

# Practices That Work!

## Reason for starting the innovative practice

For many years, the Naga City River has been suffering from siltation and pollution. Floods occur yearly. Unregulated quarrying, unsound farming practices along its levees and hillsides, and denudation of the remaining forest cover in its headwaters have threatened the very life of the river.

## Role of Implementing Organization(s)

The DENR and the academe have undertaken tree planting along with river cleaning and garbage collection. The Department of Public Works and Highways have completed about 300 meters of river revetment. About 109 of the 378 illegal settlers have been relocated. The Local Government created the City Environment and Natural Resources Office and provided funds for the implementation of the program's various intervention strategies. NGOS and civic group volunteer time and resources to firm up action plans, monitor progress, and provide feedback.

## How it works (Processes and Resources)

The City Government delineated the watershed that "fed" the river and organized current efforts using the watershed approach. A river watershed strategic plan was formulated which provided for the long-term sustainability of current and future efforts to rehabilitate and protect the Naga River Watershed. The Plan was developed through the application of the participatory planning process that was anchored on key consultations with stakeholders. This means that Nagueños themselves have crafted it, thus, giving it sense of public ownership.

## How barriers/obstacles were overcome

- Due to the technical complexity of river rehabilitation, the planning process and strategic plan formulation encountered some rough sailing. But because the planning process encouraged stakeholder participation and ownership of the program, nagging issues were brought to the forefront and resolved by the stakeholders themselves.
- At the outset, there was minimal coordination between the LGUs and national government agencies like the DPWH and the DENR. But since the consultative process adopted by the strategic plan spelled out the responsibilities of the different stakeholders, this problem was overcome.
- In the past, there were many segmented plans that created task forces to various projects and subprojects. The watershed approach integrated the various projects and rationalized the needed sectoral efforts and investments.

## General Information

### Innovative Practice Name

LGU and other stakeholders action bring back life to imperiled Naga River

### Location

Naga City

### Date Started

July 1997

### Date Completed

November 1997

### Estimated Cost:

Preparation: PhP 1M

Implementation: PhP 270.02 Million

### Implementing Office Address/Tel./

### E-mail/Web site

City Environment and Natural Resources Office, Naga City

### Contact Person/Address/Tel./E-mail

Mr. Oscar Orozco  
City ENRO  
City Hall,  
J. Miranda Avenue  
Naga City  
Tel# (054)473-0775/473-1475

### Key Consultants/Address/Tel./E-mail

Jemuel Perino  
BLISS, Kibawe,  
Bukidnon 8720  
Tel# (088)813-2434  
E-mail: [perijem@yahoo.com](mailto:perijem@yahoo.com)

Dr. Nicolas Uriarte  
Los Baños, Laguna  
Tel# (049)536-2904

## Details of benefits and results

- Before, barangay councils had very little concern for the environment. The series of planning workshops defined the key roles they should play in the program. Today, the barangays put the environment and watershed protection high in the list of their budget priorities. They are now directly involved in the implementation of tree planting, river cleaning and garbage collection.
- The consultative approach adopted by the stakeholders in the creation of the strategic plan generated popular support from the citizens of Naga City. The plan was able to pinpoint critical areas of concern where even minimal LGU investments in such strategies as tree planting and river clean-up generated high impact.
- The river rehabilitation project was the recipient of the Dubai Award for participatory planning process involving local initiatives.
- The strategic plan facilitated the creation of the City ENRO, a separate department that now handles all activities related to the implementation of plan strategies and programs as well as other environmental concerns.



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