

The Successful Community Organizing of Nagkakaisang Mamamayan Ng Legarda and Jesse M. Robredo Homeowners Village Association in Manila

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Abstract

The Philippines is known for its long history of civil society movements. Since there are a lot of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the country, there is a high expectation that their presence would create a significant change in the country. Despite their numbers, some say that the impact of their activities cannot be felt and that they are not really providing long-term solutions to the problems of the country. The Urban Poor Associates (UPA), a non-governmental organization who are actively working with the poor to educate them about their housing rights, proved this to be wrong. Over the years, they have assisted different communities to affirm their rights for in-city housing instead of relocating them outside the city. Among the communities that UPA was able to help in their housing problem is Barangay 412 Manila. UPA partnered with the people's organization (PO) called Nagkakaisang Mamamayan ng Legarda (NML) which is based in the area. Through their efforts, they were able to counter the neoliberal approach of the government in solving the housing crisis by means of successful community organizing. Unfortunately, there are still families in the area that aspire the same and they are currently on their way to pursuing their dream through another PO, the Jesse M. Robredo Village Homeowners Association (JMRVHOA). We can see that community organizing transforms the poor as powerful, visible, unified, and therefore, has the potential to be a massive force to at least make the current societal structure just and ethical.

Keywords: civil society organization (CSO), community organizing, non-governmental organization (NGO), urban anthropology, urban poor