

# More Precious than Diamonds

Our Fight against Human Trafficking and Cybersex Crime in the Philippines



**CAPTIVATING**

Captivating Philippines | July to December 2019

*Image by Joey Pilgrim on Unsplash*

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“Extreme poverty is not just the lack of having basic needs such as food, water, sanitation, and education met, but includes safety and security.”

Dean Beveridge, Chairman of Captivating



# *You are True Heroes*

## **A Letter from the Chairman**

On a recent trip to the Philippines I joined Captivating's partner Honor 1000 staff on a visit to a red light district. Together we walked the street observing the interactions and connecting with those who survive by working in this industry. The following day I joined staff as we discussed the growing incidence of cybersex amongst the vulnerable of this country. At the airport I witnessed many young girls travelling abroad for work with the ever present danger of being trafficked around the world. It dawned on me how big this issue has become and how adaptable human traffickers move.

In our meetings we asked ourselves what is the root cause of the problem of human trafficking. The answer is always extreme poverty. Extreme poverty is not just the lack of having basic needs such as food, water, sanitation and education met but includes safety and security. As an organisation, with your generous support, we are tackling the incidence of human trafficking with a three-pronged approach.



Firstly, we seek to alleviate extreme poverty through microfinance support. Currently over 2,400 families are receiving small loans to fund their businesses. While visiting a microfinance branch, I met a single mum who told me her story. She shared how she had received one of the first loans provided by our project. Through this support her business was able to fund her daughter's education.

She shared with such pride how her daughter was now employed by an international company providing customs services. Her daughter's salary was so good that she was able to send some money home to her mother so that she could close her small shop from time to time and have holidays. It dawned on me that we had been part of PERMANENTLY closing the door to human traffickers for this family. The daughter and her future children are now free of the clutches of these criminals.

Our second approach is through education and awareness. Our team is systematically visiting schools to educate children as to the risks of cybersex and the tactics used by those selling these services. On the island of Siquijor this year we will visit every school with the goal of eradicating cybersex totally from this community. This team will tackle this challenge one island at a time with the goal of PERMANENTLY eliminating this industry from the Philippines.

Finally our Blessed House has been established to catch those who have fallen through the gaps, providing a safety net of emergency housing and livelihood training. Many girls are rescued from the sex industry and trafficking.



The Blessed House provides housing, emotional support, education and livelihood training. The journey is long but the Blessed House is seeing young women PERMANENTLY released into a new destiny.

The projects in The Philippines are making a difference in the lives of thousands of vulnerable children. This work can only happen with the support of you, the donors. We thank you, recognising that you may never meet the girls you support. You are true heroes.

  
DEAN BEVERIDGE  
**Dean Beveridge, BSc LLB**  
**CHAIRMAN | CAPTIVATING**



# You are Part of Their Story

## A Message from Our Program Manager



It's a privilege to be able to update you on our work in the Philippines and especially to partner with you in the fight against human trafficking. I just returned in early December from the coal face of our work in Philippines and spent time with some of the children being cared for after their rescue from Online Sexual Exploitation of Children (OSEC).



What amazed me was the squeal of joy on their faces as they tore open their gifts and the giggles of delight as they played. These same kids were withdrawn on their arrival into our aftercare program and have since flourished in a safe environment.

I am delighted that our local partners have secured a partnership with an organisation specialising in foster care and adoption so these children will be placed in a safe and loving family. This is a priority for us, to not allow children to be kept in institutional care for extended times.

OSEC in the Philippines is a serious growing issue.

“In 2018, one in five Filipino children between 13 to 17 years reported to have experienced sexual violence while half reported to have experienced online violence such as online sexual violence or online bullying, according to the National Baseline Survey on Violence Against Children. The involvement of children's own families as crime facilitators and the increasing number of foreign perpetrators is alarming. (UNICEF)”

The office of Cybercrime received 600,000 cyber tips in 2018 which is a stark rise from 2016 with 37,715 tips. Our Captivating team are passionate about being a part of the solution to seeing this reduce in upcoming years.

Our local partner, Honor 1000, is on the front line, and is an amazing, energetic team, filled with hearts of love and mercy. They have been upscaling the work in elementary schools to educate more children and their families about the dangers of OSEC.

In recent months over 55 schools have been targeted where our teams have provided education and information to students, teachers and their families - touching 1000's.



They also continue to be passionate about building sustainable projects to reduce long term dependency on donations. Their two social enterprises are growing – with long term goals to significantly offset the costs of the projects.

The sewing business recently moved into its new location thanks to the generous support of our donors, and employs the young women rescued from human trafficking. 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 to offset costs of the project. This has supported over 3,000 women this past year.

These projects are having significant impact in so many lives and we really couldn't do any of it without you.

Thank you for the legacy your support has made this year.

You are part of their story too..... Thank you.

*Kate Brown*   
**Kate Brown**  
**PHILIPPINES PROJECT MANAGER | CAPTIVATING**

**KEY SPONSORS**

Jamoca Foundation  
The Shipley Family

The Archer  
Foundation

crieff  
aid  
projects

The Crossing  
Foundation



A group of children are smiling and laughing in an outdoor setting with a stone wall in the background. One child in the foreground is wearing a red tank top, and another child behind them is wearing a blue and white shirt. The overall mood is joyful and positive.

# Stop Cybersex and Trafficking Through Education

We believe strongly that education is the key to systemic and sustainable change. We will reduce the future incidence of trafficking and cybersex crime through the implementation of targeted advocacy and community/school education strategies to “high-risk” locations.

A photograph of a group of children and a woman laughing outdoors. In the foreground, a young boy with dark hair is smiling broadly, showing his teeth. To his left, a girl in a red top is also laughing. In the background, a woman in a pink shirt is laughing while holding a young girl in a green shirt. The scene is set outdoors with a blurred background of a fence and foliage.

## *Our 2020 Goals*

- Reach 100% of grades 5 and 6 students in Siquijor (about 3,500 students) and 100% of grade 6 students in 2 public schools in Manila (about 1,000 students)
- Conduct advocacy campaigns in 50% of municipalities in Siquijor
- Expand to other public schools in Dumaguete and Manila
- Raise 12 volunteer parent advocates in Siquijor to help conduct advocacy campaigns, thereby expanding and expediting our reach

## *Key Achievements* FROM JULY TO DECEMBER 2019

- *49 school programs* conducted in Manila and in Siquijor
- *2,830 primary schools students* trained in Cyber Safety
- *31 microfinance parent groups* trained in Bataan and Siquijor
- *562 women / parents* attended training sessions in Bataan and Siquijor



In August, 3 full time staff from Siquijor came to Manila to discuss their new role as a dedicated Cybersex Education Team.

Right after her visit in Manila, the Project Coordinator in Siquijor immediately set up meetings with the Philippine National Police (PNP), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DWSD) and Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) to build partnerships with them as the team intensifies their efforts of raising awareness in Siquijor and Dumaguete.

## Increasing Government Support



Local units of the the PNP, DSWD, and DOLE, have been showing their support since the team established partnerships with them. In one of the school sessions, the PNP sent a representative to attend and show support. DSWD has invited the team to conduct community sessions in many villages for the Human Trafficking Awareness Campaign.



In November, Siquijor celebrated Children's Month. The Siquijor team was invited by the PNP and DSWD to join the celebration and talk about their advocacy work in the province. This partnership and show of support has definitely increased the team and the organization's credibility and helps in reaching out to and engaging with more schools, parents, and communities.



## Empowering Parents to Fight Human Trafficking

After the team finished conducting the Online Safety Campaign (OSC) with the students, they invited their parents to attend the Human Trafficking Awareness Campaign (HTAC). Parents are informed and empowered to protect their children against human trafficking.

Aside from cybersex, one main issue in provinces in the Philippines is the lure of working in Manila. Parents need to be more vigilant against perpetrators who would offer too good to be true jobs in Manila.

From these HTAC sessions, some parents expressed their desire to work with Honor 1000 team in raising awareness against human trafficking. They are now Parent Advocates.

As the team expands to the province of Siquijor, and eventually in Dumaguete, Parent Advocates are a great addition to the 3 full time staff and 6 volunteers.



## Living Out My Dream

I'm the Skills Development and Communication Manager of HONOR. I oversee the Blessed Sewing Line, which is the social enterprise of the Blessed Project.

My work focuses on achieving two main goals which are (a) sustainability - growing the sewing line to rely solely on its income to operate and then give back and fund the needs of the Blessed Project; and (b) trainees' skills development - dedicated to make our trainees become employable and help prepare them for their life outside our transitional shelter.

Additionally, as the Communications Officer, I ensure that people are becoming more aware that human trafficking exists; and so are the preventive strategies that we are implementing in Manila, Bataan, and Siquijor. And then encouraging these people become advocates themselves.





**Laila teaching some Grade 4 students in one of the Online Safety Campaign sessions.**

I am passionate about impacting the lives of people around me whether through ensuring that we get more sewing job orders and then coordinating both with our foreign and local partners, thinking and proposing ideas for our Blessed advocacy product range, posting Facebook updates, spending time with our trainees listening to their story of struggles and victories or by simply asking them about their day in school.

With the mindset that I am one sewing order placement, one social media update, or one conversation away to giving glimpses of hope to these trainees and much more to myself, I realize that these efforts are not futile because every deed, small or big, can help alleviate the thriving statistics of sexual exploitation in the Philippines.

I always knew while I was on my first corporate job that I was most alive doing advocacy work. Years later, I was exposed to the rising problems of human trafficking in the Philippines through some of my friends. And then in 2017, I grabbed the opportunity to work in this organization, which not only advocates against human trafficking but has a goal of not becoming donor-dependent. I'm glad to come full circle with something I dream about doing - impacting and bringing hope to the lives of young women.

**Laila Titular**  
**COMMUNICATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER**  
**HONOR 1000 MOVEMENT, INC.**

# Get engaged

## **STOP** **TRAFFICKING 5K** **MAY 2020**

**Changing lives 1k at a time**

This year alone in Nepal - 20,000 women and girls will be trafficked.  
In the Philippines - 60,000 to 100,000 women and girls will be exploited.

**Will you join us in raising funds to  
STOP TRAFFICKING in 2020?**

**How many people can you gather  
to run 5Ks during MAY?**

We'd love to hear from you.



[stoptrafficking5k.org](http://stoptrafficking5k.org)



[stoptrafficking5k@captivating.org](mailto:stoptrafficking5k@captivating.org)



**CAPTIVATING**



**Global  
Development  
Group**

in 2020

changing lives **1k** at a time  
**MARATHON**  
**IN A MONTH**



SEPTEMBER 2020

In Nepal and the Philippines,  
girls are literally disappearing every day.  
Stolen. Exploited. Enslaved.

We're passionate about **STOPPING HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

Will you join us in 2020?

Changing lives **1k** at a time

We'd love to hear from you.



[marathonmonth.org](http://marathonmonth.org)



[marathonmonth@captivating.org](mailto:marathonmonth@captivating.org)





Eradicating Poverty Through  
*Microfinance*

By directly addressing the problem of extreme poverty, we will directly decrease the attraction to high risk practices of migration to find work and being tricked into the sex trade.

*Photo of one of the women involved in the Microfinance Project*

## *Our Goal*

Maintain support for 2,200 women across 129 loan groups in Microfinance Program. The program will expand by 400 women each year.

## *Key Achievements* FROM JULY TO DECEMBER 2019

- *167 women* added to the program
- *2,466 women* with current loans
- *109 loan groups*
- *229 women* repaid their loans and are considered poverty-free during the year 2019



## Nova's Story

With 3 of her sons still in primary school, Nova is looking to sustain her business and grow it to secure their family's future. She joined the Microfinance Project in 2016 with her small grocery store placed in their own balcony. Her steady income helps in providing for their daily needs. Together with her husband, they maintain a rice field that produces additional income every 3 months. This helps with their children's education.

*Photo of rice field managed by Nova and her husband*



Nova's seventh microloan cycle was just released in August. She is committed to attending weekly meetings and makes sure she does not miss one. She is grateful because through the loan capital, she was able to purchase basic appliances for her family.

Nova knows that it is still a long journey ahead to seeing her sons finish their studies. She is thankful that she also has a community of mothers to support her.



## *Alma's Story*

Before joining the Microfinance Project in 2019, Alma had been diligently running her small business of peddling snacks in schools for 12 years. She used her first loan capital to add variety to her products. She shared that her income significantly increased because of this - doubling it per day from PHP 300 (USD 6) to PHP 700 (USD 14). Because of this, she has now secured her own business permit from the Municipal's Office. This allowed her to secure a fixed spot near the school for her business, instead of having to roam around during break times.

Alma has invested in a new refrigerator so she could also sell cold drinks. Her next goal is to add home-cooked meals to her business to cater to the teachers and other people living in the neighborhood. The added income will be a big help for their household of five. She and her husband are working tirelessly to build better roofing and flooring for their house. They are both determined to provide for their three children and build a safer, steadier home. With the support of her loan group, she claims that this goal will be achieved within the next year.



## *Our Goal*

To support 25 young women and their children annually

Young women who have been trafficked/sexually exploited are referred to the Blessed Project. Through the Blessed Project, they are then provided with independent/safe living, counselling & support, life skills and education, and assistance in finding eventual employment. We aim to see them become healthy and positive contributors in their communities.

# The Blessed Project

Rehabilitating Rescued Women

## Key Achievements FROM JULY TO DECEMBER 2019

- *10 young women* and *3 children* currently supported in the Blessed House
- *2 young women* with 5 children are now living independently with support
- *11 young women* gained employment (either part-time or full-time)
- *1 young woman* is now fully self-supporting through employment
- Since July 2018, the Blessed Project has supported a total of *18 young women and 11 children*

## Living an Empowered Life

Dina has been with the Blessed Project since June 2017. She is a human trafficking survivor who has been given a chance to earn a college degree; she is now in her 3rd year studying Criminology.

Dina is very grateful for this opportunity and really shows determination to do well in her studies. She has also been invited a number of times by various organizations to share her story to other survivors and inspire them to keep working hard to rebuild a life of dignity.

Because of her huge growth while in the Blessed Project, she has also been tasked to start conducting Human Trafficking Awareness Campaign (HTAC) Sessions with the microfinance groups in Bataan. Dina spends time and engages with the mothers - answering their questions about human trafficking and encouraging them to fight it.

Not only was she able to rise up from the traumatic experiences she had, but now lives a dignified and empowered life, ready and open to inspire others to do the same.



## Blessed House Renovation



The staff of the Blessed Project believe that women rescued from trafficking shouldn't be separated from their babies upon rescue. That is why they help support rescued women with their dependents. However, given the limited space, they are not able to provide much privacy for women with babies.

With the renovations in the new Blessed House, the women and their babies are provided with a healthier environment. Even the committed house parents will now have their own room where they can get better rest.



The young women in the Blessed Project are very happy to have the Sewing Project just beside their new home. Having to juggle their full schedule in school, responsibilities with their babies, and activities in the Blessed House, the new home helps them do their work more efficiently.

**We are deeply grateful to Maurice for making this happen.**

## *Access to Livelihood*

The Blessed Project continues to intensify their efforts to guide young women rescued from human trafficking towards independent living by providing them access to livelihood training.

Five young women are taking vocational courses offered by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA). These courses increase their skills and potential of being employed.

Aside from vocational courses, the women in Blessed are enjoying improving their skills in baking. They produce goods such as banana bread, cookies, cupcakes, and more which they market and sell. The Christmas season has been a great opportunity to sell more of their products.





One of the women in the Blessed Project dreams of becoming a pastry chef.

The staff from the Blessed Project reached out to another organization that offers free training and potential employment to young women, and they are very much willing to accept this young woman in their program as soon as she graduates from the Alternative Learning System (ALS).



*The Honor 1000 team from Manila, Siquijor, and Bataan, with Kate (Captivating Program Manager)*

## *Self-Sustainability for Honor 1000*

Honor 1000 Movement, Inc. aims to generate their own income to decrease ongoing reliance on donors through two commercial ventures: (1) Microfinance profits; and (2) Sewing Social Enterprise. They are also looking to tap into in-country fundraising.

The goal is to raise the following percentages of operating budget in the financial years:

- 36% by 2018/19 (*Achieved*)
- 46% by 2019/20 (*On track but needing to expand Microfinance client base*)
- 70% by 2020/21

# Providing Employment for Rehabilitated Women

The **Sewing Project** focuses on two core objectives, which are (1) **sustainability**, and (2) **skills training** to prepare young women for employment. Recently, orders from nearby institutions and partners were received, which generated good income.



As the project moves forward to increasing its capacity as a sewing line, the team recently hired Jelyn to be one of their assistant sewers. Jelyn was once part of the Blessed Project and has been successfully reintegrated into the community. Currently, she works in the Sewing Enterprise just like a regular employee in a company. She has already been involved in 3 different sewing projects where she showed great potential.

Jelyn's story is just one of the many success stories the program wishes to share as this social enterprise grows.



## *Blessed Product Expansion*

From advocacy pouches to Honor Advocacy tote bags, another product has been added to Blessed's product range - Honor's multi-purpose and multi-pocket bag. The bag is available to the clients of the Microfinance Project each time they are successful with a new microloan, as well as to online customers.

The product received great feedback from the microfinance clients saying it is perfect for mothers who do groceries or errands, or for anyone who needs a go-to bag to keep their things organized.

Honor aims to continue expanding their advocacy product range to introduce 3 new products each year.

With all the new initiatives and transitions Honor 1000 has seen for the past year, it is important that each staff member is driven by the same vision. From staff retreats to monthly meetings, Group Services has been keeping staff care and morale at a priority.

In August 1, all Honor staff from Manila, Bataan, Pampanga, and Siquijor came together for an afternoon gathering at the new Blessed House. The program started with Flo, the Executive Director, reminding each one about Honor's vision and mission. A representative of each branch shared how they are thankful for the organization and appreciate the work they do.

They also dedicated a part of the program to appreciate their longest serving staff who has been with Honor 1000 for 10 years: Rachel from the Microfinance Team in Bataan and Maricar, the Project Coordinator in Siquijor. Both shared words of encouragement to the other staff.

Kate Brown, our Philippines Project Coordinator, has been with Honor since the beginning and shared words of encouragement for everyone. Songs filled the rest of the afternoon as a karaoke machine was present - as any Filipino party would! The day ended with a hearty dinner prepared by the Blessed and Sewing Staff.

## *Investing in Staff*



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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*Image by Charlein Garcia on Unsplash*