

Xavier ecoville²

The Phase IV (Year 2) of Xavier Ecoville Experience



ABOUT THE COVER

Xavier Ecoville is a special resettlement community located at Barangay Lumbia, Cagayan de Oro City for the TS Sendong survivors. The Xavier Ecoville Project is reputed as the first university-led resettlement project in the world. It serves approximately 2,800 people from different typhoon-stricken barangays of CDO. The community currently has 568 permanent houses, chapel, multipurpose hall, cooperative, basketball court, livelihood center, talipapa, and other facilities for its residents. The project also works with different stakeholders for effective and sustainable partnerships with XU, Xavier Ecoville community members, government agencies, and private organizations.

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PROEM

The Resonating Chorus of Xavier Ecoville

As vivid as it was well-prepared, a night in December 2013 was worthy to be remembered. Around fifty performers, clad in colorful costumes, presented a rundown of artistic numbers during the “Straight from the Art” show — folk dance and chorale performances, a group declamation, comedy skits, storytelling, painting exhibit, Christmas carols and a short play — which attracted many viewers who packed the theater house of Xavier University.

One of the highlights of that show was the soulful number, “Sa Xavier Ecoville,” an original composition of and performed by Paul Peji Aguiman and his band in the musical show. It was significant to remember that song for it chronicled the torment they went through when Typhoon Sendong struck, the struggle to survive its aftermath, the rebuilding of lives and now, sustaining life in their new homes. Toward the end of the song, many people got teary-eyed.

Among the many spectators was Alexie Colipano. “This is a way to express what we have become two years after [Typhoon] Sendong. It is also one of the few ways that we can set as examples that even though we went through a difficult time, we still help each other,” he said, referring to the victims of Supertyphoon Yolanda to whom they dedicated the show. The family of Colipano is only one of over 500 families residing at Xavier Ecoville, nestled in Barangay Lumbia in the uptown portion of Cagayan de Oro City.

It was also at the same time when Shirley Siarot began pedaling the sewing machine together with other women of Xavier Ecoville, thus, the inception of their Sewing and Textile Enterprise. The journey of selling bags while managing an empowering livelihood organization has been one that goes up and down, a journey paved with perseverance yet not without challenges. Part of “Straight from the Art” show was the launching of their livelihood undertaking, bearing the tagline — “Do you carry the PagBAG-o?” — a play on the words “bag” and “pagbabago” (change).

Aguiman, Colipano and Siarot are not just residents of Xavier Ecoville. They are living testaments that ordinary voices in this community, when pooled together, can realize a self-reliant neighborhood. Together with a city that bares a myriad of definitions of resiliency, we all have learned the hard lessons. It is central to remember the lessons we have ascertained from the tragedy, beyond numbers and figures. Further than what is obvious, we ought to see the larger picture—the sense of community and to think of the future.

It was in a not-so-distant past when Typhoon Sendong came like a thief in the night and left behind shattered homes, broken dreams, and curtailed thousands of lives of Kagay-anons. The enormous scale and extent of the damage wrought by the typhoon brought the “City of Golden Friendship” to a standstill, clearly indicating the need for sustainable reconstruction and rehabilitation of which XU was among the first institutions to respond to the call.

In collaboration with different organizations with diverse resources and expertise in resettlement, the Xavier Ecoville Project courageously embarked on an exigent yet fulfilling task of making sense of the massive loss of lives and damage to properties in order to conceive a multi-year, multi-level and agenda-targeted rehabilitation and resiliency strategy that will not only bring the Sendong-stricken families back to their feet but also serve as an exemplary archetype of a university-led resettlement community.

With their recent achievements in integrating various livelihood programs and strengthening its local governance, Xavier Ecoville remains steadfast in flourishing itself so it can inspire a booming local economy and leadership with its own residents as the frontliners. Establishing entrepreneurial opportunities is Xavier Ecoville's number one priority. At present, they have six enterprises: (1) credit and loans, (2) wholesale, (3) food, (4) manpower, (5) sewing, and (6) agri-enterprise.

In paving this bright future they aspire, there will be challenges, no less difficult than what they have experienced in the past but now they have the advantage: the knowledge documents. This is what this special magazine is all about — to take us back to how they started and moved forward, from ideation

to scratches to construction to empowerment. This publication could not have been achieved without a large measure of dedication from our contributing writers, photographers, artists, public and private partner institutions. As part of XE's Knowledge Product Development Program, this can be beneficial to groups and organizations who are interested in replicating the framework of the Xavier Ecoville Project to other resettlement communities. This publication takes its name from the compendium of stories, challenges and lessons from the Phase IV (Year 2) of the project, thus, **Xavier Ecoville²**. This magazine is an answer that yes, the XE community continues to grow, that it remains true to its goal of becoming “a self-sufficient, self-governing community” as how its pioneers envisioned this village to be.

One year before the management of the Xavier Ecoville Project concludes, one thing will stay, the thought that they were able to usher in efficient coordination as an integral part of building not just a mere community but an inspiring model of what a resettlement undertaking can achieve. The stories of its own residents and the countless names of people who form part of Xavier Ecoville's great tapestry of narratives give them the best reason to hope for sustainable years ahead. ■

Words by Stephen J Pedroza, Editor in Chief

*Sa Xavier Ecoville, kami malipayon
Tungod sa pagsinabtanay samatag-usang panimalay
Naningkamot ang usag-usa alang sa kausaban
Salamat sa Kahitas-an gidungog ang kabag-ohan namong tanan*

*(At Xavier Ecoville, we are happy/ Because of the harmony of every home/ Each one of us strives for change/
Thanks to the Highest who granted progress to all of us)*

“Sa Xavier Ecoville” (2013)



SMILES AND HUES. Donning their attractive costumes, a group of girls performed a Filipino folk dance with grace and pride during Xavier Ecoville's show, “Straight from the Art.”



Yap, R.
FR ROBERTO C YAP SJ
PRESIDENT

Xavier University – Ateneo de Cagayan

To the Xavier Ecoville community:

It has been three years since we first broke the ground for the building of your homes and took the first steps that would lead to the creation of a new community. We have grown since then, and learned much.

Among the gifts we were bestowed are the partnerships with the people who have generously offered their assistance and support for the development of your new home, your new community. When Xavier University envisioned this project, it was not just to build houses, but to build lives together by a common experience of despair transformed into hope, of fear transformed into faith, and of loss transformed into new life. Our goal was not just to provide shelter, but to foster empowered living through the development of livelihood, education, health and values.

The years ahead come with many challenges such as the need to strengthen your community organizations, and to sustain the programs and projects that have been initiated to better assist you in moving toward a brighter future. The call is for us to continue caring for each other, caring for the environment in light of a deepening faith in God who saved us, and continues to save us so that we could live “lives that are full.”

Ad maiorem Dei gloriam.



H. Roa-Quiaoit
DR HILLY ANN ROA-QUIAOIT
VICE PRESIDENT

XU Research and Social Outreach Cluster

After five years, Xavier Ecoville has shifted from a project to a real township. It provided a platform for the survivors to start again. More than building houses, it has been about looking at the system of resettlement. We weren't just building the physical structures; it was strengthening their values and capabilities. Together with different organizations, we embarked on different workshops and formation sessions. These have helped the community earn a certain degree of sustainability.

With the way it was designed and with the skills of the XEP team, I felt that the five years has really made an impact on the community in terms of making them stand on their own. It has been a slow shift, but I believe that the community will still appreciate Xavier University's continuing support. Certainly there will still be some issues and problems with which they will need technical assistance. As a university, we must not cease to engage, although it isn't necessary for our support to be financial. We must recognize the community as our partner—a strong entity that is able to stand on its own.

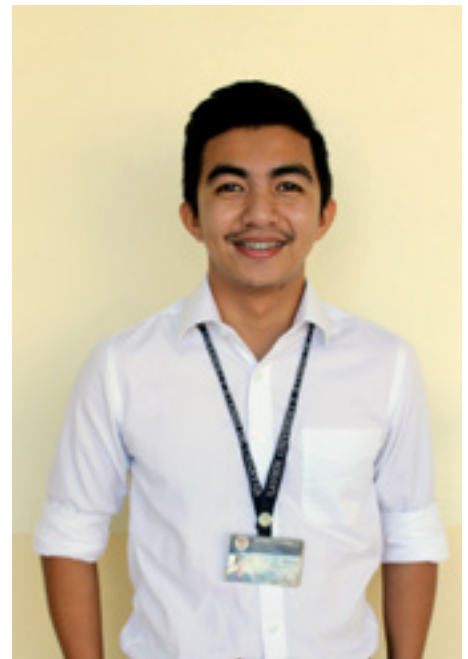
Congratulations to the Xavier Ecoville community! It took a lot of courage; it took a lot of foresight to build something new. Xavier Ecoville is a testament to our resilience. Their journey is a testimony of their will and desire to continue leading their own way of life. They are a good example of people of strong faith and strong hearts, continuously moving forward.



The mission continues even after the awarding of the permanent houses to the beneficiaries — to build a resilient community and provide them the right to a life with dignity.

It has been several grace-filled years for the project to serve and help build the community become self-sufficient, self-governing and values-oriented. It has also been years of building partnership that have enabled synergies among individuals, organizations and the government, and years of challenges, learning and development that has made this mission fulfilling.

As the project gears toward the end in the management of the community, we are always reminded that we can only do so much and the role of sustaining the community lies in the hands of the community members and partners.



Philip Robert C. Flores
PHILIP ROBERT C. FLORES, MBA
 PROJECT COORDINATOR
 The Xavier Ecoville Project

Barangay Lumbia has a bright future and we are glad that Xavier Ecoville is part of it. Maybe ten years from now, our barangay will become one of the major residential areas in Cagayan de Oro as many Kagay-anons now opt to invest in the uptown.

I see Xavier Ecoville growing with its youth who are actively engaging in various advocacies and who value their education with dedication and determination. There is no wonder they will eventually become a self-reliant community because of their cooperative and synergy.

We have seen the progress in their lives and families, and my greatest hope for Xavier Ecoville is for them to keep on pursuing towards communal and personal growth.

Kudos, Xavier Ecoville!



Wilhelm Valencia
HON WILHELM VALENCIA
 CAPTAIN
 Barangay Lumbia





CHILDREN'S SMILES. "We have an experience in some 20-year-old communities; it's now the children who are speaking about the importance of having a secured home that brings them hope. They are successful in their career. Given the opportunity, I'm sure Xavier Ecoville will do the same. It's our vision." - Leonilo Escalada, Chief Operating Officer of Habitat for Humanity Philippines



The Tree of Life

By Matthan Luceño

The Xavier Ecoville Project (XEP) planted a tree on the edge of a forest. XEP pruned it, kept the soil around it healthy, and watered it. As the tree grew, so did XEP's awareness that it will have to move the tree to the forest someday, allowing larger hands to help the tree reach greater heights and spread deeper roots.

As a resettlement community, Xavier Ecoville grew out of the passion and compassion of Xavier University, the government sector, various donors and funding agencies, site development and construction partners, international and local aid organizations, and the beneficiaries themselves.

When the season of charity passed, it left the University to act as a governing unit through XEP. Dr Dixon Yasay, director of XU's Governance and Leadership Institute (GLI), seconded the assessment of XU president Fr Roberto Yap SJ that a paradigm shift was necessary.

Thus, XEP entered into the development phase, marking September 2013 to August 2016 as the preparation period for the integration of Xavier Ecoville into the larger community of Barangay Lumbia.

XEP concluded the second year of its enabling period with the values of *magis, cura personalis*, collaboration and empowerment at its roots.

Magis: the stakeholders

Magis is the philosophy of doing beyond excellence for others. Aside from the *Operation: Tabang Sendong* pool of funds which XEP has strategized to last until 2016, different partners and donors continue to pitch in.

Government partners include the City Government, Barangay Lumbia, and the Department of Social Welfare and Development; while some non-government partners included the International Organization for Migration, Habitat for Humanity, Peace and Equity Foundation, Philippine Red Cross, A Brown Company Inc, Gawad Kalinga and the Ateneo de Manila University. Other donors were the Union Bank Foundation, Maybank, Brotherhood of Christian Businessmen and Professionals, Give2Asia and Chinese Ladies Association of Cebu.

In the development phase, XEP focused on enabling the community to create their own programs. The community devised a five-year strategic plan and for the community to receive funding, XEP assesses the community's programs to ascertain that they

complement XEP's development goals.

“Kung naa’y funding nga dili in line ato, lisod man na ihatag nato (It’s difficult to release funds for programs that aren’t in line with the plan),” says project coordinator Philip Robert Flores. “It would create trouble instead of development. It will cause problems when people receive money that is not intended for development. So, for now, all the funding and proposals go through us. The funders would also be assured that their money is safe and used for the intended programs.”

Cura personalis: barangay involvement

In the spirit of caring for each person in the community, the University continues to conduct research and social outreach at Xavier Ecoville. At present, the challenge for XEP is placing the engagements through the right channels and ensuring that their focus is set on concrete development and sustainability.

With Lumbia as Xavier Ecoville’s host barangay, XEP must also ensure that the resettlement’s plans go in line with the barangay’s. Lumbia, an integral stakeholder in the development programs, is involved with capacitating the Xavier Ecoville Homeowners Association (XEHA) through the integration of their five-year strategic plan to the barangay development plan to accommodate Ecoville’s needs.

To transplant Ecoville is to give the governance role to which it is due: the local government units of Barangay Lumbia and Cagayan de Oro City. Flores also expects that after XEP’s culmination and turnover in 2016, Ecoville will relay all future concerns to the said LGUs.

“Many have asked if there’s a need to stay,” says Flores about XEP’s phasing out from Xavier Ecoville. “If there will be a need to stay, especially when the programs are still not implemented or sustainable, most probably the management team would stay, but the approach will change. Instead of enabling, it would be monitoring and consultancy.”

But despite their special care, XEP has encountered some challenges that should be surpassed by the time Xavier Ecoville uproots on its own.

Collaboration: problems and challenges

No resettlement project is perfect. Like a regular community, Xavier Ecoville has faced issues such as domestic problems, violence against women and children (VAWC) and cases of teenage

pregnancy. And then there are the regular issues that a resettlement community is bound to face: the turnover of property management to the LGU, the Xavier Ecoville cooperative’s debt to the Peace and Equity Foundation, sustainability of the water and electricity connections, XEHA’S debt to the barangay water cooperative for the installation of a communal water system, lack of documentation and financial reports, and absentee and disqualified residents.

For a family to live in Ecoville, they must have passed the three requirements: the family had been directly affected by Sendong; they have participated in values formation and voluntary services; and their original residence must have been drastically ravaged by the tropical storm and/or demolished completely. The management of Ecoville and the community members themselves are willing to address these challenges collectively and pave a brighter future in their new found home.


Empowerment: XEHA and the cooperative

With the multitude and scale of current challenges in the community, XEP is fortunate to have found some helping hands in Ecoville itself. Capacity-building programs have put forth the leaders of the community: the XEHA and the Xavier Ecoville Multipurpose Cooperative (XEMPCO). The approach they have chosen is for XEHA to filter the general problems of the community while the XEMPCO has to deal with the unemployment and food security concerns.


GLI has been active in providing capacity and leadership training sessions to XEHA. GLI has also conducted training on crafting policies that will protect members of the association and safeguard the community. In time, Xavier Ecoville will systematize and institutionalize all its processes, achieving mechanisms for legislation, equity, and accountability.

When XEP started, they already envisioned what kind of growth Xavier Ecoville will achieve. XEP set three objectives: to strengthen the community’s governance, to ensure its smooth transition into Barangay Lumbia, and to network and collaborate with more partners for further development.

In times of difficulty and doubt, their vision continues to light up their way: the growth of an economically and ecologically progressive, God-centered community that is values-driven, self-sustaining and self-governing. ■



INCOME GENERATION. Xavier Ecoville Livelihood Center was established in 2014 to house the different enterprises of the community.



ENTERPRISES. Xavier Ecoville Multipurpose Cooperative (XEMPCO) currently has six enterprises, namely, credit and loan, wholesale, manpower, food, agriculture, and sewing.



A Work in Progress

By Kimberley Mae V Llano

Fifteen Xavier Ecoville (XE) residents were given scholarships at All-in-One Technical School in Cagayan de Oro City. With the help of Maybank Foundation, a partner of XE in the renewal of lives affected by TS Sendong, the scholars passed the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) National Certification Level II (NC II).

After the enhancement of their competencies, how are the scholars now? Here is a glimpse of their stories.

One step at a time

Jonito Enhambre, 34 years old, is one of the scholars who passed the carpentry skills training. *“Gamit kaayo siya. Dali ra makuha ang salig. Samot na bitaw naa ang tag-iya, ikinapayas dayun nako akong NC II (It’s very useful since I can easily gain my employer’s trust. When the boss is around, I would proudly talk about my certification),”* Enhambre said.

Enhambre offers house-to-house carpentry services around Xavier Ecoville. *“Sa balay-balay ra ko ga-trabaho. Di ko ga-apply as engineer ug contractor kay partial-partialan ra man ka hangtod matabla (I*

prefer house-to-house projects over engineering or contracting since I have more control over pricing),” he shared.

Enhambre explained that he had built a solid network in Burgos. After Sendong, he had to go back to square one: get to know the neighbors, offer his services at a lower price. *“S’yempre, kung mahalon g’yud nimo sila, di g’yud sila musugot sa imo kay wala pa man sila kaila (Of course, if you charge them with a high price right away, they wouldn’t take you since they’re not yet familiar with your work),”* he said.

Enhambre is grateful for his certification. But he also thinks that he and his fellow scholars would be able to put their certificates into better use if they can get some guidance. *“Akong hangyo unta, kanang na’y maghawid sa amo. Kanang package na. Unta mu-back up sila kung aha mag-apply bitaw, kanang klaro (It would be great if someone could manage the scholars, as part of the package. Someone could back us up when we apply, to make the process clearer),”* he explained.

Almost

For Lour Elle, 29 years old and NC II passer of carpentry skills training, being a scholar and passing the exam for NC II is a great thing.

“Naka-decide ko mag-take sa NC II kay sa pag-apply sa trabaho, diretso na. Wala na’y laing pangutana sa kompanya. Mao ra na imong ipakita sa ila kung mag-apply ka (I decided to take an NC II course because it makes applying for work easier. You just need to show the certificate and you’re as good as hired),” he said.

However, Elle admits that he has not yet used his TESDA NC II for applying jobs since he still needs to comply with the requirement for his birth certificate.

Extra mile

Renald Ampo, 25 years old, passed electrical skills training. He has yet to use his TESDA certification in applying for jobs, but he is applying what he learned from the 12 training sessions at All-in-One Technical School.

“Gakagamit man usab nako akong natun-an diri sa balay. Ako’y ga-install sa mga electrical wiring. Kung na’y magpa-install diri sa Ecoville, ako’y mag-install (I did the electrical wiring at home, so I’m putting



PERSEVERANCE. A worker of the manpower enterprise assembles handwashing facilities. The Maybank - Xavier Ecoville Manpower Association (MAXEMA) was contracted by GiZ, a German NGO, to produce about a thousand handwashing facilities for public schools in some areas of Mindanao.

Still, he earns his daily wages by doing carpentry work in the Xavier Ecoville Multipurpose Cooperative. *“Pasalamat ko sa nagtabang sa amo. Pasalamat ko kay wala’y gasto among pag-eskwela (I’m thankful to those who helped us. I’m thankful that we were able to get a free education),”* Elle said.

my new skills to good use. I also help others around Ecoville),” said Ampo.

Aside from electrical services, Ampo also does other things for extra income. *“Ga-catering ko karon. Ga-process usab ko og banana chips ug peanut roll, ug gahimu usab og lumpia wrapper (I do catering too, as well as food processing. I make banana chips, peanut rolls, and lumpia wrappers),”* he said. ■



COLLABORATION. Maybank executives discuss with Cagayan de Oro City Mayor Oscar Moreno the resettlement development plans for the "City of Golden Friendship."



Banking on Hope

By Bernice Cabildo

The Malayan tiger symbolizes bravery and strength to Malaysians, appearing in various heraldry of Malaysian institutions. One such institution is Malayan Banking Berhad, or Maybank.

In the Philippines, Maybank Philippines Inc (MPI) takes inspiration and guidance from its parent institution. It sustains its role as a strong, dependable corporate citizen.

With disaster relief as one of its key advocacies, MPI serves to create a difference in communities—to bank on the bravery and strength of Filipinos who

choose to hold on to hope and action to rebuild lives. Maybank Philippines Vice President for Corporate Affairs Eric Montelibano spoke to us about their partnership with Xavier Ecoville.

What made you decide to partner with Xavier Ecoville?

With the aftermath of Typhoon Sendong, there was a heightened concern among the management of Maybank. Then MPI Chairman of the Board Dato' Mohd Salleh Bin HJ Harun asked MPI Corporate Affairs to identify a project for Maybank to support. We came across Fr Eric Velandria of Xavier University who shared with us the Xavier

Ecoville Project (XEP). After learning more about the vision of creating a community and visiting the site where it was going to be located, we firmed up our decision to partner with Xavier University. Maybank wanted a more significant role in the community and identified the provision of a facility where residents and partners could gather, talk, and mobilize activities for rebuilding lives. The Maybank Foundation donated the Maybank Community Center to be at the heart of the Xavier Ecoville's community.

What is special with the Xavier Ecoville community?

Xavier Ecoville is beyond being a resettlement site. It is a well-planned community that provides shelter and helps families rebuild their lives through various support initiatives that bring them back to the mainstream of everyday life. The XEP aims to improve the living conditions of residents by providing opportunities and sustainable activities that contribute to their growth. From the values formation initiatives to the livelihood projects, Xavier University has created a model resettlement community in the XEP.

Ever since your partnership with Xavier, what has changed or improved in your programs?

After donating the Maybank Community Center, Maybank wanted to continue with a program that

could help residents earn a living. So together with Xavier University, Maybank created a manpower program designed to generate jobs. The result is the Maybank - Xavier Ecoville Manpower Association (MAXEMA). After only a year, the association has achieved impressive results for its members, with more promise to grow and help more residents. From skills training to management and marketing, MAXEMA continues to grow.

What are your other plans and projects for the development of the Xavier Ecoville community?

To further develop the community, Maybank is building the Maybank Training and Learning Center (TLC) at Xavier Ecoville to provide more training programs for residents and neighboring communities, and to help the MAXEMA membership grow. Maybank has decided to have a long-term engagement to significantly help Xavier Ecoville residents.

What else are you looking forward to with Xavier Ecoville?

Maybank looks forward to more meaningful engagements with Xavier Ecoville. For Maybank, Xavier Ecoville is a community that will serve not only as a model for resettlement sites, but also as an inspiration to Filipinos and the world. Through this community, families have the opportunity to live and grow with dignity. **[With reports by Isa Agawin]**



SCHOLARS. The MAXEMA scholars were awarded with their TESDA National Certificate II (NCII) on electrical installation and carpentry during Maybank's visit at Xavier Ecoville.



Bread and Change: A Day in XE's Panbag-o Bakery

By Mary Antoinette M Magallanes

It's 3:00 in the morning when the alarm goes off. While the rest of the Xavier Ecoville community still slumbers peacefully, some are already up on their feet to prepare for another day's work.

It's 4AM, and the faint sounds of clinking utensils and whisper-like chatter, the thump-thump-thump of hands kneading dough onto a table, and the alluring aroma of freshly baked bread fill the quiet lanes of the small village.

It's 5AM, and fresh sunlight unfolds on another workday in XE's one-year-old livelihood enterprise – the Panbag-o Bakery.

The bakery is a livelihood program under the Xavier Ecoville Multipurpose Cooperative (XEMPCO). As XEMPCO's sixth and latest enterprise, the bakery was formally opened in August 2014 with several Xavier Ecoville community members and Xavier University staff gracing the opening event.

Felix Latorino has been working for the Panbag-o Bakery for one year now. Although he has an assistant, Latorino mixes the ingredients and bakes the bread himself.

The work in the bakery, according to Latorino, starts a day ahead. At 2PM, he and his assistant kick off the tasks by sanitizing the kitchen area. They would then

arrange the baking utensils, check the inventory of the goods they need to bake, and prepare the dough. Latorino lifts several huge lumps of dough on a table sprinkled with flour and mixes the ingredients for each kind of bread they are going to serve.

"Mahuman siya [Latorino] og masa mga 7 sa gabii so ipapauli na namo siya para dili na siya mabilar kay ang magpuli na pud sa iyaha kay ang assistant baker. Siya man ang maghorno (Latorino finishes the preparation around 7PM. We let him go home then so that he doesn't get overworked. The assistant baker takes over and takes care of the rest)," said bakery in-charge Flordelyn Luyao. While the bakers rest, the dough is set to ferment overnight.

Banging trays, clanking utensils, and whisking mixers break the stillness on the next morning. Latorino slides the now ready-to-bake dough into the oven while his assistant prepares the bakery display.

Luyao says that other enterprise managers of the livelihood program help her with the bakery. *"Si Joy, katong sa grocery in-charge, 3AM muanhi na siya diri. Ang manager dayon namo nga si Ma'am Ging ang mupuli pagka-5AM, dayon ako dayon ang mupuli pagka-6:30AM. (Joy, the grocery in-charge, comes in at 3AM. Then our manager Ma'am Ging takes over at 5AM, followed by me at 6:30AM)," Luyao explained. The persons-in-charge are*

responsible for the display, accounting, purchasing the ingredients, and overall management of the bakery.

At around 5:30AM, customers slowly fill the bakery. Fresh pandesal, ensaymada, cheese bread, and other Filipino favorites fill happy stomachs. The trend continues for the rest of the day until 5PM, and by 2PM, the baking routine goes on again for Latorino and the rest of the staff.

Living this routine is not new for Latorino as he has been in the bakery business for quite a while now. In fact, his skills as a baker have brought him to distant places outside Cagayan de Oro. “*Sa Manila, mga napulo ka tuig. Nag-trabaho gihapon ko’g bakery sa Negros* (I worked in Manila for ten years. I’ve also worked at a bakery in Negros),” Latorino imparted.

However, the meager income from the bakery often falls short in covering expenses at home, especially for the needs of Latorino’s six children. “*Igo-igo ra gyud [ang sweldo],*” said Latorino. “*Ang P300, igo-igo ra gyud para sa akong mga anak* (Three hundred pesos is barely enough for my children).”

Latorino also finds himself getting into some sideline jobs for additional income. Nevertheless, he is thankful for the salary he earns from the bakery. He even sees himself working in the bakery for years to come.

Luyao also shared how the bakery has helped her family. “*Naka-help jud siya [XEMPSCO]. Maski gamay ra ang honorarium, maka-utang man ko maskin ma-gipit ko gamay* (The honorarium from XEMPSCO really helps. When finances are tight, I can get a loan from the cooperative),” Luyao said.

As the name itself implies (being a play on the Bisaya word for “change”—“pagbag-o”—where “pan” means “bread”), the PANbag-o Bakery has indeed molded some lives anew. The management sincerely hopes to see the bakery thrive in the coming years—to see more products, better income, and additional employment.

To establish a branch outside Xavier Ecoville is also one of the bakery’s major goals. In the meantime, the management continues to wake up at 3AM every day to bake new bread. ■



BAKER. Lour Elle, one of the members of the Manpower Association enterprise and an NCII passer, also bakes for the PANbag-o bakery every day.



It has been almost three years since Shirley Siarot started pedaling the sewing machine at Xavier Ecoville. Just as how her foot treadles to create the bags she sells, the journey of the community’s Sewing and Textile Enterprise has been one that goes up and down, slowly but surely making its way toward its visualized goal of success.

Through the glitches

When Shirley transferred to XE, she opted to commit herself to making a living rather than just staying at home. So she joined the sewing enterprise. With prior knowledge in sewing and years of experience under her belt, she quickly became the head of the enterprise. Leading was not an easy task as the sewers, just like her, originally came from different barangays and she hadn’t quite known them long enough to lead them.

That was just one challenge. There were and still are many. One in particular was the lack of clientele. “*Usahay medyo mingaw*,” Shirley used to lament while being hopeful that more clients would come soon. In the meantime, to maximize their resources, they would turn to old donated clothes to sew into foot mops, rags and pillow cases, which they in turn sold for profit.

pagBAGo project

**Stitching possibilities
for Ecoville sewers**

By Rezza Mae B Tolinero



Sketching dreams

It was an answered prayer when “SKETCH Bags,” the social enterprise of Xavier University’s Business Administration students contacted Shirley’s group to sew specially designed and quality bags for mass production.

Zuilen Guantero, the general manager of SKETCH bags, tells that the motivation for the partnership was to help leverage the skills of Ecoville’s sewers so customers would want to purchase their bags for their quality and not out of sympathy.

Auspiciously, the British Council found the endeavor promising enough to award it a funding grant worth Php100,000 under its “I am a Changemaker” program last year. The seed grant is being used for the development of the enterprise as well as for helping the XE sewing cluster expand its market and increase its earnings.

Reaping what was sewn

The most memorable moment for Shirley as a sewer at XE is the PagBAG-o Project Runway held at Lim Ket Kai Mall last November 2014, where their products were paraded and sold. “*Lami kaayo ang pakiramdam nga ang bags nga imong gipangtahi kay na-display ug nangahalin,*” she shares.

In partnership with SMART Telecommunications Inc, the sewers were provided with tarpaulins as raw materials for the bags. So aside from the usual *katsa* bags that XE sells, the sewers were able to introduce a new product line – bags out of old tarps.

Shirley admits that bags out of this material are undeniably more difficult to sew. Never mind, though, because since they’re recycled materials, they cost practically nothing to make. This makes the whole experience for her worth it. The experience enabled her to exemplify the importance of recycling while making a living out of it.

After the PagBAG-o runway show, one of the volunteer models, Caroline Joy Veronilla, shares, “It was an honor to be one of the models for the PagBAG-o Project of Xavier Ecoville.”

“Seeing the happy faces of the people who worked hard for this project was more than anything I could ask for. It made me feel that somehow, I was able to change their lives. The experience was really inspiring.”

For Shirley, this is only the beginning. Xavier Ecoville’s sewing enterprise still has a long way to go. But as its project’s name suggests, PagBAG-o, has ushered in a myriad of changes in the lives of the sewers and their families. Now, Shirley and her companions continue to treadle for greater possibilities, beyond just bags. ■



LOOKING FORWARD. Shirley Siarot, a member of the Sewing and Textile Enterprise of Xavier Ecoville, hopes that more clients would buy their products now that they have new sewing machines and more members.

FASHIONABLE. Local models don the colorful and creative PagBAG-o products of the Sewing and Textile Enterprise of Xavier Ecoville.



A BEAUTY. Ms Cagayan de Oro 2014 Bea Alvarez supports the PagBAG-o products of Xavier Ecoville.

Buy our bags|
For more information,
scan the QR code below.





SOCIAL ENTERPRISE.
The ROOFosition proponents (left to right) Malcolm Flores, Philip Flores and Ryan Madrid pose with their award as the first-runner up of the YSEALI start-up weekend.

The ROOFosition's Winning Journey

By Philip Flores

It felt surreal when my colleagues and I entered the Magic Campus at Cyber Jaya, Malaysia — the venue for the 54-hour start-up weekend event. Our idea, ROOFosition, has come this far after joining the same competition in the Philippines and other countries but ended up the same fate: not winning.

The event was like a jungle where every participant from 10 ASEAN countries is fearless and packed with their own expertise to succeed. We managed to hurdle to the top 30 spot out of the 100 ideas pitched and invited like-minded ideas from Vietnam and Indonesia to join the team. The brainstorming was grueling; we were so fixated with the same idea that tweaking it was like changing our religion. But sticking to it was leading to the same result. Our teammates and mentors helped a lot in putting in great ideas on the table which brought BringMeVeggie to life.

BringMeVeggie is one of the pillars of ROOFosition; it focuses on marketing the product using an online platform to connect organic farmers to organic consumers for fresher, safer and cheaper vegetables that will be delivered right at the consumer's doorstep. We pitched the idea during the semi-finals and our luck almost ran out when our team was called last to enter the top 9.

But we delayed our gratification because we were aiming for more, for something higher. Our team pitched the idea and it was a nerve-racking experience but we were confident with our idea this time. Anything could happen.

The second runner-up was called; it was the other team. Chances were getting thinner, after a long drumbeat of hands — BringMeVeggie was

pronounced as the first runner-up. We bagged a capital to start our idea and an exclusive pass to a business event the next day.

ROOFosition, the umbrella program, is a portmanteau of the words “roof” and “reposition,” and it encapsulates what we were trying to achieve: maximization of the spaces on rooftops and repositioning perspectives on urban agriculture, climate change adaptation and resiliency. A green roof panel combined three technologies: (a) solar panel, (b) veggie panel and (c) water catchment.

The metaphorical seeds grew out of the desire to serve, then the fertile ground where the seeds were planted in would be the Xavier Ecoville, a resettlement community for TS Sendong survivors. The sun would be our mentors who guided and inspired us, then the water would be our friends who believed in us and the fertilizer would be our partners, namely, British Council, Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) and StartupWeekend, that trained us intensively and kept us inspired in social entrepreneurship.

And just like any other seed, an idea as young as ROOFosition or BringMeVeggie needed essential resources to grow even more. We were pushed to ideate and innovate solutions because of the need for alternative resources of food in resettlement communities. We saw the roofs unutilized so we then thought of an alternative urban agriculture until we were able to refine to what it has become now.

Our journey didn't end there; it just started. We faced every challenge along the way towards turning our idea into reality. This is not just a story of winning but a story of not giving up. ■

Xavier Ecoville in Numbers

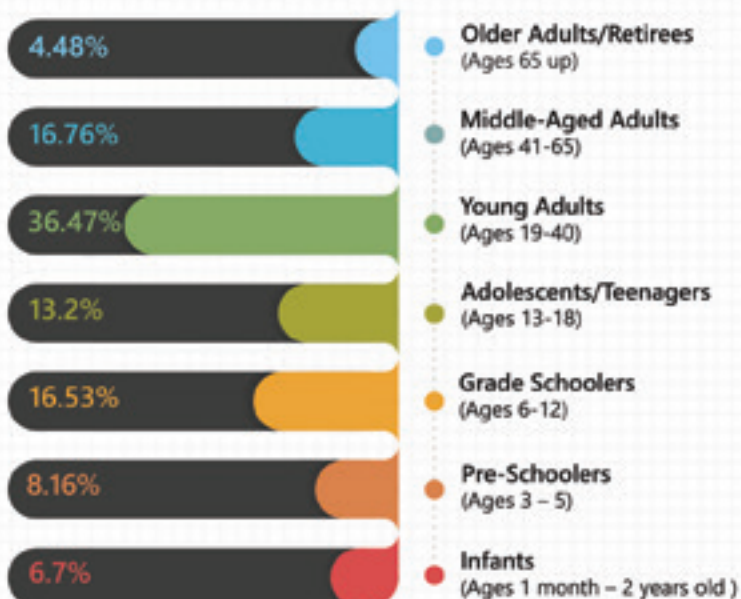
Based on the March 2014 data

POPULATION

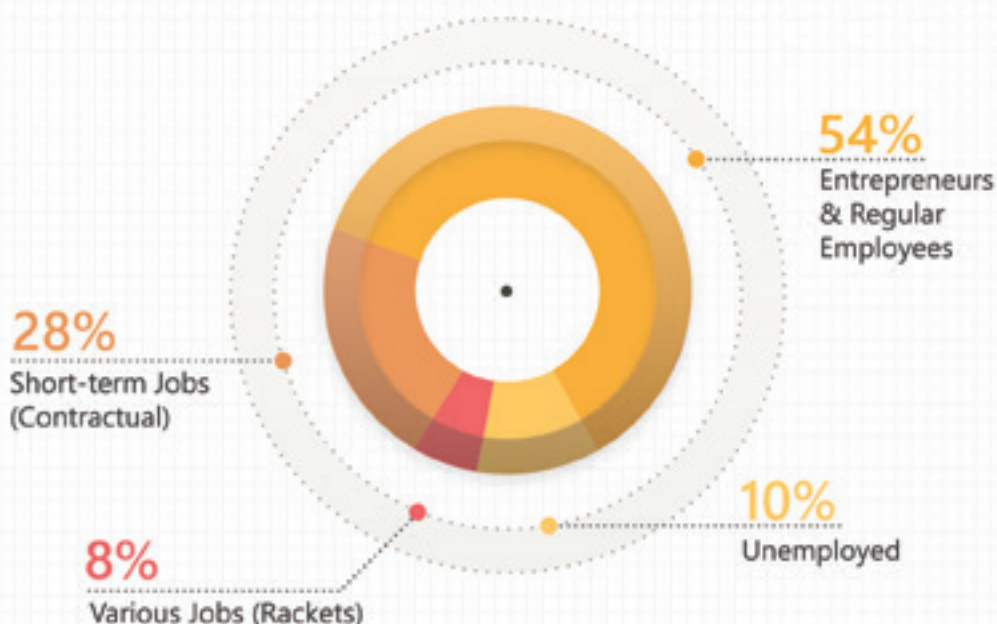


- **568** houses
- **5.3** ha total land area
- **50** sq.m. total area per house
- **20** sq.m. floor area per house

Age Range



LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

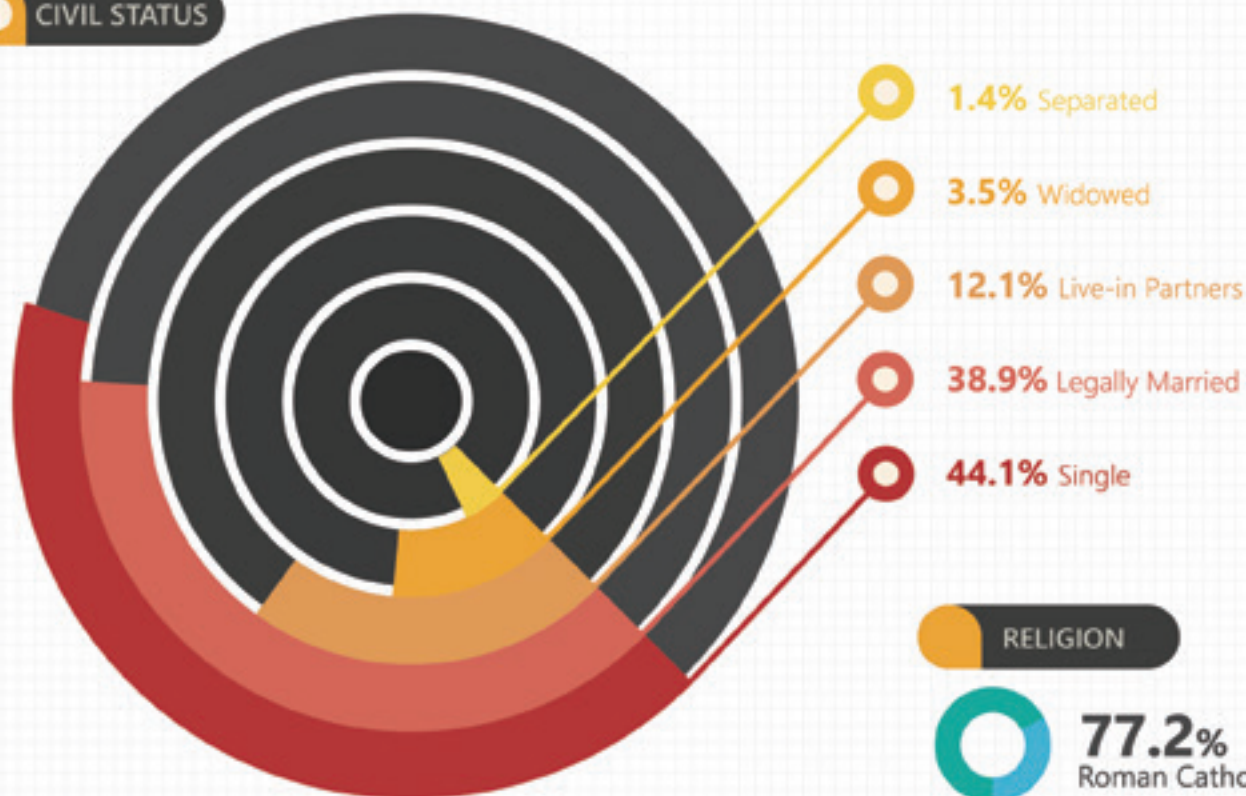


6

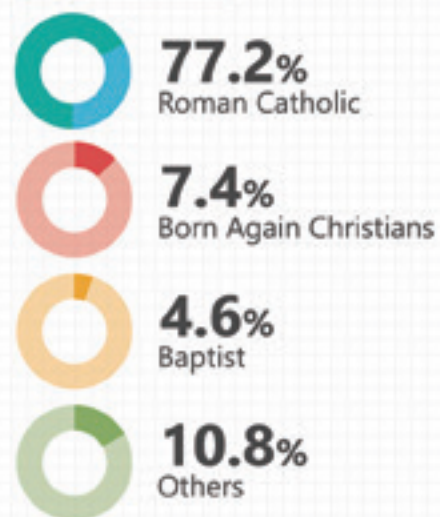
livelihood enterprises

- **Credit Loan**
- **Wholesale**
- **Food - 8 members**
- **Agri-enterprise**
- **Sewing - 20 members**
- **Manpower - 40 members**
- 7 TESDA NCII passers in Electrical Installation
- 8 NCII passers in Carpentry
- 6 NCII scholars at XU Center for Integrated Technologies

CIVIL STATUS



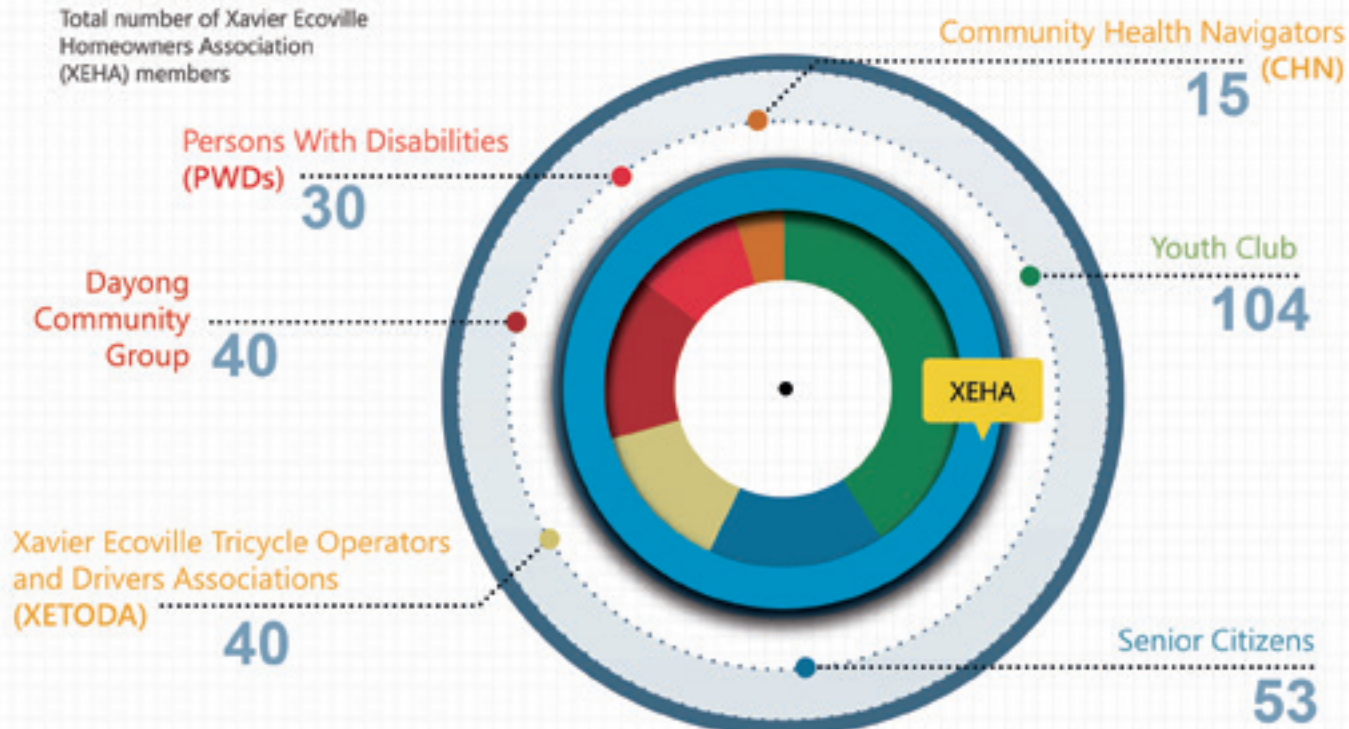
RELIGION




ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

437

Total number of Xavier Ecoville Homeowners Association (XEHA) members





Norma, 38, is one of the vendors at Xavier Ecoville.

A day in a life of a vendor

Words by Caryl Trabadillo

Illustrated by Alana Bernadette Cabildo

In the midday heat, salty beads of sweat run down her face. Tired and restless, she wipes her forehead and waits for a customer to come up to her stall.

Norma, 38 years old, starts her day at dawn. She finishes cleaning the house and doing the laundry just as the sun comes up. After preparing breakfast, she wakes up her two kids and bathes them as her husband also prepares for work. Her husband, a motorela driver, takes the little ones to school while she walks a few blocks to the wet market. She washes, slices, and chops some vegetables, and arranges them before opening her stall. The sun shines down on another day of selling vegetables to fellow residents of Ecoville.

Two of Norma's kids are in elementary school: Neneng, a first grader; and Josh, a fourth grader. The third one is already married and staying in Dipolog with her own family. Norma prepares lunch before her two kids arrive from school. She also packs lunch for her husband.

Her two kids are still young, but Norma has big dreams for them. She wants them to finish high school and go to college. She is happy that even though she and her husband do not have high-paying jobs, at least they can still afford to send their kids to school. "*Basta maka-kaon katulo sa adlaw, okay na* (As long as we can eat three times a day, we're okay)," she says.

She does not want many clothes or anything expensive. What she wants is for her family to be happy and for her to be able to provide for her kids. She is happy with the simplest things, like her daughter and son doing well in school.

She prefers her life before Ecoville, selling different kinds of food on the road. Everything was more accessible near the heart of the city, while Ecoville is relatively remote. Part of Norma's daily routine

is buying vegetables at Cogon Market, which adds the burden of expensive commute. But even though she prefers her old life, she still considers herself happy and blessed with her life now. Without Ecoville, she cannot imagine what would happen to her family.

Norma is one of many others who sell vegetables at the wet market. All of them buy their vegetables at Cogon Market. Still, the competition does not stop them from helping one another and exchanging *chika*.

"*Ayha ra ni ma-bibo kung hapon na* (In the afternoon, things get livelier)," says Norma. This lively air puts everyone in a good mood — even readies them for eventualities such as unsold produce. Before the food goes bad, they slice it all up and make *pinakbet*. Norma says people avail of this because it is cheap and convenient to cook.

Norma says that Ecoville has had a significant impact on her life. Even though life here is simple, the community provides her family with everything they need. When she looks back on the day she started her business, Norma says that she is happy to have done something productive with her life. She is glad to be able to stand up for her own family.

After a day of selling vegetables, Norma starts packing up. She closes her stall at 8 in the evening, when the day has cooled down and darkened. She walks back home and prepares dinner for her family. She is tired, but rest can wait. She helps her kids with their homework before tucking them in. Before going to bed, she counts the day's earnings and notes everything on a piece of paper.

Norma ends her day with a prayer. In a few hours, the sun will rise again. But now is the time for a good night's sleep. ■

Norma goes out every day to sell vegetables at the market.



Along with other vendors, she gets her stocks from Cogon Market.



Things get lively in the afternoon at the Xavier Ecoville wet market.



Life at Xavier Ecoville is simple, but the community provides her family with the foundation they need.

Norma goes home to prepare dinner for her family and to take some rest before facing another day.





“

I want to be a policeman when I grow up because I want to arrest the robbers.”

- AG



“When my husband was still alive, I used to farm in the province of Lanao del Sur. It was when my eldest daughter entered the world of college that I had to stop farming, and our family transferred to Cagayan de Oro City. After almost 20 years of staying in the city, I never expected to go back to becoming a farmer. It was around the time when we relocated to Ecoville. I was planting *ipil-ipil* and *tanglad* (lemon grass) when I slipped. I had to use crutches for months. It was indeed an indication that I am old now. But I am still able to contribute something to my community.”

- Concepcion “Bibi” Torejos

“Xavier Ecoville had a huge impact in my life. I became a member of its cooperative, one of the programs it offers. As a vendor, if given the chance to have additional income, I’d sell Pinoy home-cooked meals.

I am so thankful that we have been given another chance for a good life. Five years from now, I can see that there will be economic changes in the community and one of these is the Lumbia terminal that will be relocated inside the village.”

- Flaviana Ampo



“I am a vegetable vendor. If I were a vegetable, I’d be like the string beans; as string beans, I would complement the different types of meat and perfectly blend with other vegetables. They are a source of nutrients we all need. Having these benefits, like string beans, I’d love to be a helping hand to others.”

- Norma Nilmida

“I was five years old when TS Sendong hit Cagayan de Oro City. I could hardly forget how I swam through the flood while holding on to a piece of plywood. All I could think that time was nothing but the end of my life. The typhoon left me a scar. I am now nine years old.

I could say that I am not afraid whenever another typhoon comes. I want to be a policeman someday and I want to help stop the *baha*.”

- JR





From left to right. Jefford, George, Monica, Caryl, and Joshua

“I prefer my life at Ecoville than my life in Tibasak. I just love how friendly the people are at Xavier Ecoville. I can say that by the time I graduate and get a job, I’d still choose to settle down here. There are so many things I learned when we transferred here and one of those is the seminar on teenage pregnancy. I learned the disadvantages of teenage pregnancy.”

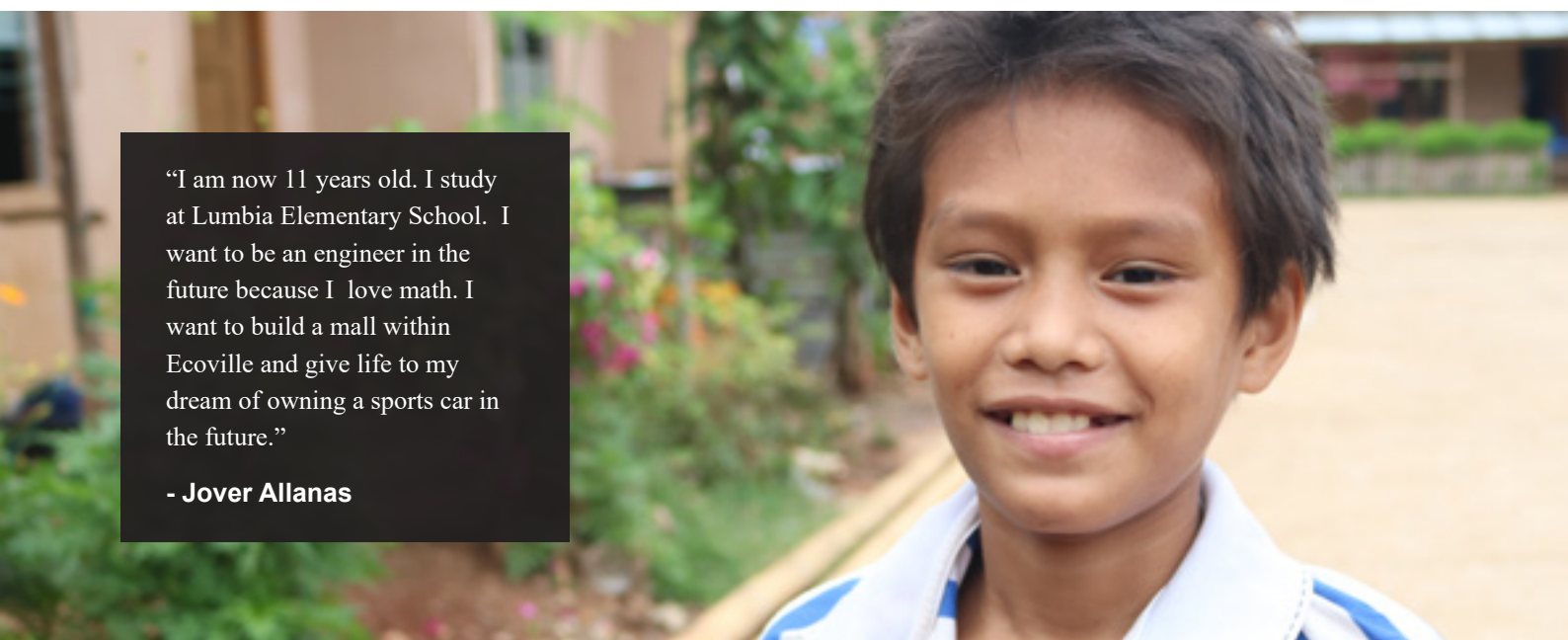
- Jefford

“What happened in the past was tragic. I can still remember the hopeless voices crying for help, houses—including ours—being washed away, the flood swallowing up the trees, animals’ bodies were floating. It was the scariest thing that happened in my life. But it hasn’t discouraged me from pursuing my dreams. The disaster tested my patience and faith. I am now 14 years old, living peacefully in this new community.”

- George

“Love can wait. We still have a future ahead of us. For now, I must say that I’ll just have to focus on establishing friendships with the other youth in my community.”

- Joshua



“I am now 11 years old. I study at Lumbia Elementary School. I want to be an engineer in the future because I love math. I want to build a mall within Ecoville and give life to my dream of owning a sports car in the future.”

- Jover Allanas

“I was not able to finish my studies due to poverty, yet I do believe that education is one of the keys to every person’s success. I am a mother of two. I always make sure that my children can study. I visit them during lunchtime to make sure they’ve eaten. I also talk to their teachers. I’m an active member of the Parent-Teacher Association. I see this partnership as a success, especially in raising my kids and molding them to become responsible people.”

- Jenny Repulo





DOCTORS FOR OTHERS. Volunteer students from Xavier University's Dr Jose P Rizal School of Medicine take a day off from their academic engagements to help build houses for the residents of Xavier Ecoville.



Chronicling How to Build a Community

By Bernice Cabildo

The Climate Institute estimates that there are 25 to 30 million environmental refugees worldwide, people who are “fleeing from environmental crises, whether natural or anthropogenic events, and whether short or long term.” Unable to gain a livelihood in a home rendered unlivable, the refugees turn to their neighbors for help.

In the Philippines, those who were directly affected by Tropical Storm Sendong tackled the herculean tasks of starting anew, facing tough challenges, and moving on after the muddy fall. And move on they did. Through the generosity of Xavier University – Ateneo de Cagayan, those who were devastated by the calamity have resettled and formed the community now known as Xavier Ecoville.

In December 2014, the Xavier Ecoville Project (XEP) launched *Xavier Ecoville: Brick by Brick*, a book chronicling the collaborative efforts of XU as the pioneering academic institution for Xavier Ecoville together with its supportive partners.

From the start, the core volunteers of Xavier Ecoville envisioned a resettlement that would practice developmental community approaches and stewardship for Mother Earth. Former project

coordinator Ryan Madrid says that six months into the project, they received several inquiries and consultancies on how an educational institution was managing the whole colossal process—from relief operations, to temporary housing, to selection of beneficiaries, and finally to permanent housing.

“Since Xavier University appears to be the first academic institution to undertake such effort,” says Madrid, “stakeholders and partners wanted to see how the entire experience was and how other academic institutions can also do the same. When other disasters like Pablo, the Bohol earthquake, the Zamboanga siege, and Yolanda happened, the book was all the more necessitated.”

With former production head Xyla Mercedita “Tat” Gualberto, Madrid gathered other focal persons and project staff for the book production team. Madrid and Gualberto also identified key people from XU such as Roel Ravanera, executive director of Xavier Science Foundation and former dean of the XU College of Agriculture, Iris Montellano, former XEP camp manager, and German Tumala to give first-person perspectives of the beneficiaries and of those who worked for Xavier Ecoville.

Head writer Shane Hyacinth Tagupa says that gathering relevant documents was actually one



THIEF IN THE NIGHT. In December 2011, the world saw Cagayan de Oro City on bended knees after Typhoon Sendong ravaged many communities, causing massive damage to properties and the loss of thousands of lives.



STORIES. “Xavier Ecoville: Brick by Brick” chronicles the efforts of Xavier University as the lead organization in the Xavier Ecoville Project (XEP), regarded as the first resettlement community in the world led by an academic institution. While many other organizations have greatly contributed to Xavier Ecoville, this book is told from the perspective of Xavier University.

of the easier parts of making the book since the XEP office already had everything on hand. The more challenging part was putting it all together with input from the interviews and other primary sources. Guided by the timeline of the making of Xavier Ecoville, the team looked at everything from a macro perspective and divided the events into three major phases: the preparatory works, the physical development works, and the community development works.

“The biggest challenge was really capturing what happened throughout the XE Project,” recounts Tagupa. “Documents alone won’t tell you that, so we had to pick the brains and mine the memories of several people.” With Palanca awardee Dr Elena Paulma (also an English professor at XU) as their editor-at-large, the production team had to weave all the threads together into a single tapestry.

With its reputation as the first resettlement project to have been led by a university, the XEP shared figures and summary lists for technical procedures and standards. To allow the discovery of areas for improvement for similar future endeavors, the book also presents the challenges, milestones, and learning of the key players of XEP. Readers will find personal narratives as well – individuals who directly contributed to or were directly affected by the XEP relate their experiences and insights.

Writer Nadine Legaspi says she was intimidated by the task at first. However, getting engineers and site managers’ narratives while tracing that of Xavier

Ecoville’s proved to be a reward in itself. Legaspi found the same purposeful glimmer in people’s eyes as they talked about their thread in Xavier Ecoville’s tapestry.

“Putting the book together was not without its difficulties, but the key to surpassing challenges is to know that you are working for a cause greater than yourself,” remarks Legaspi. “To have taken part in writing Xavier Ecoville’s history was such an enlightening and fulfilling experience, and I will continue to support the community’s cause in my own ways for as long as I live.”

Perhaps it is this ringing conviction that has shaped Xavier Ecoville into what it is today. At its best, resettlement sees the displaced as active social agents. XEP walks hand in hand with Xavier Ecoville, towards being not only a successfully resettled population but also an autonomous, resilient and self-reliant community.

Resettlement often emerges from the complexity of many cultural, social, environmental, economic, institutional and political factors. Owing to the lack of appropriate input such as legal frameworks and policies, funding, and care in implementation, it often fails.

With *Xavier Ecoville: Brick by Brick*, the world has taken great steps in research and resettlement at its best. One cannot make bricks without clay: To build a home is to be a builder first before being a homemaker. ■



STORYTELLING. Children of Xavier Ecoville listen attentively during a storytelling session in celebration of the World Read Aloud Day.



Attracting Lumbia entrepreneurs through ideation camp

By Niña Bea Cadorna

T rue to its aim to establish a self-sustaining community, the Xavier Ecoville Project (XEP) conducted a four-day ideation camp for 15 Barangay Lumbia entrepreneurs at Country Village Hotel and Southeast Asia Rural Social Leadership Institute (SEARSOLIN) in May 2015.

With the theme “*Negosyo mamugna gikan sa ideya*,” the ideation camp was aimed at improving the economic opportunities of the participants (aged 18-50 years old) through discussions and training on product innovation, marketing and business management.

“Mismanagement was seen as one of the reasons why a business cannot be sustained at Lumbia. Thus, we considered conducting an ideation camp for entrepreneurs to guide them in starting up and venturing into a more innovative business,” said Therese Baliwag, the project head of the said camp.

The first two days of the camp were allocated for discussions and coaching sessions wherein several business experts were invited to speak about starting, managing and sustaining a business. The remaining

Most of them opted for businesses involving food production such as homemade longganisa (sausage), cashew nuts and *calamay* (sticky sweet rice delicacy packaged in a coconut shell), while others were more into catering the needs of the community such as putting up a barber shop and rice lending.

Participant Roy Quilala said “*Dili diay basta-basta ang pag negosyo. Kinahanglan naa ka’y saktong kaalam aron mas molambo kini.*”

[Building a business is not that easy. You need to have the right knowledge in order to sustain your business.]

Promising business start-ups

At the end of the camp, five business ideas were chosen as the Best Pitches from the 15 participants.

The winners of the ideation camp were Irene Oragasajo (1st place - cashew nuts business), Leonilyn Tabaniag (2nd - corn coffee with herbs), Ritchelyn Echaves (3rd - homemade chicken and pork longganisa), Roy O Quilala (4th - *yema* or custard candy) and Ellen D Ampoloquio (5th - *calamay*).



EMERGING BUSINESSWOMAN. Ellen Ampoloquio, a participant and 5th placer of the ideation camp, imparts the challenges and lessons on starting her own business.

two days were allotted for business pitching where the participants would convince the panelists to invest on their products.

Bright business pitches

During the business pitching session, the participants showcased their entrepreneurial ideas and products.

“All of us have had a hard time choosing the best pitches,” said Baba Pelaez, one of the speakers and member of the panel at the camp.

“All of them have great business ideas but we were also considering how they are going to manage and sustain the business and how their products can, in a way, help the community,” Pelaez continued.

Through the sponsorship of SMART Telecommunications and Petron Corporation and fundraising efforts of Team Lihok Arun Padulong ug Kalambuan (LAPUK), the first place got a start-up capital worth Php30,000; the second place with Php20,000; the third place with Php15,000; while the fourth and fifth placers got Php10,000 each.

Progressive businesses

Eight months have passed since the winners were awarded a start-up capital for their businesses. How are some of the winners doing now?

Irene Ragasan (photographed here), the first placer of the camp, used most of her start-up capital in buying cashew nuts. She sells the processed cashew nuts for Php500 per kilo. She said that from the Php18,000 initial capital that was given to her, she now have profited a total of Php7,000.



“Ang challenge lang kay ang pagpangita og mabaligyaan sa akong mga kasoy. Ayha ra man gud ko makahimo sa kasoy kung naay mga orders. Ang ako lang g’yud gusto karon kay mas mapadako pa ang market sa akong mga produkto para mas daghan pa halin,” Ragasan said.

[The challenge really is finding more people to buy my products because I make processed cashews only when there are orders. A bigger market means bigger profit for me.]

Ragasan also admitted that even though her products are in order basis, she is still thankful because from Barangay Lumbia as her first market, her products have already reached Surigao del Sur airport and Opol Prawn House as *pasalubong* (souvenir).

Like Ragasan, Leonilyn Tabaniag, the second placer of the ideation camp, also hopes for a bigger market. “I believe that an attractive packaging is important for getting a larger market. I want to make my

products more presentable but I just don’t have the capacity to do it yet,” Tabaniag said. She aims to put the corn coffee into tea bags but she does not know where to buy one or how to make one yet.

Most of Tabaniag’s start-up capital was used to purchase a corn grinder machine. The remaining money was used to buy corn and to travel to their farm in Cotabato where they harvest mangosteen leaves. She believes the mangosteen, when used as herb, can prevent and cure diseases. She then sells her product for Php300 per kilo and profits half of the price.

“Malipayon kami nga nahatagan mi og higayun sa Xavier Ecoville Project nga makapatukod sa among kaugalingong negosyo pinaagi aning Ideya Patigayun. Nakatabang gayod among kita para sa pang-adlaw-adlaw namo nga panginahanglan,” said Tabaniag.

[We are grateful to the Xavier Ecoville Project for giving us the opportunity to start our own business through this Ideation Camp. Our earnings have greatly helped us in acquiring our daily needs.]

Since the establishment of Xavier Ecoville, livelihood has been a major concern in the sustainability of the community considering that it is far from the city. This issue was addressed through implementing the six enterprises of the multipurpose cooperative namely sewing, wholesale, credit and loan, manpower, food and agri-enterprise. A construction of a talipapa or wet market inside the community was also initiated by the homeowners association to provide more livelihood opportunities. And now, to extend the opportunity to its mother community, Lumbia, this ideation camp was implemented.

The ability of a community to sustain itself has nothing to do with how much money and resources it has but how well its residents utilize and maximize them.

As the famous Chinese proverb says: “Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.” ■

INSPIRING OTHERS. Kyna Chan, a speaker in the ideation camp, shares her knowledge in business marketing and experiences as an entrepreneur.





Homestretch: The Xavier Ecoville Homeowners Association Leadership Journey

By Bernice Cabildo and Bea Cadorna

Republic Act 9903 or the Magna Carta for Homeowners and Homeowners Association stipulates the people's right to form organizations and associations to fulfill their roles in serving the needs and interests in their communities.

To uphold this law, the leaders of Xavier Ecoville formed their own homeowners association and sectoral groups as a way of governing and sustaining their community.

The Xavier Ecoville Homeowners Association (XEHA) is the highest governing body of Xavier Ecoville. It was duly registered as the official homeowners association of Xavier Ecoville at the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board in December 2012. It oversees the administration of other organizations under its umbrella of management such as the health navigators, tricycle drivers and operators, youth groups, senior citizens, persons with disabilities, Kasilingan formation core, and block officers.

XEHA currently has 15 officers with Alexie Colipano Sr as their president. Managing a community with 567 households and approximately 2,800 individuals does not come easy. For XEHA, keeping the peace and piloting the community's socio-economic development will be their perennial challenge. To enable XEHA and the organizations, a three-year organizational development program was created. This program focused on 1) participatory strategic planning, 2) building capacities for community leaders, 3) facilitating the integration of XEHA to its host barangay, and 4) facilitating partnerships for community programs.

It has been a long and arduous run, but XEHA is finally in the homestretch with the completion of the XEHA Leadership Program (XLP). Among the components of the organizational development program, capacity building ensures that all the other components will be sustained by proper leaders.

Implemented for a year in partnership with Governance and Leadership Institute (GLI) of Xavier University, the XLP was the most comprehensive and remarkable training that the XEHA officers had to undergo.

Based on the Bridging Leadership Framework, the XLP aimed to develop personal awareness through

reflections on the leadership journey, assessment of leadership capital, and identification of personal vision and purpose—ownership, co-ownership, and co-creation.

“It is through this program that XEHA has finalized its mission and vision which will guide us as we serve the community,” said Jean Casinabe, one of the program graduates. “This program has prepared us for the years when the XEP team will finally leave us.”

XEHA officers christened their new power with heavy planning and numerous meetings. “Isa ra ka tuig among termino. Dapat wala nami’y sayangan na panahon (Our term only lasts for a year. We shouldn’t waste time),” said XEHA president Alexie Colipano Sr.

Xavier Ecoville has already seen the repair of 30 street lights. Officers-in-charge have been assigned their daily tasks. An operational plan has been created. Indeed, XEHA has hit its stride.

Xavier Ecoville stands to see the expansion of livelihood services, traditional community activities, transparent financial recording, strengthened partnerships, and massive resource generation. With XEHA, the community embarks on the journey of a lifetime. ■



YOUNG LEADERS. The Xavier Ecoville youth club members perform the trust fall exercise during their teambuilding activity.



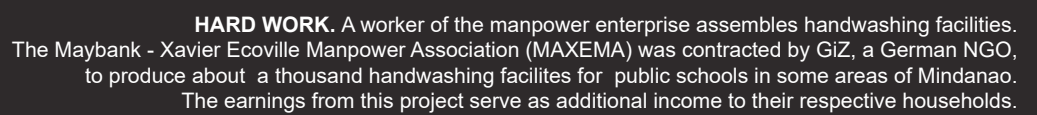
REFLECTIONS. The XEHA officers identify their weaknesses as a leader in a self-awareness workshop during the XEHA Leadership Program.



LEADERSHIP GROWTH. The participants and mentors strike big smiles at the end of another session of the XEHA Leadership Program held at Manresa Farm Complex.



ACCOUNTABILITY. Rosalie Abellano, vice president of the XE Community Health Navigators, presents their 2015 accomplishment report during the organized sectors mid-year evaluation.





Greetings to the members of the Xavier Ecoville community!

On behalf of the President of the Council of Interior Design Educators (CIDE) Dr Lilia de Jesus and CIDE members who conducted a seminar-workshop on upcycling titled *Laman + Loob: Sining sa Loob ng Bahay* for your community on November 21-22, 2014, I wish to express our sincere thanks to you for giving us the privilege and opportunity to share our knowledge and skills on upcycling household waste materials into reusable home interior accessories. We had been fortunate to have been given a grant by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) to make the social advocacy project possible. Through NCCA's National Committee on Architecture and Allied Arts, we were able to identify Xavier Ecoville as our target beneficiary community for our seminar-workshop on upcycling.



Adela V. Mayo
ADELAIDA V MAYO PhD

Project Director
Laman + Loob: Sining sa
Loob ng Bahay
Council of Interior Design Educators

What is special about the Xavier Ecoville community is the unity among members of your community. Your initiatives and collective efforts in your application of proper waste management is commendable. Because the community has already started the practice of segregating your household wastes, it was very timely then for CIDE to conduct a seminar-workshop on upcycling for you to gain ideas on how to transform your household waste materials into new products. This also introduced to you one way to augment your income.

Since our experience with you was a pioneering one, we have certainly gained lessons which will further improve our future seminar-workshops. We shall be replicating the same seminar workshop on upcycling in other communities in other relocation sites this year – another one in Cagayan de Oro in September and one in Bohol in November.

CIDE hopes that the members of the Xavier Ecoville community are already applying whatever new knowledge we have taught you. We look forward to know that you have enhanced your home interior spaces using upcycled household waste materials.

More power to the Xavier Ecoville Project!

My dear friends in Xavier Ecoville,

Foremost, I wish to thank you for trusting us, your partners in the XU Engineering Resource Center (XUERC), in taking part of building your sustainable and resilient community.



It was about a week after Sendong when I was assigned to do site inspection on that piece of land, now Xavier Ecoville, and your home. When I arrived, all I saw were trees and grasslands, but I also found the promise of hope and of dreams that would soon come true.

Then we worked together on land development, house design and construction, installation of basic facilities and infrastructures, and homes started to rise as dreams continued to build.

It was never an easy mission, but your loving embrace to our finite talents and time is something we are infinitely grateful. We are grateful for having been given the opportunity to work, serve and journey with you and your families. And it is with deep joy that we see you now living in a vibrant and healthy community.

Of course, we also recognize that challenges continue to exist. And that is why we continue our commitment on working with you for the past five years and counting. We are again grateful of your unwavering trust for us to help in the engineering design of your water supply system, and currently for the Training Learning Center. We are deeply grateful that you've trusted us not only on the physical house building, but also on building sustainable livelihood programs of your community.

Finally, we are also grateful of the real life experiences we've journeyed together as partners. You have gracefully taught us deeper meaning and grander purpose of our technical skills by showing that our works truly matter in your lives. Our XUERC team, composed of faculty members and students, will treasure these life-changing experiences throughout our lifetime.

Indeed, in *omnibus amare et servire Domino!*



Dexter S. Lo
ENGR DEXTER S LO

Director
Engineering Resource Center



RAMON R ISBERTO
Public Affairs Head
Smart Communications Inc

Greetings!

We are one with Xavier University – Ateneo de Cagayan and the Xavier Ecoville community as they celebrate this milestone.

We are a proud partner of Xavier Ecoville in providing capacity-building services and resources to the Xavier Ecoville Multipurpose Cooperative (XEMPCO), especially their sewing enterprise and the PagBAG-o Project. Through our joint initiatives, we hope to empower the community with relevant and sustainable livelihood opportunities.

May the coming year bring forth many more venues for collaboration and partnership. Cheers to a bright future for Xavier Ecoville!



ROEL R RAVANERA
Executive Director
Xavier Science Foundation

Xavier Science Foundation (XSF) congratulates the management and staff of the Xavier Ecoville Project as they continue to serve the survivors of Typhoon Sendong.

XSF's partnership with Xavier Ecoville goes back to the initial days of resettlement planning for the Sendong victims. As it supported the construction of buildings, so it continues to champion the building of the community.

Today, Xavier Ecoville serves as an inspiration to XSF as the foundation works with other stakeholders on reforesting the CDO watershed—an undertaking that is critical to the prevention of another Sendong. Under the CDO River Basin Management Council, XSF implements the Payment for Ecosystem Services as the fund manager.

XSF envisions that someday the Xavier Ecoville community will join the indigenous community of the Talaandig tribe in Mt Kalatungan as they protect and rehabilitate watershed areas. The foundation looks forward to the day when forest dwellers and urban residents join hands in planting trees to save our common home. On that day, the victims will become the redeemers.



DIXON Q YASAY PhD
Executive Director
Governance and Leadership Institute

The Xavier Ecoville Project's Phase 4 (Year 2) is very significant to XU Governance and Leadership Institute (GLI). It is at this time that XEP and GLI inked the memorandum of understanding and launched the XEHA Leadership Program, a leadership training program anchored on Bridging Leadership Framework.

The basic of Bridging Leadership is OWNERSHIP where the leader accepts his work as a mission, understands community issues, concerns, and challenges, and communicates his/her vision for a better community.

It is at this period of the project that Xavier Ecoville Homeowners Association leaders started to embrace ownership competencies and slowly making progress on co-ownership among stakeholders thus being able to achieve co-creation. XEHA has formulated its mission of managing, inspiring, and collaborating with stakeholders.

It is our hope that Xavier Ecoville will move towards achieving the vision of making itself a model of resettlement sites in the region.

XU-GLI is one with Xavier in the mission of building not only houses but also communities.





A Prime Mover Community

By Stephen J Pedroza

Xavier Ecoville, regarded as being the first university-led resettlement community in the country, received the Prime Mover Award from Habitat for Humanity.

XU president Fr Roberto C Yap SJ received the award Tuesday, Feb 23 and expressed his gratitude to Habitat for Humanity for the recognition of the work Xavier Ecoville has been doing since early 2012, in the aftermath of Typhoon Sendong.

“We had a great time reminiscing our experiences. As I remembered the trustees were very clear and they said that ‘Let’s donate land for Sendong [survivors],’” Yap recounted, adding, “One good thing that they said is ‘You know what, let’s be in charge of it. Let’s be involved.’”

There were many groups who supported the resettlement endeavor and continue to help the Xavier Ecoville community up to today.

“I’m really happy that we chose Habitat for Humanity as our partner for construction. It was very easy to talk to Habitat for Humanity so our partnership began and it really went smoothly,” Yap said.

University engagement

In addition to the Habitat for Humanity personnel, the XU Engineering team also worked with the non-government organization as representatives of XU in the construction.

“The planning was done together and the building was also done together,” Yap said, “And we were very clear that we were not only building houses but we were building a community.”

Xavier Ecoville was able to bring Gawad Kalinga and Habitat for Humanity along with other partner organizations together for the project.

Xavier Ecoville was awarded for being the “model of how universities can be involved in building a resettlement community.”

“Our Nursing and Medicine departments were there for the health component. Our School of Business and Management led the livelihood programs. The School of Education took charge of tutoring and literacy programs. Our Engineering team helped in the construction designs and planning. Other units also helped so it was really a university engagement,” Yap shared with the guests from Habitat for Humanity. “A lot of orgs and people really helped a lot.”

Yap also related the challenges the community faces. “Livelihood has been a challenge at Xavier Ecoville because the community is far from the city. The livelihood projects are still coming in with the support of different institutions, Maybank, for example,” he said.

Resettlement model

Over the years, different housing agencies and national and international organizations have visited Ecoville to study its processes and replicate it in other relocation sites.

“The Xavier Ecoville Project (XEP) management team is currently producing knowledge products such as training modules so others can learn from our experience and replicate it in other areas,” XEP coordinator Philip Flores.

“We are training the leaders of the homeowners to be the ones to speak to partner institutions unlike before when XU personnel did the talking,” he added.

Flores has shared the Xavier Ecoville stories and system to different resettlement areas in the ST Yolanda-ravaged Tacloban and in other countries.

A vocational school training center will soon rise at Xavier Ecoville, funded by Maybank Foundation Inc,

which will train and provide skills development to community members.

“Recently, the Maybank scholars passed the NCII exams and they are now licensed technicians, carpenters and welders. Now, it’s their time to give back to the community by training others,” Flores said.

XU is phasing out from the community as part of their plan. “This is going to be our last year with the community and eventually we will let them be self-sufficient,” Flores said.

A vision for Xavier Ecoville

On January 29 this year, Habitat for Humanity Philippines officially launched its “We Build” campaign to strengthen the partnerships it has forged with donors and key partners in building communities and transforming lives.

More than 80 donors and key partners, including Xavier Ecoville, were recognized during the event led by Fernando Zobel de Ayala, Habitat for Humanity International’s board secretary and Habitat Philippines’ capital campaign cabinet chairman.

“Xavier Ecoville is unique,” said Leonilo Escalada, chief operating officer of Habitat for Humanity Philippines. “This time it’s a university that is actually giving away their property and supporting the community to rebuild their lives and families.” Escalada shared a reflection from working with other resettlement communities in the country.

“We have an experience in some 20-year-old communities; it’s now the children who are speaking about the importance of having a secured home that brings them hope. They are successful in their career. Given the opportunity, I’m sure Xavier Ecoville will do the same. It’s our vision.” ■



XAVIER ECOVILLE STORY. President of Xavier University, Fr Roberto C Yap SJ recounts the experiences and shares the best practices of Xavier Ecoville, from scratch to what is now “a model university-led resettlement community in the country,” with the guests from Habitat for Humanity.



what's new at xavier ecoville?



PANBAG-O BAKERY

The PANbag-o bakery was initiated by the Xavier Ecoville Multipurpose Cooperative (XEMPCO) in partnership with the Xavier Ecoville Project as an addition to their livelihood center. PANbag-o was derived from the word *pan* which means bread and *bag-o* which means change or freshness. It connotes a taste of change and a beginning for the Xavier Ecoville residents. The PANbag-o bakery opens daily at 5 in the morning to sell freshly baked breads at an affordable price. It took two years of planning before it was finally realized. The PANbag-o bakery is currently handled by Marilou Alfabeto, the general manager of XEMPCO.



ORGANIC COMMUNAL GARDENS

In partnership with the National Commission for Culture and Arts (NCCA), the Philippine Association of Landscape Architects (PALA) chose XE to be the beneficiary of their 2nd Luntiang Pook Project aimed at fostering a strong sense of nationhood through sharing of knowledge in landscape design using indigenous and edible plants. The PALA officers taught the XE residents how to turn their open spaces into edible organic gardens. The residents have been harvesting vegetables from these gardens either for their own consumption or for earning extra income.



SOLAR STREET LIGHTS

Initiated by the XU-Alternative Renewable Energy Center (XU-AREC) and funded by the Department of Energy (DOE), 24 solar-powered streetlights were already installed at Xavier Ecoville in September 2015. During the day, the solar panel collects the sun's energy and stores it in a rechargeable gel cell battery. When there is no longer any energy from the sun, the (Light Emitting Diodes) LED light automatically turns on using the stored energy from the rechargeable battery. The streetlights were installed in the community spaces and in the dark perimeters of Ecoville to provide light especially at night. XE is one of the resettlement communities in Cagayan de Oro City that were granted with solar panel installation by XU-AREC and DOE.



WET MARKET

With the goal of providing more livelihood opportunities and convenience to local households, Xavier Ecoville opened its wet market on September 28, 2014 at the pocket park of Block 5. There are 25 stalls in the wet market and the stall renters have to pay P10 per day only to the livelihood committee of the Xavier Ecoville Homeowners' Association (XEHA). The collection of the rental fee serves as XEHA's fundraising to increase their operations for general funds.



CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND

JCI Macajalar 24K and JCI Manila turned over the study center and playground to the Xavier Ecoville community on March 15, 2015. The turnover ceremony was attended by the JCI officials, Xavier Ecoville Homeowner's Association (XEHA) officers and Xavier Ecoville Project management team.



TROMPA

In partnership with the Xavier Ecoville Homeowner's Association (XEHA), the Xavier Ecoville Project installed trompa speakers in the community which have been used for easier information dissemination.



COMMUNITY BLOCK DIRECTORIES

To empower the block officers and reinforce the importance of their roles and responsibilities in the community, 29 block directories were constructed at Xavier Ecoville on March 21, 2015. Each block directory shows the names and positions of the officers per block. These block directories were assembled by the Manpower Association of Xavier Ecoville (MAXEMA).



SEWING MACHINES

SMART Communications turned over additional sewing machines to Xavier Ecoville Multipurpose Cooperative's (XEMPCO) sewing enterprise on March 13, 2015. The XE sewers are now using these new machines for their bag production.



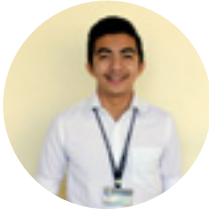
WATER CONNECTION

Permanent water supply connection has been installed to all blocks at Xavier Ecoville. The community currently has a level 2 water connection.



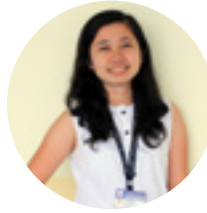
GRAND FINALE. The "Straight from the Art" wraps up with a community singing of the "Sa Xavier Ecoville."

Profile of the XEP MANAGEMENT TEAM



PHILIP ROBERT C FLORES Project Coordinator

One of the youngest project heads of a resettlement community, Philip is a Master in Business Administration graduate at Xavier University and a YSEALI professional fellow in the United States.



JOANA KATRINA N MELITANTE Livelihood Development Program Officer

A Year of Service volunteer for two years, Joana holds a degree in Community Development from Bukidnon State University.



THERESE RHEA ROSE M BALIWAG Administrative and Finance Officer

She is a graduate of XU Business Administration major in Financial Management and a staff of Christ Youth in Action - CDO Chapter since 2011.



LAILANIE C CABATUAN Sustainable Agri-based Livelihood Program Officer

A Year of Service volunteer, Lailanie is an Environmental Science graduate from Central Mindanao University.



JASON JAY C DALMAN Organizational Development Program Officer

A dynamic youth leader, Jason is an Environmental Science and Technology graduate at Mindanao University of Science and Technology. He is also a program consultant of the Leadership Empowerment and Development Seminar at MUST.



NIÑA BEA CADORNA Knowledge Product and Services Development Officer

Bea is a graduate of Development Communication major in Development Journalism at Xavier University. She initiated the publication of the Xavier Ecoville² magazine.

EDITORIAL BOARD PROFILE



EDITOR IN CHIEF **Stephen J Pedroza** is a graduate of BS Development Communication major in Development Journalism at Xavier University – Ateneo de Cagayan and he attended an intensive course on new media in journalism at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. He revels in writing various genres of literature and journalism as much as embarking on exhilarating adventures. At present, Pedroza writes for several publications and relishes in the company of books, magazines and paintings.



MANAGING EDITOR **Bea Cadorna** is the current Knowledge Product Development Officer of the Xavier Ecoville Project. She graduated magna cum laude in BS Development Communication major in Development Journalism at Xavier University – Ateneo de Cagayan. Most of the items on her bucketlist involve traveling the world, being able to immerse with different cultures and meeting Paulo Coelho in flesh. She is guilty of devouring too much “How to Get Away with Murder?” A self-confessed ailurophile, she also loves to drown herself in books, chocolates and daydreams.



ASSOCIATE EDITOR **Bernice Cabildo** is a press relations officer at DILG Regional Office 10. She has won numerous staring games with her dog and has been published internationally in her dreams. She is the author of two moderately successful one-shots which may be read on FanFiction.Net. She has also collaborated with Emily Dickinson, Edgar Allan Poe, William Shakespeare, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Charles Dickens, and Friedrich Nietzsche through the demo for the Google Docs collaboration tool. Bernice is a Development Communication graduate of Class 2014 at Xavier University – Ateneo de Cagayan. She majored in Development Journalism. When pressed to name her favorite Fall Out Boy album, she scoffs because “what do favorites matter anyway?”



GRAPHICS AND LAYOUT EXECUTIVE **Romando Q Lonon Jr** is currently a Computer Engineering student at Mindanao University of Science and Technology. He has been doing graphics and layouts on various publications in and out of school. He pampers himself in investing more time to the latest trend in technology. One of his greatest dreams that would hype him until he screams is to attend the Consumer Electronics Showcase at Las Vegas, Nevada.

The Xavier Ecoville Project

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