

**Support program for the  
sustainable socio-family and  
socio-professional integration  
of street children.**

**Open Day Centre (ODC)  
Bacolod City, Negros, Philippines.**

**ETM/KDW – Virланie Foundation Inc.**

**Mid-term evaluation report**

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## **List of acronyms and abbreviations**

ALS	Alternative Learning System
BADAC	Barangay Anti-Drug Abuse Council
BLP	Basic Literacy Program
CADAC	City Anti-Drug Abuse Council
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DSSD	Department of Social Services and Development
ETM-KDW	Enfance Tiers-Monde – Kinderen Derde Wereld
LCPC	Local Council of Protection of Children
ODC	Open Day Centre
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RRCY	Regional Rehabilitation Centre for Youth
SDC	Social Development Centre
VFI	Virlanie Foundation In.

# 1 Executive summary

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## 1.1 Subject of the evaluation

### 1.1.1 Type of program

The program is social, educational, sanitary and participatory

- **Social** because it seeks to improve the living conditions of children and young people who live in absolute precariousness and are in family breakdown as well as social breakdown. The program supports a day centre which organizes care for particularly disadvantaged children and adolescents and works for their family, social and professional integration.
- **Educational** because it contributes to the education of children and adolescents who attend the centre.
- **Sanitary** because it provides physical & mental health care as well as basic needs services to children and young people (food supply, promotion of body and clothing hygiene, etc.)
- **Participatory** because it seeks to strengthen the links (ties) between actors in the children's sector.

### 1.1.2 Specific Objective (outcome)

Support 1,500 street children, children in conflict with the law and vulnerable young adults on their way to socio-familial, professional and community reintegration in Bacolod (Negros)

### 1.1.3 Results (outputs)

- a. An open day centre (ODC) for street and vulnerable children is created in Bacolod
- b. Street children and vulnerable young people of Bacolod have access to primary rights through the different services set up by the Centre.
- c. 400 vulnerable children are referred and follow an education or training program for their socio-professional reintegration.
- d. Collaboration and complementarity between local actors working for the rights of children are strengthened

## 1.2 Criteria and evaluation questions

The 5 classic evaluation criteria of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) were used to evaluate the program, its achievements and the results obtained: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. Four additional criteria were also used: participation, synergies - partnership, Gender, Children's rights. Each criterion was the subject of multiple evaluation questions.

## 1.3 Methodology

The assessment has been collective and participatory. It has favoured qualitative methods of data collection. Great importance has been given to the opinion of direct beneficiaries (children and

young people, families, social, medical and educational personnel) and indirect beneficiaries (local communities, local authorities). However, it has preserved an objective appraisal of the achievements and results of the program.

## **1.4 Conclusions of the evaluation**

The consultation of the available documents (project file, reports, socio-educational tools, attendance statistics, etc.), the data collected during individual or group interviews as well as the visits made during the evaluation process make it possible to give a globally positive opinion on the operation of the program.

The program offers a wide range of services well adapted to the care of children and young people in extremely vulnerable situations. The social services of the Open Day Centre (ODC) provide administrative and legal support, meet basic needs of children, promote family reunification and prepare young people for an independent living. The health services are concerned with physical and mental health issues, addictions and reproductive health. Educational services are included in the Alternative Learning System, a Philippine state educational initiative for out-of-school children and are active in literacy as well as elementary and secondary levels of schooling.

The figures collected at mid-term show that the results and the specific objective will most likely be achieved by the end of the project. A significant effort must however be made for result 3 which concerns schooling as well as technical and vocational education and training for children and young people. The levels reached at mid-term are lower than expected. This situation is however understandable given the fairly recent start of the program but must nevertheless be addressed.

If we want to give social and professional integration opportunities to children and young people who have spent long periods in the streets, the creation of a non-formal vocational training system seems unavoidable in the medium term. This system should alternate the apprenticeship in workshop and the acquisition in a school environment of technical skills as well as the basics of reading, writing and calculation (Basic Literacy Program). The current program does not have enough financial means to realize such intent; it could possibly be done in a future program of action.

In the same vein, the ODC has currently only four accommodation places (two extra places are foreseen). The 4 places available are logically occupied by former street children in the process of social and professional reintegration. This type of temporary and conditional accommodation is an absolutely necessary transition place to allow the passage from survival on the street to a socially and professionally dignified way of life. As with the previous point, such action must be planned for the medium or long term since the current program does not have the necessary funds.

To a lesser degree, while recognizing that this type of work is already being done by the ODC, family reunification processes could be intensified and carried out according to more clearly defined stages. The pace of street work, which currently seems a bit light, should be speed up. It should also be noted that the number of girls who benefit from ODC's services is less significant than that of the boys. This imbalance should be reduced.

Even though the evaluator is aware that it is not easy to get financings, it is unfortunately necessary to point out the lack of sufficient future findings to ensure the continuation of the program whereas it has proved its usefulness.

Finally, there is no doubt that empathy and emotion are essential elements of social work. However, we must constantly keep a sufficient distance from the painful and often dramatic social problems that we encounter in order to remain rational enough to make thoughtful and appropriate decisions going always in the direction of the children well-being and autonomy.

## **1.5 Recommendations.**

All the recommendations come directly from the findings made during the evaluation. In order to gain readability, the recommendations are grouped by topic.

### **1.5.1 General Recommendations**

- Examine salary levels to determine whether or not it is appropriate to raise them.
- Fill vacancies
- Take care not to overinvest in certain beneficiaries rather than others

### **1.5.2 Recommendations for improving social work**

- Improve and detail the management flow chart which describes the procedures that must be followed for taking care of beneficiaries (capitalization of useful experiences for the future of ODC and its sustainability)
- Recruit and hire rapidly a street educator and deploy quickly the social worker already hired. Because these positions remain vacant, this affects the quality of social services and increases the workload of the other staff members.
- Document the family reintegration and socio-professional integration processes for children and young people in order to capitalize (retain, preserve) the knowledge acquired and the most appropriate practices.
- Collectively produce a detailed socio-anthropological analysis of the causes of family breakdown and street living in order to refine the intervention methods.
- Submit the methods applied by the ODC social team to critical and collective reflection in order to refine the intervention methods.

### **1.5.3 Recommendations related to family reunification process.**

- Intensify actions leading to family reunification
- Define precisely the mediation process leading to children family reintegration.
- Define precisely the follow-up process for children reintegrated into their families.
- Ensure regular follow-up of children reintegrated into their families.
- Provide support for poor families who agree to reintegrate a child (school fees, school supplies, transportation fares, income-generating activities)
- Define and record the criteria for successful family reunification.

### **1.5.4 Recommendations related to the Independent Living Program**

- As soon as possible:
  - o Recruit and hire rapidly an ILP coordinator.
  - o Define precisely the steps of the process leading to an autonomous and dignified life for young people
  - o Define the criteria for a successful independent living
  - o Try to bring some young people to independence (autonomy) before the end of the 5 years of the program.
  - o Remain realistic and not give false hopes of school and social success to the young people who participate in ILP and ALS
- Over the long term and according to the means available:

- To fit the needs, create a new shelter to increase the number of places in the dormitory.
- Create a larger transitional accommodation centre (shelter) to allow a transition between life on the street and a dignified and socially integrated existence.
- Develop non-formal TVET for youngsters involved in ILP (Because it seems very unlikely that all beneficiaries will succeed in the ALS)
- Complement the apprenticeship with a minimum training on calculation, writing and reading as well on the acquisition of essential professional knowledge and basic notions relating to the management of a micro-enterprise.
- Hire competent trainers for each training course and provide them with training programs (curricula) validated at least by the ODC and if possible by the ministry in charge of vocational training.

### **1.5.5 Recommendations related to the educational services**

- Teachers report a lack of teaching materials. If this is the case, it would be useful to complete it.
- The teacher working in the ODC Staff is active in 5 different educational levels. It seems to be a lot ... Basic literacy teaching, for example, needs specific skills totally different from those of secondary level education. As far as possible, it would be useful to separate the levels of education and entrust them to different persons specialized in each level.
- The kindergarten mentioned in the program reports and in the self-assessments remains informal. It would be useful either to make it more formal or to change its name to make it more in line with reality. Indeed, it is rather a system of childcare while their parents are temporarily unavailable because of their activities (health care, work, courses ...)

### **1.5.6 Recommendations related to health services**

- Recruit and hire rapidly a nurse (health care coordinator). This position remains vacant, which affects the quality of health care and increases the workload of other workers.
- Reinforce ODC's capacities in the management and the treatment of addictions.

### **1.5.7 Recommendations related to sustainability**

- Diversify sources of funding (local contributions, funding from other international donors, etc.)
- Ensure forward-looking financial management using existing accounting and management tools
- Capitalize in written documents the experiences and knowledge accumulated as well as appropriate practices in the field of caring for children with family and social breakdown.

### **1.5.8 Recommendations on partnerships, synergies and collaborations**

- Clarify the use of the word partner and distinguish it from other types of relationship.
- Modulate your attitude according to the nature of the external entity with which ODC is in contact.
- Strengthen the platform (PPPP, network) bringing together stakeholders active in the children's sector because it is one of the means of ensuring the sustainability of the actions carried out by the program

### **1.5.9 Recommendations about gender**

- Increase the number of girls in care until reaching parity with boys.
- Increase, develop activities and services specifically designed and dedicated for girls.

### **1.5.10 Recommendations about child rights and community involvement**

- Because of the rejection of street children by the population and although efforts are already being made by the ODC in this direction, the relevance and effectiveness of the program would be enhanced with the organization of awareness campaigns about the situation of street children and other children in situation of extreme vulnerability.
- Try to arouse the interest of neighbours and bring them to provide active support to the centre