



## Brief Background

ZOTO is a federation of 182 urban poor local organizations in fourteen (14) relocation sites in Metro Manila and nearby areas.

These relocation sites are Dasmariñas, Bulihan, General Trias, Tanza and GMA, Cavite; Bagong Silang, Dagat-Dagatan, Tala and Camarin, Caloocan City; Dagat-Dagatan, Malabon City; Dagat-Dagatan Navotas; Tondo, Manila; Sapang Palay, Muzon and Towerville of San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan and Pandacaqui in Pampanga.

The organization was founded in 1970 at the Tondo Foreshore Land when the residents were to be demolished in favor of an IMF/World Bank



funded project – an international port. At that time, this area was the biggest colony of the slum dwellers of informal settlers in Asia.

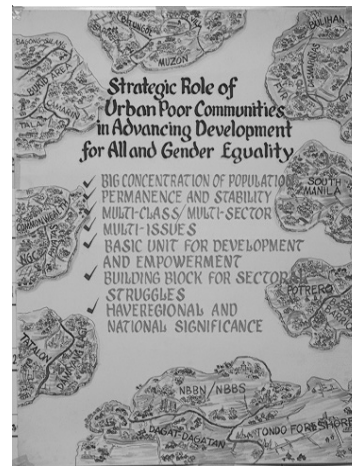
Such that when it stirred into action, not even the Marcos government could stop the organization from educating, marching and negotiating on the issues of the urban poor, on the issue of decent housing for the poor.]

Warding off eviction after eviction and rebuilding lives and homes in the relocation sites, ZOTO continues to struggle for **a community of**

**economically and politically empowered citizens who are accorded their due dignity, who foster gender equality and democracy and live in a healthy and bountiful environment.**

ZOTO on its third decade continues to carry on its mission of **economically and politically empowering the urban poor in the relocation sites** through the following:

- Organizing and strengthening citizenship in communities
- Increasing awareness in gender equality
- Conducting a continuing education and training of leaders, members of the organization and the community
- Improving the economic condition of the membership and all the citizens
- Providing health services
- Providing early education to the children
- Communicating with the different sectors, organizations, institutions and individuals locally and internationally
- Forging alliances to advance the welfare of the urban poor



There are nine (9) Regional Executive Committee Members (5 of them are women) and about 40 staff members for the organization's programs and services, 28 of them are female.

Today, ZOTO has maintained more than 11,500 members in the 14 relocation sites inhabited

by about 2.4 million people. Influenced by the organization and those directly serviced by ZOTO are about 89,000 individuals in the communities and in various alliances and groups from among the urban poor.



## Programs & Services

### Training-Organizing Program (TOP)

The program has dual functions — Education and Training and Community Organizing. The latter is geared towards mobilizing community participation through facts-based, people approaches; such as those that develop maintained responsibility towards goals. The former leads to action.



The TOP staff nudges change in the direction of sustainable development – assisting the community build strong human, social, and physical resources. This is done via information, education and training, paralegal services for local mass struggles, and organizational management.

Such services and facilities of the TOP help the urban poor communities strengthen their rights, work on their democratic demands and strengthen and broaden the scope and influence of their People's Organization and as a contribution to the Urban Poor movement in general.

The Training and Organizing Program has seven (7) major components, namely: (1)

baseline social investigation and research, (2) education and training, (3) base consolidation and expansion, (4) campaign, advocacy and alliance building, (5) facts-based expansion-organizing, (5) critical participation in the local and national elections and (7) youth and cultural organizing.

### Microfinance Program



An urban development finance service for micro entrepreneurs and an outreach fund for low-

income level clients and institutions who need to sustain development services and manage stress events (e.g. natural and man-made calamities or problematic situations like fund transfer delays, etc.). It is also a microfinance service supportive of developing timely and necessary products and services for displaced groups and communities.

### Child's Rights Program

Child's rights awareness is now being advocated and included



in all of the organizations programs, policies and projects. Day Care Centers have been set up in the relocation sites where it is right now. This is one way of affording quality early childhood education. It also involves Parents Councils in child and community development.

### Gender Equity Program (GEP)



The program helps men and women understand and appreciate women's basic rights and various gender issues and problems. It attends to women victims of abuse and other forms of domestic violence, provides temporary shelter, counseling and other necessary support mechanisms.

### Primary Health Care and Integrated Reproductive Health Program

The project's aims at increasing the demand for, utilization and access



of comprehensive RH information and services for men, women and adolescents specifically on Maternal and Child Health, Violence against Women, Family Planning, Adolescence Sexuality and Reproductive Health and RTIs/HIV/AIDS.

Also, through proper information, education and delivery of the basic RH package, target urban poor communities can start off in designing their families, lives, sexuality and health in order to establish communities that are gender-responsive, healthy, child-friendly, environment-friendly, bountiful and STD/HIV/AIDS-free as envisioned by the organization.

From shanties to empowered communities



*A community of economically and politically empowered citizens who are accorded their due dignity, who foster gender equality and democracy and live in a healthy and bountiful environment.*



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