



Introduction

Stairway Foundation, Inc. (Stairway) continuously works for the promotion and protection of children's rights, locally and internationally, with a particular focus on Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Prevention, both offline and online. Key elements of an effective response to child sexual abuse and exploitation and other child protection issues include increasing society's awareness and understanding of the issue, developing basic prevention skills among children and adults, and providing enough and appropriate technical and material resources. These key elements are at the core of Stairway's Advocacy Program.

Aside from the Advocacy Program, Stairway offers local direct service programs: the Family Home Program (FHP), the Community Assistance Program (CAP), and the Environmental Awareness for Children and Youth (EACY) program. Each program implements service and advocacy initiatives on children's rights and child protection, based on the program contexts.

This report presents, in general, the progress experienced by Stairway's programs for the year 2018.



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List of Acronyms

BTS	Break the Silence
BTS NN	Break the Silence National Network
CAP	Community Assistance Program
CAPIN	Child Abuse Prevention and Intervention Networks
CHEC	Children Health Educational Center
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CPN	Child Protection Network
CPP	Child Protection Policies
CSAEP	Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Prevention
CWC SACSEC	Council for the Welfare of Children Sub-Committee against Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children
DepEd	The Department of Education
DSWD	The Department of Social Welfare and Development
EACY	Environmental Awareness for Children and Youth
FDS	Family Development Sessions
FHP	Family Home Program
GAD	Gender and Development
IACACP	Inter-Agency Council against Child Pornography
IMMAP	Internet and Mobile Marketing Association of the Philippines
IP	Indigenous People
KNH	Kindernothilfe
LCPC	Local Council for the Protection of Children
MAB	Man and Biosphere
MCPC	Municipal Council for the Protection of Children
MENRO	Municipal Environment and Natural Resource Office
MRF	Materials Recovery Facilities
MSWDO	Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office
NCRTC	National Capital Region Training Centre
NGO	Non Government Organization
NPTI	National Police Training Institute
OSAEC	Online Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children
PLCPD	Philippine Legislators Committee on Population and Development
PNP	Philippine National Police
PRC	Professional Regulation Commission
RIACAT-VAWC	Regional Inter-agency against Child Trafficking-Violence against Women and Children
RJJWC	Regional Juvenile Justice Welfare Council
RSCWC	Regional Sub-Committee Council for the Welfare of Children
RTC	Regional Training Centre
SEC	Security and Exchange Commission
SM-ZOTO	Samahan ng Mamamayan - Zone One Tondo Organization
TOT	Training of Trainers
WCPD	Women and Children Protection Desks

Stairway's Advocacy Program

More children and adults are continuously reached with Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Prevention (CSAEP) awareness and education, and other child protection concerns, through the sessions conducted by the Break the Silence National Network (BTS NN) member organizations. There are 45 active BTS NN member organizations in the Philippines, each with an average reach of 3,000 people, resulting in about 135,000 children and adults equipped with basic prevention skills against child sexual abuse and exploitation.

The network reaches out to students, youth volunteers and leaders, teachers, local child protection councils, municipal councils, local government units, provincial staff, guidance counselors, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Education (DepEd), non-government organizations (NGOs) church workers and tribal leaders. There has been emphasis on reaching more councils for the protection of children to influence the local government units to institutionalize CSAEP advocacy and child protection in their children's programs.

The Break the Silence National Network (BTS NN)

A part of Stairway's Break the Silence (BTS) campaign, or the advocacy for the prevention of child sexual abuse and exploitation, is the intensive training of numerous other organizations to develop their capacity to do advocacy on their own. The network of all these organizations are now collectively known as the BTS National Network (BTS NN), a movement of active organizations and advocates committed to the protection of children from sexual abuse and exploitation. Their mission is to bring people together in creating protective environments for children against sexual abuse and exploitation. The BTS NN is a juridical entity duly registered with the Philippine Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

Stairway's BTS Campaign has become more widespread nationwide through the BTS NN and its member organizations. Aside from Stairway, the BTS NN members have gained increased recognition as technical resources on child protection, particularly on child sexual abuse and exploitation prevention advocacy. Government offices and organizations, NGOs and Stairway have been tapping representatives of BTS NN organization members as resource persons.



Local BTS networks have been established primarily to make effective response mechanisms available and accessible for child sexual abuse victims. Advocacy materials have also been developed and localized by some of the BTS NN members. Some BTS NN members have been able to generate funding support for their BTS initiatives and other child protection initiatives, increase their involvement in key government structures for children, such as the Local Councils for the Protection of Children (LCPCs), and improve access to local resources. They have also become visible in national gatherings that are relevant to child protection, as participants and resource persons.

In 2018, local BTS NN member organizations reached a number of milestones based on their different organizational contexts, aside from their continuous conduct of a massive advocacy campaign. Some have developed CSAEP community volunteers. Many have worked towards CSAEP and child protection institutionalization among their local government partners and schools. The BTS NN Luzon group focused on conducting and participating in learning sessions: Kids Court Training and the Ako Para sa Bata (Me for the Child) Conference provided by the Child Protection Network (CPN), legislative processes, and the Statutory Rape and End Child Marriage Campaign provided by the Philippine Legislators Committee on Population and Development (PLCPD). All BTSNN partners continue to exert efforts to further consolidate and strengthen the local networks.

The BTS NN gained membership in the Child Rights Network. This has increased the network's engagement in policy level advocacy at the national level. It opposes the legislative move to lower the minimum age of criminal responsibility in the Philippines from 15 years old to, initially, nine (9) years old and now, to 12 years old. BTS NN members have joined and organized protest activities on this, joined the reissuance of the network's statement opposing the move, joined mobilizations at the Senate of the Philippines and at the Davao City Hall, and joined radio broadcasts, signature campaigns, noise barrages, social media and print ad campaigns.



Stairway House Father, kuya Joni, used to live on the streets as a child. Here is what he has to say to the idea of lowering the age of criminal responsibility to 9 or 12.

Eight (8) new BTS NN member organizations are targeted to be trained in 2019. The aim is to be able to cover new regions and specific sectors, such as community-based organizations, children with disabilities, youth organizations and churches.

Stairway's annual campaigns during the national Child Sexual Abuse Awareness Week and World Safer Internet Day, along with the National Children's Month every November, have been amplified and become more extensive through the BTS NN.

The network board conducts its regular meetings. Plans are lined up towards enhancing network functionality and the development of sustainability mechanisms.

Partnership with National Government Agencies

Stairway has been able to sustain its active engagement with national government agencies, namely, the Philippine National Police (PNP) – National Police Training Institute (NPTI), Women and Children Protection Desks (WCPDs) of the PNP, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and the Department of Education (DepEd). The aim is to reach as many children and adults as possible, making child protection a part of these agencies' institutional strategies and policies, significantly contributing towards the creation of a safer environment for children nationwide.

Partnership with the Philippine National Police (PNP)

For several years, Stairway has been conducting CSAEP sessions among thousands of police recruits and officers in all the 17 NPTI Regional Training Centers (RTCs). Stairway has aimed for the integration of CSAEP in the NPTI curriculum. An assessment has been commissioned to determine the current capacities of the trained recruits and officers, to document the experience of Stairway in integrating CSAEP in the NPTI curriculum, and to gain inputs and recommendations as per the directions of Stairway's CSAEP advocacy in the NPTI.

Capacity building is being done not only among the Women and Children Protection Desks (WCPDs), but also among the Police Community Relations (PCRs). The WCPDs' functions are more on investigating cases, while the PCRs' functions are more on doing community advocacy activities. We prioritize training staff in both departments. The PCRs' current advocacy work focuses more on drugs and other related laws in line with the Philippine government's anti-illegal drug campaign. PCR representatives, during their CSAEP training, have realized that CSAEP must be included in their community advocacy, so as to help prevent children from becoming victims of abuse. Stairway animations and other advocacy materials, such as the tarpaulins on Touching Rules and Online Safety Rules, have been used in their community advocacy.

Stairway has started initial meetings and engagements with the PCR Offices in the National Capital Region, Cebu, Zamboanga and MIMAROPA Region (covering provinces of Mindoro Oriental, Mindoro Occidental, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan). The national officers of PNP Men Oppose Violence against Exploitation of Women and Children were also trained on CSAEP in the Stairway training center, and they can help further the cause of integrating CSAEP advocacy in the PCR advocacy work.



Despite our beginning shift in focus within the law enforcement, we trained a total of 3,500 police recruits from 5 different training schools in 2018. The PNP-NPTI National Capital Region Training Center (NCRTC) once again awarded recognition to Stairway for the effort and commitment to provide Child Protection sessions to the recruits and career courses students of the NPTI - NCRTC.



Nancy Agaid receiving award from the National Capital Region Training Center.

Partnership with the Department of Education (DepEd)

CyberSafe Education in Schools

Since the production and the launch of CyberSafe Lesson Plans in 2016, Stairway has been finding strategies to have the materials implemented in schools nationwide. The original strategy was to create national level awareness on the existence of the lesson plans, make the resources available for free access via an online portal, and support the dissemination and implementation via a DepEd national memorandum. However, as it turns out, there is a need for wide-scale implementation of the lessons in schools.

In response to the need to have Cybersafe sessions among children and parents in the communities and schools, an upgrading session on CyberSafe was held in October, participated in by a number of BTS NN members and their partner schools.

The DepEd agreed to conduct and finance a series of regional Training of Trainers (TOT) sessions on CyberSafety, for all regions in the Philippines for 2019. This is a significant development considering that DepEd has allocated a 5 Million pesos budget for the purpose.

The CyberSafe TOTs were designed to reach the following training objectives:

- Introduce to the participants the concept of child online protection;
- Gain the necessary knowledge, skills and attitude to conduct CyberSafe education in schools; and
- To know how to handle child online protection incidences vis-à-vis the DepEd case management protocols.



To further strengthen the implementation of CyberSafe in schools, the DepEd central office shall officially designate those who completed the training as “official CyberSafe trainers,” via a department circular.

It is expected that cascading in schools and delivery to students shall commence summer of 2019 and continue until 2021. There is also a plan to conduct monitoring and evaluation starting 2020-2021.

Localization of Child Protection Policies

An aim of the DepEd collaboration is to assist school partners in localizing their child protection policies (CPP). Stairway has years of experience conducting CPP localization sessions in the Philippines (BTS partners) and in other countries (with Kindernothilfe [KNH] Germany partners). It was therefore an obvious choice for DepEd to tap into Stairway as a resource in pursuing this project. There have already been several sessions on CPP localization with partner organizations of the Break the Silence (BTS) network, together with their local school partners.

Partnership with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Pantawid Pampamilyang Pilipino Program (Pantawid)

As a poverty reduction program of the national government, through conditional cash transfer, the Pantawid program targets the four million poorest Filipino households, who will have to undergo monthly Family Development Sessions (FDS) as part of their eligibility in the program. Stairway has aimed to reach these millions of Filipino households with CSAEP, through the FDS. Stairway and DSWD Pantawid have developed CSAEP modules that are used in the conduct of FDS.

A total of 76,643 partner beneficiaries were reached in March, May and June 2018. In the DSWD CARAGA Region, their existing database system is able to systematically document the CSAEP sessions that they conduct. This is a useful mechanism that can respond to the concern in feedback and monitoring of CSAEP Advocacy, not only in the region but within the over-all Pantawid program.

Our CSAP advocacy within Pantawid has made the Pantawid implementers more conscious in strengthening response mechanisms for abuse cases concerning their partner beneficiaries. For instance, the Pantawid Gender and Development (GAD) unit had a series of sessions that include reporting and managing of abuse cases. Stairway has also helped them acknowledge the need to have a Child Protection Policy (CPP) organic to the program, and actions have been undertaken to realize this.

Another milestone was the approval of the resolution to integrate CSAP in the Pantawid program Institutional Arrangements by the Pantawid NCR Regional Advisory Council. This further contributes to the sustainability of the CSAEP Advocacy within the Pantawid program.

As Stairway intensifies its CSAEP Advocacy within Pantawid, it addresses the need to capacitate social workers, most especially government social workers, in handling and managing actual cases of child sexual abuse and exploitation.

Improving the feedback and monitoring mechanisms, making CSAEP Advocacy implementation in Pantawid more systematic and sustainable, and the development of Cybersafety Modules specific for Pantawid will be the priorities of Stairway's collaboration with the DSWD in the coming year.

Development of New Programmatic Approaches

Stairway's animations on incest (Daughter), pedophilia (A Good Boy) and child sex trafficking and pornography (Red Leaves Falling), and the theatrical presentation called "Cracked Mirrors," have been effective as main advocacy and training tools. Stairway continues to develop training and advocacy materials and approaches, to actively respond to the urgent issue of child sexual abuse and exploitation, offline and online.

E-learning

An increasing demand for CSAEP trainings locally, nationally and internationally over the past years triggered contemplation on how to escalate our training activity without compromising in quality and overcoming restrictions in terms of limited human resources and geographical distance. Thus, in 2014 we started development of an E-learning platform for CSAEP training sessions. A broad and diverse group of learners has tested the material extensively throughout the production phase, and most recently we conducted an internal workshop participated by the Stairway Team, Leger Foundation and Tondo Foundation, in order to test, review and further enhance the e-learning materials. Within the first quarter of 2019, we will be able to launch an interactive online portal, which is designed to directly address children age 12 up, as well as teachers, social workers, parents, and other care providers. The platform secures consistent quality in the trainings, while offering an incomparable potential in terms of scaling in education and information that will contribute to create safer environments for children.



Dalir-Eskwela Videos

In collaboration with the DepEd and the Internet Mobile Marketing Association of the Philippines (IMMAP), the Dalir-Eskwela Videos were launched in 2018. The videos are educational and interactive, about issues of online chatting, cyberbullying, online gaming and pornography. The videos are child-friendly and are helpful for adult facilitators in conducting sessions related to online safety, especially among younger children.



Cybersafe Advocacy Materials Guidebook

Stairway's CyberSafe Advocacy Materials Guidebook was also launched last year. It supports professionals conducting advocacy and prevention sessions with different target groups. The output reflects the years of experience accumulated by Stairway, working on the issue of online child protection. It also intends to be a tool for understanding the use of Stairway advocacy materials, including the Red Leaves Falling animation.

Other Highlights and Challenges

In partnership with KNH Germany, Stairway continues to conduct child protection training sessions in other countries. In March, Stairway conducted Module 2 training in Vietnam for Adoptions Centrum Sweden. Thirty-five NGO staff participated in the training.

Accreditation as Technical Resource in Child Protection

Stairway and the BTS NN have been accredited as local providers of Continuing Professional Development courses by the Philippine Professional Regulation Commission (PRC). This recognizes Stairway and the BTSNN as technical resources in the field of child protection.

Developing a new Learning and Resource Center in Manila

With support from Tondo Foundation and Stairway Denmark, Stairway has acquired a piece of real estate in the Makati area, to be used for the establishment of a learning and resource center. Aside from Stairway, the new building will also be the headquarter of the BTSNN and Tondo Foundation. We project the new construction to be completed towards the end of 2020.

Stairway in Regional and National Inter-Agency Councils and Committees

Stairway has sustained its active involvement with the different national and regional inter-agency councils, like the National Inter-agency Council against Child Pornography (IACACP), the Council for the Welfare of Children Sub-committee against Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children (CWC SACSEC), the Regional Sub-committee Council for the Welfare of Children (RSCWC), the Regional Inter-agency against Child Trafficking-Violence against Women and Children (RIACAT-VAWC), and the Regional Juvenile Justice Welfare Council (RJJWC). Our initiatives are synchronized with larger goals on, and directions for, the best interest of children. We also intend to make our government partners more aware of the realities of child protection issues, as seen by NGOs. More importantly, we intend to find ways for complementation and collaboration, for more sustainable solutions.

Local Child Protection Advocacy in Puerto Galera

Further, Stairway has collaborated more closely with the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office (MSWDO) of Puerto Galera. Stairway and the MSWDO of Puerto Galera intend to re-orient and train the Municipal Council for the Protection of Children (MCPC) members on their functions, mandate and child protection, focusing on child sexual abuse and exploitation.

Stairway has also collaborated with other organizations, groups and the academe in providing training sessions on CSAEP, other child protection themes and extended technical support in their child protection-related initiatives.

Partnering with the British Embassy Manila

The British Embassy Manila collaborated with Stairway in capacitating Samahan ng Mamamayan - Zone One Tondo Organization (SM-ZOTO), in addressing Online Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children (OSAEC), with Stairway providing the technical resource. SM-ZOTO is a federation of local urban poor organizations from relocation sites and areas for demolition.

Break the Silence (BTS) Youth Facilitators were trained, and protocols were established for OSAEC cases in Caloocan, Malabon and Navotas, Metro Manila, with Stairway being the project lead, in collaboration with SM-ZOTO.

Training Consuelo Partners

The Consuelo Foundation has continuously tapped Stairway as a technical resource in capacitating its Child Abuse Prevention and Intervention Networks (CAPIN). In 2018, training sessions were held among their CAPIN partners in Calbayog and Antique, composed of representatives from barangay officials, local social welfare and development offices, local WCPDs and PCRs, and personnel from the DepEd.

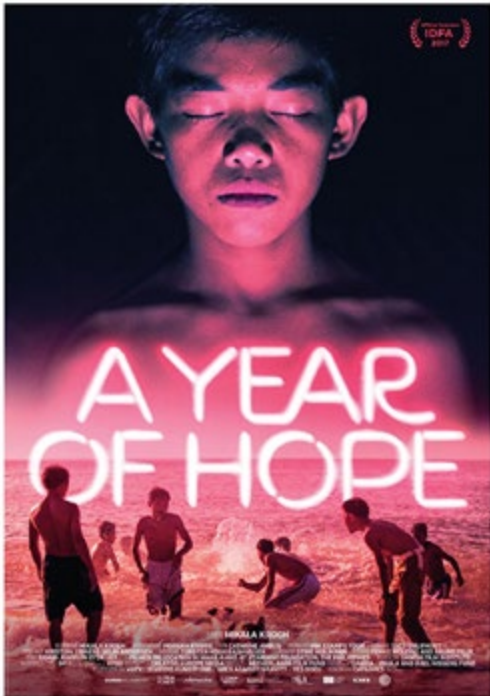
Training of Plan International, Philippines

Plan International Philippines forged a partnership with Stairway called the “Cyber Safe Spaces for Children and Youth in the Cities of Manila and Quezon Project.” It capitalizes on Stairway’s materials, experience, and expertise in educating children, young people, and adults about child online protection, otherwise known as CyberSafe.

A Year of Hope

In March, the documentary film “A Year of Hope” by Danish film director Mikala Krogh, was premiered at the Copenhagen International Documentary Film Festival. The director spent a full year at Stairway where she followed a group of boys going through a full cycle of treatment and rehabilitation in the Family Home Program.

Prior to the release, we shared the film with Undersecretary Templa from the DSWD, who praised it and recognized its potential as a tool for inspiring and educating DSWD staff working with children in government homes.



Family Home Program

The Family Home Program (FHP) is located at the Learning and Resource Center in Puerto Galera, Oriental Mindoro. In the middle of 2018, eleven former street children completed the cycle of the FHP. Two of the boys were reunited with their families, while five were transferred to other long-term residential institutions under an independent living program. The remaining four boys extended their tenure under Stairway for further case management. A new batch of boys was admitted to the program in June.

The program is currently handling 15 kids. Ten of the boys were admitted from a government center last June, one boy came from the nearby community, and four are from the previous batch.

Medical

As part of the routine, all kids underwent thorough dental and medical health assessments, and nearly all of them underwent dental treatment such as restoration, extractions and oral prophylaxis. They are now all healthy and physically active without any serious medical issues. They have increased height from 3 to 6 cm. and gained weight from 2 to 10 kg.



Academics, Sports and Creative Expressions

Classes are divided into four groups based on the result of the initial academic assessment. Subjects include Mathematics, Science, English, Filipino, Computer Skills, Cybersafety, Music, Arts, Handicrafts, Repair & Recycling, Woodwork, Environmental Awareness, Baking, Life Skills, and Personality Development.

Seven (7) of the boys took the Department of Education's (DepEd's) Alternative Learning System Accreditation and Equivalency (ALS A&E) elementary level test. Six (6) of them were successful. From the entire province of Oriental Mindoro, there were 70 examinees, but only 10 passed the exam, six of them were Stairway boys, and two of them were top notchers. This indicates that children under the FHP have not only overcome a traumatic past through a holistic, comprehensive and creative intervention, they have also significantly improved their knowledge and skills through innovative methods of learning, like using software applications, online classes, and scientific experimentations. Further, the rate of students to instructor never exceeds eight (8) to one (1).

The kids underwent sessions regarding Children's Rights, Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Prevention (CSAEP), the Juvenile Justice Welfare Act, Child Protection and Anger Management. They also attended sessions on deaf awareness offered by the Deaf School of De La Salle University, sessions on fire prevention offered by the local Bureau of Fire, and basic first aid sessions offered by the Philippine Red Cross.

Five boys competed in the Regatta 2018 held last October, which was sponsored by Puerto Galera Yacht Club. They received awards in two categories, Mirror and Optimist. The kids are also engaged in various sports like swimming, basketball, soccer (football), and kayaking. The improvement of each child, from his academics to his behavior, is evident.





Theater

The therapeutic use of drama and theater is probably the single most significant factor in the children's accelerated process of recovery, rehabilitation and development. Initially the drama exercises are designed for the children to find peace with their past and reach a mental state, where they are ready, capable and motivated to learn and grow.

Following the initial drama exercises are the preparations and rehearsals for 2-3 major performances that they present over the year in the program. Their time on the stage is rich with play and laughter, but it also guides them through rigid processes of discipline and collaboration, in which they learn to work as a team and offer and accept constructive criticism. Their focus and hard work in the rehearsals are rewarded when the first audience enters the theater to view their show. The new actors are obviously nervous the first times they are the center of attention in front of a large audience, but after several performances, their confidence grows, and they fully embrace the magic of the theater as a hall for entertainment, education, and advocacy. The last batch of children packed a total of 27 Dr. Seuss' "The Lorax" performances, reaching a total audience of 2,480 with a clear message on environmental sustainability. The same kids were also the stars in 12 Christmas presentations of Stairway's original play "One Wish," which is another creation by Stairway creative director, Monica Ray. "One Wish" has become a tradition in our local community, and, every year hundreds of people from the community and the many tourist resorts flock in to enjoy the show. Many of them come back year after year.



Visual Arts

Regular classes in visual arts provide the children with another creative outlet for pent up emotions and frustrations. There is an interesting development in the children's choice of colors, from their initial paintings towards their graduation, going from dark to bright. Throughout their classes, they are exposed to various media, learn various techniques, and color combinations. Many end up producing some impressive pieces of art.

Wood Workshop

The woodcraft classes give the children an opportunity to gain practical skills. For some, it is an important revelation that there may be a potential career in carpentry or furniture making. The kids have learned to produce wood projects from their own sketches, like miniature cabinets, playhouses, animal creatures, cars, trucks, airplanes, windmills, and picture frames.

Repair and recycling

Our resident artist, who also teaches visual arts and woodcraft, facilitates the classes on Repair and Recycling, so there is no boundaries between these creative and skills based classes that also aim to inspire and educate on environmental sustainability.

Cybersafety

Before graduating and leaving Stairway, all the children undergo a Cyber Safety training session. They learn about the multitude of risks as well as the wealth of information present and available on the World Wide Web. The information and knowledge can help protect them and help them grow and develop way beyond the time they stay in the Stairway center.

Music

A local music teacher has been volunteering since August, resulting in great improvement in the boys' music interest and competencies. All the children know how to play the guitar, percussion and boom box.



Bakery

The FHP housefather took vocational classes in baking, and he is running the baking classes. Foreign volunteers, who bring in new ideas and recipes, often assist him. There are 3-4 students per class, so the learning is more effective and efficient. They learn to bake a variety of breads and pastries, both local and international inspired recipes. The products are served as everyday snacks and during workshops and training sessions in the center. During the celebration of Earth Day and World Oceans Day, the boys helped produce and serve bread and cakes for the 300 plus guests. It is rewarding for them to see and taste their products. A couple of the boys from the last batch want to pursue careers as bakers.

Youth for Change

We had a record number of young people visit Stairway in 2018 to experience the magic of the Youth for Change camps. The coming together of children from all over the world with hugely different socio-economic, religious and cultural backgrounds seem more compelling than ever. With their particular design addressing children's rights, including environmental concerns, the camps never fail to display innate respect and friendship between children and youth across all borders. The compassion, solidarity and concern that we plant in the hearts and the minds of the youth constitute our hope for a more just world of tomorrow.

The groups visiting in 2018 included:

1. Harvard University
2. International School Manila - High School Department
3. International School Manila - Middle Schooldepartment
4. Lycee Francis De Manille
5. Singapore American School
6. Stairway Club Singapore American School
7. Dagskolen Tvind
8. United World College Of Thailand
9. Stairway Scholars (Incoming Freshmen)





Community Assistance Program

The Community Assistance Program offers educational assistance to children from poor families in the local community, educational and health assistance to indigenous people (IP), a Children Health Educational Center (CHEC) for indigenous children in a remote mountain village, Baclayan, a feeding program in Baclayan, and the Baclayan Organic Farm.

Educational Assistance

Stairway provides financial and practical educational assistance to nearly 500 students from very poor families in the local community. The scholars attend elementary school, high school, college and vocational training.

Every year all applicants/candidates are screened through a process of home visits, personal interviews, and a family income assessment. The applicants that show a high level of financial need and an interest in continuing their education are selected for the program. The scholarships are categorized into two levels: scholars that receive basic school supplies and daily transportation, and scholars that require extra assistance, which includes a daily stipend and tuition fees.

Aside from providing financial assistance, we offer our scholars a number of valuable life skills sessions. Students attend workshops in Adolescent Reproductive Health, Online Safety, Environmental Awareness and Children's Rights. Parents and family members also attend a session on Child Sex Trafficking and Child Protection, with the goal of raising the community's awareness about child exploitation and thereby preventing future child abuse and sex trafficking incidents in the local area.



Collaboration with the local schools

We have strengthened our partnership with the local high schools. A positive development from this closer collaboration is a monitoring system for the educational beneficiaries. The schools' guidance counselors directly report issues and concerns about any Stairway scholar to the Community Assistance Program (CAP) team staff. The schools also submit a digital copy of the attendance of students every month, as well as their quarterly grades.

Educational and Health Assistance for Indigenous Children and Youth

The indigenous people in our local community, the Mangyans, is a particularly challenged minority. They have traditionally been the target for heavy discrimination and to this day, many live in abject poverty. To confront and remedy these challenges, Stairway's community assistance program takes a particular focus and invests into assisting this minority.

Feeding Program at the Baclayan Mangyan School

The feeding program, offering breakfast and lunch to all children, continues to encourage students to attend classes. The average class attendance from July to October 2018 reached a new high at 196. At the end of the previous school year, 2017-2018, there were no cases of severely malnourished and malnourished children at the school. However, at the beginning of the new school year, 2018-2019, there were 8 severely malnourished and 17 malnourished children. This indicates that the two-month school break, with the absence of the school feeding program, had a significant negative impact on the poorest of the children in the community.

Below is the table showing cases of severely malnourished and malnourished children, distributed to class levels, during the weighing on June 5 at the beginning of the school year. A total of 223 students were weighed.

Grade Level	Severely Malnourished	Malnourished	Normal
Kinder	1	0	12
Grade 1	1	2	20
Grade 2	3	1	27
Grade 3	1	4	28
Grade 4	1	3	31
Grade 5	1	4	35
Grade 6	0	3	45
Total	8	17	198

We observed that the school served unhealthy snacks during the recess time/snack time of students. Some teachers offered junk food during snack time despite the guidelines of Department of Education (DepEd) to serve only healthy snacks for students. We reported this practice to the Principals' Coordinator, and we expect to see an end to this counter productive practise.

The feeding program is a collaboration between Stairway and the parents in the community. The parents' role is to show up once a month to assist in the cooking and cleaning, while we provide all food and supervision. Unfortunately, the lack of participation of some parents is still an issue, so new strategies were implemented to address this challenge. During a quarterly meeting with stakeholders, it was decided that a general assembly of parents would be held, to discuss the issue. We plan to make the assembly an annual activity, to get the support of more parents.

Students who reached 70% attendance from the beginning of the school year (June) until the beginning of August received complete school supplies and rain gear. Out of 294 enrollees, 226 students qualified.



Indigenous High School Students

The Baclayan Mangyan School is only elementary level, so after grade 6 the students are to integrate in the main public high school campus 3 kilometers down at the foot of the mountain. The physical distance is not the biggest challenge in this transformation; reaching the academic level of the mainstream school and integrating with the low lander kids pose much bigger challenges. This has traditionally manifested itself through extremely high drop out rates amongst the IP students.

The feeding program has now been running for 7 years, and within that period the average attendance rate at the school has increased from around 30 to as high as 196 students. We have been successful in bringing the kids into the classroom. Now is the time to put more emphasis on what they take with them from the classroom.

Last year, we implemented a new system to enhance the academic and social aptitude of the grade 6 students before they transition into high school. We initially developed a pre-assessment test to determine their academic standing, which revealed that 6 out of the 40 students (18%) could not read and write, and 60% were struggling with basic arithmetic operations. On average, students learn to read when they are in the grade 2 level.

The result of the pre-assessment test prompted us to group Grade 6 students based on their academic levels and carry out support interventions based on their needs. Students who could not read and write started to attend additional reading classes every Thursday and Friday, along with recurring weekend tutorials. A post assessment 3 months later indicated significant progress amongst all the students, but whether extra tutorial support will be able to help them qualify to successfully attend high school during the next school year remains to be seen.





Every year we facilitate sessions on reproductive health. Last school year we conducted sessions with 118 pupils, ages 10 years old and above. By educating the children on reproductive health, we provide them with a choice, whether they already want to establish families while in their teens. Early relationships, early pregnancies and early marriages are among the main reasons for indigenous students dropping out of high school.

The IP students also take part in many of the Youth for Change programs that are facilitated at Stairway main campus. Through the camps, the kids interact with children and youth from all over the world, along with the boys from Stairway's family home program and Tagalog kids from the community.

Last school year, the grade 6 students participated in two Youth for Change camps in the Stairway center. The first camp involved students from Harvard University and the Stairway boys. These camps always have a positive impact on the students' shyness, and they significantly improve their social and communication skills over a short period of time. Students' testimonies following some of these camps tell us that for many of them, it was the best experience of their lives and the first time they realized and felt that their human rights are equal to any other child.

The second camp for the Baclayan Grade 6 students at Stairway Center last year was with other grade 6 students from different schools in Puerto Galera. Again, the interaction between the indigenous kids and the lowland kids in a setting rich with creative activities proved to effectively break discrimination and build bridges of respect and understanding from both sides.

As a final preparation for their grand leap from Grade 6 in the Mangyan School in Baclayan into the mainstream high school, the students visited the main campus of the national high school.

The support of the IP students does not end after elementary school. Stairway offers a comprehensive scholarship package for a vast majority of those who continue into high school. Along with daily lunch, we provide them with school uniforms, school supplies, and a monthly allowance to cover their school expenses.

We also continue to support in academics and personal development. Twice-a-month weekend tutorial sessions for high school beneficiaries run throughout the school-year, in which the students receive help to understand their school lessons, and they are assisted in their assignments, research, and other projects. Further, from Monday through Thursday we run a peer tutorial program, which is now under the supervision of a teacher. The involvement of non-IP students in the weekday tutorials along with teambuilding activities we facilitate help break the discrimination against indigenous students in the school.

We have added life skills sessions in the weekend tutorials to help enhance the students' self-esteem and communication skills towards non-IP students. Topics discussed in life skills sessions include self-confidence, self-value, love, family, empathy, friends, my culture and community.



We also organize camps at the farm camp house, where a mix of students (Tagalog, Muslim, Mangyan) from different communities in Puerto Galera all get to mingle. These are overnight sessions in which we discuss self-awareness, dreams, peer pressure, adolescent reproductive health, cyberbullying, self-esteem, friendships, and other issues confronted by teenagers.

In August we held a sports camp with all the Mangyan high school students along with the tutors. These camps also help to build camaraderie and break the cycle of discrimination against Mangyan people.

The workshops and seminars are not limited to the children. We also include the parents of the scholars to undergo workshops and seminars on children's rights and prevention of child sexual abuse and exploitation, including trafficking of children.

We started out the 2018-2019 school year with 50 IP student scholars in high school. Currently 48 are still in school, which is so far the lowest drop-out rate experienced.



Children Health and Education Center (CHEC) in Baclayan

The Children Health and Education Center (CHEC) in Baclayan opened last June. It has a clinic, a library, and a roofed veranda suitable for holding classes and workshops. Besides the building, there is a new fenced off sports court for children and youth to use. It has been welcomed by the school as their venue for all P.E. classes.

The center is used for twice-a-month medical consultations and provision of medicine. Over the last 4 months of 2018 a total of 259 patients were served, suffering from common colds, cough, headache, toothache, abdominal pain, diarrhea, scabies, skin rashes, wounds caused by scratching, ear pus, dizziness, weakness, easy fatigability, and low blood pressure. Many cases encountered were related to lack of proper sanitary conditions, lack of proper nutrition, and lack of hygiene. In October, we added pre-natal check-ups to our regular medical consultation, thanks to the help of a volunteer midwife.

In line with the common illnesses encountered, our volunteer doctor recommended that latrines be installed in the community. A budget has been obtained for this purpose, but there has been serious delay in embarking on the construction phase due to local politics. Discussions and agreements with the community council are still ongoing, but a decision has been made that we will push through with the project.



The new venue allows children to read books or play with toys, as they wait for their turn in the medical consultations. Parents are also more comfortable in the waiting area. Many students from school spend their break time in the center to read and play.



Stairway Organic Farm, Baclayan

In 2018 we managed to hire an experienced farmer to be the head of the team of indigenous farmers already working at the Farm. His skills and experience in vegetable production have been helpful in substantially increasing the farm's produce and improving the performance of the farm team. The harvest output over the past six (6) months has significantly exceeded previous years' results.

The production of vermicast has also accelerated, since we expanded the production area and added an additional 10 kilos of worms. This has helped to sustain the ever-growing need of organic fertilizer to the farm's expanding vegetable production and fruit orchard.

Most of the farm's produce provide fresh and organic vegetables for the growing number of students of the Baclayan Elementary School Feeding Program, the kids of Stairway's Family Home Program (FHP) and guests and visitors of Stairway.

In 2018, we tried to offer some of the farm's surplus harvests to local resorts, restaurants and residents through social media. Many resorts and individuals responded to the Facebook posts and expressed their interest by sending in inquiries and orders. Other individuals tried a pick-and-pay-visit to the farm and were impressed and surprised to have discovered a "secret garden" within the mountain community of Mangyans in Baclayan.



The overwhelming response and interest generated by the social media posts indicate a potential market opportunity for the farm's high-value organic products as Puerto Galera has only a few vegetable growers and, therefore imports most of its agricultural demand from far away provinces. Eventually, the farm can generate more income to supplement and help sustain its operations through its multiplying harvests, coupled with a feasible marketing and distribution system.

Last October, we opened the farm's gates to 107 kids - the Grade 4, Grade 5 and Grade 6 students from Baclayan Elementary School- and started an introductory session and tour. The kids were impressed with the farm and were excited to start and maintain their own vegetable plots at a portion of Stairway's land near their school.

Meanwhile, other cause-oriented groups, like the EcoTone Foundation based in Abra De Ilog, Occidental Mindoro, and the Reaching Hands Foundation in the Province of Rizal, have visited the farm to gain inspiration, learn about organic farming and explore the possibility of creating similar organic farm projects in their areas. We appreciate that the farm can help to promote the idea to grow more vegetables locally and cut down on the need for extensive transport of food.

Recently, 44 Mangyan beneficiaries of the government conditional cash transfer program (Pantawid program) coming from various villages in the locality came to study organic farming methods. Since the farm is already known to local government offices and networks, our farm team leader was tapped as a resource speaker of this activity organized by the municipal officer of the Pantawid government program.



Local school children during a farm visit.

As the operation of the farm improves, we want to improve the knowledge and skills of our farm team. The team visited the Gabutero Organic Farm in Bongabong, Mindoro Oriental, to learn from the advanced practices of this renowned organic farm. During the visit, a refresher course on the creation of organic concoctions, both fertilizers and insecticides, was conducted, along with discussions on solving practical issues of the farm. We hope to be able to attract more skilled manpower to work with us on the farm, so we can continue increasing the amount of vegetable and food we can produce for our own consumption and potentially for selling. And, we want to do more in terms of inspiring and educating the local children and youth to see organic gardening as a potential livelihood, or at least as an accessible option to enhance the nutritional value of their own and their families' diet.



Stairway boys during a class at the organic farm.



Proper soil preparation is essential for a successful output. The African Night Crawlers (earth worms) provide us with the best possible organic fertilizer.

Environmental Awareness for Children and Youth (EACY)

Stairway's Environmental Awareness for Children and Youth (EACY) program aims to inspire and educate the local population of school children and visitors of Stairway to appreciate and protect the environment.

The year 2018 was record-breaking, as a result of a more cohesive collaboration among the EACY program, the local education sector and the local government office. We opened the SAS activities 2018 by running special trips for a number of high school teachers with the aim to train some of the science teachers to facilitate the SAS trips for their own students, and even for groups outside of their own schools. This initiative proved extremely effective in meeting its goal to give our local partners ownership over the environmental campaigns that we are launching. Throughout the year, we ran 88 SAS trips covering a total of 2,192 participants, and nearly all of these trips were facilitated by volunteer local science teachers.

No.	Date	Group	No. of Pax
1	01/09/2018	SAS Educators	22
2	01/11/2018	Harvard and Baclayan Scholars	45
3	01/23/2018	PGNHS-Palangan	28
4	01/24/2018	PGNHS-Palangan	29
5	01/25/2018	PGNHS-Palangan	28
6	01/30/2018	PGNHS-Dulangan	26
7	01/31/2018	PGNHS-Dulangan	27
8	02/01/2018	PGNHS-Dulangan	23
9	02/03/2018	PGNHS-Main	32
10	02/06/2018	PGNHS-San Isidro Extension	23
11	02/07/2018	PGNHS-San Isidro Extension	23
12	02/08/2018	YFC-Singapore American School	44
13	02/09/2018	PGNHS-Palangan	26
14	02/13/2018	Roedkilde	10
15	02/14/2018	Singapore American School	32
16	02/20/2018	PG Tour Guides and Tour Operators Association	22
17	02/21/2018	PGNHS-San Isidro	24
18	02/23/2018	PG Central SSC	39
19	02/24/2018	PGNHS-Palangan Scouts	23
20	02/26/2018	LFM (Lycee)	11
21	02/27/2018	PG Tour Guides and Tour Operators Association	22
22	02/28/2017	PGNHS-San Isidro	19
23	03/01/2018	PGNHS Main	27
24	03/06/2018	ACASIA Waldorf	27
25	03/07/2018	PGNHS-Main	27
26	03/09/2018	PGNHS Main	26
27	03/10/2018	TVIND and SFI Boys	33
28	04/07/2018	PG Mun Hall Staff	53
29	04/09/2018	OMNHS-Calapan	18
30	04/10/2018	LGU-MENRO	22
31	04/11/2018	LGU-MENRO	22
32	04/14/2018	LGU-MENRO	21
33	04/17/2018	PG Mun Hall Staff	27
34	04/18/2018	LGU-MENRO	27
35	04/19/2018	LGU-MENRO	35
36	04/22/2018	UPLB	28
37	04/27/2018	MDR,HR, Bantay Dagat	32
38	04/28/2018	NGBCC/MENRO	34
39	05/02/2018	Reservists	21
40	05/04/2018	Baclayan/Talipanan	18
41	05/05/2018	Child Hope Asia	34
42	05/06/2018	Girl Scouts Coordinator	28
43	05/08/2018	OMNHS-Calapan	22
44	05/11/2018	EACY Club	18
45	05/15/2018	PG Sanggunian Bayan	17

No.	Date	Group	No. of Pax
46	05/17/2018	DWC-MAEd Students	21
47	05/24/2018	PGNHS-Main Faculty	32
48	05/25/2018	PGNHS-Main Faculty	33
49	05/29/2018	Aninuan Brgy Council /PNP	25
50	05/30/2018	PGNHS-Main Girl Scouts	28
51	06/01/2018	PGA Faculty	37
52	06/19/2018	PGNHS-Main	22
53	06/20/2018	PGNHS Main	25
54	06/21/2018	PGNHS-Main	24
55	06/22/2018	PGNHS Main	26
56	06/28/2018	PGNHS Main	23
57	06/30/2018	OMHNS-Math Department	22
58	08/18/2018	Calapan City Federation of Student Councils	22
59	08/29/2018	PGNHS Main	25
60	08/30/2018	PGNHS Main	24
61	09/04/2018	PGNHS Main	27
62	09/05/2018	PGNHS Main	25
63	09/06/2018	PGNHS Main	28
64	09/11/2018	PGNHS Main	28
65	09/12/2018	PGNHS Main	26
66	09/26/2018	PGNHS-Main	32
67	09/27/2018	PGNHS Main	25
68	10/03/2018	PGNHS Main	30
69	10/04/2018	PGNHS SIE	25
70	10/11/2018	PGNHS SIE	27
71	10/12/2018	PGNHS SIE	25
72	10/16/2018	UWC Thailand	6
73	10/19/2018	BTS Nat'l Network	18
74	10/20/2018	OMNHS	31
75	11/06/2018	PGNHS SIE	25
76	11/07/2018	Phoenix Foundation	4
77	11/16/2018	PGNHS SIE	19
78	11/17/2018	Lindberg Group	16
79	11/20/2017	PNGHS Palangan	23
80	11/21/2018	PNGHS Palangan	24
81	11/22/2018	PNGHS Palangan	24
82	11/24/2018	SAS Stairway Club	19
83	11/25/2018	GrundFos	10
84	11/28/2018	PGNHS Palangan	17
85	11/29/2018	BTS Level 1 Youth	20
86	12/01/2018	PGNHS Palangan-Teachers	17
87	12/05/2018	PGNHS-Dulangan	22
88	12/06/2018	FHP Kids	16
TOTAL			2,192

Twenty-three percent (23%) were considered special trips, with the participating group paying for the trip cost, as indicated in green font on the table above. These special trips were joined by groups visiting from outside Puerto Galera, comprised of eight international schools, two schools from Calapan City, Mindoro Oriental, and other national and international partners of Stairway.

Most of the remaining 77% of the groups that joined the SAS trips were fully subsidized by the program's fund. These groups were from the locality of Puerto Galera, composed of Grade 9 students from five high school campuses, the teaching staff of four high schools, various local government offices and institutions including some units of the local police force, members of the tour guides association, girl scout chapters in two high schools, and the barangay (village) council of the place where Stairway center is located.



Upper: It was Marshall Foundation that helped us start the EACY program back in 2013, and with their continued support over the years we have managed to develop the program into a recognized force for children's rights and the environment in our community, and beyond. James Marshall, founder of Marshall Foundation, visited Stairway last May with his 2 eldest children, and they all had a chance to join a SAS trip with local students.

Lower left: Christian Holme-Pedersen, Director of Grundfos IS Support & Operations Manila, signs a generous cheque for EACY, after their group had won a global Grundfos competition on most creative CSR initiatives. Every year they donate an amount to EACY equivalent to the company's saving in water and electricity consumption based on 2015 level.

Evaluation of SAS Participants

Through the initiative of a Science teacher from one of our partner schools in the locality, a pre-test/post-test composed of 15 questions was given to participants of the SAS trips, for knowledge assessment. Below are the test results of Grade 9 sections of Puerto Galera National High School – Main Campus who went on the SAS floating classroom from June to September, 2018.



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
Region IV-B MIMAROPA
SCHOOLS DIVISION OF ORIENTAL MINDORO
District of Puerto Galera
PUERTO GALERA NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
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CONSOLIDATED REPORT on SEA ADVENTURE SCHOOL 2018

No.	SSC		Diamond		Emerald		Ruby		Sapphire		Jade		Pearl	
	Pretest	Post Test	Pretest	Post Test	Pretest	Post Test	Pretest	Post Test	Pretest	Post Test	Pretest	Post Test	Pretest	Post Test
1	7	9	7	11	6	10	6	9	7	9		12		13
2	9	11	8	10	6	10	8	10	4	5		8		10
3	12	9	12	12	8	10	10	10	5	10		12		12
4	9	12	9	8	8	12	7	10	2	7		9		12
5	10	14	7	9	9	12	2	8	11	13		5		10
6	6	8	10	12	11	14	10	13	8	10		7		9
7	7	10	13	13	8	12	8	12	10	12		10		10
8	13	12	11	13	6	11	8	11	7	9		10		10
9	8	10	10	8	8	10	10	14	4	9		10		12
10	11	13	11	11	7	10	10	12	5	7		10		10
11	7	10	10	14	10	12	13	13	7	10		11		10
12	10	12	5	10	7	10	7	10	6	10		12		9
13	10	12	8	8	7	10	6	10	4	9		14		11
14	7	10	7	11	13	14	8	11	4	9		9		10
15	10	13	11	13	4	10	10	12	11	13		9		9
16	8	5	5	6	6	11	10	10	3	10		8		8
17	10	12	8	8	11	12	10	11	7	10		6		11
18	10	12	9	10	9	12	5	9	7	11		11		10
19	12	14	11	10	6	12	10	10	7	11		11		11
20	8	11	6	7	7	11	10	13	4	10		10		10
21	7	13	8	9	9	10	7	11	11	13		8		9
22	9	7	5	8	12	12	10	12	12	13		11		9
23	10	12	11	12	10	12	9	10	5	10		8		10
24	11	13	8	10	5	10	10	10	9	11		10		9
25	8	12	8	10	9	12	9	13	7	10		10		10
26	10	14	10	10	8	10	7	10	5	10		10		9
27	9	14	7	8	10	13	10	12	12	12		7		9
28	12	14	9	9	5	11	7	9	8	10		11		11
29	11	14	5	7	13	13	9	11	9	11		10		10
30	8	14	9	10	13	13	2	9	7	10		12		9
31	6	12	9	10	9	12	10	9	6	10		10		10
32	9	10	4	5	4	10	8	11	5	11		11		12
33	8	9	8	12	5	10	10	10	5	10		12		10
34	10	12	9	11	6	10	11	11	6	12		13		10
35	8	10	6	10	7	12			8	13		11		
36	7	9	13	13	9	12			6	10		11		
37	7	10	9	7	8	10			8	10		8		
38	11	10	7	10								10		
39	9	11	9	10										
40	11	13	14	14										
41	14	13	10	8										
42	8	9												
43	13	13												

prepared by:
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LORELYN G. VILLAMOR
Teacher In-Charged

The test results reflect an increase in knowledge after the SAS trips. While this is a significant result of the program, the emotional impact of the exposure triggering reflection upon our relationship with our surrounding natural environment is even more desired. The high number of students signing up for the EACY Club is one indication that we are meeting our objectives with the floating classroom and the EACY program in general. We strongly believe that the remarkable decrease in the amount of litter found on the beaches and in the water around Puerto Galera is also a result of the 5 years of campaigning throughout our community and lobbying within the local government.

Sections	Mean/Average		Mean Percentage Score	
	Pre test	Post Test	Pre test	Post Test
SSC	9.30	11.13	61.43	75.24
Diamond	8.68	9.93	57.89	66.18
Emerald	8.08	11.27	53.87	75.14
Ruby	8.44	10.76	56.27	71.76
Sapphire	6.81	10.27	45.41	68.47
Jade		9.92		66.14
Pearl		10.12		67.45



Impact of SAS and the EACY Program

The Sea Adventure School has always been a central activity of the EACY program. The environmental awareness it has instilled in numerous children and youth in the locality, and beyond, has spawned significant action and has fostered a growing advocacy movement among our partners in our local municipality. It would be apt to say that the “A” in the EACY acronym could interchangeably mean “Awareness,” “Action” or “Advocacy,” as the program evolves. The SAS’ reach and impact are evident in the interrelated indicators mentioned below:

1) Spreading Local Awareness of the Global Issue of Plastic Pollution in the Oceans and Climate Change.

We recommend to our partner schools that participants watch three (3) supplementary videos to reinforce their knowledge and experience from the SAS: (1) the shortened 22-minute version of “A Plastic Ocean,” which we have added Filipino subtitles to, (2) “Blue, the Film,” and (3) “Chasing Corals”. Sad to say, the Philippines is among the world’s top 5 plastic polluters in terms of dumping plastic into the seas. Thus, we stress viewing of the documentary “A Plastic Ocean”, because it suggests and encourages simple action of each individual in terms of our relation to plastic, especially single use plastic, and how we dispose of it. In 2018, we facilitated a total of 5,246 people watching and discussing this hard hitting film, or at least the shorter version of the film that we have added Filipino subtitles to.

Viewing of “A Plastic Ocean” (2018)	Viewers
EACY Assemblies (Jan-Feb 2018)	241
Plastic Ocean viewing - January to March SAS trips with viewing	718
Earthday 2018	493
Marine Art Competition Film Showing of 4 local High Schools (March-June 2018)	3,808
Plastic Ocean viewing - April to November (from local schools)	479
Total	5,739



Lorax Performance

The greatest tool in reaching the younger children in elementary school with the message of environmental conservation is through our own theatrical rendition of Dr. Seuss' "The Lorax", performed by the Stairway kids and some of our scholars. With support from our local government and neighbour resorts, we were able to bring in more than 2000 school children to have a first real theatre experience, while at the same time receiving age appropriate relevant information regarding environmental protection.

The Lorax was also performed for several groups of visitors, who stayed at Stairway for training and workshops on various aspects of children's rights. Naturally, the play has become its own institution in the many Youth for Change Camps, and it has inspired several student groups locally and from abroad to come up with their own activities to create awareness and instigate action for environmental protection. One particular performance of the Lorax in 2018 worth mentioning was at the internationally renowned Malasimbo Music and Arts Festival in Puerto Galera. Despite strong winds, close to 1,000 people enjoyed the performance in the most beautiful mountain setting overlooking Puerto Galera.







2) Amplifying Environmental Campaigns Among Partner Schools and Other Educational Institutions

The SAS has given opportunities for collaboration with the local branch of the Department of Education (DepEd) and other educational institutions. Increasingly, we see partner schools initiate their own campaigns and replicate some of EACY's projects and initiatives.

In preparation for World Ocean Day last June 8, we organized a competition among our school partners, to creatively amplify awareness about the global problem of plastic pollution through the creation of marine art sculptures using garbage and plastic debris collected from the schools' organized community and beach cleanups. The partner schools were also encouraged to organize more community and beach cleanups, and show the film "A Plastic Ocean" to school and community audiences. The five high schools involved were able to involve thousands of students and various groups in the community through the showing of "A Plastic Ocean" and "Chasing Corals," along with community and beach cleanups, and for some communities also mangrove planting.

School	Environmental Awareness Activities Conducted	Total No. of Participants
PGNHS-Palangan	Film Showings, Community and Coastal Clean	517
Puerto Galera Academy	Film Showings, Coastal and Mangrove Cleanup, Symposia	654
PGNHS-San Isidro	Film Showing, Coastal and Mangrove Cleanups, Mangrove Planting	1,808
PGNHS-Main	Film Showing, Community Cleanups, Tree Planting	829
Total		3,808

The schools' entries for the Marine Art Competition - a giant sea horse, a conglomeration of dolphins, crabs and a sea turtle, a giant sea clam and a grouper were exhibited at Stairway for the celebration of World Oceans Day.

On June 8, almost a hundred Grade 6 pupils from two of Stairway's neighboring schools flocked to Stairway's compound that had been transformed into a kaleidoscope of marine elements and stations. The giant marine sculptures made of plastic debris seemingly welcomed the kids. They enjoyed the ocean games and activities like reef board games, the anatomy of a polyp, reef presentations, trash sorting, jewelry-making through recycled paper, face painting, and creation of small artworks from trash. The heavy rains prevented them from snorkeling at the nearby coral reef, but they experienced the wonders of the seas through virtual reality cameras.

As the program for the elementary students ended late in the afternoon, some 200 teachers and students from the five participating schools arrived to join in the second part of the celebration. Despite heavy downpour, they managed to tour the premises and view the sea creature exhibit and the photo exhibit, before they entered the theatre to witness the final performance of *The Lorax* for this year. A majority of the cast of kids graduated and left Stairway just a few days later.



After some light refreshments, it was time for the announcement of the winners of the Marine Art Competition. Three distinguished guests were invited as judges of the Competition: Ms. Maricel Montero, the executive director of the Manila-based art museum for children “Museo Pambata”; Ms. Judit Llavina, a Stairway volunteer specializing in “Design Thinking”; and Ms. Nida Calumpong, a marine biologist and professor at Siliman University. On the day before, Ms. Nida Calumpong had the opportunity to talk to over a hundred teachers and students at the main campus of Puerto Galera National High School. Her topic was the endangered Dugong and the seagrass it is feeding on.

The last event of the evening of World Ocean Day was the Premiere Showing in the Philippines of “Blue, the Film”, which is yet another very strong documentary film illustrating with uncompromised clarity the state of our planet and the urgent need for all of us to act accordingly. Two of the people in and behind the film visited Stairway a few years back in the capacity as ambassadors of our partner Scuba for Change.



The World Oceans Day gave us an opportunity to collaborate with the recently elected officials in the barangay (village) where the Stairway center is situated. The officials, their youth council, health workers and auxiliary security, joined a SAS trip and were immersed in the wonders of Puerto Galera's mangroves, sea grass and coral ecosystems. They also had a cleanup along the premises of their beach, where people litter after their picnics. They resolved to enforce stricter measures to address littering, and to carry out an intensified education campaign on proper solid waste management in their community.

Another village issue is the community households' trash that is thrown into the river and ends up in the sea. After World Oceans Day, a river cleanup was participated in by members of the EACY Club, the barangay council and the community-relations group of the Philippine National Police (PNP). Seventy people picked up trash along the river banks and spoke to those living along the river and washing in the river, to make them aware of the negative impact of their waste, once it reaches the sea.

The young members of the EACY Club aired their opinions and suggestions to the newly-elected officials regarding the issue of littering within the villages. The children suggested stricter implementation of national laws on solid waste management, and close coordination between the EACY Club and the barangay council in the campaign.





A major and long term action plan for EACY/Stairway, is pushing the local village council to secure the coastline and the marine habitat of our village by declaring it a marine protected area. Obtaining such status is a bureaucratic process involving local decision makers, both at the village and municipal levels. The first step is to convince the village council about the necessity for such a move, so we can protect our local coral reefs against fishing and the entrance of jet skis, and other touristic activities from nearby resorts that clearly disturb the marine habitat. To this end, we are working with the Fisheries Officer of the Municipal Agriculture Office.

To continue spreading awareness about the issue of plastic pollution in the oceans, the marine art sculpture entries of the schools were moved around and exhibited in the five campuses of schools that joined the competition.

Last October, the main campus of Puerto Galera National High School replicated the Marine Art Competition among its students. All 43 sections from Grade 7 to Grade 12 were mobilized to collect plastic garbage, to be used in creating sculptures of marine creatures. Over 1,970 students were involved in this competition. Their art pieces are exhibited in their “Under the Ocean” park. This campaign creates awareness among students, teachers and parents, as the school journeys towards a goal of being a “Zero-Waste” school.

Representatives of student governments from nine schools in Calapan, who recently joined a SAS trip, have also committed to launching their own version of Marine Art Competition among their campuses.

The San Isidro Campus of Puerto Galera National High School said that it plans to create kayaks made of recycled bottles and plastics. These kayaks will help patrol a nearby mangrove forest, which the school has adopted as a regular clean-up area for its students. The school has also expanded its weekend cleanup areas to cover nearby beaches in White Beach and Aninuan.



These initiatives are not only taken by our partners in Puerto Galera and Calapan, but also beyond the island province of Mindoro. The De La Salle School of Deaf Education and Applied Studies-Benilde Campus in Manila is a regular Youth for Change Camp visitor at Stairway. The school initiated its own environmental campaigns after their introduction and exposure to our EACY program. Through the “Benilde Green Project,” the school has created a story book about the environment, raised funds through the creation of dream catchers (a craft they students learned at Stairway), helped a school to have a small garden, donated funds for the SAS, showed “A Plastic Ocean” to the school and a nearby community, and conducted seminars on the environment and sustainable living. The school’s project also became a finalist for a school award, “Gawad Benildyano 2018”.

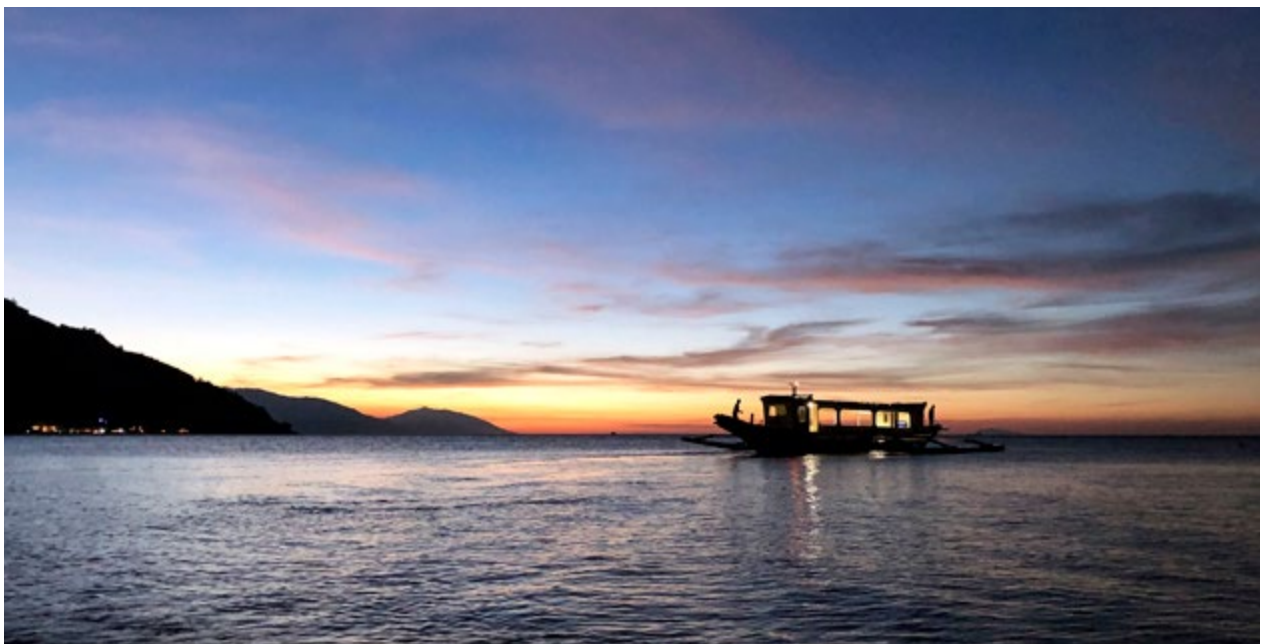
Forging a Tighter Collaboration with the Local Government's Environmental Office

After joining a Sea Adventure trip, the head of Puerto Galera's Municipal Environment and Natural Resource Office (MENRO) saw the activity as a relevant and creative tool to educate the population in general and her colleagues in the municipal hall about marine environmental issues and policies, which need urgent attention, considering a constantly fast growing population and an almost explosive increase in the influx of tourists into our area. Thus, we decided to institute SAS as basic education to members and partners of the local government in 2018. A total of 355 individuals from various local government offices and other sectoral groups in Puerto Galera were part of the SAS trips and immersed into the broader environmental awareness campaign, starting on the floating classroom. One direct offshoot of the participation of the Municipal Council in the SAS is its move to legislate a public ordinance that prohibits fish feeding.

The partnership with the local government has given Stairway an opportunity to have a seat and voice as a non-government organization (NGO) representative in three (3) multi-stakeholder committees that tackle Puerto Galera's environmental concerns: the Man and Biosphere (MAB) Council, the Solid Waste Management Municipal Council, and the Sabang Bay Water Quality Management Area Governing Board.

These committees recognize the role and potential of the SAS in communicating the agenda of their programs. The recent committee meetings have recommended localizing the information taught by SAS, based on their studies and findings.

The recognition of Stairway as a resource and a force in the context of environmental protection was further manifested through EACY's program coordinator being sought after as a resource person in various fora. This included Waste Management and the 4R's Campaign with 88 classroom student officers of Puerto Galera National High School; Gender and the Environment with 40 teachers from Puerto Galera Central School during their team building activity; and he even went on national TV regarding the state of wastewater discharges in Sabang Bay, Puerto Galera.



3) Encouraging Child Participation in Local Environmental Issues

Nine out of every 10 SAS student participants have affirmed their interest to join the EACY Club, to learn more about the environment and contribute to the club's advocacy for environmental protection. The SAS has involved numerous kids in local environmental issues, for instance, through the organization of the EACY Club.

EACY Club's 4R's Campaign

At the onset of the year, EACY Club members completed installation of Materials Recovery Facilities (MRF) among 5 pilot barangays (villages), as a continuation of the 4R's campaign (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Refuse) they had initiated back in 2017, when they decided that segregation of garbage in their homes should be a top priority, along with the proper use and maintenance of their newly-installed MRF drums and compost pits.

Sessions on ecological solid waste management were facilitated to 51 parents of newly accepted beneficiaries to Stairway's Educational Assistance Program, as well as to 206 pupils from Grade 1 to Grade 6 who are beneficiaries of the Baclayan Elementary School Feeding Program.

To assess if the lessons on solid waste management were understood, we conducted a survey among 3 barangays to find out how many households of the EACY Club members had properly segregated garbage in their homes, and it turned out that only 20-30% had managed to do proper segregation. A few were still even burning their garbage.

The survey manifested that the children needed help to communicate the issue to their parents. Thus, we facilitated a series of sessions on Solid Waste Management among 254 parents of EACY Club members last May in order to inform, educate and motivate them and to reiterate the importance of ecological solid waste management.

In September we facilitated a new survey, which did not give a 100% positive result, but it showed a significant improvement from the initial survey done in March.

Do they segregate?		Do they separate their recyclables?		Do they separate the residuals?		Do they have a Compost Pit?		Do they burn their garbage?	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
78%	22%	82%	18%	65%	35%	56%	44%	35%	65%



Earth Day

The EACY Club again spearheaded a cleanup as part of the Earth Day Celebration last April 22 under the global theme of putting an end to plastic pollution. After the cleanup, gatherings showed the abridged version of “A Plastic Ocean” with Filipino subtitles, and discussed practical solutions to plastic pollution. This event was participated in by the village officials and their constituents.

Barangay	No. of Participants	No. of Sacks of Garbage Collected
Aninuan	40	9
San Isidro	20	4
Balatero	78	19
Dulangan	91	15
Tabinay	40	8
Palangan/Sabang	165	8
Baclayan	34	13
Poblacion	37	3
TOTAL	505	79

As part of the Earth Week celebration, we did a coral cleanup, dubbed “SCUBASURA,” along Aninuan beach in front of the EACY Dive Center. Certified open water divers among EACY Club members and MENRO staff (all trained by EACY Dive School/Scuba for Change) participated in the underwater cleanup. We had collected several sacks of plastic, parts of ripped fishing nets, rope and other garbage during another cleanup earlier in the year, so it was encouraging to find that only a few pieces of plastic were seen and collected during this last clean-up.





The eight chapters of EACY Club, with over 500 members covering 10 of the 13 barangays of Puerto Galera, held assemblies last July to select their new sets of officers for the new school year 2018-2019. A leadership camp was held twice last August, to train the new club officers and plan their community projects and activities for the year.

Some chapters implemented their proposed projects, like the construction and enhancement of additional Materials Recovery Facilities (MRF), while other chapters coordinated with their respective local barangay officials for possible collaboration on projects and activities regarding solid waste management.

The plan is for the EACY Club to reach out to the greater part of their respective barangays to campaign and influence more families to properly segregate their garbage at home and to lobby for the installation of an MRF for the whole barangay in consonance with a national law that has been passed 17 years ago.



Showing of A Plastic Ocean at local school.

EACY Dive School

The EACY Dive School has been operating for a year and we have been generally pleased with its developments and results. The Center is managed by long time friend and Stairway volunteer, Magnus Peterson, who started the year by completing his instructor credentials. In the middle of the year, we had the good luck to have another volunteer show up, who is now a dive master. We still enjoy support from our Scuba for Change partners and Verde Divers, who provide us with tanks and a compressor, all contributing to a much more efficient operation.

We were very pleased to be able to certify 3 of our partners from the municipal environmental office as open water divers, and we extended the same offer to the 2 high school science teachers, who were most active as SAS facilitators throughout the year. Unfortunately, only one of them managed to complete the course, as her colleague had ear trouble and had to give up. Following their certification, we always invite them to participate in our clean up dives, also to make sure that they keep in practice.

With around 100 dive trips and 33 certified divers trained in 2018, the EACY Dive School closed the financial year with a profit of nearly 5,000 US Dollars. We are pleased with this result, but we are confident that our steep learning curve in running a dive operation will lead to even better results in the coming years.

However, our greatest ambitions for the EACY Dive School are not limited to numbers on a balance sheet. We see the Dive Center increasingly becoming an integral part of the overall EACY program, and we are expecting that we in the future will have groups of students from international schools to visit with the specific purpose of studying the local marine life and contributing to its conservation, which remains to be our main mission.





Administration, Management and Finance

It has turned out that 2018 also became an outstanding year with respect to our organizational development. Here are some of the highlights:

Accreditations:

- Philippine Council for NGO Certification Accreditation Certificate issued on May 10, 2018
- Bureau of Internal Revenue Tax exemption Certificate issued on May 23, 2017
- BIR Certificate of Registration re: Exemption from Donor's Tax issued on August 09, 2018
- Earned accreditation under the Professional Regulations Commission to conduct continuing professional development (CPD) courses to Registered Social Workers and under Care Practitioners

Human Resource:

- Implementation of Employee Dependent's Educational Assistance Program/Policy
 - 14 supported employee dependents.
- Recruitment – Hired 6 regular full time staff and 6 regular part time staff, and regularized one regular full time staff.
- Capacity Building – Majority of the staff underwent the Safety Capacity Building (Fire Prevention/Drill, Disaster Risk Reduction and Management, First Aid Training)
- Technical Staff underwent an average of 80-200 hours skills training relative with their Job Descriptions
- Annual Physical Examination to all regular Staff

New Structures and Improvements:

We completed the Children Health and Education Center in Baclayan as well as a new sports court and secured support to power it with solar energy.

Stairway switched over to solar power, thanks to our friends from Solenergy Systems Inc. We are currently covering over 80% of our consumption from solar, which is a significant step towards sustainability.

With help from Tondo Foundation and Stairway Denmark, we purchased a lot in Makati City for construction of a Learning and Resource Center. We will construct a 5 story building with office space for Stairway, for Tondo Foundation and for the Break the Silence National Network Secretariat. There will be a full floor for training and functions, and another full floor for a social innovation lab. There will also be 5 rooms to accommodate up to 20 people, a therapy room, a kitchen and a canteen. We expect the center to be operational by the end of 2020.

Finances:

We would like to thank all our financial partners, who have enabled us and made all of the above possible. Some have been with us for many years, and others have just joined.

In alphabetical order our partners are:

Active Aid Partners (AAP)
Axel og Paula Nissen Fonden
DANIDA
Embassy of Denmark, Manila
Grundfos
Hit Productions
Kindernothilfe
Leger Foundation
Marshall Foundation
Phoenix Foundation
REGUS
Roedkilde Gymnasium
Rotary Vejle Syd
SAS (Singapore American School)
SCUBA for Change
Skanderborg Gymnasium
Solenergy Systems Inc.
SONION
Stairway Denmark
Tondo Foundation
VEM

We also thank all the individuals, who have supported our work through generous donations and/or membership of Stairway Denmark. Last but not least, a special thank you to all the volunteers, including the boards of Stairway Foundation and Stairway Denmark, who have been/are investing much of their time and talents for our shared cause.

Sincerely,
Stairway Foundation

