empowHerTent

EMPOWERING WOMEN. TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES.

Enforcing a community–based approach in the urban poor
community of Happyland in Manila, Philippines:
A mobile tent solution towards poverty reduction

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the multidimensionality of poverty persistent in Tondo, Manila, seeking to answer the question: **How can the current and existing poverty alleviation strategies and programs be fitted with good practices to fill the gap between project vision and the actual attainment of sustainable effectiveness?** The study builds on existing poverty literature and applies the prevalent concepts of poverty trap, vulnerability, covariate shocks, multidimensionality (largely intertwining poverty with gender, education, and climate and the environment), and theories on capacity-building and community engagement to the context of Happyland in Tondo, Manila. This allows the researchers to create a nuanced grasp of the daily motivations and experiences of women in the sample community, revealing that severely limited access to resources require a more physical and tangible approach, steering away from web-based solutions.

To execute our vision, **EmpowHerTent** seeks to address the lack of equitable and sustainable development through capacity building via inclusive education and skills-based training. As it primarily focuses on women, it also extends to children and the rest of the family by economically empowering them through income-generating opportunities. Additionally, seminars on reproductive health, disaster risk awareness, and basic literacy and arithmetic skills will be made available to ensure holistic and sustainable learning that goes deep into the different dimensions of poverty discussed. Acknowledging the significance of regular consultations and assessments, the programs and their delivery are expected to evolve and adapt to the needs identified throughout the process.

EmpowHerTent is an initiative that hopes to bring a community-centered culture into Happyland, encourage long-term volunteerism, innovation, productivity and stronger human capital, that aims to bring together participants, supporting and partner organizations, and multiple stakeholders closer to the dream of poverty alleviation.

Keywords: poverty alleviation, urban poverty, women and development, sustainable communities, needs-based solutions

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INTRODUCTION

In the early 2000s, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) moved to widen the concept of poverty, introducing multidimensionality in its causes, characteristics, and forms of resulting deprivation. The World Bank defines poverty as "an unacceptable human deprivation in terms of economic opportunity, health and nutrition and education, as well as lack of security and empowerment." Since the late 1960s, studies on poverty, especially the Philippine case, mirrored a shift from an international standpoint to household level analyses[1] and from economic indicators–based to sociocultural–based measures[2], in support of the constantly evolving concept of poverty which later included learning deprivation, gender, climate, and vulnerability from covariate shocks[3] as recurring themes. It was also proven that vulnerability increases at the household level[4], allowing policymakers and related organizations to reframe their approaches.

The call for better collective institutions to address worldwide poverty resonated widely and encouraged more donor activity to subsidize health and food security in developing countries, and better implementation of innovative economic policies.[5] However, as the discussion on poverty introduced a broader idea that surpasses the usual "shortage in income"[6] definition, poverty reduction strategies shifted from investment in basic needs and economic growth to social development areas such as education, empowerment, and gender. As portrayed in many cases, it is not necessarily the lack of formal access to income, health, food, or education that affects impoverished households/people the most, but rather the lack of power, capacity, and limited opportunity[7] to counter these deprivations.[8]

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1 Mina and Imai, Estimation of Vulnerability to Poverty using a Multilevel Longitudinal Model: Evidence from the Philippines, 1-45; Mwangi and Markelova, Collective Action and Property Rights for Poverty Reduction, 1-39; Grimm, Waibel and Klasen, Vulnerability to Poverty: Theory, Measurement and Determinants with case studies from Thailand and Vietnam, Springer, Berlin; Günther and Maier, Poverty, vulnerability, and reference-dependent utility, 155-181; Feeny and McDonald, Vulnerability to multidimensional poverty: findings from households in Melanesia, 447-464.
2 Cobbinah, Dynamics of Poverty in Developing Countries: A Review of Poverty Reduction Approaches, 25-35; United Nations, United Nations millennium declaration (2000); Sumner, Meaning versus measurement: Why do 'economic' indicators of poverty still predominate?, 4-13; Khan et al., Approximation of Multidimensional Poverty across Regions in Pakistan, 24:2; Bourguignon and Chakravarty, The measurement of multidimensional poverty, 25-50; Mwangi, Markelova and Meinzen-Dick, Collective Action and Property Rights.
3 Mwangi, Markelova and Meinzen-Dick, Collective Action and Property Rights; Pham, Mukhopadhaya and Vu, Estimating poverty and vulnerability to monetary and non-monetary poverty: the case of Vietnam, 3125-3177.
4 Pham, Mukhopadhaya and Vu, Estimating Poverty.
5 Sachs, Mellinger and Gallup, The Geography of Poverty and Wealth, 70-5.
6 Khan, Role of Education in Poverty Reduction, 124-134; Cobbinah, Dynamics of Poverty in Developing Countries Review of Poverty Reduction Approaches, 25-37; Pham, Mukhopadhaya and Vu, Estimating Poverty.
7 Silva-Laya, et al. Urban poverty and education, 1-20; Mwangi, Markelova and Meinzen-Dick, Collective Action and Property Rights; Kelles-Viitanen, The Role of ICT in Poverty Reduction.
8 Alkire, The Missing Dimensions of Poverty Data, 347-359; Brando and Pitasse, Capability and Deprivation and Multidimensional Poverty Measures, 1-23; OECD, The DAC Guidelines Poverty Reduction, (2001).

While the recent literature[9] takes on a more qualitative approach and away from the monetary aspects[10] and determinants of poverty, the discussion began fleshing out some missing dimensions of poverty, instigating that past studies be updated to include measures for factors like quality and quantity of employment of the poor, the autonomy and empowerment as determinants of their agency, measures for physical safety and security that hinder development and productivity[11], the shame and stigma related to poverty and those striving to break the bubble[12], and the psychological and subjective well–being that refers to overall satisfaction in life.[13] The vulnerability to covariate shocks, such as natural hazards, climate change, economic fluctuations, and political instability eventually push people into greater impoverishment and perpetuates the chronic poverty cycle that reflects the multifaceted nature of poverty.[14] This brings to light the concept of chronic poverty[15] or the prolonged multidimensional and severe type of poverty which can outlive generations and keep the poor and their children in the same economic status.[16]

Third World Context

The term "Third World" was coined by French demographer Alfred Sauvy[17], who cited three common characteristics of nations under this category. These are countries "deprived of privileges, politically marginalized, and have a common interest in overcoming their situation"[18]. Situating poverty in the third world context demands a thorough scrutiny of the disparity between developed and developing nations given the huge difference in economic productivity, availability of resources, quality of life, income, and equality in terms of job opportunities both in formal and informal sectors, which clearly places a greater disadvantage on the latter. Such disparity extends and breaches the economic, political, and socio–cultural issues and problems that developed and developing nations deal with.

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9 Sen, Poverty: An ordinal approach to measurements, 219-231; Brando and Pitasse, Capability and Deprivation and Multidimensional Poverty Measures, 1-23; OECD, The DAC Guidelines Poverty Reduction.

10 Cobbinah, Dynamics of Poverty in Developing Countries: A Review of Poverty Reduction Approaches, 25-35; United Nations, United Nations millennium declaration (2000); Sumner, Meaning versus measurement: Why do 'economic' indicators of poverty still predominate?, 4-13; Khan et al., Approximation of Multidimensional Poverty across Regions in Pakistan, 24:2; Bourguignon and Chakravarty, The measurement of multidimensional poverty, 25-50; Mwangi, Markelova and Meinzen-Dick, Collective Action and Property Rights for Poverty Reduction, 1-39; Feeny and McDonald, Vulnerability to multidimensional poverty: findings from households in Melanesia, 447-464; Abraham and Kumar, Multidimensional poverty measurement and analysis, 77-87; Chakravarty, Analyzing multidimensional well-being: a quantitative approach, (2017).

11 Silva-Laya, et al. Urban poverty and education, 1-20.

12 Haughton and Khander, Handbook on poverty and inequality (2009).

13 Mwangi, Markelova and Meinzen-Dick, Collective Action and Property Rights for Poverty Reduction, 1-39; Cobbinah, Dynamics of Poverty in Developing Countries: A Review of Poverty Reduction Approaches, 25-35.

14 Mwangi, Markelova and Meinzen-Dick, Collective Action and Property Rights for Poverty Reduction, 1-39; Pham, Mukhopadhaya and Vu, Estimating poverty and vulnerability to monetary and non-monetary poverty: the case of Vietnam, 3125-3177; Nyasulu, Revisiting the definition of poverty, 147-158; Whelan, Nolan and Maitre, Measuring consistent poverty in Ireland, 211-234; Alkire and Santos, Acute multidimensional poverty: A new index for developing countries, UNDP Human Development Report (2010); Alkire et al., Multidimensional poverty measurements and analysis, Overview of Methods for Multidimensional Poverty Assessment (Chapter 3); Ravallion, On Multidimensional Indices of Poverty, The World Bank (2011); Yu, Multidimensional poverty in China, 315-336; Tsui, Multidimensional poverty indices, 69-93.

15 Pham, Mukhopadhaya and Vu, Estimating poverty and vulnerability to monetary and non-monetary poverty: the case of Vietnam, 3125-3177; Howe and Mckay, Combining quantitative and qualitative methods in assessing chronic poverty, 197-211.

16 Mwangi, Markelova and Meinzen-Dick, Collective Action and Property Rights for Poverty Reduction, 1-39.

17 Wolf-Phillips, Why Third World?, 105-115.

18 Pineda-Ofreneo, Module 11: Third World Feminism, 149-169.

Further, neoliberal globalization unfortunately plays a heavy role, serving and favoring global elites. With neoliberal policies and globalization at its peak, the rich become richer and the poorest of the poor stay poor or become even poorer. Moreover, with markets being the most powerful players, their interest to generate and maximize profit are prioritized while natural resources are depleted and exploited–– and at the end of it all, the poorest households in the poorest nations are the most affected. Further, "as a third world nation, international and national economic and political policies do not allow their country to progress as much as it should, thus perpetuating a large gap between the rich and the poor."[19] Interestingly, the effects of such a huge gap can be strongly witnessed in the Philippines, particularly in urban poor communities, seeing as increasing frequencies of economic and non–economic shocks pushes more households from only being considered as vulnerable to actually falling under the poverty line.[20]

Measuring Poverty and the Effectiveness of Poverty Reduction

One way of addressing poverty requires measurement and careful selection of proxy indicators, while simultaneously taking its multidimensionality into account.[21] Poverty reduction has traditionally been assessed using monetary forms of deprivation[22] (i.e. income, consumption) but growing trends in research expanded such rigid indicators to address wider spectra of human needs, such as their wellbeing.[23] Poverty's multidimensionality then calls for the coalescing of quantitative and qualitative measures that complement each other in the formation of realistic policies that alleviate poverty and the measurement of its relative success.

The World Bank[24] introduced new measures and estimates of poverty to adapt to its changing characteristics.[25] Going beyond the national poverty statistics and into relative comparisons to the international poverty line[26]—a measure of societal poverty—was recommended. A gendered aspect was also put forward in that statistics should include estimates of the numbers of women, children, and young adults living in households, and the number of female–headed households below the poverty line. The multidimensionality aspect of poverty is engrained in the Sustainable Development Goal 1: "End poverty in all its forms everywhere"[27] and can be supported by other SDGs including hunger (Goal 2), health (Goal 3), and education (Goal 4) in estimating the nonmonetary dimensions of poverty.

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19 Pineda-Ofreneo, *Module 11: Third World Feminism*, 149-169.
20 Pham, Mukhopadhaya and Vu, Estimating poverty and vulnerability to monetary and non-monetary poverty: the case of Vietnam, 3125-3177.
21 Bourguignon and Chakravarty, The measurement of multidimensional poverty, 25-50; Tsui, Multidimensional poverty indices, 69-93; Pham, Mukhopadhaya and Vu, Estimating poverty and vulnerability to monetary and non-monetary poverty: the case of Vietnam, 3125-3177; Alkire and Santos, Acute multidimensional poverty: A new index for developing countries, UNDP Human Develpment Report; Alkire et al., Multidimensional poverty measurements and analysis, Overview of Methods for Multidimensional Poverty Assessment (Chapter 3); Ravallion, On Multidimensional Indices of Poverty, The World Bank.
22 Pham, Mukhopadhaya and Vu, Estimating poverty and vulnerability to monetary and non-monetary poverty: the case of Vietnam, 3125-3177.
23 Khan, Role of Education in Poverty Reduction (A Literature Review), 124-134.
24 The World Bank set up a Commission on Global Poverty, a high-level commission advising the Group on how to measure and monitor poverty at a global scale. See https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/commission-on-global-poverty.
25 World Bank, *Monitoring Global Poverty: Report of the Commission on Global Poverty,* 2017. Accessible at: https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/25141/9781464809613.pdf.
26 Currently at USD 1.90 per person/day. In Fall 2022, this will be at USD 2.15, following the switch to using 2017 PPPs. See Filmer, Fu, and Sanchez-Paramo, "An adjustment to global poverty lines" World Bank Blogs, 2022. Accessible at: https://blogs.worldbank.org/voices/adjustment-global-poverty-lines.
27 Emphasis supplied. Sustainable Development Goals, https://sdgs.un.org/goals.

PROBLEM DESCRIPTION

Urban poverty in Metro Manila

The Poverty and Equity Brief on the Philippines, published by the World Bank, details that about 17.8 million Filipinos (16.7% of the population) live below the national poverty line in 2018.[28] This figure has improved from 23.5% in 2015, and such improvement can be traced to various reasons, including "the transition of workers from agriculture to better paying jobs, principally in the services sector; to increases in government spending on social programs, most notably through expanded coverage of the conditional cash transfer program, Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program; and to improvements in nonfarm enterprises revenues."[29] However, as in many developing countries, these small gains were soon reversed by the global pandemic. The Asian Development Bank reports that in 2021, 23.7% of the population were living below the national poverty line.[30]

Using the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative's Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)[31], rural provinces in the Philippines score 0.03 and the urban areas a close 0.02. Meanwhile, 9.88% of rural provinces' population and 4.05% of urban settlers are highly vulnerable to fall under the poverty line.[32] This does not aim to create a direct comparison between urban and rural parts of the country, but rather present how varying settings experience poverty differently. As can be observed in the figure above, the National Capital Region, or Metro Manila, scores the least headcount ratio to regional poverty in the Philippines, however,the case is more intricate than what the numbers suggest. This picture proves incomplete: Manila houses the largest and richest villages, in effect, evening out the index result and offsetting the low scores from the urban poor villages. Pure data does not encapsulate nor fully represent the actual living situations of the extreme poor domiciled in the country's most urban, dynamic, and globalized city. It does not do justice to use one yardstick to measure and assess the type of (aggregated) poverty and later lead to a conclusion that the poor in Manila do not compare to the poor in rural communities. Using this case, the project aims to reiterate how quantitative approaches can present limitations when it comes to nuanced context-building and further offer solutions that might be misguided.

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28 World Bank, *Philippines Poverty and Equity Brief - East Asia & Pacific,* April 2022. Accessible at: https://databank.worldbank.org/data/download/poverty/987B9C90-CB9F-4D93-AE8C-750588BF00QA/current/Global_POVEQ_PHL.pdf.
29 Ibid.
30 Asian Development Bank, Poverty Data: Philippines. Accessible at: https://www.adb.org/countries/philippines/poverty.
31 The global MPI is a multidimensional index of poverty used in 105 countries. It complements traditional measures of poverty, based on dimensions that capture the deprivation experienced simultaneously by each person regarding health, education, and living standards. The construction of the index follows the Alkire-Foster Method, developed by Sabina Alkire and James Foster within the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative.
32 Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa, *The Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) 2021*, OPHI MPI Methodological Note 51, Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative.

Uncensored Headcount Ratio (%) of All to the Poverty at the Sub-National Regions of Philippines
(Data Source: DHS, 2017)

Figure I. Ratio of All to the Poverty at the Sub–National Regions of the Philippines [33]

Much of the Philippines' development is concentrated in Metro Manila, considered as the largest city in terms of area and population. At the same time, however, the capital is also where most of the country's urban poor communities can be found, with this number registering a concerning increase.[34] Slums are often described using different terms such as squatters, informal settlements, or shanty towns, but a common thread is that these are highly populated urban areas where poverty is exacerbated by extreme miserable living conditions.
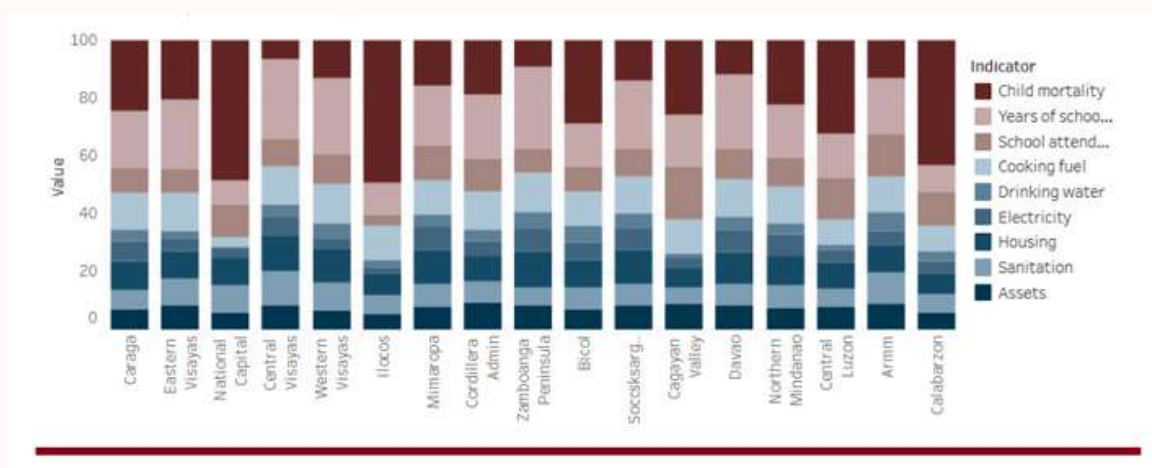
Figure II. Ratio of the Indicators to the Poverty Scores in Sub–National Regions[35]

33 Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa, *The Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) 2021*, OPHI MPI Methodological Note 51, Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative.

34 Singh and Gadgil, *Navigating Informality: Perils and Prospects in Metro Manila's Slums,* (World Bank, 2017).

35 Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa, The Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) 2021, OPHI MPI Methodological Note 51, Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative.
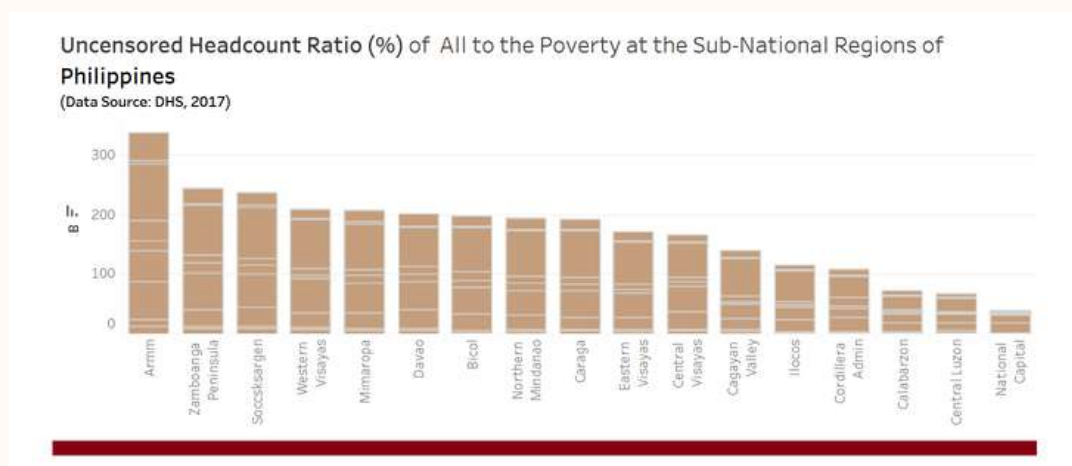
Highly known to be the face of poverty in the Philippines, Metro Manila slums are characterized by high crime rates, large landfills, big families, water and air pollution, and lack of proper housing and sanitation. It is where most impoverished families reside and where one can witness the poorest and worst living and working environment in the country. In these quarters, Filipino families struggle to survive in makeshift homes that line railroad tracks, polluted rivers, and one of the world's most densely populated city's garbage dumps. The living situation in these urban poor communities is the most visible representation of the worst of urban poverty and inequality. The figure above presents child mortality as the primary poverty indicator in the region which can be attributed to the slum environment children grow up in.

Rapid urbanization has resulted in the increase of informal settlements and urban poor communities, further proliferated by the lack of basic infrastructure and services in the city.[36] Most of the informal settlers originate from the provinces and rural areas. Due to their desperate need to survive, they braved their way to the city in hopes of finding more jobs and opportunities that may improve their conditions. As the Philippines' Manila-centric industrial development and the relative poverty of rural areas continuously drive most of the poor toward the capital, urban planning proves unable to keep up with the exponential rise in the urban population. Slums are essentially the result of a poor society where the uneven development of some sectors have pushed those economically disadvantaged to "try their luck where the chances of success are greater"[37]. In the case of the Philippines, that destination is Metro Manila—even if it means living in and navigating such insecurity and precariousness in life.

36 Ballesteros, *Linking Poverty and the Environment: Evidence from Slums in Philippine Cities*, 1-31.
37 Hollnsteiner, *Metamorphosis: From Tondo Squatter to Tondo Settler*, 211-215.

"Niraraos ko ang araw–araw."
(Everyday, we just get by.)

–Bebe, a corn seller and a mother of nine, shared that she has not managed to escape the storm as she had to repair her makeshift home under a bridge and work out how to make a living as her supply of corn dries up[38]

Case selection: Happyland, Tondo, Manila

This project focuses on the infamous slum, poverty-ridden district of Tondo. Apart from the daily struggle of economic impoverishment in the slums, life in this community is further worsened by a massive lack of essential public services, rampant crime, and the normalized prevalence of natural disasters. Overall, selecting Tondo allows the researchers to examine a case that is a stark reflection of extreme urban poverty and to flesh out its multidimensional aspects in order to arrive at a holistic project addressing the community's pressing problems. As will be revealed later on, the case of Tondo is a brilliant example of why purely quantitative methods tend to be severely detached from the realities they proclaim to measure. The selected community also offers proximity to resources, health facilities, government offices, and NGOs.

Tondo is the most populous district in Manila, lodging about 38% (around 676,835[39]) of the entire population of Manila.[40] Informal settlements in the city have been called "forgotten places" in depicting that urban and development planners seem to ignore place-based poverty alleviation, especially against the background of a globalizing Metro Manila.[41]

Behind the sharp increase of the urban poor settlement in Tondo was "its proximity to numerous large income generation establishments" post-World War II.[42] Most of the families in the district have lived there for generations[43], roughly escaping poverty. Yet, no matter the bad living conditions, "the overwhelming consensus is that Manila is where they must stake their family's future"[44]. The majority of them come from the economically-depressed regions of the country, where they face little to no chances of getting stable employment and just working conditions. But their hopeful risk does not reflect the conditions the communities in Tondo face today: employment levels remain low, and, even in circumstances one is employed, they find themselves "subject to continued hostility both from urban authorities and from the wealthier sections of the city's population"[45].

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38 Al Jazeera. Storm Rising-The Slum (Episode 3). Documentary accessible at https://youtu.be/t818Kqde2X0.
39 Department of Health, Age-Specific Population Projection, 2020, National Capital Region. Accessible at https://doh.gov.ph/sites/default/files/publications/Age-Specific%20Population%20Projection%2C%202020%2C%20NCR.pdf.
40 World Population Review, https://worldpopulationreview.com/world-cities/manila-population.
41 Shatkin, Planning to Forget: Informal Settlements as "Forgotten Places" in Globalising Metro Manila, 2469–2484.
42 Lakha and Pinches, Poverty and the "new society" in Manila, 371-378.
43 Al Jazeera, Philippines: Deliverance – The Slum (Episode 1). Documentary accessible at: https://youtu.be/Uwo5rjiIEsQ.
44 Hollnsteiner, Metamorphosis: from Tondo squatter to Tondo settler, 211-215.
45 Lakha and Pinches, Poverty and the "new society" in Manila, 371-378.

A dated study found that about 43% of the employed population in the district only had temporary jobs.[46] As most of them had no formal education, some who were extremely fortunate to have access to it, needed to have multiple informal jobs in order to survive. On top of the harsh unemployment situation, doing underground work or going into the black market is the only option for others, but this only worsens their situation as it makes them more vulnerable to exploitation, perpetuating a cycle of poverty.

By the late 1980s, average monthly expenditure, mostly on food, was higher than average monthly income.[47] Despite this expenditure ratio, their inability to access nutritious food has still resulted in increased morbidities and mortality, especially among children, food insecurity and malnourishment.

First called "Hapilan", which literally translates to dumpsite or garbage in Visayan language, Happyland in Tondo is the emblematic figure of dumpsite poverty. It is the largest wasteyard in the city and serves as home to about 20,000–40,000 people.[48] Like in any other slum area in Tondo, many of its residents scavenge for a living; and to feed themselves, they would collect discarded food, or pagpag[49], to reheat if the few pesos earned the entire day cannot afford instant food packs.[50] Children wander about barefoot and bare-chested, women ready the small carts they would later use to sell street food, men make do with whatever scavenged material they can refurbish and resell — Happyland surely contradicts its name.

46 Munarriz, Traditional vs Modern Behaviour in a Housing Development Project: The Tondo Foreshore Community, 143-152.
47 Ibid.
48 Figures are estimates. See Happyland 360 Documentary, accessible at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wc-0u1wGOX4.
49 Pagpag refers to leftover food from restaurants (often from fast food) scavenged from garbage sites or dumps. See, GMA Public Affairs Reporter's Notebook: Tira-tirang pagkain o pagpag, bumubuhay sa mahihirap na pamilyang Pilipino, accessible at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UyInDEOo9Vk.
50 Orleck and Cooke, "They call this Happyland: A heartbreaking view from inside the Manila slums," accessible at: https://glam4good.com/they-call-this-happy-land-a-heartbreaking-view-from-inside-manila-slums-on-thanksgiving-day/.

During the height of the COVID–19 pandemic, families relied heavily on state support for food and sustenance given the lockdown restrictions which essentially rendered them jobless. For the 38% of the residents relying on jobs in the informal economy[51], making a living through selling food or trinkets on makeshift pushcarts and mats, scavenging from heaps of trash that heavily contained mixture of medical waste among others, fishing or diving in murky waters, or working in tiny beauty salons — all of it, including the little access to school, stopped for the residents of Happyland.[52]

Quarantine protocols, notably physical distancing, proved to be more of a privilege rather than a precautionary measure in the slums.[53] Although much of the world is affected by the pandemic, the urban poor are the most severely impacted. Manila residents with steady incomes, access to food and grocery deliveries, and good internet were challenged at most with adjusting to new schedules of online meetings and classes, and getting creative with their idle days.[54] Meanwhile, the urban poor were worried about how to make a kilo of rice last for two days with a family of five, or where the next meal would come after that.[55]

With the barangay's extremely young population, the modal age being 5–9 years old[56], poverty alleviation at the present is quite challenging, having a lot of dependents-to-supporter ratio. Still, at the same time, it gives the temporal space needed for an established and successful project to deliver its visions — those who are able to take part in poverty alleviation initiatives now can influence and shape the future of this young population, in the hopes that they might just, gradually, be able to escape poverty.

51 Castillo, *Grey Economy and Sickly Recovery: Informal Women Workers in Pandemic-Ravaged Philippines,* https://focusweb.org/grey-economy-and-sickly-recovery-informal-women-workers-in-pandemic-ravaged-philippines/.
52 Haynes, Thousands of Metro Manila's poorest left out as deadly coronavirus spreads, Rappler, https://www.rappler.com/nation/255329-metro-manila-poorest-left-out-as-coronavirus-spreads/1.
53 Kwong, *[OPINION] Happy in Happyland: Notes from Tondo during the lockdown,* Rappler, https://r3.rappler.com/move-ph/ispeak/261347-opinion-happy-happyland-tondo.
54 Ibid.
55 Haynes, Thousands of Metro Manila's poorest left out as deadly coronavirus spreads, Rappler, https://www.rappler.com/nation/255329-metro-manila-poorest-left-out-as-coronavirus-spreads/1.
56 PhilAtlas, *Barangay 105 City of Manila*, Philippine Statistics Authority, 2022, https://www.philatlas.com/luzon/ncr/manila/barangay-105.html.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR POVERTY REDUCTION IN TONDO, MANILA

Multidimensional characteristic of poverty

Gender

Over time, Third World scholars have noted that, in situations of poverty, poor women outnumbered poor men. Termed as the feminization of poverty, gender proves to be a consistent factor affecting deprivation in individuals much like age, geographical location, and educational attainment, among others.[57] The feminization of poverty theory posits that women possess different experiences of deprivation over men, as the sexual division of labor contributes to the issue and prevents women from attaining equality in terms of material and social assets (e.g. education, training, and paid labor), cultural advantages (e.g. formal education and cultural knowledge needed in social environments), and access to decision–making in the political, economic, and social spheres.[58]

Studying poverty through the lens of gender illustrates the difference in the study of women in situations of poverty (compared to poverty in general) as it takes into account both the social and household structure reflecting the cultural values held by the community. These structures are a manifestation of gendered hierarchies which dictate the distribution of resources, the differing needs of women and men in the household, and the power dynamics in specific domestic situations and in society at large. Women and girls are disproportionately affected by poverty because they are more likely to feel its impacts rooted in their already disadvantaged positions to begin with.[59]

In the case of the Philippines, the Filipino family is the site where clear–cut gender roles and expectations are passed on and developed.[60] The dynamic within Filipino families is more favorable toward sons in more ways than one: parents prefer them as first–borns over daughters, they invest more in their education and material resources, and they are granted more freedom than their sisters.[61] At an early age, children pick up notions of what is considered "feminine" and "masculine" work and which one is more valued. Upon reaching adolescence, such biased attitudes privileging men over women become more pronounced and eventually shape the way they participate within the community.

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57 Cremin and Nakabugo, *Education, development and poverty reduction: A literature critique*, 499-501.
58 Khan, *Role of Education in Poverty Reduction (A Literature Review)*, 125-127, 129-133; Gu and Nie, *Does empowering women benefit poverty reduction? Evidence from a multi-component program in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region of China*, 1096-1098, 1102-1104.
59 Ruspini, The study of women's deprivation: How to reveal the gender dimension of poverty, 104-105; Yap and Melchor, Beyond parity in education: gender disparities in labour and employment outcomes in the Philippines, 2-4, 10-11.
60 Liwag, de la Cruz, and Macapagal, How We Raise Our Daughters and Sons: Child-reading and Gender Socialization in the Philippines, 35.
61 Ibid.

Looking at the gender dimension broadens the definition of poverty, one that goes beyond meeting the minimum basic needs but also tackles having opportunities and choices, or the lack thereof. Filipino women living in the slums of Tondo have fewer resources and opportunities to cope with their situation and change it. They get less access to education, employment, and basic infrastructure such as clean water and public healthcare services. The gendered division of labor relegates more domestic responsibilities to women and yet their labor is often unrewarded and their needs not prioritized. Given this asymmetric power dynamic, women hold less decision–making power and become more dependent on others which further makes them vulnerable to sexual and physical violence. Gender exacerbates such living conditions for poor women, leaving them with minimal means to escape the cycle of poverty.

Education

Focusing on the Third World, the approach to poverty and poverty reduction has shifted from amassing economic gains to the development of political systems, communities, social cohesion, culture, and values. Among these contemporary objectives include increased participation in and advancement of the school system with the inclusion of women on an equitable basis.[62] Addressing education in poverty reduction strategies has affirmed that higher education and skills training increase human productive capacity resulting in higher wages, as posited by the human capital theory. However, education and poverty prove to be correlational, as poverty in itself serves as a major constraint in educational attainment. In settings of poverty, women are found more vulnerable due to the interplay of educational and economic disadvantages, cultural values, and their individual domestic situations.[63]

In the Philippines, education is an ambition for both sons and daughters regardless of economic circumstances. In Tondo, for example, Chito Barquin makes ends meet to feed the six other members of his family and support his daughter's education. He uses a makeshift diving gear to gather mussels, crabs, and scraps that can be resold from Manila's polluted harbors. At times, what he gathers is only enough for a single meal, and his daughter wonders if she will still have enough allowance to spend in school. Barquin states that as long as his daughter finishes her education, it would still be worth it even if the family does not have anything to eat for the day.[64]

62 Khan, *Role of Education in Poverty Reduction (A Literature Review)*, 125-127.
63 Gu and Nie, Does empowering women benefit poverty reduction? Evidence from a multi-component program in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region of China, 1093, 1097-1098.
64 Al Jazeera English, Risky Business-The Slum (Episode 2), 10:50-15:07.

Interestingly, there is a higher expectation for sons to finish their education, to pursue better employment opportunities and assume the role of breadwinners.[65] Contrastingly, daughters are expected to help with household chores and taking care of their younger siblings while balancing other familial responsibilities and piling that on top of the pressure to successfully establish their careers. Daughters are generally seen as an investment and expected to take care of aging family members. In Tondo, for example, Dante's daughter stopped her schooling since she needed to take care of her mother who has depression. Prior to this, Dante had given up driving his jeepney and the family was left with no means to support themselves. Relying on charitable programs and food donations that arrive once a week, the family came to the decision for Diane, their daughter, to stop her schooling so she can take care of her mother while Dante is away for work.[66] This setback in gender roles within the household dampens the Philippines' progress in its efforts towards gender equality, bleeding into children's education, their opportunities, and further progression.[67]

Further along, the results do not translate into employment opportunities as women are subject to cultural, institutional, and structural factors such as stereotypical conceptions, gender-based discrimination, and lack of enforcement of gender policies in the workplace. This is evident in the case of the Learning and Livelihood Project (LLP) which emancipated women in depressed areas in Mindanao and allowed them to participate in community development work. LLP, as an initiative by local government stakeholders, people's organizations, Administrative Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) agencies, and World Bank consultants, offered functional literacy training, household food production activities, income-generating activities, and savings mobilization. This project allowed women a transformation in roles within the household and in society as their skills provided them with a cooperative initiative which allowed them to generate employment and build social capital, similar to the Support Activities for Poor Producers of Nepal (SAPPROS) initiative.[68] However, in a similar initiative for agriculture aimed at improving the skills of women in depressed communities in the Philippines, it was affirmed that the lack of formal education and training in their earlier years limited their participation and confidence in engaging in this sector.

65 Liwag, de la Cruz, and Macapagal, *How We Raise Our Daughters and Sons: Child-rearing and Gender Socialization in the Philippines,* 8-9.
66 Al Jazeera English, *Risky Business-The Slum (Episode 5)*, 36:58-43:25.
67 Liwag, de la Cruz, and Macapagal, How We Raise Our Daughters and Sons: Child-rearing and Gender Socialization in the Philippines, 19-25.
68 Geneva Graduate Institute, The Geneva Challenge 2022: How can community-based solutions be used to reduce poverty?; Sealza, Women Empowerment Through Learning and Livelihood Project (LLP) in Southern Philippines, 2-7.
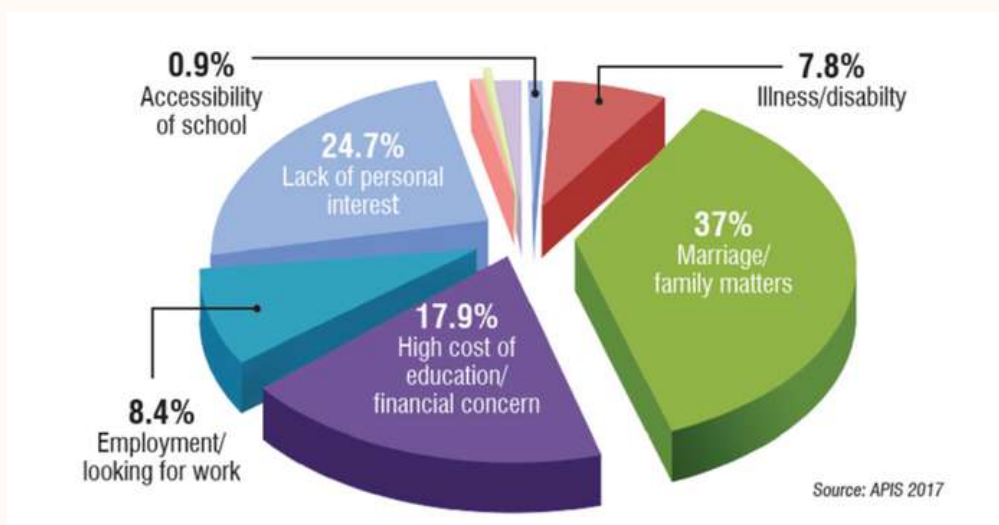
Figure III. Distribution of Out of School Youth by Reason for Not Attending School, 2017[69]

Specifically, the Philippines' Department of Education (DepEd) found that pre-pandemic, most out-of-school youth were largely those forced to stop schooling due to personal and family circumstances, low family incomes, early and forced marriages, as well as teenage pregnancies. These have restricted them from economic opportunities as adolescent pregnancies lead to a choice away from schools and education. This affects females aged 16-24 the most, casting them deeper into cycles of poverty, which by itself already plays a huge factor for school nonattendance. Figures show that 76% of out-of-school youth belong to the poorer half of the population.[70] While early school dropouts were somehow eased through the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps)[71] where parents in poor households were incentivized to keep their children in school through monetary dole outs, it was not enough and was exacerbated by the effects of and changes brought by the Covid-19 pandemic. A 9% decline in enrolment, or 2.3 million out-of-schoolers was observed in 2020-2021 alone[72], mostly attributed to the transition to distance learning modalities. Furthermore, students moving from the city to provincial schools or from private to public schools became another apparent trend. This places a setback for education and feeds into the cycle of poverty by exposing the already vulnerable poor to unexpected covariate shocks that hinders development and learning.

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69 Department of Education Enhanced Basic Education Information System (EBEIS) SY 2018-2019, Learner Information System (LIS) Data.
70 Department of Education, The Challenge: ALS-EST Handbook for Implementers, 1-6
71 Gamboa, [BUSINESS] *Dropouts left behind in the pandemic (2021),* The Philippine Star Entry, https://www.philstar.com/business/2021/06/29/2108717/dropouts-left-behind-pandemic
72 Department of Education, *Official Statement on LESF* (July 2020) and *On claims of massive dropout in basic education* (January 2021)

Climate change and the environment

Climate has been exhaustively described as a "threat multiplier"[73], rendering millions vulnerable to natural disasters, poverty, violence, conflict, and even state failure.[74] Developing countries face more difficulties[75] such as grave lack of resources and technology to cope with and address pressing climate-related issues. It thereby exacerbates the already frequent wipeout of their livelihood, housing, and other public infrastructures as it aggravates pollution, flooding, and extreme weather events.[76] As climate plays a crucial dimension in terms of vulnerability and adaptation, adding gender dimensions highlights the disproportionate impacts of climate change.[77]

On top of this, women are statistically less likely to survive hazardous evacuations, have insufficient privacy and hygiene-support in shelters, and suffer more gender-related violence following climate disasters.[78] With widening welfare gaps, women are continually left to adapt with less capital, food security, and livelihood.[79] Their access to family planning services, education, and opportunities is threatened. On top of greater damage costs, women's perceived vulnerability and virtuousness lead to increased household responsibility, but without corresponding rewards and only heightened feminization of poverty.[80]

73 Brainard, Jones and Purvis, *Climate Change and Global Poverty*, 155-180; Frankhauser and Stern, *Climate Change, Development, Poverty and Economics*, 1-30

74 Busby, *Who Cares about the Weather? Climate Change and U.S. National Security*, 468-504; Human Security Report Project, *Human Security Report 2008*; Brainard, Jones and Purvis, *Climate Change and Global Poverty*, 155-180.

75 Purvis and Busby, The Security Implications of Climate Change for the UN System; Kelman, Island Security and Disaster Diplomacy in the Context of Climate Change, 61-94; Brainard, Jones and Purvis, Climate Change and Global Poverty, 155-180; Sellers, Gender and Climate Change: A Closer Look at Existing Evidence, Global Gender and Climate Alliance, Nov 2016 Report, 1-27; Enarson, Fothergill and Peek, Gender and disaster: foundations and directions, 130-146.

76 Brainard, Jones and Purvis, Climate Change and Global Poverty, 155-180.

77 The IPCC emphasizes that "existing gender inequalities are increased or heightened by climate-related hazards," recognizing that these "gendered impacts result from customary roles in society, often entailing higher workloads, occupational hazards, indoors and outdoors, psychological and emotional distress, and mortality in climate-related disasters." See IPCC, Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

78 Sellers, Gender and Climate Change: A Closer Look at Existing Evidence, Global Gender and Climate Alliance, Nov 2016 Report, 1-27; Heyward, A growing problem? Dealing with population increases in climate justice, 703-732; Alam and Collins, Cyclone disaster vulnerability and repsonse experiences in coastal Bangladesh, 931-954; Ross, A feminist perspective on Katrina, The Women of Katrina: How Gender, Race, and Class Matter in an American Disaster, 15-23; Parkinson, Farrant and Duncan, Women and children. Climate Change Adaptation for Health and Social Services, 177-139.

79 Sellers, *Gender and Climate Change: A Closer Look at Existing Evidence,* Global Gender and Climate Alliance, Nov 2016 Report, 1-27

80 Used to explain differences between male and female poverty, stresses that gender and poverty are two distinct forms of disadvantage, this view borderline reduces women and their capabilities or discriminates them as they are placed in a boxed generalization/stereotype; Arora-Jonsson, *Virtue and vulnerability: Discourses on women, gender and climate change*, 744-775; Ross, *A feminist perspective on Katrina, The Women of Katrina: How Gender, Race, and Class Matter in an American Disaster*, 15-23.

Manila is a coastal city housing an urban population, which makes it all the more vulnerable to climate change. In the case of Tondo, women slum dwellers and informal settlers are forced to confront more dimensions of poverty on a daily basis – environmental and dumpsite poverty.[81] Their poor living conditions, compounded by extreme weather events, have a detrimental impact on their physical and mental health[82], livelihood, and security, alienating and excluding them from any growth. By extension, poor school performance among children, moreso girls, is expected, along with their susceptibility to dropping out to help with finances, committing crimes, and resorting to violence.[83] With high susceptibility to floods and storm surges, Tondo, as in other coastal urban districts, sees its inhabitants rendered more vulnerable because of poor infrastructure, reduced access to water and sanitation, and lack of access to health services.[84] Post-disaster, the poor are also more likely to forego food, health, education, to finance their recovery.[85]

This multidimensional case of poverty in the Tondo slums harks for more inclusive and consultative policymaking processes and implementation, more government and local support for capacity-building, and enrichment of community approaches that translate to sustainable solutions. Addressing climate dimensions of slum poverty also forges long-term benefits in terms of better livelihood options with less health risks as is currently the case for the slum fishermen, divers, scavengers, and workers.

81 Ballesteros, Linking Poverty and the Environment: Evidence from Slums in Philippine Cities, 1-31.
82 Rylander, Odland and Sandanger, Climate change and potential effects on maternal and pregnancy outcomes: an assessment of the most vulnerable - the mother, fetus, and newborn child (2013); Barmania, Typhoon Haiyan recovery: progress and challenges, 1197-1199; Dixon, et al., Association of weekly suicide rates with temperature anomalies in two different climate types, 11627-11644.
83 Ballesteros, 2010; Deak, Violence as a Dimension of Poverty, 33-51.
84 World Bank, Getting a Grip on Climate Change in the Philippines: Executive Report. Accessible at:
https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/473371468332663224/pdf/788090WP0P13010nge0Executive0Report.pdf.
85 Wals and Hallegate, 2019, Measuring Natural Risks in the Philippines

What worked in similar communities?: Best practices to adopt

Tondo has been attracting many urban development and poverty reduction programs in the Philippines for decades now. However, attempts to eradicate informal settlements remain futile. As early as the 70s and 80s, these efforts have rendered little to no success because relocation sites were often remote and economically–depressed and, thus, livelihood opportunities were not available.[86] Seeing as employment is the main reason behind choosing to brave harsh living conditions in Manila, it is only right that poverty reduction efforts align with this theme to effectively hit the core of what is needed by these communities.

Many successful poverty alleviation efforts in the country find base in the rural areas.[87] A number of these programs cater to education and livelihood training, especially in the agricultural field. They are not easily adaptable to Tondo's situation, with it being situated in the urban zone, away from productive agricultural lands. Nevertheless, these types of projects inspire us to design activities that cater to the urban environment of informal settlers, and challenge us to think of ways on how to sweep off urban poverty through similar methods.

In the sister case of Payatas, Quezon City, another large dumpsite in the capital, a business generation project partnering with artisan women who had little access to raw materials and remained invisible in the market, has been successful in uplifting and empowering these women by giving them a decent livelihood.[88] A similar project in Zamboanga and Marawi City looked to provide sustainable sources of income to displaced women.[89] Perhaps the program most similar to our vision of reducing poverty in Tondo is that of Project PEARLS. In line with its objective to "help the poorest of the poor children to have a better life", one pillar of the project is empowerment through skills development. Their GROW project focuses on teaching livelihood skills to women and girls in a barangay in Bulacan, a nearby urbanized province just outside Metro Manila, to empower them.[90] A similar on–the–ground education–based project for children in Manila, supported by foreign management, has also been successful in meeting its vision of bridging children towards better futures.[91] Another project in Tondo focuses on food distribution, recognizing the necessity of improving the actual picture of hunger at present.[92]

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86 Berner, Poverty Alleviation and the Eviction of the Poorest: Towards Urban Land Reform in the Philippines, 554-566.

87 For example, Espoir School of Life in Siargao, Philippines. They provide free education to underprivileged children in the Philippines, while parents commit to help in cooking, farming, teaching & maintenance. Parents' involvement is crucial to the success of the project. See https://www.espoir.ngo/;

88 Rags2Riches is now a beloved eco-ethical fashion brand in the Philippines. Founded to help stay-at-home women in low income communities, their activities include weaving fabric scraps and turning them into reusable and sustainable materials for clothing. The project has now evolved to also involve artisans outside Payatas. See https://www.seastainable.co/blogs/seastainable-blog/weaving-joyful-stories-with-handwoven-bags-rags2riches-philippines.

89 Specifically, EmpoWomen aims to address young women's inability to finish school and to have a sustainable income because of this situation. It aspires to fulfill its vision through capacity building, networking and linkages, and micro-enterprise development. It envisions to branch out to other ASEAN communities. See https://empowomenph.wordpress.com/about/.

90 "GROW was created to address poverty and the lack of job skills and livelihood opportunities in the community. The program creates a positive impact on the environment because most of the products that they make are from upcycled materials. Aside from teaching them livelihood skills, GROW is also focused on nurturing and empowering girls to be educated, safe, and healthy." See https://www.projectpearls.org/empowerment-through-skills-development/.

91 ANAK-TNK is managed largely by a French team. Its mission is to help the poorest children in Manila by prioritizing key aspects: education, health, nutrition, and protection. See https://www.anak-tnk.org/.

92 The FEEDUCATE project by Salinlahi Alliance for Children's Concerns Inc. "aims to contribute in cushioning the impact of poverty to children by responding to their basic needs through feeding programs and educational support". See https://www.globalgiving.org/projects/educate-50-children-in-slums-of-tondo-manila/.

Abroad, among the most thriving poverty reduction projects is the Self-Employed Workers' Association (SEWA) Manager Ni School.[93] SEWA itself as a movement empowers poor women to achieve secure employment and self-reliance. It has grown to reach various Indian states, exposing more women to skills development and other opportunities tailored to fit their needs, livelihoods, and interests.

As we can infer from these examples, the most effective and practical way to reduce poverty in a given community is to physically reach out and assess which aspects can have the most impact when addressed. Through this exercise of seeing what has worked in different communities, the necessity to conduct needs-based assessments, as well as of consultative approaches and strategies, is highlighted. This will also promote inclusive growth as well as give the residents ownership of the program—painting them as participants and partners, and not as passive beneficiaries.

93 For more information, see http://www.sewamanagernischool.org/.

THE PROJECT: EMPOWHERTENT

Project overview

Figure IV. Mock-up of the actual EmpowHerTent set-up

Physicality

EmpowHerTent is represented by a mobile tent that easily welcomes participants and overcomes possible intimidation and hostility. It also conforms to the landscape of the target location and to its demographics, ensuring that the project will not be seen as a foreign, insensitive, and imposing pursuit.

The mobile tent will initially be hosted near the barangay hall but will remain under the banner of an independent project not affiliated to any political actor. While maintaining non-affiliation to any political entity, a letter of endorsement will be requested from the city mayor to secure the envisioned project site. This location can certainly attract curiosity from the residents and ensure that it gains the most visibility. It will also make sure that there is legitimized recognition from the leaders of the community, guaranteeing their cooperation and diminishing security risks. The Barangay 105 hall has also been serving as a relocation site for the communities when extreme weather events strike the community[94]; this location is therefore a significant site that might represent hope for the residents of Happyland.

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94 Henley, They Call it Happyland, Asian Geography, https://www.asiangeo.com/on-assignment/they-call-it-happyland/.

Program of activities

Activities were selected to complement viable partnerships with already-existing initiatives[95], the feasibility and practicality of products, their appeal to local consumers, in addition to the space they promise for creativity and autonomy. They also enable participants to develop a skill, build human capital, and feel more empowered upon gaining the working knowledge on mechanics, design, and production, and possibly even marketing and partnerships management in the long run. When a scheduled activity is not taking place, participants can continue working on their products to be rendered at a time agreed upon by the managing teams and the participants, considering the demands of the partners and the difficulty level of the activity. To be clear, participants are not limited to a single activity, but the project team will oversee that they are able to commit to these activities.

Other activities are education-focused to help spread awareness on reproductive health & family planning——to tackle women's health and bodily autonomy, the population crisis and other family matters, disaster risk reduction——to equip participants with the necessary knowledge to reduce mortality and vulnerability to natural hazards, and provide accessible assistance on basic reading, writing and arithmetic——to furnish them with basic competencies that can help them in their daily activities and future prospects. Potential partners for sessions on reproductive health and family planning are Likhaan Center and the Commission on Population and Development (POPCOM), while disaster risk reduction sessions can be held in partnership with the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), and the education focusing on basic reading, writing and arithmetic can tap the Dynamic Teen Company (DTC) and their Kariton (Pushcart) School program along with volunteer educators from within the community and interested universities. These building blocks will make technology transfer and sustainability goals much more achievable.

Crucially, two consultation sessions are scheduled in a week to ensure that the project activities are productive, retain interest, and actually cater to what is needed by the community. These also ensure that residents are proactive participants and voice out their concerns towards the project and beyond.

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95 For a list of partners, see page 29.

Specifically, EmpowHerTent allocates three classes a day of 1.5 hours each for a period of four days a week with weekly assessments. This is to accommodate varying schedules of availability of the participants. The hours will be divided according to the following scheme:

EmpowHerTent: Schedule of activities				
Time	Tuesday	Thursday	Saturday	Sunday
10:00-11:30	Soap and candle making	Eco bricks	Education: reading, writing, arithmetic	Consultation & assessment
11:30-12:00	BREAK			
12:00-13:30	Reproductive health and family planning	Bags and rags	Eco bricks	Education: Reading, Writing, Arithmetic
13:30-14:00	BREAK			
14:00-15:30	Bead products	Education: disaster risk reduction	Soap and candle making	Bags and rags
15:30-16:00	BREAK			
16:00-17:30	Education: reading, writing, arithmetic	Consultation & assessment	Bags and rags	Bead products

Table I. Planned schedule of activities (weekly)

- **Bead products, bags and rags, and soap and candle making:** Experts on these activities will allot the first 30 minutes for lecturing and explaining how to create the products, including the distribution of materials. The remaining hour will be for crafting the items with experts and volunteers available for questions and assistance.
- **Eco bricks:** This activity requires less explanation, but experts will still emphasize their importance in aiding sustainability efforts. In this area, experts will lecture and distribute materials for the first 20 minutes, with the rest of the time spent on creating compact eco bricks. Experts may need to spend less time on explanation on this activity as the project progresses.
- **Education:** For this activity, volunteers will divide 1.5 hours equally among practical reading, writing, and arithmetic activities. This activity aims to support children and adults who are in need of these skills to move out of the informal sector and have stable jobs with a steady income in the long run.

- **Reproductive health and family planning, and disaster risk reduction:** For these activities, experts and speakers from NGOs and government agencies will be invited into the communities to formulate a two-way exchange where the agencies understand the needs of the community through the view of its participants and so the participants can benefit from their services.
- Lastly, **consultation and assessment:** EmpowHerTent intends to support and implement adjustments according to the needs and views of the community and its participants so it will allocate a weekly session for consultation. This is in harmony with the monthly assessment surveys that will be distributed and implemented by the volunteers as the project progresses.

Model and theory of change

Focusing on the critical role of women in poverty reduction

Project X will tap the long-neglected potential of women in Happyland to contribute in improving the living conditions in the area. The goal of the project is to empower women and give them practical opportunities to learn, grow, and be able to feel secure.

Removing barriers to income-generating opportunities

Establishing itself in Happyland, Project X, as characterized by its humble tent, will welcome and invite residents of the *barangay*, particularly women, to take part, freely, in its income-generating opportunities tailored in the urban context.

Prioritizing activities that are practical, feasible, and creative

Project X will prioritize activities that are easy to facilitate and to learn. These activities reserve space for autonomy, independence, and creative. They are also practical and are certain to render productive outcomes for the benefit of the participants.

Creating sustainable partnerships

Project X will form partnerships with organizations that have been successfully implementing similar initiatives; like-minded brands and businesses; and other various networks, ensuring sustainable cooperation and upholding values that align with the vision of the project.

Scaling up and aiming for a bigger impact

Our goal is to have a bigger impact that goes beyond Happyland and other neighboring *barangays*. We envision Project X to be replicated in different parts of the country, with the urban poor population as a starting point and with activities tailored to fit their location, culture, and demographics.

Triggering a domino effect in society

Women have a high amplification potential, especially among other women and children. Participants in Happyland can easily transfer learnings to more residents, and even residents in other barangays, triggering a whole landscape of actors to be vectors of change in their society.

Ensuring a holistic learning environment

Our activities will not solely focus on business-making, but also on literacy and practical education, soft skills, and reproductive health. These aspects ensure that women in Happyland receive a well-rounded training that also invests in their future potential.

Figure V. Model and Theory of Change

The ultimate goal of the initiative is poverty reduction in Happyland, Tondo. With this in mind, the project looks into the different stages of change, connecting the long-term goal with intermediate ones and indicating preconditions that allow these changes to happen. The figure above sets out the theory of change proposed by the organization.

Rationale for the approach

Following the earlier assessment that the best approach is to physically reach out and perform assessments and consultations to arrive at impact-based responses, EmpowHerTent is envisioned to be a long-term sustainable project that fills the gap presented in the case of poverty in Happyland, Tondo. The selection of a tent instead of a more permanent infrastructure allows for flexibility and mobility, and reduces the risk of losing sunk costs in a very dynamic and disaster-risk ridden environment. The program focuses on capacity-building and education, and through the meal incentive, attempts to remove the barrier to learning and worries about daily meals as much as possible.

Tondo residents are already receptive to feeding and relief programs, as they are accustomed to these initiatives, which successfully draws participants and leverages similar concrete and material projects.The urban poor in Tondo have little to no access to the internet, and when they do, would be more likely to spend time on social networks rather than on productive alternatives like online trainings, educational platforms, or even job hunting. This resulted in the careful selection of the flagship products and timetable under EmpowHerTent. Other than being easy and quick to learn and apply, they do not rely too much on technology or continuous access to electricity and the internet, which is not a commodity for this community, but rather, a privilege.

Interest map for stakeholders

Municipal Government
(Government)

1. Support its citizens in skills training and education needed to have access to better job opportunities **(A)**
2. Encourage the growth of development projects in the community **(A)**
3. Uplift the confidence of the members of some of its poorest communities **(C)**
4. Foster belongingness and inclusivity **(B)**

Happyland
(Target community in Tondo)

1. Develop skills through training which can be used for business while still being able to provide care for the household **(A)**
2. Establish a stable, long-term source of income **(A)**
3. Receive educational support in areas such as reading, writing, and arithmetic needed in everyday life **(A)**
4. Harness a sense of empowerment through education **(C)**
5. Be informed and assisted through reproductive health education and family planning **(A)**

Donors and Marketing Partners

1. Advance shared advocacies in aiding communities in need of assistance (education, business recognition, and skills training) **(A)**
2. Derive good publicity by funding or sponsoring development projects

NGOs, Volunteers
(Civil society)

1. Share their expertise in skills presented to encourage productivity in the community **(A)**
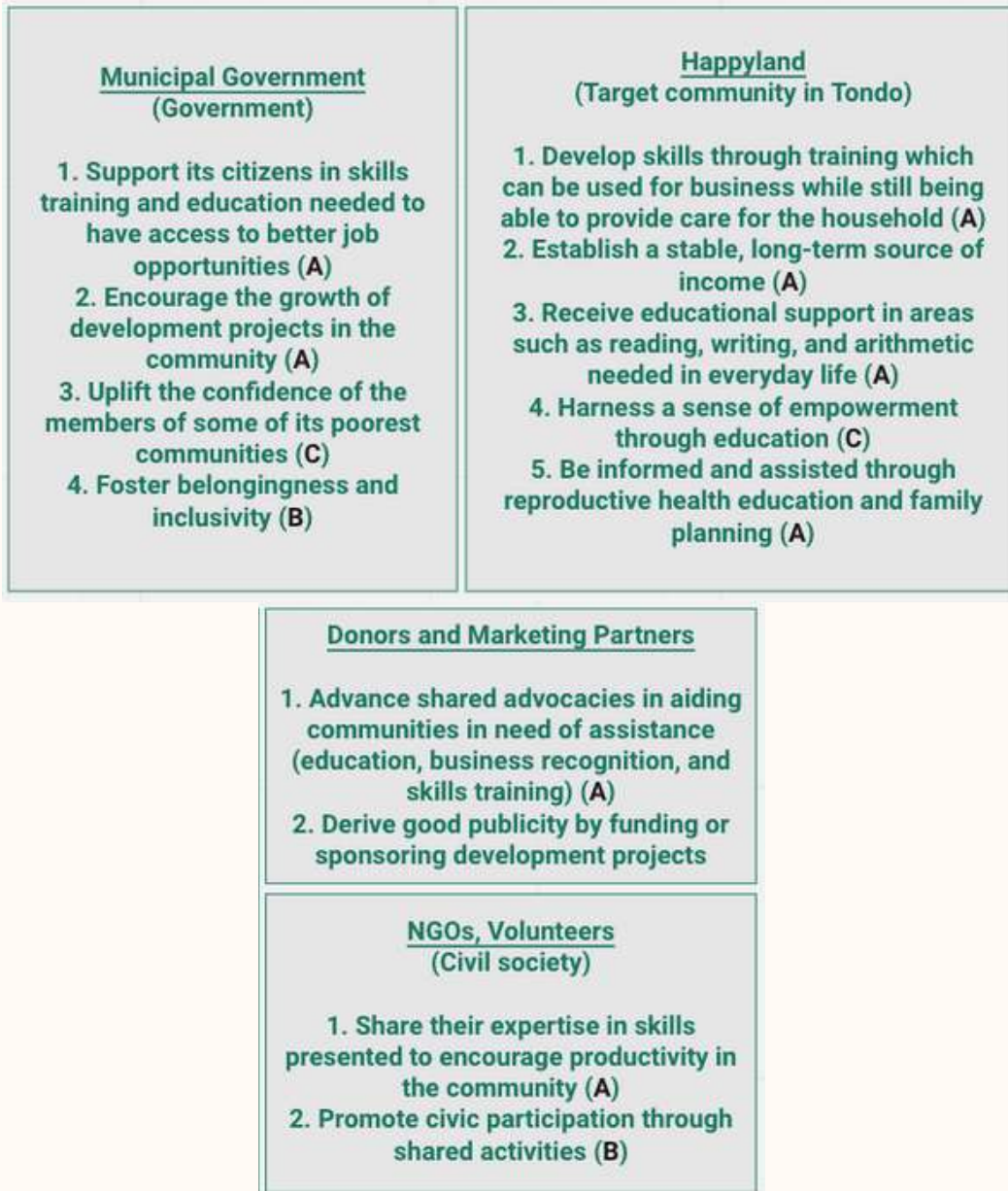2. Promote civic participation through shared activities **(B)**

Figure VI. Mapping actors that feed into the project realization

This figure shows the four main stakeholders in the project with the target community at the locus. The figure illustrates the interests and what the stakeholders stand to gain in the realization of the project. These groups share common interests and echoes the overarching goals of the project. As such, were categorized into those related to: **A)** education and skills training (capacity building), **B)** community building, and; **C)** a sense of empowerment.

Foreseen logistic and labor needs

EmpowHerTent requires support from volunteers and partner organizations at its onset. Volunteers may either help man the booths for signing up, help in weekly consultation visits, prepare and distribute meal incentives, hold the lectures and workshop events and contribute in any form as they see fit and as required. Certificates and recommendations will be provided, especially for volunteers to inspire the spirit of volunteerism and positive impact as a community culture. As sustainability through technology (more properly termed as knowledge/skill in this case) transfer is a success measure and long-term goal of EmpowHerTent, volunteers are also envisioned to come from within the community itself, where high school or college students can assist and teach in classes focused on basic reading, writing and arithmetic. Reaching this stage of in-community volunteerism further strengthens the other pillars and measures for success of the project which are community-building and sense of empowerment.

During the project launch and the first few weeks following it, little to no income is expected, as most funding will be spent on materials and other costs of starting the project, such as logistics. Thus, partnerships with local food manufacturing companies and farms might help incentivize the participants with ready-made snacks or meals in exchange for their attendance and participation. Meals were the ideal incentive for Tondo slum residents because families' primary worries revolve around putting food on the table. Relieving them of this worry can also ensure their focused energy and attention to learning new skills and coming up with innovative ideas for better sustainability. Additionally, other partners, sponsors and stakeholders can continually support EmpowHerTent by providing volunteers, funding and/or materials to be used in any aspect of the classes, workshops, and the meals.

Human effort on the ground for ingress, egress, and all the activities in between the given schedule will be drawn from the partnerships made with other local NGOs, government offices, start-ups, universities, and student organizations. Among these volunteers would also be the trainers who would distribute the materials, conduct the workshop, and monitor the participants' progress. Moreover, trainers would be seasoned in their respective activities in order to maximize time and cost, assuring that participants learn efficiently and products would have agreeable, marketable quality. Most of these partnerships will be voluntary, especially in the budding phase of the project, due to limited funding and the prioritization given to the participants' returns. This condition comes at a risk of temporary interest from partner institutions and volunteers, and might lead to quick volunteer fatigue. However, once the project becomes financially viable to support, it may hire permanent members of the team and agree to partnership terms that may come at a monetary cost. Below is a non-exhaustive list of possible sources of volunteers who can contribute their time and effort to the successful realization of EmpowHerTent:

LIST OF VOLUNTEER SOURCES	SHARED VALUES AND POINTS OF PARTNERSHIP
SPARK! (Samahan ng mga Pilipina para sa Reporma at Kaunalaran, Inc. – Filipinas for Reform and Development)	SPARK! is an NGO that empowers women and women organizations for them to be full partners in the overall national development. Similar to this project, SPARK! capacitates women to be firm decision makers, effective leaders of their lives, and more productive members of society through programs geared towards the economic development of women in various communities. SPARK! also extends mentoring and support services through financial literacy programs, value chain training, product development and other capacity building activities.
Upskills+ Foundation Inc.	Upskills+ works with communities, families, and individuals who are informal settlers experiencing extreme poverty and high unemployment by developing holistic and fully integrated services so they can change and upskill their own lives in the most sustainable way possible. They can provide livelihood training, skills training and development, employment and income generating projects, health assistance, welfare, and emergency relief programs, and help with the establishment of community-managed microenterprises.
AHA! Learning Center	This is a non-profit that serves public schools and communities with its free after-school programs that support and empower them to become future role models and community leaders. Apart from improving school performance, AHA! Also offers personalized bridging programs to achieve specific literacy levels through accessible modalities. Their modules also have a focus on increasing leadership and self-mastery skills.
Project Pearls	The core mission of Project PEARLS is to break the cycle of poverty through education, whether by providing adequate resources and support or through skills development training. This NGO regularly conducts its activities in Tondo and is thus familiar with the environment. They also launched livelihood programs for women using upcycled materials as well as special workshops that aim to educate them on a wide range of topics from basic literacy to reproductive health.
UP Economics Society	UP ECOSOC is a student organization that engages itself in numerous service-oriented activities to promote economics as a tool for national development. The members themselves conduct volunteer tutorials, daycare sessions, and other socio-civic undertakings in various communities.
Not A Daydream Manila	This is a non-profit organization that supports existing livelihood programs in Tondo. By training mothers to become bagmakers, helping them with product development and selling their products, they help mothers earn an income so they can keep their children in school. The brand Not A Daydream aims to make the products easier to market by building on existing livelihood program infrastructures and consolidating support from third parties for training and quality control.
Makesense Philippines	Makesense specializes in community development, support for entrepreneurial projects, and multi-sectoral collaborations. Given their extensive platform and active crowdsourcing efforts, they can contribute to expanding the call for volunteer engagements as well as connecting EmpowHerTent to more local partners.

Table II. List of potential volunteer networks

Funding

The successful launch and long-term solution that EmpowHerTent offers is anchored on its funding and sponsorships from potential organizations as listed below. The organizations were selected due to shared values and goals related to sustainability, positive impact, economic development, education, and women's empowerment. Potential sponsors and partners can provide financial support or in kind donations that may contribute to the need for materials in classes and workshops, food packs, or any other logistics-related necessities. Organizations like ECHOsi Foundation, Inc., the Philippine Commission on Women and Solidaridad prioritize women in their movement to generate decent, equitable, and sustainable livelihood through training, funding and local support. Whereas, the Graduation Approach Project under the Asian Development Bank and DOLE collaboration, similar to the AsianNGO focuses on inclusive economic growth and creating links to credible funding sources to secure lasting partnerships for smaller communities. These are inadvertently intertwined with the circular economy, sustainability and climate-responsible development goals of Autodesk Foundation, Shell, and Porticus.

LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS	PROFILE	SHARED VALUES AND POINTS OF PARTNERSHIP
ECHOsi Foundation, Inc. (Local)	ECHOsi Foundation is an NGO focused on enabling community eco-systems to address sustainability issues that impact the environment, sustainable livelihood, and the empowerment of women's groups, marginalized groups and cultural communities. Their programs are generally focused on finding gaps, innovating solutions, and creating circular economies and partnerships for positive impact. Some of their key partners already include IBM, TELUS, Facebook, Accenture, and USAID.	They implement fair trade for products, especially environmentally friendly and green products, made by small communities which fit our project's profile and description very well. A sizable portion of their effort and initiatives go into capacity building for women, and into helping them generate decent employment opportunities under their advocacy of inclusive economic growth. Seeing as EmpowHerTent also aspires to help women specifically, supporting our initiative falls well under their scope. Funding, technical support or introduction to a larger network will go a long way.
Philippine Commission on Women (Local)	The Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), formerly known as the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW), has its story linked to the history of Philippine feminism, women's movements, and gender mainstreaming.	EmpowHerTent being women-centric in its projects and education & training-driven in its approaches, can greatly benefit from PCW's approach of prioritizing education and development for women. PCW provides an avenue where women can develop skills and still respond to the needs of their households, allowing them to go beyond the traditional notions of the country of what a woman is, her roles, responsibilities, and capabilities.

Shell (Local)	Shell is an international energy company that aims to meet the world's growing need for more and cleaner energy solutions in ways that are economically, environmentally and socially responsible. Similarly, Shell companies in the Philippines aim to meet the energy needs of the country consciously and sustainably.	In 2021, Shell has built its first retail station using upcycled materials and eco-bricks in partnership with Green Antz Builders.The project collected materials through the waste management programs of Malolos, Pulilan, Baliuag, and San Ildefonso local governments under the concept of circular economy and urban mining. As EmpowHerTent includes eco-brick making in its program and workshops, this overlap of interests and advocacy with our project is a strong point for collaboration and calls for possible funding and other forms of support.
Asian Development Bank – DOLE (Local and International)	ADB and DOLE in 2020 collaborated and ran the Graduation Approach Project. It aimed to address poverty and inequality through targeted social assistance with technical and life skills training, financial inclusion, and coaching and mentoring, including productive asset transfer, temporary cash transfers, technical training, home visits for coaching and support, access to a savings account, behavior change communication and referral to health services. The project was unfortunately discontinued due to it being too expensive in the long run and how it eventually needed a lot of government support to be sustainable on larger scales.	Graduation approach (otherwise known as cash plus programming or productive inclusion) is a type of social protection program that builds on cash transfers along with other types of support for the poorest. It is targeted to the working adults in the family/community. Their values and mission in line with this project very much intersects with that of EmpowHerTent and served as a good blueprint and inspiration for its consultative and education-anchored approach. While it was a project enforced in rural areas, there is a lot of potential for small tweaks to fit the urban model. It also opens future possibilities of including development banks and central banks in funding such initiatives, while developing financial literacy among participants through training.
Autodesk Foundation (International)	The Autodesk Foundation is an international organization that supports innovative solutions to the world's most pressing social and environmental challenges. By facilitating a blend of funding, technical training, and expertise, Autodesk Foundation brings early-stage, transformative innovations to the market to advance a more sustainable, resilient, and equitable world.One big partnership and project is through an Australian charity, SolarBuddy.	Autodesk Foundation can be reached out for collaboration either for technical education on energy poverty through SolarBuddy education programs or drone mapping for creation of safer, stronger and more sustainable housing for calamity prone areas. This initiative was recognized by and aligned with UN SDGs. The foundation aims to give six million solar lights to children living in energy poverty by 2030, to help them to study after dusk and improve their education outcomes. Given their advocacy for sustainable solutions and addressing pressing social and environmental challenges, they might be a good partner to reach out to for EmpowHerTent.
Solidaridad (International)	Solidaridad is an international organization that pushes to make supply chains fairer and more sustainable, they specialize in making communities, especially resource production-heavy ones more resilient. A sample is their partnership earlier in 2022, helping launch Peru's first network of women in artisanal and small-scale mining.	One among its many initiatives and interests is focused on gender and equity alongside sustainability which greatly overlaps with our mission in EmpowHerTent. While technology sharing and expertise training might be more suitable for when the project expands to rural areas, it might be worth a shot building a connection and seeking support and funding from such a well-established women-supportive organization.

Porticus (International)	Porticus is an international organization that aims to narrow the opportunity gap for marginalized communities in Asia (among other regions) and help entrepreneurs in developing countries build profitable businesses and contribute to the sustainable development of their communities	Possible partnership for beaded products, artisanal soaps, and recyclable bags. They also collaborated with "Kariton Klasrum" project, one pillar is Early Childhood Development in Adversity, so they might be interested in partnering to accommodate children in the Tondo urban poor communities while the parents undergo classes, training and orientation programs. They also believe in Fair Transition in terms of a carbon-free future and enable communities to be leaders of their own economic and climate solutions – they reach out to other partners for advice, funding, and inspiration
Asian NGO (International)	AsianNGO offers a one-stop solution to grants, partnership, and learning-related needs. They aim to empower and unite NGOs, nonprofit organizations, social enterprises and philanthropists with NGO funding sources to help them amplify their impact towards society's development. They also focus on supporting and ensuring the sustainability of the key actors in the development sector by providing information on nonprofit funding sources, relevant funds for NGOs, securing partnerships and accommodating learning needs.	AsianNGO is powered by its vast database on funding sources for non profit organizations, funding opportunities in different thematic areas, international grants for nonprofits, experts, philanthropists, NGO management courses fulfilling daily development needs of teams and initiatives such as EmpowHerTent. Engaging with and seeking professional advice from NGOs like Asian NGO might enable the team to present the idea and seek funding and collaboration from credible nonprofit funding sources.
SlowFood (International)	SlowFood is a global grassroots organization founded in 1989 to prevent the disappearance of local food cultures and traditions, counteract the rise of fast life and combat people's dwindling interest in the food they eat, where it comes from and how our food choices affect the world around us. Their global movement spans to over 160 countries to date. They partner and support a lot of activities that fall under their mission upon proper presentation of proposals and activities and the management of funds once acquired.	During the year, Slow Food works to acquire funds from public and private institutions (international organizations, foundations, multilateral donors) for the implementation of projects that contribute to strengthening the network and achieving the strategic objectives of the movement at the global level. Seeing as their mission is centered on preserving and promoting local food cultures and traditions, EmpowHerTent can greatly benefit if SlowFood can support the initiative by providing technical expertise on sustainable consumption to be taught in some lectures, or sponsoring some simple and nutritious food packs which the project wants to use as early incentive for participants especially in the first few weeks when income is expectedly very low.
MY San, Lemon Square, Nestle, Monde Nissin, Jack and Jill, Milo, Unilab, Safeguard (Local and International)	These are various international and local brands well known in the country for their food products repackaged and sold for cheaper prices than most. The last two brands can be engaged to provide hygiene packs with necessities like soaps, shampoos, toothbrushes and toothpastes to all participants and their children.	Other than donating food and hygiene packs, or sponsoring meals, these companies can help support the EmpowHerTent initiative by widening the scope of calls for donations and volunteers through their marketing campaigns. They can also engage in donation-matching or releasing a certain batch of products that market the project, with some sale percentage immediately going into funding EmpowHerTent to ensure and promote sustainability.

Table III. List of potential funders and sponsors
(monetary and non-monetary)

Potential marketing partners, networks and linkages

To realize this project, EmpowHerTent will liaise with potential clients and marketing partners which share the same goals and visions on sustainability, economic development, education, and women's empowerment. Potential buyers can launch EmpowHerTent's products in their existing product lines (e.g. Kultura, Tesoros, IKEA, Frankie & Friends, and online stores) or can be tapped as collaborators to launch a unique collection (e.g. Anthropologie). Similarly, EmpowHerTent products will be given more publicity through marketing partners which also hold the same visions for the recognition of Filipino craftsmanship locally and internationally and the economic uplifting of some of the poorest Filipino communities. These partners include Shell, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, and Philippine diplomatic missions, among others. Lastly, local and international trade fairs (e.g. Manila FAME and the National Arts and Crafts Fair) can expose these products to promote investment and to ensure a steady source of income for the craftsmen.

LIST OF COMPANIES	POTENTIAL CLIENTS OR MARKETING PARTNERS	SHARED VALUES AND POINTS OF PARTNERSHIP	SIMILAR PRODUCTS AND EVENTS
KULTURA (LOCAL)	Potential client	SM Store's Kultura Filipino showcases Filipino handicrafts and accessories from different parts of the Philippines. Kultura Filipino can source their items from this project as a show of support to the community's efforts and as means of advancing Filipino craftsmanship.	The handicraft products made by the project can be launched in Kultura Filipino's local crafts, accessories, and Philippine souvenir categories.
TESOROS (LOCAL)	Potential client	Tesoros has worked with Filipino craftsmen for more than 70 years. The company has sourced products from all over the Philippines and has aided in allowing workers to establish sustainable livelihoods, social mobility, and economic upliftment.	The handicraft products made by the project can be sold in Tesoros' fashion accessories category, in particular under their Recybags line.
ANTHROPOLOGIE (INTERNATIONAL)	Potential client	In 2013, Anthropologie partnered with Rags2Riches, a local sustainable fashion brand which provides training, materials, and support to local artisans in one of the poorest communities in the Philippines to keep them living above the poverty line.	The handicraft products made by the project can be sold in Anthropologie's accessories and home collection.

IKEA (INTERNATIONAL)	Potential client and marketing partner	In 2016, IKEA began its collaboration with Rags2Riches as part of the former's worldwide social responsibility agenda. The collaboration was due to a shared intention of creating positive impact and ending the negative cycle of poverty. Rags2Riches also claims that with the same aim, they provided livelihood to communities in Payatas and other parts of the country and wisely utilized the quarantine months to train their artisans and upscale their operations in preparation for the partnership with IKEA. This makes IKEA hopeful of other partnerships with more NGOs and social enterprises to work towards poverty alleviation and provision of better job opportunities to their local communities.	Textiles come from IKEA and they sew anything the customer can think of. Offcuts are also repurposed to help reduce waste and promote upcycling. The project can handle customizations such as monogramming, embroidering, sewing, and resizing among others.
FRANKIE & FRIENDS (INTERNATIONAL)	Potential client and marketing partner	Frankie and Friends is an international company with bases in Manila which encourages conscious, intentional, and ethical purchases by promoting sustainable goods.	The handicraft products made by the project can be launched in Frankie and Friends' Shop by Impact recycled bag and tote bags and mats.
ONLINE STORES (LOCAL & INTERNATIONAL)	Potential client and marketing partner	Various online businesses from Instagram have flooded the market, tapping local artisans and showcasing local talents to help craftsmen suffering the economic difficulties brought by the pandemic. For example, Island Girl PH employs artisans in Visayas, Philippines and uses local materials and resources.	• @bayongciaga (Instagram): handwoven bags • @prescentcandles (Instagram): scent candles @IslandGirlPH: woven bags and rags, small bayongs (native bags) for purses, and beaded accessories
SHELL (INTERNATIONAL)	Potential client and marketing partner	Shell is an international energy company that aims to meet the world's growing need for more and cleaner energy solutions in ways that are economically, environmentally and socially responsible. Similarly, Shell companies in the Philippines aim to meet the energy needs of the country consciously and sustainably.	In 2021, Shell has built its first retail station using upcycled materials and eco-bricks in partnership with Green Antz Builders.The project collected materials through the waste management programs of Malolos, Pulilan, Baliuag, and San Ildefonso local governments under the concept of circular economy and urban mining. EmpowHerTent includes eco-brick making in its program and workshops. This overlap of interests and advocacy with our project is a strong point for collaboration and possible funding and support.

EUROPEAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF THE PHILIPPINES (LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL)	Marketing partner	The European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) is a bilateral foreign chamber that seeks to promote Philippine interests in Europe and European interests in the Philippines.	The ECCP may connect European business entities with the project if they find the need to buy or source crafted products from the Philippines.
MANILA FAME (EVENT)	Marketing partner (Event)	Manila FAME is the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions' (CITEM) largest trade show for buyers who want to source high-quality, design-forward, and Philippine-made products with an artisanal touch. It also provides opportunities for small- and medium-scale entrepreneurs to showcase their products in the world market. Manila FAME is one of the longest-running trade shows in the Asia-Pacific, featuring the latest Philippine-made creations from artisans and manufacturers, and is the only trade event in the country approved by UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry.	Manila FAME can provide the avenue for investors, buyers, and distributors to purchase and connect with the project's representatives and the craftsmen who made the products.
NATIONAL ARTS AND CRAFTS FAIR (BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY)	Marketing partner (Event)	The Department of Trade and Industry's National Arts and Crafts Fair aims to promote micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and Indigenous People (IPs) market their artisanal products online amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The online NACF Artisanal Shop will give broader market access both locally and globally to the products in the artisanal communities.	The National Arts and Crafts Fair gives way for investors, buyers, and distributors to purchase and connect with the project's representatives and the craftsmen who made the products. The NACF offers products such as: neckties, scarves, earrings, and woven fabric face masks; home accessories such as baskets, planters, and pillowcases; trinkets and gifts for any occasion; snacks and wine; and an array of teas.
EMBASSIES OF THE PHILIPPINES	Potential clients and marketing partner	Embassies and consular offices of the Philippines abroad are in charge of forwarding state interests in their host countries. With this, cultural aspects such as products from local craftsmen can also be a point of partnership.	The project can provide crafts and products to Philippine embassies and consulates which can be used as tokens to speakers and guests in their respective events. This will also provide a steady flow of income and publicity in their host countries by connecting local businesses with companies abroad.

Table III. List of potential marketing partners, networks and linkages

Risk Assessment and Mitigation

Risk assessment			
Type of risk	**Impact**	**Description**	**Mitigation Measures**
Health	M	COVID-19 Contagion	Making sure all our staff are vaccinated, wear masks, and exhibit symptoms of COVID; implementing adequate protocols
Health	H	Exposure to hazardous environment (dumpsite conditions) that can pose health concerns	Prioritizing sending out staff with experience in similar environments; ensuring the equipment of first-aid and hygiene kits; recruiting volunteers in the medical field for support
Political	L	The location near the *barangay* hall might politicize our project, making it a tool for politicians to potentially exploit	Ensuring that the project is independent and is not affiliated with any political actor or party (e.g., not allowing political endorsements of any kind)
Security	M	Potential petty crimes might arise given that a number of participants are expected to gather in one place	Securing adequate staff overseeing activities for the entire day; not using provocative language; constantly reminding participants of the vision of the project
Financial	L	Some participants might be taking part in our activities instead of pursuing their usual form of employment, therefore not bringing in any income (at the beginning phase)	Guaranteeing that activities are scheduled fairly across the week to attract participants to only come when they are able to; incentivizing them with food

Reputational	M	Participants may not be able to produce quality products at par with the expectations of partners, leading to less confidence or fallout	Ensuring that trainers are well-experienced (NGO partners or direct staff from brand partners); allotting adequate time for practice before participants turn over final products; having a quality control team
Performance	L	Staff and volunteers might experience fatigue or depression due to the dumpsite landscape	Recruiting more staff and volunteers to even out the schedule; pursuing more collaborations; conducting regular check-ups on the team and afterwork events to boost morale
Socio-cultural	L	Some topics like reproductive health might not be received well in an area where it might be a taboo	Ensuring that activities are not carried out in an imposing manner; not compelling residents to attend sessions on topics they are not comfortable with
Ethical	L	Participants might experience unjust labor practices from trainers or due to expectations of partners, especially if products have to be generated on a large scale	Safeguarding the labor rights of the participants through an ethics team that will consistently be present in all activities; outlining labor rights in the memorandum of agreement; dropping partners violating labor rights

Table IV. Risk assessment and mitigation measures
Legend: H High | M Medium | L Low

Cognizant of the possible risks in carrying out the activities proposed, the table above summarizes the perceived impacts of our activities, accompanied by respective mitigation strategies to be employed by our team. These risks were analyzed through the existing narratives in Happyland and in wider Tondo, against the backdrop of business partnerships, labor rights and practices, mental health, and COVID-19, among other factors.

Measuring Success

In evaluating the success of EmpowHerTent, the researchers established a three-point criteria outlining the overarching goals of this project: community-building, capacity-building, and sense of empowerment. A sample survey to be given to the participants is provided in Annex with key indicators to measure up to what extent each goal has been reached.

COMMUNITY-BUILDING *(INTER-RELATIONSHIPS)*

Strong communities are defined by a sense of camaraderie, cooperation, and connectedness among individuals within a group. As EmpowHerTent requires them to work on activities together, communal bonds are created and participants begin to identify themselves as part of a team. With this greater sense of belonging, they learn to value even more their individual roles and how each of these add value to the whole community. Participants move from accomplishing individual goals to helping one another by being invested in their collective success. This can be measured in terms of project expansion, (whether EmpowHerTent becomes supported and implemented in other local districts) and how much closer the local community feels with one another.

CAPACITY-BUILDING *(HUMAN CAPITAL)*

This refers to developing human capital wherein there is a concrete and measurable upgrade of knowledge and skills. It is generally facilitated through training that enhances the capabilities of individuals in a sustained effort, creating an enabling environment where they can solve or innovate on their own as well as impart the knowledge and skills that they gained to others. This can be measured by the degree to which there is a transfer and development of technical skills, both from trainer to participant and consequently among the participants themselves as they become more independent in accomplishing their given tasks.

SENSE OF EMPOWERMENT *(RELATION WITH ONESELF)*

This relates to how participants view themselves in relation to their work. It is about how they can participate and benefit from productive activities that make it possible for them to feel a greater sense of dignity, pride, and self-worth from what they do. When participants feel empowered, this also means that they find themselves in a much better occupational situation than before and their labor allows them to afford more resources (whether as time or monetary value). This criteria is measured by looking at changes in participants' attitudes towards their work and whether the activities of EmpowHerTent are more rewarding for them compared to their previous means of earning a living.

Table V. Criteria for Measuring Success

SCALING UP AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

EmpowerTent's envisioned timeline requires six months of operation before a mid-year assessment is performed to check on the overall viability and progress of the project. This might determine any tweaks or bigger changes required to be implemented in the following half of the year. The consultations and assessments performed within the weeks are different and would be culminated by this mid-year assessment. They are different in that they create a more humanized connection and checking in with the participants, instead of it being overtly driven by numbers and figures. As the project is not enforced mainly as an economic scheme, but rather a sustainable grassroots-based solution to slum poverty, smaller developments that may come in the form of increased number of participants, stronger culture around productive learning for both parents and children alike, better accessible nutrition, wider reach of lectures and classes on basic arithmetic, reading and writing, along with disaster risk mitigation classes and reproductive health classes are all considered measures of success that might be better recorded and noted through weekly assessments and house visits instead of single mid-year surveys or data analysis report.

As the interest on the program widens, determined by attendances of residents outside Happyland, or direct inquiries and requests from other communities, the project will eventually seek to scale up and expand into more venues. Envisioning easy replicability in neighbor barangays and in similar urban poor communities, such as Payatas, Malabon, Pasig and Bulacan, we see hopeful prospects of expanding further to reach more participants and effecting a larger impact on urban poverty alleviation. Once the project attracts more financial partners, donors, and sponsors, we envisage branching out into the more rural parts of the country that present a different form of poverty, transforming more communities and in turn inspiring more initiatives, partners and volunteers.

The aspiration to effect larger changes in poverty alleviation in various corners of the Philippines highlights the importance of informed, needs-based assessments in all steps of the project enforcement process, which the EmpowHerTent initiative upholds with high regard. Ever-evolving and adaptive to the needs of a particular community, our mobile tent painted with white and green will not stop in Happyland; it will find footing in many parts of the Philippines and become a symbol of hope, opportunity, and empowerment.

CONCLUSION

This paper utilized a community needs-based assessment approach to gauge what can be done further to fortify and create linkages with and between current and existing poverty alleviation projects and initiatives, and to attain their successful and sustainable implementation. The case of Happyland, Tondo presented a multidimensional form of poverty, requiring an analysis that takes gender, education and climate perspectives into consideration. Due to the limited resources available in Happyland, a mobile tent, EmpowHerTent, was the proposed solution to help propel women in the community to develop a skill and gain access to income-generating opportunities. A schedule of programs lined with lectures, training and workshops is also supplied, looking to produce and sell artisan soaps, candles, ecobricks, recycled bags and rags. Some long-term effects of the program's success are reinforced sustainability habits in the community, better nutrition and school access for children and women, higher literacy rates, and a complete transfer of skills and knowledge that allows the participants to take full control and leadership in the future of the project. EmpowHerTent additionally seeks to create a stronger sense of community and volunteerism for project sustainability. Supporting organizations and marketing partners will help upstart the initiative of transforming lives through funding, established partnerships, and skill-sharing. The project plans to stay attuned to the needs of the community by enforcing regular consultations and assessments, allowing EmpowHerTent to take the form of an inclusive leadership and development avenue for the residents of Happyland.

APPENDIX I. Community Needs-Based Assessment

PHYSICAL ASSESSMENT (Barangay and SK officials, or community leader/s) – This evaluates Happy Land, Barangay 105 community's assets, particularly its population and other demographics, geographic location, and environment, public/private infrastructures, and available as well as accessible social services.

1. How many people reside in the community? How many families are there? Which age bracket/group do they belong to?
2. How many are biological males and females?
3. How are the environment and living conditions in the community?
   a. Is there pollution in the area?
   b. Is there proper sanitation in the community?
   c. Is there proper housing or shelters in the area?
   d. Are there available means of transport in the community?
4. What natural resources are found in the community? Which areas have open space?
5. What is the community's geographical terrain?
6. What institutions exist in the community, both private and public?
   a. Are there nearby hospitals and/or clinics? Schools? Religious centers? Police stations? How about recreational areas?
7. Is the community safe for children, women, and the elderly?
8. What social services are accessible in the community and are currently being provided? Who provides them?
9. What nearby establishments are found in the community?
   a. Are there healthy food establishments or cafeterias?
10. How are services provided to the members of the community?

POLITICAL ASSESSMENT (Residents) – The community shall be assessed on their knowledge of their individual political and civil rights; interest and participation in community politics (i.e. policy and decision-making); affiliations or involvement in community or other organizations; and personal views on governance.

1. Do members of the community know their rights? (i.e. political and civil rights)
2. Are members of the community registered voters? If yes, did they exercise their right to vote during the last elections?
3. Are there political institutions found within the community?
4. How often do members conduct community meetings? How often do members attend such meetings?
5. Do members participate in the policy or decision-making of the community? How involved are they?
6. How do members of the community view participatory governance?
7. What are the community's emerging problems? How does the community address them? Are members aware of community projects and programs?
8. How tolerant are members when it comes to community politics? How about national politics?
9. Are members of the community sensitive and critical in terms of community leadership and practices?
10. Are members open to sharing their personal views on community issues? How about on national issues?

ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT (Barangay and SK officials, community leader/s, residents) – This shall assess how wealth and economic power is produced, circulated, or distributed within the Happy Land community. This tool also aims to surface their source of income, participation in the labor market, technical skills and capacities, and access to credit.

1. What are their income-generating activities within the community?
2. How would you characterize the general social class of the community? Are they considered poor, working class, middle class, or rich?

3. What aspects of the community's economy are the residents concerned with? Which aspects do they wish to improve?
4. How large is their youth population? What are their interests and how many of them are planning to proceed or continuing to higher or technical education?
5. Who handles reproductive, productive, or both roles in the community? How are such roles divided amongst family members?
6. Where do community residents usually work and which type of jobs do they usually have? What specific industry or field do they work in (e.g., agriculture, transportation, education, etc.)?
7. What are the specific and general reproductive activities in the community? Are there any water-related or fuel-related activities? Food preparation? Childcare? Health-related? Cleaning and repair? Or others?
8. Which group in the community usually can access or control resources such as land, equipment, labor, cash, education/training?
9. Can members of the community access certain benefits such as outside income, asset ownership, credits and loans, basic needs, education, or political power/prestige?
10. If they can and want to access credit, which type of financial institutions can they acquire loans (e.g., commercial or government banks, microfinance institutions, or informal loaners, etc.)? What are the typical collaterals or percentages asked by these financial institutions?

SOCIO-CULTURAL ASSESSMENT (Barangay and SK officials, residents) – This aims to surface Happy Land's culture, both its formal and informal structures by unearthing their rules and traditions, either spoken or unspoken; norms, mores, and traditional behaviors; and practice of power, oppression, or discrimination. Understanding such socio-cultural aspects of the community can help as a springboard in creating future projects and activities.

1. What is the history of Happy Land? How did they settle on the land and why were they categorized under Barangay 105's jurisdiction?
2. Who leads the community formally and informally? How do they control spoken or unspoken rules?
3. What are the nearby social, cultural, and religious institutions? How frequently do they visit these institutions and why?
4. What are the long withstanding social and cultural issues within the community? What are their social, economic, or political referral structures/systems in accessing help?
5. What are the general hobbies and activities of the community (e.g., biking, exercising, dancing, etc.)?
6. What does the community particularly care about? What are their economic, political, physical, and cultural goals? What concerns do they simply ignore or find less of a priority?
7. What does the community believe to be acceptable ways of behaving, dressing, speaking, doing business, or treating others?
8. Are some groups discriminated against by the majority of the Happy Land community? How do they discriminate against them?
9. How do residents normally interact with each other? How do they discuss varying opinions and address certain social and cultural concerns?
10. How does the community generally view certain areas of development? This may include the value of education, teenage pregnancy, overall and reproductive and sexual health, gender-based violence, running for public office, and many more.

APPENDIX II. SAMPLE COMMUNITY SURVEY

This is a post-project assessment meant for the participants of EmpowHerTent's pilot implementation. In conjunction with the community needs-based assessment conducted prior to the start of the project, this survey specifically addresses the three-point criteria in measuring success: community-building, capacity-building, and sense of empowerment.

Dear residents of Happy Land, thank you very much for your active participation in EmpowHerTent. We would appreciate hearing your thoughts about the project, how it helped you or made you feel, and what you gained from it. This is for us to understand whether the goals of the project have been reached and determine its overall success. Please carefully encircle the answer of your choice and feel free to reach out to us for any questions or clarifications.

COMMUNITY-BUILDING

During the workshops, when I encounter a problem that I cannot solve on my own:
- I am comfortable seeking help from others in my community and willing to help them as well.
- I sometimes try to reach out to others around me.
- I find it hard to ask for help and give help to others.

When we are not attending the workshops:
- I interact with my community more. I feel closer to them like I belong in a team.
- I still have the same relationship with my community as before.
- I do not engage with my community as much.

I know I can count on my community:
- All the time, regardless of how easy or difficult the situation is. My community is a safe space for me and I am not afraid to reach out.
- Sometimes, it depends on the situation.
- Only when I need them, and when they need something from me.

After participating in EmpowHerTent, I wish the project would reach more people and be implemented in other local districts around me.
- True, because _____.
- False, because _____.

CAPACITY-BUILDING

From all the activities I participated in:
- I have learned new things that I previously did not know how to do. I am creative and can innovate other solutions.
- I only improved what I already know how to do.
- I did not learn nor improve so much in any skill set.

Given the new skills that were taught:
- I am confident and capable of teaching others what I have learned.
- I am capable of sharing what I know how to do but I am not so confident about it yet.
- I cannot pass on to others what I have learned.

How do you feel about these new skills you have learned?
- With my new skills, I can continue my work independently with little to no instruction.
- I am still working on improving what I have learned and wish to be guided along the way.
- I need constant guidance and instruction in accomplishing my work because I cannot do it alone.

SENSE OF EMPOWERMENT

When I think about my work now:
- I am proud of what I do and I feel a greater sense of fulfillment with my work than before.
- I am okay with the work I do, not much difference from the past.
- I am not quite content nor proud of my work now.

Looking at the income that I gained from EmpowHerTent, I realized that:
- I am earning more money than my previous means of making a living.
- I am earning almost the same as before, but I am more satisfied with what I do now.
- I am earning almost the same as before, but I am not satisfied with what I do now.
- I am earning less than before.

Given these new work opportunities of making a living:
- I worry less about getting by and I have more time for other things in life. I manage my finances better.
- I still have financial worries, but I feel that I am more in control of my time and resources now than before.
- I still find it difficult to get by on a daily basis.

APPENDIX III. DATA COLLECTION AND VALIDATION

Purposive Sampling

The purposive sample survey will be utilized to reach out to the small community of families living in Happy Land, Barangay 105. We shall employ four data gathering methods, such as surveys, desk review, and key informant interviews. Each method is dedicated to extracting data from specific groups from the community. The paper-based survey will be translated into Tagalog to make it more accessible for the community as residents of Tondo mainly use Tagalog as their medium of communication.

Survey

The main objective of the survey is to understand and surface the residents' general perceptions on the physical, political, and economic conditions, and socio-cultural environment of their community. Community members will be asked to answer a series of survey questions to be conducted orally with as many community residents as possible. This shall also include questions covering their categorical questions on their general understanding of Happyland's physical, political, economic, and socio-cultural aspects; and even expanding discussions stated on the initial desk review through short questions.

Desk Review

This shall look into public records or archives, such as the population count, demographics, economic rate, or reproductive and sexual health rates, to name a few, as stated by the local government unit, newspapers, or social media posts from legitimate sources, of the Happyland community. From this, we will analyze the data and create an initial overview of the community's strengths, gaps, and challenges.

Key Informant Interviews (KKIs)

We will reach out to barangay and community leaders, including the city councilor handling Barangay 105, the barangay captain, elected barangay council, youth council (Sangguniang Kabataan), barangay health workers, people handling the day care center, health care centers, presumed or accepted leaders of the community, nearby school teachers, religious leaders, and other recommended key informants or identified key stakeholders. Going beyond the general perceptions about Happy Land, key informant interviews will go in-depth into the survey data and validate and expand the community's current understanding about their own community. Gathering in-depth qualitative answers from community leaders, professionals, and select community residents will deepen the researchers' understanding of the community's issues, needs, and goals. KKIs will also help in analyzing the community's past, current, and predicted future situations, needs, and goals, which can help determine which concerns should be immediately addressed and prioritized.

Data Validation

After data collection and the creation of a more holistic description of the community, the researchers will then create a community assessment report that attempts to describe Happy Land. This descriptive report includes organizing, recording, and commenting on the collected information based on the community's physical, political, economic, and socio-cultural aspects. The report will also contain pictures and direct quotes from the community. Once the community assessment report has been finalized, the researchers will then present this to the community for validation. Any forms of misrepresentation, especially if coming from a general response, will be immediately removed. The researchers will ensure that the community residents' realities are well-reflected on the document. The researchers shall also conduct assessments to capture the complex and ever-changing context of the community.

APPENDIX IV. SAMPLE LETTER ADDRESSED TO POTENTIAL FUNDING SPONSORS

12 July 2022
Vice President Sergio C. Bernal
Vice President for External and Government Relation
Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corporation
41st Floor, The Finance Center
26th Street corner 9th Avenue, Bonifacio Global City
1635 Taguig City Metro Manila, Philippines

Dear Vice President Bernal:

At EmpowHerTent, we are looking to serve the residents of Happyland in Tondo, Manila by addressing the pressing issue of chronic poverty through capacity building via education and training programs. Through the help of various NGOs, volunteers, and committed companies, EmpowHerTent will assist the Happyland community through reading, writing, and mathematical activities necessary for their daily lives and participation in the formal economy. Alongside this, EmpowHerTent will also enable the Happyland community to access training programs such as craftsmanship of bead products, soap and candle making, eco brick making, bags and rags making. Coupled with educational support, these activities seek to impress skills training and allow the community to have a steady and sustainable means of livelihood even at the comfort of their homes. With this, we are aiming to gather sponsors to fund and support the project and its participants.

EmpowHerTent is a nonprofit organization that is based in Manila, Philippines and this project is envisioned to be a long-term sustainable program that fills the gap presented in the case of poverty in Happyland, Tondo. We think our efforts would go even farther with Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corporation as our official corporate sponsor.

In this role, your business would provide sponsorship funding, and in turn we would promote your company as the event's official sponsor. Seeing your desire to provide economical, environmentally and socially responsible solutions, EmpowHerTent presents this initiative, seeking collaboration and sponsorship. The project took your retail station built using upcycled materials and eco-bricks as inspiration for one of our flagship training courses and products to help promote a circular economy in the Happyland community.

With Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corporation by our side at this upcoming project, we're sure to achieve this season's fundraising goal and serve Happyland, Tondo, Manila well. Alternatively, your team could provide materials related to eco-brick making in your role as our sponsor.

If your company is interested in being our official event sponsor, please reach out to us at contactus@empowhertent.org so we can discuss and negotiate further. We are looking forward to working with you.

With warm regards,
Jeanette Garcia
Co-founder of EmpowHerTent

APPENDIX IV. SAMPLE LETTER ADDRESSED TO POTENTIAL MARKETING PARTNERS

12 July 2022
Miss Lena Pripp Kovac
Chief Sustainability Officer
IKEA of Sweden AB
Tulpanvägen 8, 343 34
Älmhult, Sweden

Dear Miss Lena Pripp Kovac:

At EmpowHerTent, we are looking to serve the residents of Happyland in Tondo, Manila by addressing the pressing issue of chronic poverty through capacity building via education and training programs. Through the help of various NGOs, volunteers, and committed companies, EmpowHerTent will assist the Happyland community through reading, writing, and mathematical activities necessary for their daily lives and participation in the formal economy. Alongside this, EmpowHerTent will also enable the Happyland community to access training programs such as craftsmanship of bead products, soap and candle making, eco brick making, bags and rags making. Coupled with educational support, these activities seek to impress skills training and allow the community to have a steady and sustainable means of livelihood even at the comfort of their homes. With this, we are aiming to gather sponsors to fund and marketing partners to support the initiative.

EmpowHerTent is a nonprofit organization that is based in Manila, Philippines and this project is envisioned to be a long-term sustainable program that fills the gap presented in the case of poverty in Happyland, Tondo. We think our efforts would go even farther with IKEA as our official marketing partner. In this role, your business would provide the marketing support and a possible purchasing partnership, and in turn we would promote IKEA as the project's official marketing partner.

In 2016, IKEA began its collaboration with Rags2Riches as a part of the former's worldwide social responsibility agenda and due to a shared intention of creating positive impact and ending the negative cycle of poverty. EmpowHerTent too seeks to contribute to the solution and positive impact by providing a wider range of livelihood options to the communities in Happyland, Tondo. Success of the project envisions an upscaling effect that moves from the urban to the rural parts of the country, and EmpowHerTent would like IKEA to join the organization on its journey towards poverty alleviation and provision of steady and sustainable job opportunities to local communities.

Seeing your desire to provide economical, environmentally and socially responsible solutions, EmpowHerTent presents this initiative, seeking collaboration and marketing partnership with IKEA. With IKEA by our side at this upcoming project, we're sure to achieve this season's publicity goal and serve Happyland, Tondo, Manila well.

If your company is interested in being our official event sponsor, please reach out to us at contactus@empowhertent.org so we can discuss and negotiate further. We are looking forward to working with you.

With warm regards,
Gabrielle Ivy P. Hernandez
Co-founder of EmpowHerTent

APPENDIX V. SAMPLE LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE BARANGAY COUNCIL

12 July 2022
Barangay Council
Barangay 105, Tondo, Manila

Dear Honorable Council of Barangay 105:

At EmpowHerTent, we are looking to serve the residents of Happyland in Tondo, Manila by addressing the pressing issue of chronic poverty through capacity building via education and training programs. Through the help of various NGOs, volunteers, and committed companies, EmpowHerTent will assist the Happyland community through reading, writing, and mathematical activities necessary for their daily lives and participation in the formal economy. Alongside this, EmpowHerTent will also enable the Happyland community to access training programs such as craftsmanship of bead products, soap and candle making, eco brick making, bags and rags making. Coupled with educational support, these activities seek to impress skills training and allow the community to have a steady and sustainable means of livelihood even at the comfort of their homes. With this, we are aiming to gather sponsors to fund and marketing partners to support the initiative.

EmpowHerTent is a nonprofit organization that is based in Manila, Philippines and this project is envisioned to be a long-term sustainable program that fills the gap presented in the case of poverty in Happyland, Tondo. To fully realize this mission, we would like to set up our mobile tent within the vicinity of the Barangay Hall. This location is ideal to kickstart our program as it will ensure great visibility to the residents, as well as assure them that the project is legitimate and has warranted your support before installing itself in the heart of Happyland.

We wish to maintain independence and thus we would like to request that any form of political endorsement will not be associated with the project. However, we will not fall silent to your support: we will acknowledge your help and will guarantee that our project will not paint your honorable office negatively. Ultimately, we both believe that the residents of Tondo deserve to live in dignity, and we see no reason that this project can be seen as

If you wish to learn more about our project, please reach out to us through the email contactus@empowhertent.org. We look forward to discussing our vision with you.

With warm regards,
Mary Mediatrix A. Recella
Co-founder of EmpowHerTent

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