

# ADDRESSING FACES OF CHILD POVERTY:

THE STORY OF YAKAP SA KAUNLARAN NG BATA, INC. (YKBI)

A VOICE PHILIPPINES SPECIAL FEATURE

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**Yakap sa Kaunlaran ng Bata, Inc. or YKBI** is a community-based People's Organization (PO) registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and licensed / accredited by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) as a social development and welfare agency based in Region IV-A (Southern Tagalog or CALABARZON) with office in Lucban, Quezon. In 2015, YKBI was certified as a full-pledged non-government organization (NGO) and donee institution by the Philippine Council for NGO Certification (PCNC).

## **YKBI - CHILD FUND SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM**

YKBI was organized by Christian Children's Fund (now Child Fund) in August 2003 as a conduit people's organization (PO) to implement Child Fund's Sponsorship Program in Southern Luzon. During that time, the parents of enrolled / sponsored children were organized as parent associations per community. YKBI's role was to coordinate the implementation of programs in the communities through its eight parent associations working for children and their families within their respective covered communities. As Child Fund widened its funding base, YKBI was given direct involvement in grant / non-sponsorship program implementation that made the community-based sponsorship program a more holistic intervention for children's rights protection and development.



### **SEVERO P. TALAVERA**

YKBI Chairperson  
Former YKBI Project Officer and Federation Manager

*In 2003, six parent associations in Region IV-A Philippines, were organized as a grassroots federation. It was the biggest partner of Child Fund, serving 6,000 children annually in 11 municipalities covering 150 barangays.*

*From a family helper approach, YKBI accepted the challenge for a paradigm shift to empower parents to build associative and federative structures and building children and youth agencies. As rightsholders, they themselves crafted their own development agenda and managed their own development projects.*

*Area-focused development programs were framed to work with the duty bearers: the local government units at the barangay, municipal, city and provincial levels, and with the national agencies in the region. Children, youth, and parent sectors led participatory and learning-in-action research to make interventions grounded and connected. They themselves defined what is child poverty: sad, not schooling, children on and off the street, sickly, and living in dilapidated house. These were given through reflections to identify its root causes.*

*After a total of 14 years, four cycles, with three years each cycle, including two years of transition, YKBI has finally spin-off to become a viable and sustainable organization for children and women protection and development.*

*Along with its new advocacy, YKBI evolved as a volunteer organization of parents, youth, young professionals, and other staff. And we believe that through this project, breaking the cycle of poverty is preparing the youth for their future.*

Apart from sending enrolled / sponsored children to school and providing educational assistance, the Sponsorship Program involved a number of support and complementary programs and projects to ensure the well-being and protection of children, with the involvement of parents, families, and their communities. The Program consisted of many component programs, which changed and/or developed at every ASP implementation cycle. Its implementation of the different development frameworks spanned 12 years of four cycles, with 3-year implementation for every cycle.

## **I. FIRST CYCLE (JULY 01, 2004 – JUNE 30, 2007)**

During the first cycle, the most critical activity was the preparation of a comprehensive Area Strategic Plan (ASP) guided by the principles of understanding child poverty and adversity using various participatory learning approaches as tools. Four (4) stages of ASP were followed, such as: 1) community consultation and reflections on child poverty and adversity; 2) area synthesis and draft planning; 3) community validation and project prioritization; and, (4) detailed planning and finalization. The parents, children and youth beneficiaries took the lead role in the whole process of planning.

The results of the community consultations and reflections led to the identification of the faces of child poverty, namely: sickly children, not schooling, sad, children on the streets, and living in dilapidated houses. These became the basis for the programs and projects to address child poverty. The root causes of child poverty were prioritized: insufficient income, poor water system for potable water, lack of knowledge, attitude, values and skills (KAVS) in parenting and child rearing, and access to quality education.

The projects implemented to respond to child poverty were:

1. **Sustainable Agriculture and Livelihood Program** – Livelihood skills development and fund sourcing to establish on-farm and off-farm income generating projects or gainful employment. Under this program, four cooperatives with savings and capital-build up were registered and TESDA and CRTD were partners in training 887 family members of enrolled children, with 667 able to utilize their learning.
2. **Children and Youth Development and Empowerment** – Provision of KP scholarship and establishment of Child Friendly School and Community System which enhanced the school improvement plans and improved the relationship among parents, teachers and pupils.
3. **Water and Sanitation for Communities** – Established potable water systems in nine barangays of Macalelon, and in four partner schools in San Pablo City, Guinayangan, Lucban, and Agoncillo. Three Parents Associations (PA) provided water refilling stations in the communities to provide safe water to 80% of households. Although not registered, Barangay Water System Associations (BAWASA) were organized with intensive capacity-building interventions, thereby increasing awareness on the importance of water on health, sanitation, and environmental protection.
4. **Capacity-Building for Parents, Children and Youth** – Organizational development and management activities such as review and amendments of Constitution and By-laws and Articles of Incorporation, structure, registration and licensing, preparation and review of manual of operations, finance and administration, and staffing.

## **II. SECOND CYCLE (JULY 01, 2007 – JUNE 30, 2010)**

The second cycle was a continuation of the first to address child poverty. Some improvements were made based on a technical review of the first cycle. This time, the development needs of children and youth based on their age-group were considered. Age-appropriate program interventions for 0-5 years, 6-12 years, and adolescents were added to directly address the interrelated effects of poverty among children.

The second cycle projects included the following:

1. **Child Friendly School and Community (CFSC)** – Established child-friendly public schools (elementary and high schools) and communities where YKBI operated. Being child-friendly means: a) the school incorporates strong advocacy on child rights protection with good quality education; b) the community actively supports the educational needs of children and youth; and c) both school and community ensure high enrolment and completion rate of children and youth in elementary and high school. This benefited 39 public elementary schools from six YKBI-covered communities.
2. **Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD)** – Provided access for 0-5 year old children to center and home-based ECCD. Seven barangays from the six communities with the highest number of under five children were beneficiaries of this project, reaching 800 children.
3. **Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI)** – Knowledge and awareness on key health practices on proper feeding, child-care, health-seeking behaviors including increased access to water and sanitation facilities. Implemented in the municipalities of Guinayangan, Macalelon and General Luna in Quezon, benefiting 900 under five children and their families in five covered barangays.

The construction and rehabilitation of water systems provided potable water to 680 households in nine (9) barangays. They were also trained in water facility management.

4. **Adolescent Reproductive Health (ARH)** – Provided access for the youth to ARH youth-friendly services. Also addressed peer pressures and protection for young women from possible teenage pregnancy by raising awareness of 15-24 year old youths on reproductive health information.

STI, HIV, AIDS, and Alcohol and Drug Addiction were included with the assistance from public health centers.

5. **Building Child and Youth Agencies** – Series of capability-building activities that promoted the leading role of children and youth from 10 – 24 years old as active agents and contributors on their rights and responsibilities in the development of their communities. Organized six children associations, six youth associations, and one federation of children associations (Federation of Children Association in Southern Tagalog or FedCAST), and one federation of youth associations (Kabataang Nagkakaisa sa Kaunlarang Pampamayanan Inc. or KNKPI), constituting some 6,000 children and youth members.
6. **Micro Enterprise Development & Sustainable Agriculture and Livelihood Development (MEDSALD)** – Provided families with agri-input starter kits to support their agricultural production; organized fisher families to set up livelihood projects during fishing off-season to increase income to be able to meet basic needs. 667 vulnerable families were targeted for food security, trained in enterprise development, and linked with fund sources for initial capital.
7. **Capacity-Building for the Parents Federation, Associations, Staff and Volunteers** – Strengthened YKBI and the six existing (since 1980) parent associations as a federation, including staff and volunteers, to effectively manage program implementation for children in their areas of operations.

### **III. THIRD CYCLE (JULY 01, 2010 – JUNE 30, 2013)**

Under the 3rd ASP cycle, the programs changed to life stage programming in accordance with the Child Fund core outcomes, namely: 1) Healthy and Secured Infants (*Batang Malusog at Protektado*) for Life Stage 1 (0 to 5 years old); 2) Educated and Confident Children (*Batang Listo at Matalino*) for Life Stage 2 (6 to 14 years old); and 3) Active and Productive youth (*Kabataang Aktibo at Produktibo*) for Life Stage 3 (15 to 24 years old).

1. **Life Stage 1 (0-5 years old): Integrated Health Care and Development Program for Infants and Young Children** – Ensured healthy and well-nourished 0-5 year old children, and guaranteed provision of quality ECCD services that promote growth and development to prepare them for formal education. Also included care of mothers to reach almost zero maternal and infant mortality and infant morbidity rates. YKBI provided interventions for sickly infants and young children through its pool of trained volunteers on ECD by working with the LGUs' day care and health centers. Home-based ECD who were also caregivers of 0-23 month old children were shared with the communities for those not being reached by local and national government ECCD services.

As per technical review of the third cycle, sustainable and effective ECCD in BF-Southern Luzon was achieved. YKBI established a good working system with the LGUs and other service providers of the ECCD Program. The network and partnership of the community health team with ECCD stakeholders was strengthened. The trained caregivers and parents on early childhood care by YKBI were integrated in the network.

2. **Life Stage 2 (6-14 years old): Integrated Program Development for Educated and Confident Children** – Improved Mean Percentage Score (MPS) of enrolled children in the National Achievement Test (NAT) in all partner schools. Also developed strong self-confidence among children in actively participating to resolve their issues and concerns in their families, schools and communities.

During this cycle, the Department of Education's (DepEd) K to 12 Program was launched, bringing improvements to the educational system, and ensuring that quality education is accessible to all. The program's intervention was to help children adjust to the changes / developments and provide safety nets to those with significant needs.

YKBI continued its socialized educational assistance and emergency assistance through its sponsorship program, resulting in sustained school attendance and participation, lessened number of dropouts and repeaters, and improved school performance even in times of calamities, economic and emergency health challenges. It is notable that children themselves (from the federation and associations) were co-managers of YKBI in the entire management / PDIME process. Children who participated in the community development (CD) trainings eventually became CD facilitators, and the voice of children in the communities through their representation in local mandated bodies was recognized.

3. **Life Stage 3 (15-24 years old): Integrated Youth Development Program** – Trained the youth on social, financial, technical-vocational, and professional skills so they can become productive, responsible, skilled members of society, with high self-esteem, and better able to face their future as adults.

Implemented *Alternative Lifelong Learning System (ALLS)* of the ABS-CBN Bayan Academy, Aflateen or Youth Social and Financial Education. In addition, referred, and assisted the youth in finding employment opportunities through job fairs and job placements.

*Adolescent Reproductive Health (ARH)* – Trained and organized youth peer educators (PEs) to help YKBI implement the ARH program. Promoted advocacy among the youth to avoid sexual activity at an early age to prevent pregnancy.

*Socialized educational assistance and emergency assistance* – Continued from Cycle 2, to improve school performance to prevent dropouts and repeaters. The program design supported vocational technical education after high school.

*Kabataang Nagkakaisa sa Kaunlarang Pampamayanan, Inc. (KNKPI)* – Co-managed with YKBI, this youth federation partnered with state colleges and universities, TESDA, the municipal / city Public Employment Service Office (PESO), and the municipal / city health offices in the localities where they operated.

This produced skilled and productive youth that contributed to their own development, as well as their families and communities. Nearly 1,400 youth graduated from the ARH training modules. 255 of 300 youth got employed and / or started income-generating activities. The “voice” of the youth were recognized in the communities as per their representation in mandated local bodies. And the number of youth who completed secondary and tertiary education increased.

*Families and Local Organizations Partnership Program* – YKBI and its parents associations actively lobbied for the promotion and protection of the rights of children and youth. It supported families and community development initiatives mainstreamed with the strategic development plans of the LGUs through local mandated bodies in the barangay, municipal, city and provincial levels, particularly the LCPCs and LDRRMCs.

The following accomplishments were documented during this cycle showing that a strong, viable and self-sustaining federation that can effectively manage the programs/projects and promoted child protection and development was achieved:

- 1) The BOTs became more confident as leaders;
- 2) Two additional parent associations were added to the federation's membership, bringing the total to eight;
- 3) Almost all officers and BOTs of the parent associations and the federation carried out their tasks and functions;
- 4) The parent associations and the federation were accredited by their respective LGUs;
- 5) Some community volunteers re-committed to the organization;
- 6) The sponsors relations management achieved timeliness in submitting children's correspondence for their sponsors with no backlogs; and,
- 7) YKBI strengthened its partnership with the LGU and various institutions on child development and protection, such as the Department of Education (public elementary and secondary schools), local social welfare and development units, and public health centers.

#### **IV. FOURTH CYCLE (JULY 01, 2013 TO JUNE 30, 2016)**

The programs and projects for the fourth cycle focused on Life Stages 2 and 3 targeted for 6-14 and 15-24 year old children and youth, respectively.



1. **Alternative Life-long Skills for Youth Program or Kabataang Aktibo at Produktibo – Youth SPEED (Youth Skills and Protection for Employability and Entrepreneurship Development) Project**



**ROSARIO M. DE GUZMAN**

Former ALLS Program Officer and Community Mobilizer Generalist

*Ang Youth SPEED ay naka-focus sa edad 15 to 24. Ang proyektong ito ay naglalayon na ang mga kabataan, lalo na mga out-of-school youth, ay mabigyan ng mga pagkakataon na magkaroon ng mga pagsasanay alinsunod sa resulta ng assessment o youth mapping upang malaman kung ano ang nais nilang patunguhan. Pagkatapos ng assessment, makikita kung sino sa kanila ang dapat mabigyan ng mga alternative skills.*

*Inirerefer ito sa TESDA para sa training upang mabigyan sila ng opportunity na maipagpatuloy at malinang ang kanilang mga kasanayan ayon sa kanilang kapasidad bilang isang kabataan.*

*Pagkatapos ng mga pagsasanay, sila ay mabibigyan ng NC1 at NC2 certificate upang magamit nila sa pag-apply sa mga trabaho. Bahagi din ng mga skills training ang kasanayan para sila ay matutong mag-ipon na maaaring maging daan na matulungan ang sarili at ang kanilang mga magulang upang makaahon sa kahirapan. Tinuturuan din sila na tumayo bilang isang matatag at responsableng kabataan.*

*Dahil sa mga pagsasanay, malaki ang potential na sila ay magkaroon ng magandang takbo ng pamumuhay. At, naiiwas din sila sa mga bisyo na kagaya ng pagbabarkada na maaaring maging sanhi ng maagang pag-aasawa o pagkakaroon ng teenage pregnancy.*

*Sa programang ito ay patuloy na hinihikayat ang mga kabataan, mga magulang at ka-partner upang patuloy mai-guide sa mas maayos na pamumuhay at magandang kinabukasan. Nawa'y ang programang ito, sa tulong ng YKBI, ay magsilbing daan para ang ibang mga ahensiya ay maging kaisa natin para patuloy na magkaroon ng magandang bukas ang ating mga kabataan. Sabi nga natin ang ating mga kabataan ang pag-asa ng bayan.*

Integrated the *Ten Life Skills* modules in **Adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health (ASRH)** through youth development sessions as an indicator for young people to consider their readiness to work and passing the National Competency Examinations (NCE).

The Ten Life Skills as laid out by the World Health Organization, are the following: Self-Awareness, Empathy, Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, Decision-Making, Problem-Solving, Effective Communication, Interpersonal Relationship, Coping with Stress, and Coping with Emotions.



**ROMNICK DIAMANTE**

Former Community Mobilizer and KNKPI President

*Ang Sampung mga Kasanay sa Buhay ay mga pag-uugali na nagbibigay daan sa isang tao na (maging adaptive) umangkop sa mga kahilingan at hamon sa buhay. Ito ay inilatag ng World Health Organization.*

*Ayon sa World Health Organization, pag sinabing adaptive, ito ay nangangahulugan na ang isang tao ay nababaluktot sa kanilang diskarte at nagagawang ayusin sa iba't ibang mga kalagayan. Samantalang pag sinabing positive behavior, ito'y nagpapahiwatig na ang isang tao ay naghahanap ng pagsulong. At kahit na sa mga mahihirap na sitwasyon, maaaring makahanap ng sinag ng pag-asa, at mga pagkakataon upang makahanap ng mga solusyon.*

The three major components of the ASRH program were: a) youth development and health protection; b) youth leadership and participation in disaster risk and rehabilitation management, and c) youth employability and entrepreneurship.

To strengthen the program, YKBI partnered with training institutions, public and private companies such as TESDA, PESO and the city / municipal health centers. YKBI also preferred and actively supported vocational technical education for the youth after high school for faster employment and income generation.

2. **BIBO Project (Batang may Inisyatibo, Bihasa at Organisado)** – Improved school readiness of children to give them opportunities to voice out their issues and concerns for a meaningful participation, and to build a strong relationship within their families, schools, and their communities.

The project included responsible parenthood modules with 271 parent-participants achieving increased knowledge and skills on positive child-rearing and on the referral systems for abused children. The parents also realized the importance of their roles and responsibilities for their children's development.

Facilitated various child development sessions and community-wide advocacy celebrations where children participants learned about how to protect themselves from abuses, know and accept their self-worth, have confidence, and how to maintain good personal hygiene, resulting in positive peer relationships and more open communication with parents.

Implemented the MATHinik project which helped improve numeracy and mathematics skills of children with difficulties in these subjects. Evaluation results showed increased appreciation and willingness to learn Mathematics, and improved numeracy skills.

Savings habit sessions were also held which helped 964 mothers who are members of self-help groups to meet basic needs such as daily food, educational supplies, school fees, and business capital.

The advocacy of child's rights continued with intensive participation of children and youth in the Local Councils for the Protection of Children (LCPC) in the barangay, municipal, city, provincial, and national levels.

3. **Bukluran Project (Sustaining Federative and Associative Structures Continuously Advocating in Functional Child Protection Networks / Local Mandated Bodies for Child Survival and Protection)** – YKBI and its eight member parents associations consistently participated in various Local Mandated Bodies (LMBs) and networked with other resource agencies to support child and youth protection and development programs. YKBI also formalized its partnership with the Southern Luzon State University, KCD Technical School, Banahaw Technical Institute, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (Region IV-A), and the Department of Education.

Continuous capacity-building and training programs were provided to YKBI leaders, officers, staff, and volunteers for efficient and effective management of the programs and projects.

The fourth and last implementation cycle was the most challenging. Partnerships with other entities to address the faces and root causes of child poverty in the area were heightened. Sustainability mechanisms were also developed while sponsorship funds were diminishing towards natural attrition. Evaluation results on the organizational, documentation, analysis and technical aspects of the program concluded that there was a need to focus on prioritized projects. Initiatives for sustainability and achievement of programmatic, federative, and associative goals considered the expertise of officers and staff developed through the years.



## ASRH DOCUMENTATION OF PROJECT IMPACT AND LESSONS LEARNED

Given the relevance and timeliness of the project, and YKBI's women and child advocacy, the ASRH project was reviewed and evaluated. Completed in December 2017, the study entitled **ASRH Documentation of Project Impact and Lessons Learned** stated that "all stakeholders agreed that the (ASRH) project is relevant and timely since it strengthened children's participation, focused and built awareness about child protection, and developed their self-confidence." The child rights protection built into the program was very helpful to students. And relevant and current issues such as pre-marital sex, AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases, and even drugs and vices were tackled, helping prepare the youth to become responsible parents.

The *Ten Life Skills* introduced in Life Cycle 2 was also highlighted, where the modules included topics on HIV, Early Pregnancy, Gender Sensitivity and Self-Awareness.

ASRH's most cited impact on the youth was that it boosted their self-confidence. About 70% of the youth interviewed said it increased their awareness on ASRH as well as on adolescent issues.

### ASRH Impact on the Community

1. *According to the parents/adult educators:* ASRH paved the way for open communication between barangay officials and residents. Some barangays were even provided funds for ASRH activities.
2. *According to YPEs:* Youth organizations were recognized in the communities. In San Pablo, there was a notable decrease in the number of out-of-school (OSY) and children in conflict with the law (CICL).
3. Aside from the barangay officials, the regional health units (RHUs) also contributed to ASRH through counseling services and by acting as resource persons in barangay or school sessions.

### Challenges and Recommended Solutions

#### *Challenges Encountered*

1. Increase in teenage pregnancy
2. Inactive trained YPEs and adult ASRH educators resulting in lack of session facilitators
3. Coordination problem with barangay officials
4. Low attendance during sessions
5. Some parents do not want their children to attend ASRH sessions

#### *Recommended Solutions*

1. Include in the program "safe sex" practices
2. Constant reminders on the policies, systems, and procedures requiring compliance
3. Proper and effective communication with respective barangays
4. Scheduling of sessions convenient to majority
5. Parents should be the first to attend ASRH session for better understanding of the program

### Lessons Learned

1. *As youth:* a) to become responsible individuals; b) to think of the future; c) the art of saying no/avoiding pre-marital sex; d) there is a right time for marriage; e) life skills should be applied in everyday life; f) how to mingle and empathize with others; g) to avoid of vices/bad influence of friends / peers; and h) the need to be aware of the issues in the community.

2. *As facilitator:* a) to keep abreast about issues in the community; b) better teaching strategies; c) be equipped with handling the youth with different personalities, problems and needs; and d) not just facilitate but to also touch the lives of co-young adults.
3. *As parents:* a) to be open-minded; to trust and respect children's decisions; and b) to share/reach out to other parents regarding problems experienced with their children.
4. Coordination with barangay leaders crucial; giving them roles is key to the success of ASRH implementation.
5. Partnership with barangay councils, RHUs and schools in the implementation of the ASRH also critical for a successful implementation.
6. Patience in dealing with co-young adults.
7. Creativity is needed in raising community awareness and maintain interest (ex.: theatre, creative visual arts, video production)

### **Innovative Best Practices of ASRH, as identified by the following groups:**

1. **Youth:** a) Child-friendly activities, participatory approach which encouraged the participants to join, engage and relate to the topics discussed; b) youth beneficiaries trained as youth peer educators; c) school-based sessions, thereby reaching more young people; and d) training outside the community together with other youth.
2. **Parents/Adult Facilitators:** a) Strong partnership with LGUs, RHUs and DepEd; b) interesting and effective school-based sessions; c) 4Ps parents also trained; d) pool of trainers/peer facilitators, and e) parents also invited as facilitators by other organizations.
3. **YPEs:** a) Established in the barangay with an advocacy / learning corner containing advocacy materials; b) recognized by the BCPC–The Kabalikatan Youth Association was awarded the most accomplished youth organization by the Province of Laguna; c) peer-to-peer counseling provided by YPEs; d) Community awareness raising using theatre, visual arts, video production; and e) inclusion of ASRH in the Barangay Plan and Budget.

### **Strengths and Weaknesses**

#### *Strengths*

1. Support from YKBI staff, parent association and Child Fund
2. Strong partnership with LGUs
3. Complete, well-guided, and relevant modules and visuals; availability of IEC materials
4. Interesting topics, modules, and activities which the youth found interesting and relatable, helping build their self-confidence
5. Committed, well-equipped and trained facilitators, YPEs, and peer-to-peer sessions
6. Youth involvement as they were cooperative and participative
7. Recognition of youth association
8. Wide beneficiary reach (community and school-based)
9. Valuable sharing of parents during the sessions
10. Youth mapping proved to be helpful in reaching out to the target group
11. Resource mobilization support

#### *Weaknesses*

1. Inability of the participants to apply the learnings they learned due to temptation
2. Conflict of schedules
3. Few participants during some of the ASRH sessions
4. Few facilitators, or some trained facilitators are no longer around or available
5. Lack of interest of participants (unconcerned or lazy)
6. Shy and inactive participants

**Recommendations from the youth beneficiaries, parents, adult educators and YPEs:**

1. Continue the implementation of the ASRH in the barangays and schools to assist more young people with continuous education and awareness on reproductive health, especially on sex education, STI, HIV and AIDs.
2. Introduce new strategies, develop new topics for millennials to sustain interest and for them to avoid becoming victims of cybersex or engaging in pre-marital sex.
3. Train other youth facilitators who will continue to conduct development sessions because of the mobility and nature of the youth.
4. Continue strong partnership with LGUs / RHUs and other NGOs for the continuous implementation of the ASRH project. Continuous lobbying and endorsement of the ASRH to LGUs supported by MOA or Board Resolutions in adopting the project to ensure continuity.
5. Continuous orientation of parents and intensify their involvement as volunteers to promote ASRH in their communities.
6. Continuous monitoring of the project, documentation of best practices, and getting project recognition and support from LGUs, barangays and other stakeholders.
7. Continuous advocacy through social media (e.g., Facebook "Kabalikatan", Facebook page, Tweeter, etc.)
8. Promotional activities such as fun run or walk, flyering, leafleting, and theatre presentations in the community.

**Recommendations by the Consultant**

1. Review current strategies and come up with more effective measures to reduce the incidence of teenage pregnancy.
2. Come up with programs / services for the teenage mothers, particularly the sponsored children of Child Fund.
3. Continue advocacy and lobbying with the LGUs for ASRH ordinances for inclusion to the LGU Development Plan and Budget.
4. YKBI should install a clear Monitoring and Evaluation System for ASRH Project.

## YKBI AND VOICE LINKING, LEARNING & FACILITATION PROGRAM

### Strengthening Advocacy and Youth-Led Action on the Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy

In August 2018, YKBI was given a grant by Voice under its Linking, Learning and Facilitation (L&L) program to implement their project **Strengthening Advocacy and Youth Led Action on the Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy**. The objectives of the program are to implement projects on preventing teenage pregnancies, teaching responsible parenthood, promoting women and child rights, and policy advocacy.

The Voice grant provided YKBI with the needed funding to continue its fight for women and children. It came at a time when its 12-year partnership with the Child Fund had ended and YKBI was in transition in terms of program design and management. It also made it possible for YKBI to design and implement improved and enhanced programs based on the learnings and evaluation results of its projects under Child Fund. The Linking and Learning design was ideal as YKBI synergizes its efforts through partnerships and collaborations among the organizations, rights holder groups, and other key stakeholders, enabling YKBI to gear up towards a more enhanced and sustainable strategy.



**ROLDAN PEREZ**

YKBI Project Officer, Former M & E and Community Mobilizer/Trainer

*Ang proyekto ng YKBI sa VOICE ay ang Strengthening Advocacy in Youth-led Action on the Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy. Ang layunin ng proyekto ay maiwasan ang pagbubuntis ng maaga ng mga kabataan at maiwasan din at mabawasan ang mga kaso ng mga pang-aabuso laban sa mga batang babae.*

*Sa proyektong ito nagbibigay tayo ng kaalaman patungkol sa Adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health sa tulong ng ating mga partners mula sa Local Government Unit, religious sectors, at NGO's, para magkaroon sila ng wastong kaalaman kung paano nila maiiwasan ang maagang pagbubuntis. Ang mga kabataang nanay din ay binibigyan ng kaalaman patungkol sa Women and Child Protection kung saan malalaman nila ang kanilang karapatan, magkaroon sila ng confidence para makapagbigay ng mga opinion, at kung paano nila maiiwasan ang mga pang-aabuso laban sa kanila.*

*Dahil sa proyekto, nakapagbigay ng mga kaalaman sa mga kabataan sa pamamagitan ng mga school symposiums, mga community-based sessions kung saan nagbigay ng orientation patungkol sa Adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health at Lifeskills Development. Ang mga batang nanay naman ay nagkakaroon ng regular community sessions patungkol sa mga karapatan nila bilang mga batang babae.*

*Sa ngayon, ang YKBI ay nagsisimula na sa Policy Advocacy para makatulong na makapag-create ng mga polisiya at ordinansiya na makakatulong at makakasupporta sa mga pangangailangan ng mga kabataan at mapalakas ang Teenage Pregnancy Prevention sa lungsod ng San Pablo.*

The following factors were considered in the decision of YKBI to continue its focus on the ASRH program intervention:

1. The federation's interest and focus on children and teenage mothers.
2. Results of the ASRH program evaluation which clearly defined the importance and impact of the project on its stakeholders and beneficiaries.
3. Teenage pregnancy continued to be a major concern in some covered communities (e.g., San Pablo City where teenage pregnancy rate remained high despite ASRH intervention).
4. Under the Child Fund Sponsorship Program, YKBI noted that sponsored members were terminated from the program if they got pregnant. Support, therefore, was stopped and not one, but two individuals were now left vulnerable and without a support system (mother and child).

In response, and to ensure continuity of the groundwork that had already been laid out during the 12-year Child Fund program implementation, the established partnerships and relationships with various

stakeholders, and to continue their advocacy for children and teenage mothers, YKBI designed a new program with special focus on teenage pregnancy prevention during its transition period. The new program design included providing support for the child mothers and their children, since there is now more than one person to protect: the child mother and her child. Policy advocacy was also added, along with building stronger partnerships and relationships with local government units (LGUs), and spirituality, which they found lacking from the previous program design. By 2018, YKBI had developed a new program design, which addressed previous failures and challenges and introduced new components for a more focused, encompassing and effective program for children, child mothers, the youth, and their communities.

Below are the program components to be implemented from August 15, 2018 to August 14, 2020 under the Voice grant:

1. Adolescent Sexual Reproduction and Health (ASRH), which include life skills development
2. Child and Women's Rights Advocacy
3. Responsible Parenthood, including early childhood care and development and referral system for teenage mothers to schools and general employment
4. Policy Advocacy

By September 2018, YKBI conducted a project orientation workshop with key agencies and stakeholders where they shared previous experiences and discussed plans for the new project under Voice to attain target goals and outcomes. This resulted in a collective plan of action and development of methodologies for the project and generated technical support and access to resources for wider reach in the communities.

### **Technical Working Group (TWG)**

A TWG was formed to serve as the project's "think tank", meeting regularly to discuss plans and activities. It is composed of YKBI staff, VPAs, Barangay Councils, City Population Office, City Health Office, Sangguniang Kabataan, PNP, DepEd, City SWDO, and the Committee on Family, Women and Children. The Provincial Health Office and Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office serve as honorary members, while the City Health and City Population Office serves as resource persons for the training.

TWG members also participate in training evaluation sessions to resolve issues and concerns to be addressed in succeeding sessions. They also serve as facilitators and resource speakers for the capacity-building trainings for VPAs on ASRH and Girls and Women's Rights Advocacy. They join the VPAs during the sessions and symposia to give proper information and address participants' concerns. They also help by giving proper directions and procedures in project implementation. TWG member-agencies also initiate other activities that support the objectives of the project, such as the CSWD and DILG, who conducts capacity building activities for VAW Officers and Barangay Officials; the City Health Office and City Population Office that held an Adolescence Health and Development Symposium, training for Peer Educators, and established Teen Health Kiosks.



**ROSA COSEJO**, Executive Director, YKBI

#### **STRATEGIES UTILIZED BY THE PROJECT**

*Ang mga stratehiyang ginawa patungkol sa proyektong “Prevention of Teenage Pregnancy” ay ang pagsasagawa ng mga community-based advocacy sessions sa pitong barangay ng San Pablo City, na may pinakamaraming bilang ng teenage pregnancy. Unang strategy ay ang pagbibigay ng Comprehensive ASRH Education sa lahat ng mga teenage mother na kung saan sila ay nagkaroon ng pagkakataon na ibahagi ang kanilang mga kaalaman, at nakapagbahagi ng kanilang mga saloobin at mga suliranin ukol sa kanilang sarili, sa kanilang anak, at sa kanilang pamilya.*

*Ang pangalawang estratehiya ay ang pagbibigay ng mga kaalaman at paglilinaw sa mga batas na nagbibigay ng proteksiyon sa mga kababaihan at sa mga bata. Ang mga batas na ito ay may kinalaman sa RA 7610, RA 9262, Anti-VAWC Law at UNCRC. Sa pagpapatuloy ng advocacy, ang PNP VAWC officers ng San Pablo City ay nagsagawa ng city-wide caravan patungkol sa anti-violence against (women-)children and their children, na kung saan ang ginawang IEC materials ng YAKAP sa Kaunlaran ng Bata ay nagamit upang mapalawak ang advocacy at nabigyan ng impormasyon ang buong komunidad.*

*Ang pangatlong estratehiya ay ang pagsasagawa ng Policy Advocacy na kung saan ang mga issues and concerns ng mga kababaihan at ng mga teenage mother ay nilalayan na mabigyan ng mga batas at mga tamang serbisyo para ito ay matugunan. Hanggang sa ngayon ang advocacy na ito ay patuloy na ginagawa ng Yakap sa Kaunlaran ng Bata sa pakikipagtulungan ng local government at ng iba’t-ibang agency sa lokal at sa probinsiya.*

## **I. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**

By March 2019, YKBI, through the LGU’s City Health and City Population Offices, expanded its coverage to two additional barangays which had the highest cases of teenage pregnancy: Barangays Concepcion and San Jose.

### **Early challenges**

At first, the project lacked the support of **the Barangay Council** and workers in these communities. But this was resolved with the help of the LGU and follow-up meetings.

Partnering and working with the **Sangguniang Kabataan (SK)**, identified as a key partner in the long-term sustainability of the project, also had its share of challenges. The SKs were inactive, and YKBI could not bring them to provide their counterpart contribution to support teenage mothers. According to the TWG, this issue was also true with some LGU projects.

The lack of SK support caused delays on the conduct of community awareness sessions for out-of-school youth on ASRH. This was eventually resolved with the passing of a Memorandum of Agreement between YKBI and the LGU of San Pablo mandating the SK to support the project. Constant coordination and support from members of the Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Task Force (TPPTF), specifically the City Social Welfare Division Office (CSWDO) and the Philippine National Police-Women and Child Protection Desk (PNP-WCPD) eventually paid off and the SK’s participation in meetings became consistent. The SK of San Vicente, for instance, together with VAWC, even funded and initiated a school symposium on teenage pregnancy prevention with over 500 high school students in attendance. In addition, 40 teenage mothers were added to the list of beneficiaries based on the SK’s community baselining.





**HON. EDDRINE PAUL I. PAPA**

Former Youth Peer Educator (YPE), Now Professor / Teacher

*Naging epektibo ang programang ito dahil nabawasan ang bilang ng mga kabataang maagang nabubuntis. Naging responsable sa pagdedesisyon ang mga kabataan at kung paano makisalamuha sa pang araw-araw na pamumuhay.*

*Ang mga challenges na aming pinagdaanan at pinagdadaanan bilang implementor at facilitator ng programang ito ay:*

- 1) **Availability ng mga participants.** Ang ilang participants ay nahihiya pumunta sa mga sessions.*
- 2) **Customs and beliefs.** Maraming kabataan ang may mga kinagishang pag-uugali o kultura na ang hirap baguhin, kung kaya sa pamamagitan ng mga sessions, nababago ito at nagkakaroon sila ng mga bagong ideya.*
- 3) **Hiya.** Marami sa mga kabataan ang nahihiya na dumalo sa mga ganitong pagtitipon. Nandun din ang pagiging awkward nila sa ilang mga terminolohiya na ginagamit sa pag-conduct ng sessions. Kung kaya't kaming mga facilitators, gumagamit kami ng ibang terminolohiya na hindi nakaka-offend o para magkaroon sila ng panibagong kaalaman kung paano gagamitin ang mga terminolohiyang ito sa kanilang pang araw-araw na buhay.*
- 4) **Availability ng mga facilitators.** Ang ilan sa mga facilitators ay nag-aaral o may mga gawain sa kanilang mga tahanan, kung kaya't challenge sa amin kung paano namin hahatiin ang aming oras sa pag-conduct ng mga sessions, gawain sa bahay, at paaralan.*
- 5) **Venue.** May mga partner kaming komunidad o mga barangay kung saan maaaring mag-conduct ng sessions. Ngunit ang ilan sa mga kabataan ay tila natatakot o nahihirapang pumunta sa barangay kung kaya nag-aadjust kami pumunta sa area na gusto nila. Pero nandoon parin ang protocol at mga guidelines na dapat sundin. Ang iba, ginagawang venue kung saan sila tumatambay o naglalagi, tulad ng basketball court o kaya sa tahanan ng kanilang kabarkada.*

*Sa gitna ng mga pagsubok na aming kinakaharap, bilang mga volunteers, ito ay hindi naging sagabal sa amin. Bagkus, aming pinagpatuloy ang programa dahil tumatalima sa aming isipan na bawat segundo, bawat minuto at bawat oras na aming inilalaan sa sessions na aming kino-conduct, ay may mga kabataan kaming nababago ang buhay.*

## **Milestones, Achievements to Date**

- 1. Established and validated baseline of teenage pregnancy situationer** (October to November 2018) – A baseline study was done by a YKBI hired technical consultant. The study was supported by Barangay Health Workers and provided a deeper understanding of the situation and other vital needs of teenage mothers. During a visit by Voice to YKBI, Voice recommended revisiting the study for a wider coverage of interviewees for a more realistic data and profile. In response, YKBI conducted a second batch of profiling of additional teenage mothers.
- 2. Conducted capacity-building training for Peer Educators in preparation for sexuality education** (December 3-4, 2018 and January 17, 2019) – 24 teenage mothers (aged 15-22 years old, pregnant or with children) were trained and developed as Volunteer Peer Advocates (VPAs). They underwent two trainings on ASRH, Life Skills and Facilitation Skills.



There are currently 38 trained VPAs. The second batch of teenage mothers were mentored and trained by the first-line VPAs. 20 VPAs are actively facilitating community-based sessions, replacing those who are already working, returned to school, or have small businesses.

Two more workshops will be conducted with additional teenage mothers identified for training.

3. **Conducted comprehensive age-appropriate sexuality and reproductive health education sessions** (January 19 – February 14, 2019) – Eleven comprehensive sexuality education sessions were completed, reaching 118 males and 115 female Grades 9 to 10 students (15 to 22 years old), 110 teenage mothers / pregnant children (14 to 22 years old) and 52 out-of-school youth (13 to 20 years old). Additional 60 teenage mothers aged 16 to 23 years old, six partners and five parents attended six weekly sessions on Life Skills and ASRH.

ASRH trainings conducted at the municipalities of San Francisco and San Jose; at schools such as Prudencia National High School and Del Remedio National High School



4. **Continuous comprehensive sexual education** (January 19 – February 14, 2019) – Additional 33 teenage mothers and four male partners from the 2 new barangays of San Jose and Barangay Concepcion were given sessions on ASRH by VPAs and the City Health Office during community-based sessions and the Teenage Mothers Symposium.



## ASRH trainings



5. **At least 15 of 30 trained VPAs assisted in the 18 Comprehensive Sexuality Reproductive Health Education cum Child and Women's Rights Advocacy sessions Against Early Pregnancy (June 2019) – 17 VPAs facilitated 11 Comprehensive Sexuality Education Sessions, reaching approximately 500 participants in the five barangays. The trained VPAs will also take the lead and assist in the facilitation of the Child and Women's Rights Advocacy Sessions in the next reporting period.**



**ELSIE ADELLE**

Trained Volunteer Peer Advocate

*Ang naitulong sa akin ng project na ito, unang-una is to build my confidence. Mula kasi nung nagkaanak ako sa edad na 14, bumaba ang tingin ko sa sarili ko. Natakot ako sa panghuhusga ng ibang tao. Pero itong project na ito ang nagbukas at nagbigay ng panibagong pag-asa sa akin. Binago nila ang pananaw ko sa buhay. Pinakita sa amin na marami pang opportunity para sa mga gaya namin. Pinaramdam nila na hindi kami batang nanay lang. Marami pa po kaming magagawa at pwede pa kaming makapag-aral.*

*Pangalawa ay ang mga karapatan namin bilang isang batang nanay, at karapatan ng mga anak namin. Natutunan din namin ang kahalagahan ng Family Planning, pagpapatibay ng relasyon ng isang pamilya, at ang pagbudget sa pera na naia-apply namin sa aming buhay.*

*Masaya po ako na naging isang Volunteer Peer Advocate dahil bukod sa malaki ang naitulong nito sa akin ay naibabahagi din namin ito sa mga katulad naming batang nanay. Maraming-maraming salamat po sa bumubuo ng organisasyon na ito na naglungsad ng proyekto para sa mga gaya naming hindi napagtutuunan ng pansin.*

- 22 VPAs underwent training on Girl and Women's Rights. The PNP-WCPD officers and CSWDO facilitated the orientation on Republic Act 9262 and Republic Act 7610, while the Provincial Health Office provided the sessions on Magna Carta for Women and Mental Health and Depression.
- Trainings on Responsible Parenthood and Child Care Education attended by seven VPAs, nine Barangay Nutrition Scholars and four Barangay Officials / VAW officers served as

facilitators. The City Health Office, CSWDO, and City Population Office facilitated the trainings which focused on First 1000 days, Early Years Act, Early Childhood Care and Development, Responsible Parenthood (Family Development and Management) and Prevention of Child Injuries and Developmental Delays. There is now a total of 33 VPAs simultaneously conducting community-based sessions.

- Parents, partners and guardians were included in the sessions on ASRH, Girl and Women's Rights, and Responsible Parenthood so they can understand their roles and responsibilities and help to support / resolve the root causes of teenage pregnancies identified during the baseline study. Some of the identified root causes are broken family, lack of parental guidance/support, low awareness of young people (especially males) in teenage pregnancy and ASRH, and protection of women and children against abuses perpetrated by their partners.
- An orientation and training for 228 TODA drivers and officers was conducted so they know and understand the rights and protection of women, and their roles as fathers, husbands and protectors of women and their children. This resulted in their positive support and advocacy, their commitment to report incidences of abuse and violence to the Barangay VAWC officers, and to raise awareness on girl and child protection through the advocacy materials (IECs) installed on their tricycles.
- 45 male barangay officials, partners of teenage mothers also participated in the Training / Orientation on Tatay Effectiveness (BOTE) and ERPAT, which had an overwhelming positive response as seen from the high attendance rate. The partners of teenage mothers became supportive on letting them attend succeeding activities. Some of them joined the sessions and even shared their own perspectives and ideas on the prevention of adolescence pregnancy, and how they, as men, can protect their partners and children against violence and exploitation.



**MA. CECILLE EXCONDE**

Barangay Nutrition Scholar (BNS), Brgy. Conception



*Katanggap-tanggap na ito sa ating komunidad upang maibahagi ang pag-aaral o pananaliksik patungkol sa sitwasyon o kalagayan ng mga teenage mothers sa lungsod ng San Pablo. Lumawak ang kanilang kaalaman tungkol sa responsible parenthood. Isinama na rin ang kalalakihan sa proyekto upang mabigyan sila ng kaalaman patungkol sa karapatan ng mga bata at kababaihan. Sa pamamagitan nito ay nababawasan ang pang-aabuso ng kalalakihan sa mga kababaihan, at bagkus, sila ay naging katuwang pa sa pagtatanggol ng karapatang pambata at kababaihan.*

**EDILYN RUBANG**

Barangay Nutrition Scholar (BNS), Brgy. San Nicolas



*Noong una ay hindi pa ito katanggap-tanggap, lalo na sa mga matatanda dahil lalo lang daw binibigyan ng ideya ang mga kabataan na mag-asawa nang maaga. Pero nung makita nila ang mga pagbabago sa mga batang ina na nagkaroon ng kasanayan at kaalaman sa iba't ibang aspeto ng kanilang buhay, ay natanggap na rin nila ito. Lalo na ang ibang kabataan ay nagbalik sa kanilang pag-aaral at ang iba ay naghahanapbuhay na.*

**CRISTINA SAN ANDRES**

Volunteer Peer Advocate (VPA)



*Malaki ang naitulong para sa mga batang ina ng mga isinagawang pagsasanay upang magkaroon ng boses para sa sarili at gayundin sa mga anak, pamilya at kapwa mamamayan. Ngayon na naturuan at mayroon ng sapat na kaalaman ay kaya ng ipaglaban ang karapatan sa ano mang pang-aapi at diskriminasyon. Bilang babae at asawa ay mabuting nalaman ang mga batas at karapatan upang maipagtanggol ang sarili sa mga mapang-abuso. Naibibigay ang sapat na pag-aalaga para sa mga anak. Hindi rin gagawa ng ikasasama nila sapagkat nababatid ko ang mga karapatang dapat nilang tamasahin. May wastong suporta at gabay sa mga bagay na makabubuti sa kanila. Ito ay nakabuti hindi lamang para sa sarili, ito ay naibahagi rin sa mga kakilala at kapwa mamamayan. Naging handang tumulong upang umaksyon dahil may sapat na pang-unawa sa mga batas at pang-aabuso na maaaring maranasan. Gayundin ang pagtugon kung paano at saan hihingi ng tulong.*

*Naituro rin sa mga anak na manindigan hindi lamang sa sariling kapakanan, kundi rin sa mga taong walang kakayanan upang ipaglaban ang sarili. Mayroong boses upang ipaglaban at ipahayag ang mga karapatan sa hindi pagkakapantay-pantay at diskriminasyon na nararanasan ng ilang batang ina. Bilang responsable at disiplinadong mamamayan ng lipunang ginagalawan, malaking ambag ito na ikaw mismo sa sarili mo nagsisimula ang pagbabago.*

**6. Establish special protection help desks, include teen-age mothers in the LGU agenda, and provided resources for them in the covered barangays (November 2019)**

In response to the observation that the LGU and barangay officials / workers lacked knowledge and capacity on handling cases of abuses and violence against women and children, the LGU conducted a series of training for barangay officials, and VAW desk officers of 80 Barangays related to BCPC and VAW to strengthen their awareness and skills, and to correct practices in handling child and women abuses cases in the barangay. The training was funded by DILG and CSWD San Pablo. VAW Flowcharts were also established between Barangay, PNP, DSWD, PAO and Justice Courts. A follow up training for VAW was also scheduled by the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office funded by the Provincial Council for the Protection of Children where YKBI is one of its active members.

On the provincial level, the Provincial Council initiated and funded a series of province-wide Orientation Training and Capacity Building for all barangays, cities, and municipalities (15-16 and 22-23 October 2019). YKBI was among the resource organizations during the training and its advocacy issues and materials were shared to all participants, resulting in invitations of other municipalities to conduct ASRH and Rights Orientation for government officials, children and youth. The municipalities of Nagcarlan and Magdalena had roll-out trainings.



All nine covered barangays now have functional VAWC desk offices / rooms and active, capacitated VAWC officers providing safe spaces for special protection help desks for teenage mothers.

YKBI staff also underwent a training-orientation on laws related to VAWC such as RA 7610, 9262 and 9383.

All activities were funded by the LGU.



**SHIRLEY ARAMAMENTO**

Public Health Nurse, HEDO Designate  
City Health Office of San Pablo City Laguna

*Sa aking pananaw, nakatulong ang partnership ng LGU ng San Pablo at ng YKBI sa pagsugpo ng teenage pregnancy o maagang pagbubuntis ng kabataan sa pamamagitan ng malawakang pagpapalaganap ng impormasyon ukol sa hindi kanais-nais na kahirinatnan ng isang kabataan kung maaga syang magbubuntis. Hindi lamang sa pangkaisipan kundi sa kanilang pangkalusugan. Sa tulong na din ng mga kapwa nilang kabataan na nakaranas na ng maagang pagbubuntis, maipaparating natin sa kanila o sa kapwa kabaatan nito ang hirap at ekspiryensya na dinanas nila nung maaga silang nabuntis. Sa tingin ko ito ang pinakamabisang paraan para matutunan ng isang kabataang babae ang masamang nadudulot ng maagang pagbubuntis.*

**7. All pregnant teenagers seeking assistance from YKBI will be provided with / referred to appropriate entities for urgent services (December 2019)**

YKBI established a databank of teenage mothers in the covered barangays that includes priority issues such as access to health insurance, need for family planning, technical training, or referral to schools for each record. YKBI and members of the TPPTF conducted home visits to teenage mothers to deeply assess their needs.

On September 2019, YKBI and TPPTF conducted the 1<sup>st</sup> Family Day Celebration to celebrate Family Week. The activity served as a meet-up and play opportunity for teenage mothers, their partners, parents, and children. It also became a “one stop shop” because all government offices offered their services onsite for teenage mothers. Six teenage mothers/partners/children were able to access Late Birth Registration Information and Processing; 71 were given Provincial Health Card Insurance from the PSWDO; 36 teenage mothers, children, partners, guardians, and volunteers were given free flu vaccination; 60 accessed updating and registration to PhilHealth; and, 16 children were referred to ALS.

Teenage Mothers and families should have more opportunities for social activities. The family day was a favorite part in the project.

**8. At least 60% of the teen-age mothers identified in five barangays engaged in productive activities** such as going back to formal schooling or Alternative Learning System (ALS), and life skills training for productivity without sacrificing the care and welfare of their children, and coming up with their life plan for at least ten years with concurrence and support of their families and communities (March 2020).

Through values education and life skills training, 16 teenage mothers went back to school (either regular classes or ALS). Moreover, 12 teenage mothers got employed and established small business through buy and sell, online selling, and sari-sari stores.

Also, YKBI in partnership with the Special Livelihood Office (SLO) of the Provincial Government of Laguna, provided livelihood skills training for 45 teenage mothers focusing on their requested skills training – *supot*-making, pastry-making, and dishwashing and fabric



conditioner making. Three barangays formed three groups of teenage mothers who will work as a guild for their chosen income-generating project.

Life Planning sessions were included in the series of trainings attended by teenage mothers (some with their partners). 90% of them have positive outline of their lives. 22 are now working/employed or have personal income-generating activities (buy and sell). 16 are currently studying through ALS and formal schooling. 78 were oriented on livelihood skills (though livelihood activities did not push through due to distance of teenage mothers from each other).

**9. At least 3 community-based child-minding centers and / or community foster parenting schemes established for the children of the teenage mothers (March 2020)**

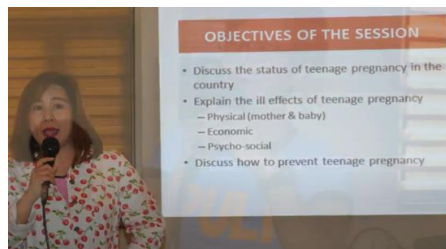
Initial discussions have started during the TPPTF meetings. But as per result of reflection sessions, this milestone is not needed / not a priority since all ALS centers are accessible at the barangay level, and DepEd allowed and welcomed teenage mothers to bring their children during classes. In addition, teenage mothers who are already working have their parents (or parents of their partners) taking care of their children during work.

**10. At least 5 other partner-organizations / entities will provide services to the pregnant and mother teen-agers and their children in the covered barangays (March 2019)**

There are 7 agencies / offices and organizations supporting the project:

- City Social Welfare and Development
- City Population Office
- City Health Office
- Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office – special concerns and cases of teenage mothers
- Provincial Health Office – health services and referral of access to health insurance
- United Pastors Council – provides counselling, spiritual and values formation
- Philippine National Police – San Pablo (Capacity-building and orientation on women's rights advocacy and protection)
- DepEd Division of San Pablo – education referrals
- Special Livelihood Offices – Provincial Government of Laguna (added during second semester)
- PhilHealth San Pablo (added during third semester)
- Local Civil Registrar (added during third semester)

**11. The San Pablo LGU thru the City Population Office, City Health Office and City Social Welfare and Development Office launched the U4U Project which aims to raise awareness of adolescents on the prevention of early pregnancy and sexual exploitation using modern technology. The project was initially launched in one high school (San Vicente National High School). Two-day seminars were run to train peer educators to be able to conduct school-based sessions.**



12. The TPPTF, in partnership with the DepEd Division of San Pablo and Col. Lauro D. Dizon Memorial National High School (the largest high school in San Pablo City) launched Teen Health Kiosks last December 10, 2019. THK is an adolescent-friendly facility established in a school or community which allows the exchange of information among peers, supports educational sessions on various topics such as pregnancy, and facilitates the referral of troubled teens to either the guidance counsellor, school clinician, or health service providers in rural health units and hospitals. During the launching ceremony, all the LGU officials and school officials expressed commitment to do activities or projects to help in the prevention of adolescence pregnancy.



13. During the Celebration of National Children's Month last November 2019, and the 19-day Campaign on Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC), the Information Education and Campaign (IEC) materials produced by the project were utilized by the LGU as their main info-graphics materials at the simultaneous barangay awareness parades and community awareness sessions conducted in all 80 barangays in San Pablo City, Laguna. Students, government employees, members of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), teenage mothers and VPAs participated. More than 2,000 individuals were oriented on the rights of the children and VAWC, resulting to an increased number of reported abuse / exploitation against children and women to the VAWC officers and the WCPD due to heightened awareness of the community and their concern for women and girl children. The IECs are posted in all 80 barangays in San Pablo City for continuous awareness raising for VAWC, RA7610, and reporting access to authorities. These materials were also presented by LGU of San Pablo City on the Regional Celebration Campaign against VAWC.

Some of the IECs used by the project



#### 14. Policy Advocacy

Senate Bill 1888 or SBN 1888: An Act Providing for a National Policy in Preventing Teenage Pregnancies, Institutionalizing Social Protection for Teenage Parents, and Providing Funds Therefor, is ongoing for approval. If enacted into law, the support and services for the youth and young women will be strengthened and provided. YKBI's initiatives in its covered areas such as providing age-appropriate and medically accurate services, will be pursued and promoted in schools and communities. The law will also empower the local government unit of San Pablo City to create services and projects to respond to the needs of young girls that will help them prevent or avoid early pregnancy, and for teenage mothers to have accessible and quality maternal and child health care.

In the locality, the San Pablo LGU has approved the Adolescence Health Development Program through a City Resolution supporting the activities on creating awareness of Sexuality and Reproductive Health information. It also empowers key agencies to provide the necessary services for teenagers, especially young girls.

The passing of the Republic Act 11223 (RA 11223: Instituting Universal Health Care for all Filipinos Law) is a milestone in one of the key issues shared by the teenage mothers during the Teenage Mothers' Symposium and Forum, such as lack of access to quality health care and services and no access to PhilHealth services. The law provide for all Filipinos, including teenage mothers, to have access to comprehensive and cost-effective health care services. This will also empower local government units to strengthen and improve existing health services for easier access to teenage mothers. The Provincial Health Office and YKBI are just waiting for the finalization of the law's Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

YKBI's membership in local mandated bodies such as the Provincial Council for the Protection of Children and Regional Sub-Committee for the Welfare of Children, helped in raising the issues of teenage pregnancy, causing them to prioritize this issue, strengthen their action plans and programs for 2019 to 2020, allot budgets for the continuous awareness of ASRH, and establish and implement school- and community-based teen health kiosks not just in San Pablo but throughout the region of CALABARZON.





**MYLENE DEREQUITO**

Population Program Officer IV / City Nutrition Program Coordinator (CNPC)

*Dahil sa partnership naming ito, na-develop ang self-confidence ng mga teenage mothers, gayundin ay naitayo muli nila ang kanilang mga dangal at morale na minsan sa lipunan ay sila'y pinag-usapan at pinagtawanan.*

*Ang YKBI, kasama ang iba't ibang ahensya ng LGU, religious sector, at mga Barangay Nutrition Scholars, ay nagbigay ng series of trainings at mga film-showing, upang magkaroon sila ng kaalaman at impormasyon ukol sa iba't ibang aspeto ng buhay. Natuto din sila ng mga life skills. Nagkaroon sila ng self-awareness...namulat ang mga isip nila na sila ay mga importante at mahalagang personalidad sa kanilang lipunan at sa kanilang pamilya. Nagkaroon sila ng pagkakataon na matuto kung papaano makipag-communicate at sila ay naging mga lider sa kanilang mga barangay.*

*Ang ibang trained mothers ay naging mga Volunteer Peer Advocates at nagbibigay din ng mga seminars at trainings sa tulad nilang mga teenage mother. Natuto din sila magkaroon ng interpersonal relationships - kung paano makikitungo, makikisama sa kanilang kapwa, asawa, magulang, in-laws, at mga taong nakapaligid sa kanila. Natuto din sila na magkaroon ng empathy – yung kanilang pakikidamay sa mga kapwa nilang teenage mothers na kung saan dumadanas din ng mga problemang dating dinanas nila.*

*Nagkaroon sila ng support group.. Nag-create sila ng isang group chat na kung saan sila ay mayroong komunikasyon. Nakapagsulat sila ng mga hinaing at problema nila, at nabibigyan ng payo o solusyon ng kanilang kapwa teenage mothers.*

## **II. LESSONS / INSIGHTS FROM PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**

1. All project activities are supported with documentation such as baseline study, training documentation, videos, pictures, case narratives, lessons learned and insights. YKBI regularly conducts post evaluation sessions and TPPTF meetings where everyone can share experiences and observations about the project.
2. During the conduct of baseline study and ASRH sessions, it was observed from the home visitations that most of the parents of teenage mothers do not give importance on protecting their girl children against possible abuse and violence. They just let them live with their partners without considering the possible violence and abuse their daughters could experience, or another pregnancy. They see early pregnancy as a norm in the community.
3. Barangay health workers and teenage mothers encountered difficulties and challenges when engaging and mobilizing the teenage mothers. Due to their situation, their time is very limited since they are taking care of their children since most of them are living separately from their parents and relatives. Household chores were prioritized over attending project activities.

Because of this, ASRH education and girl and women's rights advocacy were re-designed to include the parents and elders in the community to increase their awareness on ASRH and realize their role in and the value of protecting their children. It was also agreed among the teenage mothers that the venue of the activities will be their "tambayan" (house of a teenage mother that is closer and more accessible to other teenage mothers). To address attendance, VPAs and delegated Teenage Mother Officers per barangay maximized the use of social media to mobilize the participants. Integration of livelihood activities was also a strategy to encourage teenage mothers to attend sessions.

4. To help achieve the objective of lessening the cases of teenage pregnancies and violence against women, the project also targeted the teenage mother's partners, being the most possible perpetrator of abuses against them. Educating the men on ASRH will help them realize the consequences of additional pregnancies. Also, to realize their equal responsibilities and duties as the child's caregiver through Responsible Parenthood session

will help ease the stress experienced by the teenage mothers. And understanding the rights of women can help them stop themselves from harming their partners.

5. Include and involve family members on teenage pregnancy prevention and supporting teenage mothers, since family, particularly the parents, play a crucial role in this aspect. The baseline study shows that the top reasons for teenage pregnancy are the parents' lack of knowledge on ASRH, teaching it correctly to their children, and lack of proper communication and guidance. This is aggravated by the existing norms of just letting their impregnated children live with the male partners without considering the more complicated consequences and possible abuses their children may experience. If the family understands the importance of this advocacy and project, they will better understand the situation of the child and thereby be able to provide correct information, even in the midst of bad peer influence. The parents could also give more support to teenage mothers to encourage them to continue with their studies.



**CRISTINA SAN ANDRES**

Volunteer Peer Advocate (VPA)

*Nagsimula ang pakikipag-ugnayan ng mga teenage mothers sa pamamagitan ng isinagawang home visitation ng YKBI Officers kasama ang mga BNS o Barangay Nutrition Scholars. Inanyayahan nila na makiisa ang bawat batang ina sa isang pagsasanay na nakatulong upang madagdagan ang mga kaalaman sa pagiging responsableng magulang.*

*Lubos ding nakahikayat ang kanilang pagtitiyaga, pagsisikap at buong pusong pagmamalasakit na tulungan kaming mga teenage mothers. Nakatulong din ang pagbibigay nila ng sapat na seguridad sa mga anak ng mga batang ina habang sila ay nakikinig at nakikilahok sa mga aktibidades.*

*Sapul simula ng training ay ipinakilala nila ang YAKAP at ipinaliwanag nila ang layunin ng nasabing organisasyon na tulungan ang mga batang ina na maagang naharap sa mabigat na responsibilidad. Naglalayon din ito na turuan at akayin ang bawat batang ina upang walang maiwan sa pagbangon ng sa gayon ay maipagpatuloy ang pagkakaroon ng malawak na pananaw para sa sarili at maging sa pamilya. Dahil dito, nabuo ang pakikisalamuha ng bawat participant sa kapwa nila teenage mothers gayundin sa mga facilitators sapagkat mas nakilala nila ang bawat isa. Nagsilbing ligtas na espasyo ang bawat isa upang lubos na maipahayag at mailahad ang buong sarili.*

*Naramdaman namin ang masarap na pagtanggap, pagiging komportable at pagpapahalaga hindi lamang bilang mga batang ina kundi bilang indibidwal.*

6. The community-based sessions in the barangays are an opportunity and safe space for teenage mothers to share experiences and problems encountered as mothers and children in their families. Personal issues pertaining to relationships with their parents and partners were aired out to their co-teenage mothers. This helped establish friendships and camaraderie among the teenage mothers, gaining emotional and physical support from one another. There was sharing of personal advice, children's clothes, and even breast milk, as well as providing assistance and support before, during and after child delivery.

### **III. ALLIANCES, PARTNERSHIPS**

Partnerships were successfully formalized and strengthened through the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement with the city government of San Pablo.

The formation of the Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Task Force (TPPTF) facilitates the technology and consolidated services for easier access of the youth and/or teenage mothers.

After YKBI raised the concerns of teenage pregnancy and teenage mothers to the Provincial Council, both Provincial and Regional Councils have placed teenage pregnancy at the top of their list on issues for children and youth. The Regional Sub-Committee for the Welfare of Children (RSCWC) through

the Regional Health Office, pushed to establish Teen Health Kiosks to provide the youth with more access to ASRH information.



Various government and non-government partner-agencies / organizations are now supporting the project, not just to address concerns on the health, education, capacity-building, livelihood skills, technical skills, women and child protection, or policy advocacy, but also on the spiritual aspect where counseling and spiritual and values formation are provided.

The Provincial Council of Laguna will include a teenage pregnancy symposium during the November celebration of Children's Month at the Provincial Children's Forum and invite VPAs as speakers / facilitators.

#### **IV. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY**

The framework for the Organizational Capacity Assessment of YKBI covers six components: Vision, Mission, and Goals (VMG); Governance; Administration/Service Delivery; Program Management; Financial Management; and Partnering and Networking.

At the core of the six components is the YKBI's capability to continue and expand its programs and services for a longer period or up to the time that it is still needed. The existence of basic organizational systems and management processes and the capability of the Board, management and staff to use and implement the systems and processes, develop and institute appropriate policies, and follow them are key factors for ensuring the sustainability of an organization.

- *Vision, Mission and Goals* – gives directions and defines commitment to social change.
- *Governance* – over-all leadership in the organization.
- *Program management* – examines the processes followed by the organization in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluating organizational plans and projects.
- *Financial management* – examines systems and processes that help concerned people to be informed, transparent, be good stewards of the organization's resources, and be accountable for the financial decisions, including budgeting, accounting and auditing.
- *Administration* – looks for authorities, responsibilities, accountabilities, as well as processes of knowledge management or how information is generated, shared and used.

#### **Vision, Mission, and Goals (VMG)**

YKBI has a written VMG which are shared with all its stakeholders. There are clear written goals from 2017 to 2022 which formed part of their strategic and sustainability plans.

#### **Governance**

YKBI is a well-governed organization with five Board of Trustees (BOT) composed of sponsored children who are now professionals. Only one parent leader was left as a BOT. The governance and management of YKBI are distinct and separate organizational functions, ensuring check and balance in its operations.



The Board members are involved in the organization's policy formulation. They are not part of direct program implementation. Their qualifications and expertise are consistent with the agreed policy of the organization. And the organizational climate at YKBI encourages open exchange of ideas and harnesses efforts towards consensus building, participative decision-making, and subsidiarity. Implementers are provided with opportunities to be responsible and accountable for their decisions and actions for as long as they are not in conflict with YKBI's mandate and policies.

### **Program Management and Administration**

1. Administration of day-to-day activities is based on organizational design defined in terms of its systems, structures, and distribution of tasks and functions to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.
2. Clear personnel policies and procedures and annual staff development programs are implemented among the staff or together the BOT and beneficiaries.
3. Follows basic labor laws of the Philippines.
4. Has a written manual of operations with separate written documents on Child Protection Policy, an Organizational Chart, signed service contracts of staff with attached Terms of References (TOR). Attendance and office hours are monitored through monthly activity plans and corresponding monthly accomplishment report to the federation manager since most of the staff are community-based.
5. Practices planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of its projects. All projects have design / scheme, implementation timetable, and corresponding budget.
6. The planning process includes baseline data collection, formulation of short and long term objectives per program with key result areas (KRA) and interventions, and program of activities.
7. The results of previous assessments and performance outputs are utilized as references for planning. Program review and planning workshop with hired technical consultants are done regularly.
8. Programs and activities are carried out as planned, and some mechanisms/support programs are conceptualized and implemented from time to time to respond to emerging needs and concerns.
9. Proven flexibility in responding to changes in the environment and during times of crisis, where the organization realigns to provide needed support. An example is during typhoons or the COVID-19 pandemic where the organization provided support to its staff and rights holders through the provision of relief goods, online mentoring, and housing materials.
10. YKBI institutionalized its monitoring and evaluation system by hiring a dedicated M&E officer. The data bank on the beneficiaries and projects has also been established.
11. Regular staff and BOT meetings are held to ensure program alignment.

### **Financial Management**

1. Consistently monitors the annual work plan and budget of the association.
2. Maintains a general ledger, journal, cash receipt and cash disbursement books.
3. The books of accounts and official receipts are registered with the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR).
4. Maintains separate bank accounts for internal funds and grant funds.
5. Check disbursements are supported by pre-numbered check vouchers and follow proper internal control systems.
6. The Approving Officer for disbursements is different from the full-time Bookkeeper who keeps the financial books and prepares regular financial reports. There is an Administrative Cashier

who accepts and releases / deposits and withdraws funds to/from the banks. The treasurer and cashier regularly coordinate with one another on all cash transactions of the organization.

7. Support documents of financial transactions are properly maintained for audit. An annual audit is done by an independent external certified public accountant (CPA) registered with the SEC, BIR, PRC.
8. Written policies and procedures that adhere to the generally accepted principles of accounting and internal control is kept by the bookkeeper.

#### **IV. YKBI STRATEGIC SUSTAINABILITY PLAN**

1. Previous sponsored children / youth who are now adults can become full-pledged members of YKBI.
2. The parent associations have decreasing members, providing opportunities for reviving their memberships (registering committed members and formally delisting non-interested ones).
3. YKBI is no longer limited to just one partner but can now reach out and partner with other organizations.
4. Parents and Youth Associations can formally dissolve the registered organizations that were unable to comply with updating requirements. This means no more penalties or problems related to annual renewal and payments).
5. The remaining resources and assets of formally dissolved parents and children associations can be donated to YKBI since individuals cannot own or liquidate any association's asset. YKBI will have a healthy financial statement.
6. Parents and youth associations will be preserved in clusters in the new YKBI. What were started must be continued.
7. Child rights protection and gender equality are still on-going issues and concerns in the communities where YKBI operates.
8. Strengthen the capability of the new YKBI and its clusters.
9. Build fund / resources for child protection and gender equality programs and services.
10. Participate in policy advocacy, lobbying and representation for child protection and gender equality.
11. Develop and implement programs and services for members and communities.





YAKAP SA KAUNLARAN NG BATA INC.  
VOICE GLOBAL - PHILIPPINES  
CITY GOVERNMENT OF SAN PABLO

**STRENGTHENING ADVOCACY AND YOUTH-LED ACTION ON THE  
PREVENTION OF ADOLESCENCE PREGNANCY**

**“I AM A GIRL AND WOMEN’S RIGHT ADVOCATE”**