

## **Topic Four: Community Involvement in the Rehabilitation and Treatment of Criminal Offenders**

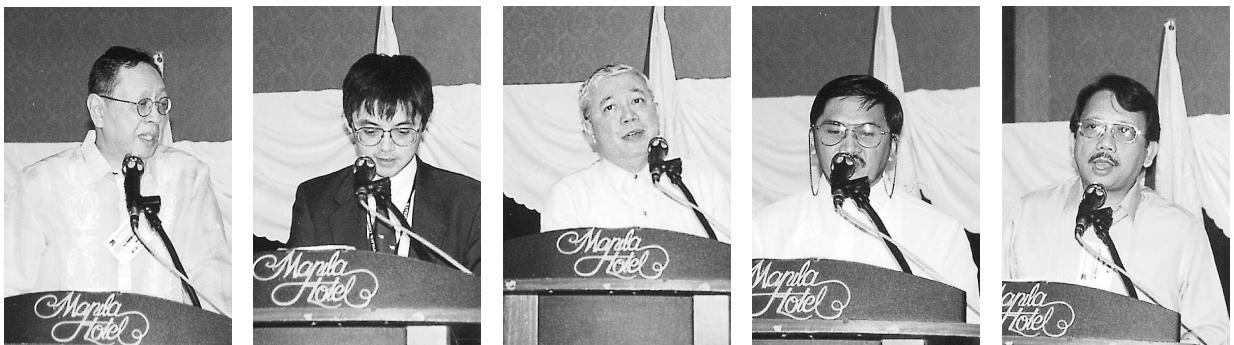
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# **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE REHABILITATION AND TREATMENT OF OFFENDERS**

**By**

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Crime prevention, in its widest sense, is any activity, public or private, that has the result of reducing the incidence of criminal behavior.

Insofar as the corrections pillar is concerned, crime prevention refers to efforts that seek to change the behavior of criminals so that they will not reoffend. It includes all activities designed to produce socially desirable results - healthier inmates, higher educational attainment, decreased dependence on illegal drugs, and the like.

## **II. THE COMMUNITY**

Crime prevention occurs in several domains. One of these is the community. The community's participation in crime prevention represents the public's acceptance of its shared responsibility with the official sector for crime prevention. It proceeds from the view that the root causes of crime such as unemployment, poverty, and illiteracy are not within the control of any one component of the criminal justice system. It is the responsibility of the community to help overcome these problems.

It must be stressed, however, that the community's role in crime prevention only complements or supplements the efforts of the State. For example, the job opportunity programs of the community must be based on the skills the offender may already have or may have acquired while in prison. The community would be hard put in setting up employment programs for offenders who are totally unskilled or who have not acquired any training while in confinement.

In this regard, this paper will attempt to identify the role the community can play in crime prevention by determining the rehabilitation and treatment programs being offered by the government, more particularly, by the Bureau of Corrections in its major prison facility, the New Bilibid Prison in Muntinlupa City, and by the Parole and Probation Administration.

## **III. NEW BILIBID PRISON**

In the year 2000, the New Bilibid Prison or NBP had an inmate population of 14,925. The inmates of the said prison were provided with the following rehabilitation programs:

1. Education and Skills Training
2. Religious Services
3. Recreational Activities
4. Work and Livelihood Programs

## A. Education and Skills Training

The NBP education and training programs consists of the following<sup>1</sup>:

- a. Formal education - Bachelor of Science in Commerce (Small Entrepreneurship), high school and elementary education<sup>2</sup>;
- b. Non-formal education or adult literacy - this seeks to give inmates numeracy, reading and writing skills; and
- c. Vocational training.

Teaching at the NBP is handled by 11 teachers; 10 Clerks and Prison Guards who work as teachers; and 75 inmates who act as teaching assistants. The teaching staff is under 2 supervisors.

Last year, a total of 4,246 inmates or 28.45% of the inmate population were enrolled in education and training programs. 1,026 of them graduated.

<b>NBP INMATE EDUCATION AND TRAINING</b>			
<b>Course</b>	<b>Enrollees</b>	<b>Graduates</b>	<b>% of graduates</b>
Elementary	167	22	13.17
High School	369	44	11.92
College	236	7	2.97
Adult Literacy	2,836 <sup>3</sup>	665	23.45
Vocational	651	288	44.24
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,246</b>	<b>1,026</b>	<b>24.16</b>

<b>NBP VOCATIONAL COURSES<sup>4</sup></b>		
<b>Type</b>	<b>Enrollees<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>Graduates</b>
• General Building Construction	23	13
• Refrigeration/Air Conditioning	54	56
• Radio Mechanic	64	35
• Metal craft & Art Design	15	16
• TV Mechanic (B&W)	34	21
• Practical Electricity	70	33
• Tailoring & Haberdashery	22	26
• Shoemaking & Leather Craft	15	21

<sup>1</sup> The Bureau of Corrections does not have formal educational programs in its other male penal institutions in Davao, Palawan, Oriental Mindoro, Leyte and Zamboanga del Sur. It is, however, planning to open college degree programs in all of the penal institutions. Negotiations are on going with Ateneo de Zamboanga for the setting up of a college program in San Ramon Prison and Penal Farm.

<sup>2</sup> 106 inmates inside the NBP maximum security compound are enrolled under the College Assurance Program (module type). At the Correctional Institution for Women, 38 female inmates are enrolled in the same course.

<sup>3</sup> The number includes students carried over from the previous year.

<sup>4</sup> The table shows more graduates than enrollees in some of the courses, The reason for this is that the column on graduates include old enrollees.

<sup>5</sup> The table show more graduates than enrollees in some of the courses, This is due to the inclusion of old enrollees in the column for graduates.

• Wire & Décor	23	20
• Auto Mechanic	85	39
• Furniture & Cabinet Making	6	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>288</b>

It would be worthwhile to note that only 576 medium and minimum security risk inmates were enrolled in the NBP elementary and high school courses. Considering that around 23 % of national prisoners have not gone beyond primary schooling, the number of enrollees in the primary grades and in high school is disappointing. This is due mainly to the lack of schoolrooms and training facilities. As for the low percentage of graduates in the elementary, high school and college courses, this is due to releases from prison of student-inmates and course drop outs.

## **B. Religious Services**

Religious services are performed by a Chaplaincy Service manned by 2 government chaplains, a full-time volunteer chaplain and around 300 religious volunteers. Last year, the service rendered the following services to a pastoral congregation of 14,925 inmates, broken down as follows: 90% Roman Catholics; 8%, Other Christian Denominations; and 2%, Muslims:

- (i) Worship - prayer (mass, bible services, fellowship), ministerial rites (baptism, wedding, funeral) and para-liturgical (devotional novenas, processions);
- (ii) Formation - catechetical, recollections, bible study, seminars; and
- (iii) Other services - literacy classes, scholarship grants, guidance counseling, medical referrals, skills training, etc. (These services are given to both inmates and their families.)

The following is a numerical count of worship and formation services at the NBP during the month of October 2001:

<b>Type of Service</b>	<b>No. of services</b>	<b>No. of inmates served</b>	<b>No. of personnel performing services</b>
1. Worship			
a. prayer	213	3,976	215
b. Ministerial	59	267	19
c. para-liturgical	115	1,070	290
2. Formation			
a. catechetical	58	1,710	277
b. seminars/conferences	6	281	14
c. guidance/counseling	46	200	14
d. others	183	2,439	630
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>9,943</b>	<b>1,459</b>

As for the “Other services” enjoyed by NBP inmates, these refer to the following:

(i) Medical/Dental

- Quarterly by the Seventh-Day Adventist
- Monthly by the Philippine Jesuit Prison Service (PJPS)
- Twice a year by Caritas Manila;

(ii) Dental- Every last Wednesday of the month by an unspecified group at the Medium Security Compound;

(iii) Cataract Extraction - Twice a year by the PJPS;

(iv) Artificial Eye - by an unspecified group for 40 inmates per year;

(v) Eye glass refraction - per availability of volunteers

(vi) Seminar on active non-violence in the Maximum/Medium Security Compounds at an unspecified frequency;

(vii) Peer counseling workshop by an unnamed group every Sunday at the Maximum Security Compound;

(viii) Others

- Donation of coffins/casket
- Religious Seminars and paralegal training by the Episcopal Commission of Prison Pastoral Care
- Hospital supplemental feeding

In a survey held last month of 22 religious volunteer organizations operating in the NBP, half said that they do not provide non-institutional services to inmates.<sup>6</sup> As for the other half, 3 provide job placement services; 1, housing assistance; 1, transportation facility and transportation fare; 1, livelihood and transportation assistance; and 2, follow-up services. 3 did not specify the non-institutional services they provide.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ; Bible Baptist Church; Caritas-PJDP-Servants of the Holy Eucharist; Christ Fishers of Men; Iglesia ni Cristo; Jehovah's Witnesses; Jesus is Lord Church; Jesus Miracle Crusade International Ministry; Lighthouse Ministry; Christian Fellowship, Inc.; Members of the Church of God in Christ Jesus Ground Pillar of Truth in the Phil.; NBP Bible Center; Sonlight Ministries, Inc.

<sup>7</sup> According to the Bureau of Corrections, Caritas Philippines, a faith-based organization, provide after-care services to released prisoners in the form of job placement and livelihood programs “though the recommendation of (the) NBP Chaplaincy Office”. Scholarship programs are provided by the Philippine Jesuit Service to deserving children of inmates.

<b>RELIGIOUS VOLUNTEER GROUPS THAT PROVIDE NON-INSTITUTIONAL SERVICES</b>	
<b>Name of Organization</b>	<b>Type of Service</b>
1. Amazing Grace Christian Ministries, Inc.	Not specified
2. Pan-World Blind Mission, Inc.	Not specified
3. Grace of our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ Fell. Inc.	Not specified
4. Paaralan ng Buhay	Job placement
5. International Prison Ministries	Job placement
6. Christ Living Epistle Ministry	Housing
7. Episcopal Church in the Philippines	Transport facility & transportation fare
8. Church of Christ	Follow-up
9. Religious of the Virgin Mary (RVM)- Catholic	Transportation & livelihood assistance
10. The Valley Cathedral Ministry	Follow-up
11. Asian Christian Charismatic Fellowship	Job placement & transportation assistance

### **C. Recreational Activities**

NBP inmates are encouraged to participate in various recreational activities to promote their physical and mental fitness as shown in the table below:

<b>RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES</b>	
	<b>No. of participants</b>
• Volleyball	192
• Basketball	805
• Badminton/table tennis	90
• Scrabble/domino/chess	90
• Daily sunning	1,500
<b>T O T A L</b>	<b>2,677</b>

The type of recreational activities that are available is limited. They are also enjoyed by just 17.94% of NBP inmates. In this regard, one can question the value of “daily sunning” as a recreational activity. There is a tennis court inside the maximum security risk compound. However, only around 20 inmates play there regularly.

### **D. Work and Livelihood Programs**

1,808 NBP inmates were employed last year in work and livelihood programs, 308 of them worked in a handicraft-making factory of Samsung Philippines, a private business enterprise located inside the Medium Security Compound. 27 inmates were employed in NBP agro-industrial projects and 570 worked as office orderlies/cleaners.

The number of NBP inmates who work as a mere 16.11% of the total inmate population. In this regard, the skills acquired by inmates in the Samsung project appear to have little value in the job market since the handicraft products they produce are only marketable in South Korea.

#### **E. Provision of Basic Needs of Inmates**

P 280,506,954.87 was appropriated last year to meet the basic needs of national prisoners. This translates to P 51.49 a day per Inmate, P 30.00 of which is for food.

<b>BASIC NEEDS OF INMATES</b>	
<b>I t e m</b>	<b>C o s t</b>
• Food ration for at P 30./day/365 days	P 264,191,238.30
• Medicine at P 1.00/day/inmate	12,130,582.90
• Laundry soap	1,353,483.67
• Mosquito net	1,010,250.00
• t-shirt	
• Blanket	1,681,50000
• Sleeping mat	
• Gratuity of P 50.00 each for released prisoners	139,900.00
<b>T O T A L</b>	<b>280,506,954.87</b>

The per capita allocation for inmates is clearly insufficient to promote their physical well-being. Moreover, there is acute overcrowding, around 28%, in the NBP. All of these lead to dehumanizing conditions that make the social reintegration of the offender difficult to achieve.

#### **F. Parole and Probation Administration**

Probation is based on the notion that the treatment and rehabilitation of offenders are better achieved in the community. Since the community is the center for legal, socio-economic and cultural changes and developments, probation enables offenders to adapt more effectively to life outside prison. They are provided with a network of relationships and a variety of real life situations that enable them to reacquire or improve their social skills.

#### **G. Volunteer Probation Aides**

Under the Probation Law of 1976, as amended, a member of the community may be appointed as a Volunteer Probation Aide or “VPA”. In practice, a VPA is matched with not more than 5 clients who are under the supervision of a regular parole and probation officer. The volunteer performs his task by visiting the clients at home or in the workplace. Also considered as a VPA is one who gives material assistance to the PPA, such as medicine, office supplies, seedlings for tree planting activities, transport facilities and providing a venue for group activities.

#### **H. Number of Volunteer Probation Aides**

From 1978 to 1992, the PPA drew on the assistance of 2,077 VPAs nationwide. Today, the number of VPAs has shrunk to 167 and they are only found in 8 Regions. The significant drop in the number of VPAs has been attributed to the failure of the PPA to continue its practice of reimbursing the traveling expenses of volunteers.

<b>REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF VOLUNTEER PROBATION AIDES</b>		
<b>Region</b>	<b>Previous No. of VPAs 1978-1992</b>	<b>Present No. of VPAs</b>
• NCR	100	-
• CAR	95	-
• I	80	12
• II	124	5
• III	146	-
• IV	281	-
• V	54	-
• VI	222	59
• VII	279	1
• VIII	100	51
• IX	201	19
• X	218	1
• XI	124	-
• XII	53	19
• CARAGA	-	-
<b>T O T A L</b>	<b>2,077</b>	<b>167</b>

The VPAs helped supervise 3,509 clients or 3.78% of 92,859 probationers, parolees and pardonees. There is, however, no correlation between the supervision caseload of Parole and Probation Officers and the number of VPAs providing assistance. The reason for this is that the volunteers do not have specific clients assigned to them.

#### **I. Community Support**

For the period from January to June 2001, PPA units nationwide utilized the services/support of 521 government agencies, 310 Non-government organizations and 211 individuals to meet the rehabilitation needs of its clients.

<b>PPA COMMUNITY SUPPORT (YEAR 2000)</b>			
<b>Region</b>	<b>GOs</b>	<b>NGOs</b>	<b>Individual</b>
• I	26	15	8
• II	11	3	3
• III	32	13	14
• IV	87	18	18
• V	75	36	43
• VI	49	23	6
• VII	106	52	35
• VIII	41	21	30
• IX	21	1	3
• X	27	10	17
• XI	-	-	-
• XII	11	11	2
• CAR	1	1	2
• NCR	21	2	11
• CARAGA	13	5	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>521</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>192</b>



The monetary value of outside assistance, including cash contributions, received by the PPA amounted to P 399,728.00 last year.

<b>CONTRIBUTIONS TO PPA REHABILITATION PROGRAMS BY GOS, NGOS AND INDIVIDUALS (Y 2000)</b>	
<b>Region</b>	<b>Monetary Value</b>
• CAR	P 35,000
• I	5,000
• II	-
• III	143,848
• IV	8,150
• V	26,245
• VI	20,810
• VII	39,156
• VIII	7,215
• IX	18,305
• X	71,339
• XI	-
• XII	5,000
• CARAGA	12,600
• NCR	7,000
<b>T O T A L</b>	<b>P 399,728</b>

## **J. Halfway House**

In 1997, the Philippine - Japan Halfway House began operating inside the NBP prison reservation in Muntinlupa City. The project is a joint effort of the Asia Crime Prevention Foundation, the Nagoya West Lions Club and UNAFEI, from the Japanese end, and the Asia Crime Prevention Philippines, Inc., the Department of Justice, the National Police Commission, the Department of Social Welfare and Development, the Muntinlupa Lions Clubs and other non-governmental organizations on the side of the Philippines.

The facility served 176 clients from October 1997 to July 2001. The inmates' stay ranged from 1 day to 1 year and 11 months. 24.14% of the residents received vocational training.<sup>8</sup> residents were released from the Halfway House are presently under parole supervision by the Probation and Parole Officers in the places where they reside.<sup>9</sup> 80% are gainfully employed or were given livelihood projects by the Department of Social Welfare and Development 39 Halfway residents were transferred to the NBP Minimum Security compound; 16 were expelled for violating house rules; and 4 escaped. At present, there are 16 residents in the Halfway House.

Doubts have been expressed as to whether the facility is truly a "halfway house". Since the Halfway House is located inside a prison complex and its residents are still serving a prison term i.e. under guard, the residents are unable to leave the facility and to mingle freely and to interact with free society. More properly, the facility only serves as a separation center.<sup>10</sup>

8 22 received training in shoemaking. 13 in refrigeration and air conditioning. 5, in automotive mechanics; 1 each in carpentry and practical electricity.

9 38 of the released residents are under parole supervision by Probation and Parole officers. All, except for 2, are unemployed. None of the employed former residents were able to use the skills they learned in the halfway house.

10 Under Sec. 2, Art. XXV of the 1960 "Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners" of the Bureau of Prisons, a "national prisoner shall, 30 days before his scheduled date of release, be transferred to the Separation and Placement Center for purposes of reorientation with the ways of free society, preparatory to his final discharge." The NBP currently maintains a Separation Center where inmates stay from 1 day to 10 days before the date of their release. While there, the inmates are given guidance counseling.

#### **IV. OBSERVATIONS**

Budgetary constraints have created big gaps in the institutional services that NBP inmates get. These deficiencies are found in almost all of the vital inmate services. These include medical aid, food, clothing and counseling services to help inmates improve their attitudes towards themselves and others. The community has made substantial contributions in dealing with said gaps.

Similar gaps are found in the services available to released inmates and probationers. Among these is the absence of government or government-supported halfway houses to ease their entry into open society and assistance in securing employment, dealing with medical problems, education for their children, counseling and housing. The PPA has plans to put up halfway houses. It had received pledges for the donation of building sites for said purpose in 6 administrative regions. For lack of construction funds, however, the PPA has been unable to act on the pledges.

Parole and Probation officers carry a heavy workload of 154 supervision cases a year. Since Corrections has a low priority in the allocation of government funds, more VPAs should be recruited to ease said workload. This will require the development of a volunteer resource development program either in the field offices or in the PPA central office.

There is need to expand the use by the PPA of restorative justice principles in the treatment of offenders. It should enhance the involvement of its clients in more community service work, that is, in activities that enable them to make amends to society, such as tree planting, cleanliness and beautification projects. The PPA should also consider providing crime victims with greater participation in the post-sentence and pre-executive clemency investigations conducted by parole and probation officers.

#### **V. CONCLUSION**

The community gives ample support to the efforts of the New Bilibid Prison to promote the spiritual growth and high moral standards of inmates. It has, however, not given enough attention to the needs of inmates who cross over from institutional life to freedom. This is the most critical phase in the reformation of criminal offenders. This is the period when an ex-convict, whose need for emotional and material support is most acute, is most vulnerable to suffering a relapse. Unfortunately, the community does not provide enough programs and services to smoothen such transition. This is the area where the community has yet to display its full potential. Considering that faith-based and community organizations have the trained personnel with specific skills and access to large numbers of volunteers and material resources, they can play a more expansive role in ensuring the successful re-entry and integration of ex-convicts into society.

# **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE REHABILITATION AND TREATMENT OF CRIMINAL OFFENDERS**

**By**

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## **I. INTRODUCTION: SIGNIFICANCE OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN CORRECTIONS**

Community involvement has been one of the important components of the criminal justice system in order to achieve the successful rehabilitation and treatment of criminal offenders. Nowadays many jurisdictions put much emphasis on support from the community in providing various services as well as in earning understanding on the difficult work involved in both institutional and community-based treatments of criminal offenders. The smooth reintegration into society and the through-care of criminal offenders cannot be done without community involvement.

In view of this importance, the Asian and Pacific Conference of Correctional Administrators (APCCA) has repeatedly discussed the issue of community involvement. The 20th APCCA (2000) selected the issue of community involvement in corrections as one of the agenda items and indicated the following three major reasons were considered to be important for corrections incorporating community involvement:

- (i) 'Offenders must be released into the community when their prison sentence has expired and community input is vital to improving the chances of their integration into society.'
- (ii) 'An open relationship between the community and corrections is critical to increasing public awareness and the role of correctional services.'
- (iii) 'Volunteers and non-government organizations can be involved in the provision of valuable services to prisoners and ex-prisoners.'

Although the above reasons are not necessarily exhaustive, community involvement assumes a vital role from the initial stage when offenders encounter the formal reactions of the criminal justice system to the aftercare stage when they are truly re-integrated into society.

In a more broader way, Ms. Caparas, a UNAFEI participant, clearly demonstrated one of the excellent criminal justice practices that incorporated community mobilization to strengthen four formally organized components in the Philippine criminal justice system: i.e., law enforcement, prosecution, courts and corrections. Her paper (2000) emphasized the significance of close coordination and integrated strategies among criminal justice agencies by maximally utilizing community involvement to further enhance both crime prevention and offenders' rehabilitation.

This paper mainly examines the role of community involvement in Japanese corrections in order to deepen understanding on the current situations in Japan and to make a useful international comparison for enhancement of discussion in this session. Then, with reference to some relevant group workshop reports prepared by UNAFEI International Training Course participants, this paper tries to clarify major problems and their countermeasures in mobilizing community and indicate some suggestions in the field of corrections.

## **II. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE REHABILITATION AND TREATMENT OF CRIMINAL OFFENDERS IN JAPAN**

In Japan, all matters regarding corrections are within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice. The Correction Bureau, an interior organ of the Ministry of Justice, has direct control over the correctional administration concerning the institutional treatment of both adult and juvenile offenders. The non-institutional treatment or the community-based treatment of offenders is under the administrative control of the Rehabilitation Bureau of the Ministry of Justice. Both Bureaus closely cooperate with each other to realize a smooth transition from institutional treatment to community-based treatment. Community involvement is one of the keys for both Bureaus to achieve better treatment and rehabilitation of offenders and to keep closer collaboration between the two Bureaus.

This chapter firstly deals with the current situation of community mobilization in the field of community-based treatment. Next, community involvement in institutional corrections will be explained. As referred above, the Japanese Corrections deals with both adult and juvenile corrections, this chapter mostly covers the topics in adult corrections. Those in juvenile corrections will be briefly explained if they seem worthy of a mention.

### **A. Community Involvement in Community-Based Treatment in Japan**

There are several types of community involvement in the rehabilitation of offenders. In terms of offenders, the Rehabilitation Bureau introduced the 'Community Participation Program' in 1992 as an educational measure for juvenile offenders to broaden their perspective of society, and not as a punishment by depriving them of liberty. The effects of the program include:

- (i) to develop client's sense of responsibility as a member of society and enhance his sense of self-esteem;
- (ii) to know different types of people in the community and learn their way of life and value sense as an identifiable role model; and
- (iii) to learn how to develop sound interpersonal relationships with others.

The program is categorized into these four groups:

- (i) Community service in social welfare institutions such as for the elderly or physically disabled people in the community,
- (ii) Work experiences on farms or in public areas,
- (iii) Observation tour of historical spots, public facilities or construction areas, and
- (iv) Recreational activities such as skiing, soccer, cooking, fishing and camping.

In some cases the juvenile offenders engage themselves in the practices together with other young persons from the community. In this program, the community gets involved in the rehabilitation of offenders by arranging the community programs, receiving offenders to the programs, giving advice to the offenders, and building constructive relationships between offenders and the community.

Other forms of community involvement are an active participation of volunteers in the rehabilitation process. The rehabilitation system in Japan has been characterized by the extensive participation of volunteers, which is collectively named the participatory model.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> As of 31 December, 1999, volunteer visitors (1,964) and chaplains (1,835) were working for both adult and juvenile correctional institutions in Japan. In community-based treatment, as of 1 April 2000, about 49,000 volunteer probation officers (VPO) and other numerous groups cooperate in the rehabilitation of offenders such as Big Brothers and Sisters Association (BBS) (6,053, this body is solely utilized for juvenile corrections), Women's Association for Rehabilitation Aid (WARA) (202,345), and Cooperative Employers (4,606).

Important characteristics in the participatory model include:

- (i) Various types of community involvement are available so that many people can participate in their activities according to the individual interests and circumstances;
- (ii) Good communication and collaboration among the volunteer organizations;
- (iii) Initiatives of the public while government promotes systematization and assists further development; and
- (iv) Policy's emphasis on grass-roots deterrent power of crimes in the community.

The following section describes, among many, volunteer probation officers (VPOs)<sup>2</sup> who act as government agents in the rehabilitation services; the juridical persons for offenders rehabilitation services approved by the Ministry of Justice; and other volunteers who contribute to the prevention of crime and rehabilitation of offenders such as the women's association for rehabilitation aid, big brothers and big sisters association, and cooperative employers.

### 1. Volunteer Probation Officer (VPO)

Since the enactment of the Volunteer Probation Officer Law in 1950, approximately 50,000 persons have served as VPOs throughout the country. According to the Offenders Rehabilitation Law, a VPO is expected to assist the Professional Probation Officer (hereinafter called PPO) and make up for inadequacies of the latter's work under the supervision of the director of the probation office. Of the VPO's rehabilitation aid activities, the most important is supervising and assisting probationers and parolees assigned to him/her, while keeping close consultation with the PPO.

Legally, the VPOs are defined as non-permanent officials of the National Government and are entitled to the benefits of national compensation when any bodily injury is inflicted on them in the performance of their duties. However, they are not paid any remuneration for their services. The Government may pay only the total expenses incurred in discharging their duties, or a part thereof. As in any other fields of volunteer work, what constantly motivates VPOs is a sense of mission and gratification from helping others.

As for the recruitment of VPOs, the Volunteer Probation Officer Law requires VPOs to be:

- (i) evaluated highly with respect to their good character and conduct in the community;
- (ii) enthusiastic and sufficiently available to work;
- (iii) financially stable; and
- (iv) healthy and active.

To recruit VPOs, the directors of the 50 probation offices prepare a list of candidates based of the information gathered from various sources in the community. In effect, the list reflects to a great extent the opinion of representatives of the VPOs' Association. Further screening is made by a VPO Screening Committee, an advisory committee to the Ministry of Justice that is established in 50 locations corresponding to probation offices. This committee consists of representatives of the court, prosecution, the bar association, correctional institutions, probation and parole services, other public commissions in the community and learned citizens. The candidates who successfully pass the screening process are then appointed as VPOs by the Minister of Justice.

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<sup>2</sup> A growing number of countries in the world have also become interested in volunteer involvement in offenders rehabilitation and have introduced the VPOs system. Japan introduced probation before World War II. However in the Asia-Pacific region, probation was only introduced recently in most of the countries; for example, in 1976 in the Philippines, 1979 in Thailand, 1985 in Papua New Guinea, and 1989 in the Republic of Korea. Existing volunteer systems in the world can be divided into two groups:

- a) Volunteers who undertake most of the duties of probation officers (e.g. Japan, Singapore, Thailand, Papua New Guinea and Republic of Korea)
- b) Volunteers who assist Probation Officers while the Probation Officers themselves always carry out their official duties (e.g. the Philippines, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Sri Lanka)

The term of service of a VPO is two years with the possibility of re-appointment. In practice, most of them are re-appointed repeatedly for a number of years and receive periodical training programs assisted by the probation offices because the duties of a VPO requires long-term experience with much knowledge and skill about the treatment of offenders.

The activities of VPOs are classified into two categories: Rehabilitation Aid Activities and Crime Prevention Activities. The VPO rehabilitation aid activities include:

- (i) to supervise and assist the probationers and parolees assigned to the VPO;
- (ii) to conduct environmental adjustment soon after an offender is committed to a correctional institution until the pre-release stage to enhance an earlier discharge and better adjustment after release;
- (iii) to locate a probationer or parolee who has moved to the VP's residential area with or without permission and take over their supervisory casework; and
- (iv) to conduct preliminary investigation for a candidate for pardon.

Both probation and parole supervisions are conducted through the close collaboration of the PPO and VPO. While the professional probation officer is involved in the case as a specialist in the treatment of offenders, the VPO works as a neighbor to the offender, assisting them on behalf of the community. The volunteers are assigned on the basis of their place of residence to one of 901 Rehabilitation Areas of the country. They are guided by a PPO in charge of the rehabilitation area. VPOs have formed a VPOs' Association in each area. Every VPO is affiliated with one such association depending on their residence. Leaders of VPOs' associations form organizations at prefectural, regional and national levels, which play roles in facilitating better VPO activities by means of training, awards and other services.

The advantages of the VPO system, as generally acknowledged among practitioners, can be summarized as follows:

- (i) Since both the VPO and the parolee live in the same community, a parolee can make immediate contact with a VPO (immediate contact).
- (ii) The VPOs can provide the offender with various social resources and useful information about the community to help them rehabilitate in the community (social resources).
- (iii) The VPOs find themselves in a more advantageous position in bringing about a change in the public attitude towards the offender and in mobilizing social resources (practices based on community needs).
- (iv) The offender and their relatives look upon a VPO as a neighbor, rather than as a representative of the government. As a fellow citizen, s/he can demonstrate purely fraternal concern about the welfare of the offender and even intervene in the offender's family relationship more smoothly. Experiencing such a relationship with the volunteer undoubtedly helps the offender regain their self-respect and identify themselves with law-abiding culture; since most offenders have never previously experienced such warm concern for them (close relationship).
- (v) VPOs live continuously in the community, and therefore, can establish relationships on a more continuous basis. A PPO sometimes fails to keep close relationships because s/he needs to transfer to other offices every two or three years. Furthermore, even after the expiration of the parole period, private relationships between the offenders and the VPOs may continue in their community, and the VPOs may provide them with various services even though there is no legal requirement to do so. This continuation of providing services may contribute to the rehabilitation of offenders (continuous support).
- (vi) A VPO can provide more flexible services as s/he is not bound by regulations and working hours as much as regular staff (flexibility of services).

However, the VPO system itself is not immune from several problems. Some arise along with the

changes in our society. The following are examples of major problems that the VPO system has been facing:

- (i) VPOs as laymen are likely to deal with their clients according to personal or inherent views that have been established through their personal experiences. This may result in a wide difference in the treatment of offenders from one VPO to another. Although treatment methods should be individualized, such partial treatment, resulting in partial disposition should be minimized in order to ensure that every probationer and parolee gets the same benefit from probation and parole supervision.
- (ii) The average age of VPOs tends to become older year after year. At present, the average age of VPOs is more than 60 years. On the other hand, more than three-fourths of the clients are under 20 years of age. The generation gap may disturb smooth communication and invalidate positive influence. Also, VPOs used to be easily recruited from among those who had a good reputation in the traditional community. However, it has been difficult to recruit VPOs in urbanized areas because there are few qualified residents in this regard (e.g. new comers are not well known in the new community).

In mobilizing community maximally in the community-based treatment by VPOs, backup policies should keep up with changes and needs in our society. In 1999, the Amended Volunteer Probation Officer Law was enforced to strengthen the following points:

- (i) Community organizing and networking activities for crime prevention and the mobilization of social resources are defined as major activities of VPOs;
- (ii) The VPO's association is defined as a public organization certified by the Law, to which every VPO is affiliated without exception depending on their residence; and
- (iii) Cooperation of municipal governments with VPOs and VPO associations is emphasized in the Law.

The VPO association's roles as "a supply base" for VPOs' rehabilitation activities and "an advanced base" for crime prevention are supposed to receive full attention under the new Law. Specifically, these affiliations play an important role in the maintenance of mutual solidarity, the development of abilities (skills development training) and the co-ordination of efforts and resources, as well as crime prevention activities.

## 2. Juridical Person for Offenders' Rehabilitation

The Law for Offenders Rehabilitation Services (1995) established the juridical person for offenders rehabilitation in the form of a non-profit organization for offender rehabilitation services such as (i) accommodating offenders in halfway houses (Shelter Aid Services), (ii) providing material aid (Temporary Aid Services), and (iii) financially supporting other rehabilitation organizations under the supervision of a probation office (Liaison and Assistance Service). As of 1 April 2001, juridical persons for offenders' rehabilitation run 101 adult and juvenile halfway houses in Japan. Services (ii) and (iii) indicated above are provided by the Rehabilitation Aid Association.

All of the 101 halfway houses are run under the authorization of the Ministry of Justice. Among them, 5 hostels accommodate only juveniles, 22 hostels are only for adults, and 74 hostels are for both juveniles and adults. Additionally, 91 hostels accommodate only men, 7 hostels only women, and 3 hostels both men and women. The total capacity of the halfway houses is some 2,300 individuals with each facility averaging from 10 to 110. While most residents work daily outside of the halfway houses, those deemed unfit for outside employment are provided jobs at workshops available in some halfway houses. There is a total of 526 employees nationally; an average of five per facility. Among them, 163 employees (at least one in each hostel) are in charge of the treatment of offenders and most are appointed as VPOs concurrently

The national government supervises and provides financial support to the halfway houses. In 1999,

halfway houses received approximately 76 percent of their budget from the national government.

In this connection, some countries/regions in Asia (e.g., Hong Kong, Japan, Republic of Korea) have accumulated their rich experiences in this field. Other countries have introduced recently such intermediate measures (e.g., the Philippines for adult prisoners), while others have not.

Among many problems the halfway house should address are the growing number of aged inmates at halfway houses, lack of financial stability, difficulty of recruitment of staff and unfavorable reactions from the community.

### 3. Rehabilitation Aid Association

Rehabilitation Aid Associations represent another type of juridical persons for offender rehabilitation services. There are 68 such associations throughout the country, at least one in every prefecture. They contribute to rehabilitation services in two ways. One is to provide temporary aid such as meals, clothing, medical care and travel fares to offenders experiencing difficulties in their daily lives. The other is to provide liaison and assistance services to persons and organizations working in rehabilitation services, such as halfway houses, VPO associations and other volunteer organizations. They accomplish the latter by providing subsidies, textbooks for training, tools and materials for crime prevention activities, and educating the public on crime issues.

### 4. Other Volunteer Organizations

In addition to VPOs, there are other private organizations that are not directly involved in the treatment of offenders, but give much support to the community-based treatment of offenders. Probation Offices and Regional Parole Boards support and guide the following first two organizations.

Firstly, the Women's Association for Rehabilitation Aid (WARA) is an autonomous group that conducts crime prevention activities in the community and helps offenders rehabilitate themselves by making use of their experience as women and mothers. For example, it organizes crime prevention meetings for residents, including junior high school students and material support to VPOs, halfway houses and Big Brothers and Sisters (BBS) groups. Also they visit inmates in correctional institutions and encourage them to rehabilitate. Currently, more emphasis is placed on supporting young mothers who are at a loss for bringing up their children.

Secondly, the Big Brothers and Sisters (BBS) Association is an organization of youths who befriend delinquent youngsters and discourage their delinquency. Regardless of educational or occupational background, any person aged from 17 to 30 capable of befriending delinquents, with a proper understanding of their problems and needs, can be a member. There are 578 associations, some of which are certified as university clubs. Their activities include organizing sports events, doing volunteer work in the homes of aged people, doing group work outdoors and talking about their life and future. Their activities are conducted based on entrustment by probation offices, the Family Courts, child consultation centers, local police, etc.

Finally, Cooperative Employers help offenders or juvenile delinquents by offering stable employment in spite of their criminal history. However, in recent years the number of Cooperative Employers tends to be decreasing because of economic recession.



### Cooperative Employers by Occupation ( as of 1 April 2001)

Occupation	Number	%
Construction	2,330	50.1
Manufacturing industry	804	17.4
Service entrepreneur	411	8.9
Wholesaler, retailer	247	5.4
Constructor of electricity, gas and water supply	164	3.6
Transportation	152	3.3
Agriculture, forestry and fishery	57	1.2
Mining industry	10	0.2
Others	430	9.9
<b>T o t a l</b>	<b>4,608</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Rehabilitation Bureau, Ministry of Justice

## B. Community Involvement in Institutional Treatment in Japan

The Japanese institutional corrections also widely makes use of volunteers and private organizations in supervising offenders and helping them reintegrate into the community. Firstly, volunteers are vigorously involved in religious services, counseling, teaching both academic knowledge and technical skills. Secondly, prison labor is also supported by a style of public cooperation, which stabilizes and promotes the smooth running of prison labor. Thirdly, when the inmates participate in extramural activities, volunteers provide such valuable opportunities as helping disabled people, working experiences in the community, etc. Finally, VPOs consistently contribute to enhance early-release of prisoners as well as to assist rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders from the time of admission to the time of their successful return to the community.

### 1. Volunteer Participation in Various Educational Programs: Prison Chaplains, Volunteer Visitors, and Other Agents

Educational programs in Japanese penal institutions mainly include orientation at the time of admission and release; academic training for helping those inmates who have not completed compulsory education up to junior high school to earn a diploma; correspondence including courses for those who wish to receive higher education at the senior high school or college/university level; living guidance including special group treatment programs by offence typologies, individual/group counseling, lectures. All of these programs are carried out not only by the prison staff but also with the assistance of volunteers from outside. Extramural curricula are also provided in terms of community services such as cleaning parks, attendance at local recreational events, visits to factories, and taking examinations outside the prison to obtain various kinds of qualifications and licenses.

### 2. Volunteer Visitor System

Prisoners have a wide variety of problems and personal concerns. Life guidance and counseling services are quite important programs in order to solve such issues. Also they often look for hobbies that will cultivate their lives. Such inmates' needs are better assisted by outside volunteers who have abundant knowledge and experiences. In view of such needs, the Volunteer Visitor System was established in 1953 to enhance correctional treatment. In recent years, about 2000 Volunteer Visitors are actively involved in providing and supporting various prison programs indicated below.

**Volunteer Visitors by Occupational Field (as of 31 December 1999)**

Service Field	Number	%
Religion	334	17.0
Education	357	18.2
Literature	284	14.5
Rehabilitation	234	11.9
Commerce & Industry	124	6.3
Social Welfare	65	3.3
Law	98	5.0
Others	468	23.8
<b>T o t a l</b>	<b>1,964</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Contents of Assistant by Volunteer Visitors (as of 31 December 1999)**

Contents	Number	%
Culture	8,853	29.1
Individual Counseling	6,621	21.8
Hobbies	5,000	16.4
Family Guidance	2,133	7.0
Vocational Guidance	1,481	4.9
Aftercare Guidance	1,683	5.5
Religious Guidance	1,008	3.3
Judicial Guidance	457	1.5
Others	3,211	10.5
<b>T o t a l</b>	<b>30,447</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Correction Bureau, Ministry of Justice*

In recent years, special group treatment programs for inmates such as stimulants abusers, traffic offenders, sex offenders, violent offenders, etc. have been studied intensively to further enhance inmates' rehabilitation. In such intensive programs, volunteer visitors are increasingly contributing in-class lectures, group discussions or counseling, etc.

### 3. Chaplains

Since the Constitution of Japan stipulates the separation of the State and religion as a corollary of the freedom of religion, the Government is prohibited to employ prison chaplains as government officials. However, with the voluntary cooperation of priests who are registered at each institution, inmates can receive religious guidance from their own sects upon request. Religious services provide them with mental and moral support through cultivation of religious sentiment. In 1999, some 1,800 volunteer chaplains provided about 20,000 religious services for inmates including foreign inmates. For both volunteer chaplains and volunteer visitors, national and prefectural level associations are organized with the close collaboration of the Correction Bureau.

#### 4. Prison Industry: CAPIC and Prison Camp Programs

Well functioning prison industry is one of the important features of Japanese corrections. Prison work is compulsory by law for those sentenced to imprisonment with labor, who account for the majority (99%) of convicted prisoners. Through prison work, inmates acquire working habits as well as occupational know-how and skills. There can be little doubt that working hard in the daytime helps to raise the morale of inmates and to maintain discipline. In FY 2000, the daily average population who participated in prison industry was about 46,000 and its annual revenue was about 10.3 billion yen.

As with the operation of the prison industries, due to the unavoidable budgeted curtailment for correctional services, the Prison Industry Cooperation Division was set up within the Japanese Correctional Association in 1983. Since then, this third sector agency has been providing the raw materials necessary for the operation of prison industries and turned over working funds for the materials. Prison products distributed by this agency have the brand name of 'CAPIC', which has a good reputation with many Japanese citizens thereby enhancing the positive understanding of the general public toward offender rehabilitation.

As with the management of open camps, there are two modes of management: i.e., one form of prison camps are managed directly by the State, in the other, prison camps are managed through the cooperation of private sectors in the free society. In the latter type of prison camps, inmates may commute everyday from the prison to the prison camp outside (a kind of daytime-leave), or they may stay at a dormitory attached to camp (a kind of overnight-leave). One of the examples is Oi Ship-building Dockyard Camp, established in 1961, attached to Matsuyama Prison. The Dormitory, where prisoners and prison officers live together, is managed through self-governed activities among the residents. The prisoners commute everyday to Ohi Dockyard, where prisoners and other ordinary workers work together. The dockyard is managed and owned by a private company.

#### 5. VPO as one of the Catalysts to Enhance the Through-Care of Offenders

The rehabilitation of prisoners is most enhanced when both the institutional treatment programs and the aftercare programs are well arranged and appropriately implemented in accordance with each offender's risk and needs. A smooth transition from the institutional treatment to the community-based treatment is the key to achieve an effective reintegration into society. In view of inmates' smooth reintegration into society, correctional programs place a special emphasis on the parole of inmates.

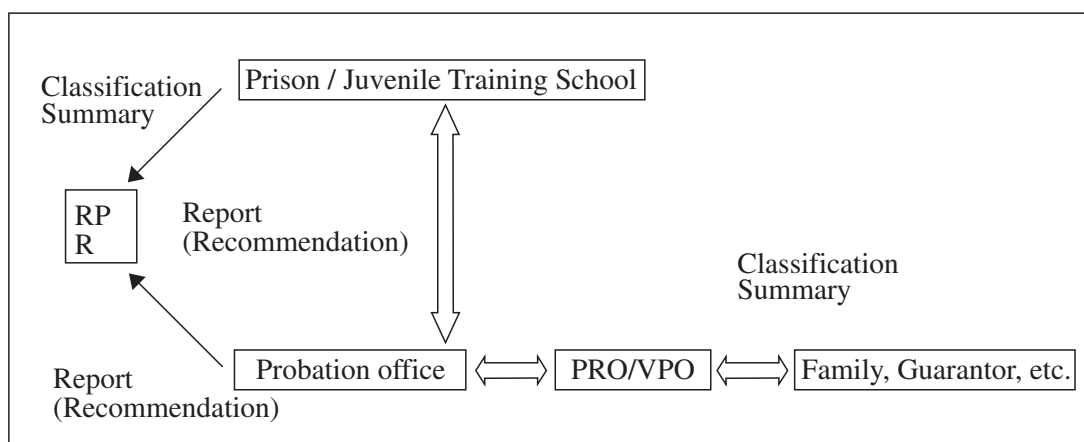
Although the Penal Code provides only two requirements for parole eligibility: (i) the prisoner has served one-third of his sentence for a determinate sentence or 10 years for a life sentence; (ii) s/he demonstrates a state of reformation, these are regarded as only necessary conditions for parole application.

In practice, a classification committee organized in each institution meets at least once a month even before the eligibility date for parole to decide whether to submit an application for parole to the Regional Parole Board (RPB). The most important criterion in evaluating qualification for parole is a low probability of recidivism. To examine this probability, the committee takes into account numerous factors such as behavioral, personal and social factors, factors related to the present offense, a release plan and community resources. For such substantive arrangements, correctional institutions collaborate with relevant probation offices in order to successfully achieve early-release and well-planned supervision and aftercare services from the time of admission. VPOs strenuously support this process in assisting an environmental adjustment for each inmate.

The following diagram shows the process of how the environmental adjustment is conducted. Firstly, as soon as an inmate is committed to a correctional institution, based upon the initial classification and treatment planning result, the institution provides a classification summary that includes the person's

physical and psychological characteristics, employment plans and his/her family's name and address to the probation office which has jurisdiction over the prospective place where s/he would like to live. At this moment, usually, the PPO entrusts the duty of social inquiry to a VPO living near the inmate's family. The VPO must visit immediately the prospective place to determine the feasibility of an inmate's return there. The VPO tries to eliminate any negative factors in cooperation with family members. Such adjustment efforts continue until an inmate's release date subject to the discovery of a more suitable return location. When no family is available, similar efforts are directed towards finding an appropriate employer, friend, halfway house, or other resource person or agency.

Without the VPOs' assistance, most of the environmental adjustment cannot be achieved. In recent years, about 95 percent of parole applications are approved by the RPBs and 60 percent of the total inmates are successfully released on parole, in which the VPO serves an indispensable part and partially contributes to prevent the correctional institutions' overcrowding in the backdoor step. During inmates' incarceration period, the VPOs often visit or write to them and encourage their rehabilitation.



After conditional release, the assigned VPO starts supervising the offender. The VPO keeps in touch with the offender and his family by means of mutual visits and interviews generally twice a month or so. The VPO submits regular progress reports on each offender to the probation office every month. When the parole officer thinks it necessary, judging from the information from the VPO or the offender's family, s/he interviews and supervises the offender as crisis intervention. Such a supportive relationship continues until the parole supervision is successfully terminated and s/he resumes a self-sustaining and law-abiding life as a community member.

### III. CONCLUSION: WHAT SHOULD BE SOUGHT FOR THE BETTER COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE REHABILITATION OF CRIMINAL OFFENDERS?

As briefly described above, Japanese Corrections, both in the community-based treatment and the institutional treatment of criminal offenders, have incorporated community involvement to achieve the through care of them. Close coordination and collaboration among all the agents who are involved in offender rehabilitation is the key in effective mobilization of community.

However, some UNAFEI International Training Courses indicated major obstacles when we mobilize the participation of the public: e.g., lack of public interest, security risk for both formal agencies and community members, difficulties in securing qualified and skilled helpers, shortage of the budget to meet the needs of the community volunteers, insufficient community support from community for specific groups

of people who are in need of intensive intervention, etc.

The following are some of the suggestions that might enhance the further discussions in this seminar:

1. Differentiate Our Clients from Offenders' Risk and Needs and from Conditions of his/her Circumstances

When we introduce community assistance to offender treatment, we should reconsider the importance of proper assessment of offenders' criminogenic needs and risk and the proper classification for the most appropriate treatment selections is underscored. An appropriate assignment of community assistance should be differentiated in terms of levels and qualities of services of the individual needs and risk.

2. Engagement of the Media and Promotional Strategies should be arranged to raise public awareness.

The difficult work of corrections is often invisible to the general public. Although correctional authorities have tried to enhance public awareness through various campaigns, needs on the community involvement change year by year. Both long-term and short-term strategies finely tuned with current practices, their problems and needs must be publicized openly toward the community to incorporate sufficient assistance and understanding from the community.

3. Coordination and Cooperation Correctional Agencies and Volunteers should be further enhanced.

In order to secure the consistency and continuity of treatment, relevant agencies have to keep good coordination and cooperation. The same thing is also applicable for community mobilization. Community involvement may be maximally utilized when the related agencies share and better coordinate volunteer activities. Offender's rehabilitation is the product of collaboration among all the relevant members in both the criminal justice field and community.

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## **REACTION**

**By**  
**Mr. Rod CORNEJO,**  
**GMA Network, the Philippines**

Two influential members of the Filipino community are the church and the media who make up what is popularly called “Civil Society.”

I appear before you with two hats: that of an executive of a broadcasting organization known as GMA Network. And that of a volunteer in a church jail ministry known as Prison Fellowship Philippines.

The Philippine media industry, aware of its power to mould public opinion and consent, has a mandate not only to provide news and entertainment but also to engage in community work in the name of public service. For this reason, two of the country’s largest TV networks have each established a foundation to do humanitarian work.

GMA Foundation, of which I am a director, is the humanitarian arm of our company. Its work is focused in the promotion of education, health and the rights of the child, among others.

As Assistant to the President and head of Community Relations, I represent our Chairman and Chief Executive Officer and the company in a number of government and non-government agencies, foundations and cause-oriented groups to manifest our concern for the community and our partnership with government in nation building. Since our Network is a private commercial station whose goal is to make money, and because my job is not to make money but to serve the community, I have been dubbed the “conscience” of the company.

Prison Fellowship Philippines, of which I am a director, is a Christian Ministry to the jails. Its primary mandate is to help prisoners find new hope during their incarceration and to give the prisoners opportunities to acquire skills and means of livelihood that will enable them to start a new life upon their return to the folds of society. Prison Fellowship defines its work as an act “moved by the love of God” to set the captives free. Free from guilt and hatred, free from hopelessness and helplessness, free from the bondages of spiritual bankruptcy.

This is the thought I hope to leave with all of you, partners of the community pillar. The spiritual side of the community which believes in the goodness and power of God which upholds the Christian principles on justice and mercy, repentance and restoration, salvation and eternal life.

This is no wishful thinking or fanciful preaching. I have seen hardened criminals change for the better because they have found new hope and purpose in Christ. This is further evidenced by the generally peaceful atmosphere in the national penitentiary and local jails made possible by the teachings and charitable acts of church organizations reaching out to the prisoners and their families. This is rehabilitation work in its truest form.

We, Filipinos, should be thankful for our freedom of religion which has encouraged our prisons to be open to teachings about God. Most, if not all, of the prison officials I know welcome church work inside the prisons as this serves to promote peace and harmony.

Through the media, the public is made aware of the transforming power of faith in the prisons. While many members of our society may remain skeptical about criminals becoming saints, most of you

representing the pillars of our criminal justice system recognize the positive contributions made by religions in the rehabilitation of the prisoners. If you agree, say Amen.

I thank God for my job which brings me not only to the palaces of the powerful but also to the pits of the powerless. My work in the media and in the prisons has allowed me to see man's capacity to hate or to heal, to destroy or to restore, to be greedy or to be generous, to be selfish or to be selfless, to do evil or to do good.

Where does the transformation begin? When man begins to love and fear God.

The Holy Bible teaches us that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. I believe this is the wisdom we seek for in this four-day seminar. May God grant it to us.

# REACTION

By

**Professor Taha M. BASMAN**

**Philippine Islamic Council**

*Assalamu Alaikum.* May peace be upon everybody during this very important occasion centering on community involvement in the criminal justice administration. We know that this forum is being held at a very appropriate time when our communities are struggling to be at Peace with ourselves and with all other members of society – “Ramadhan” for the Muslims and “Christmas” for the Christians. Our spirituality during these Holy days can effectively reinforce our determined effort to curb criminality in all corners of the world.

The papers read by Justice Undersecretary Ramon J. Liwag and Professor Kenji Teramura present a lucid picture of the unique position of the Community Pillar in the Criminal Justice System. While the criminals abuse and offend this particular sector, the Community goes beyond “turning the other cheek” and, in fact, strives hard to rehabilitate and treat its abusers and offenders. What can be more noble than this gesture! The statistics and relevant information contained in both papers confirm this situation to be real and not merely an obsession.

I agree with Undersecretary Liwag that, “the community’s participation in crime prevention represents the public acceptance of its shared responsibility with the official sector for crime prevention. It proceeds from the view that the root causes of crime such as unemployment, poverty, and illiteracy are not within the control of any one component of the criminal justice system. It is the responsibility of the community to help overcome these problems.”

Perhaps, an inclusion of data on the specific effects of the community effort, if plausible, such as a reduction in criminality through the years, can pave the way for creative initiatives for more pioneering activities on the part of the community to make the re-integration of the offenders smooth and effective. My concern on this matter is influenced by the observation that in both societies (the Philippines and Japan), despite the active involvement of various groups and individuals in helping the inmates cross over smoothly from institutional life to freedom, one can not be assured of a decrease in criminality.

I cannot dare venture to disagree substantially with the observations, analyses and proposals presented by our speakers. They are acknowledged experts on the subject matter. However, due to the sudden upsurge of one type of criminality which is now seriously hounding the whole world – from Zamboanga City to New York and Jerusalem – it behooves us to include a non-sense discussion of “terrorism” and other relevant issues for the community to effectively counter such menace. Since this particular criminality does not value human lives, of both the perpetrators and the victims, there is a need for an objective discussion of the subject matter, either in this forum or in another occasion which deserves priority attention among Governments, peace advocates, and religious leaders. It must be noted that the “terrorists” have found an effective counter to hi-tech and sophisticated armament of the authorities, by using a very primitive and simple strategy – suicide bombing.

In the proposed discussion, an “interfaith dialogue” is needed to address all the concerns of the sectors affected by the menace. For this purpose, such dialogue must have the following features:

1. It must be held in an environment of mutual respect among people of different faiths;
2. It must aim at mutual understanding – understanding the Muslim as a Muslim and the Christian as a Christian. It seeks to explore our respective faiths, coming to know what we as Muslims or



as Christians believe and hold dear, what we practice as peoples of prayer and spiritual discipline, how we live our lives and the role of religious and moral guidance in that living, the way we hold our sacred books, the worries that we have as Muslims and Christians about our children, the life of our communities, the life we live as peoples of faith. That mutual exploration does not proceed in a spirit of debate or even apology;

3. It is not just talking together but may also involve praying in each other's presence. It may involve reading the Scripture of the other and seeking the help of the other to understand its message;
4. It is essential that we listen to our partners in dialogue deeply and in "their own terms;"
5. It is a way of meeting one another across the similarities and difference of our religious and communities – but the similarities should be highlighted; and
6. It must be regular and supported by both the community and the government.

In a nutshell, the points raised by both speakers, and the proposal to counter terrorism and similar crimes, must become our guidelines in charting the present and the future thrusts of our efforts at crime prevention.

Thank you.

## REACTION

By

**Mr. Dante L.A. JIMENEZ**

**Chairman, Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption, the Philippines**

It is not true that I am not comfortable with the topic of rehabilitation. Our organization is where victims come and we have to bind ourselves against the perpetrators of various crimes and these are heinous crimes. When we talk of rehabilitation, sometimes it becomes our second priority. What is important to us is to capture these people who inflict harm to many victims of crimes including corruption.

Let me react to the presentation of the Honorable Ramon J. Liwag with regards to community involvement and which is a perception in the government service. I think while we just complement, as community, the government's role which is the principal implementor of the criminal justice system (CJS) particularly in the rehabilitation of prisoners. This is the problem facing now our government that the community is taking the second lead – the background. It has to be a “partnership.” Also, I would like to focus on volunteerism, we have the Probation Law of 1976, as amended. The problem there is that a member of the community maybe appointed as a Volunteer Probation Aide (VPA). It is better to remove maybe. It has to be a requirement. Because here, when we say maybe, everything will depend on the budget. Please take note that the presentation concluded that the main problem of our rehabilitation is budget constraints. We have to take note of the tremendous reduction of volunteers from 2,077, 1978 to 1992 precisely because he made mention of non-payment or reimbursement of expenses of volunteers. There lies again the problem of budget.

There was also a presentation of halfway houses which is my first time to have heard of it. I am wondering why there had been doubts as to its viability. Well in fact, the presentation of Mr. Kenji Teramura that in Japan, they have many halfway houses. There has to be a lot of discussion on this so that the success of halfway houses must really be given utmost consideration.

The presentation of our friend from Japan is well elaborated and I need not expound further or react on this because our concern in Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC) is the problem of our present penal system, the implementation of laws here in our correctional system. In fact, I requested the organizers if I could participate here so I will be able to share with you the problems of victims who come to our office. The question is how to rehabilitate our jail wardens?

It is really the reality that I would like to mention here and I think Mr. Liwag here knows that the New Bilibid Prison (NBP) is really a big problem. We victims really have to visit our prisoners there. We should have a jail watch. We have to check the killers of our loved ones. There was a time where you heard or learn from the newspapers that there were three prisoners who were released because of fake release orders. This is something that has to be looked into. Because unfortunately, one of the convicts there was the killer of my brother, Carlito Aguilar. I am still waiting for the report of the NBP what happened to the investigation of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI). I understand that the Department of Justice (DOJ) through the office of Mr. Liwag do not have the latest information and I have to go to the NBI.

My dear friends we in the community really must involve all pillars of the criminal justice system, particularly the Corrections Pillar. It is quite unfortunate that our focus is more on the following-up of cases which are staying so long in various law enforcement agencies. But I say, though we are victims of convicts we believe that they really have to be rehabilitated and re-accepted to the community. Lastly, we have to implement all our laws regardless whether these laws are really very harsh.

Congratulations again to the organizers, *Arigato!*