



CUSTOMER'S OPERATIONS CENTER with Resilience Suite powered by Komunidad.

KOMUNIDAD.GLOBAL

# From disaster to solution: Startup takes on climate change with intel platform

By Miguel Hanz L. Antivola  
Reporter

EFFECTIVE disaster management requires access to real-time data and a swift means of disseminating critical information — a realization that entrepreneur Felix R. Ayque had in the aftermath of Super Typhoon Yolanda, which wreaked havoc in Eastern Visayas in 2013.

Fast forward to 2021, and that realization turned into a solution called Komunidad, a software-as-a-service company specializing in weather and environmental intelligence services.

With Komunidad's resilience suite, businesses and government units can tap into real-time climate data and localized early warnings. This data and analytics software equips them with the tools to monitor and anticipate climate-related risks and natural hazards, from typhoons to heatwaves, according to the company.

The mission was clear: to confront the challenges posed by climate change head-on, armed with actionable data, Mr. Ayque, founder and chief executive officer of Komunidad, said in an interview with *BusinessWorld*.

Situated in the Pacific Ring of Fire, the Philippines faces a multitude of natural hazards.

"If you are in the Philippines, you would focus on climate resilience in day-to-day operations like typhoons and flooding," said Mr. Ayque, an information technology developer who has worked with various weather agencies.

"It could also be for long-term reporting purposes, client risk assessment, power demand forecasting, physical risk assessments, and even sustainability reporting," he added, highlighting various industry use cases.

"For us, it's mostly about using what is needed and what is best available."

For the government, support for communities is crucial, as only a small portion, or 36% of Filipino households are fully prepared for natural disasters, according to a 2017 study by the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative.

Mr. Ayque also noted that providing social impact lies at the core of Komunidad, which is reflected in its name — mapping out resilience with adaptation and mitigation through technology.

Komunidad leverages sophisticated technology, including artificial intelligence, as a backend solution to deliver information through simpler channels like predictive alert text messages.

This approach ensures that critical climate data reaches a diverse audience, including farmers and fisherfolk, empowering them to make informed decisions in the face of environmental challenges, according to Mr. Ayque.

As the sole player in an emerging market, the company faces unique challenges, he also said.

"We believe that we already have enough data to become climate resilient, but using that data is the issue — we are not connected," he said.

"We have a lot of bureaucracy in terms of connecting that data; there is no agency bridging the gaps," he added.

The situation highlights the pressing need for efficient data management and sharing mechanisms. To achieve this, Mr. Ayque calls for collaboration between the government and the private sector.

"This is how we see the collaboration: governments improve the science and invest in infrastructure, but the private sector tailors solutions to industries, individuals, or whoever would benefit from it," Mr. Ayque said.

## EXPANSION

Recognizing that the ability to withstand natural disasters is a unique strength of Filipinos, Mr. Ayque saw an opportunity to export this talent.

"We believe that this is the best export of Filipino talent, being climate resilient," he said. "We believe that we are the best to tell the world that we know all these things."

The company has established an office in Singapore, strategically positioning itself to tap into the global market. It also plans to expand in Europe.

Presently, the company serves 24,000 villages in India and supports 1,500 farmers in Cambodia. "With that reach, we are very happy that it came naturally to us," Mr. Ayque said.

Mr. Ayque also expressed optimism in the mainstream adoption of the climate tech market, bringing the hopeful trademark of the Filipino to the world at large.

"Having more players market even in this industry is better for the planet and for the world," he said on embracing competition, overcoming climate vulnerabilities, and fueling public environmental consciousness.

# Payoneer's incubation program targets Philippine BPO SMEs and freelancers

PAYONEER Global, Inc., an American financial services company, has opened applications for its incubation program in the Philippines, targeting digital freelancers and small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the business process outsourcing (BPO) industry.

The Bridge for Billions program aims to support 70 Filipino entrepreneurs with four months of mentorship, sustaining growth in digital industries, including SMEs and the gig economy, the company said on Tuesday.

"The challenge for SMEs is access to support — having a strong business foundation," said Jenell P. San Antonio, marketing lead for emerging markets at Payoneer APAC, recognizing the rarity of incubation support for SMEs.

"This is open to any startup and freelancer who provides any type of digital service," she said in an interview with *BusinessWorld*.

According to Payoneer's Global Freelancer Insights Report 2023, global demand for freelancers has increased in the fields of programming, marketing, project management, and web design.

The information technology and business process management (IT-BPM) industry has 1.7 million full-time employees, which is up 8.7% from the previous year. It anticipates adding 257,000 full-time workers and



FREEPIK

generating \$5.9 billion in revenues over the next two years.

The program will consist of eight modules on value proposition, competitor mapping, and the formation of a business plan backed by Bridge for Billions best practices.

The Bridge for Billions' methodology is based on the concept of disciplined entrepreneurship from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, according to the company. It has been used for 270 incubation programs in 134 countries over the past eight years.

Once the four-month incubation has ended, 15-20 participants will be

chosen to join a pitch competition where three winners will receive cash prizes of \$1,000, \$1,500, and \$2,000 to kickstart their businesses, Ms. San Antonio said.

"We're banking on equipping them with business tools, mentors, and a community network of entrepreneurs," she added.

Impact assessment to monitor the growth of supported entrepreneurs will be conducted post-program.

Participant and mentor applications for the Bridge for Billions program will end in December. The incubation proper will be from March to June.

Ms. San Antonio also noted the need for collaboration between the IT-BPM sector and the gig economy, where freelancing is being acknowledged as competition to BPO companies in terms of business registration and talent acquisition.

Jack Madrid, president of the IT and Business Process Association of the Philippines, said that potential investors must accept such competition, and Filipinos must understand the pros and cons of working for an unregistered company, *BusinessWorld* reported in May.

Both industries must work together and understand each other's pain points to improve necessary regulatory processes, Ms. San Antonio said. — Miguel Hanz L. Antivola



Republika ng Pilipinas  
**LUNGSOD NG MAKATI**  
SANGGUNIANG PANLUNGSOD OF MAKATI

## PRESENT:

Vice Mayor	HON. MONIQUE YAZMIN MARIA Q. LAGDAMEO – Presiding Officer
Councilor	HON. DENNIS B. ALMARIO
Councilor	HON. MARTIN JOHN PIO Q. ARENAS
Councilor	HON. MARIA DOLORES M. ARAYON
Councilor	HON. JOEL M. ARIONES
Councilor	HON. SHIRLEY C. ASPILLAGA
Councilor	HON. BENEDICT B. BANIQUED
Councilor	HON. ARNOLD J. CRUZ
Councilor	HON. VIRGILIO V. HILARIO, JR.
Councilor	HON. EDRALYN M. MARQUEZ
Councilor	HON. CARMINA C. ORTEGA
Councilor	HON. ARMANDO P. PADILLA
Councilor	HON. RENE ANDREI Q. SAGUISAG, JR.
Councilor	HON. KRISTINA T. SAROSA
Councilor	HON. JOSE C. VILLENA, IV
Councilor	HON. ANNA ALCINA M. YABUT
SK President	HON. JULLIAN KYLE G. SAN MATEO
LnB President	HON. MARIBEL F. VITALES

## N.B.:

Councilor HON. LUIS S. JAVIER, JR. – Vacation Leave

## ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Secretary to the Sanggunian ATTY. DINDO R. CERVANTES

Upon motion of Hon. A.P. Padilla, duly seconded, the Sangguniang Panlungsod of Makati, by a unanimous vote, approved City Ordinance No. 2023-221 on third and final reading.

## CITY ORDINANCE NO. 2023-221

Authors: Hon. A.P. Padilla, Hon. R.A.Q. Saguisag, Jr., Hon. D.B. Almario, Hon. B.B. Baniqued, Hon. V.V. Hilario, Jr., Hon. J.K.G. San Mateo, Hon. E.M. Marquez and Hon. A.A.M. Yabut

Co-Authors: Hon. M.J.P.Q. Arenas, Hon. M.D.M. Arayon, Hon. J.M. Ariones, Hon. A.J. Cruz, Hon. C.C. Ortega, Hon. K.T. Sarosa, Hon. J.C. Villena, IV and Hon. M.F. Vitales

## AN ORDINANCE DECLARING THE ANNUAL BARANGAY YOUTH INVESTMENT PROGRAM (ABYIP) FOR C.Y. 2024 OF BARANGAY URDANETA TO BE IN CONFORMITY WITH EXISTING LAWS, RULES, AND REGULATIONS.

**WHEREAS**, Sec. 20 (d) of R.A. No. 10742, otherwise known as the "Sangguniang Kabataan Reform Act of 2015", provides that "(T)he Sangguniang Bayan or Sangguniang Panlungsod shall, within sixty (60) days upon receipt hereof, review the annual budget and supplemental budget of the Sangguniang Kabataan on their compliance in the immediately preceding provision and other existing laws, rules and regulations.";

**WHEREAS**, Sec. 8 of the same law also states that the Sangguniang Kabataan shall prepare the Annual Barangay Youth Investment Program (ABYIP) based on the Comprehensive Barangay Youth Development Plan (CBYDP);

**WHEREAS**, the Sangguniang Kabataan of Barangay Urdaneta, by virtue of Sangguniang Kabataan Resolution No. 005 Series of 2023, approved its ABYIP for C.Y. 2024, a copy of such Resolution, including its supporting documents, is hereto attached and made an integral part hereof as **Annex "A"**;

**WHEREAS**, the Honorable Members of the Sangguniang Panlungsod of Makati extensively reviewed the subject ABYIP;

**WHEREAS**, after careful perusal of available documents, it was ruled by the Members of the Sangguniang Panlungsod of Makati that the proposed Annual Barangay Youth Investment Program (ABYIP) for C.Y. 2024 of Barangay Urdaneta is compliant with the minimum requirements as prescribed by existing laws, rules, and regulations; hence, this Ordinance.

## NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED, AS IT IS HEREBY ENACTED BY THE SANGGUNIANG PANLUNGSOD OF MAKATI, METRO MANILA, BY THE POWERS VESTED IN IT BY LAW, IN SESSION ASSEMBLED, that:

**Section 1.** The Annual Barangay Youth Investment Program (ABYIP) for C.Y. 2024 of Barangay Urdaneta is hereby declared to be in conformity with existing laws, rules, and regulations.

**Section 2.** The *Joint Endorsement* issued by the Urban Development Department (UDD) and Budget Department dated 6 September 2023, which attests that the Supplemental Investment Program (SIP) for C.Y. 2024 of Barangay Urdaneta substantially complies with the provisions of pertinent laws, rules and regulations, is hereby adopted *in toto*, a copy of such *Joint Endorsement* is hereto attached and made an integral part hereof as **Annex "B"**;

**Section 3.** The provisions of this Ordinance are hereby deemed separable. If any provision hereof should be declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

**Section 4.** All ordinances, resolutions and executive orders which are inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

**Section 5.** Let a copy of this Ordinance be furnished to the Office of the Mayor, Office of the City Administrator, Law Department, Budget Department, Accounting Department, Urban Development Department, Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG)-Makati City, Sangguniang Kabataan Federation of the City of Makati, Liga ng mga Barangay, Sangguniang Kabataan of Barangay Urdaneta, Sangguniang Barangay of Urdaneta and other departments, offices, and agencies concerned for their information, guidance and reference.

**Section 6.** This Ordinance shall be posted and published in accordance with the provisions of R.A. No. 7854, otherwise known as the Charter of the City of Makati.

**ENACTED BY THE SANGGUNIANG PANLUNGSOD OF MAKATI, METRO MANILA**, in its Regular Session held on 26 September 2023.

Attested by:

ATTY. DINDO R. CERVANTES  
Secretary to the Sangguniang Panlungsod

Certified true and correct by:

HON. MONIQUE YAZMIN MARIA Q. LAGDAMEO  
Vice Mayor & Presiding Officer

Approved by:

HON. MAR-LEN ABIGAIL S. BINAY  
City Mayor

Date of Approval: SEP 26 2023