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Towards Innovative, Liveable, and
Prosperous Asian Megacities

Gawad Kalinga: Innovation in
the City (and Beyond)

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GAWAD KALINGA: INNOVATION IN THE CITY (AND BEYOND)

Abstract

Gawad Kalinga (GK) is an innovative approach that could be the key to solving poverty and homelessness in the Philippines. It is potentially an effective, sustainable, and replicable model that could address the problem of urban housing in the developing world. Its most important innovation is a shift in paradigm of what community development ought to be. Instead of looking at members of the poor communities as passive actors (i.e. as mere recipients of donations or as beneficiaries of support programs), GK considers them as active participants in the development process. Through the help of the caretaker team and the support provided by donors and volunteers, residents (or the *kapitbahayan*) become stewards of their own communities.

GK also emphasizes the building of relationships among the different actors involved in what it calls a “nation-building” movement. This is the institutional dimension of innovation. Before programs are introduced to the target community, the caretaker team sets the stage for a continuing relationship with the community members by participating in the community’s social activities, and by familiarizing themselves with the culture of the community. Even corporate partners and individual donors are oriented about Gawad Kalinga by bringing them to a GK site. Through their interaction with the members of the *kapitbahayan*, these benefactors become more involved in the various programs of GK in their adopted communities, and a more enduring relationship is formed, as a result.

Another innovation introduced by Gawad Kalinga is its holistic approach to community development, which involves educational, health, livelihood and environmental programs, among others. This distinctive feature has been successfully replicated throughout the country, and is now being imitated by other countries.

Gawad Kalinga has gone a long way since its initial years in Bagong Silang. The generosity, commitment, and heroic sacrifice of its full-time workers, caretaker teams, donors, volunteers, and institutional partners have made a difference in the lives of more than 500,000 people in over 2,000 communities in the Philippines and in several other developing countries. Whether GK can sustain its rapid growth remains to be seen. By remaining true to its innovative character, however, and by nurturing the patriotism of the Filipino people, there is reason to hope that its dream of “Land for the Landless, Home for the Homeless, and Food for the Hungry” will become a reality within our lifetimes.

I. INTRODUCTION

Urbanization in developing countries has proceeded so quickly, compressing into decades what had taken developed economies centuries to reach (Malpezzi & Mayo, 1987). The Philippines is no exception to this, as it has exhibited rapid population growth and migration over the past decades. In the National Capital Region (NCR), which accounts for 13 percent of the total population of over 88.6 million individuals, population rose from 9.93 million in 2000 to more than 11.55 million in 2007. This translates into an average annual population growth of 2.11 percent (National Statistics Office [NSO], 2007).

The rapid urbanization of NCR (or Metro Manila) has resulted in several problems such as congestion, pollution, poverty, depletion of natural resources, crime, environmental degradation, and lack of adequate housing (Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council [HUDCC], 2004).

In short, Metro Manila has not been able to sustain itself and keep up with the fast population growth and continuous migration. Moreover, the migrants and their families are not able to afford adequate housing due to the higher costs of living, and difficulties in acquiring sources of livelihood. Thus, they resort to informal settling.

In 2007, the total number of informal settlers in the Philippines was 550,771 households². Of this figure, 199,398 or roughly 36.20% live in Metro Manila (HUDCC, 2010). These figures are much lower than an earlier estimate by the National Housing Authority [NHA], which placed the total number of informal settlers in the Philippines in 2004 at 1,408,492 households, of which 726,908 or roughly 51.6% live in Metro Manila (NHA, as cited in HUDCC, 2004).

² The legal definition for *household* is “one arrangement for cooking and eating” (HUDCC, 2004).

Regardless of which figures are more accurate, providing adequate housing remains one of the long-standing challenges the country faces.

To resolve the problem, both the public and private sectors have undertaken several initiatives to provide for the housing needs of these informal settlers. Various government agencies (both at the local and national levels), together with the private sector and non-government organizations (NGOs), have implemented programs and projects that seek to address these needs. These programs include housing infrastructure, relocations, and funding through long-term mortgages. Shown below are data pertaining to the actual accomplishments of the National Shelter Program:

Table 1: Actual accomplishments of the National Shelter Program, 2001-2004

Housing Package	Target Households 2001-2004	Accomplishments				
		2001	2002	2003	2004	2001- 2004
Socialized (below PhP225,000)	880,000	207,940	118,987	84,716	81,853	493,496
Low-cost (PhP225,000 to PhP2 M)	320,000	54,447	74,306	114,507	146,067	389,327
Total	1,200,000	262,387	193,293	199,223	227,920	882,823

Source: Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council [HUDCC], 2004

The figures above refer to the national total³. Of the targeted 1,200,000 households, 882,823 or 73.6% were provided for through the joint efforts of both the private and public sectors (HUDCC, 2004). Clearly there is still a gap that must be filled in terms of providing for housing needs. Population growth and constant migration imply a constantly increasing demand for adequate housing, in addition to the current backlog.

Aside from the inadequacies in capacity and logistics with regard to these projects, there is also a gap in terms of providing the beneficiaries of these housing projects with other essentials, including livelihood to sustain their families, and education for their children's'

³ There were no data pertaining to the regional distributions of the shelter security units.

growth and development. Inability to meet these needs would mean failure to break the cycle of poverty.

Interestingly, Gawad Kalinga (literally “to give care”), a movement that was initiated during the early 2000s is attempting to eliminate poverty not only by providing adequate shelter but also by addressing the beneficiaries’ social needs. It takes on a holistic approach, putting into consideration the person as a whole. It also attempts to attain a state of development at the grassroots level, following a “ground-up” approach (Gawad Kalinga, 2009).

Gawad Kalinga is an innovative approach that could be the key to solving one of Philippine society’s biggest concerns. It is potentially an effective, sustainable, and replicable model that could address the problem of urban housing in the developing world.

A. Problem Statement

What are the innovations implemented by Gawad Kalinga to address the problem of urban housing in Metro Manila? How effective are these innovations in terms of the following criteria? (i) novelty, (ii) impacts, (iii) equity, (iv) economic and financial feasibility, (v) environmental sustainability, (vi) transferability, and (vii) political acceptability.

B. Research Objectives

The study has the following specific objectives:

- i.) To briefly describe the urban housing situation in the Philippine setting.
- ii.) To describe the activities undertaken by Gawad Kalinga in terms of three spatial dimensions, namely *physical space*, *information space*, and *cognitive space*.

- iii.) To evaluate these activities in terms of the following criteria: (1) novelty, (2) impacts, (3) equity, (4) economic and financial feasibility, (5) environmental sustainability, (6) transferability, and (7) political acceptability.
- iv.) To identify the key actors (e.g. communities, agencies, individuals, firms) involved in Gawad Kalinga, and to determine the interaction and linkages among these actors.
- v.) To identify the challenges faced by Gawad Kalinga in the implementation of its various programs.
- vi.) To write an illustrative case study that highlights the innovative aspects of the Gawad Kalinga experience.

C. Research Design and Methods

1. Research Design

For this study, we adopted a descriptive research design. We described the current situation of urban housing in the country, which serves as the context for the establishment of Gawad Kalinga. We then described Gawad Kalinga's structure, its key programs, and the innovations it introduced in its attempt to address the problem of poverty and homelessness in the country.

We also adopted an applied research design. Our findings provide valuable inputs for Gawad Kalinga's future policies, development paths and endeavors. We hope that our study succeeds in providing the organization with a documented (or established) framework that can be a guide in making its future efforts more efficient, effective (skill), and replicable (scope and scale).

2. Research Method

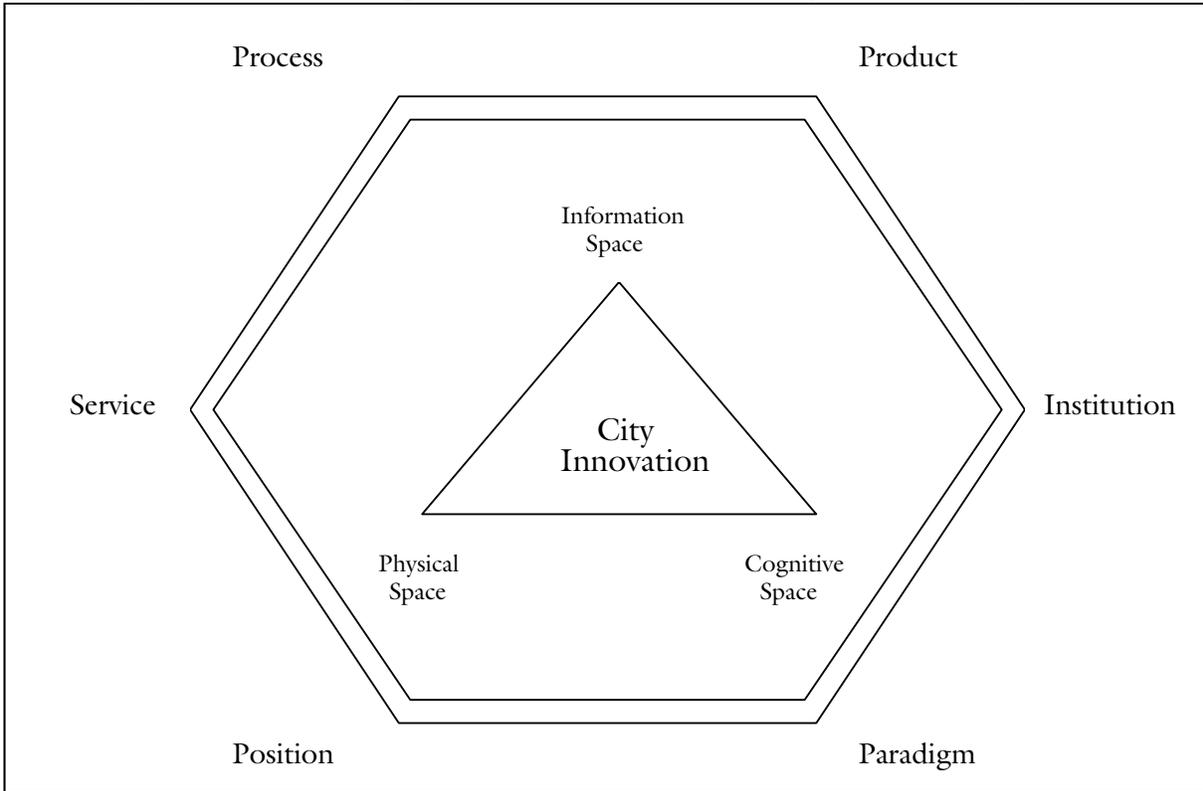
Yin (2003) suggested that the case study approach is best for describing certain social or behavioral phenomena present in the activities within the system. Because of this, we utilized the case study method, which aims to describe and understand a phenomenon (Gawad Kalinga) within its context (urban housing problem).

Specifically, we attempted to understand the complex relationship of the programs and activities undertaken by Gawad Kalinga, the interactions among the key actors involved, the impact of the innovative solutions introduced, and the behavioral changes that occur among the various stakeholders (i.e. volunteers, donors, beneficiaries, etc.). We gathered secondary data from various sources (e.g. Gawad Kalinga web site and documents, statistics from relevant government agencies, and articles about Gawad Kalinga published in newspapers and magazines). We likewise interviewed key officials of Gawad Kalinga. We also undertook the process of triangulation to incorporate the various data toward a sound, and consistent conclusion.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study adopts the City Innovation Systems framework, which attempts to analyze City Innovation Systems in terms of three spaces: (i) physical space, (ii) information space, and (iii) cognitive space; and in terms of six dimensions: (i) product, (ii) service, (iii) process, (iv) institution, (v) position, and (vi) paradigm (Ratanawaraha & Chairatana, 2009).

Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework for the City Innovation Systems



Source: Adopted from the City Innovation Systems (CIS) – Asia brochure

A. Spaces

Figure 2: Spaces in which innovation systems will be analyzed

Space	Description
Physical Space	Refers to the following aspects: where it happens, where it starts, and its relation to an urban built environment; also refers to geographical patterns (concentration, agglomeration, or dispersion) of the innovation, the innovators, and other actors or entities involved.
Information Space	Pertains to the source from which the innovators or users of the information acquire relevant information in creating, adopting and diffusing or distributing the city innovations.
Cognitive Space	Looks at behavioral patterns exhibited by both the innovator and other actors in relation to the city innovation; explores the patterns of thought, learning, and behavior in coming up with innovative solutions, as well as the <i>changes</i> happening to the way people think, learn and behave. At a collective level, the cognitive space also looks at commonalities in terms of shared values, symbols used, common language use, and “common-ways-to-do-things” which facilitate the creation, adoption and diffusion of city innovations.

B. Dimensions

Figure 3: Dimensions of innovation

Dimension	Description
Product	Pertains to a tangible item or object.
Service	Refers to new ways of delivering kinds of innovations; intangible, yet add a certain value to the lives of those benefited.
Process	Pertains to the way things are being done. Basically it answers the question “how?” Innovations in processes introduce new ways of doing things.
Position	Refers to the strategic aspect of the innovation, e.g. the vision, market niches, overall strategy. It answers the questions: “Who are we?”, “What do we do?”, “Who do we serve?”, “Where do we want to be?”, and “Where are we relative to where we want to be?”
Institution	Covers many areas, not necessarily formal organization structures but also informal networks and other connections between different entities within a given system; basically aims to unearth novelties in terms of such interactions, connections or hierarchies between elements in a given system or organization.
Paradigm	Pertains to changes in the ways of thought or the ways of life. It is the light in which one perceives the world.

III. POVERTY AND HOMELESSNESS IN THE CITY

Metro Manila, or the National Capital Region (NCR), is the center of business, education, and politics in the Philippines. It is composed of 16 cities (Caloocan, Makati, Malabon, Mandaluyong, Manila, Marikina, Muntinlupa, Navotas, Paranaque, Pasay City, Pasig, Quezon City, San Juan, Taguig, and Valenzuela), and one municipality (Pateros). It has a total of 1,705 *barangays* (the smallest political unit in the country).

With a total land area of 636 square kilometers, Metro Manila is bounded by the Marikina Valley and the Sierra Madre Mountains in the East; the Manila Bay in the West; Central Luzon in the North, and Laguna de Bay in the South.

Table 2: Metro Manila land area, population, and population growth

Local government unit	Land Area (sq. km.)	Population (2007 Census)	Population density (per sq. km.)	2007 Annual Population Growth Rate
Caloocan	53.33	1,378,856	25,855	2.20
Las Pinas	41.54	532,330	12,815	1.65
Makati	27.36	510,383	18,654	1.91
Malabon	15.76	363,681	23,076	0.98
Mandaluyong	11.26	305,576	27,138	1.29
Manila	38.55	1,660,714	43,079	0.68
Marikina	33.97	424,610	12,500	1.14
Muntinlupa	46.70	452,943	9,699	2.48
Navotas	10.77	245,344	22,780	0.87
Paranaque	47.69	552,660	11,589	2.88
Pasay	19.00	403,064	21,214	1.77
Pasig	31.00	617,301	19,913	2.80
Pateros	2.10	61,940	29,495	1.05
Quezon	161.12	2,679,450	16,630	2.92
San Juan	5.94	124,187	20,907	0.87
Taguig	47.88	613,343	12,810	3.82
Valenzuela	44.58	568,928	12,762	2.21
TOTAL	638.55	11,553,427	18,093	2.11

Source: MMDA, 2010

According to the National Statistics Office (NSO, 2007), the population of Metro Manila rose from 9.93 million in 2000 to more than 11.55 million in 2007. This meant that its population grew by an annual average of 2.11 percent. The cities with the biggest populations as of 2007 are Quezon City (2.67 million), Manila (1.66 million), and Kalookan (1.37 million).

Metro Manila accounts for 33.01 percent of the country's total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2008, up from 32.69 in 2007. If we add the gross regional domestic product (GRDP) of the adjacent Region IVA (composed of the provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon or CALABARZON), which contributed 12.08% and 11.86% of GDP in 2007 and 2008 respectively, these two regions account for almost half of the total economic output of the entire country.

**Table 3: Gross Regional Domestic Product of NCR and CALABARZON,
2007 and 2008**

(in thousand pesos, at constant 1985 prices)

Region/Year	2007		2008	
	GRDP	%	GRDP	%
Philippines	1,366,492,669	100.00	1,418,952,296	100.00
NCR	446,669,407	32.69	468,382,396	33.01
Region IVA	165,060,085	12.08	168,299,527	11.86

Source: National Statistical Coordination Board; data as of July 2009

A significant number of registered businesses in the Philippines are located in the country's capital. The headquarters of large multinational and Filipino firms are mostly located in the NCR, especially in cities such as Makati (considered the country's financial capital), Manila, Pasig, Quezon City, and Taguig. Not surprisingly, total tax revenue collected by the Bureau of Internal Revenues (BIR) in Metro Manila reached P622.2 billion in 2007. This accounted for 41% of the country's total tax collection (NSCB, 2009).

As the country's educational center, Metro Manila is home to a large number of educational institutions. In School Year 2007-2008, it had a total of 511 public elementary schools and 213 public secondary schools. Metro Manila also had 309 public and private tertiary institutions, including the country's top four universities (i.e. University of the Philippines, Ateneo de Manila University, De La Salle University, and University of Santo Tomas). According to the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), tertiary enrolment in Metro Manila in SY 2005-2006 reached a total of 671,583.

As the country's premier urban center, Metro Manila serves as a magnet to migrants from the provinces seeking opportunities in the city. Many of these people, however, because of lack of education, take up hard labor and menial jobs that require unskilled workers; some end up doing odd jobs, including drug peddling, illegal gambling, and prostitution. According to the NSO, the unemployment and underemployment rates, as of April 2009, were 14% and 12% respectively.

A. Poverty in the city

While the poverty incidence in Metro Manila is lower than those of other regions, the sheer number of its population means that the total number of poor people in the megacity is high. In 2000, the total number of people considered poor reached 856,045, which accounted for 7.3% of the population of NCR. In 2006, poverty incidence increased to 9.9% of the population or 1.138 million people (see Tables 4 and 5).

Table 4: Official poverty statistics for urban population, Philippines, NCR and CALABARZON (Region IVA): 2000, 2003, 2006

Region/Year	2000		2003		2006	
	Poverty incidence	Magnitude of poor	Poverty incidence	Magnitude of poor	Poverty incidence	Magnitude of poor
Philippines	17.3	6,784,016	15.9	6,360,978	16.1	6,852,965
NCR	7.3	856,045	6.7	746,022	9.9	1,138,424
Region IVA	10.0	596,377	9.3	651,721	9.6	698,954

Source: National Statistical Coordination Board

Table 5: Increase/decrease in poverty for urban population, Philippines, NCR and CALABARZON (Region IVA): 2000, 2003, 2006

Region/Year	Increase/Decrease (2000-2003)		Increase/Decrease (2003-2006)		
	Poverty incidence	Magnitude of poor	Poverty incidence	Magnitude of poor	
Philippines		(1.4)	(423,038)	0.2	491,987
NCR		(0.6)	(110,023)	3.2	392,402
Region IVA		(0.7)	55,343	0.3	47,233

Source: National Statistical Coordination Board

B. The problem of illegal settlements

Because of poverty, the bottom 40% of both urban and rural households in the Philippines resort to informal housing or illegal settlements in congested areas under poor living conditions. The problem of illegal settlements (also known as spontaneous settlements or “squattling”) is particularly pronounced in Metro Manila. Spontaneous settlements are primarily characterized by chaotic growth and land division, lack of basic infrastructure, and lack of basic services. They also give rise to social problems such as “high levels of

criminality, health and sanitation problems, and poor quality of housing” (Santos-Delgado, 2009).

Figures from HUDCC (2010) reveal that the total number of informal settlers (in terms of households) in Metro Manila is 199,398. This constitutes 36.20% of the total number of informal settlers in the country. Assuming an average of five persons per household, this translates to approximately 996,990 informal settlers. Nearby CALABARZON also has a large number of informal settlers at 67,872 households, which accounts for 12.32% of the national total.

Table 6: Informal settlers in the Philippines

Major regions	No. of informal settlers (households)*	Percentage
PHILIPPINES	550,771	100.00
LUZON	352,100	63.93
NCR	199,398	36.20
CALABARZON (Region IV-A)	67,872	12.32
Rest of Luzon	84,830	15.40
VISAYAS	81,742	14.84
MINDANAO	116,929	21.23

* Informal settlers are those households whose tenure status is "rent-free lot without consent of owner."

Source: HUDCC, 2010 (Based on extrapolation made using the 2000 Census of Population and Housing and 2007 Population Census, National Statistics Office)

Within NCR, Quezon City accounted for the highest number of informal settlers (91,090 households or 45.68%), followed by Manila (19,949 households, 10.0%) and Caloocan City (18,565 households, 9.31%). Pateros, San Juan, and Marikina had the least number of informal settlers in Metro Manila.

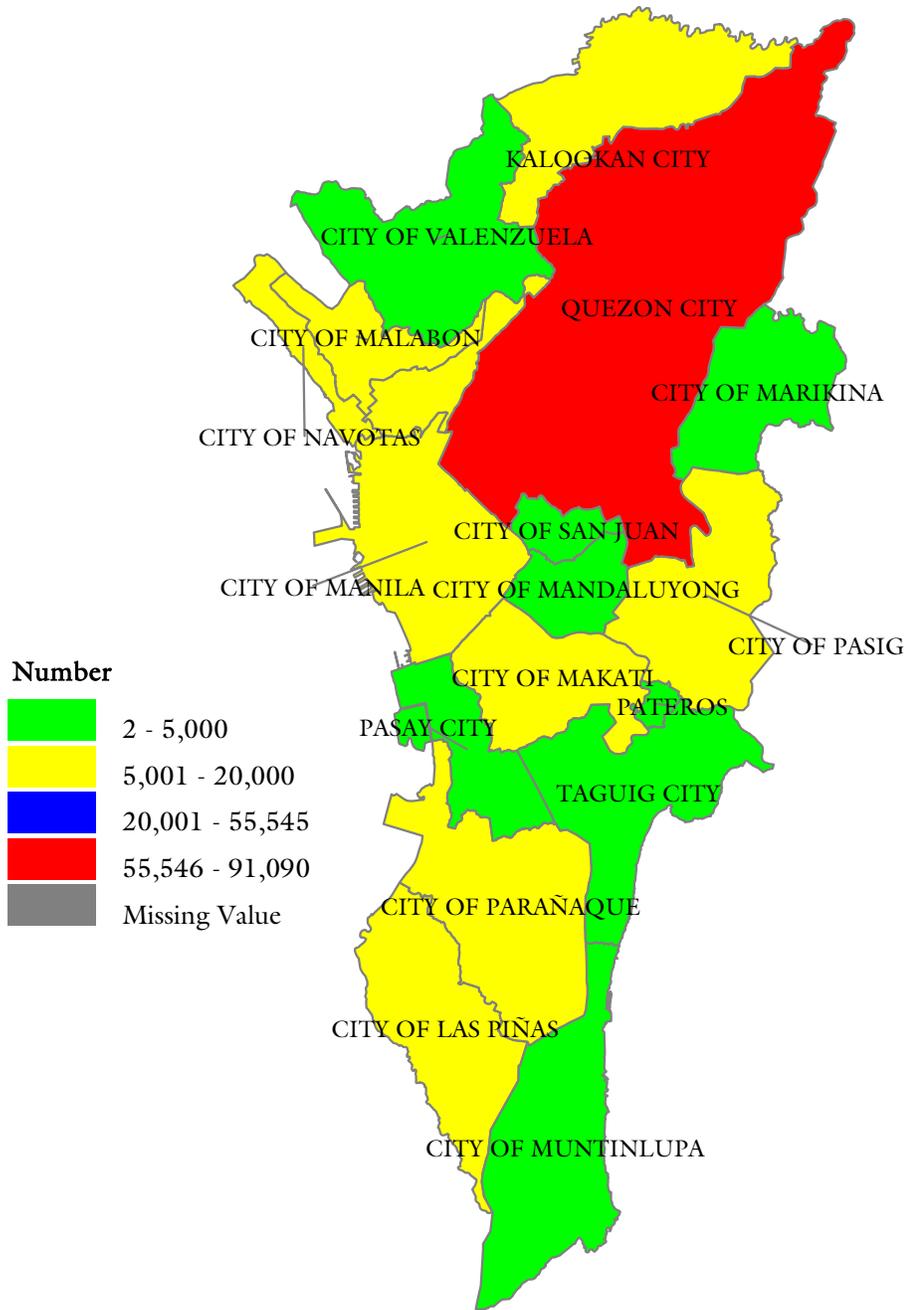
Table 7: Estimated number of informal settlers in Metro Manila, 2007

City or municipality	No. of informal settlers (households)*	Percentage
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION	199,398	100.00
NCR 4 - City of Las Piñas	5,713	2.87
NCR 4 - City of Makati	5,191	2.60
NCR 3 - City of Malabon	7,359	3.69
NCR 2 - City of Mandaluyong	2,134	1.07
NCR 1 - City of Manila	19,949	10.00
NCR 2 - City of Marikina	1,810	0.91
NCR 4 - City of Muntinlupa	4,989	2.50
NCR 3 - City of Navotas	11,583	5.81
NCR 4 - City of Parañaque	12,307	6.17
NCR 2 - City of Pasig	6,338	3.18
NCR 2 - City of San Juan	1,627	0.82
NCR 3 - City of Valenzuela	4,457	2.24
NCR 3 - Caloocan City	18,565	9.31
NCR 4 - Pasay City	4,491	2.25
NCR 4 - Pateros	226	0.11
NCR 2 - Quezon City	91,090	45.68
NCR 4 - Taguig City	3,925	1.97

* Informal settlers are those households whose tenure status is "rent-free lot without consent of owner."

Source: HUDCC, 2010 (Based on extrapolation made using the 2000 Census of Population and Housing and 2007 Population Census, National Statistics Office)

Figure 4: Estimated number of informal settlers in NCR, 2007



(Source of basic data: 2000 Census of Population and Housing and 2007 Population Census)

C. Relevant laws on housing and urban development

In December 1986, President Corazon Aquino issued Executive Order No. 90, which set up the mechanism for the implementation of the six-year National Shelter Program (NSP). The EO created the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC), defined the functions of other housing agencies, renamed a few of the agencies, and mandated HUDCC to formulate goals and strategies in housing, monitor housing targets, encourage public sector participation, formulate policies for asset disposition, and exercise such other powers and functions necessary for ensuring the implementation of the NSP.

On May 24, 1989, Aquino issued E.O. No. 357, which strengthened the coordinating mechanism of the NSP by allowing HUDCC to exercise overall administrative supervision over the key housing agencies subject to the control and supervision of the President; to review the organization, programs, and projects of the key housing agencies and to adopt measures to improve coordination and integration of activities among them; to adopt measures to decentralize its operations and those of key housing agencies to attain equitable regional distribution of housing benefits; and to enlist the assistance of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) in securing funding support for the NSP.

To specifically address the housing problem in the country's urban areas, the Philippine Congress enacted Republic Act 7279 or the "Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992." RA 7279 provides for the implementation of a "comprehensive and continuing" Urban Development and Housing Program, which aims, among others, to "uplift the conditions of the underprivileged and homeless citizens in urban areas and in resettlement areas by making available to them decent housing at affordable cost, basic services, and employment opportunities" and to "adopt workable policies to regulate and direct urban growth and expansion towards a dispersed urban net and more balanced urban-rural interdependence."

Through the rational use and development of urban land, the program seeks to bring about the following: (i) equitable utilization of residential lands in urban areas with particular attention to the needs and requirements of the underprivileged and homeless citizens and not merely on the basis of market forces; (ii) optimization of the use and productivity of land and urban resources; (iii) development of urban areas conducive to commercial and industrial activities which can generate more economic opportunities for the people; (iv) reduction in urban dysfunctions, particularly those that adversely affect public health, safety and ecology; and (v) access to land and housing by the underprivileged and homeless citizens.

RA 7279 specifically provides for the following:

- i.) Formulation of a National Urban Development and Housing Framework by the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB) under the direction of HUDCC and in coordination with local government units (LGUs) and other concerned public and private sectors.
- ii.) Identification of lands for socialized housing and resettlement areas for the underprivileged and homeless in urban areas, taking into consideration the degree of availability of basic services and facilities, accessibility and proximity to job sites and other economic opportunities, and the actual number of registered beneficiaries.
- iii.) Disposition and valuation of lands for socialized housing, and the registration of socialized housing beneficiaries.
- iv.) Balanced housing development – Developers of proposed subdivision projects are required to develop an area for socialized housing equivalent to at least 20% of the total subdivision area or total subdivision project cost within the same city or municipality, whenever feasible, and in accordance with the standards set by the HLURB and other existing laws.
- v.) Incentives for participation of the private sector in socialized housing so as to reduce the cost of housing for the underprivileged and the homeless. Incentives

include the reduction and simplification of qualification and accreditation requirements of participating private developers, simplification of financing procedures, and exemption from the payment of selected taxes (e.g. project-related income taxes, capital gains tax on raw lands used for the project, value-added tax for the project contractor concerned, transfer tax for both raw and completed projects, and donor's tax for lands certified by the LGU to have been donated for socialized housing purposes).

The Program also encourages “more effective people’s participation in the urban development process,” and seeks to “improve the capability of local government units in undertaking urban development and housing programs and projects.”

D. Persistence of housing backlog

In spite of the efforts of government and the private sector to reduce the urban housing backlog, the problem persists. The government had estimated the total housing need in the country to have reached a total of 3.75 million units by 2010 (see Table 8). Metro Manila’s housing need alone was estimated at 496,928 or 13.23% of the total.

In the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP) 2004-2010, however, the government made provisions for shelter assistance to 1,145,668 households for the period of 2005-2010 (see Table 9). This is only approximately 30% of the total housing need for the said period, a telling indicator of any (or a combination) of the following: (i) the government’s lack of resources, (ii) the ever-increasing prices of land for housing, (iii) the absence of political will to overcome legal issues (e.g. land security and property ownership), and (iv) a deficiency of managerial competence to creatively address this pressing problem, in spite of resource and legal constraints.

Table 8: Housing need per region, 2005-2010

Region	Annual Backlog	Cumulative Backlog and New Households						Total
		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	
NCR	58,412	82,182	82,434	82,689	82,946	83,206	83,469	496,928
CAR	1,309	6,494	6,589	6,685	6,783	6,882	6,984	40,416
I	5,556	25,027	25,446	25,874	26,310	26,757	27,212	156,626
II	4,078	17,725	18,032	18,346	18,667	18,995	19,330	111,094
III	12,569	71,938	73,837	75,798	77,821	79,909	82,064	461,368
IV	23,827	127,872	131,742	135,757	139,920	144,239	148,718	828,248
V	12,267	28,288	28,288	28,830	29,109	29,392	29,679	173,855
VI	16,816	36,941	37,255	37,574	37,898	38,227	38,561	226,455
VII	10,578	45,880	46,865	47,877	48,918	49,988	51,087	290,616
VIII	7,281	18,766	18,940	19,116	19,294	19,476	19,660	115,252
IX	7,642	21,824	22,133	22,449	22,772	23,101	23,438	135,717
X	5,912	18,880	19,164	19,455	19,751	20,054	20,364	117,668
XI	11,158	41,922	42,722	43,542	44,384	45,248	46,134	263,952
XII	6,661	18,033	18,270	18,511	18,758	19,009	19,266	111,847
ARMM	5,126	22,800	23,482	24,190	24,926	25,691	26,484	147,574
CARAGA	5,942	12,791	12,902	13,016	13,131	13,248	13,367	78,456
Total	195,133	597,362	608,370	619,708	631,389	643,422	655,821	3,756,072

Source: HUDCC; * Annual backlog is the total housing backlog for the medium-term divided by six years

Table 9: Government's target housing assistance for the period 2005-2010

Housing Package	Number of Units	% share
Socialized Housing (below P225,000)	780,191	68.10
Low Cost Housing (P225,000 – P2 million)	365,282	31.80
Medium Housing (P2 million - P4million)	195	0.01
Total	1,145,668	100.00%

The lack of adequate housing facilities, according to a recent survey by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), has increased the incidence of renting, especially in depressed areas in Metro Manila. This finding is consistent with government statistics which show that among the low-income groups and urban poor groups, tenants accounted for 34.9% and 36.9% respectively, while sharers accounted for 9.3% and 11.7% respectively.

Table 10: Distribution of households by tenure and income group, 2000
(in %)

Tenure*	All income groups	Low-income	Urban poor	Middle-high income
URBAN Philippines				
Owner	25.1	29.1	30.4	20.4
Tenant	69.6	64.4	62.8	75.5
Sharer	5.4	6.5	6.7	4.1
All	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
METRO MANILA				
Owner	64.1	55.9	51.4	69.5
Tenant	29.4	34.9	36.9	25.7
Sharer	6.6	9.3	11.7	4.8
All	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*Based on UNCHS definition, tenure arrangements in the Philippines has been classified as follows:

Owner – own house and lot, own house & rent-free lot without consent of owner

Tenant – rent house and lot; own house and rent lot; own house & rent-free lot with consent of owner

Sharer – rent-free house and lot with or without consent of owner

Source of basic data: FIES 2000 (as cited by Chua, undated)

Clearly, rapid population growth, fast-paced urbanization, and the ever-increasing prices of land for housing (Chua, undated), make it difficult for government to solve the problem of homelessness by itself. This requires the cooperation of various sectors of society. Aside from the critical roles that must be played by the private sector, the local government units and key government agencies, which were identified in the Urban Development and Housing Act, other sectors such as non-government organizations, academe, concerned private citizens, and the informal settlers themselves must work together to solve a problem of this magnitude.

IV. GAWAD KALINGA

Gawad Kalinga is a community development model that begins at the grassroots level. It is “fueled by a massive army of volunteers who are working together in *bayanihan* (cooperation) to bring about change and to restore the dignity of the poorest of the poor” (Gawad Kalinga, 2009).

While it was not conceived to solve the problem of informal settling, it is now known largely because of its success in mobilizing donors, volunteers, and the intended beneficiaries themselves in building beautiful and colorful houses in thousands of communities all over the country. As of June 2009, it has built a total of 33,439 houses in 1,400 villages in the Philippines. Almost 9,000 of these houses were built in Metro Manila. More than building houses, though, Gawad Kalinga has initiated self-sustaining programs that have improved the lives of more than 200,000 families throughout the country, and counting.

Table 11: Gawad Kalinga villages and houses built per region
(as of June 2009)

Region	Total villages		Total houses	
	f	%	f	%
National Capital Region	316	22.57	8,374	25.04
Region 1	13	0.93	277	0.83
Cordillera Administrative Region	3	0.21	62	0.19
Region 2	49	3.50	991	2.96
Region 3	176	12.57	4,646	13.89
Region 4A	131	9.36	3,253	9.73
Region 4B	48	3.43	970	2.90
Region 5	130	9.29	2,938	8.79
Region 6	78	5.57	1,863	5.57
Region 7	60	4.29	1,706	5.10
Region 8	84	6.00	1,804	5.39
Region 9	33	2.36	547	1.64
Region 10	123	8.79	2,819	8.43
Region 11	53	3.79	756	2.26
Region 12	33	2.36	777	2.32
Region 13	33	2.36	643	1.92
Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao	37	2.64	1,013	3.03
TOTAL	1,400	100.00	33,439	100.00

Source: Gawad Kalinga Community Development Foundation (2009)

Table 12: Gawad Kalinga villages and houses built in the NCR
(as of June 2009)

City or municipality	Total villages		Total houses	
	f	%	f	%
Quezon City	82	25.87	2,056	24.54
Caloocan	51	16.09	1,376	16.42
Manila	47	14.83	1,303	15.55
Paranaque	32	10.09	698	8.33
Rizal	31	9.78	932	11.12
Mandaluyong	25	7.89	766	9.14
Las Pinas	16	5.05	502	5.99
Taguig	12	3.79	239	2.85
Pasig	11	3.47	345	4.12
San Juan and Valenzuela	4	1.26	63	0.75
Marikina	2	0.63	52	0.62
Pateros	2	0.63	3	0.04
Muntinlupa	1	0.32	39	0.47
Pasay	1	0.32	4	0.05
TOTAL	317	100.00	8,378	100.00

Source: Gawad Kalinga Community Development Foundation (2009)

A. Brief history

Gawad Kalinga (GK) began in 1995, when the Couples for Christ (CFC) in the Philippines organized a youth camp in *Bagong Silang* (literally “new born”), one of the biggest slum areas in Metro Manila. In the next few years, efforts to reach out to families of gang members and to beautify community areas slowly bore fruit, leading to the building of the first GK community in Bagong Silang. The first structures built were the ANGKOP Livelihood Center and the Chapel of the Forgiven.

In 2000, 12 teams pioneered the first GK villages outside of Bagong Silang. This was made possible through the network of Youth for Christ. These 12 sites participated in the Gawad Kalinga Awards, a nationwide competition launched the previous year to recognize the best practices in the various GK programs (i.e. shelter, education, and community empowerment) in these communities. Also this year, GK built 80 homes for 400 victims of the big flood that killed thousands and almost wiped out the entire city of Ormoc in Southern Philippines.

In 2002, some 2,000 volunteers from Singles for Christ built in three days 16 GK homes in Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental. Impressed by what she witnessed, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo challenged GK to build 1,000 homes with P30 million from her presidential fund. Even if it lacked the experience in building at such a scale back then, GK succeeded in building the houses in 70 sites throughout the country within a year.

This highly-publicized initiative by the President served as a boost for GK, which began to attract leaders from both sides of the political fence, including opposition leader Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., who provided P40 million from his Countryside Development Fund for schools, livelihood centers, sewage and path walks. Other senators followed the lead of Pimentel. Hundreds of governors and mayors have since joined the bandwagon.

The growing support it had been receiving from various sectors emboldened GK to launch GK777 in 2003 during the first GK Expo in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig. GK777 is “a global movement to build the homes of 700,000 families in 7,000 communities in seven years. Also during that year, former President Corazon Aquino declared that “GK is People Power.”

In 2005, GK partnered with the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC), the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and 200 LGUs to give care to typhoon victims. Through Kalinga Luzon and Kalinga Leyte, GK pioneered a template for rescue and rehabilitation of communities built by volunteers. Also that year, the 1st GK Highway of Peace began and the first Muslim GK village was built in Datu Paglas, Maguindanao.

In 2006, Gawad Kalinga received numerous awards from various groups. These included the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership, the first Haydee Yorac Award, the first Jose P. Laurel Award, the Manuel Luis Quezon Award, and the Philippine Daily

Inquirer’s Filipino of the Year citation. By that time, GK had become a true nation-building movement. Local government units (LGUs), civic organizations, politicians, overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), academe, and even rival corporations (e.g. Globe and Smart, Jollibee and McDonalds, Unilever, Procter & Gamble, and Nestle) embraced GK’s vision of a slum-free Philippines.

In 2008, the Gawad Kalinga Builders Institute (GKBI), the think tank, training arm, and learning center of GK, was established at the Ateneo de Manila University. By this time, GK had already set up villages in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, and Cambodia. It also received financial support from the Singaporean government and the Canadian government among others.

In 2009, Gawad Kalinga unveiled to the world the emerging Asian model for development at the first GK Global Summit in Boston. It also launched GK2024, a 21-year vision that provides the roadmap towards a “First World Philippines” (Gawad Kalinga, 2009).

B. Gawad Kalinga programs

According to Edgar Chua, country chairman of Shell companies in the Philippines and member of GK’s board of consultants: “what differentiates GK from others is that it has taken steps to ensure the sustainability of the communities it builds” (Meloto, 2009). Its holistic approach, which includes values formation training, education, health care, environmental awareness, food sufficiency, and livelihood training to beneficiaries, is what attracts sponsors (individual and corporate) and volunteers alike. It can be said that the success of the Community Infrastructure Program, which includes the building of houses, is linked to the effective implementation of all the other components of this integrative community-development approach. Summarized in Figure 5 are the various programs of Gawad Kalinga.

Figure 5: Gawad Kalinga’s key programs and their goals

Program	Description	Goals
Community Infrastructure Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building beautiful and brightly painted homes and other infrastructure (e.g. multi-purpose halls, Sibol schools, clinics) in clean and green environments through sweat equity of the <i>kapitbahayan</i> (GK residents) with assistance from volunteers in a spirit of <i>bayanihan</i> (teamwork and cooperation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To restore the dignity of the poorest of the poor by providing them with a stable foundation where they can begin their lives anew • To inspire families, especially their children to dream of a beautiful future
Child and Youth Development Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SIBOL, which means “to grow”, provides values-based education to pre-school children from 3 to 6 years old. • SAGIP, which means “to save a life”, is a support program for children aged 7 to 13. Children receive free academic tutorials, sports and creative workshops, and values formation classes. • SIGA, which means “to light”, prepares the youth (teens) to become productive citizens through sports, creative activities, and mentoring sessions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop the skills and talents of the kids and youth of GK communities by inculcating values and providing opportunities that bring out their fullest potential
Gawad Kalusugan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careful monitoring of health profiles of GK families through the assistance of volunteer doctors, nurses, and medical practitioners. • Health awareness and training workshops for local leaders (neighborhood and government) in health programs and practices that will benefit the whole community such as proper nutrition, sanitation, disease prevention and first aid. • Partnerships with medical schools and associations to provide basic medical and dental services (e.g. free consultation, immunization, minor surgical procedures, and nutrition programs). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To empower the poor to take care of their communities: “health in the hands of the people” • To provide quality of life for the poorest of the poor who have been previously deprived of quality health care

Figure 5: Gawad Kalinga’s key programs and their goals (*continued*)

Program	Description	Goals
Green Kalinga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment advocacy through seminars and workshops • Use of environment-friendly materials into GK infrastructure • Use of renewable energy sources in communities • Creating environment-friendly projects such as solid waste management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To inculcate love and care for the environment among community residents
GK Bayan-anihan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GK’s food sufficiency program – empowering the communities to produce their food through their own GK farms • Launching of model farms in partnership with corporations – Selecta, Globe, Shell, Wyeth • Training and assisting GK residents to care for their farms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide sufficient food for families in the GK communities • To eradicate hunger in the Philippines by establishing sustainable food sufficiency programs through multi-sectoral partnerships • To transform lives towards a hunger-free nation
GK Mabuhay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GK sites as tourist destinations and cultural attractions – GK villagers welcome visitors with warmth and hospitality brought about by a renewed sense of hope. • Training <i>Mabuhay</i> ladies to be effective tour guides with good communication skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To showcase and preserve Philippine culture and values in GK communities
Community Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization of GK community members under the Kapitbahayan Neighborhood Association, where strong values formation is translated into concrete guidelines for community living, which are agreed upon and lived out by every member. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help GK villages become self-sustaining communities • To inculcate stewardship • To ensure unity, cooperation, and accountability • To make model GK villages agents of change and transformation in their larger communities

By implementing the above-mentioned programs, Gawad Kalinga hopes to achieve the following (GK Shelter Manual, undated):

- i.) Community empowerment: GK villages are communities “whose residents are not just receivers but are givers as well.” GK’s work is not about charity, but

stewardship – “uplifting the dignity of the poor by building their capacity to respond to opportunities and enabling them to reach their highest potentials.”

- ii.) Massive mobilization for volunteerism: This is based on “bayanihan” – the collective efforts of heroism in local communities, one that honors “ordinary men and women who choose to make sacrifices for the greater good.” Heroism does not pertain to a single outstanding individual who wants to help his community but to the whole community working together to achieve success for all.
- iii.) Partnerships in nation building: GK recognizes that the task of nation building is massive, “but the challenge is not insurmountable if all Filipinos learn to work together. According to GK, “government is not hopeless, but it is helpless without the support of civil society.” Every citizen has a part in realizing “the dream of the Filipino nation rebuilt.”

V. EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

Before Gawad Kalinga came, there were other organizations that have attempted to address the problems of poverty and homelessness. Notable examples are: (i) Habitat for Humanity which was established in 1976, and (ii) *Fundacion Promotora de Vivienda* (FUPROVI) which was founded in 1987 in Costa Rica. In their attempts to alleviate poverty and to provide solutions to the problem of illegal settlements, these organizations promoted organized self-help housing (Santos-Delgado, 2009).

Organized self-help housing is more than simply providing for housing needs. It promotes enhancement within the community and the pooling and maximization of its resources in terms of manpower, resource generation, and more significantly, social responsibility. Organized self-help housing is both *personal effort* and *mutual help*. The former is such, because the family’s efforts are exerted to satisfy its own needs. It is also the latter, because it involves the help and actions of fellow community members, and volunteers (Santos-Delgado, 2009).

What distinguishes Gawad Kalinga from other community-organizing groups is that it offers a package of programs that must be delivered to every GK area. These include values formation, education, health, livelihood, and community infrastructure programs. These services are delivered with the help of a caretaker team and a committed set of partners. The whole package was designed to address the basic needs of the members of the community, and to restore human dignity. All of the components are essential in helping the poor “join the socio-economic mainstream of society.”

In the case of Gawad Kalinga, the goal of empowering communities is a collective effort that involves three key parties: (i) the *kapitbahayan*, (ii) the community organizer, and (iii) the caretaker team.

A. The *kapitbahayan*

Gawad Kalinga moves towards its goal of “integrated, holistic and sustainable communities” through the Kapitbahayan Neighborhood Association. The first members of the *kapitbahayan* are the people who reside within the given boundaries specified as scope of the GK area. Membership in the KB Neighborhood Association is one of the requirements to qualify as a beneficiary of GK programs. Members include the beneficiaries of the various GK programs (e.g. health, livelihood) in the community, the parents of children who participate in the values formation and education programs of GK, and other residents of the community who are willing to take part in the *kapitbahayan*’s mission and vision.

“Kapitbahayan” is a contraction of two Tagalog words: “kapit” means to hang onto or to hold together, while “bahay” means house or home. Thus, *kapitbahayan* means a neighborhood of homes, working together for the common good and relying on each

other for support and strength. Their relationship is based on trust, respect and preferential concern for others, which follows the example of the early Christian community.

According to the Kapitbahayan Manual (undated), the core values that serve to unify the GK Kapitbahayan are the following:

- i.) Bayanihan. The “collective efforts of heroism in a community”.
- ii.) Less for self, more for others, enough for all. Everyone in the community always has something to share or contribute according to his heart and means. *No one is too poor that he has nothing to give.*
- iii.) All members are equal partners. There is no discrimination among the poor, whether in terms of religion, community status or level of education. Willingness to participate is given the highest value, and each one is encouraged to give his or her share in community building.
- iv.) Solidarity has to do with being a family. It is accepting that the good of one person has to do with the good of all.
- v.) Servant Leadership. This means taking the lead in giving service, and being the last in receiving benefits (*una sa serbisyo, huli sa benepisyo*)
- vi.) Empowered Community. Residents of the GK community must be full partners and not just beneficiaries. They gain the ability to respond to opportunities and choices, enabling them to reach their highest potential.
- vii.) Enlightened community. Residents protect themselves from social, economic and political degradation. By following agreed-upon common values, the *kapitbahayan* can discern and promote what will be good for the whole community.
- viii.) Faith and Patriotism. Love of God and country.

An empowered Kapitbahayan Neighborhood Association is the essential component in ensuring the sustainability of the work done in the GK village. Unless the residents take responsibility for the vision of Gawad Kalinga in their own community, the gains achieved

in terms of site development and the development of homes will be wasted as the community deteriorates back into a slum environment.

While the work of the caretaker teams and volunteers are critical in speeding up the building of homes and the setting up of health, education, and livelihood programs, it is the *kapitbahayan* that will ensure the continuation of the various development programs on a day-to-day basis, even in the absence of outside volunteers.

Finally, an active and empowered community inspires more and more benefactors and partners to continue supporting their programs and activities. It also encourages neighboring communities, making them an effective agent for the growth and expansion of Gawad Kalinga. In Bagong Silang, for example, there are now 19 GK villages and 82 organized kapitbahayan neighborhood associations. The influence of Gawad Kalinga is so pervasive that a former GK volunteer who ran for barangay captain (town leader) won in the 2007 elections by the biggest margin ever. His campaign posters: the 17 GK villages that were built when he was still a GK worker (Testimonial of Dr. Eric Cayabyab during the GKBI National Workshop, Ateneo de Manila University, November 17, 2009).

B. The community organizer

Organizing the *kapitbahayan* has to be facilitated or initiated by the community organizer. Her main role is to bring about a strong sense of community process, mobilizing and organizing. Since community organizing takes the side of the people, the organizer must possess an orientation that is pro-environment, pro-family, and pro-life, and takes a strong stand on ethical principles based on truth, justice, and love. The community organizer, however, is not the leader. This is because community organizing is group-centered, not leader oriented.

The KB community organizer is the key person in the entry of Gawad Kalinga in the area. She facilitates the smooth implementation of the various programs through constant coordination with the caretaker team and the *kapitbahayan*. As such she must fully understand the vision and ideals of the *kapitbahayan*, and inspire others to embrace it fully. According to the Kapitbahayan Manual (undated), she performs the following functions:

- i.) Facilitate the entry of GK into the community. Conduct home visits and meetings within the prospective GK site to build relationships and identify potential leaders.
- ii.) Conduct ground work and ocular data gathering, guiding and mobilizing the caretaker team assisted by residents and leaders in the area. This undertaking would start the process of familiarization and building of relationships.
- iii.) Along with the Project Director and the rest of the caretaker team, evaluate data output, and give necessary recommendations
- iv.) Prepare the families and the caretaker team for the Kapitbahayan Membership Training-KBMT
- v.) Coordinate with the caretaker teams to facilitate integration.
- vi.) Empower the local community especially KB officers to plan and implement their own programs until they become a self sustainable community.
- vii.) Develop potential leaders from the members of the caretaker team, and even the *kapitbahayan*, in community organizing for purposes of expansion of the work and eventually to take her place.

C. The caretaker team

The caretaker team takes the lead in providing the Kapitbahayan Membership Training (KBMT), which is meant to build and strengthen the relationships among members of the community, and to foster community empowerment. For new sites, a member of the caretaker team serves as team leader, a role which will ultimately be turned over to member of the *kapitbahayan*.

Members of the caretaker team also serve as facilitators of the various activities and group discussions during the KBMT. The facilitator sets the right mode of discussion, and sees to it that everyone takes part in the discussions. He serves as a catalyst in the building of relationships within the group, and makes sure that concrete action and the necessary coordination meetings are done within the week. The facilitator also empowers the group especially the leader of the smaller discussion groups (aka bayanihan group) from the very start. He also gives feedback to the caretaker team on the strengths and weaknesses of the group that he is handling.

There are several phases in organizing the community: (i) the preparatory phase, during which GK gathers information about the community, even as it engages community leaders to encourage them to become partners; (ii) the integration phase, during which members of the caretaker team immerse themselves in the community and build relationships with the people; (iii) the values formation phase; and (iv) the empowerment phase.

The ultimate goal is a *kapitbahayan* that has become a “self-propelled people’s organization.” In this community, there is strong ownership of the various GK programs, and there are long-range plans to maintain and continue these programs and services. By this time, the *kapitbahayan* has established strong linkages with GK partners, has established strong livelihood programs and cooperatives, and has learned how to manage its finances well. Other indicators include the following: regular assemblies and meetings; practice of ecumenism in communities with mixed religions, especially during community prayers; and the “bayanihan spirit” has become a way of life. At this point, the role of the caretaker team has shifted from being “implementor” to “mentor.”

Figure 6: Key activities in various phases of organizing the kapitbahayan

Phases	Key activities
Preparatory phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courtesy call to the parish priest, barangay officer, and local chief executive or representative of the LGU concerned; inform them about Gawad Kalinga, and encourage them to become partners in the work of GK • Gather and study pertinent data regarding the site (e.g. history, land ownership, geographical mapping, peace and order situation, economic and cultural background), especially the particular area (cluster of homes) that the GK is targeting; must be done together with the caretaker team and prospective program managers (i.e. those in-charge of GK programs in the community) • Prepare an inventory of local resources (e.g. number of CFCs living in the area; number of names of local organizations, leaders, and services; existing neighborhood associations; outside government organizations or NGOs implementing programs and services, and their beneficiaries) • Coordinate with the caretaker team and with the community organizer in planning the strategies for entry in the community and for establishing goodwill and rapport with the people (e.g. medical missions, Christian Life programs) depending on the characteristics of the site and the familiarization of the people to GK
Integration phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct house visits and initial talks with some prospective beneficiaries; caretaker team may touch base using Ocular Survey Form • Organize informal consultation meetings with the people • Converse with the people where they usually gather; be familiar with their culture, orientations, aspirations, and disappointments, among others • Participate in small group discussions • Take part in social activities (e.g. birthdays, fiesta, wakes), but avoid taking part in gambling, drinking, or engaging in gossip
Value formation phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the four-track Kapitbahayan Membership Training (KBMT) as formal entry to membership in <i>kapitbahayan</i> • Implement formation tracks of the social ministries depending on the immediate need • Hold the 10-track KB Values Formation sessions weekly (or monthly) depending on the frequency of other formation courses of other social ministries • Implement the Christian Life Program, if the Caretaker Team, based on its discernment, sees the need for it, and if there is clamor among the people

Figure 6: Key activities in various phases of organizing the kapitbahayan (continued)

Phases	Key activities
Empowerment phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formalize the <i>kapitbahayan</i> (KB) structure • Members of the kapitbahayan elect their officers (i.e. President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer), and the Bayanihan Action Team (BAT) leaders of the following committees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Kalinisan and Kagandahan</i> (Cleanliness and beautification) ○ <i>Kapayapaan at Kaayusan</i> (Peace and Order) ○ <i>Kasiyahan</i> (Community Socials and Recreation) ○ <i>Kapatiran</i> (Tatag Homes and Site Development) ○ <i>Kalusugan</i> (Basic Community Health Care and First Aid) ○ <i>Kabuhayan</i> (Food Self Sufficiency and other Livelihood Projects) ○ <i>Kaagapay</i> (Social Service) • KB officers imbibe their defined roles and functions and establish good working relationship with program managers • Regular community ecumenical prayers (inter-faith) and community praise and worship (for CFC communities) • Establish service schemes to support KB-based programs

VI. MOBILIZING AN ARMY OF VOLUNTEERS

“So massive and pervasive is poverty in our country that our response to it cannot be small.” This was the realization of GK Founder Tony Meloto after his initial efforts in Bagong Silang began to bear fruit. “Our movement had to be one that would transform a whole nation, community after community, town after town, until there were no more squatters, no more slums, no more hunger, no more violence, and no more corrupt politicians” (Meloto, 2009).

This vision could be achieved with the help of an army of volunteers who are willing to “make sacrifices for the greater good,” and whose collective efforts can make a difference in battling a formidable enemy that is poverty.

A. One million volunteers for nation building

Launched in 2005, GK1MB or Isang Milyong Bayani (One Million Heroes) in the Philippines (called One Million Builders in other countries) seeks to raise one million volunteers not only from the Philippines but also all over the world. The idea is for volunteers to provide their talents, skills and time, at least four hours a month to assist in GK communities. Professionals in various fields are also given the opportunity to share their skills and expertise for six months to two years of full-time service in GK communities (Gawad Kalinga, 2009).

In its brochure, Gawad Kalinga calls upon potential volunteers to be a GK hero by participating in any of its menu of programs. Volunteers can: (i) help build houses, path walks, multipurpose halls and schools; (ii) help teach kids and the youth values, sports, and the arts; (iii) assist in skills training and share their knowledge and experience on productivity; (iv) volunteer in its health programs; and (e) share their expertise in preserving the environment and ecologically sustainable lifestyles.

Every year, GK volunteers from the Philippines and other countries gather together to build houses in areas that are in most need of care or have been struck by natural or man-made disasters. This much-anticipated event is called the Bayani Challenge (Heroes Challenge), which was born from an urgent desire to help the surviving victims of a major landslide in Southern Leyte recover from the catastrophe.

Usually held in April, the Bayani Challenge is a week-long event formatted like a competition. Teams composed of 15 persons register and try to finish as much of a house as they can in the company of other teams doing the same thing—somewhat like an extreme sports, the winners of which are the most efficient in helping a family receive a decent home in the shortest possible time. The Bayani Challenge has gone to several provinces, namely Bicol, Marinduque, Lanao del Sur, Bukidnon, Zamboanga, and Sulu (Montelibano, 2009).

B. The power of audacious goals

1. GK777

Meloto, a successful marketing practitioner prior to his involvement in Gawad Kalinga, knows the importance of coming up with a compelling vision to inspire people. Thus, he came up with GK777. Launched in 2003, GK777 is the vision to build 700,000 homes in 7,000 communities in seven years. The goal of the campaign is to “un-squat the poorest of the poor, heal their woundedness, regain their trust, build their confidence, make them think and act as a community and to share the joy of a country rising from poverty.”

When former President Corazon Aquino expressed her apprehension to Meloto about what seemed like an overly ambitious target, he explained that adopting targets that border on the impossible was needed “if Gawad Kalinga were to become a major counterforce to the fear and lack of confidence of the Filipino people, specially the poor and the marginalized.”

With just a few months left before the seven-year timeline ends, GK has yet to reach its audacious target, but it has succeeded in building the confidence of the Filipino, and has triggered the process of addressing social injustice in the country.

2. GK2024

A logical extension of GK777 is GK2024, which “seeks to uplift five million Filipinos out of extreme poverty by the year 2024, thereby building a first-class Philippines and a world-class Filipino.” This is the official vision stated in the GK web site, the timeframe of which is 21 years – from October 4, 2003 until October 4, 2024.

The first phase of the journey (from the year 2003 to 2010) aims to achieve “Social Justice,” and is captured in GK777. The goal has been restated as: “raising 700,000 home lots and starting up 7,000 communities by the end of 2010.”

The second phase (from 2011 to 2017) is the stewardship phase called “Social Artistry,” and aims to empower GK communities for self-governance, self-reliance, and self-sufficiency through community-based programs for health, education, environment, and productivity. It also aims to build a village culture that honors Filipino values and heritage.

The final phase (from 2018 to 2024) is envisioned as a time of “Social Progress,” and “seeks to achieve scale and sustainability by developing the grassroots economy and expanding the reach and influence of GK to five million families with support from key sectors of society in the Philippines and partners abroad” (Gawad Kalinga, 2009). During this phase, the Filipino will lift himself from poverty by unleashing his potential for productivity and hard work in the right environment.

According to the Gawad Kalinga web site, “the 21-year journey of Gawad Kalinga represents one generation of Filipinos who will journey from poverty to prosperity, from neglect to respect, from shame to honor, from third-world to first-world, from second-class to first-class citizen of the world.”

VII. MANAGING PARTNERSHIPS OF MEANING

Just like any organization, Gawad Kalinga has developed an organizational structure to coordinate its internal operations and to effectively mobilize its army of workers, volunteers and benefactors. Two major units created by GK to deal with its key stakeholders are the Gawad Kalinga Partnership Management Group (GKPMG) and the Gawad Kalinga Builders Institute (GKBI).

A. Gawad Kalinga Partnership Management Group (GKPMG)

GKPMG deals directly with corporations, local government units (LGUs), government agencies and other groups that are (or could be) major benefactors of Gawad Kalinga. This group was formed because GK recognized the need to pursue institutional partnerships in order to sustain the work. As GK Founder Tony Meloto himself said: “development cannot be sustained purely through volunteerism and doles.”

GKPMG is responsible for two things: resource generation and partnership management. The basic strategy, according to GKPMG Head Chacha del Rosario, is to actively engage groups that want to take part in the GK mission. GKPMG begins by raising the potential partner’s awareness and appreciation of the activities of GK. Del Rosario explains: “We present to them what Gawad Kalinga is. We orient them, and bring them to a GK site. Once they understand the vision of Gawad Kalinga, they would say: ‘Hey, we share the same vision. We want to be a part of it!’ That’s when the partnership begins.”

What follows is the formalization of the partnership through the signing of a memorandum of agreement, after which the terms of the partnership are executed. GKPMG constantly gives an update on the developments of the project supported by the institutional partner. “Our role is to make sure that we deliver on our commitments to them,” del Rosario said.

GKPMG also aims for a more enduring relationship by involving GK’s partner institutions in as many events as possible, and by encouraging them to interact with members of the *kapitbahayan*. The goal is for the partner institution to be more than just a donor, but to become a regular part of the GK volunteer force, even taking the lead in implementing certain programs in GK communities.

Over the years, GKPMG has observed that the decision of different organizations to establish a partnership with Gawad Kalinga is driven by different motives, while their

continuing involvement is due to the meaning that they derive from an enduring partnership (Habaradas, 2010).

For private companies, the primary motive is to engage in corporate social responsibility. Their partnership with GK is reinforced by the benefits they get in terms of better employee relations, and co-branding advantage.

For government agencies and LGUs, the successful partnerships are driven by the intent to exercise good governance and to expand the scope of the delivery of public service.

For other groups and individuals, motives include being able to contribute their individual or collective expertise to help the underprivileged, and building a GK community as a tribute to a beloved family member or to a respected individual.

1. Companies (private sector)

Gawad Kalinga has successfully propagated the idea that the participation of big business in GK is more than just exercising their corporate social responsibility (CSR). They are also involved in a bigger project that is nation-building. Because of GK's novel approach of actively engaging their corporate donors in implementing GK programs and activities 'on the ground' (rather than simply raising funds), the partnership takes on some special meaning for them.

a. Corporate social responsibility model

One of the inspiring stories of corporate involvement in Gawad Kalinga is that of Unilever RFM Ice Cream, Inc. (URIC), producer of Selecta, currently the premier ice cream brand in the country.⁴

⁴ From "Taking the High Road to Number 1," written by Tina Arceo-Dumlao for the Philippine Daily Inquirer on April 19, 2009, as published in *Builder of Dreams*, pp. 324-327.

The URIC management, led by its managing director John Concepcion, drove its employees hard, relentless in its pursuit of making Selecta number one. But this only succeeded in alienating the company's employees, who filed notices of strike, and became too legalistic in their negotiations with management. According to Concepcion, "people became wary of each other and nobody seemed willing to do more without asking for something monetary in return." The old happy-family atmosphere faded away and died.

While reflecting on where the company was headed, Concepcion encountered Gawad Kalinga in 2005. Several visits to an urban poor village in Cainta, where he saw "people living near tombs in a cemetery and a family of twenty squeezed into a one-room shanty," made him realize how blessed he was. "Other people were either living in a shoebox or living with the dead," he said.

This realization eventually led to the building of the GK-Selecta Village in Cainta, where 96 families now live. Concepcion was later joined in the development of the village by most of the employees who generously contributed their time and effort to help build homes for the poor. "And in the weeks, months, and years that followed, as they baked under the heat of the sun and sweated it out together to pour cement and plaster walls, that old family feeling came back to life."

To cut the story short, participation in GK engendered renewed feelings of goodwill between management and the employees. This led to fresh ideas and strategies that emerged in quick succession. Among the brilliant ideas that came up in one of their brainstorming sessions is the Selecta 3-in-1 ice cream. The idea was a hit among Filipino families who wanted ice cream but could not afford to buy three different flavors. In 2006, with the appropriate innovation, advertising, and distribution strategies, Selecta became the country's leading ice cream brand, and has enjoyed double-digit growth rates since then. "We really became number one because of GK," Concepcion said. "We became a team."

b. Co-branding model

Since Gawad Kalinga has become a powerful brand name because of the credibility it has built over the years, association with it creates value for the company. Thus, companies attach their names to GK villages that were built through their financial support.

Globe Telecom, for example, helped build the Globe-TM GK Village in Bagong Silang, the birthplace of Gawad Kalinga. According to Gerardo Ablaza Jr., member of Globe Telecom's board of directors and member of GK's board of consulters, "[our company] cannot truly succeed if our nation fails. And we cannot create sustainable value in our company if the communities in which we operate are mired in poverty. That is why we partnered with GK."⁵ He added that, in the first six months of Globe's partnership with GK, a total of 1,200 employees (roughly one-fourth of the entire organization) had volunteered of themselves, having been inspired by the GK vision. Ablaza said that the extensive volunteerism of Globe employees "enriched our relationship with GK and elevated our engagement beyond mere sponsorship to a true partnership."

Globe's major competitor Smart Communications (member of the PLDT Group of Companies) is also a long-standing partner of GK. It started out by helping build GK villages in Manila, Maguindanao, and Quezon Province, and then it set up seven villages in various parts of the country, including Cebu, Iloilo, and Nueva Ecija. According to Manny Pangilinan, chairman of the board of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and member of GK's board of consulters, his company has also provided GK with telecommunications support in the form of broadband Internet connections and funding for its management information system to help GK manage its affairs more efficiently.

⁵ From "Globe and the GK Way," written by Gerardo C. Ablaza, Jr., as published in *Builder of Dreams*, pp. 225-227

Another company that is strongly associated with GK is Shell Philippines, which invited GK founder Tony Meloto to be the face of its hope-and-dreams campaign—“Malayo ang Mararating”—back in 2004. This was a deliberate effort by Shell “to make CSR relevant to the aspirations of a people to rise from poverty, to protect the environment, to improve health and education, and to provide livelihood and a better quality of life for our citizens” (Meloto, 2009). After initially rejecting the idea of appearing in a high-profile multi-media campaign, Meloto was convinced by friends who thought that this will enhance GK’s credibility and recall. Meloto recounted:

Television, radio, print, and the over a thousand Shell stations around the country would carry our dreams to millions all the way to the most remote areas for six months. It would also mean more people donating land, mayors inviting us to their towns, more volunteers, more corporations sharing Shell’s concept of CSR, a more invigorated army of caretakers, and more hope for the poor.

GK’s partnership with Shell is as strong as ever. It donated two villages on prime properties in Batangas City, where Shell employees helped build homes, schools, livelihood centers, and supported programs that benefited over 200 families in the area. The company also provided support to GK villages in Tarlac, Leyte, and Quezon, and set up five training farms in Bicol, with at least 20 more farms to follow.

2. Government (public sector)

In 2002, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo challenged GK to build 1,000 homes with P30 million from her presidential fund. In spite of its lack of experience in building at such a scale back then, GK succeeded in building the houses in 70 sites throughout the country within a year.

President Arroyo’s highly-publicized initiative served as a major boost for GK, which began to attract leaders from both sides of the political fence, including opposition leader Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., who provided P40 million from his Countryside Development Fund for schools, livelihood centers, sewage and path walks. Support also came from other senators. Hundreds of governors and mayors have since joined the bandwagon.

In the next few years, GK collaborated closely with several cabinet secretaries, including Vice President Noli de Castro. Through their support, according to Meloto (2009), “whole communities with houses, schools, water systems and farms were built for typhoon and fire victims, urban informal settlers, rebel returnees, soldiers, and other marginalized sectors of society.”

a. Good governance model

Even when Meloto was discouraged by friends from working with politicians, he realized that “it would be difficult to achieve scale and help more people if we did not deal with government.” The important thing, he said, is for GK to be clear about its position: GK must not judge politicians or beg for their help, but must support them so that they can become effective as public servants. Today, GK’s work has expanded rapidly thanks to the support of mayors and governors in hundreds of local government units (LGUs) throughout the country.⁶

Among these supportive local executives is Camsur (Camarines Sur) governor Luis “LRay” Villafuerte Jr., who has transformed his province into a leading tourist destination in the country. One of the innovations he introduced is the setting up of bed-and-breakfast facilities in GK villages in Camsur.

⁶ From *Builder of Dreams*, pp. 127-128

According to Villafuerte, he learned about community building the GK way, i.e. “to share the best of Camsur with those who have the least, and to build self-sustaining communities we can be proud of.” He knew that before setting up infrastructure and introducing livelihood programs in his province he had to work on the confidence of his province mates. He said: “Before I even thought of building roads that would interconnect the farthest and poorest barangay, I had to reach out to a vast majority who had long given up on development.” To Villafuerte, GK served as an inspiration. “I have learned to invest in hope, and am encouraged to seek opportunity despite the odds and to be on the opposite side of traditional politics.”⁷

b. Service expansion model

For several government agencies, partnership with Gawad Kalinga allows them to fulfill their public-service mandates more effectively. Worth noting are the partnerships of GK with the Department of Agriculture (DA), and the Department of Tourism (DOT).

The partnership between GK and DA took the form of Bayan-Anihan, the food-sufficiency program of Gawad Kalinga. Bayan-Anihan aims to eradicate hunger by empowering families in GK communities to produce their own food.

Under this program, GK families would each be given a 10-square meter lot where they could start a vegetable garden with okra, tomatoes, eggplants, and *kangkong* for their daily consumption. Launched in 2009, the program seeks to launch 2,500 farms in the next three years to feed at least 500,000 people for life.⁸ These model farms are supported by corporate partners such as Selecta, Globe, Shell, and Wyeth Philippines.

⁷ From “Architect of transformation,” written by Luis Villafuerte Jr., as published in *Builder of Dreams*, pp. 254-255

⁸ From “Gawad Kalinga launches food-sufficiency program”, written by Patricia Esteves, retrieved from <http://bayan-anihan.com/gawad-kalinga-launches-food-sufficiency-program/>, updated on June 15, 2009.

Another innovative program is GK Mabuhay, which promotes GK sites as tourist destinations. This is a result of the collaboration between GK and DOT. GK villages have become a cultural attraction in themselves, owing to the fact that they were built with the people working together as members of the community.

Under this program, GK villagers welcome visitors with warmth and hospitality brought about by their renewed sense of hope. Both GK and the DOT call this campaign the “new face of community tourism.” Taking center stage are the Mabuhay Ladies, a group of women residents who were chosen to be tour guides in the GK communities that were opened as travel destinations. The DOT conducted workshops for the Mabuhay Ladies, giving them practical guiding tips and techniques on how to be effective tourist hosts and good communicators.⁹

The concept of community tourism, according to DOT Secretary Ace Durano, is fairly new. This has been a sought-after activity among the more adventurous travelers, who choose not just to travel but to take part in community concerns. “This travel-for-a-cause stance has been supported by the DOT through its other partnerships with socio-civic groups,” Durano said.

3. Other groups and individuals

In 2005, Gawad Kalinga launched GKIMB, which seeks to raise one million volunteers not only from the Philippines but also all over the world. This campaign has generated interest not only in the country but also from Filipino communities abroad. For the roughly nine million Filipinos working overseas, there is longing to connect with the homeland, and GK has struck a chord in the hearts of many of our countrymen or *kababayans* (Habaradas, 2009).

⁹ From “GK ‘Mabuhay Ladies’ show the way to community tourism” written by Patricia Esteves, retrieved from philstar.com, updated on September 28, 2008.

According to Meloto, “Filipinos abroad are coming home to help rebuild their motherland. Many Filipino doctors and other health professionals in North America are supporting us by adopting GK communities. Corporate executives who have retired are volunteering their expertise, some even give up their promising careers to work with GK full time” (Burgos & Doyo, 2007).

a. Expertise sharing model

For Primo Andres and the doctors belonging to the University of Santo Tomas Medical Alumni Association in America (USTMAAA), their involvement in GK resulted into a showcase village in Towerville, San Juan del Monte, Bulacan, which is visited by their alumni whenever they went home to the Philippines. Now there are 11 such villages and a medical clinic/dormitory in Towerville put up by individual alumni, classes, fraternity, and group of friends.

Dr. Andres and his wife Sylvia have also donated GK villages in both Panabo, Davao del Norte and in Cordon, Isabela. Andres’ testimony probably captures the sentiments of thousands of Filipinos abroad who have also been inspired by GK: “We have achieved our dreams in our adopted country, the USA. Now it is time for us to look back at the country we left behind but have never forgotten nor ceased to love.”¹⁰

GK has also succeeded in tapping the experience of individuals coming from different fields and disciplines, and in integrating their ideas into its development model. Among these individuals are former Environment Secretary Elisea “Bebet” Gozun, who is now the GK champion for Green Kalinga; DA Secretary Arthur Yap, who brought with him DA’s programs, expertise, and funds to support GK Bayan-anihan; Tourism Secretary Ace

¹⁰ From “The ‘Hearts’ of GK,” written by Dr. Primo Andres, and published in *Builder of Dreams*, pp. 271-273.

Durano and former tourism secretary Tony Gonzales, who both support GK Mabuhay; and business leaders Manny Pangilinan, Gerardo Ablaza Jr., Edgar Chua, and Washington SyCip, all of whom are members of GK's board of consultants.

b. Legacy model

For rich and prominent Filipino families that dream of a better life for the poor, “legacy GK villages” became a concrete expression of deep concern for them. Here are some of the examples cited by Meloto (2009):

Phinma Chairman Oscar Hilado “returned to his roots in Negros and built a beautiful village for over 500 beneficiaries on land provided by the Hernaez-Magsaysay family.” Customs Commissioner Tony Bernardo, on the other hand, mobilized his relatives abroad to donate a legacy village in Mandaluyong City in honor of his parents. He also inspired his law fraternity, Utopia, to raise its own villabe in Paranaque City.

In San Jose, Bulacan, the Aldaba-Lims transformed a community as a legacy to their matriarch, former social services secretary Estefania Aldaba-Lim, who was from the province. She was able to turn over the homes to their happy beneficiaries before she died.

Other prominent families include the Lopezes of Iloilo, the Aranetas of Negros, the Laurels of Batangas, and the Benitezses of Laguna.

According to Meloto (2009), “there are many more families that have not forgotten where they came from and have championed the rebuilding of their towns. We cannot honor them enough; many others are waiting to follow their noble example.”

B. Gawad Kalinga Builders Institute (GKBI)

The Gawad Kalinga Builders Institute (GKBI) is GK's way of tapping the energies of the country's youth, and of rapidly expanding its capacity to undertake its bold mission. According to the GKBI Head Mark Lawrence Cruz, the initial success of GK generated tremendous goodwill that generated substantial donations from partners. This meant that GK must build hundreds or thousands of houses at any one time, even as it strives to sustain the programs it has introduced in existing GK villages. This was beyond the capability of Gawad Kalinga, which previously built houses and implemented programs at its own sweet pace. "We were not yet prepared for it," said Cruz. This led to the realization that GK cannot simply continue on the basis of vision and inspiration alone. There must be a convergence of "the spirit, the system, and the science" to sustain the momentum generated by Gawad Kalinga, and to speed up the pace of its development efforts. Thus, GKBI was established.

GKBI is envisioned as a "global network of schools committed to the cause of nation building." Schools that become part of the network promote love for God and country among their students and faculty by integrating the GK lifestyle through constant engagement with Gawad Kalinga communities. GKBI "seeks to bring people from the classroom into the communities while planting love for country in the campuses and growing nation builders and great patriots" (Gawad Kalinga, 2009).

GKBI, through its national secretariat, engages select GK schools partners to establish and maintain centers that serve as hubs for GKBI programs in their respective areas. These GKBI centers lead the efforts to integrate the core values and programs of GK in the academic and non-academic programs of the schools, and hold regular gatherings, activities, and events (e.g. summits, roundtable discussions, and workshops) "to generate more inspiration and greater collaboration for nation-building" (GKBI, 2009).

Each GKBI school is represented in the network by a member of the administrative or teaching staff of the academic institution. Designated as the GKBI Coordinator, this person serves as the coordinator between the GKBI National Secretariat and the academic institution that he/she represents, advocates and promotes the programs of the GKBI to the different units and departments in his/her school, oversees the implementation of GKBI projects and activities that his/her school has committed to, and attends the GKBI national workshop (GKBI, 2009).

Through GKBI, students become part of GK's volunteer program called GKIMB (GK One Million Builders). Upon graduation, these students can continue to engage GK communities and programs as fulltime volunteers through the GK Builders Corps program.

GKBI also serves as a think tank and as a center for learning of Gawad Kalinga. As a think tank, GKBI develops templates and models for GK through community and school-based research. It encourages schools and universities to engage GK communities in documenting best practices, and in introducing new approaches and technologies. Other initiatives include integrating the GK way in the curriculum, research, and internship programs; and developing, offering, and implementing GK knowledge products (i.e. courses and programs) that will impact not only GK communities but also other sectors (i.e. corporations, civic groups, and government) that are becoming more involved in community building and social transformation.

As a learning institution, GKBI is engaged in capacity building. It designs and implements training programs for GK teams, GK communities (*kapitbahayan*), caretaker teams, management boards, volunteers, and partners so as to align the values, principles, and strategies of the individuals and institutions that participate in the various GK programs (Gawad Kalinga, 2009). GKBI schools, in collaboration with the GK Training Team, develop and implement the GK capability building program which includes the following:

(i) the GK Caretaker Training Program, (ii) the GK Volunteer Formation Program, and (iii) Specialized Skills Training and Workshops.

VIII. GAWAD KALINGA: MULTI-FACETED INNOVATION

The innovations of Gawad Kalinga happen in three spaces, namely physical space, cognitive space, and information space.

Physical space refers to where the innovation happens, where it starts, and its relation to an urban-built environment. It also refers to geographical patterns (i.e. concentration, agglomeration, or dispersion) of the innovation, the innovators, and other actors or entities involved.

The GK villages themselves, which are part of a larger community, constitute the physical space. Many of these villages are found in the slums, where drugs, drinking, prostitution, and petty crimes are commonplace. It is within this physical space (and often tough conditions) that the different programs of Gawad Kalinga are introduced with the consent of the *kapitbahayan*, and where the colorful houses are eventually built. Gawad Kalinga has, so far, established almost 2,000 villages in different communities throughout the country. Of these, more than 300 villages are located in Metro Manila.

Cognitive space, on the other hand, is manifested in the change of attitude and behavior of the members of the community, as well as in the behavior of full-time workers, volunteers and partners that have come to take part in the GK mission. This is where GK makes its largest impact – the way community members are able to change the way they look at themselves, and are able to change their behavioral patterns into more positive forms (e.g. no more drinking, no more gambling, no more drugs). Even partners and volunteers begin to change their concept of volunteerism into something that involves closer and continuing relationships with members of the community.

Finally, information space pertains to the source from which the innovators or users of the information acquire relevant information in creating, adopting and diffusing or distributing the city innovations. In the case of Gawad Kalinga, the sources of innovations are the partners, the volunteers, the full-time workers, and the community members themselves. Innovations in one GK village are replicated in other villages through the help of caretaker teams. The exchange of ideas also takes place during the annual GK Expo, during which representatives of different communities share their best practices with one another.

A. Innovations of Gawad Kalinga

There are different ways by which innovation can be reckoned. Our conceptual framework identifies six dimensions of innovation, namely (i) product, (ii) service, (iii) process, (iv) position, (v) institution, and (vi) paradigm.

1. Community development – the GK way

In Gawad Kalinga, the most important innovation takes the form of a shift in paradigm of what community development ought to be. Instead of looking at members of the poor communities as passive actors (i.e. as mere recipients of donations or as beneficiaries of support programs), GK considers them as active participants in the development process.

This is the reason why GK actively engages the *kapitbahayan*, who must take responsibility for attaining the vision of Gawad Kalinga in their respective communities. The members of the community organize themselves into a neighborhood association; they actively participate in the values formation program of GK; and they play a central role in the implementation of the various GK programs in the community by assigning their representatives to head the following committees of their association: (i) Cleanliness and Beautification, (ii) Peace and Order, (iii) Community Socials and Recreation, (iv) Tatag

Homes and Site Development, (v) Basic Community Health Care and First Aid, (vi) Food Self Sufficiency and Other Livelihood Projects, and (vii) Social Service. Through the help of the caretaker team and the support provided by donors and volunteers, residents become stewards of their own communities.

The community development model of GK also emphasizes the building of relationships among the different actors involved in what it calls a “nation-building” movement. This is the institutional dimension of innovation.

Before programs are introduced to the target community, for instance, the caretaker team sets the stage for a continuing relationship with the community members by organizing informal consultation meetings with them, by conversing with them in places where they usually gather, and by familiarizing themselves with the culture of the community. They also participate in the community’s social activities, e.g. birthdays, fiesta, and wakes.

Even corporate partners and individual donors are oriented about Gawad Kalinga by bringing them to a GK site. Through their interaction with the members of the *kapitbahayan*, these benefactors become more involved in the various programs of GK in their adopted communities, and a more enduring relationship is formed, as a result.

This is what happened to Globe Telecom, one of the largest telecommunications company in the Philippines, which is a major corporate sponsor of Gawad Kalinga. In the first six months of its partnership with GK, a total of 1,200 of its employees (or about one-fourth of the entire organization) had volunteered of themselves and their personal time. According to Globe’s former president Gerardo Ablaza Jr., “we did not mandate [our employees] to participate; they came of their own volition because they understood and were inspired by the GK vision. I believe that this extensive volunteerism by the Globe

people enriched our relationship with GK and elevated our engagement beyond a mere sponsorship to a true partnership.”¹¹

Another story worth recounting is that of Tony and Aya del Rosario, who found themselves at the receiving end of the relationship nurtured by Gawad Kalinga.¹² They designed their dream village in Paranaque City with the help of family and friends from Singapore, Indonesia, Canada, and the U.S., and with the cooperation of the city’s mayor. They also assisted in the values formation and other community programs through their Christian community Magis Deo. When Tony had a heart bypass in 2008, his family had difficulty sourcing blood from relatives and friends for his transfusion. But donors were found among the GK residents of the village he sponsored. The blood donors turned down the family’s offer of money and food, proudly claiming that it was their turn to help.

2. A holistic and integrated approach

Another innovation introduced by Gawad Kalinga is its holistic approach to community development, which involves educational, health, livelihood and environmental programs, among others. This is a distinctive feature of Gawad Kalinga that has been successfully replicated throughout the country, and is now being imitated by other developing countries.

An illustration of the comprehensive approach of GK is its Child and Youth Development Program, which has three components aimed at three different age groups. These programs are as follows:

- i.) SIBOL, which means “to grow”, provides values-based education to pre-school children from 3 to 6 years old.

¹¹ From “Globe and the GK Way,” written by Gerardo Ablaza Jr., and published in *Builder of Dreams*, pp. 225-227.

¹² From *Builder of Dreams*, pp. 152-153

- ii.) SAGIP, which means “to save a life”, is a support program for children aged 7 to 13. Children receive free academic tutorials, sports and creative workshops, and values formation classes.
- iii.) SIGA, which means “to light”, prepares the youth (teens) to become productive citizens through sports, creative activities, and mentoring sessions.

All of these programs are meant to develop the skills and talents of the kids and youth of GK communities “by inculcating values and providing opportunities that bring out their fullest potentials.”

Among the innovative programs of Gawad Kalinga that were introduced over the past several years are the following: (i) *GK Bayan-Anihan*, its food self-sufficiency program; (ii) *GK Mabuhay*, which transforms GK sites into tourist destinations and cultural attractions; and (iii) *Green Kalinga*, which creates environment-friendly projects such as solid waste management, and promotes the use of environment-friendly materials into GK infrastructure as well as the use of renewable energy sources in communities.

All of the above-mentioned programs are meant to transform the values and behavior of the people living in the GK communities. While old habits (e.g. gambling, drinking and engaging in gossip) are difficult to break, GK has proven that this can be done with an empowered *kapitbahayan* and with the constant presence of the caretaker team. “It is necessary to do social engineering to build peaceful communities,” says Meloto, but this could be done “only within the context of interpersonal relationships – kinship and friendship – that seek to empower the weak and make them productive citizens, and have everyone working together to achieved shared goals.”¹³

¹³ From *Builder of Dreams*, p. 44

3. Building the GK brand

Contributing to the rapid growth of Gawad Kalinga is the reputation it has built over the years. Gawad Kalinga has succeeded in creating an image that appeals to donors, volunteers, and other stakeholders. For example, GK is fashioned as a nation-building movement. It seeks to build a nation “empowered by people with faith and patriotism” and one that is made up of “caring and sharing communities, dedicated to eradicate poverty and restore human dignity” (GKBI, 2009).

Since it was founded in 1995, Gawad Kalinga has managed to put a unique spin to its programs and activities. Because of this, GK has always looked fresh and dynamic to interested observers. For example, GK was originally known for building “faith communities” because of its values formation programs, and because of its association with the Couples for Christ. When it made inroads in building homes in war-torn Mindanao, GK communities were dubbed as “peace zones” where Muslims and Christians work together to address poverty. Recently, GK communities have become “eco-friendly villages” as well because they have begun to integrate environmentally-sound practices in their way of living.

GK villages have likewise been transformed into “tourist spots” that showcase the inherent charm and uniqueness of each place. Aside from the colorful houses and beautifully landscaped surroundings, each GK community offers the warmth, hospitality, and inspiring stories of its residents, who represent the triumph of the Filipino people against poverty and oppression.

Over the years, GK has created appealing slogans that rally people towards its vision. Among these slogans are:

- i.) Land for the landless. Homes for the homeless. Food for the hungry.
- ii.) Lakas ng Pagbabago (The Power of Change)

- iii.) Isang Milyong Bayani (One Million Volunteers; One Million Heroes)
- iv.) Bawat Pilipino, Bayani! (Every Filipino, A Hero!)
- v.) Bayan. Bayani. Bayanihan. (Country. Hero. Collective and Heroic Action.)
- vi.) Walang Iwanan! (No One Gets Left Behind!)

B. Innovation Criteria

At this point, we evaluate the above-mentioned innovations in terms of the following criteria: (i) novelty, (ii) impacts, (iii) equity, (iv) economic and financial feasibility, (v) environmental sustainability, (vi) transferability, and (vii) political acceptability.

1. Novelty

Gawad Kalinga is unique in many different ways. What makes it really special, though, is how it changed the way we view community development. GK made us realize that eliminating poverty and homelessness is a collective undertaking that requires the involvement of various sectors of society, following a set of widely-accepted values (e.g. generosity, heroic effort, sacrifice, and solidarity). Thus, GK can be considered a true nation-building enterprise.

Also, GK's experience showed us that the problem of homelessness must be viewed from a systemic perspective. The solution is not merely allocating resources to secure land and to build enough houses. It requires a holistic approach that includes values formation, health programs, and livelihood, among others. But all these must be anchored on a stable and empowered community, whose members play a central role in addressing their present needs and in charting their collective future.

Figure 7: Gawad Kalinga innovations at a glance

Dimension	Description
Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GK villages have colorful homes in beautifully-landscaped surroundings. • GK has come up with new and better designs for homes, an improvement over the small box-type houses it previously built; GK communities in Taguig City have been designated as designer villages.
Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GK adopts an holistic and integrated approach to community development. • GK has a Child and Youth Development Program for the community’s children from their pre-school years up to their teen-age years. • Innovative programs include the following: Bayan-anihan, GK Mabuhay, Green Kalinga; GK communities have, thus, become self-sufficient, tourist-friendly, and eco-friendly villages.
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GK strengthens the communities through the Kapitbahayan Neighborhood Associations, with the support of caretaker groups. • Community members offer “sweat equity” in building houses, while the caretaker teams work day-in and day-out in GK communities without expecting recognition nor reward (“padugo” or sacrifice)
Position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GK is fashioned as nation-building movement; a viable Asian model of development. • GK communities are variously known as faith communities, peace zones, eco-friendly villages, and tourist spots. • GK uses appealing slogans that inspire action.
Institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GK establishes formal partnerships with government agencies, local government units (LGUs), corporations, academe, and other groups. • GK encourages donors/benefactors to participate actively in the community’s programs so as to promote enduring partnerships.
Paradigm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community members are active participants in the development process, not passive beneficiaries; residents are stewards of their own communities. • GK does not just build homes, but also builds relationships • GK follows the “bayanihan” model, i.e., community development is seen as a partnership that involves the <i>kapitbahayan</i>, the caretaker team, partners (i.e. corporations, LGUs, schools), and volunteers. • “No one is too poor that he cannot share, and no one is too rich that he cannot care.”

2. Impact

Gawad Kalinga is present in about 2,000 communities throughout the country. Based on the latest estimates, the number of houses it has built has reached 50,000 units. Back in

2007, development experts placed the total development generated by Gawad Kalinga at more than P8 billion in just over eight years (P3 billion for houses, P0.5 billion for schools, clinics, and other infrastructure, P2 billion for land and site development, P2.5 billion for social preparations, donated professional services, and volunteerism, programs for health, education, and livelihood).¹⁴

3. Equity

GK villages are only for the poorest of the poor, but GK generates support from a wide segment of society.

4. Economic and financial feasibility

GK receives financial support from various sectors of society – from corporations to overseas Filipino workers; from local government executives to student volunteers. It has also secured enough land where a total of 550,000 houses can be built. Gawad Kalinga is able to generate the resources it needs for community development through the concept of creative leveraging. Meloto explains that “a dollar of donation for the materials to build a house triggered a counterpart value in ‘sweat equity’ from the beneficiaries, professional services from volunteer architects and engineers, and dedicated community organizing and program implementation by caretaker teams.” Others donate schools, clinics and livelihood centers as their counterparts to the houses.

5. Environmental sustainability

GK villages have adopted environment-friendly practices through its Green Kalinga programs. Leading this initiative is former Environment Secretary Elisea “Bebet” Gozun, a

¹⁴ From the article “After Edsa I, Gawad Kalinga Filipinos’ next gift to the world,” retrieved from <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/inquirerheadlines/nation/view/20070128-460...>

GK volunteer who believes that “saving the environment is synonymous to saving the people.” “We want to integrate the environmental component in GK communities.... If we truly want to help the poor, we need to make sure that we protect the environment, that we ensure that communities will live a quality of life. Environment is a natural capital from which all development stems,” Gozun said (Esteves, 2007). The implementation of a sustainable zero waste management system in GK villages is being pursued as part of the Green Kalinga program.

6. Transferability

Gawad Kalinga’s growth is partly due to its ability to learn from its mistakes and to replicate its best practices in various GK communities. There are also ongoing attempts to formalize processes and procedures and to compile them into manuals through the efforts of the GK Builders Institute. The success of Gawad Kalinga has also prompted several countries (e.g. Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Cambodia, India, and South Africa) to replicate its development model.

7. Political acceptability

Gawad Kalinga has succeeded in getting support from both sides of the political fence (i.e., administration and opposition). Many local government officials belonging to different political parties have welcomed Gawad Kalinga in their cities and municipalities. Likewise, GK has established strong partnerships with various government agencies such as the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Tourism, the Department of Social Welfare and Development, the Department of Interior and Local Governments, among others.

IX. CONCLUSION

Gawad Kalinga has gone a long way since its initial years in Bagong Silang. The generosity, commitment, and heroic sacrifice of its full-time workers, caretaker teams, donors, volunteers, and institutional partners have made a difference in the lives of more than 500,000 people in over 2,000 communities in the Philippines and in several other developing countries.

In spite of its achievements, Gawad Kalinga faces real challenges in terms of managing a growing organization. It needs to formalize and to set up systems to ensure the effective implementation of its various programs, but it also needs to remain flexible and nimble so as to reach more poor communities more quickly. Currently, it needs more caretaker teams to set the groundwork for GK programs in an increasing number of villages. It also requires more full-time employees and volunteers that must do the necessary staff work (e.g. accounting and finance, staff training and development, and partnership management), which would require resources that will not go directly to the building of villages or to the implementation of programs.

Whether GK can sustain its rapid growth remains to be seen. By remaining true to its innovative character, however, and by nurturing the patriotism of the Filipino people, there is reason to hope that its dream of “Land for the Landless, Home for the Homeless, and Food for the Hungry” will become a reality within our lifetimes.

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