



newsletter

Island Kids
Philippines 

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In this edition

- Workshops
- Events for Children
- Our Time-Out-House is nearly finished!
- BARLIF
- Awards
- Operation for Children in Street Situation, CISS
- Sale of Bakery Products in Support of IKP
- We Are Mourning

Dear Friends of Island Kids Philippines

IKP/PIKIFI care about sustainability and a responsible attitude towards our planet. Therefore, we are especially pleased to have found the land for our new project: The BARLIF-Farm will be developed into a place where regenerative farming and integral ways of sustainable living in harmony with nature can be learnt. Full of energy, the four board members of the newly established foundation will now set to work.

There are two other projects that are equally helpful for the people in our care to create an understanding for a careful handling of their place of living: our Time-Out-House built as an Earth House, and a meeting of scouts under the motto "Our World – Our Thriving Future".

Other events were focussed on attentiveness to other topics: school, hygiene, exploitation of children, and a healing interaction with oneself.

We are very pleased that our effort is repeatedly recognized by urban organizations. We commit ourselves wholeheartedly, supported and encouraged by you, dear friends, sponsors and donors.

Salamat kaayo – many thanks for your loyalty!

■ Workshops

In March, a half-day information event was held at the Socialtherapeutical Center for Prevention and Intervention. Mothers and fathers of our schoolchildren were informed what their children are learning at school and how important it is to support and pursue at home what they have learnt. Apart from education, it includes the daily routine of cleaning the teeth, washing hands and personal hygiene. The importance of homework was pointed out and that the children need the space and time to complete it. Fruit juice and chocolate rolls were served during the break.

Under the direction of World Vision, the City Council of Cagayan de Oro organized a two-day workshop for the protection of children, to which PIKIFI employees were also invited. The participants developed a risk analysis and exchanged views on desirable and feasible changes. They identified existing resources and developed strategies. The closing message emphasized the importance of supporting together a child-friendly CdO. Together Against the Exploitation of Children is the slogan which is key to the implementation of the strategies.

■ Events for Children

A big Scout Event took place on 24th February in memory of Happy World Thinking Day. Girls and boys of PIKIFI participated at the event featuring “Our World, Our Thriving Future”. The program included handicrafts, games, singing and dancing, which everyone enjoyed.



Scout Event in memory of Happy World Thinking Day.



Participants of the Workshop

Some of our girls who have been traumatized by sexual abuse participated in a series of therapeutical activities and a workshop on the subject of "Back to Beauty", which were organized in the context of our new partnership with the Christian non-profit organization Balik Kaanyag (Visayan for "back to beauty"). The team of Balik Kaanyag consists of psychologists and social workers. Under the motto "Care, Healing, Encouragement", their aim is to show abused children their inner beauty in order to give them more self-esteem and thus strengthening them on their way of mental healing.



Well-attended workshop at Balik Kaanyag.

A total of 40 girls accompanied by six PIKIFI employees took part in two camps lasting for two days. The children had a lot of fun doing handicrafts, drawing, making music, going on a scavenger hunt and experiencing other adventure-based educational activities. The PIKIFI staff were talking to children, either in small groups, or individually. They helped them to perceive their abused bodies in a positive way by washing their hands and feet in a caring manner, and styling the girls' hair.

■ Our Time-Out-House is nearly finished!

The children and adolescents in the Children's Village have been through traumatic experiences. Now that they are safe, their oppressed feelings can sometimes come to the surface in an uncontrolled way turning into aggression towards other housemates, carers, or the furnishings. For situations like these our Time-Out-House has been planned. Nothing can be broken here, and the short, supervised time-out helps children and adolescents to calm down and learn how to handle their anger and other feelings.



Das neue Time-Out-Haus.

The small building with a time-out-room, an observation room and a toilet was constructed as an "Earth House". These especially ecological earth houses have been built from locally available material sourced without using a lot of energy. PIKIFI filled used rice sacks with soil to build the walls. Used car tires cut into slices were reused as roof tiles. What is still missing is the interior coating and the foam mats for the soft walls and the soft floor.

■ BARLIF

On 11th May 2024 the foundation "Bata-Alima Regenerative Living Int'l. Foundation, Inc." (BARLIF) was founded in CdO. In Visayan, "Bata-Alima" means "Welfare for Children" which should be achieved by a "regenerative way of living" on the future farm of the foundation.

Above all, the foundation will support and complement PIKIFI through its activities. Like PIKIFI, BARLIF will be financed and supported by Island Kids Philippines (IKP) from Switzerland and Germany, at least initially. BARLIF will later become completely independent of donations.

BARLIF will set up and operate a farm with regenerative agriculture in order to produce agricultural produce for the children and young people cared for by PIKIFI.

In addition, adventure-based recreational camps will help to:

- promote their environmental awareness
- enable healing in nature
- teach a conscious use of natural resources and the protection of ecosystems:
 - living in harmony with nature
 - reforestation of forests
 - planting and harvesting for self-sufficiency according to the principles of regenerative agriculture

Hikes in the nearby Kintanglad and Kalatungan mountains and to the Limunsudan waterfalls should become unforgettable experiences for the children from the big city. Later, children in need on the farm should also find a new home in a foster family.

Furthermore, BARLIF with its regenerative agriculture wants to become a pioneer farm for other interested farmers in the area and beyond. Next to Thomas Kellenberger and his future wife Rachel Gose as founders of the new foundation, the board also includes people who are already familiar with the organization: Juvy Naguita, development worker at PIKIFI, and Pamela Denice Inday, former social worker at PIKIFI, currently probation officer at the Department of Justice and aspiring lawyer. The team also includes experienced farmer Jerelie Huwebes, who will live on the farm full-time with his family and run the business.

Jerelie (called Oni by everyone), Rachel and Thomas are currently attending further training courses in the field of regenerative agriculture. Thomas and Rachel will later divide their time and work between the BARLIF farm and PIKIFI.

The imminent purchase of the farm will be financed by donations from the "Kuya Thom Goes Home Project". The farm is located 49 km from CdO in the rural sub-municipality of Indulang, which belongs to the municipality of Talakag. The land is situated at an altitude of about 800 meters above sea level and, with its cooler and more rain-resistant climate, is suitable for growing numerous types of vegetables and grains, fruit trees and even coffee beans. After several inspections, the land was officially surveyed last April and new boundary stones were set. It comprises 4.98 hectares of agricultural land and around 2.5 hectares of forest. The Pigcutin river and the Bobotan stream form the natural boundaries. Adjacent to the property are a largely untouched forest and three other agricultural plots. A spring provides fresh drinking water.

We are delighted that the work of PIKIFI and IKP has been extended and complemented.



Awards

Rose Pulmones is a police officer who has already won several awards. She has been cooperating with PIKIFI for a long time and has been on the PIKIFI board for several years. Once more she was honored for her tireless commitment to children on the dark side of life. The police organization of CdO (Cagayan de Oro City Police Office/COCPO) presented her with the award for outstanding achievements in the field of child and women protection. Therefore, her police station was also honored as the most child-friendly police station.



Rose Pulmones and her colleagues.

PIKIFI, too, received again an award from the mayor. We were honored for actively contributing as a dedicated partner and member of City Council for the Protection of Children.

Operation for Children in Street Situation, CISS

In a joint operation by the police, authorities and the Organization Streetlight, 28 persons, including 15 minors, were rescued during the night of 3/4th February 2024. They were caught after curfew sniffing volatile substances, engaging in prostitution and/or violating the law concerning parental responsibility. After interviewing the rescued and assessing their cases, 21 of them were taken to their respective places of residence for reintegration. 7 minors were temporarily placed in the ORPC-CSWD waiting area until further action could be discussed.

(Source: Esther Bühlmann, Streetlight, Facebook)

Sale of Bakery Products in Support of IKP

Mateo, Norah and Celia Burgener from Steffisburg baked muffins and decorated them with Filipino flags that they had created themselves. They sold the delicious artwork in their neighborhood, raising over CHF 200. Full of pride and joy, they donated the amount to IKP. We are very pleased and would like to thank the three children very much.



Mateo, Norah und Celia Burgener (v.l.n.r.)

■ We Are Mourning

It was with great sadness we have learned of the disappearance and presumed death of Robert Demata, the husband of Virgelia, co-founder and director of PIKIFI. Robert worked as a sailor on large container ships for decades, which kept him away from his wife Virgelia and his adopted son Raphael for months at a time. He wanted to resign at the beginning of 2024, but was persuaded to take one last trip from Australia to Japan. When a man was missing from the evening roll call on February 10th 2024, it turned out to be Robert. He had been busy painting the outside of the ship that day. The entire ship was immediately searched for him, unfortunately without success. It must be assumed that Robert had fallen overboard for unknown reasons. Neither the crew nor the coastguard have been able to find any trace of him.

The situation is very difficult for Virgelia and her son. Our thoughts and prayers are with them both and with great sympathy the PIKIFI staff are trying to help them through this difficult time.



Robert Demata

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Actual information you'll find as well
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