

Afterword

IN CLOSING, the findings of this research have been found to support the key messages that Venture for Fund Raising has stood by since its inception in 1999.

Filipinos *do* give. We have always known this to be true in the smaller circles of our own family and friends, where we experience the giving or the asking—firsthand. But now the evidence in this book tells us that giving is not limited to our own small circles but is in fact something that binds Filipinos together. The *bayanihan* spirit of old is alive and well but has taken on a different form. Perhaps not all Filipinos have the opportunity to lift neighbor’s houses anymore, but many have shown the willingness and the ability to uplift other people’s lives.

NGOs play an important role in society and deserve support. The challenge is both for the giving public to exercise careful discernment and for the NGOs to take to the call of legitimacy, responsibility, accountability, and transparency. Demonstrating that they (NGOs) can be effective and efficient in working to fulfill their missions is now recognized as only half the battle. Communicating this good work to the public and giving them an opportunity to do or give their share completes the picture.

Improving the quality of life is *everybody’s* business. Never should the interest of making people’s lives better and addressing the problems and needs of our communities be left to the monopoly of a sector, a branch of government, or that part of the world that has taken to the name “civil society.” We all are stakeholders in this process called development, the rewards of which will only be bountiful and can only be reaped if each one plays his or her part.

And so, the challenge remains—to invest in ourselves and in our communities. ►