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In April of this year, Japan's first comprehensive children's rights law※ was enforced and the Children and Families Agency was established. This time, with the theme of "Children and Gender", we deliver articles on organizations that support children around the world.

In February 2023, KFAW held the 35th KFAW Research Report Meeting. The contents of that meeting are also posted.

※Quoted from Ms. Nakajima's article, page7.

Overcoming adversity: Street youth of Metro Manila receive vocational-technical training certificates, pave the way for a brighter future

- Dr. Herbert Q Carpio,
Executive Director of Childhope Philippines Foundation, Inc.

Children and youth in street situations are among the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in the Philippines. They face numerous challenges, including lack of access to basic needs such as food, shelter, healthcare, exposure to various

forms of abuse and exploitation, limited access to education and opportunities for personal development, and social stigma and discrimination.

Additionally, these children and youth are also struggling with mental health, bullying, and teen pregnancy, among others. These problems cause much difficulty for our children and youth to live their lives to the fullest and fulfil their roles for the betterment of our country. It is due to these circumstances that an NGO for youth in the Philippines is needed more than ever.

Childhope Philippines Foundation, a non-governmental organization, has been working to address the needs and issues of children in street situations for over 30 years. Their Street Education and Protection Program aim to provide these children with the support and resources they need to build better lives for themselves.

Through education and skills training programs, Childhope Philippines helps children in street situations acquire the knowledge and skills they need to break the cycle of poverty and improve their future prospects. Health and nutrition services are also provided to ensure that these children have access to essential healthcare services and proper nutrition. Childhope Philippines also provides protection and legal assistance to children in street situations, including those who have been victims of abuse or exploitation. Their advocacy and community mobilization efforts work to raise awareness about the issues faced by these children and to promote greater support for their needs.

Overcoming youth adversity through vocational and technical education.

It is essential that more attention and support be given to addressing the issues faced by children

in street situations in the Philippines. Childhope Philippines is doing vital work to support these children and youth, and provides them with the resources they need to build better lives. However, more needs to be done to ensure that all children and youth in street situations are given the support and opportunities they need to thrive.

Childhope Philippines takes pride in one of our successful and ongoing programs, the Project Bamboo, which is a collaborative effort with the Asian Community Center (ACC21). This program aims to inspire and motivate out-of-school youth to think innovatively and take a creative approach in addressing their economic needs. It also aims to teach the youth vocational and technical skills such as food and beverage management, barista, massage therapy, cosmetology or hair-cutting, and baking. Aside from alternative education and service skills, Project Bamboo also provides livelihood trainings for youth participants in business concepts that they can choose to start on their own. Among these include T-shirt printing, food processing, perfumery, and preparation of household items such as dishwashing liquids, fabric detergents and conditioners, hand sanitizers, and disinfectant liquids.



Last March 31, 2023, Childhope Philippines Foundation and ACC21 have successfully produced a new batch of street youth graduates under Project Bamboo. Fifteen (15) youths who were once unschooled have undergone months of several vocational-technical trainings, making them certified Food and Beverage and Barista specialists ready for work.



According to Mr. Melchor Amante, the Project Officer of Project Bamboo, these youths may have missed out on schooling, but they found hope in vocational-technical education through this joint project with ACC21.

One of the highlights of the event was the showcasing of the success story of a former participant, Almira Mae Cuvera. In 2019, Almira completed the Food and Beverage course and was able to apply the knowledge gained to continue pursuing a degree in Hospitality Management at STI Manila. She currently works at a popular convenience store in the country while continuing her studies. In addition to celebrating the newly graduated students, this was another noteworthy aspect of the event.

And to cap off the event, Mr. Armavin Balza, Childhope's Program Manager for Street Education and Protection, expressed his genuine gratitude to the graduates for selecting the program as their second home. He stressed the

significance of taking the valuable lessons and good values that the organization had instilled in them with them. Additionally, he reminded the graduates that even if they had skipped the entire schooling process, they could still achieve their desired jobs through Project Bamboo.

A glimpse of hope: Genesis forges a path to a promising future.

Genesis Anne Rose Chido, a current Grade 12 student, had a happy childhood with her parents and siblings, despite their small source of livelihood from selling on the streets. They provided for her needs and instilled good values in her. However, her life took a turn when her father passed away. Due to familial dysfunction, she departed from her home and opted to reside on the streets of Manila alongside other children. Eventually, Genesis became a regular beneficiary of Childhope Philippines. She was granted a scholarship for two years but was later terminated due to non-compliance of organization's policy. She faced more challenges when she became pregnant and was abandoned by her partner. Nevertheless, she remained determined and continued her studies with the support of Childhope Philippines through the Alternative Learning System (ALS). Driven by her eagerness to learn, Genesis participated in Project Bamboo and completed a course on Food and Beverage Management skills.

Genesis acknowledges that joining Project Bamboo was a challenging decision to make, as she was studying and raising a child simultaneously. However, she did not let these circumstances become obstacles, but instead used them as a source of motivation.

"My current aspiration is to complete my education and secure a promising career, which will not only benefit my son but also my family. In addition, given the opportunity, I aim to establish a small business as a stepping stone towards my goals." stated Genesis.

Support Childhope's Advocacy as an NGO for youth in the Philippines

The future of the Philippines can be bright through the empowerment of our youth. As an NGO for youth in the Philippines, Childhope Philippines are striving to continuously run and create programs and activities that will motivate and teach our youth on how to be greater. You can help too! Donate today and help us empower the Filipino street children and youth to make our country a better place.

[About Childhope Philippines]

Childhope Philippines Foundation, Inc. works to promote the welfare, uphold, and protect children's rights, particularly children in street situations by providing education and healthcare, as well as psychosocial care and vocational skills. Childhope Philippines traces its history back when Childhope International was founded in 1986. Individuals from children's agencies saw the need to address the plight of children needing protection, especially those living in the streets. In 1989, a regional office for Asia was established in Manila after the First Regional

Conference of Street Children in Asia. This forum facilitated networking and collaboration among agencies working for street children in the Asian region. In 1995, Childhope Asia Philippines, Inc. was registered under the Securities and Exchange Commission. Childhope changes its name to Childhope Philippines Foundation, Inc. in 2013. It is registered, licensed, and accredited by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and the Philippine Council for NGO Certification (PCNC).

[Profile of Dr. Herbert Q. Carpio]

He is Executive Director for Childhope Philippines Foundation, Inc., a non-government organization pioneering in street education for disadvantaged children. He has been with Childhope for over 16 years, with previous stints as Program Coordinator for Health and Medical Services and Physician. Harvey supervises Childhope's over-all operations with enthusiasm to advocate for the cause of street children. Besides implementation of programs and policies, he is also involved in advocacy and networking initiatives, particularly with local government units, academic institutions, public and private organizations who are stakeholders, working towards the realization and protection of rights of street children in health, education and social welfare. He obtained a Diploma in Global Health from the University of Tampere in Finland in 2009, and a Doctor of Medicine from the University of the Philippines College of Medicine in 2006.



For a Society Where Every Child Believes Changing the World Better is Possible

Report on Change Makers Fes2023

- NAKAJIMA Sanae,
Chair of the Board, Free The Children Japan

Free The Children (FTC¹) was founded in 1995 by a 12-year-old Canadian boy named Craig Kielburger. Its goal is freeing children from poverty and exploitation. Free The Children Japan (FTCJ) was established in 1999, proudly supporting FTC's unique philosophy: Children are more than just people to be saved; they are agents of positive social change. Since then, the FTCJ has operated international cooperation programs in India, the Philippines, Kenya, and other countries, while encouraging young people in Japan to make a difference, and has learned from FTC's various forms of leadership training programs for young people, localized them for Japan and supported child-led and centered activities.



Camp style leadership training for children
“Take Action Camp”



Conveying the current situation of schools and communities and making proposals to Minister Ogura, who is in charge of the Children and Families Agency.

The FTC held "WE Day" in Toronto in 2007, an event to celebrate the impact young people had made on local and global issues, to encourage them to continue being changemakers and participate in community service and international cooperation activities. Since then, the event has been held in more locations every year and has grown into a major movement with 250,000 taking part in 15 cities including New York, London, and Vancouver in 2019.

Every time I have personally participated in WE Day events, 20,000 elementary, middle, and high

¹ Free The Children changed its organizational name to WE Charity in Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom in July 2016.

school students who worked on social issues gathered in the stadium to an overwhelmingly enthusiastic atmosphere. Actors, singers, athletes, activists, politicians, and other celebrities came to empower the young people and to give speeches on many topics from climate change and poverty to conflict and discrimination. I was fascinated by the program, which was designed to educate children about various social issues. They left the venue excitedly saying, "I was encouraged, and I want to continue to take action!"

When FTC conducted an awareness survey of participants and non-participants to evaluate the impact of the WE Day project over a 10-year period, we found that the childhood experience of civic engagement made them realize that they could make a difference through their own actions, and that the wellbeing of children who joined in community service improved. The study also found that they were also 16% more likely to vote in elections than those who did not join.

Meanwhile, according to the "Survey Report on Attitudes toward Social Participation of High School Students: Comparison of Japan, the United States, China, and South Korea (2021)" by the National Institution for Youth Education, about 80% of Japanese high school students think that social issues are relevant to their lives, yet 64.6% believe that "society will not change even if I participate," which is more than double the percentage in the other three countries. In addition, a survey by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare announced that the number of elementary, junior high and high school students who took their own lives during 2022, was 514, the largest number ever.

According to Dr. Igarashi, President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Center for Child Health and Development, "The low level of wellbeing of children in Japan is the result of decisions made by adults for their own convenience without listening to the voices of children." We at the FTCJ believe that in order to protect their lives and realize their rights and happiness, it is essential for children in Japan to be able to speak up and to transform the country into a society that listens to their concerns. We believe that Japan is in need of the WE Day event which empowers children to create a better world by taking action themselves. Thus, the name of the event was changed to "Change Makers Fes" as the Japanese version, we co-hosted it with the Nippon Foundation at Tokyo Dome City Hall on March 28, 2023.

We invited participants to take part in the event on two conditions: they had to be 25 years old or younger, and they had to report having taken some kind of action contributing to the Global Goals (SDGs). We received very unique activity reports from over 6,000 participants. For example, junior high school students in Saitama City thought that bullying and abuse of children sometimes went unchecked because many of them were unaware of their rights. They suggested to the superintendent of schools that the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* be included in their student handbooks. Their idea was implemented by the city starting this April. One elementary school student made and sold shaved ice and donated the proceeds to a foster home. Junior high school students who love the ocean wanted to do something about the ocean plastic waste problem, so they organized beach cleanup activities and made posters to raise awareness. One group of elementary and junior

high school students made a presentation for the local school board to convince them to replace the plastic straws in school lunches with paper straws. A college student traveled to Poland to help Ukrainian refugees of the Russian invasion, and a high school student made a video to help end the war. I was very encouraged by the reports of the wide variety of actions taken by these young people thinking about the community and the Earth. We are currently compiling their stories into a "Social Action Report" and will upload it to the FTCJ web page as soon as it is completed.

On the day of the event, about 1,200 young people gathered at the venue and 300 joined us online. A total of over 30 performers including ambassadors for the event, Anna Tsuchiya, Sumire, and Chihiro Watanabe (a visually impaired singer-songwriter), bands, models, DJs, actors, comedians, influencers, YouTubers, and activists joined the event to celebrate the impact young people had made on local and global issues and said, "Your actions are changing the world for the better. Thank you!" The stage was an unprecedented combination of speeches on environmental issues, human rights, peace and diversity, as well as visual and musical entertainment. Since the event was held just before April 1, when Japan's first comprehensive children's rights law came into effect and the Children and Families Agency was to be inaugurated, we received a message from Masanobu Ogura, Minister of Policies Related to Children and Parliamentary Secretary Nanako Jimi to mark the occasion, and hosted a talk show with Naoki Ogi (aka Ogi Mama) and some children on the topic of "Making Children's Voices Heard in Society".



aka Ogi Mama and Suzuki siblings



The finale

Finally, let me share a quote from the video message sent to us by Craig, the founder of the FTC, now 40 years old. "Today I want to congratulate you and your work. When you see injustice, whether at your home or around the world, when you see the need to act, and when someone stands up for what they believe in, I want to wish you all the best to be a changemaker, to keep being idealistic, and to keep moving to create a positive impact in the world. Because together we can change the world."

[About Free The Children Japan]

Free The Children Japan (FTCJ) is a NPO that started its activities in Japan in 1999 in support of the philosophy of Free The Children, founded in 1995 by a 12-year-old Canadian boy, Craig Kielburger, to free children from poverty, that "children are not just people to be helped, they are agents of change. "FTCJ is empowering children and youth in Japan to become changemakers who can tackle social issues, in parallel with its international cooperation activities in the Philippines, India, Kenya, and other countries.

[Profile of Ms. Nakajima]

In 1997, while interning at an NGO in the U.S., Nakajima learned about Free The Children and, resonating with its philosophy, founded Free The Children Japan in 1999 after returning to Japan. Since then, she has been involved in the organization's activities. Published books include "Challenge! Kids Speech" (Otsuki Shoten). In 2007, she earned the "Youth Leadership Award" from Soroptimist International and became a member of the Niigata City Committee for the Promotion of Children's Rights in July 2022.



Experiences of women with disabilities in Bangladesh during the COVID-19 pandemic

- KANAZAWA Mami,
2021/22 KFAW Visiting Researcher

As a visiting researcher at KFAW 2021/22, I investigated the impact of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) on the daily lives of women with disabilities in Bangladesh. This is a brief report of that investigation.

In recent years, seeing made-in-Bangladesh clothing in fast fashion stores, such as UNIQLO, has become common. Bangladesh, which once experienced dire poverty, is now known worldwide for its remarkable economic development in recent years owing to the garment industry. This economic development has changed the lives of Bangladeshi citizens significantly. However, people with disabilities, who account for 1.4% of the country's total population (Census 2022), continue to be

marginalized, and they have not benefitted from the recent economic development.

"Disability is not a sin, not a curse let us wipe out the wrong concept." These words are posted on the top page of the Disability Information System on the government website. People with disabilities continue to face many disadvantages in various aspects, including daily life, education, employment, and marriage, owing to prejudice and discrimination from their families and communities. The disadvantages are even greater for women with disabilities who face intersectional and multiple discriminations not only because they are women but also because they have a disability.



Woman with disabilities weaving a carpet

During COVID-19, people with disabilities faced several challenges, including economic impacts such as unemployment, exclusion from emergency support by governments and NGOs, and difficulty accessing information about COVID-19 prevention. Women without disabilities also faced difficulties such as economic impacts, the risk of domestic violence, and increasing unpaid care work in the household. Women with disabilities faced not only the challenges mentioned above, but also the following:

First, many of these women who worked as tailors, domestic workers, and so on lost their jobs due to the pandemic. Their impairments and gender made it difficult for them to get other jobs. This led to a significant increase in the number of extremely poor households with women with disabilities. Second, one of the venues where COVID-19 vaccination was being administered was located on the second floor of a building without an elevator. This prevented a wheelchair-bound woman from entering the venue, and she had to be vaccinated on the street. During vaccination, she was told to take off her clothes and expose her shoulders, even though she was on the street. This was not possible for her as a

Muslim woman because she could not show her skin in public. Therefore, she covered herself with her shawl and unstitched her clothes to receive the vaccine. Finally, excretion was a significant problem among women with disabilities during the pandemic due to the increase in public interest in water and sanitation to prevent the spread of infection. This problem was most prominent in rural areas of Bangladesh where toilets and tube wells are located outside the house. To use the toilet, a woman must first go to the tube well and pump water, which she can take to the toilet. If she finds it difficult to pump water and take it to the toilet by herself because of her impairment, she must ask someone for help every time she goes to the toilet. Importantly, young women with disabilities find it embarrassing to ask others, including family members, for help. Furthermore, the family member from whom she seeks help might be occupied, requiring her to resist going to the toilet. In this regard, one woman shared that when the pandemic forced her to stay at home, she withheld water and food so that she would not have to go to the toilet as often. Men with disabilities also faced problems related to water and sanitation problems. However, in their case, they and their family members believed that their family was supposed to take care of males, so they received the care they required. The three instances discussed above highlight the intersectional disadvantages that women with disabilities face both as women and as people with disabilities. At the same time, some women with disabilities who are members of organizations for women with disabilities received information about COVID-19 and emergency relief supplies through their organization. They shared this information and

the emergency relief supplies with their family and neighbors. Through this exchange, their relationship with their family and neighbors changed, and they were accepted in the family and community.

Thus, the investigation revealed two important

points about women with disabilities. One, they faced difficulties as people with disabilities, as women, and as women with disabilities. Two, women with disabilities who were marginalized by their families and communities could restore their dignity when they belonged to related organizations.



Thank you for reading. Any comments and suggestions are welcome.

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