

Vision Help

INTERNATIONAL CARE FOUNDATION

UPDATES
FROM THE
PHILIPPINES

TOGETHER, WITH ONE GOAL!

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ABOUT US



We are Vision Help, a non-profit foundation that has been working in the Philippines for over 10 years. We help people in need and rescue children from poverty, forced prostitution and human trafficking.

The protection of children and the improvement of their living conditions are central goals of our work in the Philippines, where every third child lives below the poverty line and is affected by exploitation and violence or forced prostitution.

Carsten Aust, a pastor and paramedic who has been doing humanitarian work in the Philippines since 1996, founded the foundation in 2011. Ten years after its founding, in 2021, the Philippine government awarded Vision Help as the best non-profit organization in the field of child and family assistance.

Medical care, disaster relief and reconstruction, education for street children without access to schools, education and vocational training for children and adults, feeding the poor, running children's homes and children's villages, conducting safe adoptions in close cooperation with international authorities, and church work are the areas in which the foundation is charitably active.

We help people to become healthy and independent. With effective initiatives, we protect children, fight poverty, empower and elevate communities in a sustainable way.



VISION HELP INTERNATIONAL
CARE FOUNDATION, INC.

SALAMAT PO AWARD - BEST NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION

OUR PROJECTS

1

EDUCATIONAL SPONSORSHIP

Educational Sponsorships provided to indigenous children in Apayao

2

MERCY MINISTRY

Day-care center, pre-school and soup kitchen in the slums of Tondo, Manila.

3

HOUSE OF HOPE CHILDREN'S HOME

in Antipolo, Rizal

4

VILLAGE OF HOPE CHILDREN'S VILLAGE & SCHOOL

in Morong, Rizal

5

CITYLIGHT CHURCH & SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

Church ministries and educational sponsorships in Cebu

Dear friends,

Amidst the hectic tumult of everyday life, as we flip through the pages of this edition, I want to create a quiet corner of reflection. The end of the year, in particular, invites us to pause and ask what we can be grateful for—even when the world around us is full of challenges and chaos.

“It is a privilege, in the face of life's many uncertainties, not to overlook the grace and provision of God.”

Thus, as we recollect into the last six months of 2023, let us be reminded of how precious life is. The effort contributed by every individual in this year mattered—however small it might have been. Let us also realize that our service to others not only changed their lives but also enriched our own.

There is an old saying that goes, "When you love others, you also love yourself." These words resonate in our work here, in our encounters with other people, and in the support we collectively receive. Every helping hand, every encouraging word, and every donation make a difference in the lives of those we reach.

In this time of reflection and gratitude, I invite all of you to look not only at what we have done but also at the many future possibilities. Let us not lose sight of both the important things in life and those that are seemingly ordinary.

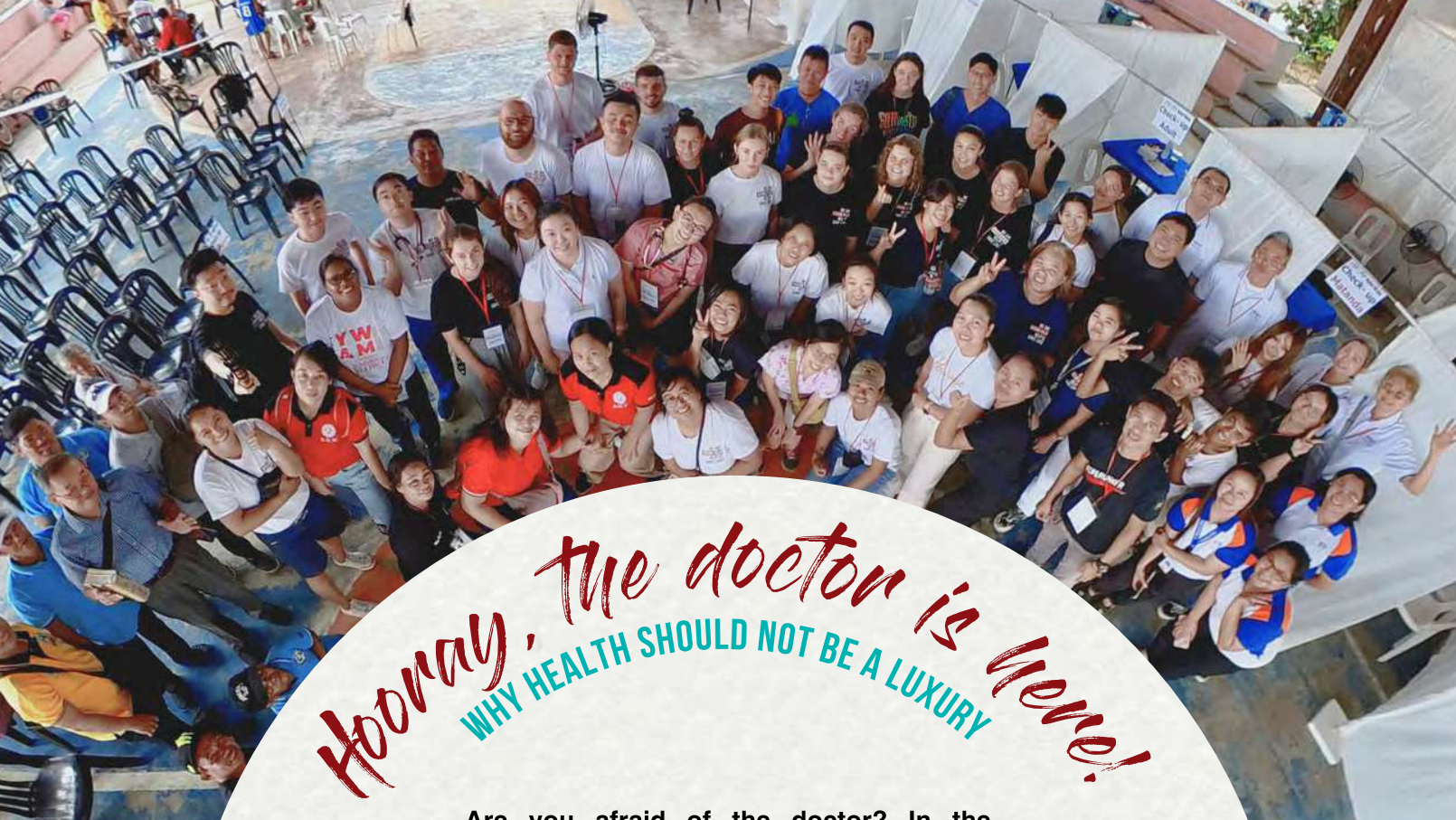
In conclusion, I would like to share the words of Albert Schweitzer: "The only thing that counts is how much love we put into action." May our actions be shaped by love, gratitude, and compassion.

Thus, we express heartfelt thanks for your ongoing support, which makes our work possible. Together, we make a difference.

With sincere thanks and blessings,

Carsten Aust
CEO & President of VHICF





Hooray, the doctor is here!

WHY HEALTH SHOULD NOT BE A LUXURY

Are you afraid of the doctor? In the Philippines, it is the opposite: everyone looks forward to seeing the doctor. Healthcare is not easily accessible to many poor individuals. They cannot afford the travel, the cost of treatment, and the prescribed medication. And this is where our medical outreaches come into play.

Health is one of our greatest assets. However, this is often realized only when one becomes ill, lacking the means to afford healthcare. This is especially heavily present in the rural areas of the Philippines and the slums, medical care for the poor population is not adequately ensured, significantly increasing the mortality rate. For this reason, Vision Help regularly conducts medical missions in such regions.

1,300 PATIENTS IN THREE DAYS

Rosty (63) and his friend Samuel (73) were two of a total of 1,300 people who availed our recent medical assistance in Barangay Pinugay, Baras Municipality (Rizal Province). From November 11 to 13, residents received treatment from our team of doctors. Rosty, a stroke patient dependent on expensive hypertension medication, was not only thoroughly examined by the doctors but also had his supply of medicines replenished. His friend, Samuel, received the same treatment and urgently needed medication. All free-of-charge!



CYSTS THE SIZE OF A TENNIS BALL

Another significant issue is the removal of cysts and lipomas. Although most of these bumps are medically harmless, they can significantly diminish one's quality of life. The poor often have to live with it and the pain it causes their bodies. A minor cyst removal costs up to 50€. For many, this is more than a month's salary. One of the affected individuals had cysts hanging from her earlobes the size of earrings, resembling a 1.5 table tennis ball. The operation freed the 22-year-old lady from her shame. It took up an average of 90 minutes per patient to remove cysts with the sizes ranging from marble to tennis ball size.



NON-STOP DENTAL EXTRACTION

During the medical outreach, hundreds of teeth were also extracted. The three attending dentists worked tirelessly—often without a break, from morning until evening. Despite having water source in every household within Baras, poor hygiene is still present. As a result, many children and adults alike often suffer from dental cavities and toothaches. Thankfully, our dentists attended to their needs relatively quick! What a relief the patients had! They gladly stood in line for hours with our doctors.



FROM SURGERIES TO HYGIENE TRAINING

With our partner organizations: Nehemia Christliches Hilfswerk e.V., CRU Singapore and Samaritan Aid Ministries, we were able to offer general medical and dermatological examinations as part of our medical missions. Our team from Singapore also blessed the community with basic hygiene training and gave out kits. What may sound trivial is significant in regions without access to proper sanitation. And through our medical outreach, together, we truly have made a difference.



We are planning our next medical mission from February 20 to 25 and we would be very grateful to team up with more doctors and medical professionals. ***If you want to be part of our team and help the poorest of the poor with your skills, contact us at outreach@vhicf.org.***



VILLAGE OF HOPE



The Family is Growing

We love children and consider each one a gift. In the latter months of this year, we are deeply grateful to have welcomed four more children into our House of Hope and Village of Hope.

In the Philippines, the gap between the rich and the poor is significant. Almost a third of the people in the Philippines are considered poor, and as is often the case, the children are the ones who suffer the most. About 80,000 children live alone on the streets of Manila in the worst conditions imaginable, facing the threat of abuse and violence.

SLEEPING ON CARDBOARD

Baby Rica shared this tragic fate with many other children before the social welfare office brought her to our House of Hope on November 14. Her father earned so little that it wasn't even enough for daily meals. The family lived on the streets with Rica, sleeping unprotected on scrap cardboards. Her mother could barely take care of her, overwhelmed by the hopeless situation and worried that there is another mouth to feed. This led then to Rica's father handing her daughter over to strangers and never returned. These strangers tried to profit from her through online solicitation. The social welfare office were alerted of this situation and that is how she then came to us.

We are grateful that she only had to live under these dreadful conditions for only a very short time. She can now grow up loved in our care.



MALNOURISHED AND DESPERATE

Cristal came to us on October 6. The ten-year-old was severely malnourished and neglected. She had been living with her older half-brother and mother in Tondo, one of the most underdeveloped and densely populated areas of the Philippines. Her mother earned the equivalent of 1.50 to 2.50€ per day, which was not enough for food. The girl was so desperate and hungry that she sought shelter and help on her own. She wished for nothing more than a safe place to sleep, enough food, and the opportunity to go to school. She was eventually brought to our care by another community-based organization in Tondo.

We are hopeful that with us, Cristal can be a child and enjoy school while living in a safe space.



Stories like those of Rica and Cristal are just some examples of the hardships that many disadvantaged children in the Philippines have to endure.

Even after many years of serving the young ones in the slums, their plight still leaves us speechless and heartbroken. But at the same time, it motivates us in our efforts to provide and ensure a place of refuge to as many children as possible. We want them to thrive and grow into wonderful individuals.

You too can profoundly change a child's life! With a sponsorship (starting from 35€ per month), you can ensure the care and education of one of our children. For more information, contact us at sponsors@vhicf.org or visit www.vhicf.org.



TOGETHER, WITH ONE GOAL

"Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime."

This is our aim and that is why we have numerous programs in the slums of the Tondo district in Manila for people of all ages to help them stand on their own feet.



Sheryl (41) dared to dream – and her dream came true: despite having four children and a monthly salary of just under 100€, she pursued her studies and graduated as a teacher last July! What's more, her son Audrey (23) followed in his mother's footsteps and not only received his teaching degree in September but was also honored for his outstanding performance. Initially, it was Sheryl's children who all received scholarships. However, she also proved to be curious and hardworking, so it was out of the question not to support her as well.

But who would have thought that mother and son would reach the goal of their dreams together? How happy they must feel now! Audrey wrote to us:

I still remember that great day very well and none of it would have happened without your help.

We are confident that the other children of Sheryl will seize their opportunity as well.



FROM BEING A SCHOLAR TO A TEACHER

This was made possible through an educational support program which we offered in 2018 as part of Mercy Ministry to families in the slum communities of Tondo. Aside from the already established educational scholarships for children and teenagers, we saw the need for adults needing support in maximizing their skills, attending school, or pursuing higher education.

Sheryl and Audrey are deeply grateful for the support they received. And at present, Sheryl became part of our staff in our Tondo center to inspire and motivate other slum residents to follow in their footsteps.

FOR YOUNG AND OLD

Education begins with small steps, such as in our literacy courses for all age groups. Every Friday, we still conduct our literacy program so both the young and the old learn how to read and write. We are proud that three teenagers, a mother, and a father have successfully completed this course again. Aside from that, a new set of 20 children joined our preschool program that incorporates improvement of basic skills.



We are excited to see how the learning journey of our protégés continues!

MORE THAN LEARNING

But Mercy Ministries is much more than that: in addition to our literacy programs, we continue to operate our day-care center, catering specifically to malnourished children. We are grateful that their parents and guardians show great interest in our Bible study, youth meetings, and worship services. Sustainable change must happen from within, and we are convinced: a relationship with Jesus is part of it.

We are constantly looking for sponsors for our hardworking students and scholars. Are you interested? Here you can find more information:



EN



DE



Enthusiastically Heading to School

In September 2023, we gave thanks as a whole to God once again proving His faithfulness in making a vision into a reality: our Vision Help Learning Center started its operation and our children were so thrilled about it! Our 89 children at the Village of Hope were excited with our new premises and school facilities. In addition to classrooms, students can expand their skills in the computer lab, music and art rooms, or the science room.

All these were made possible because of the support of numerous sponsors and volunteers coming from out-of-the country.



INAUGURATION WITH DANCE AND SONG

On November 24, the excitement of our children was unbearable: the official inauguration of the school with 200 guests was held. Representatives from partner organizations of AVC Nehemia (Germany), Samaritan Aid Ministries (Canada) and Youth With A Mission (Philippines) did not miss the opportunity to be personally present. The students expressed their gratitude and enthusiasm with special performances of singing and dancing which they were preparing for many months prior to the celebration.

FUNDRAISE: School Equipment

Even though the school could begin operating after months of construction, it is not yet completely finished. We still continue to raise funds for the purchase of school equipment for our computer lab and science lab among others.

We would appreciate your support in acquiring everything necessary! For questions, please contact us at sponsors@vhicf.org.





WE NEED SPACE TO GROW

Our Village of Hope is like a living organism that is constantly changing: sometimes we outgrow spaces, sometimes things break and need repair. Thankfully, we have loyal helpers by our side.

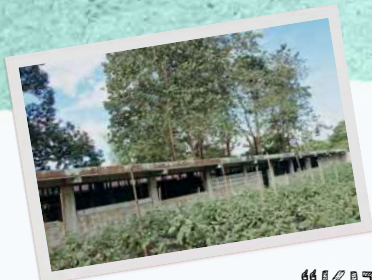
Just like in a normal household, the kitchen is a central place in the Village of Hope. Here, cooking and baking happen – both are expressions of love for our children. Three meals a day are faithfully served which consists of 150 servings per meal. All these are prepared by our kitchen team.

Our numerous hardworking staff enjoy this benefit as well since they need good food to deliver good performance.



Originally, our kitchen was not designed for such a large amount of food. So, it is only natural that time comes to expand and renovate the old premises. In October, we broke the ground and carried out construction at the back of the biggest house in the Village.

Thanks to diligent volunteers from Germany and Canada, the major project was implemented in no time, and the new walls were up in a flash.



Donate today for our kitchen's construction project:
"KITCHEN BUILDING PROJECT 2024"



OFF TO THE PLAYGROUND!

And what do children love to do most after eating? Play! A large playground on the grounds of the Village of Hope was erected back in 2017 specifically for that purpose. Our children can play to their hearts' content!

However, like all playgrounds, ours needed a fundamental renewal after six years in operation: the elements made of wood were worn out and brittle—unsafe for our children's use.



As with the kitchen, our hardworking helpers from Germany and Canada were ready to realize the renovation as cost-effectively as possible.

We would like to thank all the numerous volunteers and partners who stay faithfully by our side in these two construction projects!

We are grateful for their dedication because we can save a significant amount of money each year, which we can then use wisely elsewhere.

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SOCIAL MEDIA & IMPRESSUM



SHARE OUR MAGAZINE

Receive free magazines in the quantity of your choice from us for sharing. Share with your neighbor, friend, church or local bakery. Only together can we face the challenges of poverty, save lives and make a lasting impact. Order with quantity and delivery address: mail@vhicf.org

CORPORATE DONATIONS

Do you as a company want to do good and live up to the idea of corporate social responsibility (CSR)? Help people in need and demonstrate this to customers, partners and employees. As a non-profit organisation, we issue tax-deductible donation receipts and help publicise your social commitment. Contact: mail@vhicf.org

ATTENTION: OUR NEW DONATION ACCOUNT!

We are happy that for a while now donations can be made directly to our Vision Help donation account in Germany. We therefore ask all donors and sponsors who still donate to our former partner Mastering Your Life e.V. to switch to our account or to set up donations on www.VHICF.org once again. Direct debits and credit card donations must be cancelled by e-mail to office@mastering-your-life.de or by postal mail (Mastering Your Life, Renoirstr. 32, 04157 Leipzig). Thank you very much!

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VHICF Inc.
Carsten & Mercedita Aust

Germany

Vision Help International Care Foundation Stiftung (VHICF Stiftung)
Dorfweg 2
27751 Delmenhorst
Email: mail@vhicf.org
Tel: +49 (0) 4221 298 20 04

Philippines

Vision Help International Care Foundation, Inc. (VHICF Inc.)
Carsten & Mercy Aust
No. 50 Block 13, Lot 11 Eastport Street, Parkridge Subdivision Antipolo City, Rizal Philippines 1870
Email: info@vhicf.org
Tel: +63 8 671 72 12

Photos: Buena Velasco, Lena Sappl, Aaron Schöning, Ivan Leong

Texts: Carsten Aust, Buena Velasco, Erika Gitt

Translations, Layout: Buena Velasco, Eunice Esteves

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Vision Help

International Care Foundation

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HELP US SAVE LIVES.**