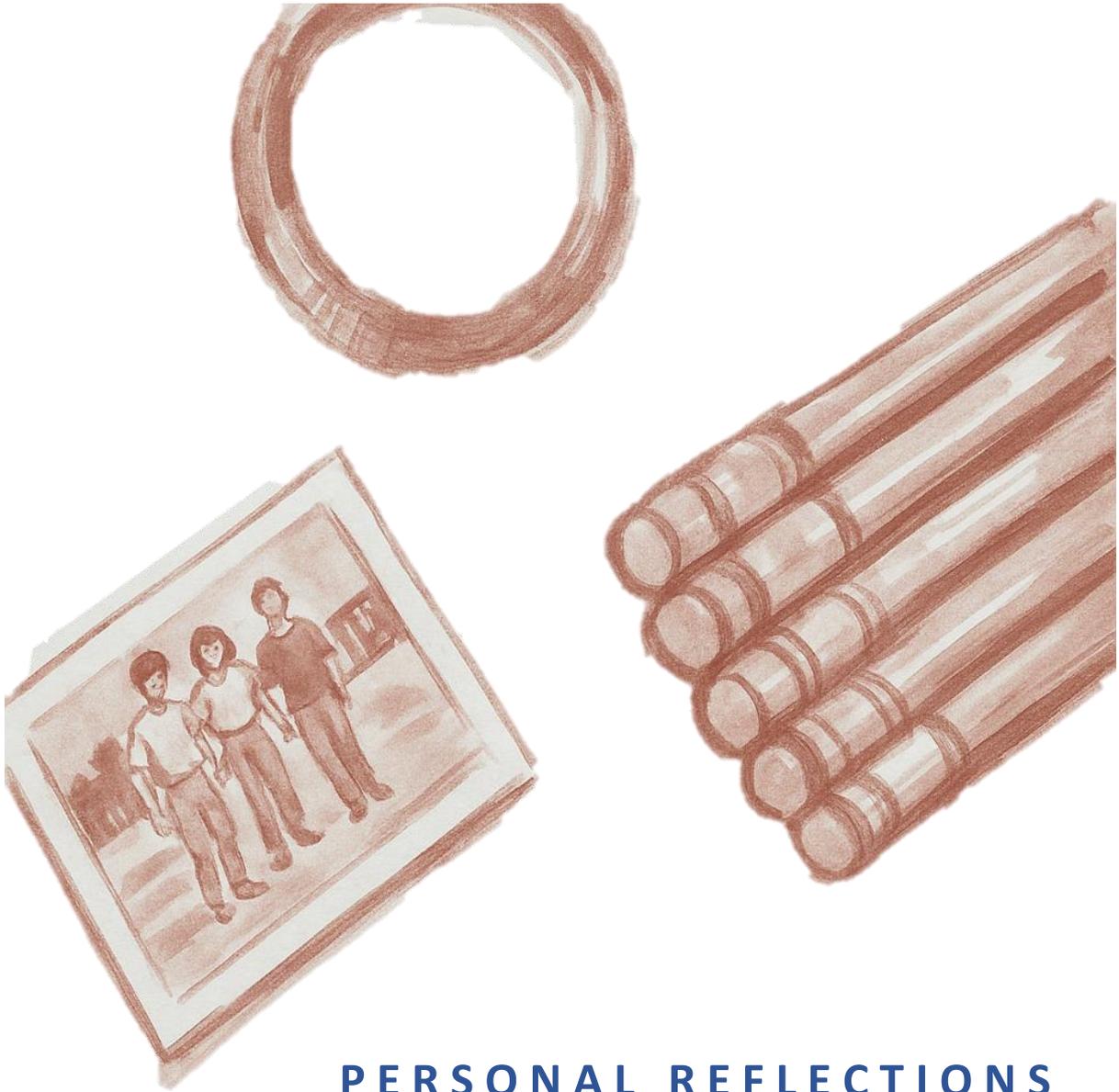
**DODO MACASAET.** Dodo has been the national coordinator of the Pambansang Kilusan ng mga Samahang Magsasaka (PAKISAMA), one of the biggest national peasant federations in the Philippines for the past 5 years. Before this, Dodo spent 7 years directly engaging in farmers organizing in Quezon with the Organizing for Rural Development (ORD) program of the Center for Community Services. He also continues his long experience in political activism by nurturing his commitment to democratic socialism. Dodo is currently pursuing his masters' degree in Public Administration at UP-Diliman.

**CRISTI NOZAWA.** Cristi is at the forefront of the Philippine environment movement as the Executive Director of Haribon Foundation for the Conservation of Natural Resources (HARIBON). She is currently on leave while undergoing post-graduate studies in England.

**MARLENE RAMIREZ.** Marl is currently the National Coordinator of the Philippine Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in the Rural Areas (PhilDHRRA). She is primarily concerned with resource mobilization and program/project development and monitoring. Coming from the "latter half of the second generation" Marlene worked with manufacturing firms as an industrial engineer for 3 years before she joined the NGO movement.

**ROEL RAVANERA.** Roel has spent over 15 years in working mainly with small farmers on agriculture and agrarian reform issues. Earlier, he worked as legal aid and Trainor for farmers, as researcher at UP Los Banos and VISCA and as coordinator and technical consultant for agriculture projects, particularly with Sariling Sikap, Inc. He now is Program Manager for the Asian NGO Coalition's Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture Program, trying to link. up policy advocacy with grassroots action.

**PATRICIA SARENAS.** Pat has made up for her late start in the NGO movement by involving herself in numerous worthwhile activities in Davao, where she is currently based. She is now the Executive Director of the Kahayag Foundation, chairperson of the Mindanao Coalition of Development NGOs (MINCODE), vice-chairperson of the PILIPINA National Council, and is the Southeast Asian focal point for the Grassroots Organizations Operating Together in Sisterhood (GRASSROOTS). Pat is also involved with the Association of Social Development Agencies in the Region (ASDAR), Aksyun Andang sa Kalinaw sa Yutang Natawhan (AKSYUN), and the Gender and Development Thematic Committee of PhilDHRRA



**PERSONAL REFLECTIONS**

## How it all began...

### The Roots of Our Involvement

The little boy watched with envy as the sparrow

flapped off towards the safe confines of a branch well out of reach of deadly slingshots. The little boy daydreamed and pictured himself in similar flight as the pilot of a huge soaring jet.

The young girl alternated between fantasies of living the bohemian lifestyle of a painter and convent life as a nun. As she grew into her teens, she decided that she wanted to become a lawyer, much to the consternation of her father who thought that it was "unglamorous" and that there were no such things as women lawyers.

The bookish teenager dreamt of "serving the people" by becoming a politician. The young boy yearned to develop his talents and become a writer or a journalist.

### In the beginning...our dreams and aspirations

These were the dreams of our generation and those of many other generations of young people. Like them, we had a wide range of dreams which inspired our studies and our games. In our minds, we would rise

in the corporate world and build our nest-eggs; we would become hunters, motorcycle drivers, and national volleyball players. Our parents, like so many other typical mothers and fathers, wanted us to become doctors, lawyers, and engineers.

For some of us, it was sufficient to dream of a good life free from poverty. We would become educated and our "full potentials" would be developed.

**We were really not unlike all young people of our generation.**

Many of us became involved in social development work in the mid-sixties up to the late seventies. We have since become the first in several generations of Filipinos who have devoted a significant portion of their lives to social development work in the Philippines.

Even in our youth, quite a few of us were intent on entering professions that would exert influence on others. For instance, several of us felt called to the priesthood, or aspired to become soldiers and scientists. Others had a vague notion of the need for social action. Nevertheless, our dreams were quite "ordinary."

Those of us who followed in the footsteps of the "first generation" NGO workers in the eighties have evolved as leaders in our own right in the NGO and social development world. Like our elders, our dreams and aspirations did not seem to manifest a culture distinct from young people of our age. In fact, when asked, quite a number of us could not name any clear career orientations that we had in the beginning.

Our dreams surely were not reflective of our destinies in social development and the NGO world.

As such one is wont to wonder, what is it exactly that shaped the **circumstances for our future involvement?** What is it that attracted

us to social development work? What did it have to offer us in the beginning? How did we get involved?

## The Call Towards Social Development Work

In the sixties up to the late seventies, many of us were drawn into our social involvement due in large part to the spirit of the times. School organizations played crucial roles in exposing us to certain social realities which would perhaps otherwise have escaped us. Peers were major influencing factors in our involvement. However, social development work, or perhaps more appropriately, social action, as it was more popularly referred to in the years before its institutionalization in formal social development organizations, presented countless attractions for those of us drawn to it.

For many of us, our involvement was a direct response to the turbulent socio-political situation which was facing the Philippines at that time. We were young men and women propelled by idealism, passion, and strong emotions. Social action was a very real and appropriate contribution to the solution of our country's ills.

In a way, social action fulfilled a few of our personal needs, as well.

While we were making the positive contributions that were so badly-needed at the time, social action also served as an opportunity for us to be in direct contact with the poor-those in society for whom change was most urgent, and at the same time, on whom it was most dependent. For us, it was a means of being in solidarity with the poor and at the same time an opportunity to fully understand and affirm their dignity as a people.

Moreover, being involved meant being able to keep values, such as commitment to social transformation and the appropriate lifestyle

"We got caught up in the spirit of the times. There was no deliberate purpose to go into this kind of work.

A lot of changes happened all over the world and we got caught up in that kind of spirit.'

**GREG HONTIVEROS**

The NGOs felt that they were performing in ways which were not valued or recognized by the DENR staff and the ADB. For instance, the DENK people pretty much ignored the tenure infrastructure and CO part, which the people considered to be most important for them. The argument was about product versus process. The government had this concept of social preparation that had to be completed in six to twelve months. And the NGOs felt that social preparation could be attained in three months or two years, depending on the level of organization of the people. But the government insisted that a decision be made, since there would no longer be any funds in six months. I feel that the whole concept of social preparation should never have come into the picture because it distorts the idea of community organizing as a continuous process of increasing sophistication and capacity. There's no cut-off time for community organizing. The notion of social preparation is strange in NGO terms. Thirdly, the bureaucracy favoured order, predictability, and accountability (i.e. in terms of COA regulations). On the other hand, NGOs were committed to flexibility in responding to specific needs and situations of people. NGOs were expected to bridge the funding for at least six to eight months, as a result of the slow processing of government papers, and the resultant delay in payments. The POs did not farm their kaingin because they were planting trees and working in infrastructure building projects, all the while, expecting to be paid. When they were left unpaid for six to eight months, they had no money and didn't have the food from the kaingin either.

"We had to respond to what was happening to our country. Probably one would say that we were...romantics."

**GREG HONTIVEROS**

"Many people wanted to make a difference or were challenged, although there was no necessary coordination of the personal or individual decisions."

**MILO CASALS**

Provided a great attraction for us as well. One of the major perks of working in social development, we saw, was the practice of "flexi-time" we would not be tied to a "9 to 5" job for so long as we proved productive within the odd hours that we worked.

Role models and family members, as well as our peers were strong influences on our decision to join social development work. For some of us, they were decisive influences. In one instance, one person was drawn in by her mentor to "help out" only to discover that soon enough, there was "no getting out of it."

Several of us had family members who were already involved in social development and the protest movement before us. Others felt that it was their parents who had, albeit indirectly, instilled the values of community and cooperative efforts in them. However, it was our friends and coworkers who helped us out most in processing our involvement; they made our work seem like fun, as well.

Books were major eye-openers for some of us. The ideas that we formed from reading were major factors for our involvement. And once we were in the thick of the work, it was the people themselves—those who formed the communities and the organizations—whom we had vowed to assist, who served as the greatest inspirations.

Ironically, those who most objected to our involvement were, for most of us, also our families. They exerted varying degrees of pressure on us and raised issues pertaining to our safety, security and stability.

Husbands, for instance, objected to the work hours and the time spent away from home. At times, relations with the family were strained by the positions we took on issues.

One NGO leader recalls getting involved in the advocacy for agrarian reform and farmers tenurial rights, and coming into conflict with his

relatives, who were also members of the landed elite in that same province.

## The Nature of Our Work

Over time, the initial attractions of social development evolved into a **genuine commitment** to the cause of social transformation within the different arena that we had come to be involved in. To our delight, this commitment has often been accompanied by numerous little joys.

The **personal satisfaction** of knowing that one has done something and succeeded in contributing to change in society is a major "plus" in development work. Signs of **growing empowerment within a community** is cause for celebration among community organizers and NGO workers such as ourselves.

The seasoned CO was extremely proud when the people that he had been working with started to question his authority. They had become so critical that, in his words, they had learned to "bite the hand that fed them." He was also elated when he recounted that several of his former students were now making deliberate attempts to join the NGO world; some of them, to his delight, had expressed their intentions to return to their hometowns to teach and work with the communities there. His sermons and inspirational talks had finally proven to be effective.

**The exposure to other sectors**, such as the rural people, and their initiatives at development are our inspirations. These have helped us in broadening our perspectives in a way which no other experience could have. This knowledge of other sectors has enabled us to express our solidarity with the masses.

**Self-expression through our work** has also been facilitated by our involvement in social development work. As a result, we have been

"Our framework is actually social development as an orientation, a set of values, and praxis that you bring anywhere you go, whether in an NGO, in a government institution, and even private sector institutions.

constantly challenged to become creative and unique individuals who are constantly dreaming and discovering new things about ourselves and about our environment.

Because we are social development workers, we have succeeded in remaining true to our values.

For instance, most NGO workers are constantly tried by, and yet succeeded in remaining firm in, their commitment to a simple lifestyle. One leader was particularly pleased that she could impart "lessons of love, justice and freedom" to her children because she was working in an NGO. Her daughter has been so touched by these lessons that she has since opted to go into development work, too.

The trying circumstances, which are characteristic of social development work, have also served as a better basis for friendship among individuals. To date, our closest personal friends most often include those whom we have worked with for years. Reunions may be few and far between. Nevertheless, it is the co-organizer, with whom whole days were spent trekking through hillsides, or the trainor who once lent an ear to listen to personal trials and professional difficulties, who seems to know certain parts of our personality best.

And then there are the perks of NGO life. Things like being able to meet "big people", travelling and studying are some things which make the work more pleasant. Of course, the excitement of "living a dangerous life" and facing a flexible work system are helpful as well.

On the other hand, the difficulties that we face in development work are countless.

A major difficulty shared by NGO workers from the first and succeeding generations is the lack of finances for both our families and the institutions we work for.

Those of us who were among the first social development workers identified the difficulties that we faced stemming from institutional flaws. For instance, we saw the predominance of a narrow framework, highly-bureaucratized structures, dependence on government, sloganeering, and inbreeding. These are major problems that need to be contended with.

Conflicts among NGO personalities and between NGOs and POs, as well as between organizations were also cited.

The lack of stimulus and concrete outputs have served particularly frustrating. The rather heavy workload for NGO leaders is also a problem.

Those of us in the younger generations of NGOs raised an entirely different set of concerns.

For instance, gossip and personal debates among members of an organization have resulted in disunity. Friendships with non-NGO workers often become strained for varied reasons. At times, we find it difficult when we are compared to our peers who are not in NGOs, vis-a-vis the traditional measures of success (i.e. wealth and stature). Military harassment was also a major difficulty, particularly for those of us who worked in the field.

We often find our work difficult because of the load and time constraints that we face, the lack of focus in our work and the lack of concrete results of our efforts. Often, we find that the responsibilities that we must face are daunting in view of our rather limited experiences. In some cases, the nature of our work necessitates a suppression of our artistic and other inclinations. Stress and tiredness are common among people of our generation.

## The Call Towards Social Development Work

The experience of NGO work has definitely marked us as individuals, and the ways by which this is manifested in us is varied.

For instance, those of us in the first generation of NGOs have become more passionate about making our dreams for society a reality. We have become better dreamers, and yet we have become more realistic. We are optimists and yet we have become bitter. We have become more understanding of the needs of others, and yet we are more impatient for change. At the same time, we have preserved our capacity to question without being afraid of not having answers, we see that we have become more balanced persons with a greater degree of control over our lives. Most importantly, perhaps, our values have remained intact.

Those of us in the second generation have developed a broader view of people, society, and life. As a result of our involvement, we have become more conscious of the needs of others; we are more caring, patient, humble, accommodating, consistent and less cynical. Our involvement in development work has also helped us grow as more critical, assertive, self-confident, and realistic persons. We have kept our values intact, so much so that we have become better parents who are also feminists and non-sexists, environmentalists, and freedom-lovers. All our experiences have caused us to become more fulfilled persons.

## A Second Look at Our Second Options

In spite of our expressed commitment to development work, it was not unusual for many of us to explore and study our other career options. A number of us were curious about the "other" world and how we would be able to fare in it. The question of whether these second options

would make us happy or fulfilled was always asked; often this was answered in the negative.

Nevertheless, while a greater number did not pursue these thoughts, most of us who belonged to the first generation thought of teaching, writing, research and school administration as options. Interestingly enough, we also raised compromise alternatives such as doing "sideline" and contractual work or going into semi-retirement, while staying in social development work in order to meet financial obligations and to ease the "tiredness". One NGO pioneer thought that an option for him would be to shift gears and become a bureaucrat in one of the large development institutions.

Those of us in the second generation have explored us alternative career paths in moments of tiredness and frustration.

At times this was triggered by the financial difficulties and interpersonal conflicts that we found ourselves in.

We felt that if we were not in NGO work, we would probably find ourselves in various nontraditional NGO work, doing consultancies, working with POs. Most of us thought that we would join the academe as teachers and writers. We also explored the option of joining the government or becoming entrepreneurs and farmers.

Interestingly enough, if we were not in NGO work, we would have had the time to pursue other interests such as painting and other artistic pursuits. For those who had families, shifting to other careers would also mean being able to spend more time with them; for those of us who were still single, it would mean finally having the luxury to plan on having one. Many of us felt that we would no longer have financial problems if we were to leave social development.

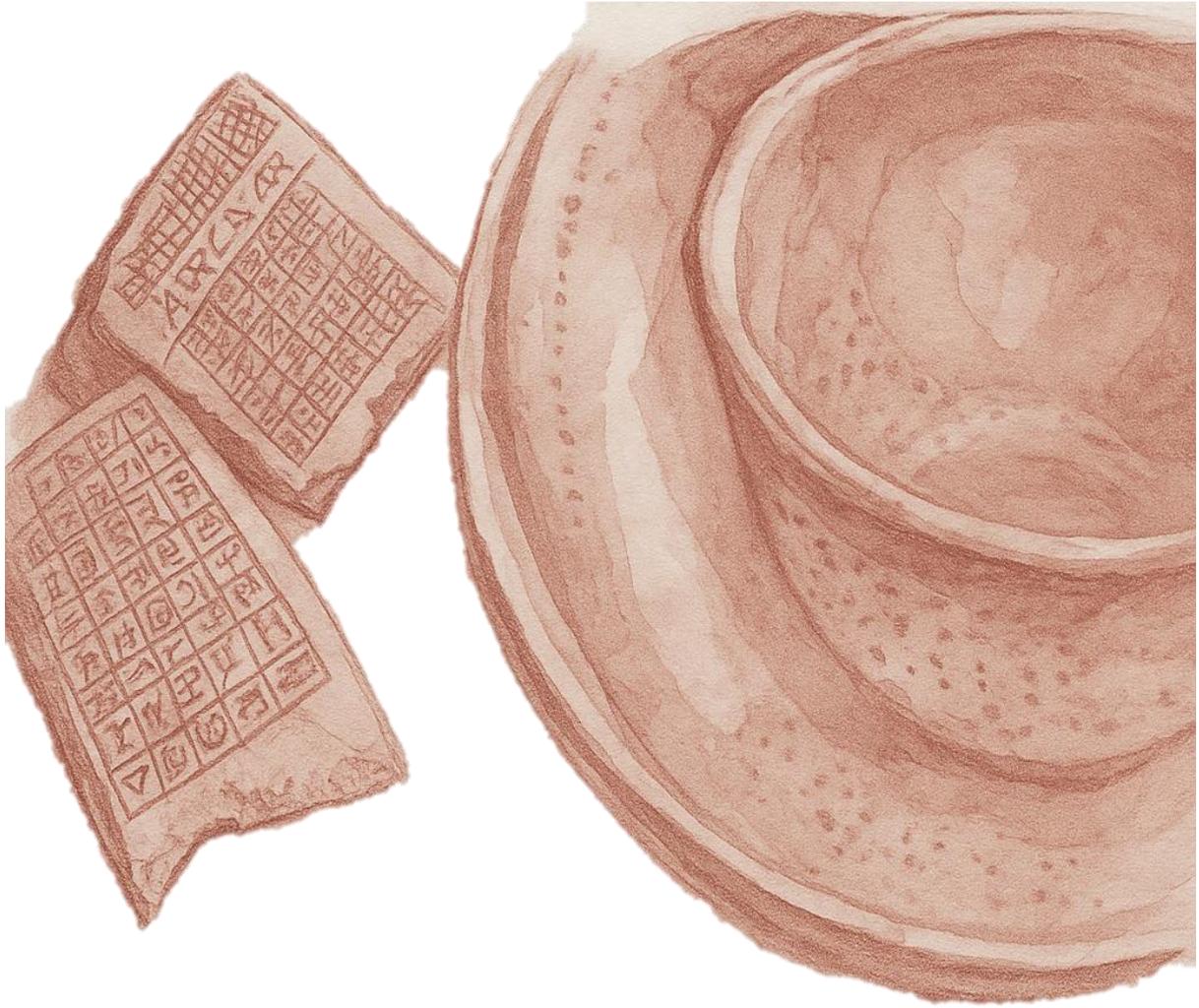
"It's really a type of commitment, a type of orientation, a type of value system and a type of work ethic that you bring to any institution that you choose now or in the future “

**NANDY ALDABA**

evolved into an orientation; it is no longer a fixed career path which is limited to community organizing or NGO work. For many of us it had become a value system and a multi-disciplinary approach to change which would accompany us in whatever arena of work we chose.

Nevertheless, we shelved our other options in favor of staying NGO workers because we felt that the work set out before us here was not yet over, especially in view of the new contexts which we found ourselves in.

We still find enjoyment in our work, and as one person put it, we would not be happy elsewhere, for after all, our spirits are here.



## HISTORICAL CONTENT

## The Evolution of NGOs as a Social Movement

*W*hat are NGOs? What are their roles and

purposes? We confront these questions often and in all types of fora. In attempting to answer these questions and coming to a greater understanding of their strengths, weaknesses and contributions to social transformation we saw it fit to review the "history" of NGOs in the Philippines.

The evolution of social development work in the Philippines spans over thirty years of our country's history. In reviewing the passage of the years, we noted six major eras with distinct trends and developments in the progress of the social development and non-governmental organizations (NGO). These stages are: 1960s to 1972, The Rise of the Social Question; 1972 to 1978, The First Quarter Storm and the Martial Law Years; 1978 to 1983 The Period of Innovation and Expansion; 1983 to 1986, The Second Wave; 1986 to 1992, The Aquino Administration; and 1992 to the present, The Ramos Years. Each era was distinct in that the signs of the times situation and events from within and without the country - called forth a particular response.

The following are the highlights-the events, our responses, insights and reflections-of our collective experience of these eras.

1965 TO 1972:

## THE RISE OF THE SOCIAL QUESTION

We will always remember the late sixties to the early seventies as a time of turmoil in the Philippines.

While the civil rights and anti-war movements raged in the United States and other western countries, the Philippines was struggling with a steadily-worsening political and economic situation. Before our very eyes, the gap between the extremely wealthy and poorer sectors of society widened. The inability of government-a bastion of traditional politics at its worst to respond to the situation frustrated many. Exploitation by the ruling economic and political elite angered even more people, including young students and professionals considered to be the best and the brightest of our generation. The growing unrest was met with increased militarization by the state, which in turn fuelled the fires of protest among the mass movement. their types greater social in the Numerous Church-backed and other key organizations, predecessors of current social development organizations played key roles in this vibrant mass movement.

### A Church of the People

The emergent shift of church involvement towards the socio-economic and political aspects of social transformation began with the establishment of Church-based organizations such as the INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL ORDER (ISO) and the ASIAN SOCIAL INSTITUTE (ASI).

"Vatican II mentioned this role (for the Church) of flowing with the people. And the Social Action Centres produced a Church for the poor."

**-FR. FRANCIS LUCAS - NANDY ALDABA**

The ISO, which was established in 1947, played a crucial role in giving the necessary technical support to labor leaders, particularly those affiliated with the FEDERATION OF FREE WORKERS (FFW).

The establishment of the ASI, a graduate school of economics and sociology, paved the way for Church involvement in socio-economic development projects.

Nevertheless, what was accepted even then as "Catholic action" largely involved traditional forms of participation-the organization of and participation in activities such as catechism and various religious celebrations.

The emergence of a more progressive Church response can be seen in the development of the NATIONAL SECRETARIAT FOR SOCIAL ACTION (NASSA) as a response to the people-oriented mandate of Vatican II. In the late sixties, the leaders of NASSA saw the inadequacy of community development or "socio-economic self-help projects" in situations of extreme poverty. This led to a greater understanding of the "structural roots of the problem", an analysis which NASSA eventually adopted.

The seventies thus saw the emergence of a Philippine Church whose growing involvement in conscientization and in developing politicized mass organizations had made it a church of the people

**1960s  
To 1972**

1961 The Berlin wall, which becomes a stark symbol of the Cold War between the US and the USSR, is erected

1962-1965 The Second Vatican Council is convened by the Roman Catholic Church. Sixteen

documents reflect the spirit of renewal and a new perspective on the Church and social issues.

1965 Ferdinand E. Marcos completes his rise to power, beating incumbent Diosdado Macapagal for the presidency.

1966 Chinese "Cultural Revolution" launched by Mao Ze Dong. 1967 "Jabidah massacre" of Muslims in Corregidor. The Muslim independence movement rises in Mindanao.

## FFF: Core for the Agrarian Reform Lobby

We experienced the emergence of the FEDERATION OF FREE FARMERS (FFF) as a key player in Philippine social movements during this period.

Jeremias Montemayor and Fernando Esguerra established the FFF as a nationwide organization of peasants. It also counted among its members quite a few students and young professionals who, propelled by ideals and their faith, were drawn to the organization and the peasants' struggle. In the sixties, the FFF succeeded in establishing itself as the center of the agrarian reform lobby, and consequently, the peasantry as an effective lobby group for the first time in Philippine history.

The FFF-led Agrifina Circle picket in 1969 won for the small farmers the establishment of a Presidential Coordinating Committee for Social Justice and Agrarian Reform (PCCSJAR), forerunner of the present-day Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR). In 1970, the FFF occupied the Department of Justice (DOJ) building and won major reforms in the agrarian reform law.

In addition, peasant leaders successfully participated in the elections for the first time as a result of the FFF's growing strength. Two leaders from Davao del Norte were elected into the Constitutional Convention in 1970 and formed part of the progressive bloc within that body. FFF peasant candidates also won in the 1971 local elections

"Professionals, students, priests, and nuns (in FFF) were expressing their social involvement within a PO. That earlier model did not have this aspect of polarization between an NGO and a PO."

1968 A faction led by Jose Ma Sison formally splits with the old Communist party and "re-establishes" the new Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) under the aegis of Marxism-Leninism-

Mao Tse Tung-Thought. The CPP's military arm, the New People's Army (NPA) is formed the following year to wage armed struggle. 1968-70 Vietnam War escalates and opposition to the war rises.

1968 Liberation theology evolves in Latin America as a response to unjust social structures.

1969 A 58-day picket by moderate groups led by the Federation of Free Farmers

Advances the lobby for Agrarian Reform. 1969 Marcos wins second term after elections marked by massive cheating. Facing a severe balance of payments crisis, because of massive >

"When we branched out into rural organizing through PECCO, our first core of leaders was always FFF. If you look at CPAR, 50% of all the national or regional leaders were FFF before."

**DINKY JULIANO-SOLIMAN**

The ISO, which was established in 1947, played a crucial role in giving the necessary technical support to labour leaders, particularly those affiliated with the FEDERATION OF FREE WORKERS (FFW).

The federation, however, was most effective in settling disputes between its farmer member and the landowners. Many of us who were part of the FFF as students and professionals recall that this was due in large part to the provision of very strong legal support for its members.

Former members also recall the formation program which we had to undergo. The FFF was known for its "banking" method of education which called for lecture-type training modules for all members. The impact of this formation was so great that quite a number of the current crop of national peasant leaders, regardless of political affiliation, trace their roots to the FFF. The same holds true for many of us who are now NGO and rural development workers.

### The Golden Age of Community Organizing

We saw the formal entry of community organizing (CO) as a viable social development approach in the early seventies with the establishment of the PHILIPPINE ECUMENICAL COUNCIL FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZING (PECCO). The combined efforts of a large group of national democrats, social democrats and independents (individuals not aligned with any political organization, but who found their ideological roots in either the national democrat, social democrat or anarchist strains) together with members of both the Catholics and Protestants churches, led to the establishment of PECCO.

<p>election spending, Marcos's turns to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for loan assistance. The peso is de-valued and causes more economic hardship, deep-ening the social crisis. Sixteen</p>	<p>1970-72 Demands for gender equality becomes stronger and feminism rises in the USA and Western Europe. 1970 Paulo Freire, introduces a new dialogical "action-reflection" paradigm for literacy and cons. Sixteen</p>	<p>sciousness-raising. Socio-political organizing in the Philippines would be profoundly influenced by Freire's (and later Alinsky's) ideas</p>	<p>strations against Marcos are launched in what is now known as the First Quarter Storm. The open protest movement against state repression and the worsening social situation escalates&gt;</p>
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PECCO's organizers held a common belief in social transformation through the equitable distribution of wealth and the establishment of democratic decision-making processes.

More concretely, PECCO was established in order to organize and mobilize the people of Tondo, assist in the resolution of the land problem in that area, and, in so doing, uplift their standard of living. The establishment of the ZONE ONE TONDO ORGANIZATION (ZOTO) in 1970 was a major outcome of PECCO's efforts.

CO, as it developed under the leadership of PECCO and ZOTO was characterized by immediate and palpable victories as a result of the innovative approaches it employed. In addition, the participation of different religious groups (Catholics and Protestants), sectors (students, academe and other professionals), and political formations (national democrats, social democrats, and independents) gave life to a never-before seen ecumenism. As a result of PECCO's establishment, CO gained a foothold in the development process as a viable approach to people empowerment and social change. More importantly, it led to the development of a core of committed community organizers and able PO leaders. Quite a few of us who started our involvement as COs find our roots in this particular era, the age which many consider to be the "Golden Age of Community Organizing."

"It was not difficult to come back to ecumenism because we already knew each other. The barrier was down already because we had been together in other things."

**- JUN ATIENZA**

significantly thereafter.	1971 Young Moro activists organize the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in the struggle for an independent Muslim homeland.	before the senatorial elections.	a parliamentary form of government is exposed by Eduardo Quintero
22 April 1970 The first Earth Day is celebrated.	August 1971 The opposition rally at Plaza Miranda is bombed	Marcos, widely tagged as the perpetrator. He then suspends the writ of habeas corpus.	September 1972 Citing threats to national security, Marcos declares Martial Law all over the country.
1971 Saul Alinsky develops conflict approach as a tool to rouse the people into collective action.		May 1972 Constitutional Convention payolas to extend the term of Marcos by adopting	

## Business and the Social Question

"There was a hiatus in the growth of POS, because martial law was directed at them. One of the reasons NGOs came up was for protection. The farmers could become part of an NGO and feel protected, as opposed to remaining in their own orgs which were being harassed."

- JUN ATIENZA

The business sector was also drawn in as a player in the social movements at this stage. In 1971, the first Conference of Bishops and Businessmen in Baguio City led to the consolidation of the three sponsoring business groups, the Council for Economic Development, the Philippine Business Council, and the Association for Social Action into the PHILIPPINE BUSINESS FOR SOCIAL PROGRESS (PBSP) Foundation.

Although the Foundation was initially viewed with scepticism it provided the venue for business's involvement in social development. In fact, the establishment of the PBSP facilitated the first release of local funds for credit and cooperative development during that time.

1972 TO 1978:

### THE EARLY MARTIAL LAW YEARS

The declaration of Martial Law on September 21, 1972 and Marcos's iron-fist approach to establishing a "New Society" changed the mood of Philippine social movements overnight. In the systematic clampdown which government initiated against all progressive forces, all attempts at organizing and empowerment seemed to grind to a halt; "salvaging", torture, arbitrary arrests and other forms of repression became commonplace, but nevertheless terrorizing, activities of the day. All at

#### 1972 To 1978

September 1972 Under PD 2 and 27, Marcos proclaims land reform in rice and corn lands 1972 Using international loans, Marcos launches an ambitious development plan. In 1973, RP enjoyed a 10% rise in GNP, a

trade surplus, and increased foreign investments. However, from 1974, internal factors related to the corrupt authoritarian political leadership led to the progressive deterioration of the economic situation.

1972 The Muslim separatist rebellion escalates. In the next 4 years, the AFP would pour up to 60% of its resources into battling the MNLF. The fighting causes tens of thousands of casualties. >

once, key leaders who had worked side by side with us either disappeared mysteriously, wound up in detention centres, fled to the mountains to join the resistance movement, or threw in the towel to become coopted by the dictatorial regime.

### The Co-optation of the FFF

Faced with this mounting repression, as well as the possibilities of genuine reforms in the countryside promised by Presidential Decree Number 27, the FFF leadership opted to openly collaborate with the Marcos's regime. This co-optation was, for many of us, a manifestation of the "shallowness" of the banking method of education which the organization had employed; it also pinpointed the urgency of establishing a genuinely critical mass-base.

The FFF leadership's collaboration with government efforts to involve themselves with PO organizing, as well as our disapproval of the highly personalized leadership being employed, prompted many of us to resign from the organization, leading to its general collapse. This was a serious setback to the peasant movement, for the FFF was once viewed as the leading organization in the agrarian front in the Philippines. Moreover, as a result of the defection of the FFF leadership to the dictatorial regime, and its subsequent disintegration, its fallout provided

<p>1973 The National Democratic Front (NDF) is founded as a united front of CPP-led forces October 1975 Recognized as the labor movement's rebirth under Marcos's iron-</p>	<p>fisted rule, workers of the La Tondeña distillery go on strike. The strike also triggers the resurgence of the youth and student movement. 1976 A World Bank-funded government project to build</p>	<p>dams along the Chico River in the Cordilleras meets organized resistance from tribal groups and becomes a focal point in the protest movement. In 1981, the government finally abandons the building of the dam</p>	<p>1976 A ceasefire is called between the MNLF and the government with the signing of the Tripoli Agreement, which grants autonomous rule to Muslims in particular regions in Mindanao</p>
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constantly challenged to become creative and unique individuals who are constantly dreaming and discovering new things about ourselves and about our environment.

Because we are social development workers, we have succeeded in remaining true to our values.

There were FFF members who eventually opted to take up the armed struggle with the National Democratic Front (NDF) in order to continue to participate in social change. Others pursued creative strategies of working with organizing efforts of the church and the cooperative movement.

### Community Organizing during Martial Law

The repression of the Martial Law days hit community organizers and NGOs involved in CO hard, while a few of us left to go underground, those who stayed behind bore the brunt of attempts to silence us. Despite the difficulties and the very real physical dangers, we persisted in our efforts to organize and empower the people, and in so doing, resist government attempts to cow the movement into submission.

Employing the frameworks of Saul Alinsky, Paolo Freire, and Karl Marx, we continued to build people's organizations in communities such as those in Tondo in Manila, and Bukidnon in the South. People came together in massive mobilizations in support of numerous causes such as land and shelter, agrarian reform and human rights, and issues such as the rice crisis. The ecumenism that we saw on the ground made the process of the development of CO at this particular conjuncture quite interesting. Extensive ecumenical exchanges on the basis of ideology rather than faith were seen. Partnerships were developed between the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches in endeavours to organize local communities. At the same time national democrats, social democrats, and anarchists banding together in united front efforts became

NGOs then provided support for all kinds of resistance. We approached NGOs for transport and other little things, including a name or a legal identity. Although the NGOs were also resisting the dictatorship in their own way."

- TONY QUIZON

commonplace, particularly with regard to issues where a broad and unified position was necessary. As a result, CO evolved into a valuable, open-legal alternative to underground work.

At one point, however, the very charism of CO as a means for uniting ideological entities served as a major crisis point. This was seen in the case of PECCO wherein underground elements began to participate in the CO process.

Internal political struggles were focused on two primary issues: tactics on linking the local with national issues, and (2) issues-based organizing and mobilizing as opposed to ideological and mass-education. Particular reactions were raised when organizing was clearly undertaken for the purposes of giving the armed struggle a tactical, legal form. Many of us felt that open-legal work such as community organizing should have been free of intervention from the underground. All these eventually led to the breakup of PECCO in 1977.

1978 TO 1983:

## NGO INNOVATION AND EXPANSION

### The Rise of Secular NGOs

The PECCO split gave way to the birth of several no-government organizations. Foremost among these were NGOs like the SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT INDEX, the AGENCY FOR COMMUNITY EDUCATION SERVICES (ACES), SERVICE BUREAU FOR SMALL FISHERFOLK (SBSF), ORGANIZATION FOR TRAINING, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (OTRADEV), CENTER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES (CCS), and PUNLA, the first of the non-church spearheaded institutions on specific issues and concerns.

When the Church became really divided, the need to move out of its umbrella was raised. One motivation was if there was a clampdown and the church would be affected, we would need other orgs. That was when we all agreed to support ACES.

**-DINKY JULIANO-SOLIMAN**

## Church-Based NGOs

Church-led NGOs, such as the SHARE AND CARE APOSTOLATE FOR POOR SETTLERS (SCAPS), the PEOPLE'S ECUMENICAL ACTION FOR COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT (PEACE), the COMMUNITY ORGANIZING PHILIPPINE ENTERPRISE (COPE) and the BASIC CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY-COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS (BCC-COS) were also established at this time.

SCAPS and PEACE, which were spearheaded by Protestant ecumenical groups, employed "sweeping sectoral organizing" and emphasized the use of social analysis in their efforts. COPE, on the other hand, adhered to the Alinsky-Freire approach and sought to downplay the use of social analysis as a basis for CO. A select number of bishops who were openly critical of the dictatorship and who took the lead in the CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES (CBCP), encouraged the nationwide establishment of BCC-COs during this time.

Inspired by the Vatican II precept that the Church was a community of believers, BCC-COs were established to bring people together in prayer towards a shared understanding of and a united response to their problems.

The "infiltration" of these Church-led groups by political elements from the left and the right-from within the ranks of the COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE PHILIPPINES-NEW PEOPLE'S ARMY (CPP-NPA), as well as the forces

**1979  
To 1983**

February 1978  
Succumbing to pressure from the US, Marcos schedules elections for the members of an Interim Batasang Pambansa on 7 April. Anti-Marcos figures-including jailed former senator Ninoy Aquino

run and form the Lakas ng Bayan (LABAN) party with sections of the political movements and the traditional opposition. April 1978. On the eve of the election, a noise barrage planned as a show of support for

LABAN becomes the most widespread display of opposition to the Marcos regime in Manila. Nevertheless, Marcos KBL, led by Imelda Marcos sweeps the elections amidst fraud and intimidation

While this created problems with the fanatically anti-communist government-all progressive organizations were hence labelled "subversive" and "dangers to the security of the state"-perhaps the biggest impact of this trend were the internal ideological struggles within the religious-led organizations. A growing militancy therefore marked the Church-led movements.

Unfortunately, despite this continuing activism, the ecumenism which had been established in earlier years, became imperilled at this point. At some points, the real issues which needed to be confronted were waylaid because of ideological struggles.

### The CO Debates

The sprouting of new NGOs brought about more innovations in the theory and practise of CO. While some groups upheld a "pure" CO approach, others were particularly outspoken in their critique of such approaches which did not highlight the role of ideology and its accompanying framework in organizing. In the midst of these heated debates, other NGOs and government agencies, such as the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) and the National Housing Authority (NHA), developed their own interpretations and merged the approaches to conform to their own purposes and contexts.

"The Church, in becoming associated with the movement, was unable to sustain its distinctiveness. It became attached and was dominated."

- RENE SALAZAR

1990 The MNLF junks the Trosli Agreement and renews its call for secession. However, the threat of Muslim rebellion is substantially diminished after a faction of the MNLF is coopted by Marcos

The AFP begins to shift its attention to the growing communist insurgency in the country. January 1981 President Marcos "paper lifts" martial law and schedules presidential elections. The opposition forces refuse to put

up a candidate and boycotts. June 1981 Marcos, running against obscure candidates, wins his third presidential victory. U.S. Vice-President Bush praises Marcos' "adherence to democratic principles

1981 The external debt soars to \$12.3 billion. As the trade deficit widens, the government contracts more foreign loans to cover the gap, reinforcing the country's economic dependence.

in a fine-tuning of the charism of CO as a tool for sustainable development, as opposed to sectoral organizing as a means for attaining political power through advocacy. As such, these debates were crucial

## Innovation of new approaches and ideas

during this time, as well. For instance, alternative lifestyle, community-based health programs, participatory action research, community heater, micro-media, herbal/alternative medicine were just a few of the new catchwords in development at this time.

We first raised the women's question during this time. In fact, we established the NATIONAL MOVEMENT OF FILIPINO WOMEN (PILIPINA) as the first feminist organization in the Philippines in 1981, as a move to provide institutional support for this concern.

The establishment of the ASSOCIATION OF FOUNDATIONS (AF) and the PHILIPPINE PARTNERSHIP FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN RURAL AREAS (PhilDHRRA) were the initial seeds for networking, which were sown during this time, as well.

### 1983 To 1986

August 1983 The assassination of the Ninoy Aquino marks the beginning of the dictatorship's downfall. The regime struggles to regain control over an outraged citizenry. It also faces a major economic crisis

after the uncertain political situation spurs massive capital flight out of the country. September 1983 The 11th anniversary of martial law becomes the occasion for the biggest political demonstration since

1972. Two hundred thousand rallyists send out a message to all Filipinos that now is the time to act and that at issue is not just "justice for Ninoy but ending authoritarian rule and restoring democracy.

1983 TO 1986:  
THE SECOND WAVE

On August 21, 1983, oppositionist Benigno S. Aquino was brutally assassinated upon his return to the Philippines after a three-year exile. His death marked the beginning of one of the most difficult yet vibrant phases in the history of the Philippines.

The Aquino assassination led to an overwhelming politicalization among the different sectors of Philippine society. The "parliament of the streets", no longer merely included those of us who were involved in social development and community organizing work, but the businessmen, housewives, the religious, farmers and fisherfolk, workers, students and young professionals, as well.

The Church, in particular, became a major political force in the movement protesting the Marcos dictatorship. At this point, the "middle forces" who had long remained silent and impassive came forward to make their voices heard. For many of us, it was exhilarating to experience a "second wave" in the activism which we had known in the sixties.

Correspondingly, we made numerous attempts to harness these new forces through the development of broad-based mass organizations and

**For many of us, it was exhilarating to experience a "second wave" in the activism which we had known in the sixties.**

1983 The "alternative press" succeeds in breaking the government-controlled media's monopoly of news and readers. May 1984 Nationwide elections for Batasang Pambansa

are held amidst growing polarization. The bulk of the mass movement calls for a boycott, but opposition candidates who participated in the polls still manage to win more than a third of the seats, because of the

vigilance of opposition poll watchers and volunteers from the reorganized National Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL). 19 October 1984 In Davao City, militant mass leader Alex Orcullo is ambushed and killed.

1984 The AFP grows from a 50,000-person force in the early seventies to a 250,000-strong army with an P8.8 billion budget in 1984. Human rights violations by military personnel are rampant.

other structures such as the JUSTICE FOR AQUINO, JUSTICE FOR ALL (JAJA) and the AUGUST TWENTY-ONE MOVEMENT (ATOM) which would respond to the call of the times.

In Mindanao, NGOs and other organizations made initial attempts to form coalitions for their mutual militarization in that area.

## The Establishment of BAYAN and BANDILA

The formation of the BAGONG ALYANSANG MAKABAYAN (BAYAN) was another of such efforts.

In 1987, those of us who were intent on establishing a mass movement organization which would actively resist the Marcos regime attempted to coalesce under a single banner. Various political blocs-national democrats, social democrats, liberal democrats and independents-came together to formulate a shared agenda under BAYAN.

Unfortunately, disagreements on equitable representation in the leadership of the organization led to the break-up of the organization before the organization ever took off. The second day of the conference saw three of the formations walking-out on the process, leaving the national democrats to take over what was left of the coalition.

3 November 1985 Under heavy pressure from the U.S., the ailing Marcos calls for a snap presidential election to be held in early 1986.

**February 1986** The presidential elections are

marked by widespread harassment and cheating by the Marcos camp. COMELEC programmers walk out in protest.

14 February 1986 The influential CBCP issues a pastoral letter stating that

“a government that assumes or retains power through fraudulent means has no moral basis.” 15 February 1986 The rubberstamp Batasang Pambansa declares Marcos and Tolentino winners of the elections.

NAMFREL's unofficial tally though shows Cory Aquino winning by 700,000 votes.

**16 February 1986** In a Tagumpay ng Bayan" mobilization at the Luneta, Cory Aquino rallies her

In 1985, the social democratic and liberal democratic forces which had played key roles in the initial stages of BAYAN formed an alliance and established the BANSANG NAGKAKAISA SA DIWA AT LAYUNIN (BANDILA).

## NGOs and the Snap Elections

Due to external pressures and a marked decline in his credibility, President Marcos announced the holding of the Snap Presidential Elections of February 7, 1986. This sparked the advent of a new phase in the growth of social development work, as it marked the first concerted effort to participate in the electoral process.

Previously, in the 1978 and 1984 Batasang Pambansa (National Assembly) elections, the progressive forces had been split on the decision to participate in the elections. In 1984, we had presented a "Call for Meaningful Elections" which outlined six major reforms as prerequisites for clean elections. The regime failed to heed our demands, which included amnesty for all political prisoners, electoral reforms and the abolition of Amendment Number 6 (which gave Marcos a free hand in issuing decrees), among others. This led many of us in the NGO community to boycott the elections. For many of us, without a clear commitment from Marcos to the holding of clean elections, the process would be a sham, carried out for the benefit of foreign governments and designed merely to restore Marcos's fast-declining credibility.

**This sparked a new phase in the growth of social development work, as it marked the first concerted effort to participate in the electoral process.**

supporters and announces the start of a civil disobedience campaign to signify the people's rejection of the official election results and intensify the call for Marcos's resignation.

**22 February 1986** The Presidential Guard discovers a coup plot involving military officers of RAM. The plotters, joined by patron Defense Minister Enrile and AFP Vice Chief of Staff Fidel Ramos, take refuge in

Camp Aguinaldo. People respond to Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin's call for support for the two officials and begin their vigil outside the military camp's gates in the start of the "EDSA Revolution".

**25 February 1986** Corazon C. Aquino takes her oath of office as president. By night-fall, with Malacanang Palace under siege, the Marcoses scape to Guam aboard a US Air Force plane.

**The NGO voice had made itself evident through the electoral process, as well as in the spiral of events which led to the February Revolution of 1986**

The overwhelming support for the opposition candidate Corazon "Cory" Aquino, as well as the general mood of the people gave the February 1986 Snap Elections a slightly different flavour. These manifestations of the very real possibilities of victory, as well as the current state of NGOs at that particular point, urged our participation in the process.

For the first time in history, NGOs and POs organized themselves into networks and alliances at the national and regional levels in attempts to upscale efforts and safeguard their own security. This paved the way for our effective participation in the elections.

We conducted numerous pulong-bayan (neighbourhood discussions) and other fora to discuss the concept of alternative politics rooted, not in personalities, but in issues such as poverty, corruption, and human rights, among others. The war against guns, goons, and gold-the trademarks of traditional politics-had been launched.

While the Radical Left opted to boycott the 1986 elections as well, it was apparent that, for the first time, the NGO voice had made itself evident through the electoral process, as well as in the spiral of events which led to the February Revolution of 1986. When Marcos fled the country on February 24, 1986, NGOs actively coalesced with the rest of the populace to oust the dictator.

**1986 to 1992**

**March 1986** President Aquino puts into place the Freedom Constitution. She then creates a Commission which was to draft a new organic law.  
**July 1986** First coup attempt launched by several hundred

civilian and military "loyalists" who take over Manila Hotel.  
**November 1986** KMU leader Rolando Olalia murdered by extremist factions in the military.  
**22-23 November 1986** "God save the Queen," a coup plot

hatched by military officers identified with the RAM, fails.  
**November 1986** President Aquino reshuffles her Cabinet  
**10 December 1986** A 60-day ceasefire between the government and the National

1986 TO 1992:

## THE AQUINO ADMINISTRATION

The euphoria that the February Revolution ushered in, gradually faded out and eventually gave way to a sense of frustration within the first two years of the Aquino administration.

Despite success in the establishment of the traditional pillars of democracy, (the reconvening of the National Assembly, etc.), it soon became evident to us that Cory Aquino had been pushed into a corner by her lack of desire to resolve controversial issues and her over-dependence on a few advisers. With a coalition government threatening to disintegrate over irreconcilable differences, maintaining political stability within her administration soon became a priority over following through on the badly-needed reforms.

For instance, peasant organizations and their support groups soon declared the centrepiece program of government, the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), a farce.

### Proliferation of NGOs

NGOs mushroomed nationwide after 1986, and the concept was soon being claimed by all sorts of organizations, government included. The proliferation of NGOs pushed one NGO leader to identify the following

Democratic Front begins, paving the way for formal peace talks between the two.  
**22 January 1987** "Mendiola massacre" of 23 peasant demonstrators pressing for comprehensive agrarian

reform. As an unfortunate result, peace negotiations with the NDF break down.  
**27-29 January 1987** Marcos loyalist soldiers launch another coup attempt, but again fail to

**February 1987** In reaction to the latest coup attempt, voters heavily ratify the 1987 draft Constitution, which contains several progressive provisions.  
**April 1987** Another attempt by Marcos loyalist soldiers to take

over fails. The military gains more power in Cory's regime  
**1987** The World Commission on Environment and Development presents its landmark report to the UN General Assembly

**Networking and the establishment of mechanisms for cooperation and communication were also set up, spurred by the growing professionalism being developed among NGOs and other social development agencies at this time.**

clusters of NGOs: development, justice and advocacy NGOs (DJANGOs), traditional NGOs (TANGOs), funding agency NGOs (FUNDANGOs), mutant NGOs (MUNGOs), or government-run and initiated NGOs (GRINGOs), business-organized NGOs (BONGOs), and NGO entrepreneurs (COME N'GOs). It seemed that the ever-widening range of the term had come to accommodate all forms and purposes.

The development of other forms of social organizations was a definite trend of this period. For instance, we succeeded in establishing coalitions which brought together different organizations and federations on the basis of specific concerns and issues (debt, peace, environment, urban land reform, sustainable agriculture) or to unite specific sectors (peasants, urban poor, women, etc.).

Foremost among these coalitions was the CONGRESS FOR A PEOPLE'S AGRARIAN REFORM (CPAR) which brought together a broad spectrum of 13 peasant - farmer, fisherfolk and rural women- organizations under a single banner.

CPAR's establishment was historic in that it would serve, over the next 6 years, as the peasantry's voice in the advocacy campaign for agrarian reform and other peasant concerns, as well as in efforts within the broader context of national development.

It was apparent that with the growth of CPAR and other broad-based coalitions, ideological and other differences had successfully been diffused

<p><b>May 1987</b> In the first elections under the new constitution, Aquino-backed candidates win convincingly and assume leadership positions in the Senate and House of Representatives.</p>	<p><b>August 1987</b> RAM soldiers launch another coup and challenge government forces in Manila, Pampanga, Cebu, Baguio, and Legaspi  <b>September 1987</b> Leftist leader Lean Alejandro is murdered in</p>	<p>cold blood in Quezon City.  <b>1987</b> More than 200 anti-communist vigilante groups proliferate nationwide.  <b>1988</b> Aquino government launches a new "total war" anti-insurgency campaign against</p>	<p>the CPP-NPA-NDF.  <b>June 1988</b> Aquino signs the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (CARL) amidst protests from peasant organizations that the law is riddled with gaping loopholes that &gt;</p>
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in favor of greater openness to coalition-building efforts towards specific development goals.

Networking and the establishment of mechanisms for cooperation and communication were also set up between sectors, as well as between regions, nationwide, which was spurred by the growing professionalism being developed among NGOs and other social development agencies at this time. It was also an affirmation of the value of "small is beautiful", and that bigger is not always better. In fact, networks were established as a direct alternative to the enormous NGOs that were being formed; networks were attempts to pool the limited resources of the numerous small NGOs in existence at the time.

NGOs took on a multitude of forms as they developed their own areas of expertise. Political institutes, alternative law groups and consultancy organizations became the newest additions to the NGO world. New funding mechanisms in the form of NGO consortium-managed agencies, such as the Canadian-funded PHILIPPINE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (PDAP), were also introduced for the first time.

**Networks were established as a direct alternative to the enormous NGOs that were being formed.**

### Other Trends of the Era

This period of innovation also led to a widening of concerns and issues. For the first time in history, our organizations gave equal attention and

<p>defeat agrarian reform.  <b>September 1988</b> The Generics Act is signed into law by President Aquino. <b>November 1989</b> The fall of the Berlin wall symbolizes the end of the Cold War and</p>	<p>The collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe  <b>December 1989</b> The joint forces of the RAM rebel soldiers and Marcos loyalist officers launch most serious coup attempt. At the request of the</p>	<p>government, the U.S. government signifies its support for the Aquino administration by sending two fighter jets to provide air cover for government troops.  <b>March 1990</b> A Cabinet dispute erupts over the conversion of</p>	<p>prime agricultural land leads to the resignation of DAR Sec. Florencio Abad. Pres. Aquino's failure to step in and settle the controversy leads to wide-spread disenchantment with the government's "center</p>
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**Due to the opportunities for participation in government which arose after EDSA, the question of what to do with political power also became a major question.**

devoted whole programs to human resources development, inner and human ecology, green issues, women's concerns, alternative and appropriate technologies, alternative trading and marketing, peace, policy advocacy and lobbying, relief and rehabilitation, and socio-economic work.

Due to the opportunities for participation in government, which arose after EDSA, the question of what to do with political power also became a major question. Subsequently, we explored ideas regarding integrated area development and tripartite partnerships among government, NGOs and POs, as new approaches to development, while localization and regionalization also became key organizing strategies.

During this period, high-technology invaded our world: more and more of our institutions stepped up its use of computers and electronic communications systems.

The development of alternative agenda and programs became foremost among our concerns. CPAR, for instance, did not stop at protesting government's agrarian reform program, but proposed an alternative People's Agrarian Reform Code which, the farmers felt, was best reflective of their interests as a sector. For the first time, NGOs were defining not only what they were against, but more importantly what they believed in and stood for. It was apparent that the NGO movement had matured in its approach, evolving from protest to pro-action.

<p>piece” agrarian reform program and Cory's continued capacity to lead.  <b>July 1990</b> An 7.7 earthquake registering 7.7 hits Luzon, causing nearly 2,000 deaths, injuries to thousands, the</p>	<p>displacement of a million people, and massive property damage.  <b>October 1990</b> The seventh and final attempt by rebel soldiers to overthrow the Aquino administration fails in Mindanao.  <b>1991</b> Estimates place the</p>	<p>number of AIDS cases at over 1.5 million worldwide. At least 10 million are believed HIV carriers.  <b>June 1991</b> in the world's most violent volcanic explosion this century, Mt. Pinatubo erupts, affecting immediate surroundings</p>	<p>and the outlying cities and towns of Pampanga, Tarlac and Zambales Raging rivers of lahar displace whole communities and bury houses, roads, and rice fields.  <b>September 1991</b> A treaty</p>
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## Some Reflections

While our experience with the Aquino government was marked with frustration, it also brought forth several important lessons.

First of all, we learned that government is not a monolithic structure and as such, is filled with opportunities for participation at all levels. In addition, the experience came with the valuable reflection that the reform of unjust social, economic and political structures of the past remains the task of the social development worker. Government, no matter how "popular", would always have institutional interests and the dynamics of a bureaucracy to hinder it from following through on campaign promises.

At the local level, we saw that coalition-building among NGOs is essential to ensuring an immediate appropriate response to the needs of the local community, as well as in the development of local development agenda.

The massive infusion of funds and the greater opportunities for partnerships also gave us insights on the nature and role of donor agencies. We saw that in many instances donors can help in catalyzing new programs and are most likely to listen when NGOs appear to be strongest, as during this era. More importantly, we saw that it was essential for NGOs to remain discerning in its actions in the face of massive funds.

**We learned that government is not monolithic, and as such, is filled with opportunities for participation at all levels.**

<p>landing the US privilege of maintaining troops and military bases here is defeated in The Senate, paving the way for withdrawal of US troops. 10 October 1991 The Local government Code, a victory</p>	<p>for decentralization is enacted <b>5 November 1991</b> In Ormoc City, Leyte, thousands die from floods, highlighting the consequences of forest denudation due to rampant logging and the conversion of forested land.</p>	<p><b>1991</b> Splits begin to show in the CPP between the "reaffirmation-ists" and the "rejectionists". <b>11 May 1992</b> Synchronized national and local elections are held. Six run for president. <b>30 June 1992</b> Fidel V. Ramos is</p>	<p>sworn in as president. The relatively clean elections and the orderly transfer of power to the new administration is a testament to the restoration of formal structures of democracy in the country.</p>
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**Questions relating to sustainability in terms of organizational and natural resources have also been crucial in the development discussion.**

With regard to people's organizations, we saw that NGOs still lacked some capabilities, for instance, in terms of financial and overall project management, etc.; often it is a case of the blind leading the blind. In addition, the concept of PO autonomy still needs to be accepted and clarified, especially since PO and NGO interests are not always the same.

Finally, we saw that joint efforts between NGOs and the academe must be community-based to be effective.

## 1992 TO THE PRESENT

Major global trends which have impacted greatly on the social movements in the Philippines have marked the nineties. For instance, the establishment of a global village, recent developments in communications technology, as well as the ever-increasing concern for the environment, have all demanded a rethinking of our tools for analyses and development approaches in the Philippines.

In the local front, the NGO movement has been challenged by the windows of opportunities for participation and partnerships in governance, as well as the trials of ideological divisions, and declining numbers. Questions relating to sustainability in terms of organizational and natural resources have also been crucial in the development discussion.

<p><b>1992 to the Present</b></p>	<p><b>June 1992</b> In Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development, and its parallel International NGO Forum brings together representatives from over 160 nations to discuss</p>	<p>pressing environmental and development issues and raise global consciousness regarding more sustainable approaches. <b>1992</b> President Fidel Ramos unveils his "Philippines 2000" Vision of NIC-hood for the</p>	<p>country. In line with this vision the Ramos administration also outlines a Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP) for 1993 to 1998 that hopes to increase per capita income to \$1000</p>
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## The integration of NGOs in the globalization process

For the first time in history, we are experiencing what it means to be part of a global village. With the advent of cable television, for instance, it is no longer unusual for the ordinary household to hear reports of events which transpire in countries halfway around the globe, at the

very moment that these are happening. At the same time, electronic mail and facsimile machines have practically done away with concerns for distance and time, and to some extent, the costs of communication.

Never before has technology brought us so close to our neighbors. More importantly, never before has this technology been so available to so many people. The growing number of local organizations and institutions with access to such technology will attest to this.

As such, globalization has led us to the realization that our actions are and must necessarily be interrelated with those of our neighbors. We have begun to realize that partnerships with other NGOs and solidarity groups abroad must be established if we are to firmly consolidate the positions of "civil society" in view of the existing world order and other institutional stumbling blocks to genuine development. Hence, the arena and scope for discussions on development now also include international fora; development workers must now be able to truly "think globally, and act locally".

<p>achieve 10% growth rate, and reduce poverty by 30%. 1992 Kidnapping, carnaping, drug-dealing, and bank robbery syndicates, many led and protected by police or military personnel, seem</p>	<p>unstoppable, Cases of rape, murder, and other heinous crimes hog the news. In response to the continuing rise of criminality all over the country, Ramos sets up the Presidential Anti-Crime Commission.</p>	<p><b>August 1993</b> President Ramos finalizes the composition of the government panels for peace negotiations with the NDF, RAM, and MNLF, signifying his administration's intent in pursuing a comprehensive peace process.</p>	<p><b>1993</b> Daily brownouts, averaging 4 to 8 hours a day in Metro Manila and even longer in other parts of the country, results in billions of pesos in business losses from 1990 to 1993. There was clearly</p>
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**Over the past few years, we have played significant roles in civil society efforts to shape policy at the international level.**

The need for networking holds true, as well, in relation to our neighbors in South East Asia. We cannot underscore fully the importance of developing ASEAN as a force in current global movements.

Faced with this reality, we have seen fit to participate more and more in discussions in the international fora at different levels and under various contexts.

Over the past few years, we have played significant roles in civil society efforts to shape policy at the international level. It is no longer unusual for NGOs to participate in global trend-setting and policy-making in high-level international fora such as the United Nations. Previously, only national leaders in government were bestowed these honors.

For instance, during the 1992 International NGO Forum (INGOF), the NGO-initiated parallel to the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED), the seventeen Filipino NGO workers who were delegates to that process played key roles in the series of conferences at which over 7,000 delegates from all over the world took part. The Filipinos made major contributions in terms of facilitating the flow, as well as providing technical support to the process, with our skills in conflict-resolution and inherent process-orientedness.

In a similar vein, our wealth of experiences in community organizing and other development skills have been crucial in our participation in global movements. It has often been said that the Philippines has one of

<p>not enough energy to meet the requirements of sustainable economic growth. Food security is also threat-ened, since the amount of cultivated land devoted to staple food crops such as rice</p>	<p>and com has been decreasing while those being used for export crops such as sugar, coconuts, bananas, pineapples, etc have been increasing. Lands classified ideal for agricultural use are converted into</p>	<p>industrial estates in line with the Ramos administration's drive toward NICHood. <b>26 March 1994</b> With the goal of promoting economic integration within the ASEAN, officials of Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, and</p>	<p>the Philippines launch the East ASEAN Growth Area (EAGA). For the regions covered by the EAGA-Brunei, East Kalimantan, West Kalimantan, Sarawak, Sabah. Labuan, and Mindanao</p>
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the most advanced NGO sectors worldwide. As a result, we have been tapped for numerous consultancy projects abroad. Proof of this is the large number of Filipino NGO workers who are taking part and playing key roles in the rehabilitation process that war-torn Cambodia is currently undergoing.

The Philippines, largely through the NGO sector, has also succeeded in initiating policy and institutional reforms in the area of debt management, particularly by proposing creative uses of national debt. For instance, a Debt for Nature Swap was introduced whereby foreign funding institutions purchased parts of the Philippine debt with funds allocated for the protection and development of the Philippine environment. The Foundation for the Philippine Environment (FPE) has since been set up to manage this endowment fund for the Philippine environment. A similar arrangement has been made with regard to debts incurred from the Swiss government.

Philippine NGOs have also actively played a part in monitoring the activities of multilateral development banks such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the World Bank (WB) and engaging in policy dialogue efforts with these institutions towards the adoption of more sustainable and people-centered approaches to development. The timely and appropriate interventions of Philippine NGOs and their partners of over fifty national, regional and international organizations,

**It has often been said that the Philippines has one of the most advanced NGO sectors worldwide.**

<p>areas of cooperation were Identified, including air links, tourism, fishing, and sea links <b>November 1994</b> in Bogor, Indonesia, the leaders of the eighteen member-nations of</p>	<p>the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) sign an agreement pledging to remove all obstacles to free trade and investment between member-countries by the year 2020 <b>December 1994</b> Brushing aside</p>	<p>calls by various sectors to postpone voting on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the Senate goes ahead and approves the accord. The approval of the GATT, which commits its signatories to lower</p>	<p>tariffs, remove trade quotas. and protect intellectual property rights, qualifies the Philippines for founding member status in the World Trade Organization (WTO).</p>
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have succeeded in making fundamental changes in ADE's policies and programs. For instance, the Bank now has a greater recognition of the role of NGOs, as reflected in a relatively broader policy on the role of the sector. The Bank has also expanded its social and environmental units as well as opened up to new approaches in agriculture, forest and energy sector development.

Spearheaded by THE ASIAN NGO COALITION (ANGOC), the seven-year old NGO Campaign on the ADB, is a landmark in that it paves the way for greater NGO participation in shaping development policy in this crucial arena.

All these have contributed greatly to the growing official recognition of civil society's role in development as seen in policies adopted by the United Nations, other key international development agencies, as well as governments worldwide.

In addition, the transnationalization of the modes of production and the advent of the information revolution have necessitated a reassessment of our development approaches.

For instance, the use of traditional forms of trade union organizing have had to be reassessed in view of situations which dictate that workers are no longer housed in a single site, much less in a single region or country. In situations where workers are regarded as "contractuals" and are thus no longer afforded the same rights as those of full employees, new strategies for organization and education must be employed.

These realities have challenged us to rethink our strategies and to explore areas of partnership with our neighbors and allies in other regions and countries. Thus, we are discovering our niche in the world order and in our responsibility towards our counterparts abroad.

The conference on East Timor which drew the ire of the Indonesian and Philippine governments towards Filipino organizers supporting the cause of human rights, including the right to self-determination of the East Timorese people, is an example of our growing awareness of this need for solidarity among peoples.

### Increasing concern for the environment

The global community shares a common concern for the rapid deterioration of our environment. Over the past years, sustainable development and the economic, political and socio-cultural dimensions of the environmental problem, as a basic framework for development has come to be accepted and recognized by governments worldwide, as well as by international bodies like the United Nations.

Even more significantly, international finance institutions like the International Monetary Fund-World Bank (IMF-WB), once viewed as major institutional threats to sustainable development now face the challenge of programmatizing sustainability above the "traditional" elements of development (i.e. GNP growth) in its programs.

The Philippine government has, likewise, aligned its newly-industrialized country (NIC) model for the Philippines in the year 2000, with sustainable development. While critics would say that this is largely limited to the level of rhetoric, government has attempted to establish, with a strong lobby from the local environment and development NGOs, mechanisms for facilitating that alignment and for providing opportunities for NGO intervention in cases of misalignment.

The PHILIPPINE COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (PCSD) is a negotiating forum for government officials and their NGO counterparts,

**The global community shares a common concern for the rapid deterioration of our environment. approaches.**

which reviews policies and programs according to the basic principles of Agenda 21 and other sustainable development principles. Although the PCSD process, being subject to the intricacies of government bureaucracy and often diverging viewpoints, can be frustrating for those of us in the NGO sector, its establishment has resulted in gains to bring forward the position of civil society.

The establishment of the NGOs for Integrated Protected Areas (NIPA) is one such milestone. NIPA was established as a consortium of 18 environment and development NGOs that shall manage US\$20 million allocated for the development of ten protected areas in the Philippines.

Other new mechanisms for the protection of the Philippine environment, such as the FOUNDATION FOR PHILIPPINE ENVIRONMENT (FPE) were established during these years. The interest gained from the FPE endowment fund is currently being utilized to support sustainable development and biodiversity projects and other related initiatives throughout the Philippines.

## Local Trends

### **Opportunities in government**

The entry of Ramos's administration heralded new opportunities for participation in government. Very early on in his assumption into office, President Ramos asked several NGO-oriented personalities to join his Cabinet.

He invited Ernesto Garilao, formerly head of the PBSP, to take on the very crucial post of agrarian reform secretary. Angel Alcala, former head of the Silliman University, a bastion of the coastal and marine environmental movement, was selected to head the Department of

Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). The appointment of these individuals presented definite opportunities for reforms and provided the entry point for advocacy within the executive branches of government.

On the local level, the Local Government Code (LGC) has paved the way for the participation of NGOs in the formulation of the local development agenda. As such, advocacy and local initiatives related to local governance are numerous and show promise. Nevertheless, NGO and PO participation is often so limited that, in the end, the NGO agenda and the concern for social costs in local development plans are not factored in.

For instance, the East Asia Growth Polygon (EAGA), an effort to develop trade relations between Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines, offers numerous potentials for Davao and other southern provinces of the Philippines. Nevertheless, Mindanao NGOs have expressed concern about other impacts on the region, particularly the environmental hazards posed by some of the projects. The local NGOs and POs are unable to make the necessary interventions because there has been little or no consultation involved.

Opportunities for partnerships with government have been numerous as well. These tripartite partnerships basically fall under three types: (a) GO-managed partnerships such as those established by government line agencies and institutions such as the DAR, the LBP and the DTI, (b) donor-managed partnerships are bilateral or multilateral programs initiated by foreign development agencies in cooperation with tripartite mechanisms involving local government, NGOs and POs in an area.

An example of these are the Sustainable Integrated Area Development (SIAD) projects; and (c) NGO-managed projects such as the Tripartite

**The intricacies of government bureaucracy and the often diverging viewpoints can be frustrating for those of us in the NGO sector.**

**While the work remains overwhelming and no less urgent, it is apparent that the numbers of social development workers are often insufficient..**

Partnership for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (TriPARRD) program which involves NGOs, POs, and government in the development of three major agrarian reform sites, in Antique, Bukidnon and Cagayan de Oro.

While the projects have been fairly successful in promoting the NGO/PO interests, the experience has also given us a deeper understanding of the mechanics and the dangers involved in such partnerships. For instance, cooptation by government and other sectors of society is a very real possibility. In addition, because they often involve vast amounts of financial resources, and offer great opportunities for new partnerships and project expansion, such projects may serve as potential sources of friction and unhealthy rivalries among competing NGOs.

#### **Declining numbers**

We have noted that fewer young people have felt called to social development work. The decline in student activism is a major factor for this trend, and poses a real challenge to the movement for social development. While the work remains overwhelming and no less urgent, it is apparent that the numbers of social development workers are often insufficient.

At the same time, while we see the need for new blood among the leadership of the movement, few are willing and able to take over. Given this situation, the present crop of NGO leaders and workers are often burdened by workloads over and above what they can realistically bear. Likewise, the development of first-liners to take on leadership positions among the people's organizations is sadly lacking. The lack of second liners among the leadership of these POs, are also a cause for concern.

Thus, sustainability, in terms of human resources to fuel the movement in the long-term is a real question which NGOs must, and have yet to, confront. We must now ask ourselves, how do we draw in the "best and the brightest" into the movement once more? What do we do to capture the imagination of the young people?

### **CPP/NDF split**

The continuing internal conflicts within the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the National Democratic Front (NDF) has had an impact on the social development and NGO sector, as well. First of all, it shook existing paradigms of development among many social development and NGO workers. Secondly, the division was felt in various sectoral and issue-based coalitions, as well. For instance, in the case of CPAR, this led to the weakening of the peasantry and thus the loss of a countervailing force to the ruling elite. As a result, the focal organization for the peasantry was lost, which in turn left a vacuum in the agrarian movement.

### **New Development Approaches vis-a-vis sustainability questions**

The concern for sustainability is manifested in both the levels of projects and programs, as well as with regard to organizational systems of NGOs.

Over the years, we noted an increasing demand among donors and our other partners for impact and subsequently, a long-term response to the question of sustainability. Hence, integrated area programs, such as the Sustainable Integrated Area Development (SIAD) programs and consortium-led projects such as that initiated by NIPA became a key

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development strategy at this point in time. These projects not only involve inter-sectoral partnerships, which are seen as essentials for success, but also called for interrelated actions (lobbying, policy advocacy, and model-building) and a more holistic approach that deals with the economic, social, and political spheres of development.

On the level of organizational systems, we saw the growing need for financial stability and the tapping of resources independent of outside sources in the long-run. The quest for sustainability was reflected in efforts at local resource-building and the exploration of the stabilization of the fund base. A strong lobby for alternative fund mechanisms was also launched. For instance, we explored and utilized the debt for nature swap, which transformed debt into funds for development.

#### **Our Ongoing Concerns**

Several primary concerns remain with us as we continue in our efforts as NGO and social development workers. For instance, we have yet to fully study and resolve the tensions of the relationship between NGOs and POs.

New issues such as those pertaining to Muslim concerns, urbanization, uplands and coastal migration, tenure in relation to land and water resources, upscaling of agricultural projects, and health issues, such as AIDS, remain with us.

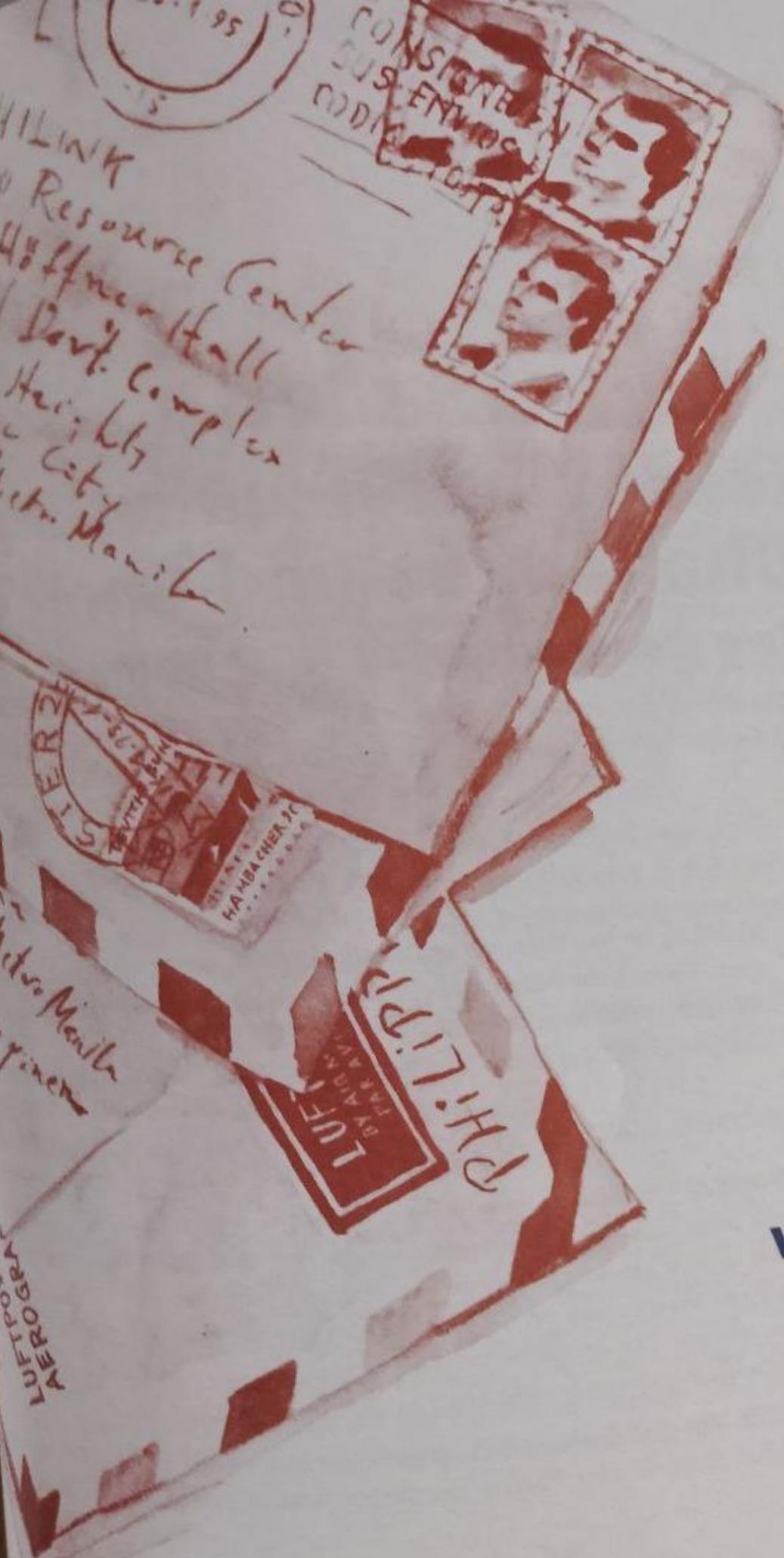
We have yet to give equal attention to the politicalization of "personal" women's issues and the limited rootedness of NGOs in Philippine culture and its role in emergent cultures.

At the same time, these developments have called for us to undergo an internal transformation process. A definite trend over the past few years

has been the rise in number of organizational self-assessment sessions among NGOs. For instance, very recently, our pioneers in rural community organizing conducted a series of reflection and strategy sessions on the nature and role of CO within the present-day context. The result of the CO rural forum reflections was the formulation of a whole set of new strategies and tactics. In addition, several initiatives to search for new paradigms on the role of NGOs within the broad framework of "civil society" was launched in the past year alone.

Our study of the evolution of the NGO response over time has proven that innovation and evolution are the means, as well as the end of social development. In view of the work that remains before us and the new challenges that are certain to accompany it, therefore, we are certain that NGOs will be able to evolve new strategies and approaches that will effectively respond to the call of the times.





V O I C E S

## Issues and Trends, Challenges and Choices

*Two Generations of NGO Workers Speak*

*W*hen we came together to reflect in

Makiling for five days, we really talked and listened and learned from each other a lot. Though the richness of our sharing could not be fully recorded, some of the discussions that were documented still yield a lot of insights on the current issues, trends and challenges that face us all. Here are some of our voices.

### ON GLOBALIZATION AND THE RISE OF TECHNOLOGY

**TONY Q** The issue of economic globalization, is primarily a problem of defining the issues and finding the actors. Before, with the US-Marcos regime, it was easy. But now, it's getting harder and harder to actually pinpoint the "enemy", because it's actually running on the very momentum of economic growth and there are no centers. The definition of the problem and the strategy is changing, so it is difficult to capture in slogans.

**RENE** The globalization of the economy is now redefining the nature of the state in the Third World. Therein lies the problem of governance. For instance, it is

now the IMF-WB which dictates how much our water in MWSS costs. So my experience in international work is that when I go abroad, I am forced to ally with the Third World governments-such as those of Indonesia and Malaysia-which are very repressive. We strategize to protect Southeast Asia against transnational corporations and to protect biodiversity. So the nature of nation states and even international research institutions like IRRI have changed. The UN system is also now changed under the globalized economy led by the US.

**FR. TONY** "The basic understanding of technology in terms of the possible cooptation problems is precisely to understand technology as a double-edged sword. Because our view is that it is a neutral instrument. But it carries social values, so we have to be constantly aware of that."

**AL** With globalization that is propelled by the information revolution, the emergent problem is the increasing homogenization of culture. I feel that it is not to our best interests that there be one, single, homogenous culture, because of our value for diversity and freedom.

**RENE** A community organizer is now faced with technological changes, power relations, and at the same time, impact at the international and national levels. A new type of CO is needed.

### **ON NEW FRAMEWORKS AND PARADIGMS**

**JUN** The vision and the values are there. We have to continue to identify the content of the vision. For example: sustainable development or sustainable society; what are their components? Social justice, and people's participation are part of it. Our project should be economically viable. There is gender sensitivity and equality. There is peace. By the very nature of the vision, you cannot absolutize values. You cannot just say "Social justice!" and the rest be damned. That is the big difference between the old paradigm and the shifting paradigm. There is a vision, but it is not ideology.

**FR. TONY** We have to link agrarian reform with sustainable development or sustainable agriculture with civil society while going beyond sectors and classes. We have to link AR with the whole idea of Philippines 2000 and NIC-hood, and how it can alter agro-industrialization and export-marketing, for example. It has to be seen in a new light if you want to continue the process and standard of agrarian reform. It is not exactly on the land issue alone... (it's) resource technology, water resources, globalization of the market, GATT, environmental issues. Yet the majority of the farmers are still in need of basic resources: land.

**JUN** How do we challenge the NIC model of development with sustainable development? That is the challenge at the national level. The strategy there is to identify variable sustainable development programs on the field and then "macro-nize them. We have the language, lingo, rhetoric of sustainable development. What is lagging behind are the ground programs. If we cannot move into that level, we will remain a debating society.

**GREG** Probably some farmer will start talking about "paradigm shift". (But) I do not know how to translate that. I myself have some difficulty understanding what paradigm shift is, after all. In the past, the particular genius of the FFF-its only saving grace by the way-was when it broke the social question to the level of the farmers. Then the farmers started talking about social problems.

## ON THE NEED FOR NEW STRATEGIES AND TOOLS OF ANALYSIS

**DINKY** With CO, the realization is that it has to be a process which is gender aware and environment conscious. The Sustainable Development framework, not just structural analysis, should be used. So when you enter a community, you should be able to determine the impact of your framework on women and environment, not just on the cultural, economic, social and political spheres. The calls for an integration of structural analysis with the sustainable development framework in the level of analysis, strategies and tactics. This points to a recognition that you cannot absolutize your enemies and friends as we used to do when we were using structural and class analysis.

**GING** With regard to the framework of sustainable development, there are questions that we did not consider before: gender, identity-which for us, means taking a deeper look at religion and possibly ethnicity, there being a latent racism in our culture-and other potential cultural wellsprings that we may have just overlooked because our analysis of the situation before was so class-based

**DINKY** If you are an advocacy group, you cannot advocate without knowing about model-building on the ground. If not, you are not credible. At the same time, your policy advocacy should not be limited to the national level because there is a globalization of policies, for example on agriculture like GATT.

So the challenge is to be able to comprehend all of that and at the same time act in very different levels while still remaining rooted to the community. And vice-versa. Think and act local, national and global.

**NILDA** The impression is we say a lot, we've been sloganeering, but we are quite weak in terms of actual, concrete efforts at finding alternatives, and not just theories. So there is actually a need to balance advocacy work and actual community-based interventions.

**EUGENE** We have to look at the challenges at both the paradigm and at the movement or civil society level. One such challenge is creating the source as well as the centre of momentum for our interventions. We need this momentum so that we can become pro-active, and not resistant and reactionary.

On the level of paradigms, the overall challenge I see is promoting sustainability in the light of globalization. At the movement level, we have to find our wellsprings and centres of momentum. Plus, that balance between advocacy and impact.

**MILO** Right now, although people want national or even global impact there is no institutional development strategy or framework for it. Not that there should be but in the context of what was shared, it appear to me that there is no coordinating mechanism or coherent strategy for change. Largely, the mode of decision-making about the focus of NGO activity is still very decentralized.

## ON DECENTRALIZATION AND POPULARIZATION

**MILO** In a sense, focusing on localization seems to me a noticeable trend in the thinking of people in terms of refocusing on the community, on identity, on local cultures, on ethnic groupings, even on religious orientation. So it seems to be significant.

**PAT** I wish there were a conscious and more purposive effort to include more Mindanao NGO and PO players. If we really look at the whole country now, whatever happens to Mindanao has such a great impact on the whole country. We have been saying this for so long.

**GREG** For as long as these debates and arguments centre and stay in Manila it won't satisfy many people in the NGO community, because the only business we have as NGO people is how we shall be able to bring this to the grassroots.

**NILDA** We have to redefine the problems in such a way that it becomes relevant on the ground. This is because, even if we are acting on the global level, we do not have support, eventually this becomes empty. So it's really very important to have it clarified to the lowest level.

**DODO** Capability building at the local level is a necessity. First, to ensure an immediate and appropriate response to local needs. Second, to develop the local development agenda.

## ON PROBLEMS OF MAINSTREAMING

**GING** An additional problem with the shifting paradigm is that it will be easy to be coopted. Unless you really understand, it will be easy to be influenced because terminologies will be used by the powers-that-be and those who are joining the bandwagon.

**DELFIN** Mainstreaming may be actually bad if you mainstream all the NGOs and POs. You end up actually also imbibing the culture of the mainstream. That is a very strong tendency and only a few can resist becoming part of that culture. And when you join government, there is the danger of believing that one cannot create alternative options, within what is available under the system.

**DINKY** How do we exercise the power that is within the NGO/PO community without being coopted? That is a real issue. The whole idea of tripartite partnerships is a trend, and ...maybe if your base is not organized or sophisticated enough in your tactics, you can be coopted.

**RENE** Some people will stay as far away from the "enemy" to remain pure and correct. But they end up talking to themselves and nothing happens. If you approach government, they will say that you are a reformist, which is also wrong

### ON MAKING AN IMPACT

**NANDY** In one of my naughty reflections about NGOs, I wondered how much we have actually spent on development work? around \$50 million? So what has been the impact? I really wonder what impact our work has had?"

**SOC** Based on our discussion on breakthroughs and impacts, we can say that we as an NGO community made a difference in building up a more inclusive, sustainable, participatory civil society. This is seen in three areas: one, in building people organizations; two, in developing models and tools; and three, in influencing government, donors, and the larger Philippine society on the whole sustainable development agenda.

**DODO** Much of the impact of the NGO work has not been towards PO development.

**AL** In the so-called "golden age of NGOs", it is clear that it was not a golden age for POs. If you look around now at mass movements-the non-NGO, non-institutionalized mass movements-it is really not in the best of times. Our history may have been exhilarating, but the fact is that mass movement is not in its best times, and neither is this regime in power the regime we ultimately want, in spite of its openings. Is the golden age of NGOs preparatory for the golden age of Pos? For some of us who entered NGOs, the ultimate goal that society, the POs could mediate itself in a strong and meaningful way. Have we become too "relevant" perhaps? I hope this is not mere "NGO-bashing", nor just plain cynicism, but it must be confronted.

**ROEL** Earlier in the history, it seems that NGOs were not really delineated from the overall social movement. Later, the NGOs as a distinct sector emerged. Is this a positive development? I don't know what this would imply about our evolution.

**DINKY** Have we become "establishment"? Bureaucratized and passe? Have we become institutions similar to the academe and research, or are we in danger of being that way?

**RENE** We are part of the solution, but we must also see ourselves as part of the problem. We have to step away from the maddening crowd to move forward. Because we are, in fact, imposing structures of operations when in fact, our creativity is curtailed. While we do our best within our resources, at this point...we are also part of the problem.

### **RANDOM COMMENTS**

**MARY RACELIS** There is a whole movement now among NGOs which you all express of trying to link up more systematically to revitalize yourselves in a very specific way. That is a very important new development, re-examining where we are and not merely resting on our laurels. In fact, it is the acceptance that to do the same thing (we've always done) is a violation of the very concept of why we went into this kind of work in the first place. So I consider myself very lucky to be included in this discussion because I think you are really at the forefront and the cutting edge of the "new society".

**PAT** The problem of being on the cutting edge in your world is that you get too many bruises, you get too many cuts. If we continue to hold hands together and make the journey on the long and winding road, the cuts or the bruises will be less deep. And I feel that with our own bruised hands we will salve each other's wounds along the way.

**MARLENE** One of my fulfilling moments in this Reflection was when we went back to the history of the movement-especially for me, coming from the latter part of the second generation. I felt a new sense of belonging to the NGO community. I feel that other newcomers should witness this. While listening to

TQ relate the "10 chapters" of his life, I felt that I had lived out only one chapter. I really wish to build my own ten exciting and fulfilling chapters.

**SOC** I have experienced a

fight deep sense of community here. I think many of us our own battles, we have our own forts to defend and to fight, but sometimes the sense of community is lost. This is why I think it is important that we affirm each other, because we have done a lot, even as a lot more remains to be done.

I feel very much at home with this community, and it gives me that confidence in the future, that we can do better things and we can fly even higher given our common roots in this community, this social movement which we are all in.

**AL** Sometimes the younger generations would ask 'Al, nasaan na ang Rebolusyon? Ano na ang nangyari sa Rebolusyon? I want to tell them now that here--in the lives of the first and generation NGO workers--here is the a part of the revolution. If we sum up the number of years each person here has given to the movement, we would have roughly 350 to 400 collective person-years of waging an authentic revolution. I am humbled before such a reality as I feel that your values remain as clear and as pure as when you first became involved.

**TONY Q** For me this process reaffirms something that I have been feeling. Although I've been advocating for a paradigm shift, I was really working on the old paradigm of just toppling dictatorships and taking over government state power. I think that we've opened a whole new area to explore from hereon.

The other thing which was striking for me was being able to link up with the past. Being able to link up with the past made me see how much we have done over the years. And it gives you the feeling that we are on the right track.

**DAVE** The angle that I observed was how the experience of the first generation transformed them as persons. This is critical because it carries the spirit of the movement. It becomes part of you and you eventually live it, and that gives colour to NGOs. The values that you shared is the one that sustains the motivation. Not just the work-but the heart or soul of the work-that no matter how much or how fast our work is, we still have not forgotten the value of the person.

**FR. FRANCIS** When we talk of global realities and events, sometimes, I wonder why I had to become involved in that thinking. On the ground, the struggle is simple. There is a saying: "The early bird catches the worm." But I can also see that the situation has been reversed: 'The late worm also escapes the bird.'

Perhaps the Philippines is backward in some ways, it is not an NIC, it is weak. But in terms of the social movement, the NGOs are flourishing. Perhaps in the continuous questioning and realizing the cutting edge, we can bring again a new spirit-and spiritual dimension-into development. Perhaps the "worm" can become a butterfly and we can make other flowers bloom.

**DINKY** We are at a vantage point, not only physically in Mt. Makiling, but at this moment of history in our journey of transformation with the people. And being with you here made me feel like I was 21 years old and a pioneer again! At this moment of my life, I am 41, I feel young all of a sudden. That was how I felt when I was in Bukidnon in the 70s in the mountains, seeing the sunflowers. I felt I was one of the pioneers of Mindanao.

Now I feel we are all pioneers again. I am more eager now to keep on asking more questions, and am very energized to live the answers. If that is one value that we all share across generations, it is an ability to live through these answers.

**JUN** It has a very nice feeling, when we of the first generations, found out that the second generation was singing our song. I guess the reason for that is because it is not only our song, but it is our song together. And what really changed was not our song. It still is the same song-social change-but it is the vision perhaps that is changing. On how to attain that vision.



**L O O K I N G   A H E A D**

## Towards New Paradigms and Strategies

*T*he significant changes that have taken

place over the past years now call on us to develop new and appropriate responses and strategies.

While many of the basic issues which we set out to resolve in the beginning remain with us today, the environment that we now find ourselves in is quite different. We ourselves have evolved in response to those changes. As such, we find ourselves armed with new strengths and capabilities, while having to face new challenges and limitations in our work.

We thus ask ourselves: **What direction should we take in our attempts at social transformation? In view of current realities, as well as our capabilities as NGOs, what specific tasks remain to be done? How are we to fulfil these tasks?**

At this point, it seems apparent that if we remain committed to social transformation and wish to respond to the new challenges which we face, a **PARADIGM SHIFT**, is necessary. Secondly, attempts must be made to develop our **SUSTAINABILITY AND VIABILITY** in all spheres of our community development efforts.

### **UNDERTAKING A SHIFT IN PARADIGMS**

In view of current realities in our world (i.e. globalization of trade and technology), we need to **develop new perspectives and approaches**, in terms of issues, frameworks, responses and institutional arrangements.

This shift in perspectives or paradigms must take into account the need to **link "the barrio" to the international arena**, in view of the fact that the globalization process now impacts on the village, faster and greater than ever before. Likewise, this means that while social development should be headed towards global actions, we need to double our efforts to strengthen local interventions.

Most importantly, the shift we undertake should direct social development towards the promotion of our **pro-active role** (as opposed to being "resistance-oriented") as members of civil society.

The question is, how do we initiate the process of undertaking this paradigm shift? We recognize that this will be a long and painstaking process which will necessarily involve more than a few heads, and will integrate the ideas of different sectors. At this point in time, all that we are prepared to present are a **menu of options and ideas** to spark discussion and debate from that larger group. Hopefully, these will serve to set in motion the process of shaping a new paradigm.

## Identifying new development paradigms drawn from and based on local reality

We need to study local realities and experiences and, from there, draw out elements of new perspectives on the development process. We believe that any development process must necessarily be in touch with and grounded in local reality to be successful.

## Consensus building towards systematic paradigm-building: "Struggle for interpretations"

The evolution and establishment of new ideas and frameworks must necessarily go through a process of discussion and debate among all sectors. As such, we recommend the following steps for arriving at a consensus on elements, if not the actual interpretations, of the new paradigm:

### A. *"Cramming Sessions"*

We should initiate discussion fora which shall:

- be conducted at the micro-level leading to regional and national consultations
- focus on areas of paradigm shifts, for instance biotechnology, feminism, as well as doomsday realities such as AIDS, malnutrition, aging, disability, etc.
- be conducted using concrete terms, particularly in clarifying the shift on the ground.

### B. *Interphasing with Other Sectors*

The process should involve important sectors in society. As such we should interphase with:

- **the academe**; for example, linkages should be fostered with UP Diliman and smaller institutions within the university system
- **the people's organizations**; any new framework, direction or strategy needs to be clarified and refined from their perspective. As such, we should initiate a parallel process with POs, especially as POs should not be robbed of the opportunity to participate in the shaping of the paradigm shift, and to do so in terms that are real to them.

### *C. Documentation and Research*

The process of discussion and dialogue must be **documented** until a major consensus document can be made. Subsequently, pioneers in the NGO movement among us need to become involved in the **writing** of literature related to this paradigm shift in order to assist in the development of new ideas.

We must be able to effectively **disseminate** the results of this process; we must **explore other methods**, not necessarily written-based, in order to do this.

### **Draw up models and advocate for the paradigm shift at all levels**

We must **advocate for the adoption of this new paradigm** at the global, national and local levels. Specific sectors such as government, donors, NGO networks, and especially local communities must be convinced of the need for a new paradigm. As such, we must be able to articulate the problems related to globalization and the establishment of a global village in a way that is relevant to the communities.

Equally important is the need for us to **develop models** which shall promote this paradigm shift. As such, we must balance advocacy with community-based work.

**Identify viable and sustainable development programs in the field and "*macro-nize*" them.**

We must identify the "energy zones" and the **viable sustainable programs** on the ground which match this new paradigm. These must then be **replicated** on a level which has a greater potential for impact.

**Develop tools of analysis and technology for sustainable development.**

A **menu of tools for analysis** ("a tool box") must be shaped by this new paradigm and should have the following basic elements:

- sustainable development framework is the standard measure or tool of analysis
- structural analysis should be integrated into this sustainable development framework
- conjunctural analysis must also be integrated in order for us to identify enemies and friends as they relate to a given issue
- these new tools must incorporate an understanding of power in relation to gender, class, citizenship (national and global), life-forms, identity and ethnicity

A concern which cuts across all others is that we must bring women into the process of change, simultaneous with the paradigm shift.

## ESTABLISHING SUSTAINABILITY AND VIABILITY AT THE GROUND-LEVEL

Our concern for a paradigm shift can only be confronted effectively if we undertake parallel efforts to ensure that NGOs and their programs can continue to effectively respond to the call of the times. This means honing our skills and capabilities and managing our existing resources to ensure sufficiency in the long-term.

We identified a few essential tasks that must be carried out in order to ensure that NGOs can continue to function effectively in the long-run.

### Capability-building

#### A. *Empowerment of POs*

We must continue our efforts to empower POs in view of the fact that they are the foundations of all our efforts at social transformation.

#### B. *Skills Building*

In order to remain as viable entities, we need to build our skills and capabilities as workers in a global village. As such we need:

- literacy training in the area of Science and Technology, particularly with regard to modern communication technologies
- trainings for building capabilities in policy advocacy at the local and national levels
- research and systematic documentation processes.

### *C. Resource-Sharing*

In view of our limited financial and human resources, we need to:

- jointly invest in relevant hardware/software
- establish database centres, etc.
- harness the expertise of local NGOs for consultancies

### **Networking and Linkaging**

Partnerships and alliances must be established if we hope to ensure impact and effectivity in our efforts. We therefore need to

- redefine and strengthen our existing networks and linkages
- broaden these partnerships by establishing networks and new mediating instruments which shall involve one or more of the following: mass and political movements, the private sector, academe, and research and policy institutions) as well as civil society (NGOs and POs).

### **Mainstreaming and Popularization**

We must continue to advocate the NGO agenda, to gather popular support, and therefore, greater acceptance of its views and proposed alternatives.

### **Power, Politics and Governance Concerns**

We need to refine and clarify the NGO agenda vis-a-vis the question of politics and governance.

### **Renewal of Organizing Efforts**

Community organizing efforts must be shaped by this paradigm shift. As such, we need to reassess, reorient and renew our organizing

**methodologies** accordingly; we need to redirect these efforts towards the creation of a critical mass base of substantial number which is, at the same time, aware and conscientized.

### Resource Management

A. *Financial*. In the light of the drying-up of the aid well, we face the challenge of finding and developing alternative schemes of raising resources. This must be done if we truly wish to establish financial independence, and subsequently, genuinely sustainable programs.

B. *Natural Resource Base*. We must continue all efforts to secure the natural resource base.

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### Internal NGO concerns

There is a growing need for us to *identify the "wellsprings", "zones of energy", and "centers of momentum"* for the movement. We must tap the youth, for instance, to provide the human resources for, and thereby, fuel the movement. In particular, we should:

- incorporate "alternative" paradigms into the curriculum of major universities.
- strengthen existing comprehensive student formation programs and go beyond political propaganda in social development conscientization for the youth
- use Human Development indices at the local level to be monitored by the youth
- study the World Youth Congress as a serendipitous moment

## C O N C L U S I O N

# Towards a Just and Sustainable World

The reflection process that

we initiated in Makiling was itself a milestone in the development of NGOs in the Philippines. For the first time in the past thirty years or so, we looked back on our evolution as NGOs and explored our changing responses to the call of the times. In so doing, we caught a glimpse of our role as NGOs in Philippine society, as well as the impact that we had in shaping our environment. **We realized that we had, in fact, made a difference through our efforts and interventions.** Though far from being completed, it was clear that the missions that we had set out to accomplish had, indeed, borne fruit.

We attempted to answer the question of current challenges and new strategies. A greater understanding of our strengths and limitations, as culled from our histories, both personal and as a sector, pointed out the need to fulfil two primary tasks.

First, global and national events call on us to undertake a paradigm shift; we must do this if we expect to be able to respond to our current realities. Second, we must be able to develop our capabilities in response

to these new realities and in so doing, sustain our resources and prove our viability as mechanisms for change.

We brainstormed on possible strategies and tasks that we could present as options to fulfil these two goals. The result was a "menu" - a whole range of options that can be digested and utilized when appropriate, and otherwise discarded by the reader.

Those of us who participated in the Makiling reflection-retreat agreed on three basic resolutions for immediate action. We agreed to

1. Interphase and interact with organizers of other similar initiatives, such as those conducted in Subic and Palawan, our counterparts in the different regions of the Philippines, as well as the people's organizations.
2. Initiate, through the different NGO networks in the Philippines, "Cramming-sessions" or "Kapihan" to discuss the substance and process of the paradigm shift.
3. Document and disseminate the substance of the reflection through different forms.

While we recognized our roles as catalysts in initiating this process of undertaking a paradigm shift and in continuing our efforts at establishing a viable, just and sustainable world, we know that others must take part and support this process for it to be a success. Thus, **we call on all those who remain committed to change and social transformation to join us in making this a reality.**

**in continuing our efforts at establishing a viable, just and sustainable world, we know that others must take part and support this process.**

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## ABOUT THE PUBLISHERS



The **ASIAN NGO COALITION FOR AGRARIAN REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (ANGOC)** is a regional association of development NGOs who operate at the regional, national, and local levels taking into account the development framework and perspectives discussed at the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (WCARRD). It seeks to address key issues related to food security and poverty alleviation in the region. ANGOC has 23 members in nine countries from South and Southeast Asia: Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand.



The **PHILIPPINE PARTNERSHIP FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN RURAL AREAS (PhilDHRRA)** is a non-denominational, non-ideological and non-sectarian organization, with a current membership of 62 NGOs all over the country. Since its formalization as a network in 1983, PhilDHRRA has played a key role in major rural development issues such as agrarian reform, upland development, fisheries, environment, gender, and local governance. Along the way, the network has also played a leading role in major NGO efforts such as CODE-NGO, PDAP, and PCHRD, as well as in evolving alternative development paradigms.