



MARCH 2020 ISSUE

SMALL MIRACLES

The Monthly Newsletter of Chosen Children Village Foundation, Inc.

Amidst the current global pandemic caused by COVID-19, it has become increasingly evident that sustainability ought to be part of every NGOs long-term strategy.

Fortunately, the founders and the board of the Chosen Children Village had the foresight to initiate projects that enable us to continue operating during lean times like these. In this issue, we're going to highlight some of these projects and celebrate how we're slowly becoming a self-sufficient village.



FROM THE DESK OF *editor*

Dear Donors & Sponsors.

In response to the community quarantine directives issued by local and national governments, as well as confirmed reports of positive COVID-19 cases in Silang, we have implemented measures to make sure that the Chosen Children Village remains COVID-19-FREE. Here they are:

- **We are on lockdown.** All parties, immersions, tours, volunteers, OJTs, and pre-scheduled visits have been cancelled until further notice. Sunday mass has been suspended but we're still observing our Lenten traditions, e.g. Stations of the Cross, provide dwe can do it in open air. A few visitors who dared the quarantine were allowed to drop their donations at the admin building but only after disinfecting at the guardhouse.
- **Staff required to stay-in until the quarantine is lifted.** To avoid the possibility of community transmission, residential, kitchen, rehab and admin staff were given the option to stay in the village until the lockdown is lifted. They receive free accommodation and food during this period. Our physical therapist, Shaira, has started a group exercise program to keep staff in good health while in isolation.
- **Food supply secured.** Thanks to the careful planning of Mama Bing and the rest of the kitchen staff, we have enough supplies to last us until April 14th.. Fresh produce that we cannot source from the farm were bought before the total lockdown took effect. Should the quarantine be extended and we'll need more supplies, we have secured a quarantine pass for 1 person to go to market and pharmacies.
- **Maintenance works are still on-going.** Since our maintenance staff does not have direct contact with the children, they are allowed to stay out provided they follow strict protocols when they report for duty. This includes disinfecting at the guardhouse before entering the village and heading directly to the school to take a shower and change their clothes before heading to their work stations.

Our deep appreciation goes out to our board of trustees. From the Taal Volcano eruption in January to this nCov crisis, we are fortunate to have a strong, hardworking leadership to guide us through these challenging times. One of our board members, Bryan Rigg, recently braved checkpoints to visit us and ensure that everyone is well. He brought with him fresh produce including newly-picked avocados from his backyard.

We'd also like to express our sincere gratitude to our staff for cooperating with our lockdown policy. They have their own families to think of but many decided to stay in and work through the quarantine period which, hopefully, will end on April 14, 2020

And finally, we'd like to thank you - our dearest donors, sponsors and volunteers. We sincerely appreciate your concern and your continued support through these uncertain times. Our prayers go out to each one of you. May the Good Lord keep you and yours safe from the virus.

Sincerely, *RAF*



THE FARM

One of the biggest (if not the biggest) project that CCV has undertaken in recent years is the Hacienda, or what we simply refer to as the Farm. What started as a garden with fruit trees has now grown into a multi-faceted, fully operational farm with:

- Pineapple Plantation
- Barns for the farm animals
- Fish ponds
- Aquaponics setup
- Vegetable Garden
- Mushroom House

Whilst there are a few coffee trees remaining and providing food for free-range goats, the farm now supplies our kitchen with organic fruits and vegetables, including lettuce, celery, tomatoes, basil, papaya, mango, santol, squash banana, malunggay, and guyabano. Soon, we hope we can also grow our own strawberries and, perhaps, grapes.

A sustainable NGO is one that can continue to fulfill its mission over time and in so doing meets the needs of its key stakeholders – particularly its beneficiaries and supporters. As such, sustainability should be seen as an ongoing process rather than an end in itself. It is a process that involves the interaction between different strategic, organisational, programmatic, social, and financial elements.

Source: The sustainable NGO: Why resourcing matters By John Hailey
([CLICK HERE TO READ](#))



Our fish ponds are a source of tilapia, bred as fingerlings from our aquaponics setup and fed with a water plant instead of commercial feeds. We didn't have these bigger ponds before but whilst the children were in Baguio, a farm consultant visited the village and urged us to build bigger ponds so that the fish would grow. It turned out that we had too much fish in our aquaponics setup, which is why they're not growing as big as they should.

Click the image on the left to watch a video of the fish harvesting.

We're still in the process of breeding and growing our herds but we've already sourced pork, poultry, turkey and rabbit meat from our barns. Turkey is usually prepared during our annual Thanksgiving dinner. We're still not at the point where we can fully handle 100% of our meat needs in-house – the village is big after all. But that will certainly be our goal in the future.

The pineapple plantation, which was devastated by the Taal Eruption, has become a source of food for our grazing cows. Surplus banana is also fed to our farm animals.

One of the benefits of having a big farm is that it provides tasks for our older children to do to keep them busy and out of trouble! The boys, Nino, Michael, and Oliver work mainly with the animals while the girls help with the nursery, planting and transferring seedlings.



THERAPY PAR EXCELLENCE

The Arantza Rehabilitation Center remains a hub of therapeutic and recreational activity at the village. The children are continuing to get their physical therapy treatment whilst the toddlers are attending occupational therapy sessions to make them independent. It is remarkable to see the progress that our children has made due to the efforts of our dedicated therapists.

It's also worth noting that our in-house therapists are actively seeking further education by attending seminars and workshops focused on addressing issues caused by cerebral palsy and autism. This supports our goal to get **accreditation from the Commission on Higher Education (CHED)** so we can train more students and interns and, eventually, conduct workshops and seminars at the village.

The accreditation could also allow our therapy team to accept patients from outside the village for a minimal fee. If that succeeds and we get a lot of patients, the proceeds of their services can pay for the therapy program itself.

Small Wins Corner

TechSoup Asia validates CCV for Google for NonProfits

Through TechSoup Asia, Chosen Children Village has been approved in the Google for Non-Profits program. This allows us to use Google's suite of business tools, e.g. email, cloud drive storage, Google Docs, and other applications for free. This would save us the money we currently pay for extra cloud storage in Gmail and qualify us for free advertising credits that we can use to ramp up our donor/sponsor acquisition campaigns in the future.

Additionally, TechSoup Asia also grants us free productivity software from Microsoft, BitDefender, AsianNGO, Docusign, Amazon Web Services, Zoom and more.

Globe for Good to include CCV

We're currently processing the requirements to be part of Globe Telecom's Globe of Good, where they will promote donations to us through Globe and Gcash users. They will also promote us through non-Globe users via social media.

The publicity that will come from this partnership can bolster our sponsor numbers and donations.

iVolunteer.ph to partner with CCV

One of the nation's leading organizations promoting volunteerism among Filipinos, iVolunteer.ph, has invited us to become one of their partners. The Partner's Meet-up, originally scheduled for March 21st, has been postponed until further notice due to the enhanced community quarantine.

Once we've made things official, we can secure more volunteers to help our staff. This would also be a good avenue to spread awareness about our mission and widen our community.

PINILI KITCHEN

Spearheaded by our beloved Mama Bing, the Javier Nutrition Center plays host to parties held at the village. They also sell excess produce through a social enterprise initiative called Pinili Kitchen. This is still in a "testing" phase; we have not officially launched anything yet as we do not always have products on hand. Our first priority is always the village and to make sure we have enough supplies for the children and residential staff.

As of now, we have only sold extra jams and baked goods to visitors and party guests. The feedback is good so far but there is a lot of work to be done if we really want to pursue this venture.



TRUST FUND DONOR PROGRAM

Our trust fund donor program is one of the key weapons in our bid for sustainability and self-sufficiency. We are blessed to have such diligent board members who continue to bring in new donors who will ensure the continuity of the village decades from now.

Want to become a trust fund donor?
Please call **0919-999-8915** or email
admin@chosenchildrenvillage.com
for more details.

MOVING FORWARD

As of the end of March, a few of our donors and fundraising partners have notified us of lockdowns and work stoppage that might affect their ability to provide funds. We remain hopeful but, at the same time, it has driven us to give "sustainability" more thought. A step towards that direction is through the use of sustainable energy. We're revisiting project proposals to harness solar energy and use it to power the village. The installation of solar panels will be a huge financial undertaking so this project under careful consideration.

There's also the issue of sustainable funding. Defined as "*a holistic approach to fundraising that moves beyond traditional tactics such as securing grants or tapping a few wealthy corporate or personal patrons*"*, sustainable funding combines traditional funding techniques with more creative, sustainable methods. Our plan ahead is to explore online fundraising platforms and combine it with community-inclusive events like fun runs. We're also looking forward to partnering with other nonprofits like My Father's House for fundraising activities.

Meanwhile, we're ramping up our efforts to improve our food security by cultivating more vegetable plots. Our strategy thus far is to plant vegetables that we can harvest quickly, within 30 to 60 days, so we will always have fresh produce available and on the table. We're also looking for a farm expert/consultant to help us maximize the farm because, as a visiting farmer commented, it is currently underutilized.

The future is full of opportunities. This much is clear to us and we hope that we live up to the challenge for the benefit of our special angels. We also hope that you'll continue to join us in our journey, Together, let's continue to provide a haven for God's special children.

*Source: https://www.huffpost.com/entry/a-sustainable-funding-opt_b_268532



Farm staff cultivating new vegetable plots



Thank you!!!

Welcome to our New Child Sponsors for March 2020

- Annabelle Vitti Valenzuela
- Madesa Espana
- Robert Dussault

Please forward this newsletter to family, friends and colleagues who might be interested in sponsoring a child(dren). Or you can also send this link:

<https://chosenchildrenfoundation.com/sponsorship/>

Donations!

We would like to thank the following for dropping off their donations this March!



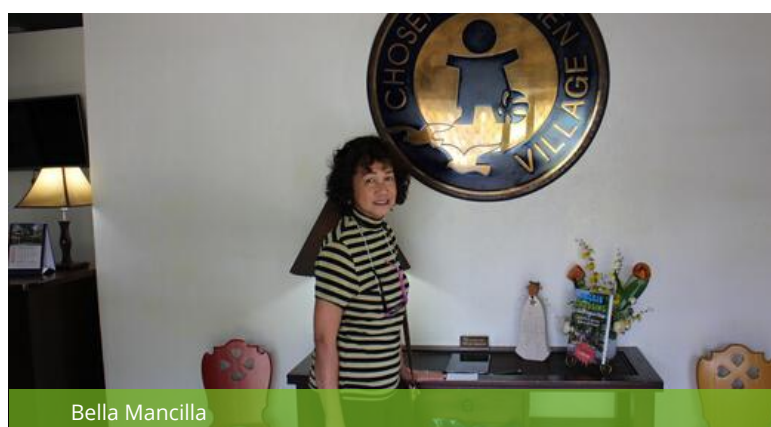
Bureau of Jail Management and Penology



April Paligsa - Child Sponsor



Gardenia



Bella Mancilla



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Chosen Children



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