

PASIG RIVER ORGANIZING



Background

The Pasig River Rehabilitation Project (PRRP) was one of the flagship projects of former President Fidel Ramos. Funded by the Danish International Development Aid (DANIDA), the PRRP aims to clean up the heavily polluted river to spur tourism growth, carve out new transportation routes and lure foreign investors. A major part of the cleaning up entails the removal of structures located within the 10-meter easement along the riverbanks. This includes the houses of approximately 10,000 urban poor families living along the Pasig River.

When the Estrada administration took over in 1998, the PRRP remained a flagship project. The Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC), composed of Cabinet members, was created to oversee its implementation. Since its inception in 1993, about 5,000 families have been evicted and relocated to remote areas of Cavite and Montalban: away from their sources of livelihood and with minimal social services available.

CO Multiversity and Multisectoral Partnerships Towards Sustainable Riverside Communities

In response to the effects of the government's Pasig rehabilitation project, the **Community Organizers Multiversity (CO Multiversity)** established partnership with riverside communities to bring into the development equation, the needs and aspirations of marginalized families who have lived many years along the river.

CO Multiversity's main strategy is community organizing a social development approach that transforms apathetic and marginalized sectors of society into dynamic, participatory and politically responsive communities.

The CO Multiversity riverside community partners and NGOs such as Sagip Pasig Movement (SPM), Foundation for the Philippine Environment (FPE), with the cooperation of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) have conducted Earthday celebration which gives "Lason sa Ilog Pasig Awards" (Pasig River Poison Awards) every year since 1995 which helped in the enforcement of the industries improvement of industrial waste management.

The partnership of CO Multiversity with the said riverside communities have developed the "People's Plan which resulted from community based processes in research, house design options, and negotiation with local government units and the agencies dealing with Pasig River.

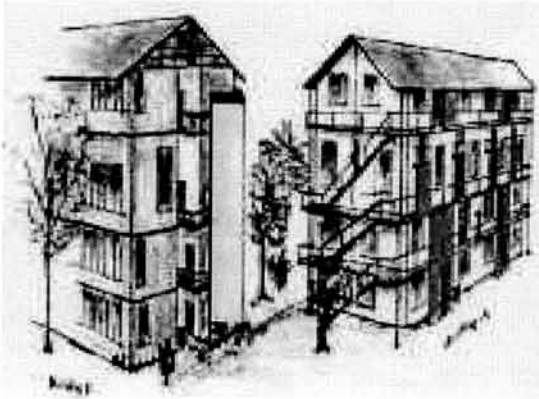
For the past six years, CO Multiversity has worked closely with NGOs and POs in the affected riverside communities spanning the cities of Pasig, Manila, Mandaluyong and Makati. Organizing work in these urban poor communities is aimed at pursuing in-city relocation. POs along the river are mobilizing their forces, calling on the local governments and various line agencies to recognize their alternative housing proposals.

Together with the pursuit of an in-city relocation, organizing initiatives are also being conducted in Kasiglashan Village 1, a relocation site located in San Jose, Rodriguez, Rizal. The people's organization in the area are currently working on their access to basic services and the development of a community-based estate management plan.

Pasig River Communities People's Plan Highlights

The following section identifies and describes the results of the community partnerships of CO Multiversity since 1994 towards establishment of local grassroots organizations in riverside communities. From 1994-1997 the organization was then

known as CO-TRAIN extended community organizing assistance to the communities cited in this section. Urban Poor Associates (UPA) a partner NGO is currently providing support to the process of people's plan to Baseco, and Pineda while CO Multiversity continue CO work in Punta and Comembo.



Punta, Sta. Ana, Manila

In 1998, almost a thousand affected families living within the 10 meter easement started the process of exploring different alternative options to government far-away relocation site. Since then the Dikeside Organization of Punta (DSOP) formulated different options such as the re-channeling of the river, reclamation and constructing a boardwalk extending

towards the river.

After a series of community workshops, and thorough analysis of the technical working committee composed of local leaders, architects, and other technical people, a Punta People's Plan was officially submitted to the PRRC for approval. This plan aims to acquire a portion of the Marcelo Steels property, a 9 hectare idle land for more than 20 years. The plan needs 3 hectares of the said property to be able to construct a low-cost medium rise building that would house all the affected families along the river.

The community is currently negotiating with the government and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for full support on this plan. Feasibility study is being done by the technical working committee.

Comembo, Makati

This is a community along a tributary, the Pateros river, of the main Pasig river system. Three meters easement was already cleared by the PRRC and a written statement was issued ensuring that 10 meter easement clearing will not be implemented in this area.

The community organization, the United Group for Progress, Inc. (UGPI) is now negotiating its tenurial issues at the DENR and LGU level. The UGPI is now gearing to undergo a process of formulating a People's Plan that contains the community development plan for the area.

The CO Multiversity provides assistance in community organizing processes.

Pineda, Pasig City

After 29 years of residence in Brgy. Pineda, around 500 members of the Samahang Pinagsama sa Pineda-MRR (SAMAPI) look forward to the realization of their dream.

They are now at the stage where they can forever leave behind the monicker of being squatters, and proudly declare themselves as homeowners. At last, HUDCC, NHA, ADB and the LGU has given their support for the People's Plan, paving the way for on-site development in the community. The current work is focused on formulating a financing scheme and site development plan beneficial to all stakeholders in the process.

Baseco, Manila



The Kabalikat sa Pagpapaunlad ng Baseco (KABALIKAT) with most of its members affected by the 10 meters easement clearing by the PRRC and other LGU road widening projects, conducted series of consultations during the early part of this year. The consultations covered all 18 blocks of the BASECO Compound. The consultation meetings resulted into the identification of an area near the compound that can be reclaimed. Three alternative housing options for the people were also

cited: single detached housing, duplex, and row housing.

The technical group came up with needed drawings that will used by the organization in the future presentation of the options to other stakeholders like the PRRC, HUDCC, and the LGU. At this point, KABALIKAT is consolidating and gathering consensus among all affected regarding the options most feasible for an alternative people's community development plan for BASECO.

About PRHM

The ***Pasig River Heritage Marathon (PRHM)*** is the first point-to-point 42.195km full marathon in the Philippines that is anchored on an environment cause - the rehabilitation of the Pasig River.

Why the Marathon?

The sun was still in deep slumber together with the scores of park dwellers in front of the Manila Cathedral in historic Intramuros. At the church's steps, people clad in crisp white and tranquil blue shirts were massing up. It was a Sunday morning. The air was humid but was cooled by the morning sea breeze of Manila Bay. A number of vehicles were maneuvering in the street parallel to the church. Some people were putting streamers on cars while others were just milling around.

As the sun was slowly rising from the horizon, the park dwellers awoke gawkeyed to their surroundings - blue and white T-shirts everywhere. Moments later, Fr. Robert Reyes, the running priest, led a prayer and flagged-off the first ever ***PASIG RIVER HERITAGE Advocacy RUN***. It was 15 April 2000.

The 21-km Advocacy Run was conceived to be just that - a run to create awareness and advocate for the rehabilitation of the Pasig River by the government while instituting a sporting event for local and international running professionals and enthusiasts. The event took the runners through the old city of Intramuros, along the banks of the river, across the bridges, and into the future city of Ft. Bonifacio in Taguig. From old to new, from death comes rebirth. Such is the story of the Pasig River and the beginnings of the **PASIG RIVER HERITAGE MARATHON**.

Inspired by the support it harnessed and the goodwill it created, Clean & Green Foundation, Inc. (C&GFI) through its project Piso Para sa Pasig (PPP) is the lead proponent that organizes the PRHM annually. A full 42-km open marathon the Pasig River Heritage Marathon is scheduled every last Sunday of February.



The 1st PASIG RIVER HERITAGE MARATHON was held on 25 February 2001. One hundred eighty two 42-km runners and some 3,000 5-km fun runners witnessed its humble beginnings. With birth pains and all, it transformed into a more spiced up event in year 2002 gathering 200 runners who competed in the lung busting 42 KM race. The 5 KM event proved to grow that year too. With such participation and the support it gathered, C&GFI, included two more events the 10 KM and the 3 KM kiddie run in year 2003. Runner participation is constantly growing and thus, C&GFI looks forward in making the PRHM a part of the local sporting psyche.

The Logo

The Pasig River Heritage Run Logo was designed by Noli L. Villaluz, a young independent artist from Laguna.

The human form, styled in art deco symbolizes peoples' involvement in rehabilitating the Pasig River. Moreover, the swirls are the graphic adaptation of water as life giving. Appearing to be crossing a river, the human form gives meaning to people's active involvement in bridging the gaps in the effort to revive the river. Color variations in white, gold and blue in different applications characterize people's purity, honesty and sincerity in its desire to see the river alive once more. The color background adopts water as the symbol of a life-giving element presented in tranquility.

Adopted to become the official Pasig River Heritage Marathon logo, the phrase "Takbo Pasig Takbo" was made integral part of the logo. Ms. Odette Alcantara of Earthday Network Philippines, coined the phrase to say that time is of the essence when we speak of rehabilitating the river. The Pasig River is a potential source of fresh water. Reviving it is elemental as the world faces a looming water crisis. Only 1 percent of the 3% total fresh water source around the world is being utilized and shared by the 6 billion people on Earth.

The Course

Rehabilitating the Pasig River is a herculean task. Organizing the Pasig River Heritage Marathon is a (*logistical*) nightmare!

The PRHM course is unique. The first point-to-point full marathon, the course is plotted out in a manner that will take the runners, as much as possible, along the Pasig Riverbanks, crossing 11 of the 13 Bridges that traverse the river, including 1 bridge over the San Juan River, passing historical landmarks and edifices, going through small communities, side streets as well as major ones. This is so because we need to draw the attention to the waters of the Pasig River, tell its story and eventually drive home the point that it needs help from you and all of us.

Admittedly, the course is a **curse** for runners. But the PRHM is a running event anchored on an environmental cause that seeks to promote the rehabilitation of the Pasig River. Truly, it is an unorthodox way of lifting public consciousness.

But, as we say, it is a marathon set against the backdrop of the Pasig River. It is in this spirit then that the marathon course was developed. Hinged on the vision that if the PRHM is held annually, people gets together, government rehabilitates the river, then together, pave the way for a runner-friendly marathon course.

Precisely because of this (unusually difficult) route, **we guarantee**, it will make a sturdier runner and Pasig River lover of you.

Compete and Enjoy!

Who is C&GFI?

COMMITTED TO REVIVING AN AILING RIVER
AND SAVING A NATIONAL TREASURE

Behind such successful programs as Piso Para Sa Pasig; Metro Green Plan; Gift of Trees; the Orchidarium and Butterfly Pavilion; Eco-Boats; Project Bridges; Riverwatch, the volunteer group; the Cleanest & Greenest Barangay Contests Along the Pasig, San Juan and Marikina Riverbanks; Muling Aawit ang Pasig, the concert series; Kumusta Ka Na, Ilog Pasig? symposium series; and the Pasig River Heritage Marathon is the Clean & Green Foundation Inc. Established in 1994 for the protection, preservation and enhancement of the environment, the

Foundation has taken upon itself projects that were traditionally regarded as sole tasks of the national government. It forms the backbone of private sector participation in the government's efforts to halt the further deterioration of our ecosystem and natural resources and to create environmental awareness among the population.

The Clean and Green Foundation, Inc. (CGFI), a non-stock, non-profit, quasi non-government organization dedicated to the protection, preservation and enhancement of the environment and the quality of life of the Filipinos. CGFI is registered under the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and is classified by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) as a tax-exempt donee institution.

Partners

- Asian Development Bank (ADB)	- Foundation for Philippine Environment (FPE)	- Presidential Social Fund
- Ateneo de Manila University	- Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC)	- Sagip Pasig Movement (SPM)
- Institute of Philippine Culture	- Leaders and Community Organizers of Asia (LOCOA)	- Ugnayang Lakas ng mga
- Economics Department	- MISEREOR	- Apektadong Pamilya sa
- ARS Women's Group of Fukuoka	- National Housing Authority (NHA)	Baybaying Ilog Pasig (ULAP)
- BALAY – CODEWAN	- OXFAM Great Britain	- Ugnayan ng mga Maralitang
- Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP)	- Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila (PLM) – Social Work Department	Nailikas sa Bautista(UGMA)
- Clean and Green Foundation	- Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC)	- Ugnayan ng mga Tagasagip ng
- Community Organizing for Philippine Enterprise (COPE)	Philippine Partnership for Support Service Agencies (PHILSSA)	Ilog Pasig (UGNAYAN)
- DAMPA	Polytechnic University of The Philippines – Sociology Department	- University of the Philippines –
- DANIDA -		College of Social Work and
- Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)		Community Development
- Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)		- Urban Poor Associates (UPA)
- FORD Foundation		- Urban Poor Colloquium (UPC-NCR)

note: partners since 1994 - present

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