

Childhope Asia Philippines'
OUTREACH AND PROTECTION/ EDUCATION ON THE STREETS
2007 Annual Narrative Report

Introduction

In 2007, the Outreach and Protection/ Education on the Streets Program of Childhope launched its newest project component, Financial Education for Street Children- an idea introduced to Childhope in early 2006 by Aflatoun Child Savings International in the Netherlands. A project proposal was submitted to the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) who in turn submitted this to Citigroup in the US in mid-2006. The project proposal was approved for implementation in 2007 with PBSP as proponent and Childhope as implementor.

New partners like PBSP and Citigroup, as well as long-term donors like Consuelo Foundation, UNICEF-Manila, Cordaid, the British Embassy of Manila, and Kindernothilfe, among others, indicate that Childhope continues to enjoy the trust and support of these organizations and that the education on the streets program among street children remains relevant.

In order to ensure the sustainability of Childhope and its programs and services for the street and urban poor children in Metro Manila, efforts to mobilize local and alternative resources, especially volunteers who continued to play significant roles in street education program activities, remain relentless. Management and staff faced very serious challenges during the year but their dedication to the vision, mission, and goals of the street education program did not diminish at any point in time.

This annual narrative report presents, in a nutshell, the over-all achievements of the program. Annexes are appended for statistics and detailed information.

The Street Educators

They are the front-liners who are called *Ate* (older sister) or *Kuya* (older brother) by the children. During the year, a total of thirty-two street educators, including five Spiritual Value facilitators, conducted activities focusing on alternative education and psychosocial interventions. They are the biggest group of street educators working on a full-time basis and conducting an integrated Child-Rights based program in the country. Working in teams of two (one education facilitator and one social worker / counselor), they concentrate their

outreach activities in their pre-assigned area of operation, even as they devote three hours a day at the office preparing progress reports and arrange for referrals for reuniting with children's parents / relatives or referring to temporary recovery shelter/ centers or to hospitals / health centers or to facilitate the release of a child from detention in police stations. They also attend training seminars (in and out of Childhope) and accompany children who are referred to public hospitals/ clinics for laboratory tests, psychological examinations, and dental check-ups.

It is a difficult challenge to work as a Street Educator. Aside from the daily challenges of pollution and other health hazards while working on the streets, they are also at risk of coming across criminal elements or meeting accidents, especially since their work sometimes takes them to unfamiliar territory late in the evening. And then there are street children who *really* test their professional knowledge and skills, and the street adults who interfere with their street work.

The Areas of Operation

There have been no major changes in the areas of program operation. The focus remained the six cities of Metro Manila where majority of the street children are highly visible – Manila, Quezon City, Caloocan City, Pasay City, Paranaque, and Makati. These cities are characterized by high rate of unemployment and high population of rural migrants hoping to find work in already densely-populated areas. The result? Many out-of-work heads of families who are forced to encourage their young children to perform odd jobs on the street for a few pesos, and of unemployed parents resorting to drugs resulting in child abuse (sexual and / or physical). One can see the startling contrast between the enormous shopping centers on one end of the spectrum, and on the other, the slum areas teeming with poorer than poor families struggling daily to make both ends meet.

Please see **Annex I** for a chart of the areas of program operation.

The Street Children Assisted

A street child is defined as a person 18 years old and below who regularly spends a considerable amount of time on the streets, either to play, to work or to live there altogether. Childhope Asia's Street Education Program further breaks down this classification in order to set its priorities vis-à-vis the program's target beneficiaries. Its priorities are the *totally neglected or abandoned street children* who have very little or no contact at all with their families, accounting for their total dependence on street life for their existence. Totally abandoned or

neglected street children comprise 5 to 10% of the total street children population in Metro Manila. They are in need of psychosocial interventions due to the impact of the abuse (sexual or physical abuse) suffered in the family and on the streets as well as their behavior problems. The most, owing to their prolonged exposure to negative behavior and attitudes on the street, not to mention the absence of supervision by responsible adults.

Also a second priority of the program's focus of attention are the *children of street families*, i.e. those who practically live on the streets –born to parents who were once street children themselves or living with the mother or the entire family in a pushcart or directly on the streets or in the parks. These two groups comprise about 25% of the street children population.

Lastly, there are the majority of the street children who, after they have sold their wares and have earned enough for the next day's money for school or for the family's survival needs, go home to their families. They are classified as *community-based street children* and, although not the program's top priority for obvious reasons, still receive assistance, most notably the training for Junior Health Workers and Junior Advocates as well as support for their formal education in public schools.

In 2007, a total of one-thousand one-hundred ninety-four (1,194) street children were assisted by the program, broken down into four-hundred seventy-three (473) girls and seven-hundred twenty-one (721) boys. Of the total number of street children assisted, forty-two percent (42%) were street-based children living and working on the streets - a good sign that the street educators were reaching the children who need basic social services the most. On the other hand, this seems to indicate that more children are being driven to the streets by poverty or abuse at home or being pulled by the influence of their peers.

Please see **Annex II** for the breakdown of street children assisted, according to gender and category.

Program Accomplishments

Alternative Education

Different methods of teaching are used by the street educators to facilitate alternative education sessions among the children. These sessions are normally conducted on the sidewalks, under the tree, in parking lots, in vacant lots, or wherever there is enough space and some amount of privacy that will allow the street educators to hold the attention of the children for a good two hours at least.

Various topics are taught in these sessions, and they are all competency-based and relevant to a street child's "lifestyle" and needs. Among the sessions' themes are the *UN Convention of the Rights of the Child*, *Protective Behavior and Personal Safety against Child Sexual Abuse*, *Life Skills and Life-goal Planning*, *STI-HIV/AIDS Prevention Education*, *Substance Abuse Prevention Education*, *Adolescent Sexuality and Gender Sensitivity*, and *Primary Health Care Education*.

Thanks to JVS Worldwide, parent company of The Body Shop Philippines, a donation of two Mobile Education Vans has made possible the transportation of educational/ recreational materials and audio-visual equipment to the sessions' venues once or twice a week, allowing for more varied and enjoyable approaches to teaching values education and the above-mentioned topics. After the session, the children partake of a simple meal provided by the program to meet food needs and as a means of compensating for the money they could have earned in lieu of participating in the session.

Please see **Annex III** for the statistics on children who participated in alternative education sessions.

Basic Literacy and Numeracy/ Alternative Learning System (ALS)

The program sees to it that a child's fundamental right to have an education is not neglected or taken for granted. Basic literacy and numeracy classes are conducted also with the aid of the mobile education vans. However, street children who have been out of school for some time and who wish to resume studying are assisted with non-formal accreditation and equivalency (NFE A&E) classes so they can prepare for the Alternative Learning System tests, the results of which determine which grade level they will belong when they go back to formal schooling.

Modules used for these NFE A&E and Basic Literacy classes are provided by the Department of Education, which also trained selected street educators as Instructional Managers or Facilitators of these classes.

Annex IV shows the number of children who participated in these classes in 2007.

Financial Education among Older Street Children

This new program component began implementation during the second quarter of 2007. It aims to teach street children 14-17 years old to save money – a discipline and skill that will be required when they are helped to develop a vocational skill to eventually earn a living and leave the streets. The following

areas were selected as pilot sites for this project: Caloocan, Luneta/ Lawton, the vicinity of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, and Malate/ Ermita. Children who were identified as potential beneficiaries of the project were assessed to determine their level of interest and commitment towards saving. Target beneficiaries are older abandoned children living on the streets and children of street families or those who are difficult to place in temporary recovery centers because of their age or who have no more identified relatives to return to. Most importantly, the children selected have stopped using/ abusing or selling illegal drugs.

A project coordinator for financial education was recruited, and selected street educators were trained to prepare for the launch of the pilot phase. After almost a year of implementation, 90 children have benefited from the financial education activities of the project.

Educational Assistance Program (EAP)

This program component is extended primarily to active Junior Health Workers (JHWs) and Junior Advocates (JAs) in recognition of their volunteer service to the program. Mostly community-based, these children are easier to monitor, thereby assuring some level of success for the program vis-à-vis preventing the children from dropping out or discontinuing their studies. For school-year 2007 – 2008, fifty-one schoolchildren were selected to receive assistance with most of their school expenses. Four of them are in college, forty-two in high school, and five in grade school.

To curb the incidence of dropping out or playing truant, the street educators and the children's parents conduct regular monitoring visits at home and at school. Children whose performance in school and in the JHW/ JA program fall below standards are de-listed after warnings/ reprimands and all possible interventions fail to produce the desired results. Sponsors of these children are notified of these developments through regular progress reports. New candidates are screened before the start of the following school-year to replace those who were de-listed.

Psychosocial Interventions

The street children receive psychosocial interventions geared towards making positive behavioral changes and to help them cope with their problems and the challenges of street life. Individual and group counseling focus on raising awareness of the risks/ hazards of staying on the streets and on planning for their life goals. The street educators/ social workers provided these interventions often in combination, i.e. counseling requires a completed intake interview, referral for temporary shelter is accompanied by case study/ case summary, etc.

Annex V shows the types of interventions provided, as well as the number of children assisted with this service. It is worth noting that individual and group counseling are the two interventions received by the most number of children, and it is during these sessions that a child may express his desire to return to his family or enter a temporary shelter. However, family reunification is resorted to only when it is absolutely feasible; for as long as there is the possibility that the child may be abused again (this being the reason cited by the child for leaving home), then the program will not take this course of action and instead refer the child to a temporary shelter.

Health and Medical Services

Before the program received its donation of a mobile health clinic from the Rotary Club of Paco and Honolulu in July 2006, street educators depended heavily on referrals to public clinics and government hospitals for all the health and medical needs of the children. However, the mobile health clinic van has enabled street educators to respond immediately to the health concerns of the children, thanks to the services of a full-time medical doctor and an emergency medical technician who doubles as the van's driver. Medical consultations are conducted monthly in all areas of operations with the exception of Caloocan and Lagro – two areas with the most number of children in need of medical attention – which are visited by the mobile clinic van twice a month. Medicines are dispensed when available.

The most common illnesses/ health problems attended to by the clinic's resident doctor were upper and lower respiratory tract infections, dental caries, anemia, and skin diseases, particularly scabies. Exposure to pollutants and improper hygiene contribute to the spread of these illnesses among the children. For major illnesses that require follow through consultations, the children are referred to public hospitals, e.g. Ospital ng Maynila, Philippine General Hospital. The program refers children with dental problems to Charity First, Childhope Asia's new partner organization. Another partner is United Laboratories for the medicines given to the children.

For a breakdown of medical services provided, please see **Annex VI**.

Para-legal Assistance

Hand-in-hand with teaching the children their rights and what to do when these rights are violated is the assistance the program provides to children in conflict with the law. This is where the advocacy efforts of the street educators should be strengthened so that, in the process of having a child released from

detention for example, the police officers in charge of the case are also enlightened and their awareness of children's rights is raised as a consequence.

Para-legal activities for 2007 are shown in **Annex VII** of this report.

Relief and Material Assistance

This assistance comes in the form of rice subsidy and used clothing that were also donated by well-meaning individuals or groups of people with much to share. During the Christmas season, grocery items, toiletries, and over-the-counter medicines are also given to street-based children or to children of street families. When feasible, parents of community-based street children who participate in program activities also receive this assistance.

Junior Health Workers and Junior Advocates

These Childhope-trained young men and women have been featured countless times in various publications as an example of genuine children's participation in a program designed for children. Their selfless contribution towards helping other children shows the child-to-child approach at work. Junior Health Workers not only administer first-aid, they also assist in primary health education sessions, accompany children for referral to health centers, complete the Health Screening Tool for each child they help to refer, and assist in medical consultations conducted by the mobile clinic. Junior Advocates on the other hand concentrate on conducting advocacy sessions on the UN CRC and children's rights, substance abuse prevention education, adolescent sexuality and gender sensitivity, personal safety and protective behavior, and para-legal education.

JHWs and JAs have separate meetings and general assemblies that they themselves organize and facilitate. They elect officers and make decisions on matters that concern them and their work, all under the guidance and supervision of street educators who provide the perspective of management.

There were 59 JHWs and 18 JAs who continued to be active involved.

Sports and Recreation

A child's total human development will not be complete if he is not given the opportunity to engage in activities that will enhance his physical growth and stimulate his mental faculties. Sports and recreation activities among the children revolve around the annual mini-Olympics organized by Sun for All Children, and the endless Christmas parties loaded with food, games and gifts for the children. These activities are organized by friends and supporters of Childhope Asia. A total of 952 children participated in all these fun activities in 2007.

It is also the program's practice to send children representatives to conferences, workshops, and meetings (in and out of Childhope) whenever possible. There were practice sessions for the street children's theater group "Teatro Pag-asa" and the consultation meeting with children/ youth for the State Report on the UN CRC Implementation in the Philippines. A total of 54 children had the opportunity to take part in these events, either as facilitator or as member of the audience. In both instances, the child is accompanied by a street educator who provides the much-needed moral support.

Staff Development

Childhope Asia regularly conducts capacity-building activities both for newly-hired and incumbent staff to upgrade their knowledge, attitudes, and skills. In-house staff development activities included:

- Workshop on preparing visual aids
- Monthly case conferences
- Program managers' meeting
- Weekly Bible reflection sessions
- Orientation on the Juvenile Justice Act
- Case management training
- Training workshops on STI-HIV/AIDS prevention education, Substance Abuse Prevention Education, the UN CRC and CEDAW, Adolescent Sexuality and Reproductive Health, Stress Management

For training workshops and seminars/ conferences organized by other agencies and to which Childhope Asia is invited to send a representative, the lack of funds for participation or the unavailability of staff who are attending to more pressing tasks in the office sometimes constrain the program from reaping the benefits of attending. Having said this, Childhope nevertheless was able to take part in the following events:

- Basic Counseling session held at the De La Salle University
- CODE-NGO Congress
- Consultation Workshop on the Girl-Child
- Training Workshop on Sexually-transmitted Infections (organized by NORFIL)
- Result-based Management Training (held in India and organized by Leger Foundation)
- First Regional Meeting of Aflatoun Child Savings International (also held in India)
- Training Workshop on Facilitating Skills

Childhope Asia also remains committed to forging and maintaining ties with other child-concerned organizations and networks, knowing fully well that these linkages and cooperation ultimately benefit the children. Childhope continues to be an active member of:

- Philippine Action for Youth Offenders (PAYO)
- Pasay City Network for the Protection of Children
- Inter-agency Network - Sub-committee on Health
- Metro West Network
- Kalookan AdNet (Network of Advocates)
- Metro Quezon Network
- Philippine NGO Coalition on the UN CRC
- Council for the Welfare of Children's Task Force on the Girl-child
- National Council of Social Development'
- CODE-NGO

Acknowledgements

The staff of the street education program expresses their heartfelt gratitude to all their partner donors and volunteers who continue to support the program, as well as to Board of Directors of Childhope Asia Philippines, especially its Executive Director for providing the direction and guidance and for simply not giving up.

ANNEX I Street Education Program Areas of Operation

City	Areas	Number of street educators assigned
1. Quezon City	Lagro/ SM Fairview	2
	Philcoa/ Tandang Sora/ Commonwealth Avenue	2
	Mayon/ Tomas Morato/ Sta. Mesa	2
2. Caloocan	Monumento/ Sangandaan/ Balintawak	4
3. Manila	Sta. Cruz	2
	Divisoria/ Binondo	4
	Luneta/ Lawton	2
	Ermita/ Malate	2
4. Pasay	Baclaran/ Cultural Center of the Philippines area	2
5. Makati	Guadalupe/ Buendia Avenue	2
6. Parañaque	Sucat/ Ninoy Aquino International Airport area	2
	Operating in all areas (Spiritual Value Facilitators)	5

ANNEX II Street Children Contacts According to Sex and Classification

Classification	Male	Female	Total
New contact	145	91	236
Old contact	576	382	958
TOTAL	721	473	1194
Street-based children	377	129	506
Children of street families	207	230	437
Community-based children	137	114	251
TOTAL	721	473	1194

ANNEX III Street Children Participants in Alternative Education Sessions

Session Topic	Male	Female	Total
Values Education	539	387	926
UN Convention on the CRC	372	280	652
Primary Health Care Education	392	292	684
Substance Abuse Prevention Education	371	224	595
STI-HIV/AIDS	226	175	401

Adolescent Sexuality	262	167	429
Personal Safety and Protective Behavior	322	250	572
Para-legal Education	268	180	448

Life Skills and Life-goal Planning	261	189	450
Gender Sensitivity	111	64	175

ANNEX IV Number of Learners in Basic Literacy and NFE A&E Classes

Alternative Learning System	Male	Female	Total
Basic Literacy Program	95	43	138
Accreditation and Equivalency	12	2	14

ANNEX V Psychosocial Interventions Conducted among Street Children

Type of intervention	Male	Female	Total
Individual counseling	344	255	599
Group counseling	387	285	672
Completed intake interview	63	43	106
Case study	13	16	29
Case summary	29	36	65
Home visitation	92	115	207
Referral for temporary shelter	23	29	52
Agency visit for child's exposure	46	36	82
Agency visit for case follow-up	18	19	37
Family reconciliation	16	15	31
Referral for skills training	13	14	27

ANNEX VI Children assisted with health and medical services/ referrals

Service provided	Male	Female	Total
Provision of medicines			
a. through Mobile Health Clinic	300	200	500
b. through clinic/ hospital	135	82	217
First-aid	314	222	536
Medical consultation	127	126	253
Laboratory tests	76	48	124
Hospitalization	9	2	11
Health center visit for JHWs' exposure	10	4	14
Health Screening Tool (accomplished)		93	176

by JHWs for children being referred to health centers)	83		
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ANNEX VII Number of street children provided with para-legal assistance

Service provided	Male	Female	Total
Police station visit for case follow-up	4	3	7
Police station visit for exposure	1	0	1
Police visit for coordination	1	0	1
Facilitated child's release from detention	7	1	8
Medico-legal assistance/ Psych exam	3	8	11
Assistance in preparing police statement	2	3	5
Assistance in filing a case	1	2	3