



# More Precious than Diamonds

*Bringing Hope and a Future to Filipino Girls and Women*



**Captivating Philippines | January to June 2019**

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**"Today, the Philippines ranks as the #1 country for cybersex crime against minors.**

**We cannot just sit back and do nothing about it. We exist to change this space. Thank you for journeying with us."**

- ANDREW COLQUHOUN | CEO, Captivating





## Message From the CEO



Dear Friends and Supporters,

Welcome to the second update on our work in the Philippines – a collective program in partnership with the Philippines based Honor 1000 Movement, and the Global Development Group. Working together, our three entities each take ownership of different roles and responsibilities aiming to change the landscape of what we think is one of the most tragic stories of the Philippines at this current time of its history. Due to a lethal mix of extreme poverty experienced by an estimated 30% of Filipinos, and high levels of English fluency compared to other developing countries, children and young women (and men) are seen as easy targets for online cyber-sex exploitation and, of course, a cheap location to visit for those looking for direct contact. Today, the Philippines ranks as the #1 country for cybersex crime against minors. This is an extremely sad story that none of us can stand sitting back and doing nothing about.

We exist to change this space.

Since our last update in November, we've seen several advances in our programs including refinement and adjustment to continually improve our ability for impact. You'll read in this report some wonderful stories about how this work is leaving its mark on some of the most desperate in the Philippines.

**We are excited about some of the achievements being made thanks to the hard work of many and generous financial support:**

- Over 2,200+ women are in the loans program with an exceptional 93% loan repayment rate.
- We are implementing an expanding Cybersex and Online Safety education program for minors.
- HONOR 1000 are on track to fund 36% of their operating expenses through sustainable income generation.
- 19 women and children (victims of trafficking) are receiving after-care rehabilitation and support.

**But, we want to do more. These next six months will see:**

- Greater emphasis on the "successful exit" out of the Microfinance program – transitioning clients into the final step of financial independence;
- An expanding micro-finance program thanks to [we hope] increased financial support from our support base; and
- Roll-out of a strategic cybersex education and prevention program across hot-spot risk areas – meaning more partner schools, advocates, and children hearing the message.

As CEO of Captivating, there are some important thank-yous:

To the amazing team at the Honor 1000 Movement – it's this organisation that sits on the front line mobilizing a team consisting of 24 employees and up to 28 regular volunteers. Special thanks to Flo, Kayla, Trizia, Laila and Perry; as well as our thanks to the Honor Board.



Photo – Microfinance community meeting with Captivating and Honor 1000 teams.

To the team at Global Development Group – it’s this group of experts that ensure our work in the Philippines ticks all the boxes in terms of compliance with international development guidelines including accounting and reporting obligations. They are EXCEPTIONAL partners bringing so much to the table helping programs become all they can be. Our special thanks to Geoff, Lauren, Greg, Jordan and Jess.

And, of course, to you, our financial supporters. It’s Captivating’s job to fund all of this work and nothing would happen without you. My personal thanks to the team at Captivating, with special thanks to Daniella, Julie, Kate, France, Dean, David & Esther.

We aim to make a major impact in the Philippines. We have the will and expertise to do it, AND, we hope you will continue to join us in building the capacity. Lives of the most deprived and desperate are relying on us. Thank you for journeying with us and for your partnership.

Blessings and best wishes,

Andrew Colquhoun  
CEO, CO-FOUNDER | CAPTIVATING



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## Message from our Project Manager



Welcome to an update of our work in the Philippines.

It's such a privilege to partner with you in the fight against human trafficking. Working together with our local partners and staff, we are seeing significant impact in the transformation of lives. During my recent visit a few weeks ago, it was such a joy to meet the rescued girls first hand, to see them at work in the sewing social enterprise, and to visit some of the branch offices where thousands of women are taking microloans and to then see hundreds of children and families participating in our advocacy campaign – educating people about online safety. It's really important and significant work we are doing together.

Recent Philippine news reports highlight that up to 80% of cybersex victims in the Philippines are minors, according to the Philippine National Police and the USA FBI (Asia Times, Feb 26, 2019).

Filipino victims fall prey to sexual predators from around the world as their own family members lure them into the cybersex trade as a way of helping their poor families earn money – ranging from AU\$25 to \$60. Over half of these minors are aged 12 years or younger. Online child exploitation is prevalent in the Philippines because of the accessibility of the Internet and remittance centres, and English fluency. Family members act as facilitators.

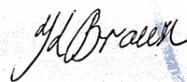
Our local partners on the front line are an amazing, energetic team, filled with hearts of love and mercy. They are passionate not only in the fight against human trafficking but in building sustainable projects and reducing long term dependency on donations. They are growing 2 key businesses with long term goals to significantly offset the costs of the projects. I love that vision to build sustainability – and not to be welfare dependent.



The sewing business employs the young women survivors of human trafficking, whereas the microfinance loans target impoverished families who then repay the loans and grow their family livelihoods. The microfinance project earns income that is then reinvested back into the community and offsets the project expenses.

I have worked for over a decade with these communities and can see the significant transformation being made through the community development work. The cybersex industry is a newer social evil infiltrating these communities, and it is critical we continue on the front line to address this through our preventive and rehabilitative work. As I recently met two of our newest participants, only aged 7 and 9 years old, both victims of cybersex exploitation, I was delighted to see hope through their eyes, in one child's art work – an illustration of the Blessed House filled with sunny flowers and smiling faces. She has found a safe place on her healing journey. You are part of her story too.

Thank you.



Kate Brown  
PHILIPPINES PROJECT MANAGER | CAPTIVATING

## *Eradicate Poverty*

Through the Microfinance Program located in three key regions – Dinalupihan, Siquijor, and Floridablanca – we aim to eradicate extreme poverty and provide alternative means for women striving to make a living and sustain their families.

## *Stop Cybersex and Trafficking through Education*

We believe today's children are tomorrow's leaders and advocates, but at the same time these are the most susceptible to being victimized by online sexual exploitation. We promote education and awareness for prevention and reduction of incidents of cybersex crimes.

*Four  
Go*

# Key als

## Rehabilitate Rescued Women

We bring hope and a bright future to women rescued from sexual exploitation. We empower them to live a life of dignity by providing access to education, employment, and psychosocial interventions.

## Sustainability for Honor 1000

HONOR 1000 aims to generate their own income to decrease ongoing reliance on donors. This will be eventually achieved through three income streams:

- Profits from an expanding Micro-finance program
- A Sewing Social Enterprise business
- In-country events and fundraisers

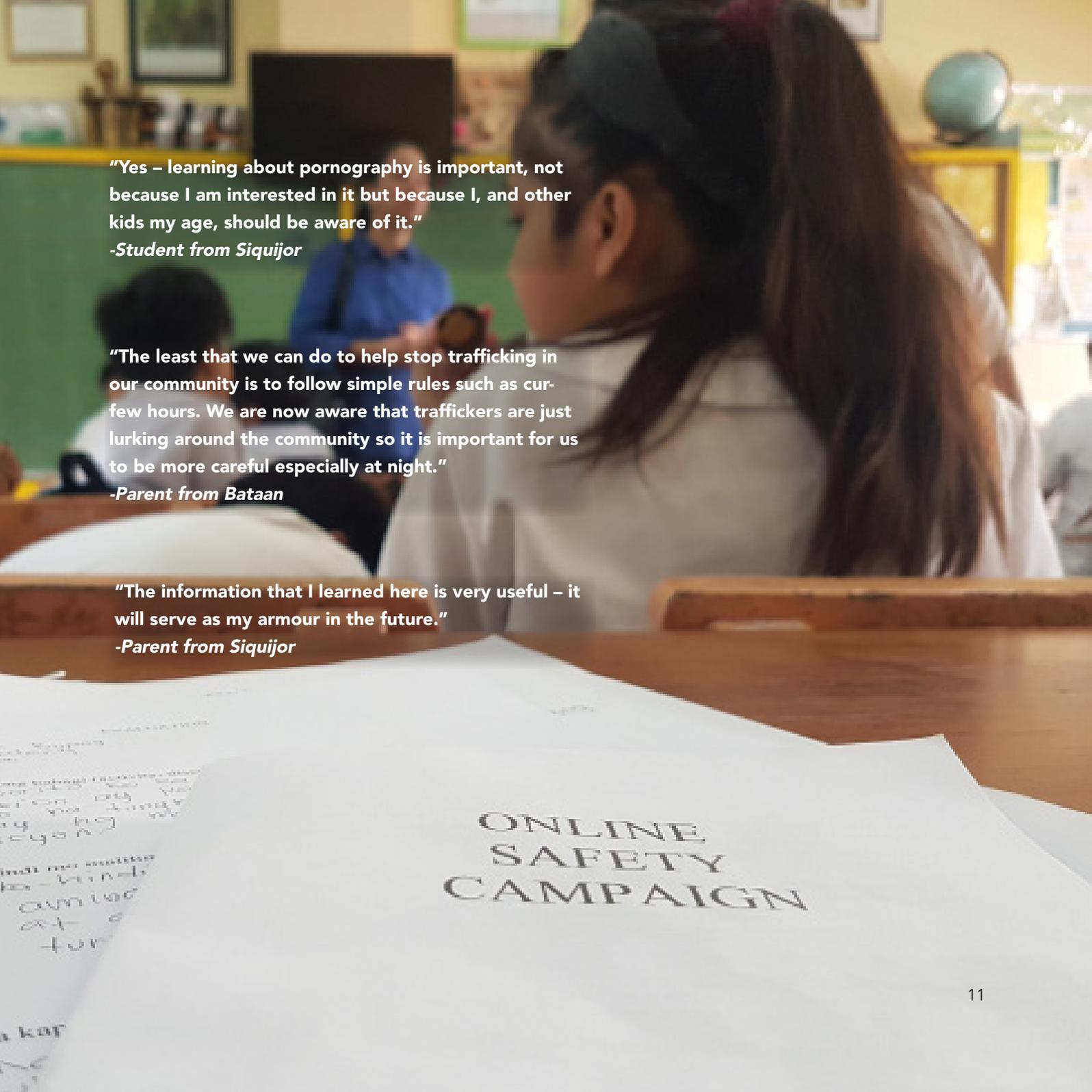
# Stop Cybersex and Trafficking Through Education

The Stop Cybersex Crime project aims to spread awareness on the various forms and dangers of human trafficking both in the physical and virtual world. Primary schools in “high-risk” districts across Manila, Bataan and Siquijor are the targets for this invaluable awareness program. Children are educated on the dangers of cyber-crime, their rights, and where to go for help. It also educates them on the safe use of social media, online games, and other activities on the internet. The program has been trialled and refined for this past school year with a total of 519 students across 5 schools. The program has also received the endorsement of the Department of Education to expand across all high-risk schools in approved regions. A busy and expansive year lies ahead.



The education program also caters to mothers. They are informed of the different forms of trafficking and how they, as parents, need to protect their children. There are currently 73 women who are participating in the program.

We look forward to reaching out to more students as the new academic year starts. Our long-term objective is to develop leaders that will advocate with us in spreading awareness and fighting against human trafficking.



**"Yes – learning about pornography is important, not because I am interested in it but because I, and other kids my age, should be aware of it."**

***-Student from Siquijor***

**"The least that we can do to help stop trafficking in our community is to follow simple rules such as curfew hours. We are now aware that traffickers are just lurking around the community so it is important for us to be more careful especially at night."**

***-Parent from Bataan***

**"The information that I learned here is very useful – it will serve as my armour in the future."**

***-Parent from Siquijor***

**ONLINE  
SAFETY  
CAMPAIGN**

# Breaking the Mold

Growing up, I found my comfort zone and stayed in it as much as I could. That was why I took Mathematics as my major in college and why I stayed for 4 years in my corporate job. However as 2016 drew to a close, I was constantly reminded of the kind of love that radiates outwards. Knowing that, at this very moment, people in my country are suffering from poverty and abuse, people who might have forgotten what comfort feels like

It was at this time when Flo (Honor 1000 Director) presented me with the opportunity to work for HONOR 1000 Movement. This was the moment I knew I had to break the mold and go out of my comfort zone. This decision has allowed me to work with people who are like hearted, and are focused on radiating love, acceptance and help in the community.



I now work with students, campaigning for their online safety. I work with dreaming mothers fighting against poverty, wanting to be able to provide for their children. I also work with rescued women who are starting a new life of dignity. All these women and children are taking action to fight against the disadvantages they live in. I am humbled and encouraged to find seeds of hope amongst them. I am grateful to our donors who continue to support us as we continue to nurture hope in these places.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M San Pedro".

Kayla Michelle M. San Pedro  
FINANCE CONTROLLER | HONOR 1000 MOVEMENT, INC.



Kayla spending time with one of  
the women in the *Blessed House*



## Rehabilitating Rescued Women through

# *The Blessed Project*

## *Regene's Story*

Regene dropped out of school when she was in fourth grade – when the beatings she received from her mother became unbearable and she decided to run away. Taking advantage of her desperate need for money to survive, Regene was recruited into prostitution at just 11 years old.

She was rescued around a year later, transferred to safety, and was able to go back to school. Despite the challenges in school, being a lot older than her classmates, she pressed on and overcame feelings of shame and embarrassment. Last April, she graduated from primary school with honours. Now at 15 years of age, Regene is enjoying school and her new life. "My life would be totally different without your support. Your kindness has provided hope for me."

# Milestones and Highlights

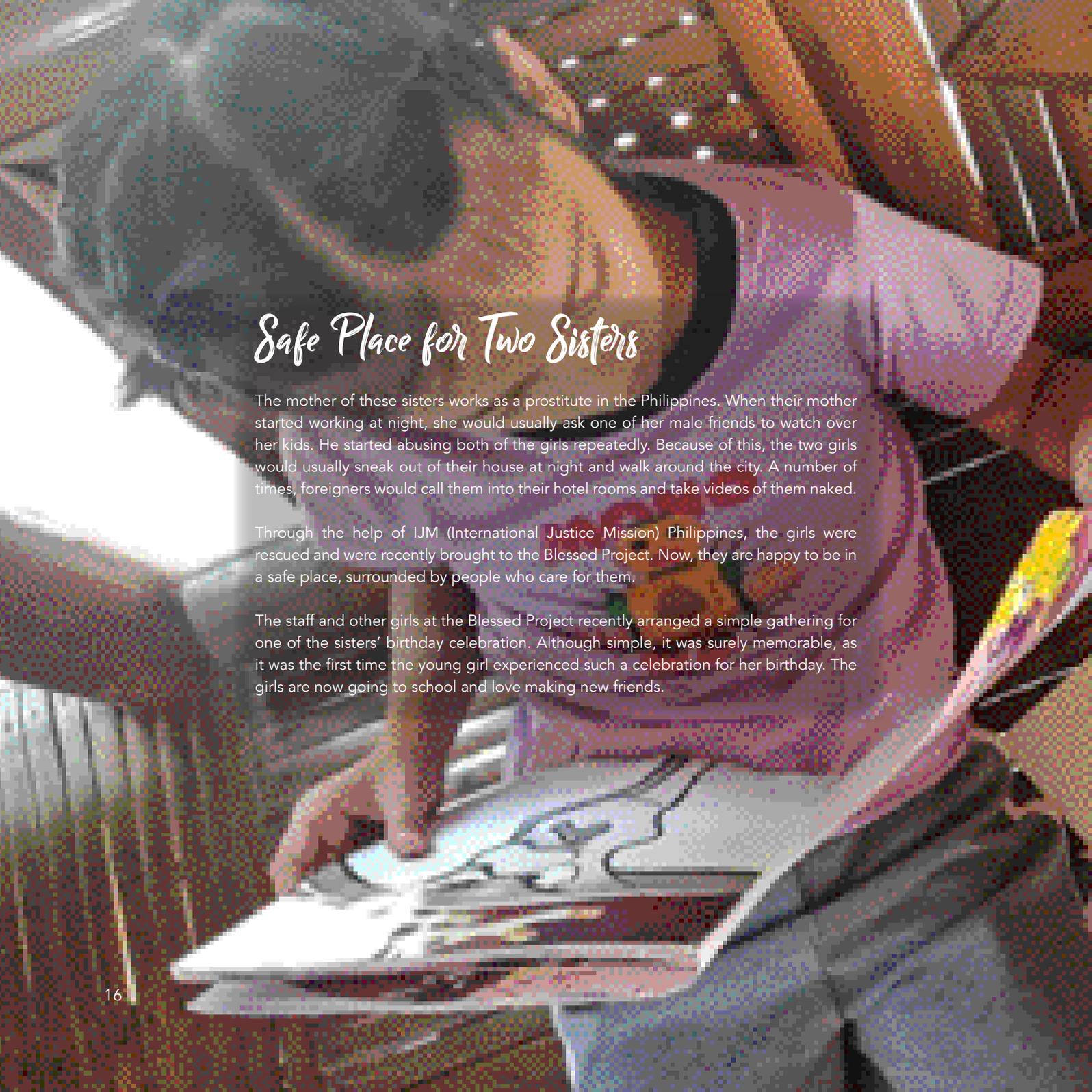
- **The Blessed House** is currently home for **19 young women and children**, including 11 rescued women and 8 children, where they are provided with their basic needs, educational assistance, skills building and employment, and emotional and psychological support.
- **3 of the Blessed girls received certifications for technical-vocational courses** expanding employment opportunities for them.
- **4 Blessed girls passed the Alternative Learning System Exam** advancing their academic level.
- Recently, some of the Blessed girls **exercised their right to vote** for the first time. Not only are they rebuilding their lives, but are contributing to building a better society.



## Dina's Story

Born into a poor family, life had not been easy for Dina. She left home at a young age and moved to the city. Alone, with no one to watch out for her, she was forced to work as a prostitute in a bar. She lived each day with shame and guilt.

New hope was restored in her when she was rescued and given an opportunity to pursue her dream of becoming a policewoman. She knew firsthand the sufferings of being exploited and hopes to extend help to other survivors.

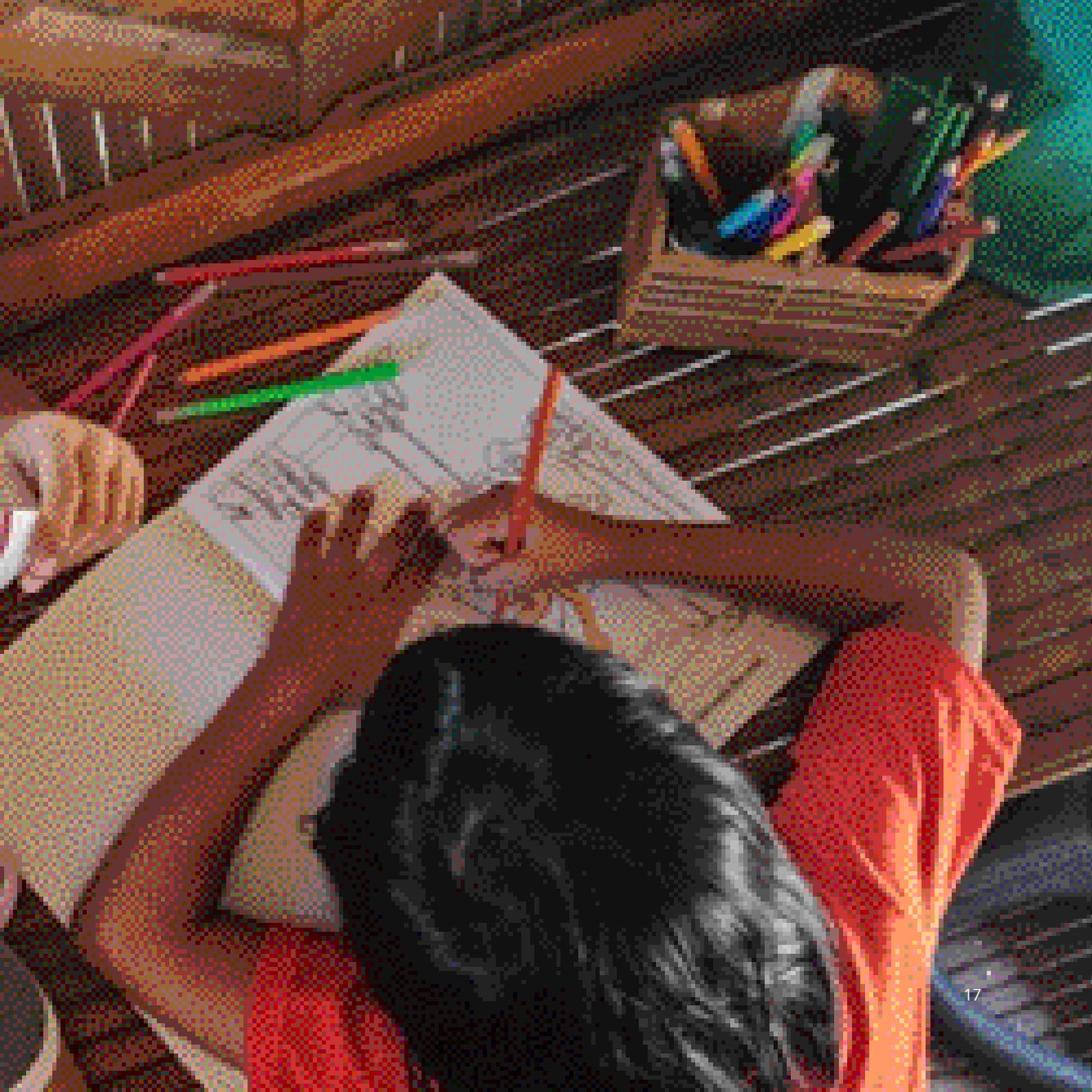


## *Safe Place for Two Sisters*

The mother of these sisters works as a prostitute in the Philippines. When their mother started working at night, she would usually ask one of her male friends to watch over her kids. He started abusing both of the girls repeatedly. Because of this, the two girls would usually sneak out of their house at night and walk around the city. A number of times, foreigners would call them into their hotel rooms and take videos of them naked.

Through the help of IJM (International Justice Mission) Philippines, the girls were rescued and were recently brought to the Blessed Project. Now, they are happy to be in a safe place, surrounded by people who care for them.

The staff and other girls at the Blessed Project recently arranged a simple gathering for one of the sisters' birthday celebration. Although simple, it was surely memorable, as it was the first time the young girl experienced such a celebration for her birthday. The girls are now going to school and love making new friends.



# Eradicating Poverty through *Microfinance*



## *Milestones and Highlights*

Our Microfinance clients are continuously growing their small businesses – typically hog raising, poultry raising, snack bars, mini convenience stores, and food canteens.

### **From January to June this year:**

- **71 new women joined the Microfinance Program** and received their first microloan
- **49 women successfully left the program** as they no longer needed further microloans.  
These women are now self-sufficient
- **2,271 women are currently part** of the microloan program
- **134 microfinance women's groups** meet each week across 3 key locations





## *Women's Groups*

This group of committed mothers from Bataan have been encouraging each other for four years now. Despite difficulties, they continue to urge each other to stay within the group, strive to repay their loans, and keep their small businesses going and growing.

These mothers are our partners in eradicating poverty and empowering families and communities throughout the Philippines. What they have achieved for their own children through higher levels of education is testament to the value of the microfinance program.



## *Erlinda's Success Story*

The feeling of not being able to provide for her children and give them a good education was what drove Erlinda to start her own Sari-Sari Store (a small grocery store beside her home). She struggled to grow her business until she joined the Microfinance Project in 2012.

During the past seven years, Erlinda has successfully grown her small business which has been able to support her children's education, an education that without, often leaves children vulnerable and at risk of abuse and possible trafficking. Now, her children have finished studying and are starting to build their own independent adult lives. Because of the knowledge and skills she acquired over the years with training and mentoring from the Women's Group she is a part of, Erlinda has been encouraging her children to start their own businesses and has also been able to assist them financially as they get established.

Erlinda's Sari-Sari Store is now able to provide her with a stable income and her savings account is looking good. She understands how important it is to have savings put aside for emergencies such as medical needs and also for her future.

We are proud of Erlinda as she is a leader in her community, showing other women that it is possible to be a confident, independent and capable entrepreneur.



A woman with dark hair, wearing a red t-shirt and dark pants, is sitting in a wooden chair. She is holding a white folder or book under her left arm and a small bag of purple and white items in her right hand. She has a gold watch on her left wrist and a black bag slung over her shoulder. The background shows an outdoor setting with a wooden railing and greenery.

## *Wilma's Story*

Wilma joined the Microfinance program in 2016, back when her family depended solely on her business. She recalls how her microloan served as capital for her small business, allowing her to actually take in the profit for her family's needs. With her small convenience store fully stocked, she would faithfully bring fellow members of her women's group bags of groceries during their meetings as well. Now that the eldest of her three children has graduated, she looks to the day that her business would sustain both her capital and family needs.

# Self-Sustainability for Honor 1000

## Blessed Project Sewing Enterprise

- ✓ 0% donation dependent
- ✓ Staff and trainees are able to produce quality products and partner with both local and international clients





Through the Microfinance Program and the Blessed Sewing Enterprise, Honor 1000 is gradually progressing to become self-sustainable. In the next 3 to 5 years, it aims to maintain zero dependency for projects that are already self-supporting (i.e., Microfinance); and to move from 100% to 50% dependence for the Blessed Project.



# Stop Trafficking 5K



In May, Honor 1000 Movement participated in our annual global event, Stop Trafficking 5K – to raise awareness about human trafficking and help raise funds for the beneficiaries of this event.

The three events – Mini Ultimate Frisbee Clinic (Bataan), Mini Ultimate Frisbee Tournament (Manila), and Sports Festival (Siquijor) – were held on three separate weekends, and were participated in by more than 100 athletes, runners, and volunteers.

We aim that through this event, we will not only be able to raise funds and awareness but also find passionate individuals and partners who will advocate with us to fight human trafficking in the Philippines.



A woman with dark hair, wearing a bright red t-shirt, is sitting on a wooden bench. She is looking out of a window with a decorative lattice pattern. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting it might be evening or night. The background outside the window shows some greenery and a building with a tiled roof.

*She has found  
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on her  
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journey*

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## YOU CAN BE INVOLVED TODAY

Contact [info@captivating.org](mailto:info@captivating.org)

Donate to this project through our website [www.captivating.org](http://www.captivating.org) and receive tax deductible receipts for Australian, US, NZ, or Hong Kong donations.

Speak up and spread the word about this project to your family, friends, and business networks.

If you have any query regarding this report, please contact [daniella@captivating.org](mailto:daniella@captivating.org)



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