



CAPTIVATING

JANUARY TO JUNE 2023

More Precious than Diamonds

**OUR FIGHT AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING
AND CYBERSEX CRIME IN THE PHILIPPINES**

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Our thanks to our key donors helping to underwrite our work in the Philippines

Jamoca
Foundation

The Crossing

Penman & Johnson
Families



A Labyrinth of Humanity

Dear friends and supporters of Captivating,

There's nothing more delightful than watching little ones' "play house". Playing mums and dads, caring for dolls, setting up little play shops, and washing the clothes for many of the world's children would be child's play. But during my recent visit to Captivating's field partner, Honor 1000, working in a Manila slum for these children, it is not child's play but real life.

Many are not regularly attending school, and are found caring for their young siblings, doing household chores or selling wares on the streets.

Weaving my way through the narrow pathways with shanty houses rising above my head on either side, I found myself in a labyrinth of humanity; in obvious need of better living conditions amongst the squalor. The picture here shows just some of the many children of kinder and primary age I saw lining the pathways in the slum village on a school day.

As our local partners took us on a house-to-house visit to the beneficiaries of our Manila Slum Project, it was delightful to hear the stories of the impact our program was beginning to have, to get children and especially young girls back into school. Many more families are being invited to engage with the program.

Other stakeholders are now also connecting with our work - with school principals and teachers monitoring the student's improving attendance and another organisation supporting the family beneficiaries by starting a "savings program" that may turn into a livelihood microlending project.

Captivating took a risk to go into this dark space and bring light and hope - and we are so delighted that others like yourselves are jumping on board too.

Thank you for your support in partnering with this amazing project, among others, which will see 200 students back in school and the lives of their families looking much brighter.

Blessings,





Kate Brown
PROGRAM MANAGER
Captivating Philippines



In-country
Implementing Partner



Project Governance, Audit,
Legislative Compliance

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION
AND PLANNING**



Marketing, Fundraising,
Communications

Stop Cybersex Crime

AND TRAFFICKING THROUGH EDUCATION

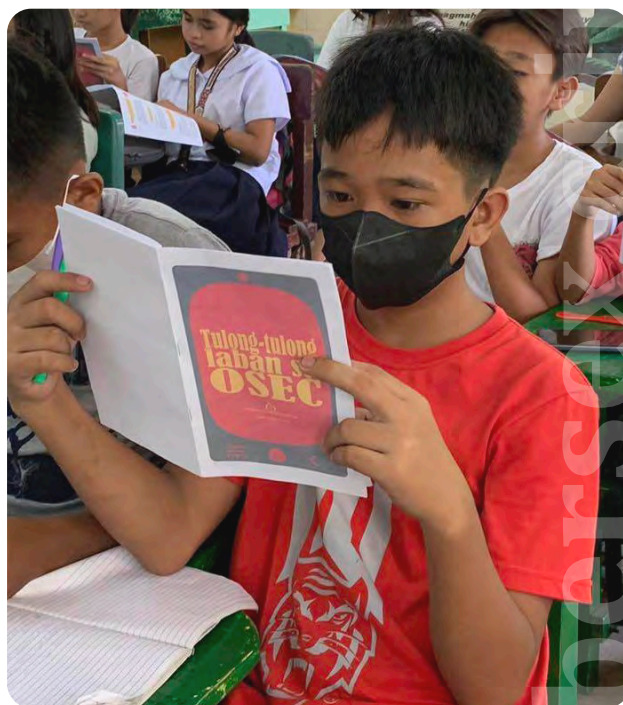
Education is still the key strategy of our Stop Cybersex and Trafficking Awareness Program. With the main goal to reduce the rate of these crimes in Manila against children and teenagers, we are rolling out education programs in schools where children are assessed to be more at risk of being trafficked or abused.

To reach these students, we need to be able to reach the leaders in their schools and their homes which are the school principal, school teachers, and their parents. By rolling out interactive awareness programs and handing out flyers and educational materials, we hope to see communities rise to fight against the threats of human trafficking and online sexual abuse and exploitation of children (OSAEC) in the Philippines.

During the January to June 2023 period, we continued to meet with school authorities to start partnerships. However, due to sudden reshuffling of principals in the public schools (reshuffling was done almost mid-school year) and the teachers' need for adjustment with all the changes, rolling out of awareness programs slowed down a bit. By August, we hope that public school officials are more settled and we will be able to proceed with our awareness campaigns as agreed with our partners.

As early as now, we are beginning to plan for calendar distribution in our partner communities. These calendars will contain relevant OSAEC information and will be distributed to at-risk communities. Our goal is to be able to distribute 15,000 copies of these calendars by November 2023 to January 2024, together with education and awareness sessions in key locations.

2023 will see Captivating fund education and awareness programs reaching 30,000 women and students in locations considered significantly at risk of cybersex crime and human trafficking.



JANUARY TO JUNE 2023 IMPACT

- **27,384 individuals were reached** through distribution of infographic materials in schools, community education, mobilization of students in universities, and online campaigns and activities.
- **273 new community advocates were trained** to be more vigilant and equipped in reporting cases of abuse as well as taking steps to prevent OSAEC. This group of community advocates is composed of teachers, community leaders, and representatives of organizations.

reaching smokey mountain

REACHING

Smokey Mountain

Tondo, Manila is one of the most densely populated cities in the Philippines. In one slum area we visited recently, Smokey Mountain, over 7,000 families would scavenge the mountain of garbage for food and scraps of junk to sell. To intensify our work in preventing child trafficking, we joined with our partners from *The Exodus Road Philippines*, a non-profit organization that also works to fight human trafficking, in conducting a parenting seminar for the mothers living in Smokey Mountain. During the discussion, we emphasized the crucial role of parents in protecting their children against exploitation.

Among reported OSAEC cases where the relationship to the trafficker was known, it was found that 83% of cases were perpetrated by biological parents and close relatives. In the Philippines, children cannot question their parents (authorities) so much and children are given the burden to help the family financially. Thus, we continue to engage parents from high-risk communities to have a strong resolve to shield their children from being abused. When we train both parents and children about the dangers and effects of OSAEC, or even letting them know that it's a crime, or making it easier for neighbors to report such cases, we help prevent the exploitation of children.



Mountain of garbage surrounding the homes of the residents of Smokey Mountain



Teaming Up **WITH BATINO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Aside from being our partner in evaluating and monitoring our Manila Slum Project beneficiaries on their attendance and performance in school, Batino Elementary School also partnered with us in the distribution of our OSAEC information and activity booklets. All their Grades 5 and 6, and SPED (Special Education) students received booklets with relevant information on how to protect themselves online and report cases of abuse. The teachers are also happy with the engaging pictures in the booklets because the children with special needs can understand them. We are thankful to have partner schools like Batino Elementary School, who works with us in the fight against the online sexual exploitation of children.

In Photos: Students of Batino Elementary School reading our OSAEC information booklet

teaming up with batino

17 PUBLIC SCHOOLS REACHED BY AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

Quezon City is the largest city in Metro Manila in terms of land area, which is subdivided into six districts. Public schools in the city are categorized per district, based on their geographical location, for easier administration.

Since the Stop Cybersex Crime Awareness Campaign was launched, we have reached all 17 public schools in the third district of Quezon City. We are now moving on to District 2, starting with Bagong Silangan Elementary School and Commonwealth Elementary School. These are two of the most populated public elementary schools in the country and are located in areas where poverty rate is high and children are at high risk of dropping out of school and being exposed to various forms of crime and abuse. If these partnerships push through, we will reach more than 2,000 students with relevant information on how to protect themselves against OSAEC.



Laila (left) from our in-country partner, Honor 1000, discussing potential partnership with a school principal



8  more precious than diamonds



microfinance

ERADICATING POVERTY THROUGH

Microfinance

As the world opens up once again for commerce after the pandemic, more and more women are needing assistance to get back on their feet and provide for their family. Women from impoverished communities, both in rural and urban areas, often have limited opportunities to earn a stable income due to lack of education and resources. Due to extreme poverty, women are attracted to high-risk practices of migration for work. ***This puts them and their young children at risk of human trafficking.***

This is where our Microfinance Program comes in - aiding these women to take out small loans so that they can start and grow their own small business. Aside from financial assistance, women are also provided with a support system by plugging them into women's groups where they can gain accountability and encouragement from other members.

Women learn about financial literacy, allowing them to make better decisions for their businesses and their families, and move towards self-reliance and sustainability.

JANUARY TO JUNE 2023 IMPACT

- **33 women** successfully repaid their loans and are now considered ***poverty-free***.
- **65 new women** were added in the past six months.
- **2,028 women** are with loans, in the hopes of eradicating poverty one step at a time.
- **83 active loan groups** are running that serve as support and accountability system for the members.



MICHELLE'S

Empowering Journey

Michelle joined our program last year and has been granted her second loan! She is a mother of three children and has a small convenience store in front of their house. She is grateful to be part of our program given her challenging experiences with informal loans before.

Michelle shares that she immediately noticed the difference in the culture and respect that we give them as loanees. With the weekly payments set up as well, it gives her enough time to earn and save for her obligations with us. These factors solidified her decision to never again rely on informal loans. Informal loans often have high interest rates, putting loanees in more financial burden.

We continue to provide our financial services to small businesses like Michelle's to protect them from such informal loans that take advantage of their needs. We want to empower these mothers in their journey to improve their quality of life.



empowering journey

second chance



Ruby's

SECOND CHANCE AT BUSINESS

Ruby joined our program this year and is still on her first loan with us. She is married and is a proud mother of five children. Her husband works as a tricycle (*a mode of public transport*) driver while she sells various snacks in front of her house.

When she receives bulk orders of snacks, she would maximize her time delivering the order by selling more snacks along the way. With this, Ruby is able to advertise her business and secure frequent customers in her neighborhood.

She shares that during the pandemic, not being able to go out and sell her snacks affected her business. Her husband also got sick at that time, putting more pressure on Ruby to earn for their family.

Now that the restrictions have been lifted and her husband recovered, they are working hard to provide and save up for their children who are still in school. Ruby is grateful to be part of our Microfinance Program. She hopes that more small businesses like hers will be given the same chance as her. And with partners like Captivating, Ruby's hope is being realized more and more.

BUILDING SYSTEMS &

Strengthening Culture

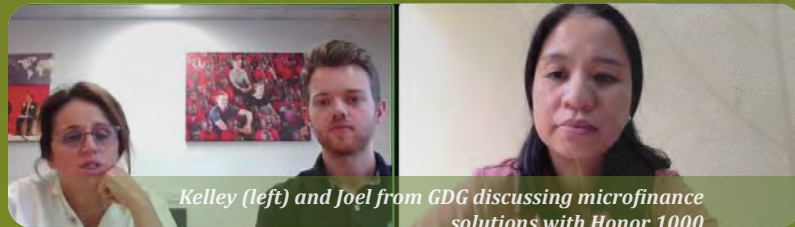
One of the persistent challenges of the Microfinance Program is ensuring that the loans are repaid on time. We have been working to establish a more concrete system for following through and connecting with the clients regularly where we can help them manage their finances and their business so they can earn back their capital and start earning profit.

Flo, our Program Director, together with Armand, our Microfinance Project Officer, went with the Microfinance team to visit clients with past due loan repayments.

We prioritized visiting clients who were met with family and health problems just before the pandemic. One of these clients was Nenet. She shared that she had a health emergency before the pandemic that affected her ability to operate her small business. When the pandemic hit and lockdown restrictions were implemented, it became harder for her to recover. During the time with her, she shared that her health is improving and she committed to paying monthly starting in June. They also signed a new promissory note to strengthen this commitment and to show her reengagement with our project.

Stories like this remain unheard unless we move on the ground and hear them directly from the women. Home visits are crucial so that we can better understand their needs and find appropriate solutions.

Our microfinance staff also met with our partners from Global Development Group (GDG), Joel and David, to discuss how we can improve our Microfinance Program. David introduced us and help set up a virtual meeting with Kelley, who shared her experiences in working with self-help groups in Rwanda and India.



During the discussion, we were challenged to step back and reassess our model and the culture that we have in our program after 12 years of operation. One thing that struck us is that if we lose the culture of our organization - a culture where honor and respect thrive for every individual - we will not survive and might not be creating the change that we ultimately want to see in our clients. Kelley challenged us to spend time with our staff and discuss the characteristics of people that we want in our program, how we can find those indicators, and duplicate them.

An Afternoon OF APPRECIATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT

Since 2022, we have added two new women's groups in Barangay Roosevelt*. We wanted to spend a special afternoon with our clients in this area to hear their personal stories and also show our appreciation for their good performance.

Kate and Glenn from Captivating, together with the team from our in-country partner Honor 1000, visited one of the project coordinator's homes where microfinance group meetings also take place. Their place is nearer the mountains so it takes around 20 minutes to reach their area. Flo led our time together where both our new and old clients shared their journey.

One of the clients shared that through perseverance and support from the Microfinance Program, she was able to have her house cemented and their roof fixed to keep her family safe from inclement weather. She shares that it is one of her life's achievements and she is very proud of what she's accomplished through hard work. Meanwhile, one of our new clients shared that being part of this program allowed her to dream. She can now think of more ways to improve her business because of the support she gets from the program.

To conclude their time together, Kate and Glenn offered their words of encouragement to the women. We are excited for what's in store for all these hardworking moms and their families.

**barangay is the smallest administrative unit of the local government*





Manila Slum Project

This project aims to bring 200 out-of-school girls from the slums of Manila back to school, and sustainably progress many of their families. Since we started this project this year, we have seen girls attending school more regularly through a regular allowance being given to their families for their transportation and other school-related expenses. Before the program, these girls are usually on the streets, selling, to help their parents earn a living. With the majority of children from the slums begging or selling on the streets, **they are at the most risk of becoming human trafficking victims**. By educating their parents about child safety and the value of education, we hope to help them see that these children still have a bright future ahead of them.

Our team is also actively engaging with local government bodies and institutions to have a stronger anchor of support and accountability for the program's beneficiaries. We are now part of the local council of the community, and have partnered with other organizations to strengthen the pillars of our cause.

Early this year, we met with one of our partner organizations to explore ways on how we can work together in this project. We are happy that in less than two months, this partnership has strengthened and plans are set to start savings groups for the moms in the community. These efforts would strongly complement our educational assistance for the children in the slum area. As we help the children go back to school, we are also equipping the mothers to more sustainably earn and provide for their family.

JANUARY TO JUNE 2023 IMPACT

- **147 children** are now back in school and regularly attending class
- Education and awareness sessions held with all beneficiary families
- Savings education programs begin as stage one of helping parents address their poverty

MADE POSSIBLE THANKS TO OUR KEY AMAZING DONORS

Central Engineering - Penman and Johnson Families

Colin & Carey

TVAC

**Davies /
Ventura Family**

John & Ann

AF Sourcing

TJ & Michele

Newspaper Girl

HOPES TO FINISH SCHOOL

When Jenny's father died five years ago, her mother left her and her two brothers. Jenny's grandparents took them in and cared for them. Her older brother is troublesome, so Jenny as the second eldest, is the one her grandparents rely on to help them sell newspapers on the streets. The streets is far from being safe for a young girl like her, but she had to take on this responsibility at an early age to help provide for their family.

Selling newspapers is their only source of income but their earnings is barely enough for their food and living expenses.

Due to their poverty, Jenny was missing most of her schooling. Upon assessment, Jenny was approved to be included as a project beneficiary, where she receives monthly scholarship funding to support her schooling and transport costs, as well as supplement some of the families monthly expenses. This helps lessen the financial burden on her and her grandparents, and minimizes the possibility of her dropping out of school. To continue receiving this scholarship, Jenny must prove her regular attendance at school.

Jenny hopes to graduate college or even just finish senior high school. For her, having a good education will be helpful for her future, especially in getting a job that can support all her and her family's needs.





stephanie

STEPHANIE'S BIG RESPONSIBILITY AT HOME

Stephanie is the eldest among four siblings. Stephanie's youngest sister is less than a year old so her mother is more focused on taking care of the baby. Stephanie helps out her parents by doing most of the household chores and taking care of her two other sisters. This consumes most of Stephanie's time which she could be spending in school or studying her lessons at home.

Her father's job as a food handler is their family's only source of income. However, majority of her father's earnings goes to her baby sister's needs like milk and diapers, while the rest is allotted for their whole family's basic needs. Most of the time, her parents are unable to give Stephanie allowance for her school expenses. Given her responsibilities at home and their lack of finances, she is at high risk of dropping out. She is unable to go to school except for the few times she would walk 3 kilometers through busy streets just to be present especially during exams.

Stephanie is determined and strives to finish her schooling. She hopes to help her family when she graduates.

Stephanie is grateful to be a part of the Manila Slum Project. With the help of the education allowance, she can now take public transport back and forth to school, allowing her to attend all of her required classes, and saving her much time and energy to study while still helping her family at home.

Ayah

GOES BACK TO SCHOOL

During the pandemic, Ayah, as the eldest child, was obligated to help her mom with street vending – selling eggs to churchgoers for offerings outside the church. Street vending is the only source of income for Ayah’s mom, a single parent, to provide for her and her two younger siblings.

When face-to-face classes resumed this year, Ayah was very excited to go to school, but it also entailed bigger expenses for school uniforms, school supplies, and transportation.

Ayah’s mom tried her best to send Ayah to school, but often Ayah was unable to submit project requirements and join school activities because her mom could not afford the project materials nor consistently provide for Ayah’s transportation to school which is about 3km away from their home. She was missing a lot in school which greatly affected her academic grades despite her perseverance to do well in her subjects and exams.

Ayah was very grateful when she became a beneficiary of the Manila Slum Project. Ayah’s mom now uses the educational allowance she receives monthly to buy materials for Ayah’s school projects and transportation to and from school, as well as to cover some of their household’s expenses. Ayah can now comply completely with all her class requirements and attends school every day. This motivates Ayah to continue to study well and earn good marks in her academics. Ayah’s mom also attends training and awareness sessions every month to help her appreciate the importance of education especially for girls and other important parenting skills.



ayah



Two girls from The Blessed House at their work immersion/internship

The Blessed House

The Blessed House project is one of the pioneer projects of Honor in the Philippines wherein they rescue and provide care and support to women and children who have been victims of human trafficking and cybersex crimes. Even though Captivating transitioned away from supporting this project in 2022, to be instead self-funded by Honor, we wanted to still update our donors who have supported this program through the years on their progress.

As we closed this project in 2022, we were able to transition these girls to a life of hope and restoration, and reintegrate the majority of the beneficiaries into their respective families.

Currently, we have four remaining women and three dependents (children) being supported at The Blessed House. All 4 women are given employment in the sewing facility to support their children and education.



OVERCOMING INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

When Bea (name changed for privacy) joined us in the Blessed House last August 2021, she was diagnosed with delayed intellectual disability and developmental neglect. She struggled with her studies, but the tutorials, love, and encouragement she received from us helped her succeed. Not only did she recently finish Grade 12, but she also passed her entrance exam at a state university!

Bea will continue to work in our sewing facility so she can support herself while finishing her college education.

Marriel's

DREAM BAKESHOP

Marriel (name changed for privacy) has always dreamed of opening her bakeshop and cafe. During her stay in the Blessed House, this dream is one of the things that keeps her motivated. Recently, as one of her requirements to finish Grade 12, she had her internship or work immersion at one of the cafes near our Blessed House. Marriel enjoyed it!

We continue to assist the women at The Blessed House in achieving their dreams and rebuilding a life of dignity. We partnered with another organization here in the Philippines, La Rose, that offers baking and pastry-making classes. We helped Marriel apply to their program and she passed with a full scholarship, including accommodation.

The program lasts for six months and then La Rose will assist Marriel to look for employment.



HONOR 1000

Self-Sustainability



Glenn and Kate of Captivating with the Microfinance Team

Our in-country partner, Honor 1000 Movement aims to generate income to decrease ongoing reliance on Captivating. This will be achieved through three income streams: (1) Microfinance profits, (2) Sewing Social Enterprise, and (3) in-country fundraising.

We are seeing slow but steady growth in our Microfinance income and this is mainly because of the new clients coming in. Loan repayments from old clients have also improved as pandemic restrictions are being eased in the country.

The Blessed Sewing Enterprise is receiving more orders from local businesses and known clothing brands. From January to June 2023, the sewing enterprise earned a total of 6,803 AUD.



GOAL:
By 2024, Honor can fund 45%
of its total operating budget.

- » July 2021 to June 2022:
25% of the total operating budget **(ACHIEVED)**
- » July 2022 to June 2023:
35% of the total operating budget **(ACHIEVED)**
- » July 2023 to June 2024:
45% of the total operating budget **(ON-TRACK)**



*Women at the Blessed House
sewing cargo pants and
sweatshirts for our local parnters*

continuous improvement



Flo and Kayla during their virtual meeting with Atty. Marie Valencia



Microfinance team meeting

Continuous Improvement FOR MICROFINANCE

With our efforts to strengthen our response to microfinance clients with past due accounts, Flo and Kayla from Honor 1000 met with Atty. Marie Valencia to consult about the changes we want to implement. Atty. Valencia works for a financing company so her experience in the field is highly valuable to us.

During our time together, she confirmed that there are Philippine laws specifying that microfinance loans should be collateral-free arrangements. She suggested to seek help from local village authorities for intervention, or to file a small claims case at the Municipal Trial Court for clients who intentionally refuse to pay. Atty. Valencia also helped review and revise our promissory note to make our clients more aware of the obligations they have with the organization and the consequences of failing to pay. She suggested that the relevant laws be included in our agreement so that we can take necessary legal action for clients who intentionally refuse to pay.

We are constantly meeting with the rest of the Microfinance team to know their suggestions as well, especially since they are the ones directly communicating with our clients. After all, our primary goal is to help the women in microfinance succeed.

Captivating Team

IN THE PHILIPPINES

In February, Kate and Glenn came to the Philippines to visit our projects in Metro Manila and in Bataan, as well as spend time with the Captivating Team in the Philippines.

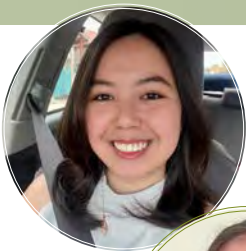
The simple gathering over lunch started with a short getting-to-know each other. The team in the Philippines has been working remotely and for most, this is their first time meeting in person, especially with Kate and Glenn.

During the time together, Kate and Glenn learned more about the work the PH team does, its most memorable and most challenging parts, and what keeps everyone going despite those challenges.

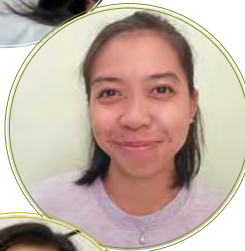
Glenn also opened the floor for suggestions and questions the team might have on how we can further improve our services. The time ended together with words of encouragement from both Kate and Glenn.

Our PH Captivating Team, composed of Kayla, France, and Joy, are responsible for producing our website blogs, country updates, and donor reports.

captivating team ph



KAYLA NICOLE MORALEJA
*Communications and Digital
Marketing Manager*



FRANCE BERNARDO
*Graphic Design and
Communications Coordinator*



JOY BUENA
*Administration and
Communications Assistant*



Captivating Team and Honor 1000 staff with Glenn and Kate

YOU CAN BE INVOLVED

Today

Contact info@captivating.org

Donate to this project through our website www.captivating.org and receive tax deductible receipts for Australia, US, NZ, or Hong Kong donations.

Speak up and spread the word about these projects to your family, friends, and business networks.

If you have any query regarding this report, please contact kayla@captivating.org

