



newsletter

Island Kids
Philippines 

2026/3

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Dear Friends of PIKIFI

The past few months have filled our heart with deep emotions. It was a time of joy, but also of sorrow, of growth and solidarity.

We were able to celebrate University graduations and are currently accompanying more than 400 children, teenagers, and adults on their way of education.

Many things were happening within our own organization. With a new director for the Children's Village and a new organization, we are fit for the future. This is evident in the lively workshops, the bustling construction work, the founding of the "Resilient Carmen Community Association", and the successful camps on the Farm. At the same time, we could target our help where it was most needed and therefore provide important emergency aid.

But on our journey, we are also confronted with sorrow. We had to say goodbye to a long-standing valued colleague, and of three members of our recycling community. They leave behind a void, but also a deep mark on our hearts and our work.

These simultaneous new beginnings and farewells show how lively and closely knit our community is. We thank you from all our heart for accompanying us on this journey.

SAVE THE DATE

20 Years of IKP!

Save the Date: On **5th June 2027** IKP will celebrate its 20th Anniversary in Hägendorf near Olten. Further information will follow in due course.

■ Successful University Graduations

Marian* (21) and April Kith Catubay (23) graduated with Honors from their social work studies. Together, they wrote a thesis titled "Roofless Realities; On Living Conditions of Homeless Families", which was awarded the prize for best work.



April Kith has been supported by PIKIFI since her father's premature death, but she continues to live with her family in the Landfill Community.

Marian was 15 years old when she came to our Children's Village. Her biological mother had abandoned her immediately after birth without leaving so much as a note and has been untraceable ever since. Over an extended period of time, Marian was repeatedly abused by her biological father. After PIKIFI filed a criminal complaint, he was placed in pretrial detention due to overwhelming evidence and was found guilty following a lengthy trial. For Marian, restorative justice was the top priority. She wanted her father to admit his guilt and make amends, but she rejected the possibility of a life sentence under Philippine law. Therefore, she agreed to a plea bargain, under which her father was released from prison after making restitution payments. During her struggle for justice and the healing process that followed, she came to appreciate the work of our social workers. It soon became clear to Marian that she wanted to follow this vocation as a social worker, in order to support girls in similar situations.

We are incredibly proud of these two successful University graduates and wish them all the best for their future.

**name changed to protect privacy*

■ All About the New School Year

So far, more than 400 children, teenagers and adults have registered for the various educational programs for the school year 2026/27, and the deadline is at the end of August. However, before the new school year begins and during the first quarter, meetings with the parents and guardians of the children and teenagers take place to discuss enrolment or contract renewals. During the interviews, additional children in need are enrolled in our program, the need for support is assessed, and the terms of the agreement are discussed and signed by both parties. During the discussions of contract renewal, we assess whether the child or teenager in question still needs support from Island Kids. This is a taxing time for our community and social workers.

Students in 7th grade and above collect their weekly financial assistance for transportation, meals, school supplies, and tuition at the Education Center at the Landfill. Before, they attend team-oriented educational games and activities, which should encourage solidarity, mental alertness and moral character.

■ New Organization of Island Kids Philippines

Since 16th June, PIKIFI has had three executive directors, who introduce themselves in the appendix:

- Rachel Fabre is the new Director of the Children's Village
- Juvy Caipilan-Naguita, our long-standing and well appreciated colleague, is responsible for Programs and Services for the Community of Waste Collectors as well as other supported children and families from various poor areas in Cagayan de Oro and beyond.
- Fred Madrona has been Head of Human Resources, Finance and Maintenance for nearly two years.

The cooperation and joint planning among them are very satisfactory. In June, they elaborated on, and then presented to the PIKIFI Board, the strategic planning for the next few years. By doing this, they worked together closely with their respective team members. Their ef-

forts are aimed at implementing several major changes in child care, community work, and staff management:

Children's Village: New government regulations require that children should now be cared for for a maximum of two years. If, after this period, family reunification in the child's best interest cannot be achieved, they should be placed with a foster family whenever possible. We are even more challenged to prepare a reunification of the children and their families. If both options prove impossible, we must report the case to the authorities. The child can continue to live in the Children's Village temporarily, but will be given priority for placement with foster parents.

Community Work: This is operated on a decentralized basis as an independent facility.

The Shelter for boys in rural Claveria, financed by the Austrian association Just One-Touch and established by its founder Mathias Dür, will function under its own government license and accreditation.

Infrastructure/Transportation: Several concrete plans have already been implemented; see below.

■ Activities Over the Last Months

There have been many activities at PIKIFI over the last months:

Program to strengthen Elementary School students' math skills: Prospective teachers helped Elementary School students develop their math skills and analytical thinking through practical teaching.

A two-day workshop on "Future Prospects Through Self Awareness and Strategic Career Planning": Students from Xavier University helped young people reflect on their personal strengths and, based on those strengths, actively shape their academic and professional futures.

Workshops on High School, College, and University: In two sessions, participants were informed about academic expectations and guidelines and trained on how to best manage financial aid and comply with the terms of their scholarship agreements.

Workshop on "Mainstreaming: Manipulation and Interference by Foreign Information Sources": The young people were made aware of the dangers and spread of disinformation and learned to use digital media responsibly and to critically evaluate information.

Information Session on the Alternative Learning System (ALS) Under the title "Re-engaging Young People in Education and Opportunities and Unlocking their Potential: A support initiative for young people who left school early or not attending school", participants learned how they can continue their education or complete high school through ALS and thus build a better future.

A two-day workshop on "Financial Competence": In cooperation with Xavier University, small business owners acquired practical skills in budget planning and bookkeeping in order to successfully manage and enlarge their businesses.

Workshop for Caregivers: Social workers deepened their knowledge of trauma-informed care in order to better understand children's behavior and specifically optimize their educational approaches.

Workshop on Inclusion: Elementary School teachers were trained to help shape an inclusive education system that integrates marginalized children, combats mental health issues and bullying, and eliminates corruption.

Seminar on "Women's Rights and Professionalism in the Workplace" Afterwards, all PIKIFI employees were treated to dinner or a massage.

■ Medical Consultations

In June, the Landfill Community Learning Center offered free health checks including treatment by doctors, dentists, and eye specialists. A representative from the municipal Registry Office handled the registrations process for birth certificates.



Free health checks.

■ Completed Construction Work

The ground floor of the **Community Learning Center** in the poor area of the Landfill has been completely renovated. The Center was built in 2008, had been continuously expanded and was in need of renovation. It has now a modern office, a functional kitchen, comfortable toilet facilities, a rainproof roof, and an inviting event space.



The new covered event stage.

A covered event stage with cloakroom was built in the **Elementary School's** playground. In accordance with new regulations, toilet facilities for people with disabilities were installed. In addition, the Principal's office and the faculty office were renovated. Thanks to Sir Fred's sound financial management, all renovation work was completed without the need for additional donations.

■ New Plans

Now that our savings have been exhausted, we hope to be able to carry out our plans soon with **earmarked donations**.

Expansion of the Elementary School: Together with the school administration and the state Department of Education, it was decided to expand our school in the Children's Village into an "Integrated School". It means that in the coming years, in addition to the existing Elementary School classes (Kindergarten through to 6th grade, as well as a class for children with special needs), we plan to offer High School (7th – 12th grade) as well. This phased process requires the construction of six additional classrooms, and therefore a two to three storey extension is planned.

Further renovations at the Landfill Community Learning Center: The daycare center, the ALS classrooms, and the sewing workshop are also scheduled to be renovated.

Solar Energy: Due to the relatively high electricity prices in the Philippines over the past several years, more and more companies are switching to solar power, which is significantly cheaper and abundantly available in the country. PIKIF also plans to supply its Children's Village and schools with solar power — and thus renewable energy — as much as possible in the future.

New Transport Vehicle: Due to fuel prices having risen by as much as 300% in recent months, PIKIF urgently needs a more affordable vehicle to transport individual children or small groups to doctor's appointments, family visits, or Court hearings. Currently, these trips are made using our smaller school buses, which results in high diesel costs.

■ Interns from the Pädagogische Hochschule Zürich (Zurich University of Teacher Education) at PIKIFI

For the first time, we officially welcomed two interns from the Pädagogische Hochschule Zürich (PHZ) to our school. During their three-week internship, the prospective teachers assisted with classes and also taught some lessons themselves. The experience was immensely enriching for both sides. Anyone else interested is welcome to contact us at

volunteer@islandkids.ch.

■ Foundation of ReCCA

The Resilient Carmen Community Association (ReCCA), based in the poor area near the landfill site, is a community-led initiative launched by PIKIFI which aims to support disadvantaged families in Upper Carmen by creating sustainable economic opportunities, building resilience and breaking the cycle of poverty. The Association has been successfully registered and is therefore able to access Government support and resources to ensure a long-term basis of existence. Its statutes are clearly structured and professionally drafted – ideal for applications, presentations or potential donors, in order to illustrate how ReCCA affects both individual families and the wider community. It offers parents a direct way to supplement their low income. By taking part in the Association's projects to secure their livelihood, parents can consistently meet their children's basic needs – including education, nutrition and health-care. The Association is open to all sections of the community in Upper Carmen. Currently, a group of interested mothers are working as market traders, organizing the sale of BARLIF's organic produce.

■ Emergency Aid in Situations of Crisis

Following several consecutive devastating fires in CdO, PIKIFI carried out an emergency aid operation at the request of those affected, in coordination and collaboration with officials from the Barangay Council. As part of this effort, rice, hygiene supplies, and cooking utensils such as pans were distributed to the 99 families affected by the fires.



Emergency Aid.



In collaboration with the Hugpong Youth Organization, food packages were provided to the motorela/tuk-tuk drivers in poor areas of the Landfill, who were suffering from high gasoline prices (+200%).

■ Bata Alima Farm

Alongside daily farm life, two camps took place:

During the **second summer camp**, the children from the Children's Village participated in various workshops over the course of three days: an educational farm tour focused on the forest; planting endemic and endangered hardwood trees on the Bata Alima Farm and in the Bata Alima Forest; making organic pesticides; contour farming (this method of planting along contour lines on a slope reduces soil erosion by about 50%), children's rights and protection, painting and painting with earth pigments on the theme of nature, Zumba, and making essential oils for personal care. On the fourth day, there was a hike followed by swimming at the Buguak Falls, and on the fifth day, a trip to Lake Napalit took place, where the children spent the night in tents. The last day was filled with playing, swimming, and canoeing on the lake. The children were overjoyed and now keep asking about the next Bata Alima outing.

Thanks to the guest house, which was completed just in time, the 60 participating children and teenagers were able to stay in better accommodation than they did the first year.



Workshops on the Bata Alima Farm.

As part of preparations for the upcoming academic year, a **two-day camp** was held with a workshop for about 20 PIKIFI college students. They, too, hiked to the Buguak Falls, where they had a great time.



■ We Are Mourning

A total of seven patients received support and care from PIKIFI's health and social services in April and May. Among them was the mother of a schoolchild who was in critical condition due to severe sepsis. She had to undergo three emergency surgeries, and ultimately overcame her serious illness, though not without lasting complications. Not everyone was so fortunate, and we experienced an unusually high number of deaths, with three patients passing away.

Our longtime staff member of the Community, Emelyn Lamantucan, also passed away unexpectedly on 22nd April at the age of 43 due to cardiac arrest, which has deeply saddened us. She leaves behind, among others, a son who was 6 months old at the time. As waste collectors living in extreme poverty, Emelyn's family had been supported by PIKIFI since 2010. Several of her eight children attended or are currently attending our school. Romnick successfully graduated from High School and subsequently completed an apprenticeship as a welder. He has since moved to Manila with his partner in life.

Rosalito, a single father to a two-year-old son, works at a recycling shop. Leah Jane and Audrey Joy attend Elementary School and High School, respectively. Rochelle is in her second year of College, studying to become a social worker. She had taken a break due to a teenage pregnancy. Now she will take on the care of the three youngest children in the extended family. PIKIFI will support her as much as possible so that she can continue her studies.



Company details

For Switzerland:

Susegg/Waldegstr. 175
CH-3803 Beatenberg

info@islandkids.ch
newsletter@islandkids.ch

Donations account Switzerland:

Raiffeisenbank Jungfrau,
3800 Interlaken
IBAN CH03 8080 8009 4649 4887 4



For Germany:

Island Kids Philippines
Deutschland e.V.
c/o Familie Erzinger
Gartenstraße 36
D-14548 Schwielowsee

deutschland@islandkids.ch

Donations account Germany:

IBAN: DE55 1605 0000 1000 9063 84
BIC: WELADED1PMB

Pictures:
Island Kids
AdobeStock.com

Compilation German: Christina Kurzen
Translation: Barbara Brand
Layout/graphic: René Müller