



# iCats Program

## Testimonial of participating organization



**Interview with Reese Fernandez, CEO at Rags2Riches (R2R), Manila, Philippines. An honors graduate of BS Management 2007 from the Ateneo de Manila University, Reese was one of the ten founding partners of R2R, and is one of the most prominent advocates for social entrepreneurship in the Philippines today. Reese herself comes from a background of poverty. She was forced to withdraw from elementary school in 4th grade due to lack of funds. In spite of this, she studied every day at her parish library. She was granted a scholarship to Ateneo de Davao High School and the Ateneo de Manila University for college. Reese worked at the Youth Leadership and Social Entrepreneurship Center of the Ateneo School of Government for one year before joining R2R full-time as a VP in April 2008. Reese was chosen as one of the Rolex Young Laureate 2010.**

**In 2010, Lars Tarrach supported the team of R2R as Financial Analyst.**

**Why did you decide to participate in the program?**

**What were your expectations?**

When I heard about the iCats Program, I thought that it was an excellent program created by LGT Venture Philanthropy. Having high caliber, passionate professionals with relevant experience on board social enterprises like Rags2Riches could help us professionalize our systems and potentially, effectively scale up our model to more areas.

**Which of your fellow's qualities were most valuable to you?**

Our iCats Fellow's abilities to adapt to our culture and adjust his skills, expectations, and activities to what is needed, are remarkable!

**What tasks and responsibilities were you able to delegate to the fellow?**

Our iCats Fellow created financial models with us and for us. His expertise in Finance and Management accounting gave us an important perspective of the business that we need to understand, appreciate, and use.

**What results did you achieve together?**

We were able to create comprehensive, clear, and customizable financial models that are relevant to the needs of Rags2Riches.

**Would you recommend this program to others and why?**

Definitely! Good talent coupled with compassion is a potentially organization-changing combination. LGTVP carefully screens and interviews potential iCats Fellows, making sure that the skills set and values of the fellows would match the needs and values of partner organizations. The commitment of LGT Venture Philanthropy to this, and the amazing roster of iCats Fellows, could definitely make a significant difference for organizations that want to change the world.

### Rags2Riches (R2R), Manila, Philippines

**Problem**

- R2R seeks to address exploitative value chains, poverty, and the accumulation of non-biodegradable waste.
- The Philippines generates approximately 18 000 tons of waste daily.
- 45% of the population in the Philippines lives on less than USD 2 a day (UNDP 2009), partly as a result of unjust value chains, which take advantage of powerless

**Solution**

- R2R was established in 2008 as a for-profit corporation that empowers poor women in the Philippines by providing them with the business support they need to produce and sell stylish and functional products made from scrap cloth and other scrap materials.
- R2R organizes poor communities and further enables them through modules on ethics, financial literacy, and business management.

**Impact**

Over the next four years, R2R has the potential to directly improve the sustainable quality of life of at least 3'600 women from poor communities by allowing them to increase their yearly per capita income by roughly USD 500.

Impact	2009	2010	2011e	2012e	2013e	2014e
<b>Total # R2R communities</b>	12	21	46	46	70	70
<b>Total # women benefited</b>	150	450	700	1'400	1'800	3'600
<b>Avg. income per woman p.a. (in USD)</b>	153	350	490	490	490	490
<b>Tons of scrap materials up-cycled</b>	38	58	249	527	785	1'094