



Civil society participation in city governance in Cebu City

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1. This is a summary of one of nine city case studies prepared as part of a research programme on *Urban Governance, Partnerships and Poverty*, funded by the UK Department for International Development's ESCOR programme. This involved research teams in each of the cities and a coalition of UK based research groups from the University of Birmingham, the

SUMMARY: A high proportion of Cebu City's population lives in informal settlements. This paper describes the range of partnerships between government and non-government organizations in the city which provide services targeted at low-income groups or at settlements with a predominance of low-income households. It also describes how a coalition of NGOs and people's organizations seeks to ensure the election of mayors with pro-poor policies and to ensure these policies are implemented. It discusses the successes, which mainly involve improved service provision, and the limitations, which include very limited economic benefits for low-income groups despite rapid economic growth, the difficulties that such groups face in acquiring land for housing and the limited influence of NGOs and people's organizations on the policies of city government.

I. INTRODUCTION

THIS CASE STUDY of Cebu City is one of nine city studies which are part of a research programme looking at the current and potential role of city governments in poverty reduction.⁽¹⁾ Cebu City was chosen partly because of its rapid economic growth in the late 1980s and early 1990s and partly because of a number of innovative social programmes implemented through government-NGO partnerships.

Cebu City is the capital of Cebu province in the Philippines and regional capital of the Central Visayas region. It forms the core of Metro Cebu which includes many other rapidly urbanizing cities and municipalities. By 1995, the city had 662,299 inhabitants – although the daytime population is much higher as workers, students and shoppers come from neighbouring cities and municipalities. The population of Metro Cebu, which includes Cebu City, Mandaue City, Lapulapu City, Consolacion, Liloan, Compostela, Cordova, Minglanilla, Talisay and Naga, was 1.44 million in 1995.

Cebu City covers 330 square kilometres and is sub-divided into 80 *barangays* (the smallest unit of government in the Philippines). Most of the population (88 per cent in 1995) live in 49 *barangays* which adjoin the coast; these are classified as urban *barangays* and cover only 17 per cent of the city's land area. The other 12 per cent live in 31 rural *barangays* located in the upland areas away from the coast and these cover 83 per cent of the city's land area.

Cebu City is well-known for its strong economic performance during

the late 1980s, a time when the national economy was registering negative growth. It has had the fastest growing economy in the Philippines and leads the country in export items such as furniture, fashion accessories, processed foods, toys and houseware. By 1994, it accounted for around 10 per cent of total exports from the Philippines. It has a highly diversified economy with 69 per cent of its economically active population in services in 1997, 24 per cent in industry and 7 per cent in agriculture. Its port is much the largest in the Visayas region and this, combined with its strategic location and pro-business government, helps explain the rapid growth in foreign investment. The Mactan export-processing zone which started with ten firms in 1987 now has 101, employing 36,000 workers. Fourteen new firms opened in a new expansion zone and provide another 3,236 jobs. However, by 1998, the city faced serious economic difficulties, in part linked to the Asian currency crisis and the fact that many local businesses had loans in US dollars. Tourism had fallen and some 36,000 workers were affected by temporary or permanent retrenchment or firm closure. There is also the uncertainty generated by the strong political squabbles between politicians at city, provincial and national levels.

The experience in Cebu over the last ten years shows that economic growth does not necessarily result in poverty reduction. Based on selected indicators, the Cebu boom has benefited a few sectors, primarily big business and the export industry. With a heavy influx of intra-provincial migrants, informal settlements and the informal economy continue to grow rapidly. Land conversion, land reclamation, infrastructure development and other projects have dislocated the urban poor who are, simultaneously, more vulnerable to environmental hazards. Income distribution between low-income and high-income families has widened, and urban poverty has increased. Policies and measures undertaken by the city government, intended to mitigate the adverse effects of development on the urban poor, are determined largely by the political dynamics between the stakeholders and the political leadership as well as the availability of financial resources.

This article focuses on NGO-people's organization initiatives to bring about the inclusion of the urban poor agenda in city governance since the 1988 local elections, and highlights government-NGO partnership in poverty alleviation in Cebu City through the 1990s.

II. CITY GOVERNANCE

a. Local Autonomy and Political Leadership

CEBU CITY GOVERNMENT is one of the most active local government units in the Philippines. It was chosen as a best practice case on government-NGO partnership for poverty alleviation by the United Nations and was also featured as a case study on urban governance at the Global Urban Research Initiative (GURI) based in Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines, in the same year.

Local governance is enhanced by the 1992 Philippine Local Government Code which grants fiscal autonomy, administrative autonomy and planning authority to local government units. But the foundations for local governance must also be matched by competent and dynamic political leadership. Since the 1988 local elections, the first since the Marcos

International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), the University of Wales, Cardiff, and the London School of Economics. Summaries of other city case studies also feature in this edition of *Environment and Urbanization*. The full version of this and other city case studies, and of theme papers, may be obtained from the Publications Office, School of Public Policy, University of Birmingham, Birmingham B15 2TT, UK; tel: (44) 121 414 5020; fax: (44) 121 414 4969; e-mail to: u.grant@bham.ac.uk. City case studies cost UK £10 each (including postage) but are free to NGOs and teaching institutions in non-OECD countries.

years, the reins of government have been held by the Bando-Osmeña (Pundok Kauswagan/Panaghiusa) Party. Tomas Osmeña was elected for two consecutive terms (1988-1992 and 1992-1995) and is widely credited with having had a key role in making Cebu one of the most dynamic local government units in the Philippines. His vice-mayor, Alvin Garcia, succeeded him as mayor in the 1995 elections and is now in his second term of office (1998-2001).

Voters in Cebu City have faith in the electoral process, as shown by the high voter turnout of 69 per cent in 1988, 65.4 per cent in 1992 and 83.8 in 1998. Election results indicate that these two mayors enjoyed the mandate of the people. Although Osmeña was a political neophyte in 1988, he won the election for mayor with 58 per cent of total votes cast. He did not even have to campaign when he ran for re-election and won with 65 per cent of the votes. Garcia, also a newcomer in local politics, was prepared for taking on the functions of local chief executive as he had served as vice-mayor under the Osmeña administration. With 51 per cent of the votes in his first bid for vice-mayor, he won 59 per cent in the next round. Garcia's victory as mayor in the 1995 elections was practically assured since he ran unopposed. He also won the hotly contested post in the 1998 elections with 60 per cent of the votes. Half of the councillors elected in 1988, and all in 1995 and 1998, have been affiliated to the Bando-Osmeña Party.

b. Elections: An Occasion for Forging Linkages

The 1986 February Revolution (also known as the People's Revolution) which overthrew 20 years of Marcos authoritarian rule widened the democratic space. But the conjuncture of key players and local developments was crucial in determining the political landscape in Cebu City.⁽²⁾ The 1988 local elections stimulated the forging of an alliance between urban poor groups and the new mayor, Tomas Osmeña. The Urban Poor People's Council, a coalition of urban poor organizations in 22 communities, with a membership of 180,000, prepared a seven-point programme known as the People's Alternative, which included:

- people's participation in decision-making;
- the creation of an office for social development;
- employment generation for the urban poor;
- local government control over the police;
- the distribution of stalls among vendors in the city central market;
- sectoral representation of the urban poor in the city council; and
- implementation of traffic regulations without discrimination.⁽³⁾

The platform was presented to the different candidates for their reaction during the 15 campaign rallies organized by the people's movement in different parts of the city. Seven public bulletin boards were set up in strategic sites in Cebu City wherein the candidates posted their programmes, notices and other information.⁽⁴⁾ On January 11, 1988 a 500-delegate convention representing 30 organizations decided to endorse the Osmeña-Garcia tandem who attended all the rallies organized by the People's Alternative and who were rated satisfactorily based on their support for the urban poor agenda. Subsequently, the Cebu City Commission for the Urban Poor (renamed the Division for the Urban Poor) was formed to provide support to the landless and homeless constituents of the city to enable them to acquire land and a decent home. NGO development workers were recruited to join the frontline offices such as the Commission and the Market Authority. The Division provides a direct

2. Etemadi, Felisa U (1997), "Urban governance and poverty alleviation: the Cebu City experience" in Porio, Emma (editor), *Urban Governance and Poverty Alleviation in Southeast Asia: Trends and Prospects*, Global Urban Research Initiative (GURI) in Southeast Asia, Ateneo de Manila, Quezon City.

3. During special events, major roads are closed to public utility vehicles and jeepneys (similar to minibuses) but not to private cars. Urban poor groups have argued, first, that private cars make a greater contribution to congestion and, second, that public transport serves all income groups, particularly the poor.

4. There are also elections for 16 councillors to the city council, and officials at barangay level. Elected officials at the *barangay* level include the *barangay* captain and seven *barangay* councillors.

link between the poor and city and national government agencies with responsibilities relevant to low-cost housing programmes, especially the Committee on Urban Poor, Human Rights and Socialized Housing, the city council committee responsible for enacting the relevant legislation.

NGO advocacy for alternative politics, particularly issue-oriented electoral politics over personality, continues to gain momentum. Voters' education reached a high point in the 1998 elections when a coalition of 16 Cebu City NGOs spearheaded the political education of urban poor groups on the mechanisms of the party-list system. Although this had been stipulated in the 1986 Philippine Constitution, to ensure greater representation of the marginalized sectors in Congress (the national law-making body), it had not been implemented.⁽⁵⁾

Sectoral meetings were held to draft the Sugbuanong Baruganan (the "Common Agenda")⁽⁶⁾ which was approved by a People's Congress on March 27, 1998 and which asked the politicians to address the following concerns:

- the provision of housing through the implementation of the Urban Development Housing Act;
- employment generation;
- social contracts in support of a labour-oriented programme; broadening industrial democracy at the plant level with access to state power;
- access to credit for livelihood purposes;
- the protection of the least protected segments of labour, namely, casuals, domestic workers, service contractors, landless rural workers, child and women workers;
- the protection of women against battering and of children against incest;
- the promotion of the growth of cooperatives by granting tax privileges and incentives;
- access to quality education and genuine youth empowerment;
- the implementation of rights and privileges for the elderly;
- food sufficiency and security; and
- a fund for social development.

The People's Congress was attended by over 1,000 participants and the Common Agenda endorsed by 31,620 signatories, including three of the mayoralty candidates, one of whom was Garcia. In a subsequent mayoralty forum with the marginalized sectors, organized by the NGO coalition, Garcia conceded that it would be difficult to address all the items on the Common Agenda platform but that he supported the cause of the urban poor in general. How far he will go in substantiating his pledge depends on how actively the urban poor lobby for their cause beyond elections.

c. Political Processes and NGO Participation

Election is but one of the political processes by which the electorate, the urban poor in particular, can articulate their interests. Other mechanisms such as holding rallies, organizing and attending fora on current issues, audiences with the mayor, advocacy through the media, participation in local planning bodies, and citizen's monitoring provide the constituents with ample avenues to ventilate their causes or grievances.

However, NGO participation in planning is more form than substance. NGO representation on the city development council, as mandated by the local government code, was implemented in 1993 but the council seldom meets. When it does, plans and programmes in the final stages of delib-

5. This coalition was called the Kaabag sa Sugbu. The party-list system is the mechanism for proportional representation in the House of Representatives of marginalized and under-represented sectors, through elections. These sectors include urban poor, labour, peasant and indigenous culture communities; the elderly, handicapped, women, youth, overseas workers, fisherfolk, veterans and professionals. Twenty per cent of the seats in the House of Representatives are allocated for sectoral representatives; a qualified party gets a seat provided it garners 2 per cent of the votes in the party-list system. It was implemented in elections to local councils at the city and municipality levels.

6. Members of the Cebu City NGO coalition Kaabag sa Sugbu, representing different areas of work (women, women and children, labour, cooperatives etc.) met prior to the Congress to identify the concerns and needs which they wished electoral candidates to address.

7. Mojares, Resil (1994), "The politics of decentralization: the case of the local development council", (draft) paper presented at the Centre for Local Governance, Regional Conference (Region 7), USC Retreat House, Talamban, Cebu City.

8. The Urban Basic Services Programme covers 26 urban poor *barangays*. Because of the difficulty in obtaining *barangay*-specific indicators (e.g., income, mortality, nutrition), the only criterion used by the programme in the selection was the presence of non-government organizations in the area. It was assumed that the NGOs tend to deliver social services in localities where they are needed most.

9. Social housing, called socialized housing in the Philippines, refers to housing programmes and projects undertaken by the public or private sector for "underprivileged and homeless citizens", defined in the 1992 Urban Development and Housing Act as households not owning legal housing or which are poor. Eligible households are registered by the city government. Programmes include houses and lots, serviced lots, long-term finance and subsidized interest rates.

10. The Community Mortgage Programme aims to secure land tenure for the landless poor by giving financial assistance to residents of "blighted/depressed" areas (slums and squatter settlements) or areas required for priority developments, to allow them to own the lot they occupy or the land where they can resettle. Residents have to form homeowner associations which coincide with all or part of a "slum" or squatter settlement and these vary in size from five to 1,000 or more households.

eration are said to be presented merely for approval. In contrast, the city showcases a strong government-NGO partnership in service delivery. The city government contracts out social services to NGOs to fast track its delivery system on health, land and housing, livelihoods, women's concerns, programmes for children and street children, and emergency rescue and relief operations such as emergency vehicles, responding to construction or maritime accidents and paramedical assistance during fires, typhoons and floods. However, tapping the organizational skills of the NGOs for special projects is one thing; power-sharing in decision-making is another matter. While Osmeña was strong at "decentralization," he was weak at "democratization".⁽⁷⁾

d. Agenda-setting

This does not mean, however, that the urban poor do not have any influence on the agenda-setting of city government. Their intervention is via NGOs-people's organizations, through government institutionalized bodies. The 1992 Local Government Code provides for the participation of NGOs in local bodies. People's organizations approach NGOs to represent their interests, while NGOs help the people's organizations to organize and articulate their views. The Urban Basic Services Programme is at the forefront, advocating total urban development especially on matters pertaining to health, women and children in urban poor *barangays*.⁽⁸⁾ The City Commission for the Urban Poor (later renamed the Division for the Welfare of the Urban Poor) champions land and housing issues. The concerns of the vendors are articulated through the Market Authority. Councillors are assigned to head special committees to sponsor and facilitate the legislation needed to translate promises and policies into action. Such ordinances are needed for action and allocation of resources.

Aside from setting up the City Commission for the Urban Poor and implementing the Urban Basic Services Programme, the Osmeña administration also institutionalized government-NGO partnerships for social service delivery. Even before a national directive mandated local government units to carry out the registration of social housing beneficiaries, the city commission had already started the process.⁽⁹⁾ The city government provides interim funding support to homeowners associations for lot acquisition through the Community Mortgage Programme.⁽¹⁰⁾ Although informal vending activities are considered illegal, the Osmeña and Garcia administrations have been implementing an unwritten policy of maximum tolerance. The Garcia administration prioritized housing by initiating a medium-rise building initiative involving the provision of flats on the upper three floors of five-storey blocks which incorporate commercial units. Originally, the low cost flats were to be made available to eligible households with subsidized mortgages. In practice, the scheme was controversial.⁽¹¹⁾ A women's crisis centre was built with city government funds and the Cebu City police department set up a women's desk in 1993. A youth detention centre is under construction in response to NGO advocacy; and a government-NGO consultation forum, conducted regularly during Garcia's first term as mayor, has continued in his second term. The newly created Housing Board, with one NGO representative and two representatives from accredited people's organizations, is expected to provide clear policy directions and guidelines and develop and implement a housing plan for the city with a primary emphasis on social housing.

Since key issues – in particular housing – are still to be resolved, some NGO leaders have expressed reservations about these dialogues. To gain headway, the NGOs and people's organizations have learned to improve their bargaining strategy. They come to a consultation forum with a summary list of maximum and minimum demands and, after a process of negotiation, the general points of agreement are then synthesized and documented for future reference. As a result of this strategy, an agreement was made on key issues during the first government-people's organizations forum initiated by Alyansa sa Nagpakabanang Kabus sa Sugbu (ANAK-Sugbu) on March 17, 1999, with support from the mayor.⁽¹²⁾ Among these key issues is the establishment of a tripartite body among government organizations, NGOs and people's organizations represented by the Division for the Welfare of the Urban Poor and the shelter agencies, Fellowship for Organizing Endeavours Inc. (FORGE) and Community Organizing in the Philippine Enterprises (COPE). The task force Tawhanong Pagpuyo is meant to follow up on the agreement, channel urban poor groups' concerns about housing and basic services to the proper agencies, and monitor and evaluate its implementation as well as government's response to people's complaints. As a follow-up, a consultation was held with the municipal and regional trial courts, and with judges, lawyers and other concerned entities, on the issues of eviction and demolition, in June 1999.⁽¹³⁾ Details of the draft agreement with the judges and the Philippine national police are still being negotiated.

The NGOs were also instrumental in pushing the water issue onto the city's agenda. The Cebu City Land Use Committee, created in September 1996, had the task of drafting the policy guidelines for the hilly lands, in consideration of watershed protection and the interests of rural stakeholders.

Through the NGO coalition Kaabag sa Sugbu, a critical mass has emerged whose voice cannot be ignored by the city government. There are also some NGOs who lobby strongly for specific concerns, for instance, SUPAK for people-oriented development and against drug addiction; Pagtambayayong for the Community Mortgage Programme; Initiative for Socialized Housing: Our Goal (ISOG) for socialized housing; LIHOK-PILIPINA for women; the Cebu Uniting for Sustainable Water (CUSW) for watershed management; the Cebu Environmental Institute for Development Centre (CEIDEC) for environmental concerns; and the C-CIMPEL for voter education and clean elections, among others.

This major shift in NGO engagement with the government, from opposition to critical collaboration, has so far worked out to the advantage of these social development organizations. Although NGO participation in the city development council and local bodies remains to be desired, their involvement in technical working groups, commissions, committees and task forces is more effective. The NGOs are increasingly aware that they can maximize their participation through these non-mandated arenas.

In effect, the mayor and his councillors determine the city's agenda and the direction of development. But they have to balance the interests of the different sectors. The business/private sector is influential in so far as business and economic issues are at stake: taxation, interest rates, oil prices, energy, wage adjustments, infrastructure development, traffic management, parking ordinance, and peace and order. As long as the government continues to ensure an environment conducive to business and does not impose any restrictions on free enterprise, the private sector does not interfere in the other affairs of the state. In fact, the government

11. The medium-rise building (MRB) initiative has been criticized for technical lapses, lack of feasibility study and for not benefiting the intended beneficiaries. The urban poor find the MRB concept unacceptable for the following reasons: owning a unit is not the same as owning the land since land appreciates whilst the unit depreciates; although they are now city dwellers, most prefer an individual house and lot, regardless of size, so that they can raise hogs and chickens in the backyard; management and maintenance of common areas is difficult; and many of the original urban poor beneficiaries backed out saying that they could afford neither the P 20,000 equity (initial payment) nor the monthly loan repayments of P 1,600 for the cheapest flats.

12. Campos, Christine (1999), "Tripartite body to oversee needs of urban poor" in *Sun Star Daily*, Cebu City, 18 March.

13. The municipal trial court issues court orders for the demolition and eviction of illegal developments on privately owned land. Under the 1992 Urban Development and Housing Act, the local government unit is required to provide a serviced site to which those affected can be relocated. Because of this requirement, the city can appeal to the regional trial court for a restraining order while arrangements are made for the resettlement. However, better liaison between the municipal trial court and the city is needed, to ensure the court informs the city of impending cases early in the proceedings.

can tap the civic consciousness of the private sector and professional groups who provide funding and technical expertise to support the socio-economic projects of the government. Other organized groups in civil society such as the NGOs and people's organizations are also influential as long as they participate in political processes, continue their advocacy backed by robust data, are open to critical collaboration with the government organizations and have a track record showing that they can deliver in joint undertakings with government organizations.

III. GOVERNMENT-NGO PARTNERSHIP IN POVERTY ALLEVIATION

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT code devolves the delivery of government services to the local government units. The city is now responsible for health, agriculture, public works and social welfare which, previously, were the preserve of national government. Accordingly, the city government has formulated pertinent policies, and initiated programmes and projects in its efforts to deliver social services to its constituents. Specifically, its urban poverty alleviation/reduction programme centres on three major thrusts – health, housing and livelihood. Among the vulnerable groups, children and women receive the most attention.

a. The Scope of the Urban Basic Services Programme (UBSP)

This is the centerpiece of the government poverty alleviation/reduction programme.⁽¹⁴⁾ It began in 1988 as a component of the Third Country Programme for Children, with the assistance of UNICEF. In Cebu City, it began with an assessment of the condition of women and children, including existing programmes and services offered by both government and non-government organizations. This assessment led to the launching of the project called Reaching the Children of the Urban Poor in Cebu City ("REACH UP CEBU") whose goal was to improve, by 1992, the situation of urban poor women and children in ten target depressed city *barangays*. An umbrella organization composed of both government and non-government organizations (GAKKUS) became the coordinating body and the National Housing Authority the secretariat. Following GAKKUS' decision to withdraw from the UNICEF funded programmes, a new inter-agency committee was formed, composed of representatives from five national agencies based in the city, heads of city offices, and NGOs. Table 1 shows the range and diversity of agencies taking part in the programme. Since 1989, the Cebu City health officer has remained as the coordinator and the City Health Department the secretariat.

The target clientele for the programme are the urban poor (especially women and children) in 26 Cebu City urban *barangays*. In line with its goals of developing self-reliant urban communities which can respond to their own needs and problems, the programme aims to:

- reduce significantly the mortality and morbidity rates of children aged 0-5 years and of mothers in urban poor communities;
- increase family incomes by providing alternative sources of credit and technologies to support efforts to improve health and the nutritional status of urban poor women and children;
- organize urban poor communities and enhance their capacities to

14. Urban Basic Services Programme (1994), *Terminal Implementation Report* (1988-1993), Cebu City. With the satisfactory review of the terminal implementation report in 1993, all the programmes and activities of the Urban Basic Services Programme continued under the Fourth Country Programme (1994-1998). A Metro Cebu approach expanded coverage to two other cities, Mandaue and Lapulapu. Cebu City is one of two cities in the Philippines included in the Fifth Country Programme, which focuses on the promotion of child friendly services and assistance to children in the street and labour sectors. The Urban Basic Services Programme meets occasionally as an *ad hoc* body but the partner NGOs continue to implement their respective programmes.

Table 1: Key Organizations/Coordinating Agencies Participating in the Urban Basic Services Programme			
Component	Government organization	NGO	People's organization
Health	Cebu City Health Department (CHO) Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS)	Bidlisiw Family Planning Centre of the Philippines (FPOP) Kapwa Ko Mahal Ko Kauswagan Mag-Uugmad Foundation. Primary Health Care, Visayas Chapter Ramon Aboitiz Foundation	Area task force on health
Nutrition	Cebu City Health Department Department of Science & Technology (DOST) Cebu City Nutrition Council Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) City Agriculture Office Department of Agriculture Department of Social Welfare and Services (DSWS)	Bidlisiw Feed the Children	Area task force on nutrition
Water-Sanitation-Environment	Cebu City Health Department Department of Planning & Development (DPD) Department of Public Services (DPS) Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor (PCUP) Cebu City Commission for the Urban Poor (CCUP)	Bidlisiw Cebu Youth Centre FORGE Kapwa Ko Mahal Ko Lihok Pilipina	Area task force on water-sanitation-environment
Women/Community organizing	Cebu City Commission for the Urban Poor (CCUP) Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor (PCUP) Cebu City Health Department Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS)	Bidlisiw FORGE KAKASAKA Kapwa Ko, Mahal Ko Lihok Pilipina People's Cooperative	Area task force on women's issues/concerns
Education	Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) Department of Social Welfare and Services (DSWS)	Cebu Children's Foundation Cebu Youth Centre EUPHRASIA, KADASIG PLAN International PHILRADS VICTO, World Vision	Area task force on education
Children in especially difficult circumstances (CEDC)	Cebu City Health Department Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) Department of Social Welfare and Services (DSWS)	Cebu Children's Foundation CCTFSC EUPHRASIA FORGE, Kadasig	Area task force on street children
Programme support	Cebu City Health Department National Economic Development Authority Department of Interior and Local Government	Lihok Pilipina CCTFSC ARMDEV	Area task force on community information system

- manage their own development programmes;
- raise and increase awareness of urban poor women on basic issues and concerns that affect their daily lives and that of their children;
- increase awareness of abandoned, street and working children of access to basic social services;
- upgrade and expand facilities for water, electricity, sanitation, drainage and other public utilities in urban poor communities;
- enhance child development through increased and sustained access among pre-school and school age children to quality educational facilities and a quality system;
- rationalize land tenure and upgrade housing conditions among urban poor families through self-help;
- integrate all efforts and resources of both government and non-government organizations to make services available to most of the urban population, especially the disadvantaged; and
- empower people in terms of decision-making, accessing and managing resources.

In advocating for a comprehensive urban development policy that would benefit the urban poor, the programme has adopted an integrated approach toward urban poverty alleviation. The ten components are:

- health and nutrition;
- water and sanitation;
- women's education and development;
- livelihoods;
- early child development;
- special projects for children in especially difficult circumstances;
- community organizing;
- land tenure;
- advocacy; and
- project support services.

Box 1 lists the range of programmes and services it includes.

b. Performance of the Urban Basic Services Programme

Evidence of the performance of this programme is mostly confined to output indicators; there has not been a systematic evaluation of outcomes and impacts.

Health

Selected health indicators on the mid-decade goals show the following performance (based on the average from 1994-1997):

- The proportion of fully immunized children, at 88 per cent, is slightly lower than the goal of 90 per cent coverage of children (0-12 months old).
- The proportion of mothers who received TT2+ (two doses of tetanus toxoid), at 71.5 per cent, is below the target of 80 per cent immunization coverage of pregnant mothers.
- With four neo-natal tetanus cases among the total live births, the incidence is far below the 1/1,000 live births target.
- Use of oral rehydration solution among children with diarrhoea is 100 per cent.
- Children who are moderately malnourished constituted 6.6 per cent of children (0-59 months old).
- Children who are severely malnourished constituted only 0.4 per cent

Box 1:	The Urban Basic Services Programme's Components and Services
<p>HEALTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded programme on immunization • Pre-natal and post-natal care • Growth monitoring/nutritional status of children (aged 0-5) • Domiciliary obstetrical services • Family planning • Control of communicable/non-communicable diseases (TB, leprosy, cardiovascular diseases, etc.) • Care of acute respiratory tract infections • Water and sanitation • Social hygiene/STD/AIDS prevention • Disease surveillance • Dental care • Information/ education/ communication/ counselling <p>NUTRITION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weight monitoring • Micro-nutrient supplementation • Food assistance • Food production <p>WATER/SANITATION ENVIRONMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water quality surveillance • Sanitary toilet construction • Sanitary inspection/certification of commercial establishment • Food handlers' classes • Street food surveillance • Clean and green through community effort <p>EDUCATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher-child parent training • Placement test programme • Early enrolment programme • Day care services • Child-minding centres • Elementary school as per barangay programme <p>WOMEN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender sensitivity seminar • Crisis centre for women • Women's desk in police precincts • Formation of Bantay Banay (women's groups) • Paralegal training 	<p>STREET CHILDREN (and other children under especially difficult circumstances)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre based services • Street based services • Community based services <p>LAND TENURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation/consultation on land acquisition • Strategies (e.g. formation of homeowner associations, funding through the Community Mortgage Programme) • Site development • Intervention in special cases (e.g. ejection, right of way, etc.) <p>LIVELIHOOD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical training (e.g. Coop development and management, feasibility studies, marketing, bookkeeping, business management) • Skills training (e.g. food-processing, candle-making, soap-making, baking, cloth weaving, etc.) <p>RESEARCH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food technology • Herbal tea production • Documentation <p>COMMUNITY BUILDING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formation of area task forces • Organization of community monitors • Institution of community information system <p>PROJECT SUPPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capability-building on planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation • Information, education and communication • Programme reviews • Coordinating meetings

15. The Pagtambayayong Foundation works closely with the Division for the Welfare of the Urban Poor in organizing community associations, in the management of the Community Mortgage Programme and of the relocation programme of the city, including the collection of loan repayments in the slum improvement and resettlement sites.

16. Division for the Welfare of the Urban Poor (1998), *City Housing Project Accomplishment Report (1995-1997)*, DWUP, Cebu City.

17. The total cost of all Cebu City low-cost housing projects, including social housing, amounted to P534.1 million. Monthly amortization payments are less than 1 per cent of the total loan amount of P 440 million. In Community Mortgage Programme areas, the loan exposure is about P 40 million with a reported average collection efficiency rate of over 50 per cent (although this has not been verified with the city treasurer).

18. Cebu City Task Force on Street Children (1998), *Programs and Services Accomplishment Report (1990-1998)*, CCTFSC, Cebu City.

19. Lihok Pilipina Foundation (1998), *Cases of Domestic Violence Report (1991-1998)*, Lihok Pilipina-Women Crisis Center, Cebu City.

of children (0-59 months old).

- Based on the 1997 multi-indicator cluster survey, Cebu City performance in contraceptive use, tetanus toxoid immunization and Vitamin A consumption are all above the Department of Health programme targets although, as noted above, the proportion of fully immunized children was below the target.

Education

- The number of day care centres increased from 27 in 1989 to 78 in 1994, and to 105 in 1998 serving 11,793 children.
- The elementary school participation rate increased from 87.5 per cent in 1994 to 99.9 per cent in 1998.
- The "Get High with Night High" programme was initiated in seven public schools in the 1994-1995 school year. By school year 1997-1998, there were 23 schools involved, with 12,442 enrollees, constituting 36.4 per cent of the total enrolment at secondary level for both day and night school. Night school at the elementary level is also available in two schools, with 88 pupils enrolled in school year 1997-1998.
- Twenty-six area task forces have been organized, there are community monitors in nine barangays and eight community-based educators have been trained.

Housing ⁽¹⁵⁾

- Of the 88,062 urban poor households estimated by the Division for the Welfare of the Urban Poor in 1998, 35.7 per cent have registered as beneficiaries of social housing, 25.2 per cent are qualified to register and 18.6 per cent have been awarded their respective lot. ⁽¹⁶⁾
- A total of 508 sites have been identified with a total land area of 4,256,744 square metres.
- One hundred and twenty-four community associations, with a total of 16,353 beneficiaries, have availed themselves of social housing in 124 sites comprising 34 per cent of the total land area identified for social housing.
- Although the city has initiated different kinds of low-cost housing projects, it needs to improve its collection on monthly amortization. ⁽¹⁷⁾

Children

- The Cebu City Task Force on Street Children has served a total of 6,001 street children, 63 per cent of whom are community based, 25 per cent street based and 11 per cent centre based. ⁽¹⁸⁾
- The number of children who were provided with health services increased from 1,720 in 1994 to 4,161 in 1997.
- The number of children who were subsidized for education increased from 1,584 to 1,802 for the same period.

Women

- Between 1991 and 1997, Lihok Pilipina attended to a total of 716 cases of domestic violence, of which 581 were cases of battering and 135 of sexual abuse. ⁽¹⁹⁾
- Bantay Banay (women's groups) have been organized in 41 *barangays* in Cebu City.
- A women's crisis centre was completed in 1997 with government funding.

c. Other Government-NGO Collaborative Programmes

Four NGOs are implementing the education component of the AIDS Surveillance and Education Project in cooperation with the City Health Office which is responsible for serosurveillance and an annual behavioural monitoring survey of high risk groups.⁽²⁰⁾ The education component comprises community outreach, training of community health outreach workers, risk reduction counselling and referral for sexually transmitted diseases-HIV/AIDS treatment. Through the four NGOs, the project has reached out to female and male commercial sex workers, free-lance commercial sex workers, men who have sex with men, injecting drug users, and children in sex work. The NGOs have also trained over 100 peer educators. The Crying Room and Extra Caring Hand for Education (CRECHE) was completed in 1996 and provides day care services for the children of registered commercial sex workers.

d. Other Programmes

With regard to government programmes, other than the Urban Basic Services Programme, the city government provides skills training and employment through the Department of Manpower and Placement. The Economic Enterprise Management expands and upgrades the public markets to accommodate the ever-growing informal sector.

NGOs are primarily engaged in capacity-building to catalyze self-reliant grassroots organizations in communities. Development NGOs which are also social-development organizations supplement or complement government social service delivery. The programmes and services of development NGOs are designed according to the type of clientele or sector served but an increasing number of NGOs are pursuing an integrated perspective toward sector-based concerns. The NGOs are thus engaged in a wide spectrum of activities including community organizing, education/value formation, training/capability-building, technical assistance, credit assistance, income-generating projects, legal assistance and advocacy.

The target clientele of most NGO programmes are the urban poor in general; a number of NGOs are involved in the Urban Basic Services Programme, as discussed earlier. But specific target groups are also identified such as women and children of specific age groups (for maternal and child health), battered women, street children, abused children, workers/labourers and informal settlement occupants. Many of the programmes focus on health and livelihood. Most of the NGOs organized in the last five years are concerned either with children or women or with the environment.

20. These are the Bidlisiw Foundation, FORGE, Free Legal Assistance Volunteers Association Inc. (Free LAVA) and the University of Southern Philippines Foundation.

IV. ASSESSMENT OF POVERTY ALLEVIATION/REDUCTION PROGRAMMES

THE POVERTY ALLEVIATION/reduction programmes undertaken by government organizations and NGOs in Cebu City are assessed in terms of strategies, outcomes and impact on the urban poor.

a. Strategies

Viewing urban governance issues in a wider context, the city government has transcended the traditional piecemeal perspective and has adopted an integrated approach to poverty alleviation/reduction programmes. Disease is not merely a health problem; the housing problem is related to the dynamics of rural-urban development; and child labour is understood within the socio-economic environment.

Recognizing its limited resources, Cebu City government has distinguished itself by establishing a track record of implementing its programmes through effective inter-agency cooperation and government-NGO partnerships. The Urban Basic Services Programme and Task Force on Street Children have demonstrated that government agencies can work hand in hand to maximize resources and produce the desired results.

By networking with the NGOs and the private sector, the city government has been able to mobilize their support in project planning and implementation. Whilst the government provides the logistics, technical support and necessary policy legislation, the NGOs manage projects and deliver social services, or complement government services in joint undertakings. NGO interventions in health, housing and livelihood projects, through community organizing, gender-sensitivity training and capacity-building enhance project implementation.

Government-NGO partnership for poverty alleviation/reduction proves to be viable and productive. Working together has provided both the government organizations and NGOs a chance to even out biases against each other. Through their active involvement in government undertakings, the NGOs have gained recognition and credibility with city hall. By their exposure to government bureaucracy, the NGOs have acquired a working knowledge of how government systems operate. Lines of communication are more open and direct.

NGOs have realized that advocacy supported by hard data, not just rhetoric, is more likely to gain the support of the administration and the public; and they collaborate with academe in undertaking research and conducting case studies in order to generate a database.

Participatory planning has long been observed by the NGOs in their community based projects. The NGOs conduct participatory rapid appraisal of target communities to establish baseline data. They engage in community organizing and leadership training. Together with community leaders and members, they undertake problem analysis, outline objectives, map out strategies, identify key players and their respective roles and the resources needed, and establish verifiable indicators for monitoring. These processes increase people's understanding of their situation, of the forces or factors that affect the environment and of the need to improve their conditions. Sessions on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) make planning more realistic and proactive.

Government workers who came from the ranks of the NGOs have spearheaded the implementation of participatory planning at the project level in government initiated programmes. Thus, the area task forces and community monitors are organized in *barangays* where the Urban Basic Services Programme is being implemented; community based street educators are tapped by the Task Force on Street Children; homeowner associations are formed; and vendor associations/vendor cooperatives are developed. In joint undertakings, the NGOs have initiated Bantay Banay (a community based effort to respond to battering and rape), have

organized community based water users associations and have trained peer educators for the AIDS Surveillance and Education Project.

Integration of community organization and participatory planning not only enhances service delivery but also increases project sustainability. The beneficiaries are not only passive recipients but are, themselves, the principal actors in the project.

Education/value formation is important in transforming the attitudes of the beneficiaries who take a paternalistic view of government. Instead of expecting government to provide free materials and deliver the services, some communities have learnt to provide counterpart contributions, in labour or in kind.

Harnessing graphic information systems has enhanced the City Health Office planning capacity for addressing health concerns – *barangay* health centres, water and sanitation, AIDS surveillance and education, and leprosy among others. Other departments concerned with social services are starting to apply similar systems.

However, monitoring and evaluation need to be strengthened. Present monitoring tends to be too target focused. Yet, not all programmes have specific guidelines for target-setting. In many cases, a 100 per cent programme rating has been reported. In actual practice, programme implementation depends to a large extent on personnel availability and budget. Since most of the evaluation is conducted in-house, it seldom includes any assessment by the beneficiaries. Little effort is made to compare quantitative data with qualitative analysis. Participatory research conducted by external evaluators, which integrates the perspective of the clientele, is oftentimes for internal circulation and not for public consumption.

b. Outcomes and Constraints

Although significant progress has been made in the past ten years in terms of programme performance, it is worthwhile to take a closer look at the issue of equity in terms of access and pricing. Quantitative reports do not indicate the quality of service, much less the equality or inequality and price differentials in accessing social services. Disaggregating selected data on health, education and water by *barangay*²¹ shows interesting findings:

- the percentage of moderately underweight children is higher in the selected urban *barangays* (3.4 per cent of the total children weighed) than in other urban *barangays* (1.1 per cent);
- while the incidence of water-borne diseases continues to increase in rural *barangays*, it decreases in urban *barangays*; among the urban *barangays*, however, the other urban *barangays* show a higher decrease (-30.5 per cent) than the selected urban *barangays* (-21.7 per cent);
- about half the households in the rural *barangays* have unsafe water supplies; among the urban *barangays*, the selected urban *barangays* have a higher percentage of households with communal faucets (36.4 per cent) than the other urban *barangays* (17.3 per cent);
- likewise, the rural *barangays* have the highest proportion of households with unsafe toilets (57.2 per cent.); among the households in the urban *barangays*, there are more unsafe toilets in the selected urban *barangays* (29.1 per cent) compared to the other urban *barangays* (18.9 per cent).

Studies on housing and water provide a glimpse into the price differential and equity aspects:

21. The selected urban *barangays* include the Urban Basic Services Programme *barangays* and those with the greatest number of informal settlements. These represent the "poor" *barangays* for comparative purposes only, while the other *barangays* represent the "not poor" ones. This categorization is, however, relative considering that not all households in "poor" *barangays* are poor; in the same manner, not all households in "not poor" *barangays* are better off.

22. Fernandez, Nacario-Ramos and Felisa Etamadi (1998), "Renters in low-income communities in Cebu City", Urban Research Consortium (Visayas).

23. David, C C, AB Inocencio, F M Largo and E L Walag (1998), "The case for policy and institutional reforms in Metro Cebu", paper presented at the Workshop on Urban Water Issues in Metro Cebu, Ramon Aboitiz Foundation, Inc., Cebu City.

24. Largo, F M et al. (1998), "Understanding household water demand for Metro Cebu", paper presented at the Workshop on Urban Water Issues in Metro Cebu, Ramon Aboitiz Foundation, Inc., Cebu City.

25. See reference 23.

26. See reference 23.

- the minimum floor area per person in formal housing is six square metres per person. In contrast, the floor area of renters in urban poor communities averages 3.5 square metres/person for those renting a room only. The smallest was a family of four living in two square metres makeshift;⁽²²⁾
- the monthly average water consumption among sample households with individual connections (27.1 cubic metres) is about six times that of households dependent on vended water (4.8 cubic metres);⁽²³⁾
- low-income households usually buy vended water, which costs P 30-35/cubic metre.⁽²⁴⁾ The median price of Metro Cebu water district water is P 19/cubic metre. The average selling price of water from a commercial faucet is calculated at P 22/cubic metre;
- lower-income households pay more for water than households with higher incomes despite the latter's four-fold higher per capita water consumption;⁽²⁵⁾
- the ratio of water bill to income is higher among lower-income households; water bills take up 9 per cent of income in lowest-income households (under P 30,000) but less than 1 per cent of income in highest-income households.⁽²⁶⁾

The disparities in access could be attributed partly to the fact that targets are set by local agencies at the *barangay* level but performance is assessed at city level and seldom by area. A lack of baseline data, limited government logistics and no well-defined targeting system result in exclusion. The poorest of the poor are often marginalized. There is also a growing recognition, however, on the part of the city government, the City Health Office in particular, that community-based poverty mapping should be done at the household level to generate the minimum database required for poverty interventions. Just as there are pockets of urban poor in most *barangays*, their characteristics and needs vary from community to community, by occupational or sectoral group, by age and gender. Although community profiling is integral to NGO programmes, their interventions can only reach out to the urban poor in their respective area of coverage.

c. Impact on the Urban Poor

Whether the interventions have resulted in any meaningful change in the life of the urban poor is not easy to ascertain. In the absence of empirical data, the assessment on impact could, at best, remain general and qualitative. Two major trends can be discerned. First, government programmes and NGO interventions have improved the urban poor's access to social services. This is most evident in health, particularly primary health care (maternal and child health), communal water, sanitation facilities, and STD/HIV-AIDS prevention and care. Access to NGO credit has provided livelihood opportunities and increased the income of the urban poor who are the beneficiaries of such programmes. They were able to send their children to school, improve their dwellings or avail themselves of housing loans to acquire land and housing. More and more urban poor children acquire education through scholarships and educational assistance. The better-off among urban poor families have accessed the Community Mortgage Programme for lot acquisition. Disadvantaged and exploited children are receiving more attention and intervention. Battering and other urban poor women's concerns are addressed as the Bantay Banay continues to expand its coverage.

Second, NGO community organizing and capacity building have empowered urban poor communities. Participatory planning has generated self-awareness and enhanced self-confidence among community members. With the increasing involvement of community based groups such as the Bantay Banay, peer educators and child rights advocates, more and more affected women and children have come into the open. Children are now better informed about their rights and about forms of violence; more and more instances of child abuse are reported to the authorities. Members of homeowner associations have realized that only through collective action can they attain their dream of owning a house and lot. Empowered communities undertake self-help activities to improve their living conditions.

It has taken decades for social development organizations to emerge and take centre stage from the traditional dole-out charity institutions. Community organizing, capacity building and community empowerment form a long-term process considering the utter impoverishment of a large segment of the urban poor. Transforming people's situations from ones of abject poverty to self-reliance cannot take place without concomitant changes in iniquitous social structures.

V. CONCLUSION

WITH THE PARADIGM shift in NGO engagement with the government, following the 1986 February Revolution and the 1988 local elections, NGOs and people's organizations have participated in electoral politics and have influenced city government policies and programmes for addressing urban poverty. Politically, the inclusion of the urban poor in formal decision-making processes is slowly emerging but remains more apparent than real. Highly visible, however, is NGO participation in the delivery of social services.

Indeed, Cebu City showcases a strong and viable state-civil society partnership in poverty alleviation programmes. Sustainability of various initiatives in health, housing, livelihoods, women's concerns and children's welfare is enhanced by the participation of low-income communities themselves and by the institution of community based programmes. Whilst sustaining Cebu's economic momentum is a continuing challenge, even more formidable is the task of ensuring equitable access and of improving the quality of life among urban residents, particularly the marginalized.