
Manila Women's Forum

A Network of Women Professionals

January 2010

Surviving Ondoy

By Rose Hunt

As a nurse with specialist training in physiotherapy, midwifery and travel medicine, Caroline Cliff found her general nursing skills in high demand when she volunteered to help with the relief work following Tropical Storm Ondoy which hit Manila in September 2009.

At the December MWF meeting, Caroline, a British national based in Manila, presented the work of the medical missions she has been involved with, spearheaded by the Springboard Foundation and Asian Students Christian Foundation led by Craig Burrows.



*Left: Children singing carols.
Above: Caroline Cliff (left)
and Lisa Lumbao (right).*

Craig was also present at the meeting and gave his first hand account of the traumas experienced by Filipinos living in Montablan, Rizal, which was severely affected by Ondoy.

The group was also treated to a wonderful Christmas concert given by a group of children assisted by Springboard and led by President Gina
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January MWF Meeting ■ **When:** Monday, January 18, 6:30 p.m. **Where:** Christine Purka's home, 1661 Dasmariñas Avenue, Dasmariñas Village, Makati City. **What:** Maribel Dionisio, Marital and Family Counselor at the Love Institute and resource person for several radio and television programs on parenting, marriage and family, will speak about how we can improve our relationships by better understanding the emotional needs of men and women. **Bring:** Something to share for the potluck dinner. **February Meeting:** Monday, 2010 February 15.

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Tuazon. They played beautiful music on violins and keyboard, and sang carols. The final song, sung a capella by a young woman, was absolutely heavenly! We missed Annette Helbig, founder of Springboard, who was out of the country on a well-deserved R&R trip.

After Ondoy hit, the school Craig runs in Montalban was converted into an evacuation center. Many groups, including the British Women's Association, Philippine Christian Foundation, Mothers and Darlings Support Group and Manila Women's Forum provided volunteers, food, clothing and other necessities to Montalban. Soon after, the medical missions began in Montalban and then Biñan, Laguna. In Montalban there was knee-deep mud; in Laguna there was chest-high water (and still is in some places). Some people are still living on rooftops and getting around in

makeshift boats including refrigerators.

The situation worsened when leptospirosis began to break out among those exposed to the stagnant water, and was even worse for those who walked through the mud. It is a dangerous bacterial infection that enters the body through wounds and which can be mistaken for dengue. Leptospirosis can be especially deceptive as it seems to disappear after the initial symptoms have subsided (high fever, headache, muscular pains, red eyes), only to reappear with renal failure setting in, sometimes fatally. In some areas bulldozers had to be used to clear the mud and prophylactic antibiotics were used for the workers.

Fungal infections were also rife on account of the water, and were also a risk factor for leptospirosis. The Department of Health's Department of Alternative Medicine sold Springboard an antifungal soap. A

volunteer medic made an antibacterial/antifungal ointment made from coconut oil and colloidal silver and garlic. Since drinking water quality deteriorated, water could become a huge source of infection. Springboard provided water filtration systems. Long queues formed for the medical missions and Caroline walked through the crowd to determine which people needed immediate attention and moved them to the front of the line. She was amazed that no one complained about having some people go ahead of them.

Psychological trauma was evident as well as more obvious physical injuries. Barangay cooperation was vital in reaching the worst-hit people who were often severely traumatized. This cooperation was patchy and often progress was made with whatever help could be found, e.g., from the WHO, the Department of Health, expats and local people. For

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“A Real Springboard”

Some Springboard Foundation Assisted Projects

Some projects funded by the Springboard Foundation as of February 28, 2009

Give A Life Foundation in Makati, which provides 11 hospitals with life saving medicines and medical equipment.

Hope Worldwide Foundation, which cares for the urban poor children in Baseco and Payatas by providing daycare centers, livelihood programs and drop-in centers.

Kinderhilfe Philippinen, a children's village that takes care of more than 100 abandoned and abused children.

Entrepreneur Volunteer Assistance (EVA) Foundation, which has helped the AETA community for more than 10 y

Social Action Center of Pampanga (SACOP), which gives micro loans for mothers to help

them with their income-generating enterprises.

Sun and Moon Home for Children, which cares for severely malnourished, abandoned, surrendered or neglected children.

Tuloy Foundation, which looks after more than 500 street-children in Alabang. 160 of these children live in the compound.

International Deaf Education Association (IDEA), which helps deaf and blind people to have home and education.

Shiphrah Bahay Paanakan/The Little Children's Home, which helps marginalized women and their families by providing antenatal care, maternity, post-partum and well-woman check-ups.

Rehoboth Children's Home (Asian Hope Missionary Outreach of Australia, Inc.), which provides much needed supervised shelter, a medical

center and a learning facility for destitute children.

Batang Pinangga Foundation, Inc., which cares for abandoned children in the outskirts of Cebu.

Stairway Foundation, which helps children who have been sexually abused and those who suffer from tuberculosis.

Angeles Bahay Bata Center, an institution in Central Luzon that seeks to uplift the welfare of street children by providing for their holistic development—physically, socially, emotionally, cognitively and spiritually.

Jesus Loves the Little Children Foundation, Inc., which is involved in issues of children at risk—including providing 24-hour care and in-house schooling for 30 resident children and a community-based outreach program for 150 more.

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example, translators were needed to help with communicating with Filipinos and often some of the older local children happily volunteered. Craig said some of them were so thrilled to take on such an important job that they said the medical mission was the best day of their lives!

Understandably, at times, the relief efforts did not go smoothly. Sometimes even Red Cross personnel were afraid to enter an area for fear of being mobbed. There were stories of local hospitals charging people for treating leptospirosis, which the government had announced would be treated free of charge. During the first medical mission lots of medicines were "lost," so there had to be strict controls from thereon.

In addition to the medical missions, Springboard did an amazing amount of work for the Ondoy victims in both the areas of Montalban and Binan, Laguna. Springboard spent more than

P6 million for relief goods (food, hygiene products, mats, blankets, charcoal ovens, fruits, vitamins and much more), water systems, medical missions, equipment for soup kitchens, emergency equipment such as generators, rechargeable LED flashlights, buckets, spades, axes, a chainsaw, and so on. Springboard also funded heavy equipment to clear the streets and paths of mud.

In Biñan, Springboard organized weekly coordination meetings for any interested NGOs with the mayor's office to strategically organize the relief there. They did a garbage collection drive in the flooded area with rubber boots, hooks, gloves and bags to collect the floating garbage. On the day of the garbage drive, a special team disinfected all 8 evacuation centres (all schools), which at the time housed more than 8,000 people and had opened for regular school activities. During the same day 2,000 families received food, hygiene packs,

cloths, mats, fruits, rehydration fromulars and water. All in one day!

Tremendous achievements were made possibly through the collaboration of volunteers, the local barangays, and the nongovernmental organizations mentioned above, who joined forces for the greater good. Many expats got physically involved with digging mud, as well as personally lending cars, raising funds and packing relief goods. Longer-term solutions are being found to relieve the pressure on housing. For example, the Red Cross has been rehousing evacuees at a modest cost P35,000 per house. Springboard is also exploring the possibility of relocating families from flooded areas in Laguna to government land in Montalban.

Springboard's Vision and Activities

Caroline also gave a presentation about Springboard's overall goals
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Sabang Elementary School in Puerto Galera, for the renovation of the school's roof, ceilings, painting of walls and building of flowerbeds and concrete benches.

Shalom Christian Bahay Paanakan in Antipolo, Rizal, which gives ante-natal and post-natal care so women can deliver their babies in a safe environment. Does parental craft teaching, trains midwives in practical experience.

Urchins Street Kids Association, Inc. in Parañaque City, cares for children who lack proper supervision by their parents.

Father O'Brien Angel's Home Foundation, Inc. in Caloocan City, which supports street children by sending them to school.

British Educational Foundation, which purchased 100 chairs for the EMS Signal School in Taguig.

NAC Development Center in Biñan, Laguna, which cares for poor and malnourished children in Amparo, Novaliches, Antipolo and Crossing, Cavite.

Nomads Children

Relief Goods for Flood Victims in Quezon Province

Community and Family Services International (CFSI) which addresses the lack of human security among out-of-school children and youth in Pasay City. It focuses on the absence of official documentation, including the non-registration of births and marriages which compounds the marginalization of these children, youth, and their families; limits their access to school systems, health services, and other social services and protection; and puts them at greater risk of disease, abuse, exploitation, and being in conflict with the law.

Aquias Talent Builder (ATB), a company with a membership base predominantly composed of performing artists and professionals. They run a long-range music enhancement program, free of charge, aimed at discovering and harnessing talented individuals in the field of music in Barangay 175, Caloocan City.

Street Pals Foundation, which is dedicated to uplifting the lives of street kids who were formerly addicted to hazardous substances.

A Better Chance Foundation

(ABC), which provides scholarships to 275 boys and girls. It aims to provide scholarships to the poorest of the poor and to lessen the drop-out rate in public schools.

St. Rita Orphanage, which provides a home for less fortunate children, orphans, abandoned and neglected children and provide them with food, clothing, and shelter as well as proper guidance and sufficient preparation for a better future.

Concordia Children's Services, which offers residential care for children ages 0 to 2 years old who were abandoned, neglected, orphaned or surrendered by their birth parents or relatives.

Ang Duyan ni Maria, which provides children with temporary or permanent shelter, home-care, formal and non-formal education, and Christian value formation for abandoned, maltreated and neglected children, children of unwed pregnant women born inside the institution, and to parentless poor children.

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and regular activities. Its overall vision is to develop healthy, educated well-rounded Filipino children. Its aims are threefold:

- * To raise funds for developing healthy nurturing environments for children in the Philippines
- * To design, implement and supervise the development of health, nutrition and educational programs
- * To improve home environments and lifestyles

As a non-profit registered grant making foundation, Springboard carefully evaluates projects to see which organizations are doing worthwhile work. These partner organizations are fully accountable for the money they are granted from Springboard and have to demonstrate experience, accountability, vision and sustainability to be awarded funds.

It focuses on:

- * Raising funds
- * Improving educational opportunities
- * Improving health care standards
- * Developing opportunities for recreational sport and arts activities
- * Improving healthcare for women
- * Improving nutritional awareness and standards
- * Strengthening family units and improve overall childcare standards
- * Providing support for sustainable work programs

Examples of projects that have been supported include the Philippine Christian Foundation (providing books for schools and donations to help build a new school in Tondo), providing scholarships, setting up Essential Nutrition Programs in Baseco and Payatas; renovating breastfeeding areas (e.g., at Fabella Hospital); and donating medical equipment, medicines, and wheelchairs to various

Children singing carols at the MWF meeting last December



MWF Newsletter
c/o Lisa Lumbao
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Real St., Urdaneta Village
Makati City 1225

hospitals.

Springboard operates with one single paid staff; all others are volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering or donating (regular donations of P500 per month would be greatly appreciated) please contact Springboard at Tel. 821-5440 or e-mail: info@springboard-foundation.org. Their website address is www.springboard-foundation.org.

Manila Women's Forum

Manila Women's Forum (MWF) is a cross-cultural network for women. It provides opportunities to build friendships, talk to women of various cultures, and share information about resources. Our meetings are intended to provide intellectual stimulation and lead to personal and professional development. All women are welcome to join.

The current officers are: **Amy Alexander**, Message Board. **Julia Holz**, Treasurer, Membership and Programs. **Cecilia Leung**, Programs. **Lisa Lumbao**, Chair. **Junie Navarro**, Message Board. **Lisa Stuart**, Message Board Moderator. **Beulah P. Taguiwalo**, Newsletter, Website. **Shari Virjee**, Programs, Message Board.

Cost of membership is P300 per year. Members receive a copy of the current mailing list in addition to the newsletter, which is also sent to non-members. A contribution is collected at each monthly meeting: P20 for members, and P40 for non-members. For more information about MWF, please contact Lisa Lumbao at Tel. 813-0168, or at lumbao@mozcom.com.

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