

**Annual Report 2019**



## Message

Dear Friends,

2019 marked the 30th anniversary of the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child. Our work at Stairway to help put weight behind the words of this most ratified and significant international document began with small steps only a year into its existence. Now, as we enter our 30th year of operation, we can look back at a history of steady growth and expansion, a development sustained by friendship and support from amazing people from around the world.

In this 2019 report, we try to share some of the highlights from four program areas; the Advocacy and Capacity Building Program, the Family Home Program, the Community Assistance Program and the Environmental Awareness for Children and Youth Program. As it appears from the following pages, 2019 has been another highly productive year of consolidation and expansion.

We value and depend on your continued support, as we set new goals and strategies for protecting children in a fast changing global environment. Together we make a difference!

Sincerely,

Lars C. Jorgensen



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## List of Acronyms

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

## Advocacy and Capacity-Building Program

The Advocacy and Capacity-building Program (ACP) has sustained, intensified and expanded its various initiatives on children's rights in general, and on offline and online child protection focusing on addressing child sexual abuse and exploitation (CSAE), locally and internationally. Projects relevant to the prevention of CSAE and other child protection concerns have been implemented, managed and developed. Technical and material resources have been provided in building the capacity of partners on child protection and on CSAE prevention. Innovative approaches on offline and online child sexual abuse and exploitation prevention have also been developed and promoted. This report presents a summary of milestones, challenges, learnings and the over-all experience of the ACP in the context of these initiatives for the year 2019.

### Break the Silence Consolidation Project

The main objective of this project is to consolidate and further develop SFI's Break the Silence (BTS) Campaign initiatives against offline and online child sexual abuse and exploitation with and through the Break the Silence National Network (BTS NN) and relevant partner national government agencies – the Philippine National Police (PNP), the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Department of Education (DepEd); and also in strengthening SFI's capacity for advocacy and training, and developing new training materials and methods.





### **Break the Silence National Network (BTS NN)**

SFI's BTS Campaign, the advocacy for Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Prevention (CSAEP), involves the intensive training of other organizations to develop their capacity to do the advocacy on their own, primarily targeting children and communities. Throughout the years, many of the trained organizations have been gathered and are now collectively known as the BTS National Network (BTS NN), a movement of active organizations and advocates committed to protection of children from sexual abuse and exploitation in the Philippines. Their mission is to bring people together in creating protective environments for children against sexual abuse and exploitation.

With its members' presence in 12 regions in the country, the BTS NN has continuously contributed in making SFI's BTS Campaign more widespread nationwide. Organizations, including the United States Department of Homeland and Security, have recognized and tapped BTS NN members as technical resource, especially when it comes to conducting sessions on Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Prevention (CSAEP) and other child protection topics, such as CyberSafe and Child Protection Policy. Aiming to reach more communities and widening safety nets for children, SFI has screened and identified new network member organizations to be trained in 2020.

SFI's annual campaigns during the national Child Sexual Abuse Awareness Week (CSAAW) and World Safer Internet Day (SID) in February, and the National Children's Month every November, have been more extensive through and with the BTS NN.



In observance of the National CSAAW and SID, the BTS NN held its Annual Conference on February 6-7, 2019 participated in by a total of 102 network members, delegates from partner organizations and guests to include those from the Royal Danish Embassy Manila, the British Embassy Manila and Kindernothilfe Philippines, among others. With the theme “Responding to the Issue of Online Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children (OSAEC)”, the two-day Buklod, Tugon, Sigaw 2019 Conference focused on OSAEC being the new trend of child sexual abuse and exploitation. Resource persons included representatives from UNICEF, Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), International Justice Mission (IJM), Plan International, Department of Education (DepEd), Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking Region VII (IACAT 7), Women and Children Protection Center (WCPC) Mindanao Field Unit, Philippines Against Child Trafficking (PACT) and SFI.



The BTS NN Annual Gathering followed on February 8, 2019. Highlights of the gathering included demonstration of Stairway Foundation’s E-learning Platform on Children’s Rights and Child Protection, network meeting and learning sessions on BTS Practice Models, presentation of the National Baseline Study on Violence against Children (NBS VAC) and the Philippine Plan of Action to End Violence against Children (PPAEVAC) with focus on Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation. Representatives of 37 out of 45 national network members attended the gathering. Both the annual conference and the annual gathering aim to provide learning-sharing sessions to update the BTS NN members and other partners about new trends and experiences on child protection focusing on child sexual abuse and exploitation, and also as part of the process of building the network.

This year’s Children’s Month Celebration coincided with the 30th year of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Following the theme “Karapatang Pam- bata: Patuloy na Pahalagahan at Gampanan Tungo sa Magandang Kinabukasan”, the BTS NN also joined the celebration through the Advocacy Design-making Contest participated in by member organizations. There were also BTS NN members who were invited to provide inputs on CSAEP and CyberSafe during the NCM celebration in their respective regions and cities or municipalities, especially in the Visayas.



Opportunity for national-level legislative advocacy has been opened for the BTS NN through its membership in the Child Rights Network (CRN) — the largest alliance of organizations and agencies pushing for children’s rights legislation in the country. The BTS NN members are visible in mobilizations and related activities against the lowering of the Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility (MACR) in their areas. For instance, Bakyas Community Development Center, Inc. has moved for a resolution for the Local Council for the Protection of Children (LCPC) to stand against the lowering of the MACR. The BTS NN has also come up with a Position Paper against lowering the MACR and calling for the full and effective implementation of the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Law. The lowering of MACR had been considered a priority bill of the recently-adjourned 17th Congress. The bill did not make it to the cut with major account to various child rights organizations and advocates opposing the move. The BTS NN has renewed its membership to CRN before the year ended.



Among the milestones for the BTS NN in 2019 is also the development of its Database System with significant support from SFI. The overall goal of the baselining is to have an efficient and comprehensive system that facilitates generation, consolidation and processing of data and documentation to help monitor and evaluate the network and its programs. A National Consultation Workshop on the Development of the Break the Silence National Network Database System was held in September 2019 participated in by selected network members representing the 12 regions where BTS NN members are present. This led to the crafting of a tool that would be used in the network’s data baselining using the BTS Campaign core strategies or components—massive advocacy, networking and capacity-building. In the last quarter of 2019, regional roll-out workshops were conducted resulting to 100% participation of active BTS NN members, excluding the Secretariat. This initiative is a big leap for the network in firming up its entire monitoring of the BTS Campaign at its level, and very importantly in setting further directions for the network towards stability and sustainability. It also serves as a way to somehow assess impact of the earlier BTS Project, and it further allows SFI to gauge what further technical assistance must be provided to network members to strengthen its work in the area of online and offline child sexual abuse prevention and other child protection concerns.



Some findings from the initial consolidation of results of the BTS NN Data Baseline include:

- The BTS NN has 46 member organizations located in 12 regions. Results imply that majority of the members have sustained the Break the Silence (BTS) Campaign through the 36 (78.26%) active members who have been continuously conducting activities related to BTS. The remaining 10 (21.73%) organizations are noted as those who have totally closed their operations due to internal organizational concerns; those who have not fully complied with the retention requirements and; those who belong to the Deaf groups whose data have not yet been accounted for as it would require specialized approaches in administering the baselining tools.
- Another significant result that has been drawn is the increase in the number of active BTS trainers in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, especially during the implementation of the Break the Silence Project in 2011 to 2015. A total of 116 partners were trained--15 individuals from the pre-campaign period (2005 to 2010), 99 individuals during the campaign period (2011 to 2015), and two individuals in the post-campaign period (2016 to 2017). The data also shows 67.2% increase in this total number as there are 194 active BTS trainers to date.
- Since the start of the BTS Campaign, a total of 74,585 service providers have received capacity building sessions. That is 64,297.41% increase from the first 116 trained through the campaign. This is a successful manifestation of the campaign's strategy using the "multiplier effect"; connoting further that those who have been trained were also able to capacitate others.
- In terms of disclosure, BTS NN members have attended to a total of 556 disclosures of online and offline CSAE cases. Of this figure, 311 were reported to authorities and 245 were directly handled by members. Leading sources are the children themselves and parents with the BTS campaign serving as a facilitating factor for disclosure. What has to be strengthened is the mechanism to report and document accomplishments and disclosures.
- Since year 2011 a total of 12,894 BTS sessions have been facilitated by BTS focal persons and partners. Most common sessions facilitated are United Nations Convention on the Rights of Child (UNCRC) orientation, Child Sexual Abuse Prevention (CSAP) orientation, Basic CSAP training, Cyber Safety Orientation and Gender Sensitivity Training.



A total of 833,819 individuals were reached through these BTS sessions. Of this, 392,928 are adults and 440,891 are children. Most common sessions received are UNCRC orientation, CSAP orientation, Personal Safety and Protective training and Cyber Safety orientation. Looking at the data, we will see that the BTS NN trainers have been productive in conducting BTS sessions.

- Conducting massive advocacy is definitely a strong area for the network and its members. This goes hand in hand with capacity building as more stakeholders get trained means more BTS sessions can be conducted to communities and more adults and children are reached. Considering that some data can no longer be retrieved, this number might be higher and lie closer to a million adults and children reached through the BTS sessions.
- Overall, the data baselining has also gauged what the network has achieved so far and where it is at present, in terms of the BTS Campaign core strategies adopted by the BTS NN from SFI: capacity-building of partners, network-building and massive advocacy. New strategies and approaches are to be initiated to further improve the network's operations as necessary based on the results.

SFI, acting as Secretariat and Managing Board, has maintained its commitment in providing the necessary support to the BTS NN towards the goal of consolidating, developing and making the network strong and sustainable. While organizational stability for the network is still in progress in terms of staffing and establishment of its own secretariat, the network's core group, who had been appointed as the BTS NN Board of Trustees (BOT), has regularly convened for their meetings to keep track of the network's progress and set directions. Internal BOT capacity-building was done through a learning visit in One Sky Foundation based in Sangkhlaburi District bordering Thailand and Myanmar. One Sky Foundation is a non-government organization based in Thailand working to meet the needs of vulnerable children. BTS Local Networks also convened themselves for updating and direction-setting as well. The BTS NN would have its 1st set of elected trustees and officers in 2020.





## **Partnership with Key Government Institutions**

### *Philippine National Police*

SFI has continued to capacitate the Women and Children Protection Desks (WCPDs) and Police Community Relations (PCR) on Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Prevention (CSAEP). SFI was also part of the management committee for the WCPD Regional Conference in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. It was during these conferences we distributed more than 600 anatomical dolls to partner Police Stations nationwide. The dolls were designed and made specifically for Stairway as a donation from IKEA. They are used to aid in the investigation and management of child sexual abuse and exploitation cases, especially for young children. During the conference, SFI also took part in providing technical assistance on Child-friendly Spaces (CFS) where the dolls would be used.



For several years, SFI has conducted CSAEP sessions among thousands of police recruits and officers in all the 17 NPTI Regional Training Centers (RTCs). With the aim of sustaining this, SFI has aimed for the integration of CSAEP in the NPTI curriculum which, however, was not easily done. An impact assessment has been completed in 2019 to gain inputs and recommendations as to the directions of SFI's CSAEP advocacy in the NPTI.

### *Department of Social Welfare and Development*

As a poverty reduction program of the national government, the Pantawid Program targets millions of the poorest Filipino households, who will have to undergo monthly Family Development Sessions (FDS) as part of their eligibility in the program. SFI has aimed to reach these millions of Filipino households with CSAEP through the FDS. A CSAEP module that can be used in the conduct of FDS had been developed by SFI and DSWD Pantawid. These Pantawid CSAEP modules are being used during the several trainings of Pantawid staff and their selected Civil Society Organization (CSO) partners, who are expected to facilitate CSAEP sessions among Pantawid households during FDS.

In 2019, SFI, the National Project Management Office (NPMO) and partner DSWD Regional Program Management Offices (RPMOs) engaged in continuous partnership meetings to strengthen the implementation of CSAEP advocacy with DSWD 4Ps through the Family Development Sessions (FDS).

SFI consulted with the NPMO Family Development Division and Gender and Development Division (GAD) on the status of their review on the draft guidelines in implementing FDS-CSAP with provisions on reporting protocols on disclosures. The NPMO has recognized the importance of management of Gender-based Violence (GBV) related cases involving their partner-beneficiaries. GAD has noted that the institution was then in the process of crafting a general referral protocol for Case Management within PPPP. It was proposed that the draft guidelines, proposed by SFI, be reviewed by GAD for possible inclusion of key provisions in the general protocol. SFI was recommended to be part of the national consultation workshop among NGOs, which would be part of the protocol development process.

At the regional level, SFI's FDS-CSAP in the National Capital Region (NCR) has been given citation by the Regional Program Management Office as one of the program's good initiatives and collaboration with an NGO partner.

Partnership expansion also materialized through engagement with Region VIII Program Management Office in collaboration with a BTS NN partner in Northern Samar. In October 2019, Pantawid workers and some of the BTS Local Network members were trained on CSAP in the region.

SFI has increased its advocacy efforts on the integration of CyberSafe in the engagement with the DSWD Pantawid Program through the FDS. A tri-partite partnership is being explored with Facebook, DSWD and SFI not only on incorporating Cybersafety but also Digital Literacy through the FDS, with the same objective of reaching more families, especially those who may be at risk of online protection concerns.





### *Department of Education*

SFI has continued working towards institutionalization of CyberSafe with the Department of Education (DepEd) through Training of Trainers (TOT) in Regional Offices. In 2019, implementation of the DepEd CyberSafety Regional Training of Trainers had been done for 12 regions, covering 720 division level trainers from 240 DepEd division offices all over the Philippines. The CyberSafe TOTs is the capacity building initiative of DepEd to promote the implementation of CyberSafe education in schools via the CyberSafe lesson plans, Dalir-eskwela videos, Stairway ELearning courses and Facebook Digital tayo modules. Pilot-testing of revised CyberSafe TOT Modules was conducted in Quezon City. Following this, as part of technical support, SFI hosted a training revision session for DepEd CyberSafe training team to mentor its new members and finalize the training design for Regional CyberSafe TOTs.

In terms of handling child sexual abuse and exploitation cases, the proposed addendum on case management protocols for online abuse cases was presented in DepEd CyberSafe and is being discussed in CyberSafe Regional TOTs. Policy-wise, SFI has presented the idea of having a social media policy in the context of safety, which DepEd would pursue. A Technical Working Group has been organized for the purpose. Inter-island consultations on the crafting of National Social Media Policy in schools did not push through this year due to transition in Child Protection Office within DepEd. This is on track for implementation in 2020.

An initial writeshop on child safeguarding standards for DepEd NCR was conducted producing the draft child safeguarding standard for NCR. The writeshop was attended by 37 personnel with two (2) representatives from each division and a staff from the Regional Legal Office. A validation workshop followed to further enhance the draft. The draft Child Safeguarding policy will be subjected to final validation and internal reviews. In support to this, DepEd NCR also agreed to train a 40-member child protection pool of trainers who will do child protection training for the whole NCR. The child safeguarding standards aim to put into place minimum standards on behavioral protocols and program implementation to pre-vent abuse and harm of students during everyday face to face interaction and during special activities such as sporting events. The Regional Child Safeguarding standards also include a provision on social media, in order to make sure that school personnel to student interaction online stays safe.

In November, the Department of Education marked the 30th anniversary of the United Nation's Convention on Children's Rights by hosting its first National Summit on the Rights of the Child in Education. In recognition and appreciation of the department's partnership with Stairway, we were invited to speak at the forum and contribute to the event program with a statement of commitment to continue to partner with the DepEd in protecting, respecting and fulfilling the rights of the child. However, what really made Stairway stand out during the 2-day event was the nearly 100 children participants running a parallel session using our cybersafe e-learning course.





## E-learning

Stairway has developed innovative materials and provided multiple trainings on child protection, especially child sexual abuse prevention, for more than two (2) decades, locally and internationally. Over the same span of time, we have all witnessed how technology has contributed to putting children more at risk. Acting on this new issue of concern, we started delving into the subject of technology related crimes against children around 15 years ago, and over the past 5 years, we have worked to develop solutions to match the increasing threats using the very technology that poses the greatest risk for children. Through e-learning, we can roll out effective campaigns to inform, educate, empower and protect children at a pace and a scope unprecedented.

On February 27 2019, we were ready to launch an e-learning platform designed to promote transformative learning on Child Rights, Child Sexual Abuse Prevention and CyberSafety among children, parents, teachers, social workers, advocacy groups, and any individual, who wants to protect children from both online and offline abuse and exploitation. Prior to the launch, the entire educational package had been through endless rounds of testing among a broad variety of users, ranging from elementary to college students, educators, curriculum developers and child protection practitioners. While there are still technical aspects that we want to improve upon, the overall feedback was that it is a great resource of information and education delivered in a pedagogical fashion to support and enable learners.



We are aware that in many places, where innovative materials and approaches to child protection are needed the most, delivery of the e-learning is not possible due to unstable or not yet existing Internet connection. To address that, we have created an off-line version, which of course compromises several qualities of the whole education and information concept, as it does not have the magnificent potential of reach that the Internet provides, and the dynamism in terms of updating and upgrading is not present either. However, while the concept of reaching children in the millions through stable Internet connections may still be ahead of our time, we have a sound basis for believing it is an imminent development. Thus, our goal is to have high quality, dynamic, interactive, easily accessible child protection materials and delivery models ready when the technology is there to support it. Preferably, in as many localized versions as possible to enhance the effect and optimize the reach of this potentially uniquely effective tool for massive education and protection of children anywhere.

We are currently in the process of translating the entire platform into Tagalog. As it is the case with the English version, the Filipino version will also be available off-line.





### **Break the Silence Campaign Project with SM-ZOTO**

Stairway has partnered with the Samahan ng Mamamayan ng Zone One Tondo Organization (SM-ZOTO) for the Break the Silence (BTS) campaign in Caloocan, Malabon and Navotas (CAMANA) cities, among the largest urban poor areas in the National Capital Region, which have also recorded CSAE cases. The BTS Campaign with SM ZOTO aims to reach children and families in urban areas that may be having limited knowledge on child sexual abuse and exploitation. SM-ZOTO has much experience in working with urban poor communities, including CAMANA, whose children may be more exposed to or at risk of experiencing abuse and exploitation.

The National Baseline Study on Violence Against Children (NBS VAC) commissioned by Unicef shows high overall prevalence of various forms of violence against children perpetrated at home, school and communities with Local Government Units (LGUs) generally having low capacity to prevent and respond to VAC cases. This partnership has an overall goal of protecting CAMANA children from online and offline child sexual abuse and exploitation through strengthened prevention and response mechanisms of the Local Councils for the Protection of Children (LCPCs). The project has mainly used (1) baselining (2) capacity building, (3) policy advocacy (4) massive advocacy and (5) technical assistance and material resource augmentation as strategies to achieve the goal.

Linkages with CAMANA LGUS were established and LGU representatives, community leaders, and youth groups were trained on CSAP and Cyber Safety to support massive advocacy in communities. Core groups of children were convened and consulted in the development of child-friendly anti-OSAEC advocacy booklet, which the group can use in community advocacy sessions. Banking on the early gains of the project, the campaign's focus has been on strengthening the prevention and response mechanisms of the Local Council for the Protection of Children (LCPC) on child sexual abuse and exploitation. The LCPC is the structure mandated to develop, implement and monitor policies, programs and services for children at the local level.



For 2019, BTS SM ZOTO Project completed its CSAP and CyberSafe Trainings for Focal Persons from SM-ZOTO and Local Government Units (LGUs) of CAMANA. Following this is the capacity-building of LCPC members. The first two trainings on Child Sexual Abuse Prevention and CyberSafe for the CAMANA LCPCs were focused on capacitating partners in doing advocacy campaigns for the prevention of both online and offline child sexual abuse and exploitation. Complementing these is the Multi-Disciplinary Team training on Online Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children (OSAEC) aimed at strengthening a multi-stakeholder approach in responding to the online sexual abuse and exploitation of children. Outputs of these trainings could be seen in LGU-led advocacy session on CSAP and CyberSafe and the crafting of a localized protocol in handling OSAEC cases. The drafting of a local protocol is considered a milestone for this engagement for there is no standard protocol yet being followed particularly to OSAEC, neither at the national nor at the local level; noting further that there had been reported OSAEC cases in CAMANA.

Another innovative approach to support the LCPC in performing its mandates is to have an evidence-based child-rights programming with focus on child sexual abuse and exploitation. A baseline study on the landscape of Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation in CAMANA has been initiated in collaboration with SM-ZOTO and the LGUs. The participatory nature of the research is what separates it from similar initiatives. Throughout the process, starting from design conceptualization and tools development up to data gathering and collation, the undertaking put high consideration both on technical inputs and practical experiences of multi-level, multi-sectoral partners (e.g. LGU, PO, academe, community partners). The baselining also observed the necessary child safeguarding policies and ethical guidelines, and has been done with utmost consideration of confidentiality and sensitivity of data being gathered from various groups of respondents.







Throughout the data gathering, leaders from SM-ZOTO have maintained close coordination with focal persons from the LGUs, as they are the authority in-charge with the jurisdiction. Process-wise, the beauty of the study is not only confined in its purpose to provide us with the baseline on CSAE, but also seen on the impact in terms of enabling the community partners to significantly take part in such technical undertaking and strengthening their engagement with their respective LGUs and vice versa as bound by the process. Moreover, it has served as a vehicle to further develop the leadership capacities of SM ZOTO community leaders in the area of child protection.

Target respondents were collaboratively achieved and the process is now nearing its completion through participatory interpretation and analysis of findings. The overall process is geared towards them having a sense of ownership of the entire initiative rather than seeing it as just a component of an external project.

The baseline study will be endorsed to the LCPCs to be used as a reference in localizing the Philippine Plan of Action to End Violence Against Children (PPAEVAC) with focus on child sexual abuse and exploitation, both online and offline.

In terms of massive advocacy, the BTS SM ZOTO campaign entailed direct sessions as a means for trained adult and youth facilitators to further develop their skills. Session guides in using the “Dalir-eskwela” videos were developed alongside results monitoring tools to measure effectiveness. For sustainability purposes, a core group of children from CAMANA was provided basic training on CyberSafety as second liners to the current youth facilitators. The #BeCyberSafe Advocacy Booklet against OSAEC has been developed to be used as an additional innovative tool in teaching cyber safety to community children.

In general, technical assistance is being provided continuously to partner LGUs through representation in the LCPCs. SFI has also been accredited as a Civil Society Organization (CSO) partner in the cities of Caloocan, Malabon and Navotas.



## Other Engagements

### *International*

- SFI represented the Philippines in the Facebook Global Safety Summit in New York.
- The Stairway CyberSafe initiative was presented during the Facebook Asia Pacific Safety Summit held in Bangkok, Thailand.
- SFI also participated in the 1st Facebook Philippines Safety round table event, wherein various stakeholders talked about the child safety issues faced in the country.
- Cybersafe was presented in the Southeast Asian Ministries of Education Organization (SEAMEO) Innotech Forum. SEAMEO is an international organization among governments of Southeast Asian countries to promote regional cooperation in education, science and culture. There were succeeding meetings with SEAMEO Innotech reaching agreements for SEAMEO and SFI to co-promote each other's learning resources on cybersafety, especially for the offline E-learning packages to be promoted in SEAMEO member states. The reason that offline is being targeted is because aside from Singapore, all SEA education ministries or department have internet connectivity concerns.
- Technical assistance has been extended to Kindernothilfe (KNH) partners locally and internationally (e.g., Child Protection Policy training in India and CPP Training to Vietnam via the Adoptions Centrum engagement). SFI also managed to work out having the ELearning courses on CyberSafety be used as the main learning materials for the planned KNH CyberSafety pilot trainings for Kenya and Sri Lanka in 2020.
- Online meetings and sessions with Fritzoy Academy took place to produce a series of online learning courses on child protection policy development.
- SFI also served as a technical resource in the 1st Asia Care Network Conference by Martin James Foundation.



### *National*

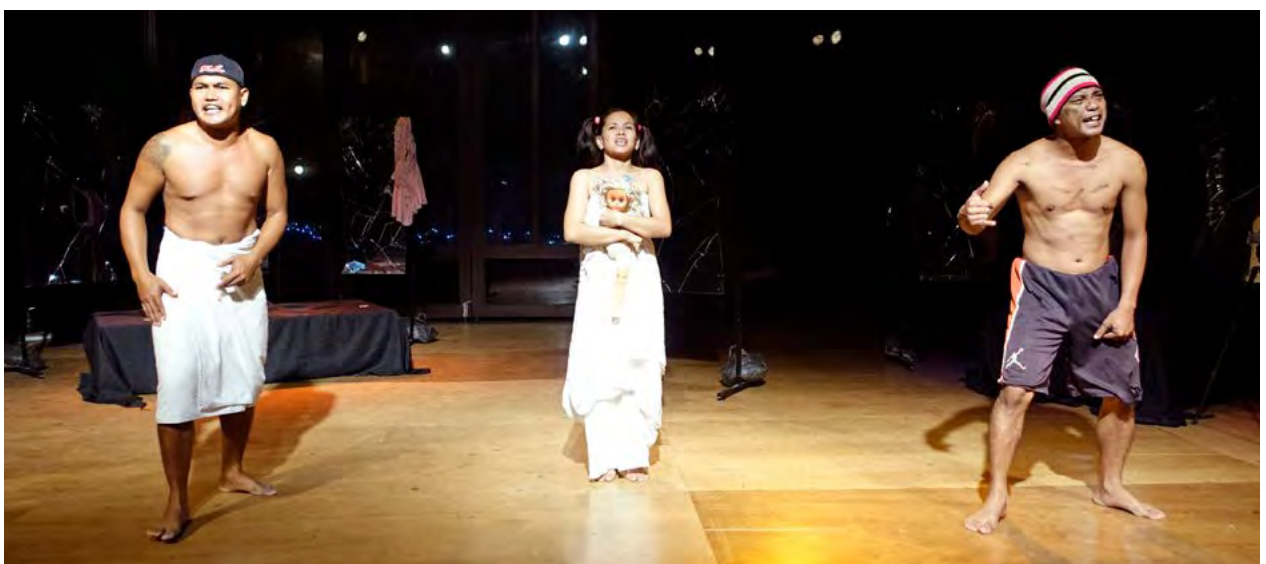
SFI took part in related initiatives of other partners such as Plan International's Cyber-Talino launching, CyberSafePH Roadmap Planning of the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) CyberSafety Unit, Women and Children's Internet Protection Summit organized by the PNP Anti-Cybercrime group, and Digital Tayo launch of the Facebook Philippines. CyberSafe sessions were also conducted for the National Association of Guidance Counselors of the Philippines, Barangay Officials of the Municipality of Kawit and Noveleta, Cavite and PNP WCPD Officers.

Microsourcing Philippines has also partnered with SFI in its fund-raising activity where proceeds will support the conduct of school-based advocacy sessions on CyberSafe using Dalir-Eskwela videos.

Stairway has also participated in consultative workshops and inter-agency events at the national, regional and local levels to provide inputs in line with its advocacies and other child protection issues including Advocacy and Communications (ADVOCOM) Planning for the National Plan of Action for Children led by the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC); National Safer Internet Day Celebration organized by the Inter-Agency Council Against Child Pornography (IACACP), Regional Inter-Agency Council meetings and Local Council for the Protection of Children meetings. SFI was awarded the OpenGov excellence award for the CyberSafe Project.

Internally, two new projects have been developed for implementation in 2020—the Child Protection Project in Puerto Galera in collaboration with SFI's Community Assistance Program and Family Home Program, and the Cybersafe Schools Project in collaboration with selected members of the Break the Silence National Network.

SFI's goal of reaching and sensitizing as many children and adults as possible can only be sustained long-term through institutionalization of CSAEP and child protection strategies within organizations, especially government agencies, based on the organizations' respective mandates and contexts. Existing strategies, approaches and initiatives have been followed through, assessed and sustained, while also initiating new ones to better respond to the evolving landscape of child sexual abuse and exploitation, especially in the cyber space due to technological advancements in Internet and other forms of communication. The challenges and other considerations that have emerged have called for more evidence-based, sustainable and workable strategies. These all the more necessitate continuous strengthening of the operational and human resource capacities and systems of SFI's Advocacy and Capacity-building Program, not only in 2019 but in the coming years as well, towards increased stability and sustainability.



Throughout 2019, the theater play “Cracked Mirrors” continued to make up an efficient and creative voice to create awareness of child sexual abuse and exploitation. After more than 15 years of performances, the stories and testimonies have reached tens of thousands of people in seven (7) countries and 3 (three) continents.



## Family Home Program

We served a total of twenty-five (25) children in the Family Home Program from January to December 2019. From the group of boys that graduated in June, five were reunited with their respective families, seven were referred to a partner child caring agency for long term residential placement, while one stayed in the program for further case intervention. Stairway still extends educational assistance every month for two boys from the previous batch, who were reunited with their families in Albay and Camarines Sur respectively. They are both attending high school and doing well.

In September, twelve (12) new children were admitted, the eleven (11) coming from four different government centers in Metro Manila and one from our nearby community. Like the previous groups, these boys are formerly homeless, abandoned, forgotten, and voluntarily surrendered children. At the end of the year, we had maintained a population of 13 boys at the center.

### Health Services

All the boys from the 2018 group graduated in great physical condition, and all of the newly admitted children (2019 batch) underwent dental and medical health assessment including laboratory tests, such as x-ray, CBC, fecalysis, urinalysis and physician consultation. Some of them had medical treatment for urinary tract infection, ascariasis, and skin problems. They also underwent dental treatment such as extraction, restoration, oral prophylaxis, and one child was provided with a partial denture. At present, all kids are healthy and physically active without any serious medical issues. Their height increased from 2 cm to 4 cm, and they gained weight from 2 kg to 6 kg over their first four months in the program.



Newly arrived boys.

### **Education and Therapy**

Upon admission, children were given a Stairway Children's Handbook, which was processed and discussed with the social worker during the orientation period. This is an interactive process, in which the children themselves help to define the framework for the home they will be spending at least the next year in.

### **Daily Classes**

Following the introduction week of the 2019 group came the academic assessment to determine the placement of the children into 4 different class levels, which makes for optimal individual attention in their new learning environment. The educational program still offers a comprehensive range of classes in English, Mathematics, Science, Filipino, Geography, Music, Drama, Arts, Handicrafts, Woodwork, Baking, Environmental Awareness, Life Skills, and Personality Development.

The children are not being graded for their academic performance, but there is a monthly progress report where teachers give their observations for each child's development, behavior, strengths and needs for improvement. After consolidating the feedback from all of the teachers, the head-teacher will talk to each child and discuss with them the results. This system allows the children to know and to appreciate how much they improve, which inspires continued effort and positive development.







### **Adjustments in Attitude and Behaviour**

The 2019-2020 group of boys are smaller and younger than last year's group, and they come from 4 different centers, as opposed to only one center last year. This means that it has been more challenging for the boys to adjust to their new environment and a new group of peers, so the first months presented a fair amount of conflict. Consideration and kindness to the next are new concepts for children, who have been brought up in an environment of neglect, violence and abuse.

In order to accelerate modification in the children's negative and aggressive behavior towards each other, we introduced a motivating system called "THINK", which stands for "True, Helpful, Inspiring, Necessary, and Kind". To gauge and assess the individual child's progress, each one of them collects signatures from the adults with whom they have regular interaction and who witness their behavior. A certain number of signatures are needed to enjoy some of the privileges, such as watching movies during weekends and holidays. In this way, the boys are encouraged to reflect before they speak or act to reduce degrading attitude towards self and others, which of course makes for a more positive atmosphere.



As a standard procedure the children undergo workshops on children's rights and child protection. This year the boys enjoyed learning through the Stairway e-learning modules, which we processed in discussions following the sessions.









Environmental class.



Baking class with kuya Joni





Learning handicrafts



The first project in the woodwork classes was making a low stool, which they use during laundry and dishwashing.

### Theater and Drama Therapy

Stairway's theatre remains to be a central and fundamental element in the processes of facilitating dramatic change within and amongst the children in the Family Home Program, while at the same time developing authentic and creative child rights advocacy built on the principle of child participation.

The psychodrama sessions are designed to recapture the children's lost childhoods and stimulate their emotional intelligence through establishment of a sense of self-worth. Over the past two months, the boys have developed quite significantly as can be seen with their progress of how they can listen and carry out instructions, how they can interact with one another without starting an argument or fighting, and how their minds have expanded to imagine new ideas and situations. In addition, the boys have shown that activities that were once challenging to them are now done with ease, such as counting to 100, playing "Simon Says", and playing a game wherein they must pass a ball in a pattern, then add another ball and another until they have at least 5 balls being passed between them. This is a difficult task if there is constant talking and blaming going on.

Story telling is an integral part of the drama and personality development sessions. The children enjoyed stories such as "The Missing Piece" and "The Big O", both renown children's books by Shel Silverstein. These two books have helped to inspire the boys to try to grow and to be open to new ideas and try new things. "My Many Colored Days" by Dr. Seuss, is another book they enjoyed, which helped them to examine and express their emotions more positively and with added nuance.

After a very successful season performing the Annual Traditional Stairway Christmas Show, "One Wish", the boys are now working on the next challenge, which is our theatrical rendition of the environmental play, "The Lorax" by Dr. Seuss. In performing "The Lorax" for hundreds of children from our local community and from afar, our boys play an active contributing role in Stairway's Environmental Awareness for Children and Youth Program.



With nearly 30 years of experience, Monica has mastered the art of using the stage as a space for cathartic release and reconstruction







## Youth for Change

We hosted eight (8) Youth for Change camps during 2019 with an average of 40 children participants coming from extremely diverse backgrounds. A typical Youth For Change group may be constituted by the children in our family home, who used to live on the streets, a group of indigenous children from our local mountain community, and a group of more privileged children and youth coming from prestigious educational institutions like International School Manila, Singapore American School, Shanghai American School and Harvard University. Based on nearly 20 years of running Youth for Change camps, we dare say that they leave a strong impact on all participants, regardless of socio-economic and educational background. Shared reflections from participants testify to an experience in which stereotypes and prejudice are challenged by sincere feelings of love, compassion, gratitude and genuine respect for others. According to numerous participants over the years, they went through a life changing experience.





## Community Assistance Program

After many years of having a multi-faceted collaboration with our Local Government Unit (LGU), we have gone a step further in 2019 cultivating the idea of making Puerto Galera a certified Child Friendly and Child Safe municipality. This means a new project/collaboration that aims to improve the functionality of existing institutions within the Local Government Unit (LGU) to respond to child protection concerns. We will enhance advocacy efforts at the local level through networking and partnership, along with information, education and campaigns to achieve a clear child protection agenda. As part of the preparatory process, we have facilitated a number of meetings and consultations with the various stakeholders of the LGU, like the school authorities and all the local government heads. The conclusion became a plan for a five (5) years partnership, which will start in January 2020 and run until December 2024.

While several specific preliminary exercises took place during 2019, the build-up for such project, where we are invited into the LGU to help advice and assist them to meet their mandate in child protection, has been a process extending over many years of collaboration. Still following the line of government recognition, the Bureau of Standard of the Department of Social Welfare and Development Office awarded the Community Assistance Program 3 years of accreditation last year.



### **Local Child Protection**

Over the past year, the positive development in our relationship with the local government has been manifested in their increased interest to invite us as a resource to facilitate sessions pertaining to various aspects of child protection and education. Below is a table showing some of the child Protection activities facilitated in our local community in 2019.

<b>Title of Activity</b>	<b>Description of Participants</b>	<b>No. of Participants</b>
Adolescent Reproductive Health orientation	Grade 7-12 high school students from Puerto Galera National High School main campus	300
Child Protection Policy localization	Teachers and principal from Baclayan Mangyan School	12
Cybersafety session	Grade 7-10 students from Puerto Galera National High School-Dulangan Extension	237
Cybersafety session	Grade 7-10 students from Puerto Galera National High School-Palangan Extension	286
Cybersafety session	Grade 5-6 students Facundo Lopez Elementary School	54
Responsibilities of Filipino Children and the Importance of Education	Puerto Galera National High School-Dulangan Extension	230
Child Protection Training (IN-Service Training of teachers)	Primary and secondary school teachers from public and private schools in Puerto Galera	412
e-learning on Children's Rights	Grade 5-6 students from Aninuan, San Isidro, Minolo, Balatero, Sto. Nino and Baclayan Elementary School	630
e-learning on Children's Rights	Information and Communication teachers	17
		TOTAL 2,178



### Community Social Services and Local Crisis Intervention

In addition to continuous provision of assistance to community people, who sought assistance for a number of good reasons, we were able to strengthen partnership with local government on providing services to children in need of special protection. School principals and guidance counselors regularly consult us on child abuse cases. The next table is listing the social services provided to the community through referrals from the principals, guidance counselors, municipal social welfare and development office, concerned citizens and walk-in community people.

Assistance provided to community people:

Form of Services	No. of person provided services
Therapeutic counseling to sexually abused children	5
Counseling session to a guardian who abused two young children - 6 & 9 years old	3
Referral to the local Social Welfare and Development Office: -mother with child custody issue (1), sexually abused children (2)	3
Referral to Women and Children protection desk: Mother beaten by her employer (1), Sexually abused children (2).	2
Mediation of two adolescents with their parents - cyberbullying case	6
Placement of an abandoned child to the Family Home Program of SFI	1
Financial assistance for medical-anti-rabies (3), pregnancy (1), appendicitis operation (2), respiratory infection (3), consultation & medicine (5)	14
Financial assistance for burial	3
Transportation service for burial	7
Transportation service to bring patients to the hospital	3

In addition to social services, we also organized and provided socio-cultural activities to local children. A music workshop was facilitated by Joseph Bowie, an American jazz trombonist and vocalist. Two hundred seventeen (217) students and 10 teachers from 3 local schools participated in the music workshops that spanned over a week.



### **Educational Assistance**

The Educational Assistance Program continuously expands the number of beneficiaries. For school year (SY) 2018-2019, there were 484 beneficiaries and 500 in school year 2019-2020. Among the 484 beneficiaries in SY 2018-2019 four hundred sixty-two (462) completed their level. The 22, who did not complete (19 high school and 3 college), were due to the following reasons: health problem (3), academic challenges (6), early relationship (3), financial difficulty (3), absenteeism (2), family problem (2), lack of compliance (2) and pregnancy (1).

The level of services we provide to beneficiaries are individually tailored depending on their needs. Everybody receives school supplies and monthly allowance, while some receive transportation allowance because of the distance between their house and the school. Indigenous beneficiaries in high school receive more services, such as lunch meals, uniforms, weekend tutorial, weekday tutorial and computer classes. All college beneficiaries receive Php. 4,000.00 educational allowances twice a school year. Students taking vocational courses receive Php. 6,000.00 educational allowances twice a year, since the vocational courses are shorter and we try to encourage more students to take that direction.

Below is the table showing the profile of beneficiaries by level and sex:

#### **School Year 2018-2019**

Level	Male	Female	Total
Primary	14	21	35
Secondary	136	231	367
College	24	58	82
Vocational	0	0	0
Total	174	310	484

#### **School Year 2019-2020**

Level	Male	Female	Total
Primary	10	13	23
Secondary	130	212	342
College	44	89	133
Vocational	1	1	2
Total	184	315	500

School attendance was monitored every month and school grades were monitored every quarter. In addition, regular school visits were conducted once a week per campus or as need arose. Parents and beneficiaries' meetings were conducted in each community (Barangay) 3 times during the year. Topics discussed during these meetings were:

- School attendance, absenteeism and grades
- Community clean up participation, and other clean-up related concerns
- Attendance at life skills sessions
- Communication to CAP team members



Thirteen (13) beneficiaries with special needs were provided with special interventions in 2019, including one (1) medical assistance, two (2) referrals to the local social welfare and development office for case management of sexually abused children, one (1) therapeutic session to a sexually abused child, (9) counseling to beneficiaries with academic problems and family issues. For beneficiaries with below 80% grades in Math and English, tutorial classes were provided through partnership with teachers from local high schools. A total of 47 beneficiaries were provided two-week tutorials in Math and English during the summer break in April.

To continue reducing the number of dropouts and for the general development of the youth, we provide all scholars with at least 2 Life Skills Sessions throughout their time in high school. The first while they are in grade 7 to 9 and the second while in grade 10 to 12. The sessions are designed according to age and developmental stage and include topics like self-awareness, adolescent reproductive health, time and budget management, premarital sex, LGBT awareness, sexually transmitted infections, true friends, bullying, self-management, self-esteem and any other challenges and issues of adolescents that may surface during the interaction. The children and youth are also provided orientation on Children's rights and prevention of child sexual abuse in separate sessions. Parents of beneficiaries are likewise provided session on Children's rights and prevention of child sexual abuse.

To assist the education of beneficiaries, we look for organizations providing free books for students. In 2019 we were able to access a large quantity of story books and work books from C&E Foundation Inc. that were distributed among two hundred fifty (250) students at a Stairway Free Book Fair, along with twenty-two (22) primary schools and five (5) high schools. We established partnership with Tondo Community Initiative (TCI) and Homer Foundation Inc. in providing scholarship to local youth this year. Five young people were admitted in the scholarship of Homer Foundation Inc. last November. TCI provided for all the basic needs of the 5 youths, including food, accommodation and transportation allowances. The Propeller Club Manila is another partner organization providing scholarships to local youth. Eight (8) young people were admitted in their culinary scholarship last August 2019.



### Indigenous Program

The past year has seen some significant developments and improvements within the indigenous people project in the Baclayan Community. Over the past 8 years of working with the school, we have witnessed a 500-600% increase in students' attendance, which greatly surpassed our expectations. Aside from pulling the children into the classrooms, the feeding program strategy also had the desired positive impact on the children's health condition. Having met or even exceeded our goals in terms of attendance and health, we came to look more into the quality of what happens in the classrooms. This is, however, an enclosed space to which we have had no access and only limited influence, but through a partnership with the Department of Education accredited organization "Teach for the Philippines (TFP)", we have found a remedy to help influence the quality of the education offered to the children in Baclayan Elementary School. With the support from one of our major financing partners, TFP has now allocated three teachers for a period of 2 years to help fill in some of the gaps identified in the school. Beginning last August, the three young teachers stay at the Stairway Farm and utilize our Children Health and Education Center for many of their sessions with the students. We hope to continue a constructive collaboration with the TFP during their 2 years deployment in Baclayan supporting our aim to push for a self-sustainable community within a not too distant future.





Since the TFP teachers have started their reading and math sessions with the grade 5 and 6 students, we have had the chance to put our attention more on to the younger students, which is a desired development as it gives us the opportunity to plant a stronger interest for education at a young age. Thus, the Drop Everything And Read (DEAR) campaign was implemented in October. It is a purposive program for kinder, grade 1 and 2 students, which aims to complement the reading activities inside the classroom. Using storytelling as the springboard, the students engage in writing, drawing, fine motor activities and critical thinking games. The objective is to develop a community of learners and make reading a part of their culture. Forty six (46) students and three (3) teachers participated in the DEAR Program.

Another program designed to motivate children to come to school and increase classroom participation is the Let the Children Play Program. It promotes the importance of physical play and its positive effect on concentration, motivation, social skills and self-confidence. Forty six (46) grade 1, 2 and 3 students and 2 teachers participated in these sessions.



The sessions with the younger children are facilitated by our new Community Assistance Officer along with a Dutch volunteer, both of them with solid backgrounds in education and pedagogy. While we of course value the opportunity to work directly with the young students, we consider the involvement of the teachers being even more significant. It is our aim to inspire the teachers to use more child-centered approaches in their classroom, so their participation in our sessions with the children is crucial.

Aside from the few teachers being part of the above mentioned sessions, we managed to have all the teachers and the principal of the Baclayan School sign up and participate in a separate training about play and child centered teaching methodologies. The objectives of the training were to highlight the importance of playing in the classroom, share ideas about playful teaching and how to become a playful teacher, and introduce new games (energizers, circle games, outdoor games, learning games, etc). Everybody responded positively to the training and appreciated the opportunity to learn about new/other methodologies in teaching. Thus, the next session has been scheduled for January 2020.



Twenty (20) students from Baclayan participated in two Youth for Change camps at Stairway. The first camp was with students from Singapore American School and the children under our Family Home Program. The second camp was with students from Shanghai American School and the Stairway boys. During the camps the Baclayan students were exposed to a diverse group of children from many different countries, cultures and religious backgrounds, and they were part of workshops and discussions dealing with Children's Rights, discrimination and environmental conservation. For many of them it is a truly mind blowing experience that contributes immensely to motivate them to study hard to become the best they can be.

The Baclayan grade 6 students came back to Stairway to attend a two-day exposure activity at Stairway along with 15 other students from other schools in our municipality. This is an annual activity aiming to prepare some of our elementary graduate scholars for high school life. Part of the activity was a visit to the National high school. Other activities included workshops on children's rights, environmental conservation, friendship building, eliminating discrimination, and respecting and appreciating diversity.



### Feeding Program

Parents' participation and accountability in the feeding program significantly improved compared to previous school years, thus the kitchen operated with no interruptions since the opening of classes in June 2019. During days where the cook in charge was absent, parents were able to manage the feeding center on their own. This is proof that the feeding program has not only benefit the school children, but also the adults in the community, who have become more empowered through the community task.

Breakfast and lunch were served to an average of 168 pupils from January to December. Two hundred forty seven (247) students were registered as the highest number served and ninety eight (98) being the lowest. The most common reason for the extremely low attendance is the weather, but absence of teachers and students extending their vacation with a few days are also counting for some of the low attendance.

A new initiative for this year was the participation of Grade 5 and Grade 6 students in washing the dishes after lunch. This was recommended by the teachers in order to train the students doing household chores. The teachers' also manifested their enhanced engagement as they took the initiative to inform parents, who were absent from their cooking duties. Furthermore, they now submit the daily attendance of the students to SFI on a regular basis. In general, this school year has presented evidence that the teachers and the parents are taking more ownership of the feeding program, which lessens the burden on Stairway and makes the initiative more sustainable.





Starting this school year, we stopped serving meat, aside from fish. The sources of protein are from several green vegetables and legumes, beans, tofu, eggs, milk, and sometimes a soy based meat alternative. The decision to stop serving meat in the feeding center, or in any other Stairway program, is part of an effort to lessen our carbon footprints and promote a more plant-based diet. The regular gardening classes for the grade 6 students and their parents are initiatives supporting the same objective.

There were 6 severely malnourished and 19 malnourished students at the Baclayan School at the start of the current school year. Below is the table showing the health status of students from kinder to grade 6. Nutrition status of students will be measured again before the school year ends in March 2020.

Grade Level	Severely Malnourished	Malnourished	Normal	Overweight	Obese
Kinder	0	2	27	0	0
Grade 1	1	5	25	0	0
Grade 2	3	1	36	0	0
Grade 3	0	4	36	0	0
Grade 4	1	3	44	0	0
Grade 5	0	0	44	0	0
Grade 6	1	4	39	0	0
<b>Total No.</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>



### **Education and Health for Indigenous Children and Youth in High School**

We expanded the provision of meals to Indigenous People (IP) beneficiaries enrolled in three satellite schools of Puerto Galera National High School (PGNHS) and in San Teodoro, as we learned that some students enrolled in these schools were not regularly eating lunch. As of now, 75 IP high school students are provided lunch on a daily basis. Majority of them are still from Baclayan community (49), who are enrolled in the main campus of PGNHS.

In partnership with the high schools faculties and the peer mentors, we strengthened the tutorial program (weekend and weekdays). Weekday tutorials were conducted for twenty five to thirty (25-30) Indigenous scholars from Monday through Thursday in the afternoon. Stairway used to be present in every session, but throughout 2019 one of the teachers from the PGNHS Main Campus has volunteered to be in charge of managing the sessions. We still provide internet connection and a printer for research projects, and we also sponsor a light snack for students and tutors alike.

For school year 2018-2019, an average of 35 IP beneficiaries attended weekend tutorials. Students were assisted in their school assignments, researches, and general lessons in every session. For 2019-2020 school year, we zoomed in to give more focus to grade 7-8 beneficiaries and some academically challenged students in grade 9 and 10. There are 25-35 high school IP beneficiaries attending the weekend tutorials. We have also facilitated special life skills sessions designed for the specific indigenous context. The different activities have helped in the discovery of the strength and interest of the students.

We conducted two computer camps last summer, one for existing high school beneficiaries and one for incoming grade 7 beneficiaries. Aside from learning how to use a computer, the incoming grade 7 students also engaged in English and Math tutorial, handicrafts, life skills sessions and swimming lessons during the five day camp. Grade 9–10 students had a similar age appropriated program.



With the new sports facility at the Children Health and Education Center we conducted two sports camps in March and September as team building activities between the IP students from the afternoon tutorial sessions and their mentors. Both camps were participated by around sixty (60) youth. The Sports Camps aim to develop cooperation and camaraderie among mentors and mentees and break stereotypes, prejudice and bias about being indigenous. The camps were run with the help of volunteer teachers and volunteer youth facilitators.

We had the satisfaction of being presented with some solid indicators of success from several years of work with the Mangyan students, as four (4) senior high school and two (2) junior high school IP beneficiaries received academic awards during the recognition day last November 8 at PGNHS Main Campus. Another positive indicator is the fact that we only encountered one case of pregnancy among IP students for 2019. The lowest since we started the program eight years ago! Furthermore, we observed high self-esteem among the Mangyan children; some of them even expressed being proud to be Mangyan.





### **Children Health and Education Center (CHEC)**

Since we started working with the TFP and hired a new focal person for the indigenous program, the CHEC has become an increasingly busy place. The TFP teachers are using CHEC for regular classes, and we are using it for a wide scope of activities from medical consultations, tutorials, community meetings, and adult literacy classes. The students are also increasingly using the library and the playroom in their free time.

The sports court is busy with activities. We held the first Basketball clinic in Baclayan during the summer with 25 children, 16 boys and 9 girls grade 4 to 6. There is a cultural notion in the Philippines that girls cannot play basketball, which we do not mind to challenge. The girls of course loved having the rare opportunity to get into the game, and for the remainder of the year we continued to have basketball training for boys and girls two times a week at CHEC.

In addition to activities conducted by Stairway and the school at CHEC, the community also utilized the center for community affairs, like the celebration of the Kaaldawan festival, honoring the indigenous people.



### **Health, Hygiene and Sanitation**

The medical clinic served 445 patients from January to December 2019. Most of the illness encountered were common colds, cough, headache, toothache, abdominal pain, diarrhea, loss of appetite, wounds, skin rashes, ear pus, body weakness, dizziness, nausea and vomiting, back pain, flank pain, fatigue, high and low blood pressure. Pain relievers and multivitamins were the commonly used medicines. The bi-weekly consultations were also used for discussing health issues with the patients, including family planning, basic hygiene and nutrition for pregnant women. Majority of the patients were mothers and their children.

We have long ago established that a large portion of the health issues faced by the people in Baclayan is related to poor sanitary conditions. In five Sitios (sub-divisions) in the Community, counting 1,072 people in 274 households, only 6% have a toilet inside their homes. In order to address this health and sanitation gap, Stairway has collaborated with community groups to help establish “sanitation stations” to be shared between 3 to 6 families. Each station has 2 to 4 toilets (depending on number of users), a septic tank and a washing area.

As of now, two (2) such stations have been built in Baclayan Center and another five (5) are under construction in another sitio. The households making use of them will carry out the maintenance and cleaning of the toilets on a scheduled rotational basis. In conjunction with this project, we facilitate health sessions to raise people’s awareness about the importance of basic hygiene and proper sanitation.





### **Sustainable Livelihood Project**

In an effort to fast forward development towards a self-sustainable community, we have moved on with a plan for a livelihood program, which will primarily focus on empowerment of the women in the community. A first step was hiring of a new focal person for the indigenous people project last September. Towards the end of 2019, the local Gender and Development Office invited SFI for the first time to take part in the annual budget planning. We utilized this opportunity to influence the government to allocate 300,000.00 pesos for livelihood training of women in Baclayan for 2020. The Department of Agriculture (DA) will manage the budget, and we have already had initial discussions with them regarding collaboration in facilitating trainings and workshops on organic farming for the community women to be able to produce quality products and create a local market.

Aside from the organic farming, we facilitated 2 separate training sessions in making soap and shampoo in 2019, and we intend to further broaden the scope of livelihood workshops in 2020.



## Environmental Awareness for Children and Youth (EACY)

### Sea Adventure School

For 2019, the floating classroom embarked on a total of 61 Sea Adventure School trips covering 1,711 participants, who were given the opportunity to explore the intricacies and interrelatedness of mangroves, sea grasses and corals within Puerto Galera and understand how human activities affect these marine ecosystems.

No.	Date	Group	No. of Pax
1	2/9/19	SAS Educators workshop	13
2	2/14/19	ISM and FHP Kids	47
3	2/15/19	PGNHS- Dulangan Extension	18
4	2/19/19	PGNHS- Dulangan Extension	22
5	2/20/19	Singapore American School and Bacayan Elementary School	43
6	2/21/19	PGA	30
7	2/22/19	PGA	30
8	2/23/19	PG Central School	41
9	2/25/19	LFM w/ FHP Kids	21
10	2/26/19	PGA	28
11	2/27/19	PGA	29
12	3/2/19	Shanghai American School and BES	52
13	3/5/19	PGA	29
14	3/6/19	PGA	30
15	3/7/19	PGA	30
16	3/8/19	PGA	27
17	3/11/19	Acasia Waldorf	21
18	3/20/19	PG Tour Guide and Tour Operator	21
19	3/26/19	PG Tour Guides and Tour Operators	22
20	3/28/19	PG Brgy Sabang, Sto Nino and San Antonio	20
21	4/2/19	PG Small Boat Operators (Habal)	26
22	4/3/19	PG Small Boat Operators (Habal)	23
23	4/10/19	PG Mun Office Staff	26
24	4/11/19	PG LGU Mun Office Staff	20
25	4/14/19	Internet Mobile and Marketing Association	13
26	4/24/19	Girl Scout Oriental Mindoro Council	66
27	4/26/19	Sinandigan, Poblacion, Balatero	23
28	4/27/19	Deaf Camp Participants	46
29	5/9/19	DepEd with Kuya Ace	9
30	5/11/19	NGBCC	26
31	5/31/19	DWC MAEd	25
32	7/4/19	PGA	23
33	7/5/19	PGA	22
34	7/9/19	PGA	24
35	7/10/19	PGA	22
36	7/15/19	PGA	21
37	7/16/19	PGA	28
38	7/20/19	Camp Kalapen	47
39	7/26/19	LCPC CaMaNa	29
40	7/30/19	PGNHS-Palangan	31
41	7/31/19	PGNHS-Palangan	30



42	8/1/19	PGNHS-Palangan	26
43	9/27/29	LGU Pudtol Apayao, Kalinga (MENRO)	17
44	9/28/29	Oriental Mindoro Girl Scouts	102
45	10/10/29	Puerto Galera Drug Surrenderers and PNP (MENRO)	20
46	10/17/29	United World College Thailand	10
47	10/24/29	Tondo Community Initiative	17
48	11/6/19	PGNHS - Dulangan	29
49	11/8/19	PGNHS - Dulangan	30
50	11/9/19	Puerto Galera MENRO & stakeholders	24
51	11/12/19	Prince of Peace College	28
52	11/13/19	Prince of Peace College	32
53	11/14/19	Prince of Peace College	26
54	11/18/19	Stairway Foundation - FHP Kids	17
55	11/19/19	PGNHS - Main	23
56	11/20/19	PGNHS - Main	29
57	11/21/19	PGNHS - Main	27
58	11/23/19	Saint Dominic Savio	27
59	11/26/19	PGNHS - Main	22
60	11/27/19	PGNHS - Main	25
61	11/28/19	PGNHS - Main	26
62	12/10/19	PGNHS - Main	27
63	12/11/19	PGNHS - Main	25
64	12/12/19	International School Manila & FHP Kids	45
65	12/13/19	Gloders College Inc.	22
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>1,830</b>

Most of the participants came from our regular local and international partners composed of Grade 9 students from the seven local high schools in Puerto Galera, students from four international schools that joined Stairway's Youth for Change Camps, graduate students from a college in Calapan City, groups within the Department of Education National Office, and various partners of the Municipal Environment and Natural Resource Office (MENRO). We also had several new partners coming in to experience the SAS trip for the first time, like students from Shanghai American School (China), a local government group from Kalinga Apayao (a province in northern Philippines), participants of Camp Kalapen (high school campus journalists from Calapan), graduate school students from St. Dominic Savio College (Manila), Break the Silence (BTS) partners from Local Councils for the Protection of Children (LCPC) in Manila, and the staff from our partner organization Tondo Community Initiative (TCI).

Our boat, Berge Apo, had a tough year. First, she underwent a repair in January, which put her out of commission for a month, and in August, when the cooling system of the engine broke, we decided to dry dock and do a major overhaul, which took all of three (3) months. This was the main reason why we were not able to reach the target of 75 trips for this year, and the weather situation during the last month of the year did not offer us much opportunity to catch up. However, Berge Apo is in great condition now and we expect that the 2019 overhaul will secure steady running in 2020 with just general maintenance allowing time for more trips. Of course, the weather is the unpredictable and uncontrollable factor in this assumption.







Berge Apo during the overhaul.

Because of the long dry-dock of the floating classroom; our local partners looked for ways to still push through with their planned Sea Adventure School trips. By utilizing the Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office's (MENRO) boat and a commercial outrigger boat, they went through with five SAS trips independently. It was encouraging to experience that our partners have come to appreciate and value the Sea Adventure School to the extent that they pushed through with the environmental activity in a less ideal vessel on their own. No doubt their experience only added further to their appreciation of our collaboration.

Throughout the year, the local high school science teachers, who regularly facilitate SAS trips, carried out several enhancements to the lessons on the floating classroom. Updates regarding Puerto Galera as a UNESCO-declared Man and Biosphere Reserve were added, as well as updates on the inventory of Puerto Galera's mangroves, sea grass and corals. To add more fun to the trip, they also introduced new games and activities. Environmental education through SAS trips were linked to EACY's twin campaigns on climate crisis and plastic pollution.

### **SAS Trip Outputs**





After 3 months, she is ready for action again.





We always encourage SAS trip participants to pay it forward to the environment --- that their awareness should translate into action like their own localized advocacy initiatives. Last summer, we ran nine SAS trips with MENRO partners that work in the barangays and the tourism sector. At the end of each trip, we discussed their ideas on how they can help address environmental issues. Here are some of their proposals that they are working on:

- Create infographic slates to be used as visual guides to inform tourists about environmental marine ecosystems.
- Create environmental video “infomercial” to be shown in Batangas Pier and inside ferry boats for incoming Puerto Galera tourists/visitors.
- Test items regarding SAS trip will be included in the licensing exam to ensure and check if the tour guides learned from the SAS trips.
- Remind tourists to use coral-friendly sun block.
- Inform tourists not to collect marine life souvenirs.
- Regular coastal cleanup by tour guides in assigned areas.
- Remind passengers not to step on corals and sea grasses.
- Enforce “No fish feeding.”
- Bring garbage bins per boat.
- No fishing inside the Marine Protected Areas.
- Install one ladder per small boat for tourists in order to avoid the practice of letting the passengers step on hard corals to get back to the boat.
- Install more visual reminders/signage per area.
- Install more mooring buoys to prevent dropping anchors.

In the schools, all student groups that join SAS trips are encouraged to submit creative and innovative project ideas and activities related to what they have learned from SAS trips.



The theatrical rendition of Dr Seuss' environmental classic, "The Lorax" had another run at the Stairway theater during the first 4 months of 2019, until the graduation of the cast in May/June. Despite some challenges in fitting the schedule of the performances with the busy end-of-the-school-year schedule of the elementary students, who were the targeted audience, the show was performed 7 times to nearly 400 spectators coming from various partners of Stairway:

Date	Name of Group	Number of Audience
2/13/2019	International School of Manila	35
2/20/2019	Singapore American School and Baclayan Elementary School	50
3/2/2019	Shanghai American School and Baclayan Elementary School	64
3/15/2019	Propeller Club	31
3/16/2019	Puerto Galera Academy	76
4/11/2019	Municipal Office Staff and Computer Camp Participants	60
4/18/2019	Earth Week 2019 Participants	40
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>356</b>

The performances reverberate the message of caring for the environment with the former street kids themselves delivering the message to the audience. The performances and the rehearsals also prove to be effective forms of creative therapy for the young performers.





### **Baclayan Mangyan School Organic Gardening Project**

For years the Baclayan farm has been showcased to different groups and visitors through educational tours around the farm that aim to familiarize the audience with the basic principles of organic farming.

This year, we have extended the educational value of the farm to the community by offering organic gardening lessons for grade 6 pupils of the school. After almost a month of volunteer work, the parents of grade 6 pupils finished creating 22 plots. The 41 children were grouped into pairs to work together on each plot to maintain and grow pechay, a green leafy vegetable commonly served at the school's feeding program. After three weeks of maintaining their crops, the students harvested a total of 36 kilos of pechay leaves from their plots. It was a bunch of proud students that brought home their first harvest, some to their families, while others sold their share to neighbors to earn an additional allowance for school.

After the hands on lesson, we provided pechay seeds and seedlings to all students, so they could replicate what they learned at home. Their next project on the farm will be learning how to create and maintain compost as a basic element for organic farming, before moving on with planting of new crops.

The lessons learned in implementing this project will be utilized in replicating a similar project for grade 5 and grade 4 pupils in the next school year 2020-2021.





### **Earth Day and World Oceans Day, Celebrated**

Together with the issue of proper waste management and plastic pollution, the EACY program 2019 embarked on popularizing another pressing issue of global concern --- the Climate Crisis.

Stairway celebrated Earth Week in a quiet and meditative manner with the Climate Crisis as the theme. The activities intended to not only present the issue of climate crisis to our local participants, but also to introduce some practices that can help mitigate it, like turning towards a plant based diet. We also practiced yoga and meditation, and we had public showings of environmental films at Stairway and in the various barrios facilitated by EACY Club members. EACY Club teams were also dispersed to various public places in Puerto Galera to explain the issue of Plastic Pollution and to hand out Eco Bags.

Our second celebration of the International World Ocean Day, June 8, became another fun-filled learning day. Grade 6 pupils from two local schools flocked to Stairway to learn more about the beauty, the wonders, as well as the threats facing this gigantic body of water comprising 70% of our planet's surface.









One of the campaigns last year in relation to World Oceans Day was the move to declare the beach across Stairway as Marine Protected Area. According to the Municipal Fisheries Officer, the proposal is now being discussed at the level of the Municipal Council, which we consider a good indication that it is progressing.

To sustain the campaign, quarterly coral cleanups were planned in various locations of Puerto Galera. EACY Dive School spearheaded the coral cleanups together with partners in MENRO, the local schools and EACY Club members, who have undergone open water dive trainings in the previous years. During the first coral cleanup last February at the Aninuan reef, a relatively small amount of trash was collected, which is hopefully a good indication of raised awareness at community level.

In unity with the calls of a week-long global climate action initiated by Greta Thunberg, Stairway managed to get a free copy and a nod from BBC Earth to launch the premier showing of David Attenborough's documentary "Climate Change - The Facts" through a forum that gathered local high school student councils, campus journalists, Science teachers and EACY Club members.

After the forum, the participants agreed that just like "A Plastic Ocean", the documentary "Climate Change – The Facts" will be shared and shown in all schools as well as in their adjacent communities. They resolved that the documentary will be utilized as a supplemental tool for all Sea Adventure School follow up sessions in the high schools.

Moreover, the students were also enjoined to create videos, artworks, and short plays that depict how climate change is affecting the locality of Puerto Galera and how everyone can contribute to reducing carbon footprint and advocate for green sources of energy.



### **Fostering Child Participation for the Environment**

Last January, a group of intern Senior High School students was transformed into what we call “EACY Brigade”, campaign teams that went house to house in various barangays (villages) to check how EACY Club member households segregated their garbage, clarify the importance of proper segregation and discuss the effects of plastic pollution to the sea. The result of their survey showed significant improvement from the previous survey done during the last quarter of 2018.

The EACY Brigade culminated their two-week internship program with a river cleanup and a house to house campaign along Aninuan River to remind the residents not to throw their garbage in the river. The group was able to collect 11 sacks of plastic garbage during the cleanup.

In the second half of 2019, the Prince of Peace College partnered again with Stairway involving 11 of their Senior High School Students, who rendered their service for more than two weeks. We also had 20 senior high students from Puerto Galera National High School undergoing the program. After their internship, all of the students chose to become part of the EACY Club in their respective campuses to continue the environmental advocacy that they started during their time at Stairway.



To consolidate the core group to lead the reconstitution of the EACY Club, we held a two-day youth leadership environmental camp late October involving selected student leaders and writers from the various PG schools, as well as members of the youth councils in the barangays. The camp covered topics on plastic pollution, climate crisis, leadership principles, skills workshop on creating and editing video campaigns, project planning, and development. In November, the participants went back to Stairway to show the videos they have created around a campaign to encourage tourists to reduce and manage plastic wastes during their vacation here in Puerto Galera. In coordination with the municipal administration, the best video will be shown in public entries to Puerto Galera, at the terminal, pier and on ferries going to this popular tourist destination touted as a UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserve with the Muelle Bay named as one the Most Beautiful Bays in the World. Please click link to see the winner entry: [\*IRL - An Immersion Documentary\*](#)

The EACY Club members carried on their Eco Bricks project that they initiated during the last quarter of 2018. An Eco Brick is a plastic bottle packed with used plastics to a set density to create a reusable building block.

Certified trainers from the Eco Brick Alliance conducted an Eco Brick Starter Workshop last February that was participated by 55 EACY Club members and parents representing chapters from various barangays. The workshop clarified the standards and the proper way of making Eco Bricks and taught the participants how to construct various products utilizing these bricks --- various furniture, garden spaces and even full-scale buildings.

Summing up the outputs from all EACY Club chapters, a total of a thousand Eco Bricks have been created between November 2018 and April 2019. Each Eco Brick is at least half a kilo of soft and hard plastics contained within a 1.5 liter soft drink container, making a total of 500 kilos of plastics saved, recycled and prevented from being dumped anywhere into the environment.

The Eco Brick project has attracted support from the local government units. Some of the barangay councils have contributed both in cash and in kind to the adhesive materials needed in order to attach Eco brick units and form usable Eco Brick products.

Even the MENRO saw the potential of the project and took some of the Eco Brick products as a model to be replicated in other barangays. The office is currently lobbying that the Municipal Government allocate a budget to exchange one 1.5 liter Eco Brick unit to a kilo of rice, in order to encourage more people to create Eco Bricks.





With the aim of reorganizing and revitalizing the EACY Club chapters by recruiting local young leaders with a genuine heart for environmental issues, a series of activities were carried out:

- Discussion and agreement with current EACY Club officers regarding the plan;
- Review and crafting of the EACY Club by-laws
- Preparation of membership documentation systems: paperless registration and membership forms
- Interim planning for EACY Club activities covering the period until the school year ends
- The reinstitution of the EACY Talks, the recent one regarding “Climate Crisis” involving local schools student councils, publications, and SAS facilitators; and the
- Immersion program with senior high school departments of Puerto Galera

On the first quarter of 2020, the core groups of EACY Club chapters in schools will be formed from the EACY Brigade, the youth leadership environmental camp participants, and current active EACY Club members. They will be the drivers of local environmental initiatives within their schools and communities.





### **EACY as a Resource and Learning Center for Partners**

In June, a group of high school students from Calapan City approached Stairway soliciting support for a workshop/seminar in environmental journalism. It was a very impressive student initiative aiming to capacitate 30 campus journalists from a number of high schools in Calapan City to create mini-documentaries discussing specific environmental issues in the city. The resource people came from the media (print and TV), from grass root organizations, the corporate sector, the academe and from an indigenous group of people, who have been struggling to protect their environment after the building of a hydro power plant in their home area.

Part one of the workshop ran over 2 days and was held under very challenging conditions at a facility in Calapan. For part 2, which was nearly 2 months later, we invited the group to come to Stairway, where we also gave them the chance to spend a day on the Sea Adventure School to learn about marine life and how to protect it.

The conclusion of the second weekend workshop was the students' presentations of the videos they had made in the time in between the first and the second part of the workshop. Some of the works were very professional, both in their technical presentation and in the substance of what they addressed and covered.

The young workshop organizers succeeded to organize and run a seminar/workshop that discussed youth and community action in environmental issues, the science aspect of environmental issues, as well as the humanitarian and social justice aspect.



After supporting and witnessing this youth initiative, we gathered representatives from the EACY club and organized a similar workshop with our local youth, where they addressed specific issues in Puerto Galera. Different from the Calapan group, we have the privilege to be able to make follow up sessions with our local high schools and continuously offer the opportunity to inspire and train our local youth in the craft of communicating environmental issues. Activities we will pursue further in 2020.

After MENRO's recommendation, Stairway was given one seat in the newly reconstituted Puerto Galera Municipal Solid Waste Committee. The EACY Program coordinator was asked to present its EACY solid waste management projects and initiatives to barangay leaders for them to emulate. The barangay councils expressed their interest to collaborate with members of the EACY Club in order to develop their barangays' waste management system. The barangay chairman of the most populated barangay in Puerto Galera requested a copy of the 22-minute version of "A Plastic Ocean," (which we added Filipino subtitles to) to be shown in their community information campaign. He first saw the documentary when he was invited to join a SAS trip during the summer.

It is inspiring to see the developments in our partners' solid waste management campaigns catalyzed by our earlier collaboration through Sea Adventure School trips and the widespread showing of "A Plastic Ocean". The monthly regular community cleanups of EACY Club chapters in the barangays, the Materials Recovery Project (MRF), the Eco Bricks Project and Marine Art Competition have cumulatively influenced our partners' initiatives. For instance, all of the barangays in Puerto Galera have reactivated their Barangay Solid Waste Management Committee to step up the implementation of the Solid Waste Management Act at the grassroots level. Furthermore, several barangays have adapted and acquired their own Materials Recovery Facility (MRF).

The Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office (MENRO) reported a very significant decrease in the collection of municipal wastes from 17 tons/day back in 2016, down to an average of 3.1 tons daily in 2019.

Stairway also continues to be part of the Sabang Bay Water Quality Management Area Governing Board, particularly in the Information and Education Campaign Committee. It is expected that relevant information like how to maintain clean water quality in Puerto Galera's beaches will be discussed in EACY's activities like the Sea Adventure School.

The 22-minute version of the video documentary "A Plastic Ocean" with Filipino subtitle is not only utilized as a supplementary material to groups that join the Sea Adventure School in discussing the issue of plastic pollution. The De La Salle University School of Deaf Education and Applied Studies plans to create a version of the documentary for the deaf. Meanwhile another group requested a copy of the documentary and showed it to children in their community in Puerto Princessa, Palawan. They read about the documentary on the Stairway website. The group is keen on working with Stairway to create a Filipino-dubbed version of the film.

### **Baclayan Organic Farm**

Over three thousand kilos of edible produce have been harvested from the farm for the whole year of 2019. The farm's production has been consistent and has surpassed last year's total harvest record and all previous years.

These vegetables and crops were mostly delivered to the Baclayan Elementary School feeding program that serves an average of 160-170 pupils daily, while the rest of the high value crops, vegetables and fruits went to the Stairway Center. The surplus was sold to nearby resorts and restaurants.



This year's record-breaking farm output is a result of several enhancements done within the farm and the farm team itself.

- Re-plotting of the Greenhouses, from 2 plots to 3 plots inside to maximize the space.
- Installation of more water sprinklers as a preparation for summer.
- Installation of fences for the area where the horses and carabao can feed on grass and stay safe. This was also done for the area where the native hogs stay.
- Clearing and planting of indigenous rice varieties in a slope.
- Revival of the fish pond area to raise tilapia and other fresh water fish.
- Clearing and preparation of the area for herbal and medicinal plants.
- Maintenance of organic supplements and fertilizers.
- Installation of additional solar panels and batteries to be utilized for camp activities and for storage facilities of vegetables/crops.
- To ensure that the farm has a consistent weekly harvest that provides for the demand of the Baclayan Feeding Program and the Stairway Center, the vegetable area of the farm has been divided into three major areas composed of 30-40 plots per area harvesting consecutively per week.







Moreover, we recently received a grant from Roncalli Foundation to support the farm's further enhancement, such as:

- Concrete and metal fencing to parts of the farm most vulnerable to the entry of stray goats and cows from the village
- Replacement of the 4 Green Houses' damaged plastic and screens, as well as enhancement of its drip/mist irrigation systems
- Acquisition and planting of a hundred fruit seedlings that can bear fruit in a relatively short period of time
- Acquisition of more farming and gardening tools

Following the resolutions of the farm team evaluation last May, members of the team are joining the regular adult literacy and numeracy sessions offered by the Children Health and Activity Education Center (CHEC). It is expected that this will enhance their communication skills as well as their confidence in performing the farm tasks. Most significantly, it makes them feel valued as colleagues and boosts their motivation and sense of ownership at the farm.

Additionally, study sessions regarding various organic farming topics are reviewed during the farm team's regular weekly meeting. Video materials, as well as presentations taken from training sessions and the Internet, are discussed to help address the various theoretical and practical issues they meet every day on the farm.

Another big and very relevant element added in the farm this year was the opening of an area for school gardening for 41 Grade 6 pupils of Baclayan. As mentioned before, this project aims to teach school children how to grow common vegetables, to appreciate the nutritional value of vegetables and learn to eat a more plant based diet. Moreover, hopefully many students will replicate what they learned by developing their own organic vegetable gardens at home.

We have piloted this project to Grade 6 pupils this year and will replicate it among grade 5 and grade 4 pupils in the next school year.





### **More Solar Power at Stairway**

As it has now become a treasured tradition, our friends from Solenergy Systems Inc. in Manila came down in December for their annual team building/Christmas outing, which they always hold at our neighbour beach resort. As it has been the case for the past 6 years, they spent their first day bringing in and installing enforcement and upgrades to Stairway's now comprehensive solar power system, which is totally to their credit. It is our goal to cover around 90% of our energy consumption from solar, which by now is a goal within reach, as we are currently around 70 to 80%.

The incredible value of running on solar powered batteries are plenty, like reducing our carbon footprint, saving on electrical bills, no more being affected by constant unpredictable power outs, no more destroyed utilities caused by power surges ranging between 150 to 280 volts, and not the least the pleasure and relevance to showcase our sustainable power system to members of our local community and the many guests that visit Stairway every year.

Aside from the installations at our main center, Solarenergy has extended their help to also cover our Baclayan farm and the Children Health and Education Center, where they earlier during the year renewed and upgraded our old system.





## EACY Dive School

The EACY Dive School continues to be a contributing part of the overall EACY program. EACY Dive does not only teach and promote environmentally friendly diving, it also attracts broader attention to the larger environmental cause we are trying to address, starting by creating awareness.

We see an increased interest for the EACY concept on search engines and tourist sites, where many actively search for an experience, which offers more than just diving. It is obvious that more and more young people choose EACY Dive for their SCUBA dive training and education, because of our social and environmental agenda. For many, we are a much-appreciated alternative to the massive and unsustainable dive industry we find on the other side of Puerto Galera.

Financially speaking, EACY Dive has also continued to grow over the past year. We have had a total income of nearly 1.5 million pesos (around 30,000\$ US), with a net income at 425,000 pesos (around 8,000\$ US). This means that EACY Dive has now been able to directly support the Sea Adventure School, as we invested around 6,000\$ US of the net income into repair and improvements of Berge Apo.







It is nearly 3 years ago that we initiated the process to have our local reef (House Reef) declared a Marine Protected Area, but until now, we see little progress. In order to further build our case and present the benefits of protecting this coral reef, we have contacted the administration of our neighboring municipality on Occidental Mindoro, Abra de Ilog, where they had the foresight to declare a portion of their coral reefs a Marine Protected Area years back. The mayor and their environmental office granted us a special permission to dive in the protected area, and we can now start searching for particular locations to explore. We hope to be able to learn from the protection initiative of Abra de Ilog, to use their collected data and document the visible results of a protected coral reef. Our aim is to provide facts and evidence of a successful conservation project in our neighbor municipality and thereby influence our own municipality to do more to protect our own local reefs.

While our Sea Adventure School primarily caters to all grade 9 students in our municipality, we decided to try to introduce elementary students from grade 5 and 6 to the beauty of our local coral reef. With assistance from our fellow divers under EACY Dive, we arranged for more than 50 students to safely explore our house reef. For many, this was their first time snorkeling and their enthusiasm and energy were high. The day ended with discussions about how we depend on and how we affect the underwater world. It was inspiring to experience how engaged and well aware many of the young students were, in terms of what is needed to protect our coastal environment, so we concluded that we will extend our reach further into the elementary schools in the coming years.





## Financial Partners

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:

1902 Software  
Active Aid Partners (AAP)  
Axel og Paula Nissen Fonden  
DANIDA  
Embassy of Denmark, Manila  
Firetree Trust  
Grundfos  
Hit Productions  
Kindernothilfe  
Mission Inclusion (formerly Léger 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  
VEM

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Stairway Foundation, January 2020

