

CALD PRESENTATION
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THIS PANDEMIC HAS SPARED NO ONE. THE WHOLE WORLD IS REELING TO CONTROL THIS INVISIBLE ENEMY THAT HAS TAKEN LIVES, DESTROYED ECONOMIES, AND SHAKEN GOVERNMENTS, REGARDLESS OF STATURE OR POWER IN THE WORLD STAGE. HOWEVER, GOOD THINGS COME FROM WHAT MIGHT SEEM HOPELESS, PROVIDED EVERY ONE OF US NURTURES THE DESIRE TO SERVE AND REMAINS TRUE IN OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR PEOPLE.

ROXAS CITY MAY NOT BE AS BIG AS OTHER CITIES ALL OVER THE WORLD, IN FACT, WE ARE JUST A SMALL CITY WITH A POPULATION OF LESS THAN TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND. OUR GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION IN THE VISAYAS, IN THE ISLAND OF PANAY MAKES US THE NORTHERN GATEWAY TO THE ISLAND. WE ARE KNOWN AS THE SEAFOOD CAPITAL OF THE PHILIPPINES AND OUR PEOPLE DERIVE THEIR LIVING MAINLY FROM AGRICULTURE. IN THE PAST FEW YEARS, OUR CITY HAS SLOWLY URBANIZED ALLOWING AN IDEAL BALANCE OF URBAN LIVING, HERITAGE, AND CULTURE. SUCH A SHIFT HAS GIVEN OUR PEOPLE MORE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND A TASTE OF METROPOLITAN LIFE WHILE HOLDING ON TO OUR TIME-HONORED TRADITIONS AND RICH HISTORY AND CULTURE.

COVID-19 IS NO STRANGER TO ROXAS CITY. SINCE IT STARTED IN MARCH THIS YEAR, WE HAVE HAD AN ERRATIC NUMBER OF INFECTIONS. TO DATE, WE HAVE 460 TOTAL CASES, WITH 51 ACTIVE AND 381 RECOVERIES, 29 DEATH. THIS NUMBER IS NOT AS LARGE COMPARED TO OTHER CITIES OR COUNTRIES, BUT IT IS A CAUSE FOR CONCERN, JUST THE SAME, MAINLY BECAUSE OF THE PRESENCE OF COMMUNITY TRANSMISSIONS. WE WOULD RATHER NOT HAVE ANY CASES IN OUR CITY, IF POSSIBLE, BUT SINCE THAT DOES NOT SEEM TO BE THE CASE, OUR COVID-19 STRATEGIES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN GUIDED BY A SENSE OF PROACTIVITY.

AS SMART CITIES ARE KNOWN FOR RESILIENCE, STRATEGIC INTEGRATION OF TECHNOLOGY TO ADDRESS CURRENT CONCERNS AND FRUITFUL COLLABORATIONS WITH OTHER URBAN CENTERS TO MAXIMIZE COVID-19 RESPONSES, OUR COVID-19 RESPONSES ARE BASED ON THREE MAJOR PRINCIPLES, PREVENTION OF TRANSMISSION, ADAPTATION, AND MANAGEMENT OF ACTIVE CASES. MOST, IF NOT ALL OF OUR COVID-19 INNOVATIONS ADDRESS THESE PRINCIPLES.

TO PREVENT TRANSMISSION, ROXAS CITY HAS FORTIFIED ITS CONTACT TRACING EFFORTS BY TRAINING AND DESIGNATING MORE CONTACT TRACERS. IT HAS ALSO PUT IN PLACE A DIGITAL, QR CODE BASED CONTACT TRACING SYSTEM TO CENTRALIZE AND STREAMLINE CONTACT TRACING, THIS IS SUPPLEMENTED BY A CONTACTLESS CONSULTATION AND PRESCRIPTION SYSTEM CALLED E-CONSULTA.

WE HAVE PARTNERED WITH NUMEROUS PRIVATE HOSPITALS AND ACCOMODATION ESTABLISHMENTS ALL OVER THE CITY TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL QUARANTINE FACILITES FOR RETURNING RESIDENTS. THIS PARTNERSHIP HAS ALSO SERVED TO SUPPLEMENT THEIR INCOMES DURING THIS PERIOD OF THE PANDEMIC. THESE HAVE SERVED TO SUPPLEMENT THE CITY-OWNED FACILITY LOCATED IN HORTUS BOTANICUS.

SO FAR, QUARANTINE FACILITIES HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENT FOR RETURNING OVERSEAS FILIPINOS, AUTHORIZED PERSONS OUTSIDE OF RESIDENCES, AND LOCALLY ACQUIRED INFECTIONS. LOCALIZED QUARANTINE FACILITIES IN THE FORTY-SEVEN BARANGAYS OF THE CITY ARE ALSO IN PLACE, APART FROM HOUSEHOLDS THAT ARE EVALUATED AND ARE FOUND TO BE SUFFICIENT FOR STRICT HOME QUARANTINE SITUATIONS. ON TOP OF THIS, WE HAVE ALSO PARTNERED WITH THE GERRY ROXAS FOUNDATION TO PROVIDE A QUARANTINE FACILITY FOR OUR FRONTLINERS.

THE CITY HAS ALSO VERY RECENTLY OPENED ITS VERY OWN COVID-19 TESTING AND DIAGNOSTIC FACILITY TO FAST TRACK TEST RESULTS AND PRIORITIZE TESTING FOR CITY RESIDENTS. PARTNERING WITH OUR INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY AND A LOCAL INNOVATION GROUP, WE HAVE DEVELOPED ULTRAVIOLET SANITATION EQUIPMENT FOR USE IN THE CITY.

POLICIES HAVE ALSO BEEN PASSED TO STRICTLY IMPLEMENT MINIMUM HEALTH STANDARDS SUCH AS MANDATORY MASK AND SHEILD WEARING, TEMPERATURE CHECKS, REGULAR SANITATION AND DISINFECTION, PHYSICAL DISTANCING, ALTERNATIVE WORK ARRANGEMENTS, AND CURFEWS IN ALL AGENCIES, INSTITUTIONS, UTILITIES, PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, AND COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS.

THROUGH OUR CITY TOURISM OFFICE, STRINGENT HEALTH PROTOCOLS HAVE ALSO BEEN IMPLEMENTED AMONG ACCOMODATION ESTABLISHMENTS THROUGH SPOT INSPECTIONS LEADING TO THE ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATES OF AUTHORITY TO OPERATE BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM.

IN ADDITION, ROXAS CITY IS ALSO PART OF THE GALING POOK NETWORK OF CITIES WHICH HAS BEGAN MEETING WEEKLY SINCE AUGUST TO CONSOLIDATE COVID-19 BEST PRACTICES AND INNOVATIONS AS WELL AS LEARN FROM OTHER CITIES TO IMPROVE OUR OWN STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES. THE SMART CITIES APPROACH TO TRANSMISSION PREVENTION IS NOT JUST REACTIVE, IT HAS TO BE FOUNDED ON A MEASURED RESPONSE TO CURRENT REALITIES BUT ALSO IMPROVE SUCH A RESPONSE PRE-EMPTIVELY AND ADAPTIVELY. TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION IS NOT JUST BECAUSE TECHNOLOGY HAS TO BE USED ON A WHIM BUT BECAUSE SUCH TECHNOLOGY IS ASSUMED TO IMPROVE THE CITY'S PRE-EMPTIVE, REACTIVE, AND ADAPTIVE STRATEGIES.

ADAPTABILITY THROUGH PRO-ACTIVITY IS ALSO VERY TANGIBLE IN OUR CITY. WE HAVE ESTABLISHED A REGULAR AIDE SYSTEM THAT EXTENDS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS IN CRISES SITUATIONS, DISTRIBUTED RICE AND FOOD ASSISTANCE TO ALL THE BARANGAYS IN THE CITY, AND EVEN IMPLEMENTED CERTAIN INNOVATIONS TO ASSIST MARGINALIZED SECTORS. WE HAVE COMPLETED 'HEALING BRUSHSTROKES' AN ONLINE PAINTING COMPETITION MEANT TO SUPPLEMENT THE INCOME OF VISUAL ARTISTS, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE J. AMADO ARANETA FOUNDATION, "CROPS FOR CREATIVES" WHICH BARTERS ARTWORK BY LOCAL ARTISTS WITH VEGETABLES FROM LOCAL FARMERS, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH A LOCAL CIVIC GROUP, "GADGET PARA SA WALA BUDGET" WHICH AIMS TO DISTRIBUTE GADGETS TO STUDENTS AND PUPILS WHO CANNOT AFFORD THESE AS A TOOL FOR EDUCATION IN THE NEW NORMAL, AND "PAN DE UTAN" WHICH DISTRIBUTES FORTIFIED BREAD TO SENIOR CITIZENS.

SO FAR, WE HAVE DISTRIBUTED CLOSE TO TWO-HUNDRED GADGETS TO STUDENTS AND PUPILS WHO NEED THEM MOST, THOUSANDS OF PACKAGES OF BREAD, AND HUNDREDS OF VEGETABLE BAGS.

TO DECONGEST OUR MARKETS AND TRADE CENTERS, AS WELL AS TO SECURE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF OUR RESIDENTS, WE HAVE ESTABLISHED SATTELITE AND MOBILE MARKETS ALL OVER THE CITY FOR EASY AND SAFE ACCESS OF GOODS AND BASIC NECESSITIES.

WE HAVE ALSO RE-ALIGNED A LARGE SUM FROM OUR LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD BUDGET TO PURCHASE EXTERNAL STORAGE DEVICES, MOBILE MEDIA LIBRARIES, AND GADGETS FOR OUR TEACHERS WHO ARE THE KEY PLAYERS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A NEW EDUCATIONAL PLATFORM MEANT TO MINIMIZE FACE-TO-FACE CONTACT IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR.

THROUGH OUR PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICES OFFICE, WE HAVE ALSO FACILITATED AID FOR PRIVATE SCHOOL TEACHERS WHO HAVE LOST THEIR JOBS OR ARE CURRENTLY ON FURLOUGH.

TO SUPPLEMENT ALL THESE, WE HAVE ALSO PARTNERED WITH LOCAL BUSINESS GROUPS AND CHAMBERS FOR WEBMINARS ON JUMP-STARTING BUSINESSES DURING THIS PANDEMIC, RE-ACTIVATING INDUSTRIES, AND REVIVING LOCAL ECONOMY. CITY YOUTH HAVE ALSO BEEN ENCOURAGED TO ESTABLISH URBAN VEGETABLE GARDENS AS EARLY AS MAY THROUGH AN AGRICULTURAL FOOD SECURITY URBAN GARDENING COMPETITION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH HUBLAG CAPIZNON.

SMART GOVERNANCE IS PREPARED TO ADDRESS IMPACT OVERRUN BECAUSE IN A SITUATION SUCH AS THIS PANDEMIC, THE WORK DOES NOT STOP WITH MERELY ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM AT HAND, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY BUILDING A HOLISTIC RESPONSE THAT WILL TEMPER IMPACTS AND AID AND EMPOWER OUR PEOPLE IN ENGAGING WITH THE PANDEMIC ON THEIR OWN.

TOWARDS MANAGING INFECTIONS, FINANCIAL AID IS EXTENDED TO INDIGENT RESIDENTS WHO ARE INFECTED WITH COVID-19. **WE HAVE RELEASED ASSISTANCE INTENDED FOR HOSPITALIZATION AND MEDICAL NEEDS OF INDIGENTS WHO HAVE BEEN INFECTED, AS WELL AS CREMATION AND BURIAL EXPENSES. OTHER PRIVATE HOSPITAL PARTNERS HAVE ALSO BEEN DESIGNATED AS COVID-19 TREATMENT FACILITIES TO INCREASE OUR BED-CAPACITY FOR COVID PATIENTS.**

WE HAVE ALSO STOCKPILED MEDICINES, VITAMINS, AND PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT WITH MUCH OF THESE COMING FROM DONORS, INTENDED FOR USE BY OUR MEDICAL FRONTLINERS,

INFECTED RESIDENTS, AND THOSE CURRENTLY ADMITTED IN THE NUMEROUS HOSPITALS IN THE CITY, WHICH, ON THEIR OWN, HAVE DEDICATED COVID-19 WINGS AND WARDS.

TO AIDE OUR MEDICAL FRONTLINERS, WE HAVE PARTNERED WITH MEDICAL ASSOCIATIONS WITHIN THE CITY AND RELEASED SUBSTANTIAL AID TO THEIR ORGANIZATION TO ASSIST THEM IN THEIR FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19. SUBSTANTIAL SUM HAS ALSO BEEN ENDORSED TO OUR BARANGAY HEALTH FRONTLINERS INTENDED FOR THEIR EXPENSES RELATED TO THEIR ROLES IN MANAGING COVID-19 IN THE BARANGGAY LEVEL.

I BELIEVE THAT INNOVATION COMES FROM A TANGIBLE COMMITMENT TO BE PROACTIVE. IN CRISES SITUATIONS, THE KEY PRINCIPLE IS PLANNING AHEAD. PREVENTION, AFTER ALL, IS BETTER THAN CURE. OVER TIME, AND IN THE EIGHT PANDEMIC MONTHS THAT WE HAD TO WEATHER THROUGH, **I CAN MODESTLY SAY THAT ROXAS CITY IS MANAGING COVID-19 WITH MAXMIAL UTILIZATION OF WHAT IS AVAILABLE TO US.**

AS THE VACCINE MAY STILL BE FAR IN THE HORIZON, THERE IS NO OTHER WAY TO BEAT THIS PANDEMIC BUT TO HAVE PREVENTIVE MEASURES IN PLACE EVEN BEFORE THE VIRUS HITS HARD. WE DO WHAT WE CAN TO KEEP INFECTIONS WITHIN OUR MANAGEABLE STANDARDS. WE FIGHT AND STRUGGLE TO THE BEST THE WE CAN GIVEN OUR MEAGER RESOURCES. WE ARE NOT A BIG CITY, OUR RESOURCES ARE LIMITED, BUT WHAT KEEPS US ON OUR TOES IS A GENUINE SENSE OF COMMUNITY, ONE THAT AFFIRMS THE SINCERE DESIRE OF OUR PEOPLE TO WORK WITH OUR GOVERNMENT TO KEEP US ALL SAFE, SECURE, STRONG IN FAITH AND HOPEFULLY, SOON, COVID-19 FREE.

THE PRINCIPLE OF SMART GOVERNANCE IN SMART CITIES IS, IN ITSELF, AN INNOVATIVE STRATEGY TO DEAL WITH CRISES SITATIONS. AS A SMART CITY, ROXAS CITY IS INFORMED BY THE VALUE OF RESILIENCE, ACKNOWLEDGES THE ROLE OF STRATEGICALLY UTILIZED TECHNOLOGY, AND VALUES COLLABORATION WITH OTHER CITIES AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN ITS QUEST TO DEFEAT COVID-19.

I AM BUT A PAWN IN THIS PANDEMIC GAME, I AM NOTHING WITHOUT OUR CONSTITUENTS AND MY PARTNERS IN GOVERNMENT; WE WORK TOGETHER, WE SHARE EVERY HEARTACHE, EVERY SUCCESS, AND EVERY HARD-EARNED VICTORY, AND TOGETHER,

WE WILL WIN. OURS MAY NOT BE SUCCESS STORY, JUST YET, BUT WITH PRO-ACTIVITY AND AN OPTIMISM FUELED BY FAITH AND A STRONG SENSE OF COMMUNITY, WE ARE GETTING THERE. JUST AS WE SAY IN OUR LOCAL TONGUE, "*MAGBINULIGAY KITA, MALAMPUWASAN NATON INI*". IF WE HELP EACH OTHER, WE WILL ALL EMERGE VICTORIOUS.

GOOD DAY TO ALL, BE SAFE, STAY AT HOME, AND PRAY.