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INQUIRER

Kanepackage CSR activities: Making the planet a greener place

The company has planted more than 13.4 million mangroves so far, and expects that number to surpass 15 million by 2025

By Kenneth M. del Rosario

The Kanepackage Group's promise to deliver the best packaging and cushioning materials is grounded in its sustainability thrust as a company. Going beyond what is expected from a firm in the business of wrapping items, its corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities are geared towards saving resources and helping ensure the planet becomes a much greener place.

It has set a lofty goal for itself, aiming to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. As a company, Kanepackage aims to promote carbon offsets through the reduction of global greenhouse gases and carbon dioxide emissions.

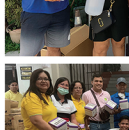
And the company is well on its way to reaching this objective, thanks in large part to its flagship project—mangrove reforestation called KPGreen Earth. Since it started the project in the Visayas region in November 2009 on Olango Island, Lapu-Lapu City in Cebu, Kanepackage has planted and maintained more than 13.4 million mangroves.

In partnership with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), local government units, and the local community, Kanepackage holds mangrove planting and tour activities twice a year.

"It was never about the image of the company. It's about doing what's right. We have to live sustainably as much as we can. There's no other option," said Yoshikazu Kanesaka, the CEO and president of Kanepackage Group.

Kanesaka recalled the first time he brought up the idea of planting mangroves to executives of the mother company in Japan, who were skeptical about the idea.

"I told them that we had to do it because no one else was doing it," he said. "It's a good reminder, too, that while the business of packaging is all about the products, the ones who are behind the production of those are actual people. They are the ones that benefit from a greener environment."



The company's CSR is founded on its core business DNA, which values people and the spirit of giving back.

Spirit of giving back to the planet

The Kanepackage Group's CSR programs are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) enumerated by the United Nations to highlight the company's business DNA in valuing the welfare of the people.

In the spirit of giving back to the planet, the company's CSR programs encompass three main themes—the environment, support for the people, and safety and security among the stakeholders.

The KPGreen Earth, for one, helps build a resilient coastal community against climate change, sea-level rise, typhoons, and other natural calamities.

The project came about after a hike at Mt. Takao in Japan, where Kanesaka learned about a Japanese artist who donated 100,000 cedar trees every year. He thought he could do a similar thing in the Philippines, only this time planting mangroves, which are endemic to the area.

After all, planting mangroves in the Philippines makes sense, as it brings lots of economic and environmental benefits. For one, mangroves sustain fisheries and coastal resources, as well as provide opportunities for ecotourism. Mangroves can even be used as house construction material and wood for cooking. The mangroves, too, become a shelter for many fishes, crabs and other marine animals. People used to cut mangroves for cooking/ housing before because of poverty. After KP Mangrove project they stopped cutting mangroves and provide the communities with livelihood projects.

The mangrove planting also has profound benefits to employees as the activity serves as an avenue for employees from other branches to connect with one another, and share their experiences working with the company.

Partner community involvement

To ensure the protection and proper management of the mangrove plantation, Kanepackage involved communities that regularly plant mangroves and monitor their progress to ensure a high survival and success rate.

"Planting is just the beginning. The mangroves need maintenance and regular clean-ups so they can grow faster and better. This is where the help of the community is essential," Kaneksaka said.

Partner communities are also tasked with replacing the dead plants and removing any plastics, seaweed, or other materials that may harm the mangroves. It can't be stressed enough how equally important and essential post-planting management is in a project like this.

In return, they receive corresponding monetary compensation for their efforts. Needless to say, the people in the community appreciate the additional income, which many of them use to send their respective children to school or to put food on the table.

The project curiously motivates members of the community to do their part in managing the mangrove project.

The photo above shows a drone shot of one of the mangrove plantations that the company maintains.

Drone shots of plantation areas show that the mangrove-planting project is an undeniable success. Areas that used to have little to no mangrove presence now teem with thick mangroves, many of which can be considered young forests. Most trees have started to bear fruit, with the number of fish and crabs growing exponentially.

Research and development

Aside from planting mangroves, the Kanepackage Group also established the Mangrove Research and Development Center, an environmental research center in Cebu, to help in the advancement of scientific knowledge on mangrove rehabilitation and management.

The company also put up a mangrove nursery, where it cultures mangroves for about six months until they are ready for planting.

"It's important to know which species is suited in a particular area. We also have to be careful because planting too many mangroves in one area could potentially do more harm than good. This is why we partnered with the DENR and the local people for this project," Kaneksaka said.

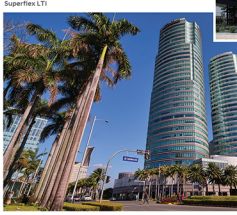
The company recently entered into a collaboration project with the Overseas Environmental Cooperation Center Japan to research the possibility of carbon credit through its mangrove project. This project aims to develop a method for quantifying the amount of carbon sequestered by our mangrove project.

Kaneksaka said: "Environmental conservation is a shared responsibility among the private sector and government. For our part, we commit to strengthening our efforts to our many CSR activities."

Superflex LTI

KP Japan Head Office

KP Lima


KP Group

KPPI Calamba

KP Indonesia

KP Thailand

Kanepackage Group leads the industry shift to more sustainable packaging

Kanepackage aims to contribute more to society by continuing to evolve the 'wrapping' technology, as well as its CSR activities that positively impact many communities around the country

By Kenneth M. del Rosario

The Kanepackage Group has been part of Filipinos' lives for more than 27 years.

Involved with designing, testing, and manufacturing various types of cushioning products, such as corrugated boards, chances are you've bought a product wrapped and shipped in packaging that Kanepackage Group of Companies produced.

"More than just packaging, we specialize in shock-absorbing products that protect even the most delicate items," said Yoshikazu Kaneksaka, the company's CEO and president.

Many people pay little attention to a product's packaging, often discarding it without a second thought, but Kanesaka said they spend a lot of time developing technology that would allow clients to wrap their goods in packaging that is safe, efficient, sustainable, and cost-competitive.

After all, there is no one-size-fits-all when it comes to packaging. In designing packaging, there are many things to consider. Foremost is the product. Kanepackage packs a variety of items, including electronics such as printers and hard disk drives, as well as micro weighing scales.

This is why it's important for them to know which part of the item is the weakest and needs the most protection from damage. They also have to know, for example, if the items will be shipped from a place with hot weather to one with cold weather, so they can protect them from humidity.

"The key in packaging is efficiency. If we can create the lightest, smallest, or simplest packaging that would never compromise the safety of the products, that's a win-win for our clients. Smaller packaging means they would be able to fit more items in a warehouse or in a transportation vehicle. This could also reduce the amount of manpower required to move items," he said.

Nowadays, an increasing number of companies are even looking at packaging that customers can reuse instead of just throwing away.

Sustainable packaging

Since Kanepackage started making packaging many years ago, there has been a huge shift in the mindset of clients.

"There was a time when companies just wanted the cheapest possible packaging. Nowadays, they are more conscious of the impact of packaging on the environment. Most of them have shifted or are in the process of shifting from using plastic to more eco-friendly materials such as paper," he said.

This aligns with Kanepackage's sustainability thrust, with the company subscribing to the Sustainable Development Goals put forth by the United Nations.

The company even has a very active mangrove-planting project as part of its corporate social responsibility. In fact, Kanepackage has planted more than 13 million mangrove seedlings in the Visayas.

A humble start

When Kanesaka was setting up the company back in the '90s, the industry for good packaging design and manufacture was virtually non-existent in the country. Professionally, Kanesaka also did not have any experience with packaging, as he had previously worked for an automobile company.

But what Kanesaka did have was a forward-thinking mindset. From the start, he knew he had to do something different in order to succeed in this line of work. It helped too that there are many Japanese companies in the Philippines, even now, that have put their trust in Kanepackage.

"If you satisfy one customer with on-time delivery and excellent quality, that would resonate with other potential clients. We expected the trust they put in us and did everything in our power to make sure we delivered what we promised. As a team, we remain as passionate as we were when we were just starting out," he said.

This goes for the 900-strong individuals that make up the Kanepackage workforce in the Philippines. Over the years, Kanepackage has set up office spaces in Alabang, LISP Calamba, Lima Malvar Batangas, Laguna Technopark in Binan, Cavite, FPIP Sto Tomas, and Cebu.

Kanepackage also has locations in other parts of the world, including Japan (where the headquarter of the mother company is located), Thailand, China, Hong Kong, Vietnam, and Indonesia.

"Our employees are very important to us," he said. "Filipinos are very smart and hardworking people," he said.

Looking ahead

Even with an established name, Kaneska wants to keep innovating, never losing the desire to be the best at what they do.

This is in part why Kanepackage's mother company decided to acquire a medical company that operates in Japan and manufactures equipment like suction machines and oxygen regulators.

Looking ahead, Kaneska wants to double production and further expand the business, not so much to earn more profit but because he knows that wherever he scales up, he gets to employ more people and help with their CSR activities.

Kaneska said: "Through these businesses, I want to contribute to society and to the progress of this country. Moving forward, we will continue to evolve the 'wrapping' technology, as well as become a bigger player in our customers' welfare. We will carefully wrap 'magokoro (great cordiality)' and deliver a dream package that cleans the air and mind to as many customers as possible."

For more information on Kanepackage Group, please visit http://www.kanepca.co.jp, http://www.kp-grp.com, and http://www.kane-package.net.

The photo above shows a drone shot of one of the mangrove plantations that the company maintains.

KP Hanoi, Vietnam

Kanesaka: "Our employees are very important to us. Filipinos are very smart and hardworking people."

Talented, loyal, hardworking Filipino employees key to success

If a business does not have a heart for the welfare of the people, it will never prosper.

That's one thing Kanepackage Group CEO and president Yoshikazu Kanesaka has learned over the years. After all, it's not the CEO who brings success to a company, but the people who work hard day in and day out.

"The key to our success is the talented employees that we have. Filipinos work hard and are very loyal. They do not easily give up when problems arise," the executive said.

Kanesaka could not express enough his belief and trust in the Filipinos. In fact, the company's Filipino employees were instrumental in setting up other holding companies in other parts of the world. When the company was setting up locations in Thailand, Vietnam, and Indonesia, for example, they sent a group of Filipinos to train the locals there.

Act of appreciation

This is why, aside from the mangrove-planting project that Kanepackage does, the company has other CSR activities that further benefit the community. The company's CSR is founded on its core business DNA, which values people and the spirit of giving back.

Kanepackage knows the importance of education in society. This is why they regularly put up school buildings close to the mangrove plantation so that the community can benefit from the project.

The company also provides school supplies and learning materials so students can advance their education and have a chance at improving their standard of living later in life. Every school year, Kanepackage donates books to daycare centers, where hundreds of young ones receive complete sets of books based on the recommendation of the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

During Christmas, the company returns to partner communities in the Visayas region and conducts its annual gift-giving. The students in adopted schools receive Christmas gifts and food packs, which never fail to bring smiles to children and parents alike.

In 2019, Kanepackage integrated into its CSR a scholarship program that helps qualified children of people actively involved in the planting and maintenance of the mangrove plantation.

Helping hand during disasters

When disaster strikes, Kanepackage is one of the first companies to lend a helping hand. When the Taal Volcano erupted in 2020, the company sent assistance to affected families in the area.

In 2022, it sent monetary help for house repairs to its partner community devastated by Typhoon Odette. They also put up a health clinic and helped employ a health professional to manage the facility. The company did the same when Typhoon Haiyan struck the country in 2013.

At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when lockdown restrictions were strictly in place, it taught soap-making to the people of Olango, who had lost their main livelihood, which is mainly fishing and boat operations. This helped many families put food on the table when their source of income was limited.

Kaneksaka said: "We do all these because we are human. Our CSR activities extend not just to communities where we do business but also to secluded places and small islands that aren't always reached with help from the private or public sector. We know the positive impact this has on the community. More importantly, this gives a sense of fulfillment among our employees, who are always ready to extend help to the best of their abilities."

– Kenneth M. del Rosario

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