

OVERVIEW OF Philippines

Overview of Philippines



YEAR OF
1898*
INDEPENDENCE

POPULATION
94,852,000
MILLION

27.9%
Population
BELOW
poverty line

Languages

Filipino and English are official languages, and are widely spoken. There are at least 120–indigenous languages also found in different regions of the archipelago.

Under-five Mortality Rate: 25 per 1,000 live births. Philippines ranks 83 in the world.

Education: Out of every 100 children who enter 1st grade, only 65 will graduate from elementary school. Out of the same 100, only 42 will finish high school.

Human Development Index (HDI) for 2012: 0.654 (ranked 114 out of 187, indicating medium human development).

*The Philippines officially mark June 12, 1898 as Independence Day, when the first Philippine President declared independence from the Spanish colonial government, shortly before America, also then at war with the Spanish, occupied the Philippines. The CIA World Factbook notes July 4, 1946 as Philippine Independence Day, when America ended the 'Commonwealth' government, and returned autonomy to local leadership.

Brief History of ChildFund in Philippines

ChildFund came to Philippines: 1954

Number of enrolled children (FY13): 30,232

Number of provinces: 80 provinces & 39 chartered cities

Number of participants (FY13): 288,785

Brief History of ChildFund in Philippines (continued)

ChildFund began its work in the Philippines in 1971, partnering first with religious organizations, and then with communities. The partnership model progressed and evolved over the years. Now, ChildFund partners with people's organizations, many of which have federated.

Where We Work



Provinces where we work:

- Ifugao
- Benguet
- Baguio City
- Mountain Province
- Quezon,
- Batangas
- Laguna National Capital Region (Metro Manila)
- Sorsogon
- Camarines Sur
- Capiz
- Iloilo
- Negros Occidental
- Cebu
- Ormoc
- Misamis Oriental
- North Cotobato
- South Cotobato
- Cotobato
- Maguindanao
- Sulu
- Zamboanga del Norte

Brief Program Overview



ChildFund is a leading global, child development agency. We exist to help deprived, excluded and vulnerable children improve their lives and grow into young adults, parents and leaders who bring lasting positive change in their communities. We build communities that protect and advance the worth and rights of children.

ChildFund works to address expressions of deprivation, exclusion and vulnerability, as children experience it throughout different stages of their life, from infancy to adulthood. We invest \$8 million annually in projects that directly benefit 50,000 children through sponsorship and grant projects. Our community-based approach allows our work to indirectly benefit 250,000 more Filipinos.

2013 Program Achievements

Healthy and Secure Infants

Early Childhood Development (ECD) is a niche core program and as of this year, 3,600 2-5 year old children enjoyed quality ECD activities through home or center-based services. Home-based ECD services operate in remote communities where Day Care Centers have yet to be built.

ChildFund's investments in infants and mothers have improved health-seeking attitudes of mothers for themselves and their children. In program areas in Western Visayas and the Cordilleras, rates for assisted child delivery have climbed up to 20%, the number of mothers seeking antenatal care has grown as much as 50%, and birth registration of children has climbed to 100%.

Clean, potable water has proven essential to ECD services in villages whose only water source is a deep well. ChildFund has installed 35 new water systems, directly linking 5,093 0 to 5 year old children and 20,388 members of their communities to clean drinking water. Thirty-six (36) more systems are scheduled for installation, linking 14,296 more children, and 67,256 members of their community to safe water.



2013 Program Achievements (continued)

Educated and Confident Children

Most sponsored children in ChildFund's communities are 6 to 14 years old. Through Conditional Socialized Education Assistance, ChildFund provided support to children, especially those at risk of dropping out of school. In FY13, ChildFund provided financial and educational assistance, to cover unmet school needs such as school supplies, uniforms, transportation and resources for other school projects to 13,833 children (6,778 girls and 7,055 boys).



Further, ChildFund invests in learning support mechanisms for school-aged children. Teacher-to-student, peer-to-peer, and community-to-student relationships prove to be effective means of improving academic performance.

In Western Visayas and the Cordilleras, close to 100% of 6-14 year olds in communities where ChildFund works, now attend some form of school, whether primary school or alternative basic education. Moreover, close to 100% participate in school governance groups or activities, owing to improvement in self confidence.

Skilled and Involved Youth

Leadership development and life skills training shape the youth into powerful young leaders. ChildFund works through Barangay Children's Associations, a visible and leading advocate for Youth Disaster Risk Reduction (YDRR) and youth issues. A core of 180 ChildFund YDRR advocates are currently active, though most ChildFund youth are equipped and serve in YDRR. ChildFund youth were selected to represent and lead the National Anti-Poverty Commission's (NAPC) Youth Sector. The current NAPC youth commissioner is the fourth ChildFund youth leader in a row to occupy the position.



Further, a total of 513 youth received sustained financial support for completing secondary education. Further, 634 out-of-school youth received livelihood skills training, in coordination with government and private university partners. Youth Community-Managed Savings and Credit Associations (CoMSCAs) assisted youth entrepreneurship efforts, particularly in communities migrating from child labor practices. ChildFund now has 2,908 CoMSCA members, including 2,424 adults, 248 youth and 89 elementary children.

In the communities where we work, ChildFund's investments in developing youth and equipping them with life skills, has played a major role in the reduction of youth pregnancies from 12.5% to 1%.

2013 Program Achievements (continued)

Civil Society

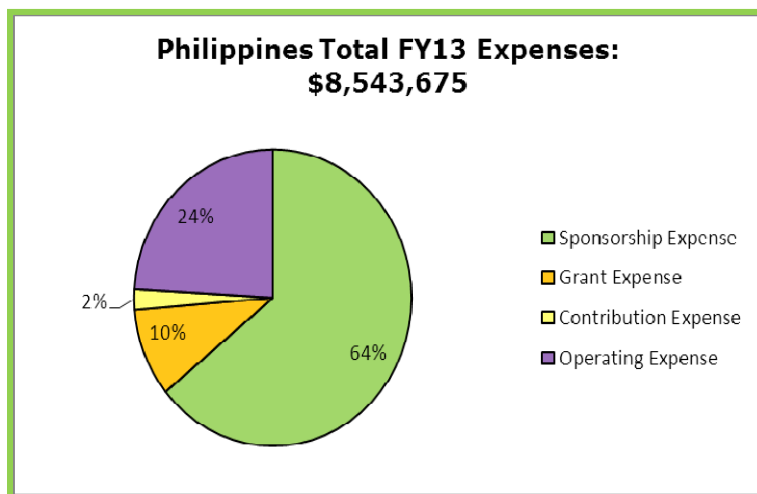
ChildFund works in cooperation with government structures, strengthening the capacities of Barangay Councils for the Protection of Children (BCPCs) and School Pupil Governments. There are 2,398 key actors involved in training and advocacy on the implementation of the Anti-Bullying Act, other child protection laws and relevant school programs.



ChildFund Philippines promotes a zero-tolerance policy for any act of child abuse, exploitation, violence, discrimination, bullying and other forms of abuse in schools. We create Child Protection Committees (CPCs) in schools to implement protection mechanisms.

In communities where we work, vulnerable families now enjoy at least twice as much or more access to medical, emotion, and psychological support services. These same families claim their ability to provide for their family's basic needs is up to three times as robust.

Financial Report



Philippines FY13		
Sponsorship Expense	5,473,492	64%
Grant Expense	823,022	10%
Contribution Expense	190,180	2%
Operating Expense	2,056,981	24%
Total Expense	8,543,675	100%

Challenges

ChildFund Philippine's Country Strategic Plan describes our intent to increase investments in Mindanao, where deprivation, exclusion, and vulnerability are pronounced, among indigenous and Muslim communities. The peace and order situation in Mindanao leads us to consider the immediate viability of increased investments in Mindanao, considering the risk posed to ChildFund Staff.

Urban expansion in Metro Manila presents a fresh set of challenges for ChildFund, as poverty conditions in the Capital are dramatically different from the provinces. Urban poor communities are often susceptible to flooding during the monsoons, and there are risks posed by inner city crime.

Ultimately, the sustainability of our investments is our primary challenge. We provide technical expertise and training in organizational development to our local partners. Our goal is to equip our partners so they can continue to represent and champion children's well-being and protection, independent of ChildFund.

Why Sponsorship is Important

Maribel felt her stomach churn. She listened as the PA named the young men and women ahead of her. One by one the line drew shorter. She was as nervous as she was excited. She was graduating from college, and in moments it would be her turn to climb the stage and receive her diploma.

A college degree was a crowning achievement Maribel once didn't think possible. Her parents were not of means; her mother worked as a housekeeper to complement her father's wages from carpentry. Getting by was the goal, and a higher education was the dream.

A good stranger, Frank DeMarco helped Maribel along that dream when he sponsored her through ChildFund. It was a relationship Maribel treasured through elementary, high school and college. *"I got to stay in school, and Frank made sure I had a gift every month, and a bigger gift I could share with family on holidays,"* Maribel recalls. *"He wrote me and his family hung a photo of me in their home. That made me feel real special,"* she adds.

Maribel found sponsor correspondence so delightful she volunteered as the "Letter-Writing Team Leader," helping ChildFund staff collect and distribute letters for other sponsored children in her community. Her siblings, much like other (unsponsored) children, also joined her at leadership workshops. *"My whole family became part of ChildFund,"* Maribel says. She observed the same from neighbors and classmates at school.



Why Sponsorship is Important (continued)

Graduation marked the fruition of Maribel's earliest dream. Though she had originally wanted to be an accountant, being part of ChildFund endeared her to Social Work, which she pursued in college. As she took her bow, diploma in hand, she knew that moment was also the conclusion of her official role with ChildFund, and her link to her kind-hearted sponsor. She recalls feelings of joy, thankfulness and hope flooding her that moment, tinged with some sadness over graduating from ChildFund.

Fifteen years later, Maribel prepares to graduate from ChildFund again. Now 37, Maribel manages ChildFund's Local Partner in a town called Malita in the Mindanao Island group in the southern Philippines, not far from where she grew up. ChildFund has long been working with the Malita Children's Project (MCP), leading to its ability to continue programs for children, families and their community on its own. Once again, at the fruition of years of work, Maribel is parting from ChildFund again. *"There's too much ChildFund in me, for me to ever be apart from it."*

After graduation, Maribel worked with the social arm of her alma mater, Cor Jesu Colleges (CJC). Their social action unit, "CJC Cares" is a ChildFund Local Partner. *"I was not involved with the Partner, and though I loved the community development work I did, I found myself frequently looking wistfully at that unit and the work they did, specially when they had activities with children,"* she shares. *"Whenever I caught those activities, I felt envious."*

Maribel served for seven (7) years at CJC before she found the opportunity to work directly with ChildFund at MCP as the Project Manager. There, working with children, she rediscovered the joy and excitement of her childhood as a sponsored child.

Over her years of service at MCP, Maribel found she was not the only former sponsored child drawn to working with ChildFund. Former sponsored children Mae and Grace, found their way aboard her team.

Unlike Maribel, Mae and Grace did not have one sponsor throughout childhood. They were fortunate enough to have a series of sponsors who saw them both through some period of their childhood, from early in elementary through college. *"All I am now, I owe to ChildFund,"* Mae says. *"Without sponsorship, I probably wouldn't have been able to finish school, nor would I be as confident,"* she adds. Grace says ChildFund owns a warm place in her heart; *"I'm indebted to generosity,"* she says.

Maribel, Mae, and Grace feel they repay the generosity they've been shown by doing their best for the current generation of children. Children also warm up to the MCP staff quickly. In the person of Maribel and her staff, sponsored children see a concrete example of who they can be if they make the most of opportunities ChildFund opens to them.

Just like Maribel's years in sponsorship closed at graduation, so too is MCP's, now they're 'graduating' as well. ChildFund adopts a time frame for working with Local Partners, building programs, skills and abilities that benefit children and their community. Like a fresh graduate makes good of what he's learned at school, a Local Partner like MCP, is prepared to continue serving its community beyond what it has achieved with ChildFund's help.

There will be a small graduation ceremony in June, and Maribel feels as nervous and excited as her commencement exercises 15 years ago. She, her staff, and their community admit being a little emotional over the impending conclusion of so many sponsorship relationships. *"We're a little sad, graduating from ChildFund again this June,"* Maribel says. *"But we're very satisfied with all the good we've done, and we're equally excited over the opportunities ahead of us,"* she adds.

Malita will be initiating a local sponsorship program this year, and Maribel's thrilled over the idea of finally being able to herself sponsor a child, and her journey of *paying forward* will finally come full circle.

Why Sponsorship is Important

Nur-isa packed light. The airline that would fly her to the capital allowed her enough baggage, but Nur-isa had a long and difficult journey ahead of her, just to get to the airport.

Nur-isa lives among the chain of islands in Basilan, on the southernmost tip of the Philippines. The remoteness of the island chain, and a long history of armed conflict and abductions, has stifled infrastructure and other development in Basilan.

To get to the main island of Mindanao, Nur-isa begins on a small motorboat, seating only ten adults. A small 15-year old, she's only charged P20, (\$.50), half an adult's fare. It's a 45-minute ride under fair weather, which could be twice as long when the weather was uncooperative. Nur-isa and other passengers had to huddle under plastic sheets or a tarpaulin mat as the boat braved chops and swells.

Nur-isa then transfers to a larger ferry that plods 2 hours through the Sulu Sea to reach Zamboanga City, where a bus takes her to the airport. The plane ride to Manila should be the most comfortable part of her journey, yet she finds herself still unaccustomed to air-conditioning, and the pressurized cabin's atmosphere nauseates her.

Though long and tiring, Nur-isa makes this journey often on her way to various national assemblies and events, where she represents Filipino children and youth. *"I go a long way because I've come a long way,"* she says.

Humble Beginnings

Nur-isa was a soft-spoken and unassertive 6-year old when she became sponsored through ChildFund. Her mother was the family breadwinner, working as a housekeeper in the Middle East. Her circumstances left her in the care of her aunt, whose home of light plywood and galvanized iron roofing, reinforced with concrete in parts, offered more comforts than her father's home.

Sponsorship was a blessing to Nur-isa. Because she was used to keeping in touch with her mother through letters, Nur-isa felt just as close to her sponsor through the letters he sends her. Letter writing was much easier for Nur-isa, than speaking to people in person.

Despite her initial shyness, Nur-isa aspires to pursue a career in education. She and her cousin, Lina, used to collect discarded campaign posters and tarpaulin banners, and together they used to build a play classroom outside Nur-isa's aunt's home. There they took turns teaching each other Math, English, Filipino and Social Sciences over a pitch-stich blackboard. They staged play graduation ceremonies during *Hari Raya* festival. *"When it rained, we had to declare there school cancelled,"* Nur-isa jokes. Still, their playschool games helped them achieve at real school, and both remained honor students from elementary through high school.

Involvement in ChildFund activities helped Nur-isa outgrow her shyness. Though her first public speaking assignment brought her almost to the brink of tears, she knew she would have to overcome her apprehension in pursuit of her dream. She then took many more opportunities to go beyond play classroom and tutor other children. She joined ChildFund's peer-tutoring activity where she helped slow readers improve their reading skills. *"Helping other kids made me more confident about what I know myself,"* she discovered.



Why Sponsorship is Important (continued)

Youth Representative

A Children's Congress in central Philippines was approaching and the ChildFund youth delegate couldn't make it. When Nur-isa was asked to substitute, she knew it was now or never. She took that long and difficult trip for the first time.

Nur-isa's public address and participation at the Children's Congress was well received, and she soon found herself representing ChildFund and the children of Basilan at one conference after another. From nearly falling apart under the strain of having to speak before an audience of

In October of 2011 Nur-isa was selected to join the youth delegation participating at an assembly of the Philippine Government's National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC). 25 young people would be selected from representatives from 60 different associations and child-focused organizations. They would be the voice representing the youth, in discussions steering government interventions in poverty alleviation. Nur-isa at best hoped to land a seat among the 25 representatives, so she could advocate strengthening of government structures in Basilan, and contribute to the improvement of her province's reputation. When she learned she didn't just make the cut, but was selected by the President of the Philippines to chair the Youth Sector as Commissioner. *"Meeting President Aquino in person, and receiving my appointment from him, was beyond any expectation of mine,"* Nur-isa says.

Since her appointment, Nur-isa has only had to travel to more conferences and assemblies all over the Philippines, and once in Thailand. Her flagship agenda is the strengthening of the *Barangay* (Village) *Council for the Protection of Children* (BCPC), a government structure conceived with the intention of ensuring children's issues and protection, at the village government level. She's observed how many village councils assign BCPC roles in compliance only. *"We came up with criteria for selection, and functions and guidelines for accountability the selection BCPC. We wanted to make the BCPC were truly functional,"* she says.

Dang, a community mobilizer working with ChildFund's partner in Basilan, says *"ChildFund is on the right track helping so many children discover confidence, and their own ability to affect change in their communities"*. Nur-isa is in fact the third ChildFund youth in succession to be appointed Commissioner of the NAPC Children and Youth Sector. Six (6) of the 25 current NAPC representatives are also ChildFund youth like Nur-isa. *"Nur-isa's come a long way from her small fishing village in the islands of Basilan,"* Dang says.

For her part, Nur-isa is just glad she can be part of efforts to make things better for young people just like her. *"I pray we can continue these efforts. There are thousands of children who need more help. We need to be strong partners of our own society,"* she says.