



PROJECT PEARLS
PEACE • EDUCATION • ASPIRATION • RESPECT • LOVE • SMILES

2023 IMPACT REPORT

Message from Founder & Executive Director

Dear PEARLS Family,

2023 has been nothing short of a testament to the power of compassion and generosity. YOU — our donors, our partners, our heroes—have been the heart and soul of this incredible journey. Because of you, Project PEARLS has been able to reach further, give more, and change lives in ways we once only dreamed of.

Every meal we served, every smile we witnessed, every child who now believes in a brighter future—it all began with you. You stood with us, side by side, and became a beacon of hope for families who had lost so much. When children faced hunger, you stepped in to provide nourishment. When dreams seemed out of reach, you extended your hand and made them possible.

You didn't just donate; you transformed lives. You were there when families needed clean water, when scholars needed guidance, and when communities needed someone to believe in them. You became the difference, the light, and the lifeline. Your kindness has woven a tapestry of hope that has touched thousands, and for that, we are endlessly grateful.

As we reflect on this year, know that every success we celebrate is a story written by your kindness. You are the heroes who make the impossible possible, and we are so blessed to have you as part of this journey.

As we look ahead, we recognize that the road will not be easy. The challenges we face in the coming years are steep, with the ongoing political climate and the natural disasters that continue to strike our beloved Philippines. Typhoons, floods, and other calamities have become all too familiar, often devastating the very communities we serve. Yet, in the face of these

hardships, we remain steadfast, knowing that with your support, we can continue to be a source of strength and resilience for those who need it most. Together, we can weather any storm and build a future where every Filipino child and family can rise above adversity.

With heartfelt appreciation and endless hope,


Melissa Villa



Message from Deputy Executive Director

“What is your exit plan?”

This is the most common question we receive when engaging with potential partners and sponsors. It is a valid question, as having an exit plan is part of the community development and organizing process. It means that our programs are anchored on the long-term goal of empowering communities so that they can stand on their own, without the need for interventions from non-profit organizations like Project PEARLS.

And truthfully, I had difficulty answering this question a few years back. As an organization whose primary mission is focused on helping children and youth through education, how can we exit the community knowing that there will always be individuals who need educational support?

However I have come to realize that our scholars themselves are the “exit plan.” By helping them realize their potential and fostering their holistic development, we enable them to build a brighter future, rewrite their stories, and contribute to the broader development of our country.

Imagine Filipino youth with a strong sense of civic awareness and responsibility, the freedom to make informed choices and seize opportunities, the courage to utilize their talents and skills, and the inspiration to make a difference in their communities. These are the youth who will lead our country into the future. We are already witnessing the impact of our efforts in this regard. Children who used to live in Ulingan, who dared not dream beyond grade school due to poverty, are now graduating from college and becoming professionals in their own right. One of them is Lilibeth. She started as a Grade 3 scholar in Ulingan, Tondo, and this School Year 2022 - 20242, she will be graduating with a degree in BS Elementary Education (Major in Special Education). After graduation, she was accepted as a Special Education Teacher in a progressive school in Quezon City.

We will not be able to do the work that we do without the support of our volunteers, partners, and donors. We are grateful for your trust and belief in our mission. Your support allows us to nurture children and youth. It is our hope and prayer that our current scholars will become future changemakers and education champions in their communities.

We still have a long way to go. We hope that our bayanihan spirit will continue to soar beyond the challenges we face. Thank you for your unwavering support!

With immense gratitude,



Monica Aclan



About Us



Our Vision

No child at no time, should go hungry.
No child should be hungry for nutrition, education, shelter, medical services, and opportunities to achieve their full potential.

Our Mission

To help the poorest of the poor children to have a better life by giving them *PEARLS* (Peace, Education, Aspiration, Respect, Love and Smiles) through education, literacy empowerment, nutrition, and healthcare.

The Communities We Serve



Our Programs

Our Guiding Principles



Project PEARLS' core programs are rooted in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We aim to contribute to building a better world for both present and future generations through our efforts. By working together, we believe we can create a ripple effect of positive change.

Our Core Programs



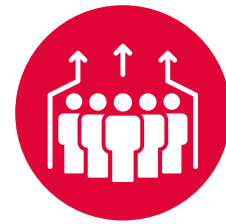
Education & Literacy

We provide a Scholarship Program to over 700 students across our four communities: Tondo, Manila; Bocaue, Bulacan; Naic, Cavite; and Zamboanga Sibugay. Time-to-Learn is our early childhood education program that aims to provide strong foundation for children. Additionally, we conduct supplementary learning programs such as the LitClub, LitMom, Brain Booster Program, and After School Program to help improve the literacy, artistic, and social skills of children and youth.



Healthcare & Nutrition

We implement a Hunger Relief Program to ensure that every child receives at least one healthy meal per day. The Health Clinic in Tondo provides free and quality check-ups and healthcare. By partnering with various organizations and individuals, we also provide medical, dental, and reproductive health services to the community. In addition, we provide financial aid for emergency, medical, and social services as needed.



Empowerment through Skills Development

We support women in the community through the G.R.O.W. (Giving Resources & Opportunities to Women) program. By offering essential resources and opportunities for sustainable livelihoods, we empower women financially and socially. Additionally, we provide workshops and training to help parents and youth develop their skills and capacities, fostering personal growth and creating further opportunities for development.

Our Team

Board of Directors Philippines

The Board of Directors consists of committed individuals from different industries and disciplines. Each member started their journey with Project PEARLS as a volunteer or collaborator, and as a result, they all exemplify deep enthusiasm and empathy to those that we serve. Through their endeavors, they have achieved notable progress in fostering a positive influence within our communities. Their invaluable guidance and steadfast support empower us to maintain and advance our mission and advocacy.



Melissa Villa
President



Marie Young
Chairperson



Rita Dela Cruz
Corporate Secretary



Sidney Snoeck
Member



Stephanie McGuire
Member



Sylvia Araneta
Member



Adrian Soco
Member



Maricel Montero
Member



Catherine Baculi
Treasurer

Our Team

Board of Directors USA



Harry Eng
Chairperson



Marcy Brandenburg



Beverly Ann Jimenez



Connie Villeta



Tina Villadolid



Edylyn Lagapa



Gianna Driver

Our Team

Full-time Staff and Core Team



Melissa Villa
Co-Founder &
Executive Director



Monica Aclan
Deputy Executive
Director



Karen Viel Beblañas
Education & Literacy
Program Manager



Jay-R Panagsagan
Communities Manager



Genevieve Matabang
Empowerment & Livelihood
Program Manager



Melissa Mae Bendanillo
Social Services Manager
(Social Worker)



Flora Mae Tatoy
Education & Literacy Program
Assistant Manager



Jeremiah Rafanan
Management Services
Manager



Arnesto Dalina
Time-to-Learn Head
Teacher/Community
Coordinator - Bulacan



Juan Villa
Hunger Relief Program
Manager



Diana Nuñez
Time-to-Learn Teacher/
Scholarship Program
Coordinator - Tondo



Cheryl Pibte
Time-to-Learn Teacher /
Scholarship Program
Coordinator - Bulacan



May Baylon
Empowerment & Livelihood
Program Coordinator



Joy Sabenicio
Community Coordinator -
Cavite



Divine Degollacion
Community Coordinator -
Tondo



Jonalyn Andia
Community Assistant
Coordinator - Tondo

Lead Volunteers and Community Teams



Ria Orsal
Scholarship Program
Coordinator (Over-all)



Lowella Lagat
Scholarship Program
Coordinator - Cavite



Jenifer Cardente
Scholarship Program
Coordinator -
Zamboanga Sibugay



Jobelle Jumawan
Administrative Assistant



Princess Dimaranan
Administrative Assistant



Jedda Punzalan
After School Program
Coordinator



Tondo Community Volunteers



Bulacan Community Volunteers



Cavite Community Volunteers



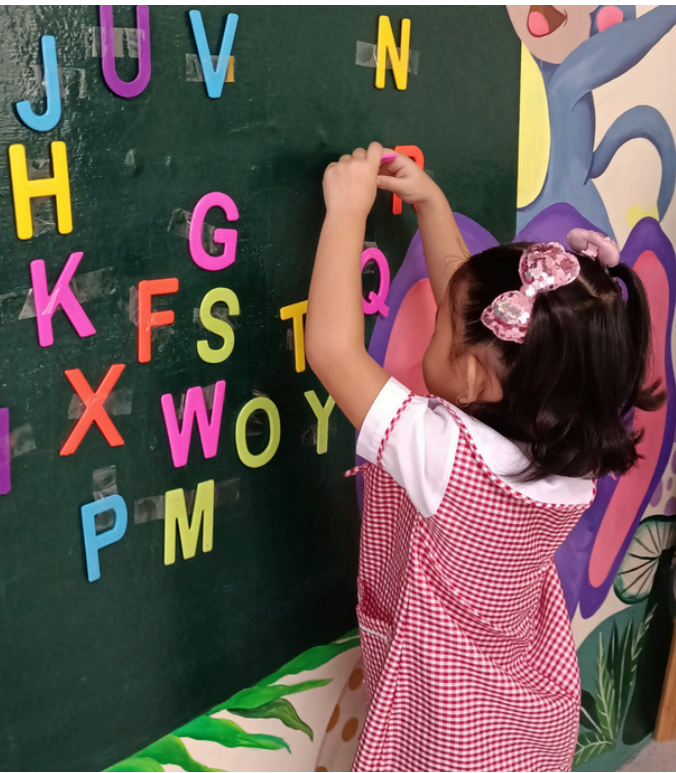
**Zamboanga Sibugay
Community Volunteers**



EDUCATION AND LITERACY

Scholarship | Time-to-Learn | Brain Booster | After School Program
LitClub & LitMom | Special Workshops and Seminars

Scholarship Program



Education and Literacy

The greatest gift of all.

Project PEARLS is dedicated to uplifting the lives of underprivileged children and families by providing access to quality education. We firmly believe that education is the cornerstone for breaking the cycle of poverty.

Families experiencing poverty face more than economic deprivation—they encounter limited opportunities and a lack of freedom to pursue personal development. When survival is at stake, their primary focus is on earning enough to put food on the table. As a result, education becomes a privilege that is often out of reach for many.

Our Scholarship Program aims to address these barriers and empower youth through educational support and nurturing environments. By offering educational investments and supportive communities, we instill skills, confidence, and empowerment in children and youth, inspiring them to create a better future for themselves and their families. When we invest in the holistic development of an individual, they will become responsible and socially aware citizens who can contribute to the overall sustainable development of our country.

This is our big dream at Project PEARLS: to empower every individual so that we can have a brighter future for the Philippines.



In the School Year 2023 - 2024, we provided support to a total of **771 scholars**, from preschool to college. With the support of our Education Champions - our sponsors and partners - we were able to provide a range of essential provisions. These included school supplies, transportation allowance, vouchers for school projects and needs, and access to a variety of learning opportunities such as field trips and workshops.

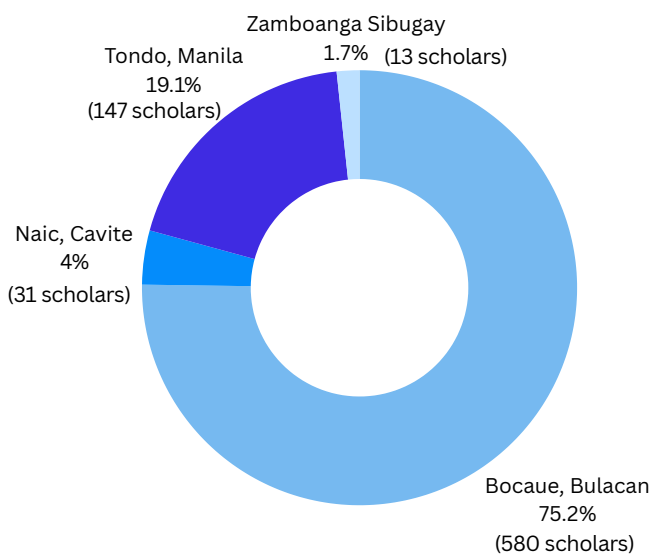
771

SCHOLARS

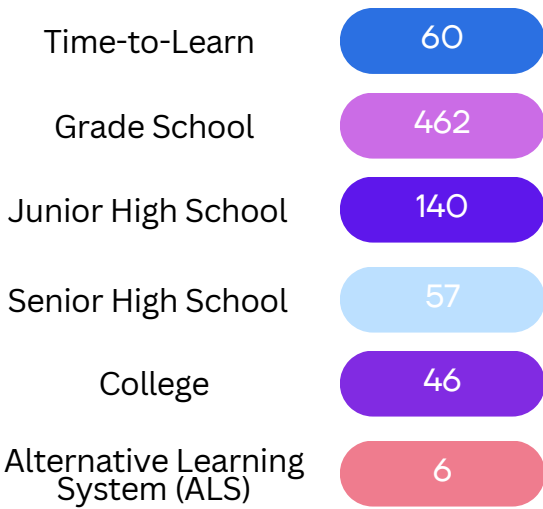
(S.Y. 2023-2024)

Below is the comprehensive breakdown of our scholars across different communities, along with a detailed analysis of scholar distribution per academic level. This data is based on the scholar count at the commencement of the academic year 2023 to 2024.

SCHOLARS PER COMMUNITY

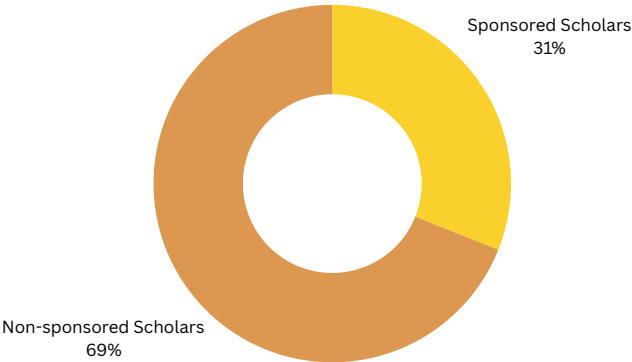


SCHOLARS PER GRADE LEVEL



Over thirty percent of our scholars were sponsored by various individuals and partner organizations. We continue to support the non-sponsored scholars through our general fund, which is sustained by different grants and fundraising initiatives.

SPONSORED SCHOLARS



Time-to-Learn Program

60

TIME-TO-LEARN

SCHOLARS IN TONDO & BULACAN

The Time-to-Learn Program is our early childhood education initiative designed to prepare children aged 4 to 5 for formal schooling. Our goal is to build a strong educational foundation while supporting their cognitive, emotional, and social development. The program employs age-appropriate literacy and numeracy activities, interactive play, and other engaging methods to achieve these objectives.



This School Year 2023 - 2024, we have pivoted to face-to-classes for four days, and one day for modular learning. We have 40 Time-to-Learn scholars in Bulacan, and 20 in Tondo.



Inauguration of the new Time-to-Learn Classroom in Bulacan

The inauguration of the new Time-to-Learn Classroom in Bulacan on February 5, 2023 was a momentous occasion for the community. This significant project was made possible through the generous sponsorship of Bill Brandenburg and Marcy Enriquez Brandenburg, demonstrating their commitment to education and youth empowerment.

We have always dreamed of providing a spacious and well-ventilated classroom for our scholars, and with many of them based in Bulacan, we are thrilled to offer a place where they can truly learn and enjoy the gift of education. The Time-to-Learn scholars are excited to attend school and interact with their classmates, as they now have a space to excel and shine.



Moving Up Day of Batch 2022 - 2023

The graduation day for Time-to-Learn scholars in Bulacan and Tondo marked a significant milestone. The event included a Moving Up ceremony, acknowledgment of scholars' achievements, and an inspiring message delivered by Amhigo Santiago, a prominent youth leader from Bulacan. This occasion highlighted the remarkable accomplishment of our scholars in successfully completing the program and emphasized the importance of perseverance and education in forging a brighter future.



Brain Booster Program



The Brain Booster Program is dedicated to nurturing the artistic and creative abilities of preschool and grade school children in our communities. We believe that engaging in art activities is vital for children's development as it fosters creativity, self-expression, and imagination. Through the Brain Booster Program, children enhance their fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, and problem-solving abilities. Additionally, participation in the program boosts their self-esteem and fosters a sense of achievement.

We also incorporate Filipino values and traditions in the art activity, thereby cultivating a deeper appreciation of our heritage among the children. According to the parents, they are thankful for the Brain Booster Program as it provides an alternative avenue for their kids to explore new hobbies and meet new friends. In the communities we serve, there are usually no playgrounds or places where the children can play freely and safely. The Brain Booster Program fills that gap.

This year, we conducted a total of 132 sessions in our communities in Bulacan, Cavite, and Tondo.

132

**SESSIONS IN TONDO, BULACAN,
AND CAVITE**



After School Program



The After School Program was created to provide tutoring and mentorship for grade school and high school students in our communities. Many children and youth living in poverty struggle in school due to a lack of resources and support, increasing their risk of dropping out or starting manual labor early. This program aims to create a supportive environment to help them succeed academically, focusing on lessons in English, Math, and Science. Our volunteer teachers and scholar-mentors help students reinforce what they learn in school, clarify concepts, and give personalized attention. The program also promotes discipline and teamwork through group activities.

120

**SESSIONS IN TONDO, BULACAN,
AND CAVITE**

Additionally, our scholars gain valuable experience by mentoring younger students, learning the importance of giving back to their communities and inspiring the next generation.

The After School Program takes place every weekend in Bulacan, Cavite, and Tondo, with a total of 120 sessions held this year.

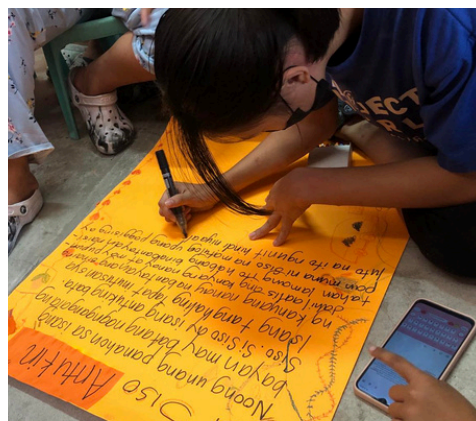


LitClubs & LitMoms

In collaboration with LitWorld, an international non-profit organization based in New York, USA, advocating for global literacy, we have established Literacy Clubs (LitClubs) in our serviced communities. LitClubs provide comprehensive literacy and empowerment programs for girls and boys aged 10 to 14.

These clubs go beyond literacy tutorials, offering joyful learning, creative expression, community building, and the development of social-emotional skills.

Every week, our LitClub Mentors lead the sessions through storytelling, writing, and sharing. The sessions are centered on the 7 Strengths - Belonging, Kindness, Curiosity, Friendship, Confidence, Courage, and Hope. These values aim to boost their self-confidence and self-esteem, while building communities of support among one another.



159

LITCLUB MEMBERS

5

LITCLUBS IN THREE COMMUNITIES

Currently, we have 159 LitClub members and 5 LitClubs. We also 30 have LitMom members. They engage in interactive literacy and confidence-boosting sessions every week. This initiative helps mothers influence their children at home and share the importance of learning.

30

LITMOM MEMBERS



World Read Aloud Day Celebration

(January 28 and February 1, 2023) Every year, we join the international community in celebrating World Read Aloud Day (WRAD). With this year's theme, *"Celebrating the Power of Reading Aloud,"* we aim to encourage children and adults to create the habit of reading aloud. This celebration also highlights the need to advocate for literacy as a human right.

The WRAD celebrations in our communities, involving volunteers, coordinators, and mentors, were a success. PEARLS scholars and LitClub members not only enjoyed listening to the engaging stories, they also had fun in crafting imaginative reading crowns. The parade was a highlight, spreading the joy of reading in the communities. This year's WRAD celebration in our communities stood out as one of the best yet, thanks to the collective participation and contribution of our partners, scholars, and parents.



Our Time-to-Learn scholars also participated in the online World Read Aloud Day celebration organized by the National Library of the Philippines (NLP). Our teachers made sure that all scholars in Tondo and Bulacan attended, ensuring everyone could benefit from the activity. NLP and other partners loved the enthusiastic participation of our scholars. These activities inspired the parents, teachers, and scholars to further promote the importance of reading aloud - starting with reading with the kids at home.



LitClub and LitMoms Graduation Day in Bulacan and Cavite

(February 18, 2023) A special graduation ceremony was held in Bulacan for our LitClub and LitMom members who completed the curriculum. It was also an opportunity to recognize their hard work and to bond with other members. Everyone enjoyed the program where they received certificates and special tokens from PEARLS donors. The culminating activity is a testament to the dedication of both the Mentors and Members in creating spaces for growth and support.



(November 12, 2023) In Cavite, we also held a graduation ceremony to recognize the LitClub members' completion of the curriculum. The ceremony included heartfelt literary presentations, highlighting their growth and readiness to positively impact their community. They felt a great sense of accomplishment and look forward to sharing their knowledge with their community and future LitClub members.



International Day of the Girl

(October 12, 2023) Our PEARLS scholars and LitClub members celebrated the International Day of the Girl with the theme *"Batang Babae Ako, Lider Ako!"* ("I am a girl, I am a leader!"). They showcased their leadership and creativity by crafting inspiring slogans and posters. One notable slogan was, *"Huwag maliitin dahil ang lakas ko'y 'sing lakas ng kalalakihan, kaya kong mamuno sa sarili kong bayan."* (Do not underestimate me because my strength is equal to that of men; I can lead my own community.) We are so proud of our LitClub members for recognizing and using their strength to inspire other girls in the community.

Partnerships with Schools



Our Scholarship Program places great emphasis on enhancing education and fostering community development for its scholars by establishing robust partnerships with their educational institutions. These collaborations are formalized through Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with each institution, ensuring a structured and mutually beneficial relationship.



This year, we are grateful to have formally signed MOUs with three schools where the majority of our scholars attend. Key stakeholders from these schools - including principals, guidance counselors, and teachers - have pledged their support for our scholars and their parents. Through these alliances, we can seamlessly coordinate the needs and requirements of our scholars, forming a comprehensive support system that empowers them to reach their full potential.



We are thankful to the following schools for being part of our mission:

Naic Integrated National High School
Amado V. Hernandez Elementary School
St. Martha Elementary School

Workshops & Seminars for Scholars

Tondo Rising Young Leaders (TYRL) Workshop

by One Tondo Community Group & AHA Learning Center

(January to May 2023) Five scholars were chosen as RISE Youth Delegates. They took part in various learning workshops where they were provided training on how to become future leaders, focusing on enhancing their presentation and communication skills.



The Culminating Day for the Batch 1 of the Tondo Rising Young Leaders (TRYL) program was held on May 6 to 7, 2023. It was an important milestone in their journey as TRYL participants, showcasing their development and achievements throughout the program and preparing them to become future young leaders. The participating scholars were very grateful for the opportunity as they were able to hone their skills in communication, public speaking, and leadership. They also formed valuable new friendships in the duration of the program.



Training Session for Time-to-Learn Program Teachers and Parents by iLearn Manila

(January 14 & 27 and May 18, 2023) iLearn Manila, one of our newest literacy partners, has generously donated learning kits to our Time-to-Learn program, significantly enhancing the delivery of educational lessons to the children.



To further ensure that the kits will be used appropriately, they organized an interactive training session for parents and teachers in Tondo and Bulacan. Parents gained insights on how to guide their children in their learning journey, while our Time-to-Learn teachers learned about various teaching strategies and innovative approaches tailored to different age groups.

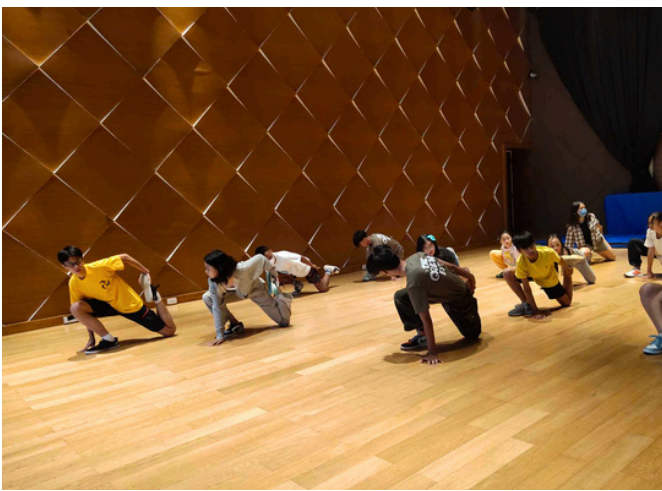
Following the successful learning sessions in Tondo and Bulacan, iLearn Manila also brought the learning kits and seminar to Cavite. Our scholars' parents had the opportunity to learn new teaching strategies that they can easily apply at home.

One of our parent-leaders, Louie shared with us, *"As a parent, I learned how to control myself so that my child won't feel afraid. This helps them focus on what they're asked to do. I also learned how to teach my child not to be afraid of me."*



Dance Workshops by Sky Dance Avenue Manila

Six PEARLS Scholars—Shekinah, Jehm, Clake, Mario, Bong, and Aeron—were selected as Sky Dance Avenue’s (SDA) “dance scholars.” Through weekly dance workshops, they have significantly improved their dancing skills while building strong connections and friendships with fellow dancers. This experience has provided a perfect blend of artistic growth and personal development, marking a significant leap forward for our scholars.



On July 1, 2023, the scholars, along with other dancers, showcased their talents in the dance recital “Groove Era.” They not only mastered intricate dance moves and choreography but also developed discipline, dedication, and a true mastery of their craft.

The scholars expressed immense gratitude for being part of this program, where they learned new dance skills and formed lasting friendships. The collaborative effort of dedicated scholars and supportive parent-chaperones has made our partnership with Sky Dance Avenue Manila a resounding success. We are so grateful to the teachers of SDA, especially Teacher Sky, for this wonderful experience for the scholars.



Rugby Training by Decathlon PH and World Rugby

In partnership with Decathlon and World Rugby, we engaged 30 high school and college scholars in Bulacan to participate in monthly rugby training sessions. Additionally, ten of these scholars received specialized training to become coaches, equipping them to train their peers and lead community sessions. These coaching sessions not only cover the rules of rugby but also enhance the participants' leadership skills.

Participating in sports like rugby not only boosts physical capability and stamina but also fosters confidence, camaraderie, teamwork, and social skills. Jenny Rose, a Grade 10 scholar, expressed her gratitude, saying, *"Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to try playing rugby. I've proven that rugby isn't just for boys. I hope Project PEARLS continues to organize events like this for scholars."* Her words highlight how sports can empower girls and women, building their self-confidence in fields traditionally dominated by men.



On July 22, 2023, the scholars participated in the ACTIVATE Super Week, further honing their rugby skills through intensive practice and competition.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Decathlon and World Rugby for their invaluable partnership, which has made these opportunities possible.



Volleyball Training by Decathlon PH and Heroes Volleyball Program

With the support of Decathlon Philippines and the Heroes Volleyball Program (HPV), 25 high school and college scholars in Tondo participated in monthly volleyball training sessions.



Each training session allowed the scholars to hone their volleyball skills while strengthening team dynamics. Ramil, Grade 8 scholar, expressed his gratitude for being part of the program, saying, *"I just want to express my gratitude for being part of this event, which deepened my knowledge of the sport. I really love volleyball, and I now have more skills in this sport."* Syeisha, Grade 9 scholar, also learned to build camaraderie and friendship with the other participants. She shared, *"What I learned from this activity is to be friendlier with my fellow scholars, and to enjoy learning volleyball together."*

We hope these training sessions with Decathlon and the Heroes Volleyball Program will open up more competitive opportunities for the scholars, allowing them to further showcase their skills and passion for volleyball.



Foundation Day, Company Tour, and Customer Service Training by Decathlon Philippines

(June 7, 2023) In celebration of their Foundation Day, Decathlon Philippines hosted a special celebration at their Pasay and Masinag branches. Twenty-seven (27) scholars from Tondo and Bulacan attended the events. The day began with an exciting store tour, allowing participants to explore their wide range of sports equipment and facilities. The scholars then engaged in a series of fun and interactive activities. They participated in a mini game, which was a hit among everyone. The team also introduced the scholars to various sports, including table tennis, football, and volleyball.



It was an enriching experience for all, as they learned new skills and enjoyed the camaraderie. Overall, the Foundation Day was a fantastic opportunity for our PEARLS scholars to discover new sports and enjoy a day of fun and learning at Decathlon.



(July 11, 2023) Decathlon Philippines hosted a company visit for nine scholars from Bulacan, Tondo, and Cavite. During this visit, the scholars toured the store and learned about various exciting work opportunities in this field. The Decathlon team also provided the scholars with valuable insights into professional life and underscored the importance of teamwork and effective communication. The motivational stories shared by Decathlon employees served as a powerful inspiration for the scholars, reinforcing the importance of setting and achieving personal goals.

(July 11, 2023) To further help our scholars in enhancing their skills, Decathlon Philippines conducted a Customer Service Training event. The training aimed to enhance the scholars' customer service skills and provide insights into handling various scenarios with customers. The training proved to be a valuable learning experience for the scholars, offering practical insights and skills that are essential for providing excellent customer service. The interactive nature of the training, coupled with the thoughtful guidance and advice provided, ensured that the scholars gained valuable knowledge that they can apply in their future.

RISE for Youth Camp by MakeSense Asia

(April 13 - 16 and June 22 - 25, 2023) Youths from various non-profit organizations participated in the RISE (Reducing Inequalities in Skills and Employment) Camp (Batches 2 and 3), organized by MakeSense Asia.

Fourteen PEARLS scholars, split into two batches, joined this immersive three-day camp designed to equip them with valuable skills for employment and their future careers. The scholars impressively rose to the challenge of acquiring essential job skills while forging new friendships and gaining enriching experiences.

The RISE Camp covered a range of topics, including résumé writing, acing job interviews, and leadership development. Mentors and speakers from diverse fields also provided inspiration and guidance on achieving career goals.



We are especially proud of our scholars and RISE Batch 1 alumni, Henrex and Girlie, who joined the camp as assistant facilitators. They assisted in various activities and shared how the workshops have helped them improve their skills.



This camp represents a significant step forward in empowering our youth with the tools they need to succeed in their careers and personal development.

Clare, Grade 12 scholar, shared with us her main takeaway from the Camp, *"I learned a lot from the events but the main thing I learned is to have confidence in front of others and to be brave enough to face our fears in order to succeed in life."*

As part of the RISE Program, MakeSense organized a job fair on November 25, 2023. This event aimed to bring job opportunities closer to the youth and to encourage more companies to invest in youth training. Our scholars from Tondo and Bulacan actively participated in the job fair.

In preparation for the event, we assisted the scholars in creating and reviewing their résumés to enhance their employability. Additionally, we provided orientation sessions to ensure they were well-prepared for the job fair. We are proud to share that one of our scholars, Roselyn from Bulacan, secured a job on the day of the event. The job fair represents a significant step in bridging the gap between young job seekers and potential employers, fostering a brighter future for our youth.

Civic Camp (SibiKamp): Active Civic Education for the Youth in partnership with Young Southeast Asia Leaders Initiative (YSEALI)

(June 17 - 19, 2023) The 3-day Civic Camp aimed to educate, engage, and inspire our youth scholars to actively participate in civic processes and address critical issues such as human rights violations, defending democratic institutions, combating fake news, and other relevant social concerns.

The camp also aimed to cultivate a sense of national identity by providing the scholars with a deeper understanding of the country's history and to inspire action by raising awareness about social issues through immersion in civic society organizations. Twenty (20) scholars from Bulacan, Tondo, and Naic participated in the camp.

The first day of the camp was dedicated to engaging workshop and informative lectures. On the second day, we visited Bantayog ng mga Bayani where we learned about the Martial Law period through museum tour, movie screening, and panel discussion with Martial Law survivors. And on the third day, we hiked the beautiful mountains of Masungi Georeserve while learning about sustainability and environmental protection. These activities were instrumental in enhancing the scholars' understanding of active civic engagement, sustainability, environmental issues, and the historical struggles for democracy and human rights in the Philippines. Angelica, 4th year college scholar, shared her realization after the program, *"I learned that young people should not turn a blind eye in today's time. There are many fake news circulating, and it's difficult to discern what to believe. However, with knowledge and someone guiding us about what's happening in the country, the youth will surely become more aware."* Overall, Civic Camp successfully achieved its goals, leaving the participants more informed, inspired, and ready to contribute positively to society.



Civic Camp is the Reciprocal Exchange Project of our Deputy Executive Director, Monica Aclan, as part of her Professional Fellowship under the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) - Civic Engagement Institute. Kelsey Collier-Wise, Executive Director of United Way - Vermillion, was also part of the project as a visiting US Fellow.



Leadership Journey Retreat by Ninoy and Cory Aquino Foundation (NCAF)

(July 1 - 2, 2023) Through the support of Ninoy and Cory Aquino Foundation (NCAF), we held a leadership retreat in Rizal for 46 scholars from Tondo, Bulacan, and Cavite.

The NCAF Leadership Journey Retreat provided an opportunity for the scholars to know one another on a deeper level and to understand their own life journey. The weekend was filled with emotions - laughter, tears, joy, and relief. But most of all, our scholars found a renewed sense of hope within themselves and a stronger bond and support from their fellow scholars.

Regine, Grade 11 scholar from Cavite, shared that one of her most favorite part was receiving letters from her parents. She expressed that she was deeply moved by her mother's love and unwavering support. Regine felt her mother's presence as a divine gift, a source of comfort and encouragement in her life. She also appreciated the open discussions about personal struggles within the community, which allowed them to express their feelings and find peace through shared experiences. Jeremy, 2nd year college scholar from Tondo, said, "My favorite part was the group sharing. I got to know my co-scholars more deeply, their positive and negative experiences in life, and it's just inspiring."

The retreat was made even more meaningful by the participation of our scholar-alumni Cyrene Starr Torres from Zamboanga Sibugay and Jobelle Jumawan from Bulacan. They shared inspiring stories about their educational journeys, their highs and lows, their losses and triumphs. They also emphasized the importance of helping others. Their messages were powerful reminders of the transformative power of education and the importance of giving back to the community.

The NCAF Leadership Journey was a significant event that provided the scholars with valuable opportunities for reflection, emotional expression, and inspiration from their peers and alumni. This retreat underscored the importance of community support and the enduring impact of education.



After School Program Training for Scholar-Mentors in Cavite by Ms. Jedda Punzalan

(July 25, 2024) We organized a workshop for 15 After School Program mentors in Naic, led by our long-time ASP Lead Volunteer, Jedda Punzalan. She shared teaching strategies, motivational techniques, and success stories, enhancing their ability to support and educate the children. The workshop improved their skills in handling young learners and creating a nurturing environment. We're grateful to Ms. Jedda Punzalan and look forward to its positive impact on the children and mentors in Naic.



Sean, Grade 9 scholar, expressed his realization after the training, *"I learned that the best gift for being a teacher is seeing that your students have learned from you and have succeeded because of you, and it's fulfilling to see them happy because they all passed."*

Proper Hygiene Module for Time-to-Learn Scholars

In the first quarter of the year, we incorporated the Proper Hygiene Module into the Time-to-Learn classes. Scholars actively participated in engaging activities focused on the importance of cleanliness, hand washing, and maintaining proper hygiene. To ensure continuity at home, parents were also involved in these learning activities, enabling them to guide their children in practicing proper hygiene.

Parents of the Time-to-Learn scholars expressed their gratitude and appreciation to our teachers for educating them and their children about the significance of proper hygiene. This initiative not only enhanced the scholars' understanding of hygiene practices but also strengthened the role of parents in promoting healthy habits at home.



High School and College Scholars' Day

(August 12, 2023) We organized Scholars' Day, a special event dedicated to recognizing and celebrating the hard work and dedication of our scholars. The event aimed to foster camaraderie among the scholars, volunteers, and staff. As part of the celebration, the scholars enjoyed a screening of the movie "Barbie," followed by a special dinner. This engaging activity provided an opportunity for the scholars to bond and connect with each other, celebrating their shared journey toward academic excellence.

The movie also imparted valuable insights to our scholars. Teddy Mae, a 4th-year college scholar, reflected, *"My key takeaway from watching (the movie) is that women can sometimes be blinded by the notion that we are not equal to men. There are times when we may settle for being seen as inferior, relying on whatever other genders may provide, and the only ones who can awaken us are ourselves, our own selves, and our fellow women. Women have the right to choose for ourselves, to move, to dream, and to be whoever or whatever we want according to our desires, and this should not be hindered by any societal system."*



Field Trip at Enchanted Kingdom by IQ-EQ Philippines

(September 9, 2023) IQ-EQ Philippines invited us to join their "Family Day" at Enchanted Kingdom in Laguna. In this event we shared our programs and advocacy to the hundreds of employees present. IQ-EQ also generously invited 10 scholars to be part of the event. This special field trip served as a reward for the scholars' outstanding achievements and active participation in our workshops and events. It was a memorable and rewarding experience for the scholars, offering them a well-deserved break and an opportunity to create lasting memories with their peers.

Project PEARLS Inc. and IQ-EQ Philippines ensured the scholars' safety and comfort throughout the trip, allowing them to enjoy the rides and freely explore the amusement park.





Art MADE Public by Metrobank Foundation

The Metrobank Foundation organized the annual Metrobank Art & Design Excellence (MADE) Competition, recognizing emerging Filipino artists. This year, Metrobank Foundation selected Project PEARLS as a partner beneficiary for the event. In addition to a monetary donation supporting our mission, Metrobank Foundation invited 30 of our scholars to the "Art MADE Public" exhibit in Taguig. This event offered our scholars a unique opportunity to explore the world of art and appreciate the creativity of Filipino artists, enriching their educational journey.

The exhibit provided the scholars with a deeper understanding and appreciation of art, highlighting the Metrobank Foundation's commitment to promoting cultural appreciation and education among young learners.

Kim Eunice, a Grade 6 scholar, expressed her gratitude for the experience, stating, *"The part where we were taken on an art tour, this is my favorite part because it's where I learned and closely observed a form of art, and you can see its true expression."* Overall, the event was a remarkable experience for the scholars, enhancing their educational journey through exposure to the vibrant world of Filipino art.

"Maligayang Kumustahan": Catch-up and Mini Christmas Party for Tondo SHS and College Scholars

(December 9, 2023) We organized a Kumustahan and Mini Christmas Party for our scholars in Tondo. This event was designed to prepare them for the next chapter in their academic journey and to foster a sense of community by bringing together both senior high school and college scholars. It also provided a simple yet enjoyable get-together, enhancing the bonds among our scholars.

During the event, our college scholars shared their experiences and provided valuable encouragement to the senior high school scholars. This interaction not only boosted the confidence of the senior high school scholars but also created a supportive environment where they could learn from those who have already navigated similar paths. We look forward to replicating this activity in our other communities.



Message from our Scholars



Jobelle L. Jumawan
Bachelor of Secondary Education
Major in Social Studies
Jesus Is Lord Colleges Foundation Inc.
(JILCF)

"I remember when my cousin Jens asked me to join the feeding program at Project PEARLS every Saturday (in Ulingan, Tondo). Back then, I thought it would be a chance to hang out with my cousins. But attending the program turned out to be the start of big changes in my life.

I want to sincerely thank Project PEARLS for their love, help, and support all throughout my school years. I feel grateful to be one of the many kids you've chosen to help. Being a student isn't easy; I faced lots of challenges, but I didn't give up. Seeing others succeed inspired me. If they could do it, so could I.

Thank you, Project PEARLS, for giving me a chance, even when you weren't sure if I would finish or succeed. Your support not only helped me in school but also taught me many things about life. I know my learning journey doesn't stop here, it's just the beginning of a new phase.

Before, I wasn't sure why I pursued education, but I held onto one thing: following the Lord's will. I believe my journey isn't just about me. I want to share what I've learned to inspire other scholars and young people to keep going in life. As they say, *'Malayo pa, pero malayo na.'*"

"I've always dreamed of becoming a teacher, and thanks to Project PEARLS, that dream came true. I joined Project PEARLS in 2010 when I was in fourth grade, and I was fortunate to be one of their scholars until I finished college. My passion for teaching was strong, especially since my father passed away, leaving my mom as a single parent struggling to support us all through school.

Thankfully, Project PEARLS had my back, providing full support for my four-year education degree. I want to give a big shoutout to the donors, sponsors, and volunteers who helped me along the way. Thank you for your unwavering support and for believing in our dreams.

Project PEARLS didn't just cover my school fees; they also gave me a home where I could freely express myself. They taught me humility and kindness by treating everyone fairly, and they educated me about the issues in our society, believing that children can make a big difference in shaping the future.

Now, as a mentor in LitClub, I aim to pass on the experiences and values that Project PEARLS instilled in me to my members."



Lilibeth Sucion
Bachelor of Science in
Elementary Education
Major in Special Education
Eulogio "Amang" Rodriguez Institute of
Science and Technology (EARIST)

College Graduates (SY 2022 - 2023)

Our scholars are the epitome of our pride and joy. They have demonstrated true dedication in their quest for knowledge, and now, as graduates, they stand as a testament that with diligence and perseverance, one can reach great heights and achieve their aspirations. We eagerly anticipate witnessing the paths they will embark on in their careers. We couldn't be prouder of our scholars.



Angelica Iliw-Iliw

Bachelor of Science in
Information Technology
Polytechnic University -
Quezon City



Mikaella Paver

Bachelor of Science in Business
Administration, Major in
Marketing Management
Jesus Is Lord Colleges
Foundation Inc.



Jobelle Jumawan

Bachelor of Secondary Education
Major In Social Studies
Jesus Is Lord Colleges
Foundation Inc.
Award: Best in Research Paper



Gladys Mae C. Donio

Bachelor of Technical
Vocational Teacher in
Education / Major in
Automotive
Sibugay Technical Institute Inc.



Lilibeth B. Sucion

Bachelor of Science in Elementary
Education, Major in Special
Education
Eulogio "Amang" Rodriguez
Institute of Science and Technology
(EARIST)



HEALTHCARE AND NUTRITION

Hunger Relief | W.O.W. Center | Water Filters | Vitamin Angels | Tondo Health Clinic |
Medical & Dental Missions | Reproductive Health | Medical & Social Services

Hunger Relief Program

In the Philippines, hunger rates remain alarmingly high, especially among families in impoverished areas like Tondo, Manila. About one in ten Filipino families faces food insecurity, affecting children the most.* These kids lack the means to feed themselves, and their families often struggle to provide enough meals each day. Consequently, many children suffer from severe malnutrition, putting the Philippines among the top ten countries globally for stunting, or impaired growth and development due to poor nutrition.* This also means they lack essential vitamins and minerals, posing continuous health risks. Malnutrition significantly affects children's ability to learn and grow, which has big implications for the nation's overall progress in health and economy.

We acknowledge that hunger poses a major challenge in breaking the cycle of poverty and ensuring that individuals, especially children, do not experience malnutrition and food insecurity so their capacity to learn and flourish is not undermined.



This is why our Hunger Relief Program exists. We aim to enhance food security in the communities we assist, particularly in Cavite, Bulacan, and Tondo. We offer hearty breakfasts with ample portions, enabling recipients to spread out their meals throughout the day. Our priority is to provide complete, nutritious meals including rice, protein, vegetables, and fruits to ensure children and elderly folks in our community have a balanced and healthy diet.



Tackling hunger is vital because it provides essential support to those in need and contributes to their overall health. By reducing the reliance on 'pagpag' or scavenged food, which often leads to health problems, we help improve the well-being of children in the community.

*Source: <https://childhope.org.ph/malnutrition-in-children-overview/>

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In 2023, we served a total of 159,700 meals in the communities we serve. Our Hunger Relief Program operates every Thursday to Sunday in Tondo, and every Saturday in Bulacan and Cavite. Our goal is to provide over 500 meals per feeding session to ensure that a significant number of our beneficiaries have access to nutritious sustenance.



159,700

MEALS SERVED



In addition the regular feeding program, we also implemented the **Daily Dairy Program** for Time-to-Learn (TTL) scholars in collaboration with the **RSPo Foundation**. This initiative provided milk to our 60 TTL scholars in Bulacan and Tondo, served during their breakfast. Milk has demonstrated benefits in enhancing cognitive function and memory, which are crucial for the well-being of our scholars.

48,832.90 kgs.

FOOD DONATIONS SHARED WITH OUR COMMUNITIES



In addition to the food donations, we also distribute diverse range of in-kind donations to those in need. This included essential items such as clothing, shoes, school supplies, and household essentials. A total of 11,126.50 kilograms of various non-food donations were distributed, making a substantial impact on the lives of many individuals and families. These generous donations not only met immediate needs but also provided comfort to those facing challenging circumstances.

Furthermore, we distributed various food items generously provided by our partners to the communities we serve. Our total food donations amounted to 48,832.90 kilograms, including bread, canned goods, condiments (such as soy sauce and vinegar), frozen meat, fruits, pasta, pastries, rice, and vegetables. These essential food items were distributed to the children and families to offer extra assistance, ensuring they have more food readily available.

None of this would have been possible without the unwavering support of our partners, including Century Pacific Food Inc., Eric Kayser Philippines, RFM Food Corp., Scholars of Sustenance (SOS Philippines), and Selecta Philippines.

11,126.50 kgs.

NON-FOOD DONATIONS SHARED WITH OUR COMMUNITIES



Stories from the Community



Lolo Manuel, 80 years old



Ako po ay single at nag-start ako mag-feeding noong taong 2020. Nawalan ako ng trabaho kaya naisipan kong pumunta sa Project PEARLS. Dati akong nama-masura pero dala na din ng edad, kinailangan kong huminto sa ganitong gawain.

Kung minsan, nabibigyan ako ng tulong ng mga kapatid ko sa gastos lalo na sa mga araw na walang feeding. Nakakatulong ang feeding program sa akin dahil dito ko kinukuha ang aking almusal at pananghalian.

Dahil din sa Project PEARLS naging bahagi ako ng GROW. Nagpapasalamat ako dahil napasali ako dito. Malaking tulong sa akin ang training dahil binibigyan ako nito ng oportunidad sa hanapbuhay kapag natapos ang training. Nagpapasalamat din ako sa programa ng Project PEARLS mula s feeding at livelihood program. Dahil hindi naging hadlang ang edad ko para tulungan nila ako. Dahil naniniwala ang Project PEARLS na pwedeng umahon sa buhay ang kahit sino sa kahit anong antas at edad ang meron sila."

"I started joining the feeding program in 2020. I became unemployed, so I decided to go to Project PEARLS. I used to scavenge for recyclables, but due to my age, I had to stop.

Sometimes, my siblings help me with expenses, especially on days when there is no feeding program. The feeding program is helpful for me because it provides my breakfast and lunch.

Through Project PEARLS, I also became part of GROW. I am grateful for being included in this program. The training is a significant help because it gives me job opportunities once I complete it. I am also thankful for the Project PEARLS programs, from the feeding program to the livelihood program. My age did not prevent them from helping me. Project PEARLS believes that anyone can improve their life regardless of their status or age."



Ako po ay isa sa regular na kumukha ng pagkain sa Hunger Relief Program ng Project PEARLS. Dahil po sa Hunger Relief Program ay nakakakain po ng masustansiyang pagkain ang mga anak ko. Nakakapag-provide din po ng pang-almusal sa loob ng isang araw na nakakatulong sa akin para mabawasan ang gastos ko. At nagpapasalamat po ako sa Project PEARLS kasi napakalaking tulong po nito. Sana patuloy ninyo po kaming suportahan. Salamat po.

"I am one of those who attend the feeding program of Project PEARLS' Hunger Relief Program. Because of this program, my children can eat nutritious food. It also provides breakfast for us during the day, which helps me reduce expenses. I am deeply grateful to Project PEARLS because of the tremendous help it provides. I hope you continue to support us. Thank you very much."



Lenilyn, 33 years old

Water, Opportunities, and Wellness (W.O.W.) Center

60,000 + gallons

**DISTRIBUTED TO FAMILIES IN OUR
SERVICED COMMUNITIES**

600+ families

**RECIPIENTS OF WATER FROM THE
W.O.W. CENTER**



The Water, Opportunities, and Wellness (W.O.W.) Center in Bulacan has continued its mission to provide clean and safe drinking water to families in the community, significantly enhancing the overall health and well-being of its residents.

Despite the seemingly vibrant community of Brgy. Batia in Bocaue, Bulacan, there exists a critical need for safe drinking water. To address this need, our generous sponsors have provided an advanced water filtration system along with the necessary infrastructure for a water filling station. This effort is more than just setting up infrastructure; it is about improving lives. With access to clean water, health improves, diseases decrease, and the future becomes brighter.

Our sponsors' contributions have brought real change, not only in the form of new facilities but in the improved lives of the people we serve. We would like to thank and acknowledge the generous support of our donors and partners who made this project possible: Harry Eng, Vanita Louie and MooMoo, Bill and Amy Schaming, Marcy and William Oliver Brandenburg, Ernie Chow, Gwen Hinze, Larry Shaw, Jeri Fujimoto, Rose Chew, Jon Kaufman, Janet, Karen, and Nancy, Rotary Club of San Francisco Chinatown, The Rotary Club of Peninsula Starlight, South San Francisco Rotary club, and the Rotary Club of Belmont & Redwood Shores.



Distribution of Water Filters



(February 11 and September 22, 2023) Because of the generous support of **Integreon**, 200 families in Naic, Cavite and in Tondo, Manila received water filters provided by **Wine to Water**. This collaboration between Integreon and Wine to Water is a testament to their shared commitment to addressing water scarcity and improving access to clean and safe drinking water for communities in need. For many, access to clean water is not just a convenience but a matter of survival. With the help of Integreon Team, families no longer have to worry about the safety of their drinking water. They can now enjoy peace of mind knowing that they have access to a reliable source of clean and safe water, which is essential for their health, hygiene, and overall well-being.



200 families RECEIVED WATER FILTERS

Moreover, the provision of these filters empowers the families with a sense of dignity and self-sufficiency. By equipping them with the tools to purify their own water, Integreon and Wine to Water are not only addressing an immediate need but also fostering long-term sustainability within the community. Additionally, the Integreon team conducted orientation sessions for the families, ensuring they are well-informed about how to maintain and care for the water filters.



The collaboration between Integreon and Wine to Water is not just about providing water filters; it's about transforming lives and creating lasting positive change. Through their collective efforts, they are making a tangible difference in the lives of these families, demonstrating the power of partnership and the ripple effect of compassion and generosity.

Distribution of Vitamin Angels



Vitamin Angels generously donated 194,400 doses (equivalent to 1,080 bottles) of Multiple Micronutrient Supplements (MMS) for pregnant women. These supplements were distributed among our partner clinics in Manila, Bulacan, and Cavite to ensure comprehensive coverage.

This strategic distribution ensures that pregnant women in these communities receive essential nutrients, significantly contributing to maternal health and well-being. Multiple micronutrient supplements (MMS), which contain essential micronutrients like folic acid, iron, calcium, and iodine, play a vital role in preventing birth defects, supporting fetal growth, and maintaining the mother's health.

In addition to the MMS distribution, we provided 650 doses of Vitamin A to children and dispensed 1,000 doses of Albendazole for deworming purposes in Bulacan and Tondo. The administration of Vitamin A is essential for boosting the immune system, supporting vision, and promoting overall health in children. Meanwhile, Albendazole is a critical intervention for controlling parasitic worm infections, which can impair nutritional status, growth, and cognitive development in children. With the support of Vitamin Angels, we are not only addressing immediate nutritional and health needs, we also lay the groundwork for long-term health benefits within the communities we serve.

194,400 doses
**MULTIPLE MICRONUTRIENT
SUPPLEMENTS (MMS) PROVIDED TO
PREGNANT WOMEN**

650 doses
'VITAMIN A' PROVIDED TO CHILDREN

1,000 doses
ALBENDAZOLE PROVIDED TO CHILDREN



Health Clinic in Tondo



The Project PEARLS Health Clinic in Helping Land, Tondo was established on July 17, 2016. Over the years, the clinic has served hundreds of patients from all ages and backgrounds, providing accessible and quality healthcare. However, the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 necessitated a temporary closure due to the unavailability of medical personnel and funding. During this period, our partner doctors and nurses were redirected to urgent COVID-19 response efforts in hospitals, and our resources were reallocated to ensure that children and families in the community did not go hungry and could continue their education.

The clinic remained closed for nearly two years. Fortunately, in 2022, we met Josh Sembrano, the founder of New York-based organization, The Ruth Sembrano Foundation. Inspired by his mother, who worked as a nurse in the USA, Josh is committed to aiding underserved communities through medical and healthcare services. This partnership brought renewed hope and shared vision, leading to the renovation and reopening of the Project PEARLS Health Clinic in the second quarter of 2023.

The official reopening was marked by a ribbon-cutting ceremony on August 17, 2023, in collaboration with The Ruth Sembrano Foundation. Since reopening, the clinic has attended to over 1,000 patients. Our part-time doctors provide complimentary check-ups for families and children, and we have distributed free medicines and vitamins generously provided by our partner organizations.

The Health Clinic is an essential resource for the children and elderly in our community, offering quick and easy access to medical care. Patients can consult with doctors who take the time to explain health matters thoroughly, fostering a supportive environment without the stigma of financial hardship. We are grateful to offer these services and continue to improve the health and well-being of our community.



Medical & Dental Missions

Dental Mission

by Dr. Thess Venturina

(February 13 & 27, 2023) Recognizing the importance of dental health from an early age, we have organized lectures and dental check-ups for our scholars. With the support of our partner dentist, Dr. Thess Venturina, and her fellow dentists, our scholars received essential dental services. A special Dental Mission was conducted for 93 Time-to-Learn scholars in Bulacan and Tondo. During this mission, Dr. Thess Venturina delivered a comprehensive lecture on dental hygiene and oral health. She also provided fluoride application to the children, enhancing their dental health and preventing cavities. These efforts are crucial in instilling the importance of dental health in our young scholars, ensuring they understand and practice good oral hygiene habits from an early age.



Medical and Dental Mission

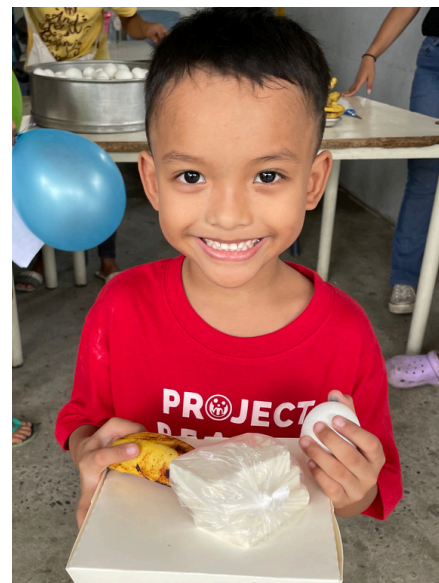
by Archipelago Builders

(May 30, 2023) More than 200 patients were served in the community of Naic, Cavite, during the Medical Mission led by our long-time partner, Archipelago Builders. With the invaluable support of various partner organizations, including GM Dentista Clinica, the Philippine Medical Association, the Philippine Navy, Makati Medical Center, Delos Santos Medical Center, and T-Rod Energy Electromech, we provided comprehensive medical and dental services to children and families in the community. In addition to the healthcare services, Archipelago Builders hosted a fun kiddie party, distributing Jollibee meals and gifts to the children, creating a joyful and memorable experience for them. They also contributed equipment for the Learning Hub and assisted in renovating our kitchen and Learning Hub facilities, significantly enhancing the resources available to the community. We are deeply grateful to Archipelago Builders and all participating organizations for their dedication and generosity.



Scholars' Health and Wellness Day

(October 22, 2023) The Health and Wellness Day emphasized the critical importance of proper nutrition and good health. With over 200 scholars in attendance, our dedicated doctors conducted comprehensive check-ups, administered Vitamin A supplements, and provided deworming treatments for the children. Volunteers from the Philippine Association of Nutrition - Alpha Chapter (PAN Alpha) facilitated an engaging nutrition and health activity. Using storytelling and interactive worksheets, they educated our scholars on the importance of proper nutrition and maintaining good health. Additionally, Children International Inc. generously donated soap bars, promoting hygiene alongside nutrition. This event not only addressed the immediate health needs of our scholars but also instilled valuable lessons on maintaining a healthy lifestyle. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our medical team, PAN Alpha volunteers, and Children International Inc. for their invaluable contributions to this successful initiative.



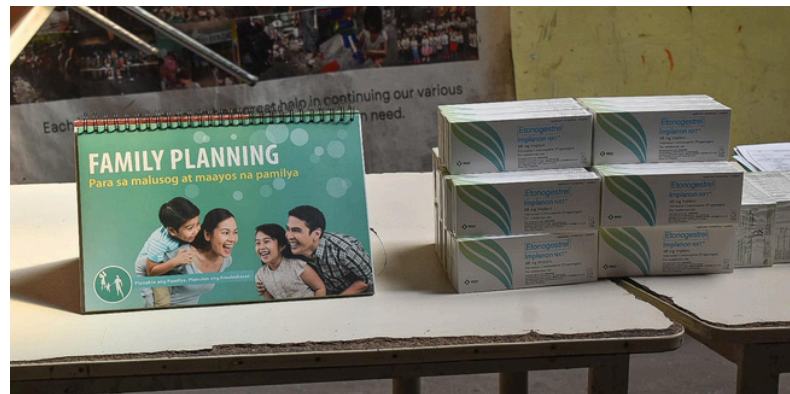
Medical Mission

by Dr. Dan Teng and Gianna Driver

(November 20 to 25, 2023) Around 350 patients received medical care during the Medical Mission in Bulacan and Tondo, led by Dr. Dan and Gianna. They offered a range of services and medications to meet the diverse needs of the patients. Our part-time doctor, Dr. Rochelle Venturina, also joined the mission on certain days to provide additional assistance. The medical check-ups were particularly beneficial, as many families lack the resources to visit hospitals or clinics regularly. By bringing essential healthcare services directly to the community, the mission significantly alleviated the burden on these families and ensured they received the medical attention they needed. We extend our sincere gratitude to Dr. Dan, Gianna, and Dr. Rochelle for their dedication!



Reproductive Health and Family Planning Services by FPOP



Family planning plays a crucial role in alleviating poverty by helping individuals prevent unplanned pregnancies and make informed decisions about their family size. By having the ability to control the timing and number of children, couples can often provide better support for their families. Furthermore, contraceptives not only help prevent unintended pregnancies, they also reduce the risk of sexually transmitted diseases.

To address this important health concern, we partnered with the Family Planning Organization of the Philippines (FPOP) to provide services on reproductive health and family planning. The FPOP team provides counseling and information dissemination sessions to educate adolescents and parents about reproductive health.

Aside from the bi-monthly duty of FPOP staff in the PEARLS Health Clinic, they conducted special sessions about family planning and services on March 31 and September 21, 2023 in Tondo and Bulacan. Over 60 women availed of family planning services, including discussions on reproductive health and counseling.



Medical and Social Services

Aside from our main programs centered on education and hunger relief, we provide financial aid to scholars and families in our communities experiencing personal crises. We recognize that poverty not only impacts a family's finances but also their ability to handle unforeseen medical emergencies and other crises. Without social safety nets, these challenges can be daunting. In response, we offer assistance to those unable to afford medical care, burial expenses, medications, and other vital needs.



Throughout the year 2023, we extended PHP 962,005.16 in assistance, aiding a total of 479 individuals and families. This included financial aid for 319 children and adults, medical assistance for 148 individuals, and burial assistance for 12 families.

As part of our ongoing efforts, we conduct weekly medical check-ups in the communities we serve and organize annual medical missions to assist homeless individuals. In 2023, we provided essential healthcare services to over 1,500 patients, underscoring our commitment to accessible healthcare for all.

Common ailments in our communities encompass coughs, colds, dog bites, pulmonary tuberculosis (prevalent among children and adults), serious wounds with infections, skin allergies, flu, stomach flu, and pneumonia. Additionally, we offer medications, laboratory exams, and hospitalization support, collaborating with patients' families to share the costs.

The support given to scholars and families in our communities wouldn't be possible without our sponsors. We sincerely appreciate our partners who share our mission and vision, making this assistance possible.



PHP 962,005.16

**ASSISTANCE PROVIDED FOR 479
INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES**

Psychosocial and Legal Interventions

We recognize the crucial role of psychosocial support in developing vital life skills and navigating life's challenges. Our Social Worker offers personal counseling sessions to both youths and parents who are facing various difficulties. These sessions are instrumental in rebuilding connections among children and between children and adults, fostering a sense of normalcy and routine. We recognize that mental health care can be expensive and hard to access, especially for those with low incomes. That's why we're dedicated to making counseling services available to everyone, aiming to break the stigma around mental health care. We believe that mental and emotional well-being are essential for overall growth, and everyone, no matter their financial situation, should have access to mental health support.



In 2023, we tackled a total of 21 cases encompassing various forms of abuse, legal issues involving children, and patients requiring prolonged medical care and therapy. The complexity of these cases varied significantly, reflecting the diverse needs of our community.

Among these cases, we supported individuals facing different types of abuse, ranging from child maltreatment to neglect. For children involved in legal cases, we ensured that they received the necessary legal representation and support to navigate the judicial system effectively. Additionally, we provided extensive medical care and therapy sessions for patients suffering from serious health conditions, including cancer and cerebral palsy.

Recognizing the multifaceted nature of these issues, we often collaborated with various agencies to offer specialized interventions. For instance, in situations involving abuse, we connected survivors with shelters and relevant government services to ensure their safety and access to necessary resources. Our role extended beyond immediate intervention, as we also provided continuous support through counseling and psychotherapy sessions. These sessions were crucial in offering psychosocial support to individuals, helping them cope with trauma, stress, and the psychological impacts of their experiences.

Our approach is holistic, aiming to address both the immediate and long-term needs of those we assist. By leveraging our network of specialized agencies and professionals, we strive to provide comprehensive care and support, fostering resilience and recovery among the affected individuals.



EMPOWERMENT THROUGH SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

G.R.O.W. | Community Savings Club | Summits & Workshops

G.R.O.W.

GIVING RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES TO WOMEN



When we officially launched GROW (Giving Resources and Opportunities to Women) in Bulacan in July 2019, our goal was simple: to equip women with skills that would increase their income, leading to financial and social empowerment.

Since its launch, GROW has delivered numerous skills training and learning opportunities to women in Brgy. Batia, Bocaue, Bulacan. Many of these women are mothers, grandmothers, and sisters of our Project PEARLS scholars. They were relocated by the National Housing Authority from Ulingan in Tondo, Manila, to this community in 2013. Despite receiving housing, they faced a lack of income sources, exacerbating their difficulties.

GROW aims to address this issue by offering resources and opportunities for these women to develop livelihood skills and realize their potential. We believe that empowered women positively impact both society and the economy. Over the years, participants in our program have demonstrated remarkable resilience, transforming challenges into growth opportunities. Through GROW, they have acquired various skills, including candle making, mug and t-shirt printing, and macramé. Our workshops have also enhanced their personal and social skills.

In addition, we have established valuable partnerships with other non-profit organizations and companies, thereby expanding our market reach and network. These partner organizations have provided further training in various fields, enriching the skills and opportunities available to the women in our program.



New GROW Products

Our GROW 'nanays' focus primarily on upcycling. We believe upcycling is crucial not only for its positive impact on the environment but also because it provides livelihood opportunities and promotes craftsmanship, creating unique products for consumers.

Upcycling is a detailed, labor-intensive process that requires careful attention to every step. Unlike mass-produced items, our products cannot be replicated by machines. Each product is meticulously handcrafted by our 'nanays' to ensure perfection.

By offering one-of-a-kind upcycled products, we encourage more consumers to choose sustainable options. Making ethical consumption choices significantly contributes to a more sustainable future.

This year, our GROW members have innovatively developed new products that will surely captivate you.



TIMPI

(to control one's self)

Description:

Macramé sling bag

Handmade and upcycled from scrap textiles

Dimensions: 7 in. x 9 in. with 20 inches strap



ULAP EARRINGS

(cloud earrings)

Description:

Pom-pom Earrings

Lightweight

Handmade and upcycled from scrap textiles

Stainless ear hooks

Dimensions: approx. 2 in. diameter



ALPAS

(to become free, to break loose)

Description:

Macramé, pom-pom or tassel keychains

Handmade and upcycled from scrap textiles

Stainless metal snap hook

Dimensions: approx. 4 in. long



JUTE SACK TOTE BAGS

Description:

Made from upcycled jute sacks and rice sacks (inside lining)

Size varies

Drop shoulder strap



Product Collaborations

At GROW, we believe that every individual can make a meaningful difference. That's why we actively seek partnerships with leading brands and businesses in the industry to collectively champion and advance sustainability. By collaborating with these diverse organizations, we aim to amplify our efforts and promote sustainability on a larger scale.

Our partnerships with various brands not only expand the community of conscious consumers but also contribute to the growth of a sustainable market overall. We aim to create a more environmentally and socially responsible future.

UNIQLO Philippines



UNIQLO Manila partnered with GROW to create special anniversary giveaways for the 5th anniversary of their Global Flagship Store. Utilizing scrap fabrics from UNIQLO's alteration services, our skilled GROW members crafted unique mini sling bags and denim zipper pouches.

Metrobank Foundation



For this year's Metrobank Art and Design Excellence (MADE), Metrobank Foundation has chosen Project PEARLS and GROW as their advocacy partners. The MADE Experience Kit is specially packaged in tote bags that are upcycled from flour sacks, crafted and sewn by the women of GROW. In addition, Metrobank Foundation made a donation to support our programs on Scholarship and Women Empowerment. Through this event, Metrobank has also helped amplify our mission to a wider network.



Ash & Muff

Ash & Muff is a local brand that “was born out of the passion to help people find the perfect gift for the numerous birthdays, anniversaries, and special occasions in their lives.”



They have various products such as bags, home accessories, apparel, and personalized gift sets. They partnered with GROW to produce their unique and artistic tassels, pom-poms, and pouches.



Angat Buhay

We are honored to be one of Angat Buhay's partner merchants at the Museo ng Pag-asa shop. This partnership allows us to showcase our products to a broader audience while simultaneously promoting our mission.



The Collective

The Collective specializes in skincare, haircare, and body care. For their second anniversary celebration, titled "Camp Collective," they partnered with us to create custom, camping-inspired tote bags.

(photos from The Collective)

Launch of GROW Tondo at Better World Smokey Mountain by San Miguel Foundation



On September 29, 2023, San Miguel Foundation (SMF) formally inaugurated its largest and latest Better World Community Center. Spanning 3,700 square meters, the Better World Smokey Mountain (BWSM) is located near the former Smokey Mountain landfill. Serving as a hub for learning and skill development, it aims to benefit 2,500 families, roughly 12,500 individuals, from the disadvantaged communities in Tondo.

We are grateful and honored to be one of the partner non-profit organizations at BWSM. Together with other non-government organizations - AHA Learning Center, Upskills Foundation, Sandiwaan Center for Learning, and Tulay sa Pag-unlad (TSPI) - we will develop diverse programs to meet the immediate needs of families in the community. With 39 modern classrooms spread across four levels, the center will serve as a hub of growth for children and youth, offering them invaluable learning spaces and life-changing opportunities.

Through this partnership, we are launching GROW Tondo to provide empowerment and livelihood opportunities for individuals experiencing poverty. To support our program, we have been allocated three rooms, including one storage room, as training centers for our GROW members. Additionally, grants for machines, materials, and staff have been provided to support the first three years of operation.



Training Workshops for GROW Members

GROW is always on the lookout for ways to assist the women in our community in learning new skills. This exposes them to fresh ideas, encourages independent exploration, and enhances their overall learning capacity. These events and workshops also offer an opportunity to engage with experts in various fields, enabling our 'nanays' to stay updated on the latest information and acquire new skills related to the topic at hand.

Haircut Training by Hair Aid

Hair Aid, an Australian non-profit organization, conducted a Haircut Training program from January 9 to 13, 2023 in Quezon City. Fifteen participants successfully graduated with certificates.

Following the training, we organized Haircut Sessions to provide opportunities for our graduates to practice their skills in real-life settings. These sessions were held on January 18, 25, February 13, 18, 27, and March 23, all in 2023. These sessions not only helped refine their skills but also boosted their confidence, enabling them to offer their services and earn additional income.



Soap Making Workshop by Cognizant

On May 20, 2023, sixteen participants joined the Soap Making Workshop in Bulacan. The workshop was facilitated and sponsored by Cognizant employees. In addition to learning soap making, participants received valuable tips on starting small businesses. Each participant was also provided with a starter kit to practice soap making at home.



Embroidery Training by Brother's Embroidery Machine Supplier

Nine members of GROW Tondo attended the Embroidery Training sessions conducted by Brother's Embroidery Machine supplier in October and November 2023. On December 2, 2023, two GROW members passed on their learnings by conducting an Embroidery Training session for SMC Managers during the Noche Buena distribution at Better World Smokey Mountain.



Training and Talks by Empowered Pinays

Empowered Pinays is an online community established on Facebook, offering monthly online training, projects, and contests aimed at helping Filipina women enhance their creativity, acquire skills, knowledge, and confidence to continuously improve themselves.



Our first event partnership with Empowered Pinays was held on February 22, 2023. Ms. Genah Evangelista, the Founder of Empowered Pinays, spearheaded a Women Empowerment talk for the women in Bulacan. Her presentation on women empowerment was well-received by the audience, thanks to its simplicity and accessibility. The discussion covered various topics, including financial literacy.

Additionally, Empowered Pinays organized several webinars on diverse topics:

- "The Essential Guide to Managing Your Mental Health: Freeing Yourself with Mindfulness Meditation" on May 31, 2023, facilitated by Ms. Ivy Autor
- "Paano Kumita sa TikTok sa Tulong ng Affiliate Marketing?" on June 23, 2023, where the participants benefitted from practical tips shared by Ms. Theresa Mattel, a TikTok Content Creator
- "Learn Entrepreneurship" on October 6, 2023, by Kezia Orhen
- "E-commerce" on October 11, 2023, by Angel Derecho
- "Turn Your Passion Into A Profitable Business" on October 19, 2023, by Chai S. Tanawan

Through these initiatives, Empowered Pinays continues to support Filipina women in their journey toward personal and professional growth.



Workshops Led by GROW Members

In addition to providing income through their participation in the GROW program, our goal is to help women gain self-confidence, empowering them to take pride in their work and their achievements.

We are proud to see our GROW women—many of whom were unable to finish school—sharing their expertise and skills with others. These women, who once lived and worked in Ulingan and faced significant struggles in life, are now leading workshops in prestigious companies and serving as role models in their communities.

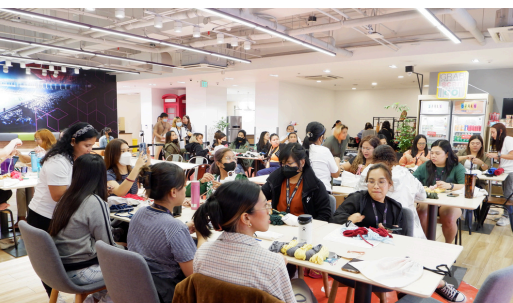


On February 22, 2023, members of Empowered Pinays participated in a Macramé Workshop, where they learned to create their own plant holders.

In celebration of Women's Month, employees of Entain Manila invited GROW women to facilitate a workshop at their company on March 16. This event provided an opportunity for GROW women to showcase their skills and teach others.

Reckitt Philippines also commemorated Women's Month on March 28 by hosting a special event featuring a 'Sofa Chat' with six standout women from Reckitt. The panel discussion was both educational and inspiring. Following the talk, GROW conducted keychain and coaster workshops for Reckitt employees, who thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Through these activities, we continue to foster an environment where women can grow, lead, and inspire others.



Bazaars and Pop-up Stores

GROW participates in bazaars and pop-up stores to raise brand awareness, attract new customers, and interact with clients, fostering meaningful connections while advancing our sustainability mission.



March 6 to 10, 2023
AMEX Women's Month
Celebration



March 16 to 17, 2023
Entain Philippines' Women's
Month Celebration



March 28, 2023
Reckitt Philippines



April 16, 2023
"Break Ups & Breakdowns"
Fundraising Show



May 17, 2023
Cushman & Wakefield Phils. Inc



June 30, 2023
Canva's "Force for
Good" Fair



July 14 to 16, 2023
Katutubo Pop Up Market



August 31, 2023
Deloitte CSR Exhibit Day



September 18 to 24, 2023
Angat Buhay's Pista sa Museo





March 6 to 10, 2023
AMEX Women's Month
Celebration



March 16 to 17, 2023
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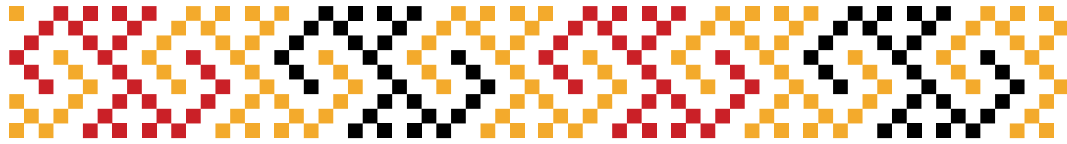


August 31, 2023
Deloitte CSR Exhibit Day



September 18 to 24, 2023
Angat Buhay's Pista sa Museo

Bazaars and Pop-up Stores



September 27, 2023
SMC @133 (San Miguel Corp.
Anniversary Week)



October 23 to 27, 2023
AMEX Sodexo



November 7 to 8, 2023
International School Manila's
PCA Charity Bazaar



November 18, 2023
"Ibong Adarna" Benefit Show



December 4 to 15, 2023
Holiday Inn Makati



November 30, 2023
UNIQLO's Christmas Market

Community Savings Club



Kids Who Farm, our partner organization, conceptualized and established the "Hyperlokal Kapital" Community Savings Club (CSC) with the goal of democratizing financial services. This initiative aims to provide a platform for the unbanked and underbanked to understand and implement financial literacy concepts. With their assistance, we successfully organized community members and volunteers to form their own CSCs, focusing on educating them about financial literacy and the importance of savings.

In 2023, members of the CSC in Tondo, Bulacan, and Cavite collectively accumulated over Php 700,000 in savings. This significant achievement underscores the impact of financial education and the power of community-driven savings initiatives.



Empowering communities with the know-how to budget, save, invest, and manage credit makes it simpler for them to fulfill their own and their families' requirements. Thanks to this initiative, our core volunteers in Bulacan, Cavite, and Tondo communities successfully reached their objective.



Total Savings per Community

PHP128,800.00

BULACAN

14 MEMBERS

PHP415,342.00

CAVITE

25 MEMBERS

PHP179,800.00

TONDO

16 MEMBERS

Summits and Workshops

World Literacy Summit by World Literacy Foundation



(April 2 to 4, 2023) Our Founder and Executive Director, Melissa Villa, and Education & Literacy Program Manager, Karen Beblañas, represented Project PEARLS at the prestigious World Literacy Summit held at Oxford University in the United Kingdom.

Melissa Villa, who received the Albert Schweitzer Award from the World Literacy Foundation in 2018 for her humanitarian efforts and exceptional work in literacy, delivered a powerful lectureship at this year's summit. Her presentation emphasized the significant influence of literacy in disadvantaged communities, highlighting the transformative power of education. Meanwhile, Karen Beblañas actively engaged in a wide array of international lectureships, gaining valuable insights into various aspects of literacy.

The summit also provided an excellent opportunity to forge connections and explore potential partnerships with other organizations dedicated to literacy. The knowledge and experiences gained from this event are invaluable, and we are committed to disseminating these learnings within our PEARLS communities throughout the year. By integrating these insights into our programs, we aim to further enhance our impact and continue our mission to improve literacy and education for underserved populations.



Gender Sensitivity Training for PEARLS Staff and Core Volunteers

(April 11 to 12, 2023) The Gender Sensitivity Training seminar was attended by 32 participants, including PEARLS staff and core community volunteers from Tondo, Bulacan, and Cavite. Carmen Lopez of HerStore Asia led the seminar, delivering an engaging and informative workshop. This training provided valuable knowledge and insights essential for fostering a more inclusive, equitable, and gender-sensitive workplace and community. Participants learned about key concepts related to gender sensitivity, including the importance of recognizing and challenging gender stereotypes, understanding gender dynamics, and promoting gender equality in various contexts.



Civic Education Summit by YouthLed Philippines

(April 28 to 29, 2023) Our Deputy Executive Director, Monica Aclan, and Education & Literacy Program Manager, Karen Beblañas, attended the Civic Education Summit organized by YouthLed Philippines. The summit was an exceptional event that provided valuable insights into the importance of civic education. This information will be helpful in equipping scholars and communities with essential knowledge about civic education and how they can contribute positive change for our country.



Trauma-informed Care in the Development Work

(June 21, 2023) A special seminar on the topic of “Trauma-informed Care in Development Work” was led by our Deputy Exec. Director, Monica Aclan, as part of her YSEALI Reciprocal Exchange Project. Attended by 25 participants, including Project PEARLS staff, volunteers, and partners, the seminar provided a deeper understanding of the profound impact of trauma on individuals and communities and its intersection in our development work. US Fellow Kelsey Collier-Wise shared her insights and expertise, and our Education & Literacy Program Asst. Manager Flora Mae Tatoy led the discussion on trauma in the Philippine context.



Training on UNCRC and the Filipino Child by Bahay Tuluyan

(June 26 to 27, 2023) Melissa Bendanillo and Flora Mae Tatoy participated in a training organized by Bahay Tuluyan. During the session, participants had the chance to review their understanding of laws related to children's rights and protection. An important part of the training was the exchange of insights among attendees regarding handling individual cases involving children in local communities.



Leadership Journey Retreat by Ninoy & Cory Aquino Foundation

(August 5 to 6, 2023) The retreat offered a valuable opportunity for Project PEARLS staff and core volunteers to rest and reconnect. It not only allowed participants to recharge but also served as a time to reaffirm the core values and mission of our organization.



Given the demanding nature of our work, fatigue and burnout are inevitable challenges. Therefore, this retreat was a necessary pause, offering a moment for reflection and ensuring that the team's well-being and effectiveness remain resilient. Through various activities and discussions, participants were able to reflect on their experiences, share insights, and strengthen their sense of camaraderie and commitment to our mission.



Overall, the retreat was instrumental in reinforcing our collective dedication to the goals of Project PEARLS, helping to maintain a healthy and motivated team ready to continue making a positive impact in our communities.

Wellness Day for PEARLS Staff



(September 1, 2023) All full-time Project PEARLS staff participated in a much-needed Wellness Day in Batangas. This day was dedicated to relaxation, team bonding, and personal development, providing a perfect setting for our staff to unwind and reconnect.

Coaches from our partner, TaskUs, facilitated insightful sessions focused on mental health, self-improvement, and coaching. These sessions were designed to equip our staff with strategies to manage stress, enhance their well-being, and foster a supportive work environment. In addition to the formal sessions, the day included various recreational activities that allowed staff members to relax and enjoy the serene environment of the resort.

Overall, Wellness Day was a resounding success, leaving our staff rejuvenated and motivated. The insights and skills gained from the sessions will undoubtedly contribute to a healthier, more supportive, and productive work environment, enabling us to continue our mission with renewed energy and commitment.

Strategic Planning for 2024



(September 13 to 15, 2023) Project Pearls held its Annual Strategic Planning for 2024 in Tagaytay. All full-time staff from the three communities attended the planning session. Facilitated by our HR Consultant, Ms. Michelle Hernandez, we meticulously set our goals, developed plans, and established key performance indicators (KPIs) to steer our efforts in the upcoming year. Each team member had the opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas, contributing to the refinement and enhancement of our programs. This inclusive approach ensured that diverse perspectives were considered, leading to more robust and effective strategies. We also conducted brainstorming sessions, where we analyzed our past performance, recognized areas for improvement, and identified solutions to the challenges we face. Overall, the planning session was a productive and inspiring event, leaving us well-prepared and motivated to tackle the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead in 2024.

Leadership Seminar by DSWD-ABSNET

(September 28, 2023) Jeremiah Rafanan and Flora Mae Tatoy attended the DSWD ABSNet North Cluster Seminar on Leadership and Development. This event was crucial as it underscored our commitment to the professional development of our staff. This was also an opportunity to network and connect with other non-profit organizations. Building these connections is vital for fostering collaboration, sharing best practices, and strengthening our collective impact in the communities we serve.



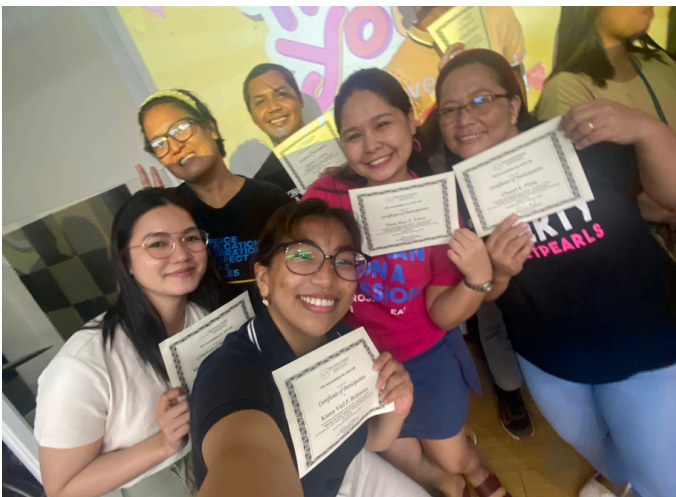
“Social Work Breaking Barriers: Achieving an Inclusive Society through Social Action” by UP PGH - Social Service

(October 18, 2023) Melissa Bendanillo and Flora Mae Tatoy participated in a webinar hosted by UP PGH Social Service in celebration of its 68th Founding Anniversary. This seminar reinforced our organization's commitment to fostering a more inclusive society for individuals from the PWD, Indigenous, Refugee/Displaced, and LGBTQIA+ sectors. The webinar provided valuable insights and strategies to enhance our efforts in supporting these marginalized groups.

“Raising the Child’s Higher Order Thinking Skills” by Mission Ministries of the Philippines



(October 28, 2023) The Education & Literacy Team and our Social Worker attended the seminar on “Raising the Child’s Higher Order Thinking Skills” organized by the Mission Ministries of the Philippines. This seminar helped our Time-to-Learn teachers and literacy team in improving our lesson plans and programs to enhance the thinking skills of our scholars.



Additionally, the event provided valuable networking opportunities with potential partners for educational programs. This was beneficial not only for our team's professional growth but also for our ongoing efforts to improve education and literacy in the communities we serve. The seminar significantly contributed to our mission by equipping our educators with new strategies and fostering connections that will support our educational initiatives in the future.

**27th Asia Pacific Regional Conference:
“The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Halfway
Point: Social Work’s Contribution to Social Development”
by PASWI**

(November 4 to 8, 2023) The PASWI (Philippine Association of Social Workers Inc.) Convention in Cebu centered on the theme "The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Halfway Point: Social Work's Contribution to Social Development." Our Deputy Exec. Director, Monica Aclan, Education & Literacy Program Asst. Manager, Flora Mae Tatoy, and Social Services Manager, Melissa Bendanillo, attended the convention.

The convention provided a platform for networking with various organizations, fostering collaboration and exchange of ideas within the social work community. Discussions centered around the progress and challenges faced in achieving the SDGs, emphasizing the pivotal role of social workers in contributing to social development.



**“Walking Together: A Journey of Appreciating and Understanding Solo Parents in the Society”
by DSWD Field Office**

(December 4, 2023) The DSWD Field Office organized a webinar about the Expanded Solo Parent Welfare Act (RA 11861). Flora Mae Tatoy and Melissa Bendanillo attended the event. The seminar focused on comparing past and current laws related to the Expanded Solo Parent Welfare Act (RA 11861). Another important aspect was gaining insight into the challenges encountered by solo parents. Additionally, attendees were able to earn Continuous Professional Development (CPD) points, which are crucial for their professional development as social workers.



**“Youth Volunteerism Workshop on Education,
Environment, and Health”
by Peace Corps Philippines**

(December 6 to 10, 2023) Communities Manager, Jay-R Panagsagan, together with our interns and scholar-alumni, Jobelle Jumawan and Ria Rosal, attended the Youth Volunteerism Workshop organized by the Peace Corps Philippines and in collaboration with Love Yourself. It served as an opportunity for attendees to develop their leadership skills and gain insights into various programs and community strategies from other NGOs and volunteers. Attendees were able to learn from the experiences and best practices of other organizations, broadening their understanding of how to create impactful volunteer programs.





BAYANIHAN

Bayani for the Homeless, Abandoned, and Neglected

BayaniHAN

(Bayani for the Homeless, Abandoned, and Neglected)

In 2023, our monthly feeding initiative, supported by our partners, The City Eats and Europamundo Foundation, made a significant impact by providing meals to more than 4,500 individuals who are experiencing homelessness. This initiative extended beyond just food; we distributed essential hygiene products such as toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, and shampoo to address basic needs and promote personal well-being. Additionally, we occasionally provided pre-loved clothing and food items, further aiding those in need.

4,500+
MEALS SERVED



The impact of this initiative is profound, as it not only addresses immediate needs but also contributes to the overall well-being of the community. By ensuring access to nutritious meals and hygiene essentials, we played a crucial role in promoting health, dignity, and a sense of self-worth among vulnerable populations. Furthermore, our efforts were bolstered by the introduction of 'LitClub on the Go,' which provided educational and recreational opportunities for children experiencing homelessness. This program fostered a sense of belonging and learning, helping to nurture young minds despite their challenging circumstances.

Rain or shine, our dedicated team of volunteers was always ready to serve - from cooking and preparing meals to distributing them around the streets of Manila and facilitating literacy activities for the children. In summary, through the collaborative efforts of our partners, volunteers, and community members, our feeding initiative addressed both immediate and long-term needs, and promoted health, dignity, and education for all.



Pop-Up BayaniHAN Village for the Unhoused



(August 19, 2023) In 2019, we conducted the first “Pop-up Bayanihan Village Program”, an innovative approach to providing hospitality for the unhoused in Manila. Due to the challenges and constraints during the Covid-19 pandemic, we were forced to put this program on pause. Thankfully, this year, we successfully relaunched the program.

Thanks to the unwavering dedication of our partners and volunteers, we were able to offer a wide range of essential services. These included access to showers, counseling sessions, medical check-ups, and necessary medications.

Additionally, participants enjoyed full-service luncheons, and haircuts. They also received snacks, clothes and towels and essential hygiene items such as shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, and toothbrushes.

To assist them in taking the first step towards changing their lives and applying for jobs, our Social Workers helped them write and print their bio-data with photos. This service was met with immense gratitude, as it boosted their confidence in their job search.



The relaunch of the Pop-up Bayanihan Village Program has once again highlighted the power of community and collaboration. By addressing both the immediate and long-term needs of the unhoused, we aim to restore dignity and provide a sense of hope and belonging. Our collective efforts are a testament to what can be achieved when we come together to support those in need.



350+

**INDIVIDUALS RECEIVED
SERVICES**

This endeavor was made possible through the generosity and support of numerous organizations and individuals. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the AJ Kalinga Foundation for their partnership and for hosting this vital cause.

We also express our deep appreciation to our generous partners:

- City Eats and Europamundo Foundation for providing nutritious meals
- Dr. Fe Del Mundo Medical Center Foundation for supplying essential vitamins
- Scholars Of Sustenance Philippines (SOS Philippines), No Brand Philippines, TOBI Peanuts, Michelle's Putong Ube, Maison Eric Kayser Philippines, and Ellen Go for the snacks and food donations
- Nivea (Beiersdorf Philippines Inc.), Vi Lim, ShoeMart, and Holiday Inn & Suites for their generosity in providing hygiene care items, towels, and bed sheets.
- TMI Food Processing & Dev't Inc. and Aurelia Grinstead for their cash donation which enabled us to purchase much-needed medicines
- Fownes Brothers & Co. Inc., Joel Trinidad, Teresita Villaluna, JP Oracion, Bill and Marcy Brandenburg, Jose Villaluna, and Ginny Matabang for their clothing donations
- GROW haircutters, trained by the remarkable Hair Aid, for providing free haircut services
- Dedicated medical professionals: Dr. Rochelle Ann Venturina, Dr. Ronel Mark Bautista, Dr. Clarice Trinidad, Dr. Bijan Santarina, Dr. Lance Arguelles, and Dr. Benedict Priela

Lastly, we extend our sincerest gratitude to all the volunteers who dedicated their time and effort to spread warmth and love. Your commitment and compassion have made a tangible difference in the lives of those we serve. Together, we continue to uphold our mission of fostering dignity and hope for all.





SPECIAL PROJECTS & EVENTS

Fundraising Events | 13th Anniversary | Outreach in Zambales |
Adopt-A-Family & Toy Drive

Special Events



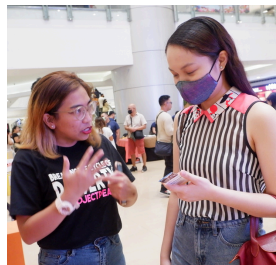
“Breakups & Breakdowns” Musical Play

(April 16, 2023) With the goal of raising funds, we successfully organized and sold tickets for the "Breakups & Breakdowns" musical play. The proceeds from this event will support our various programs and initiatives. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our partners, volunteers, and donors, who made this event possible.



“Go! Volunteer Expo” by iVolunteer Philippines

(May 6 to 7, 2023) We joined the “Go! Volunteer Expo” at SM Megamall, hosted and organized by iVolunteer Philippines. The event provided a platform for diverse organizations to highlight their causes and programs. Its goal was to inspire increased volunteer participation.



“Ibong Adarna” Benefit Show by Liza Macuja-Elizalde, Ballet Manila, and Aliw Theater

(November 18, 2023) Our long-time advocate and donor, Ms. Liza Macuja-Elizalde, generously dedicated one of the "Ibong Adarna" ballet performances as a benefit show for Project PEARLS. In collaboration with Ballet Manila and Aliw Theater, we successfully hosted and promoted this special event. Additionally, 100 scholars from Tondo and Bulacan had the remarkable opportunity to attend the show. This experience allowed them to be introduced to performance art and theater, helping them appreciate the beauty of dance through live performances.



Celebrating 13 Years of Impact



Tondo, Manila



Naic, Cavite



Bocaue, Bulacan



Kabasalan, Zamboanga Sibugay

(August to September 2023) Thirteen years ago, who would have thought that a humble mother-and-daughter advocacy, aimed at helping another mother and daughter, would become a non-profit organization serving hundreds of scholars and families across the Philippines? Reflecting on our journey, it is truly heartwarming to see how far we have come. This remarkable achievement would not have been possible without the unwavering support and dedication of our staff, volunteers, donors, and partners who continue to believe in our mission. This is a testament to the incredible things we can achieve when we work together. We are not just an organization; we are a movement of people who believe that *PEARLS (Peace, Education, Aspiration, Love, and Smiles)* can change lives.



To celebrate our 13th anniversary, we held a simple yet special program with our scholars and volunteers in each community. The event included serving meals and enjoying performances prepared by our talented scholars.



On September 30, Melissa Villa, Monica Aclan, Karen Beblañas, and Jay-R Panagsagan visited Kabasalan in Zamboanga Sibugay. Due to security concerns, we had not been able to visit the community in Kabasalan for many years. Thankfully, we were finally able to meet our scholars in person, forming deeper bonds and experiencing the heartwarming joy of personal connection.



Our journey over the past 13 years reaffirms our belief that together, we can create lasting change. Here's to many more years of making a difference, one child at a time.

Outreach in Zambales



Over the years, we have been supporting the “Lubos na Alyansa ng Katutubong Aeta ng Sambales” (LAKAS) Community in Botolan, Zambales through various outreach activities - formation of LitClub, building a new classroom, and gift-giving events. On April 30, 2022, we visited the community again together with our partners and friends from The City Eats, led by Kieem Baker and Catherine Montes. During this visit, we served healthy meals and delivered special gifts from the US. Children also received toys from G2 Fam of UAE, clothes from TwiloPH, and cups donated by Ellen Go were distributed to families. This visit was a profoundly moving and memorable experience for Kieem and Catherine, thanks to the warm welcome and hospitality shown by the children and families of the LAKAS community. Inspired by this experience, The City Eats promised to continue their support for the community.



On November 11, 2023, we organized another outreach event in the LAKAS Community, with the support of The City Eats. We provided nutritious meals to more than 500 children and adults, courtesy of The City Eats. Additionally, we distributed various essentials thanks to our generous partners: hygiene and skincare items from Nivea/Beiersdorf, clothes and toys from Aurelia Grinstead, shoes from The City Eats and Bata Sole, and solar lamps from Goodera.

These outreach activities underscore the importance of our partnerships and the positive impact we can achieve together.

Adopt-A-Family & Toy Drive

(December 19, 21, 22, & 23 2023) Christmas is always a special time in the Philippines, a season for families to gather and create cherished memories. However, for families living in poverty, it can also be a difficult time, marked by the uncertainty of securing a meal to share. To bring joy and hope to these families, we have made it a tradition to organize the Adopt-A-Family and Toy Drive campaigns every holiday season.

In December 2023, we organized Christmas gift-giving events in Tondo, Bulacan, Cavite. and Zamboanga Sibugay. During these events, we distributed 1,100 Noche Buena packs and over 2,500 gifts to children. The extra gifts were shared in February 2024 with our partner community in Smokey Mountain. We are grateful to all our volunteers, partners, and donors who made these campaigns possible. And we are also thankful to Vi Lim for the Jollibee meals for the children in Naic; SOS Philippines for the meals for the children in Tondo and Bulacan; Oishi for the 2,000 pieces of snacks; and FruitGals for the 1,000 pieces of fresh apples.

These events not only bring joy to the recipients but also reinforce the spirit of generosity and community. By supporting families during the festive season, we help ensure that everyone can experience the warmth and happiness of Christmas.



1,100
NOCHE BUENA PACKS
DISTRIBUTED

8,000+
TOYS AND GIFTS
RECEIVED

2,800
MEALS SERVED

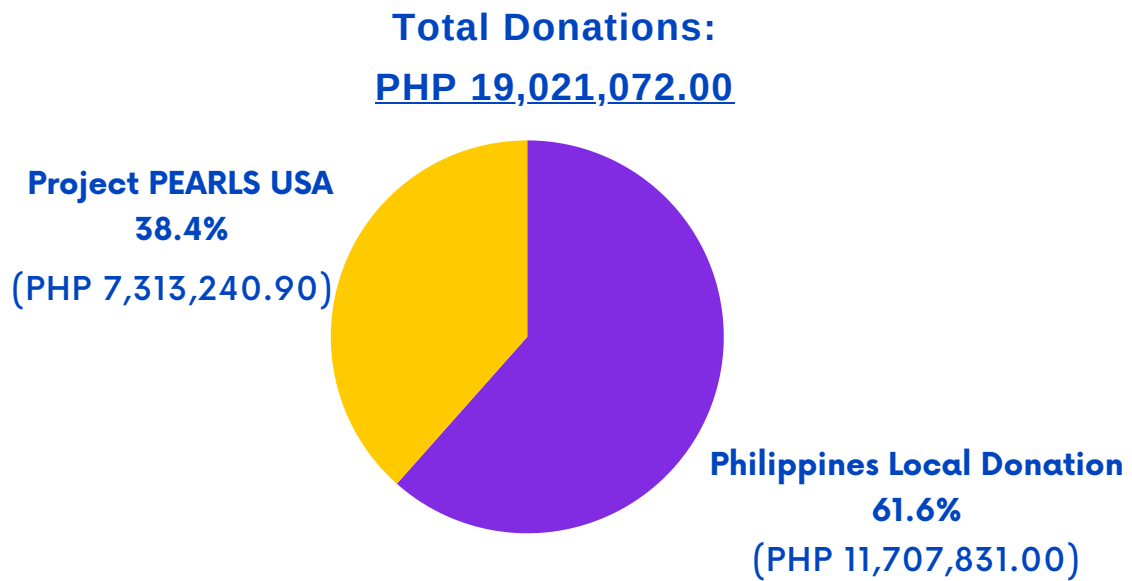
2,500+
CHILDREN AND YOUTH
GIFT RECIPIENTS



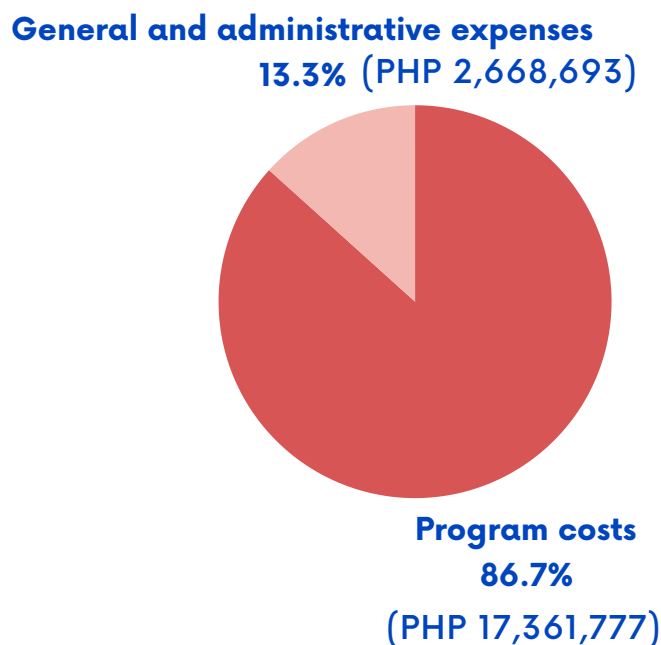


FINANCIAL REPORT

2023 Financial Highlights



Total Program Cost and Administrative Expenses:
PHP 20,030,469.00



Project PEARLS USA operates independently from Project PEARLS in the Philippines, with a primary focus on fundraising and applying for grants to support various programs in the Philippines.

To maximize the impact of the donations we receive, we maintain low administrative expenses. This year, over 86% of our funds were allocated to program costs, ensuring the effective delivery of services to the communities we serve. Any excess expenses are covered by the remaining balance of donations from the 2022 fiscal year.

TO OUR HEROES, THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR MISSION!




We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our Education Champions, Hunger Warriors, and Life Changers for their unwavering generosity and support towards our programs. Your belief in our initiatives are deeply appreciated. Without your dedication, our programs would not have achieved the success they have.

Your collective efforts have profoundly impacted the lives of numerous children and families within our community. Thank you for your commitment and for standing by us throughout this journey.



Helping the poorest of the poor children and families in the
Philippines to have a better life.

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