

NON-STATE ACTORS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN DEVELOPMENT -
ACTIONS IN PARTNER COUNTRIES (MULTI COUNTRY) FOR NON-STATE ACTORS

Best Practice Marikina: Marikina Eco Savers Project

- short version -

Thematic Area: Inclusive Urban Public Services

Country of Origin: Philippines

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Konrad Adenauer Stiftung



UCLG ASPAC
United Cities and Local Governments Asia Pacific



LOCAL GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION



สถาบันสิ่งแวดล้อมไทย
THAILAND ENVIRONMENT INSTITUTE



A Project implemented by the consortium: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V., Thailand Environment Institute (TEI), Local Government Development Foundation Inc. (LOGODEF), United Cities and Local Governments for Asia and Pacific (UCLG-ASPAC), Association of Indonesian Regency Governments (APKASI), Association of Cities of Vietnam (ACVN), and National League of Communes/Sangkats of the Kingdom of Cambodia (NLC/S).



ABOUT DELGOSEA

The Partnership for Democratic Local Governance in Southeast-Asia (DELGOSEA) was launched in March 2010 and is co-funded by the European Commission and the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) of Germany through the German Ministry of Development Cooperation.

DELGOSEA aims to create a network of cities and municipalities to implement transnational local governance best practices replication across partner countries: Cambodia, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam. It supports the role of Local Government Associations (LGAs) in providing and assisting the transfer and sustainability of local governance best practices replication by local governments. Most importantly, through the exchange of best practices in the region, DELGOSEA intends to contribute to the improvement of living conditions of disadvantaged groups in Southeast-Asia by helping increase their participation in local planning and decision-making.

In the first phase of project implementation, an intensive research was done to determine Best Practices (BP) in local governance in each of the five participating countries. A consortium of international local governance experts and representatives from the LGAs reviewed and selected 16 BPs out of the submitted 27 BPs.

The project concentrated on the following four thematic areas while selecting best practice examples from the five countries:

1. Peoples' participation in planning and decision-making;
2. Institutional governance;
3. Inclusive urban public services;
4. Fiscal management and investment planning.

The following short descriptions BP is one of the selected 16 BPs in the area of inclusive urban public services, provided by Marikina in the Philippines.

Starting in January 2011 through August 2012, DELGOSEA will continue to collaborate with LGAs and local governments to transfer best practices replication. The pilot cities/municipalities could modify or improve the original best practice to their local context. The LGAs in the five participating countries will closely consult and guide the selected pilot local governments on the transfer and implementation of BP replication.



Country	Philippines
Local Government:	Marikina City
Type:	City
Best Practice:	Marikina Eco Savers Project
Aspect of Governance:	Inclusive urban public services
Reported By:	Dr. Alvin Ang

Summary

The Eco-Savers Program is Marikina City's innovative recycling scheme which promotes a culture of discipline among the youth through ecological solid waste management. The name of the program 'eco-saver' implies several meanings, which include the following:

- Saver of ecological system by being aware of sound environmental practices;
- An ecological solid waste management practitioner from a household;
- Economic savings realized through recycling of garbage.

Its main features and functioning are described in the BP description as follows:

- Waste management at source
The program requires students to bring recyclable garbage from their respective households to school during an assigned Eco Day — the day when the garbage is going to be weighed and credited to their issued eco-savers passbooks. Students and parents are partners of the city government in practicing waste segregation and recycling practices at the household level
- Empowerment of elementary pupils in ecological solid waste management
Even at an early age, the pupils at Marikina City's public schools were given an opportunity to have meaningful involvement and create an influence to fellow youth in implementing sound ecological solid waste management practices by recovering recyclable materials from the household waste. This becomes a valuable experience that instils in them the values of discipline and concern for the environment.



- Promotion of economic benefits from recyclables
This program is not only rewarding for the environment but also for the students who get points for the recyclables they bring to school. The recyclable garbage are valued according to the prevailing market price, i.e. PhP1.00 = 1 point. Points earned entitle the students to shop in the Eco-Savers bus, which carries educational materials such as dictionaries, books, school supplies and educational toys and basic commodities such as sugar, cocoa powder drink, and rice.

- Incentive Scheme thru the Eco-savers passbooks
Each student is issued the Eco-Savers passbook at the beginning of the school year. The passbook is where the points of the student-owner are credited and recorded according to the recyclable waste material he/she brings to school. An eco-saver who wishes to shop in the Eco-Savers Bus only needs to present this passbook, which entitles them to exchange their points with any of the goods sold inside.

- Utilization of Eco-savers Bus
The Eco-Savers Bus or the Mobile Store is a converted city government facility which contains educational materials like dictionaries, story books, school supplies and educational toys and basic commodities such as sugar, cocoa powder drink, coffee and rice. This range of goods is exchangeable with the points secured by the students from their recyclables.

The advantages of this BP are easily understood:

- It is a BP, which addresses the current needs in solid waste management of many municipalities and, at the same time, offers an easy way to organise the handling of recyclable material.
- It is an entirely local project, which can be managed with little municipal administrative resources.
- It involves the population directly and at all stages, taking advantage of the power of family structures, embedded in the community.
- It is a project which can be realised in a short period of time with no particularly big public or private investment required.



Background and Objectives

The Eco-Savers Program of Marikina City is a program envisioned out of Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2001. This law requires local government units to adopt a waste segregation scheme that will help meet an initial waste diversion goal of 20% through ecological means.

The program has the following objectives:

- To educate households in Marikina City to religiously practice waste segregation and recovery of recyclable household waste by enlisting public elementary students and teachers.
- To gradually realize the waste diversion target of 20% through recycling.
- To eventually reduce the cost being incurred by the city in its solid waste management program.
- To instill the value of environmental concern, preservation of health, consciousness on the amount and type of waste the target households produce, and the importance of savings.

In general, this is an educational awareness program on the ecological system among the constituents. It gives due focus on sound environmental practices for people from the household level to the schools to be ecological solid waste management practitioners. Ultimately, it seeks to instill the realization of economic savings through this waste management program. The Eco-Savers program is being implemented by the city's Waste Management Office, in coordination with the Department of Education (DepEd). It was initially presented to DepEd in December 2003, and followed by a series of meetings that resulted in the formulation of the program's several strategies.

A. Innovative Elements

Capitalizing on waste management at source, the Eco-Savers Program has awakened and harnessed the culture of discipline and consequently the value of savings. The program has stimulated the consciousness of the community, thereby promoting waste segregation and recycling practices at the household level. Parents of students have been interacting regularly with teachers and city government personnel.

The program has earned up to P1.3 million from recyclables from its inception, and has helped lessen the city's dependence on the internal revenue allotment. In addition, cost incurred by the city government in solid waste disposal was reduced. It has also provided junk shops within the city with regular clientele, helping boost economic activities. From the parents' perspective, Eco-Savers offered an additional benefit: it helps



defray the cost of school supplies through the individual savings or points earned by the students.

The program also provides an addition to the preservation of the community's health and the environment. The significant quantities of waste that have been diverted from dumpsites have contributed to the improvement of air and land pollution. Likewise, the decreased number of garbage trucks' disposal trips has contributed to traffic decongestion, less air pollution, and energy conservation.

The program has become an avenue where the people felt the presence of the city government. It also showed the strong political will of the city government in implementing bold and innovative programs aimed at attaining full compliance with the law. Because of its innovative and novel approach to environmental awareness, it has become a benchmark for other local government units in developing their own program particularly during their "*lakbay-ara*" (study tours).

B. Involvement and Activities

The Eco-Savers program is being implemented by the city's Waste Management Office, in coordination with the Department of Education (DepEd). It was initially presented to DepEd in December 2003, and followed by a series of meetings that resulted in the formulation of the program's several strategies. The Waste Management Office conducts a series of orientation in schools to familiarize students and teachers about the objectives of the program. It distributes Eco-Savers passbooks to students and teachers of all public elementary schools in the city.

Each school is assigned an Eco Day, which is once a week. An Eco Day is the day when students must bring recyclable garbage from their respective households; the garbage will be weighed and credited to their passbooks. An Oversight Committee is responsible for the selection of junk shops. These junk shops are tasked to report to the principal of the school where the program is being implemented every Eco Day. They will weigh the recyclables, record, and haul all the recyclables collected. Storing the garbage within the school premises is not allowed for sanitary reasons. The recyclables are priced and recorded in the individual passbook using a point system.

Points earned shall entitle the eco-saver to shop in the Eco-Savers Mobile Store. The mobile store visits the school twice within the school year, carrying educational materials, such as dictionaries, books, school supplies, and educational toys. An eco-saver who wishes to shop only needs to present the passbook. As parents are involved in the program as



well, the implementers have added grocery supplies as part of the redeemable items. This has encouraged participants, especially as basic necessities are now part of the program's benefits.

Looking at the program at a broader perspective showed that adopting a sound solid waste management at the household and community levels is a form of people empowerment. The community is given an opportunity in how they can best contribute to solve the perennial problem posed by garbage. The public school teachers were made aware of the existing environmental conditions, particularly the state of solid waste management. The knowledge gained has made them confident about the veracity of information that they cascade down to their students. Hence, the natural outcome of the program is a strengthened working relationship between the city government, parents, students, and the business sector.

This program has actually been partly financed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

C. Sustainability and Replication

Because of its simplicity and continuing success, this program is seen to be eventually replicated and implemented by other localities, through private or public initiative. This will help and inspire other local government units (LGUs) to look for ways to achieve their waste reduction and waste diversion targets within a short period of time.

The program has been presented in the following venues:

- Metro Manila Spouses Association conference (MM spouses are the ones handling their respective cities' clean and green program).
- Consultative conference between the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority and the Solid Waste Managers of Metro Manila.
- Department of Environment and Natural Resources website of best practices.
- 5,612 *lakbay-aral* groups that visited Marikina from July 2004 to June 2005 to study or look into its Solid Waste Management Program.

Most of them expressed their desire to replicate this program in their localities. In fact, they were each given a sample of the passbook. The nearby city of Pasig has already implemented its own version of the program adapted to its own institutional capabilities.



Several key factors in sustaining and replicating this model elsewhere:

- The city's reputation of dutifully implementing efficient and effective solid waste management is a strong component of the program. The city government conceptualized the program, determined the stakeholders, met with these stakeholders, formulated the guidelines, and brought about the printing of the needed passbooks. There was no financial equity from the participants, just recyclables from their households.
- The leadership of the city government should credibly sustain the implementation and avoid possible waning interest in the program. If the program is sustained, its target participants will also sustain their confidence in the government and their active involvement.
- Aside from the economic benefits reaped from the program's activities, the participants are greatly encouraged to perform responsible solid waste management.

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