

The Dumaguete Centre in the Philippines provides access to University Education for disadvantaged students

The Need

With a poverty incidence of 21.6%¹, the Philippines has the **most persistent poverty in South-East Asia**². Around a third of Filipinos survive through farming or fishing, industries in which productivity has lagged badly. “Educational expenses” is one of the top reasons why **1 in every 10 Filipinos aged between 6 and 24 years is an out-of-school child/youth**. This rate reaches 20% for the youth aged between 16-24 years in the poorest regions³. Dumaguete is a small coastal and university town located in the centre of the country. It is the capital of Negros Oriental - one of the poorest provinces with a **poverty incidence above 40%**¹. Young people come either from the countryside or isolated mountains of the islands of Negros, Panay, Siquijor or South Cebu to study here.

Our Programme and Education Centre

Our presence in Dumaguete started with a Sponsorship Programme in May 2009. We opened an Education Centre in November 2011. The centre provides students: 1) better chances to access the best Universities’ programs 2) a stable life environment and studying framework, to allow them to reach their full potential in their studies 3) a holistic life skills program to encourage intellectual, moral and emotional growth.

The centre currently hosts 27 students from disadvantaged backgrounds: 8 of them are in the 2nd Year, 10 are 3rd Year students and 9 students from 4th Year live independently in 2 residences. There are currently no 1st year students due to the recent K-12 school system reform. But we expect to take in new 1st year students this academic year.

Throughout their education, the students of the centre are followed and accompanied by a supervising team: an overseas volunteer ‘Bamboo’, a social worker and a caretaker. Together, they ensure the personal development of each young person in our care.

Concept: 4 main goals for our students



- 1) To **acquire a superior level of academic skills**: We set the bar high. Students are expected to score an average grade of minimum 80 percent each semester.
- 2) To **develop self-awareness and self-confidence**: They take part in team sports activities at least once a month. Qualified speakers provide sex and relationship education 3 hours/year. They also receive training on employment-related skills such as writing CVs and cover letters, facing interviews.
- 3) To **develop their world view**: The students have access to a daily national newspaper called *The Daily Inquirer* as well as to a library with over 100 books and bi-monthly lessons/presentations on general knowledge and culture. Our local team also chooses a movie for them every week.
- 4) To **become responsible and generous adults**: The students in-turn give classes to disadvantaged children every second Saturday. 4th Year students are in charge of organizing weekend activities for the other students twice a year.

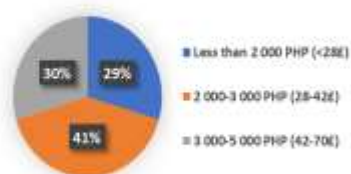


¹ Philippines Statistics Authority, Official Poverty Statistics of the Philippines, 1st semester, 2015

² The Economist, Youth and Sport, *The Philippines has the most persistent poverty in South-East Asia*, Nov 25, 2017

³ Philippines Statistics Authority, Out-of-School Children and Youth in the Philippines, April 20, 2015

Monthly Income of the Family

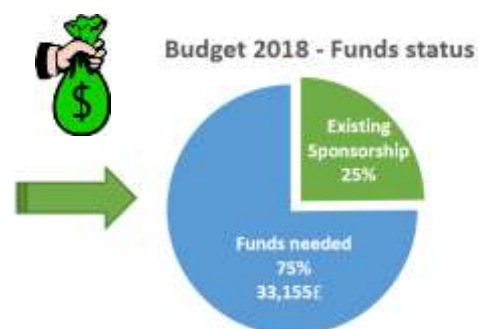


The Philippine economy is booming. In 2017, the GDP increased by 6.7 percent and is projected to continue to grow by more than 6 percent annually in 2018 and 2019.⁴ Although the government has recently made education at state universities and colleges tuition-free, the move will primarily benefit wealthier students since only 12 percent of students at state institutions come from low-income households.⁵ **The Dumaguete Education Centre therefore plays a critical role in improving access to higher education to break the cycle of poverty.** The students study in fields as varied as engineering, finance, accounting, human resources,

psychology, social, education, etc. Thanks to this opportunity, they have the means to make some of their dreams come true. Many dream of becoming recognized professionals who can in turn help their families. Your support to the Dumaguete Education Centre would be highly appreciated.

Budget required for running the centre - 2018

Children of the Mekong - Dumaguete Education Center / Budget 2018		
1 PHP = 0.01418 GBP	PHP	GBP
Education center	540,466	7,664
Students Housing	1,191,380	16,894
Schooling	496,783	7,044
Social services	522,066	7,403
Admin costs	10,000	142
Total	2,760,695	39,147
Existing funded sponsorship CoM	(773,300)	(10,965)
Gross to fund	1,987,395	28,181
CoM fundraising costs - 9%	210,430	2,984
CoM operating costs - 6%	140,305	1,990
TOTAL TO FUND	2,338,130	33,155



About us

Children of the Mekong works with local communities to **improve access and quality of education in Southeast Asia**. It is a registered charity with the UK Charity Commission (No.1116375), and the UK branch of “Enfants du Mekong”, a leading French organisation founded in 1958.

Children of the Mekong’s education programmes have four aims:

1. To create the **right environment for learning** through programmes such as the construction of schools and accommodation for pupils, specialised support (HIV, disabilities), nutrition and healthcare.
2. To provide **access to education** through our child sponsorship programmes.
3. To **shape well-rounded individuals** by giving them access to secondary education, university, vocational training and self-development programmes in our education centres.
4. To foster **responsible involvement in society** of the children we care for through professional development and assimilation training and services to the community.

Our latest annual account can be viewed at <https://www.childrenofthemekong.org/who-we-are/financial-transparency/>

⁴ <https://wenr.wes.org/2018/03/education-in-the-philippines>
⁵ *ibid*