



Children's Link

A Publication of the Philippine Children's Ministries Network

January – May 2007

Philippine Children's Ministries Network (PCMN) is a network of Christian organizations, churches, ministries and individuals working among 'children at risk' in the Philippines. Formed in November 1998 at the initiative of the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches (PCEC), PCMN serves as its Commission on Children and representative to the Philippine Inter-Faith Network for Children (PhilLINC). PCMN is an affiliate of Viva Network.

Children's Link is a PCMN publication containing news and stories about the work of the network in protecting children from all forms of abuse, exploitation and trafficking in and around the country.

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Dear Readers,

We are sharing with you news, stories and information coming from different groups that testify to the wonderful and amazing things that happen when people agree to work together around a common issue or purpose.

These stories inspire us to press on in the work we do among children in a world that has become more hostile and dangerous to these little ones. It has also convinced us that the way forward in our advocacy has to be done in the context of networking and partnership.

Networking has become a 'buzz' word describing varied concepts and activities, e.g. it is associated with pyramid schemes in the Philippine context. For PCMN, networking is ***"the coming together of individuals and/or organizations around one or more clearly defined commonalities (issues, concerns, tasks), sharing information, skills, expertise and resources and undertaking collaborative activities for children at risk (Viva Network). Synergy is created with a result that is greater than the total of individual accomplishments."*** Through networking we are able to do more as we encourage and build up one another. ***The PCMN experience demonstrates that network works, indeed!***

There is still plenty of room for anyone who would want to come onboard in the great adventure of networking for children at risk in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. ***'Tara Lets!'***

Editorial Staff



5 loaves & 2 fish

Why Work Together?

By Pine Gutierrez

By nature, the individual people as well as the individual organization prefer to live his own life or run its own affairs without the interference of others. When challenged to work with others, the question at the back of most minds is: "Isn't it really easier and quicker just to do it yourself?"

For many churches and other faith-based groups, some of their reasons for refusing to work with others are: perceived theological differences; various fears such as change, losing group's identity and autonomy, intrusion on 'my turf,' exposure of our weaknesses; protecting the sources of support; 'we can do it alone' mentality; perception that it is of little or no value and involvement is a waste of time.

It is true that one can get a specific job done. However, not everything can be accomplished by going it alone. The task of helping protect children around us is a good example. Working together to achieve something is confirmed in historical records, traditional proverbs and in the Scriptures. Indeed, it is not a new idea.

"Want to travel fast, travel alone. Want to travel far, travel together." African proverb

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to live alone. I will make a suitable companion to help him." Genesis 2:18

Then they said, "Come let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens..." The Lord said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them." Genesis 11:4,6

Two men can resist an attack that would defeat one man alone. A rope made of three cords is hard to break." Ecclesiastes 4:12

The PCMN experience of working together for and in behalf of children at risk has brought about the following outcomes:

Improved quality of care – leaders and workers who have attended conferences, training seminars, workshops and retreats have given feedbacks that the new knowledge and skills gained have helped them to become better and more effective workers.

Increased action – Initially, there were 3 churches in Quezon City involved in Project Rhoda that were able to support 90 child domestic workers in formal and non-formal education in 2005-2006. Ten churches and organizations have joined the collaboration this year. Four churches in QC launched in May a Children and Youth Center. An estimated 100 churches and organizations in the 3 Samar provinces, Davao and SOCKSARGEN have been involved in awareness

raising sessions on child trafficking. In 2007 the network has a goal of helping 250 new children at risk on top of individual members' targets.

Increased involvement with agencies and groups whose influence and action affect the lives of children. The national office is a partner of UNICEF, Tear Holland and Tearfund UK, a member of the technical working group of the Philippine Inter-Faith Network for Children and Micah Challenge Philippines, participates as stakeholder in groups like the Inter-Agency Coalition Against Trafficking of Persons, ILO-IPEC Education For All subgroup and Winrock. PCMN will be working on its registration with the Department of Social Welfare and Development. PCMN is serving as the Commission on Children at Risk of the Philippine Council of Evangelical Council and an affiliate of the Viva Network, the international network of Christian ministries to children at risk.

Getting people to work together is a challenge even among Christians. But we have learned through the years that the key in building and developing lasting relationships is the acceptance of our diversity in the body of Christ. This acceptance is shown in being understanding, patient and looking out for the other persons' or groups' interests. It will never be easy but the results are worth the effort.

Signs of Hope

New Ministry for Children Launched at Krus Na Ligas!

By Fe Foronda

On May 19, 2007, four pastors affiliated with Project Rhoda launched a new Center for Children and Youth at Risk in Barangay Krus Na Ligas, a community of 17,000 people in Quezon City which has the largest population and land area among Metro Manila cities. One-third of its 2.17 million population is below 15 years old.

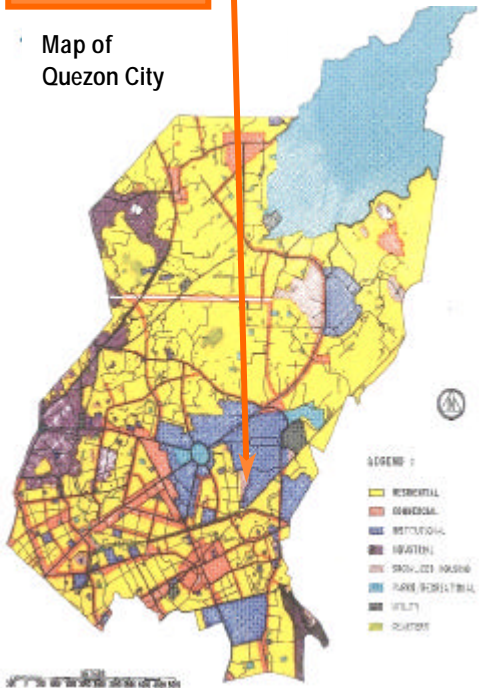
Barangay Krus Na Ligas is a densely populated urban poor community. It has two government schools, 1 elementary and high school with a combined population of about 10,000 children. The four pastors envision Krus Na Ligas as a community where children live in an environment of peace, protected from abuse and exploitation, and where families promote their welfare and uphold their rights.

The Center will serve as a hub of activities for children, young people and their families. It will offer modular course on life skills for children at risk, facilitate the referrals of children in varied forms of distress, help provide aftercare services to sexually abused and exploited children, educate the parents and other stakeholders in the community on child's rights, issues of children at risk and prevention of abuse. UNICEF is funding the purchase of basic equipments while the operation is supported by the Tear Nederland. The Center is open on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10 am – 6 pm. It will be manned by a Center Coordinator, 2 volunteer counselors/caseworkers and 1 facility caretaker.

The pastors namely, Pastor Joel Candano of the Church of Praise, Pastor Nards Aliño of the Philippine Bible Christian Community, Pastor Emil Ybanez of God is Alive Fellowship Church, and Pastor Dodie Diendo composed the Coordinating Team. They have oversight of the center's operation. Three of the pastors are residents of Krus Na Ligas and have been ministering in the area for several years now.



Pastors, center volunteers and PCMN staff posed after the launching celebration of the KNL Center for Children & Youth at Risk.



In 2007, the Center targets to serve 100 children at risk in the barangay. It intends to partner with the school, other non-evangelical churches, local barangay office, civic organizations such as Rotary Club, Parents-Teachers Associations to foster the well being of children in the community.

UP COMING EVENTS TO BE INVOLVED & PRAYED FOR...

June 2	World Weekend of Prayer for Children at Risk Marikina City Sports Center
9-11	PCMN Staff Retreat Baguio City
14	Working Group Fellowship Good Shepherd Convent, Katipunan Ave., Quezon City
18-20	Celebrating Children's Course (Module 3) Alay Pag-asa Foundation, Mandaluyong City
20-22	Understanding God's Heart for Children Training International Justice Mission
28&29	Consultative Meeting & Integral Mission Workshop Cebu City
29 6pm	International Justice Mission's Prayer Gathering Chow Unlimited Corp., Roof Deck Prestige Tower, Ortigas Center Pasig City

July 1-6	Celebrating Children's Course Facilitators' Training Penang, Malaysia
4-6	Facilitators Training on Life Skills Module Bacolod City
16-18	Celebrating Children's Course (Module 4) PCEC Conference Hall Quezon City
25-27	QIS Facilitators Training

August 1-3	Facilitators Training on Life Skills Module Samar
1-4	Network Facilitation Training Roxas City, Capiz
13-15	Celebrating Children's Course (Module 5)
20-21	Consultative Meeting & Integral Mission Workshop Legaspi City, Albay
29-31	Understanding God's Heart for Children Training Sorsogon

"By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" - John 13:35

NETWORK NEWS / WORKING GROUPS

Working groups are the think tank, advocates, mobilizers and implementers of the network. This is a venue for the members to actively participate in network initiatives. Being part of a working group opens up many networking opportunities with other groups. More significantly they become part of a joint project that will impact children at risk in a given area which brings tremendous satisfaction and encouragement, and inspires them to do more. Currently, we have 9 working groups that are responsible for planning, preparing and implementing various trainings and activities of the network.

Project Rhoda conducted a Facilitators Training on Life Skills Module (LSM) last January 9 to 11 at the Philippine Bible Christian Community, Kamias, Quezon City. There were 23 participants representing various churches in Metro Manila and 1 from Bacolod City. These trained facilitators are currently doing sessions on LSM to their respective areas.

Adolescent Sexuality and Reproductive Health (ASRH)/HIV-AIDS spearheaded a Facilitators Training on No Apologies: Sex, Lies and Truth in partnership with the Philippine Ministries On Family Care (PMOFC), held last January 23 to 25 at the Philippine Bible Christian Community. There were 15 trained facilitators that are now ready to advocate abstinence to young people and assist churches and ministries for SLT sessions.

Understanding God's Heart for Children (UGHC) has produced facilitators who are actively involved in holding UGHC trainings in Metro Manila and provinces.

Twenty four (24) workers from churches and organizations were trained and added to our pool of facilitators. The training was conducted last February 13 to 15 at Good Shepherd Convent, Quezon City.

Child Participation's Level Up for Jesus! Leadership Camp was held last April 17 to 19 in Tagaytay City. Forty two (42) children coming from different member organizations and churches participated. The facilitation team includes CP kids Batch 1. Our hope is to reactivate the child participation program.

Alternative Learning System (ALS) has conducted 3 Instructional Managers' Training to more than 100 workers since 2004.

Last March 29, some 30 implementers of ALS gathered for fellowship, sharing and updating at Christian Community Fellowship, Marikina City.

Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) held a half-day fellowship and discussion on the "Psycho-social Trends in Working with CSA Victims" last February 23. Ms. Dolly Rubia from the Child Protection Unit of the Philippine General Hospital was the resource speaker.

Child Trafficking (CT) provides a forum for updating, sharing of experiences and exchange of information for network members implementing projects and activities on child trafficking. The flip chart, one of the significant outputs of the group, is widely used by local networks and partner organizations. It was revised and reprinted recently with support from the International Justice Mission. Copies are available for a minimal cost at PCMN office.

World Weekend of Prayer for Children at Risk (WWPCAR) is an annual celebration held every first weekend of June. The group prepared for the event that was held at the Marikina City Sports Center. Different prayer activities were held in other areas and significant number of churches set aside time for prayer during their Sunday worship. We would like to see the mobilization of churches in continuing prayer ministry for children at risk.

Workers Retreat – the group organizes the Workers' Annual Retreat which provides opportunities for the workers of member organizations and churches to have rest and recreation.



CP Kids facilitates the children's camp. (l-r) Peter, Aldren, Raffy, Kuya Gerald, Denden, Joy and Jocelyn.

Special Projects Updates...

Celebrating Children was developed by Viva Network for Christians working in ministries to children at risk. The course is both practical and academic, designed to equip people to work more effectively with children living in difficult circumstances of loss, trauma and abuse.

On April 18-20, the first module was conducted. The course will run until November. Twenty-two students enrolled, representing 10 organization and 5 churches.

The name Celebrating Children was chosen to emphasize that work with children should not focus on them as problems but rather be a celebration of who children are and what God intends them to be.

"Integral Mission or holistic transformation is the proclamation and demonstration of the gospel. It is not simply that evangelism and social involvement are to be done alongside each other. Rather in integral mission our proclamation has social consequences as we call people to love and repentance in all areas of life." (Taken from the Micah Network Document)

PCMN conducts session on Integral Mission for pastors and church workers as a means to challenge and mobilize the churches for children at risk. Sessions have been conducted in the 3 Samar provinces, Davao/SOCSKSARGEN and Western Visayas. Sessions are planned for pastors and church leaders in Cebu, Bicol and CARAGA for the remaining months of 2007.

Quality Improvement Scheme (QIS)

Viva Network has developed and piloted an organizational development capacity building tool called the Quality Improvement System (QIS) to facilitate quality improvement amongst Christian projects and organizations working with children at risk. Through QIS, organizations will be able to assess their performance against the standards. The key areas that need to improve can be identified and training to address them can be conducted.

PCMN in partnership with Viva Network will bring QIS to the Philippines for the benefit of groups in child care and development work. Several PCMN leaders and those in the local networks will be participating in a QIS training that Viva Network will conduct on July 25-27, 2007.

Impact Assessment is a joint project of Viva Network and PCMN, with Asian Center for Personal and Organizational Development (ACePOD) contracted to do the study. The purpose is to determine the impact of networking on children, workers, ministries, organizations, churches and decision-makers.

Activities include base lining on Child Trafficking and Retrospective Study on Project Rhoda and other network initiatives.



Workers in the Celebrating Children Course.

NETWORK NEWS / LOCAL NETWORKS

Western Visayas

The result of the training on Understanding God's Heart for Children (UGHC) last year and reported during the assessment meeting last March were very encouraging. The material is widely used; it has been added as Sunday school guide for the Convention Baptist churches, incorporated in the curriculum of the Department of Theology of Filamer Christian College (FCC).

In the first quarter, UGHC trainings were conducted with 29 partner day care workers and community organizers of the Creative Community Foundation in Iloilo City; 42 church workers, Sunday school teachers, staff of local organizations and faculty of FCC in Roxas City, Capiz; 19 partner pastors of the Share An Opportunity Negros Occidental; and 29 pastors and Sunday school teachers of several churches in Roxas, Oriental Mindoro. Participants' shared that their perspective on children and their ministry is enhanced. They were greatly encouraged in their study of the Word of God and from the sharing of the participants.

There are now 5 budding networks from Negros Occidental headed by Ms. Imelda Caspe, Iloilo City by Pastor Edwin Araña, Northern Iloilo by Pastor Elizer Destor, Antique by Mr. Larry Petinglay and Roxas City, Capiz by Ms. Vilma Resol.

Various trainings and activities are scheduled for the rest of the year in the region.

Cebu

The Cebu Coordination Group is currently advocating for the collaboration of churches and faith-based organizations in reaching children at risk.

The group composed of Ms. Sally Ababa of the Operation Mission, Ms. Marlyn Uy of the Gabayan Alang sa Kaugmaon, Ms. Juliet Oleo of Christ for Asia and Ms. Sally Proudlove is preparing for the Integral Mission Seminar-Workshop in June.

Samar Island

Community awareness on the issue of child trafficking is heightened through the community education sessions conducted by the different churches who are members of the Eastern Samar Children's Rights Advocacy Network (ESCRAN), Western Samar Children's Ministries Network (WSCMN) and the Northern Samar Children Ministries Network (NSCMN). To date, they have reached 18,715 individuals. They are also involved in reporting child trafficking incidence and in aftercare service of victims. Pastors have found more meaning in their ministry and relevance in the community.

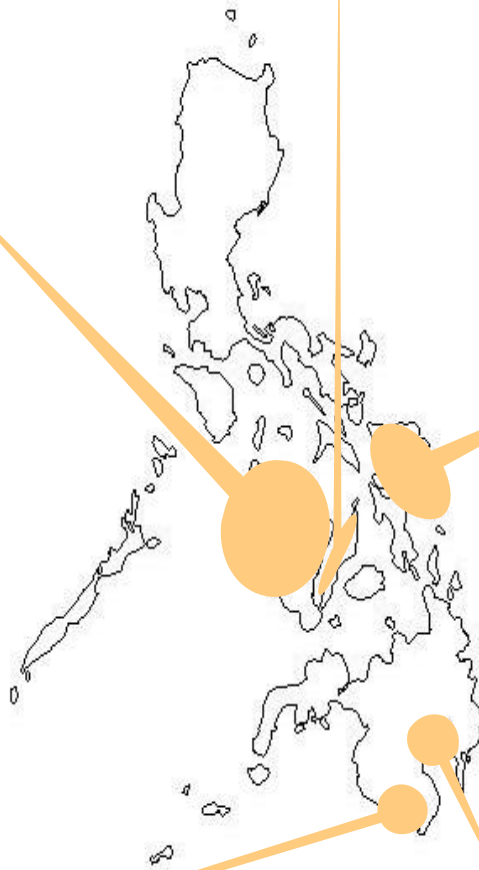
A Facilitators Training on Understanding God's Heart for Children (UGHC) was conducted last March 29 to 31 with 27 participants and the Foster Care Training, in partnership with the DSWD National Office and Regional Office VIII, last May 29 and 31 with 27 participants.

Davao

On April 26 and 27, the Mindanao Children's Ministries Network (MCMN) and SOCKSARGEN Children's Ministries Network (SCMN) organized the Integral Mission held at Brokenshire Resource Center, Davao City. Forty (40) pastors representing 30 churches and organizations from Davao and SOCKSARGEN areas attended. The sessions were facilitated by Mr. Ricardo Cosico, a development consultant.

MCMN's community education for the prevention of child trafficking reached 5,000 individuals last year. Another 5,000 is target for 2007.

Ms. Leah Genson, Executive Director of Pag-ugmad sa Kabataan Foundation and the Local Network Coordinator, represents MCMN in Davao City's Child Welfare Council.



SOCKSARGEN

(South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani provinces and General Santos City)

Churches and organizations continue to be involved in the community education sessions on child trafficking prevention. There were 2,036 individuals provided with the information last year. For 2007, a new target of 5,000 to be reached has been set.

The SOCKSARGEN Children's Ministries Network (SCMN) is a recognized body by the city government of General Santos. Mr. Juniper Bibiolata, of Share An Opportunity and serves as the Local Network Coordinator, sits in the executive committee of the Local Inter-Agency Task Force Against Trafficking (LIATFAT).



How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity!' - Psalm 133:1

You are warmly welcome to explore with us different ways by which you could be a part of the amazing work that God is doing among children. You may contact us at

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