



Center for Civic Education CIVITAS INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

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Civitas Success Stories: Philippines

Bagong Silangan High School has been participating in Project Citizen since its launch five years ago. Since then, all four of their previous policy proposals have been approved and acted on by their barangay. With the new barangay leadership, all four proposals are now being given due attention and are now in the process of implementation. Their first proposal is the relocation of the public market to a new venue. The public market in question is located right beside Bagong Silangan High School. Apart from the stink that comes from the market, which spills over to the school, the market has also been the hide out and escape route of gang members, thereby posing a threat to the security of the school and particularly its students at night. Upon presenting the research to the barangay authorities, it was approved and today, construction is under way for the new location of the public market.

The second proposal to be approved by the barangay is the construction of retaining walls in the creek near the school. The retaining walls that are now under construction are superior in quality and strength compared to the previous shoddy walls around the creek that offers little protection against flooding when the creek overflows. The importance of such walls were highlighted when typhoon Ondoy greatly affected the area of Bagong Silangan High School.

The third proposal is the opening of a community urban garden. While Bagong Silangan High School already has a school garden, they observed the need to expand it and form a community garden. This is due to the fact that malnutrition was prevalent in the community. The community urban garden not only seeks to address the issue of malnutrition (for members of the community can utilize the vegetables that are to be planted in the community garden), it also is a possible source of livelihood for the members of the community. The urban gardening initiative is also, at the same time, compatible with current President Aquino's call to plant more trees in light of recent floods caused by typhoons such as Ondoy. The barangay has given the lot for the community garden just two weeks ago.

Lastly, the Project Citizen team of Bagong Silangan High School also proposed the relocation of the PUJ and tricycle terminals. These terminals are located right outside the school premises. While there is already an ordinance stating that the 100 meters within the school perimeter is to be cleared, the PUJ and tricycle terminals remained to be situated right outside the school. This is the main cause of vehicular accidents among students especially due to reckless drivers. At present, the relocation of these terminals is underway albeit not in a hasty manner in consideration of the fact that the matter at hand is also the drivers' main source of livelihood.

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