



Lives Changed Communities Transformed

Bohol, Philippines

Background

Bohol is an island province in Central Visayas, Philippines. Located along a fault line, Bohol is highly vulnerable to tsunamis and earthquakes. In 2013, the community experienced a 7.2-magnitude earthquake, which affected more than 3 million people and destroyed at least 367,760 homes.

In the past, almost half of the population in Bohol lived below the poverty line. Families suffered from debilitating poverty and did not have proper housing to live in. It was common for children to be found in squatter settlements located along flood-prone riversides, where they risked losing their homes to flooding. Families struggled to provide for their children's food, education and medical needs. Children were malnourished and deprived of educational opportunities. Many had to drop out of school to find manual work to help earn money for their family. Low levels of education significantly affected their ability to break the cycle of poverty.

BOHOL AREA DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (ADP)

TOTAL POPULATION: 153,493

NUMBER OF FAMILIES: 63,453

Women: 47,963

Girls: 30,783

Men: 42,077

Boys: 32,670

ADP start date: 2000

ADP end date: 2018

How the Journey Began

To improve the well-being of children and families in the community, Bohol ADP was started in 2000. Key development interventions focused on economic livelihood, education, community capacity building, child protection and participation, as well as health and nutrition.

World Vision had planned to phase out of Bohol ADP in 2015. But when an earthquake struck in 2013, the programme was extended to support long term recovery efforts as well as rehabilitation and rebuilding work in Bohol ADP. This included improving the community's resilience to disasters and building sustainable sources of income for families. World Vision's efforts in fostering strong partnerships with the government and other local organisations to support the community's development were highly regarded, and we were awarded 'Outstanding Civil Society Organization' by the Provincial Government in Philippines in 2013.



Celebrating the opening of schools in Bohol after the earthquake

Education

As families struggled to make ends meet, children could not go to school and were instead encouraged to work to support their families. Parents did not recognise the role they played in ensuring that their children received quality education. Children who were unable to juggle between work and school performed badly in their studies and ended up dropping out of school.

In addition, many households were unable to afford college education fees and it was impossible for high school graduates to even enrol in college. School buildings and education materials were also old and in poor condition. Furthermore, the earthquake in 2013 destroyed many school buildings and greatly affected school attendance.



“Being one of the older children among my 11 other siblings, to support my father’s income of only S\$10 a day, I had to work and study at the same time. It was difficult to focus on my studies.”

– Apolinario, a student who eventually managed to graduate from high school

Interventions to increase the level of education in Bohol ADP included



15 classrooms
reconstructed after
the earthquake



24 schools
provided with learning
materials & equipment



**150 deserving
students**
given scholarships for
college or vocational
education

To ensure that the progress made will be lasting, workshops on responsible parenthood were conducted to help parents recognise the importance of education and be able to guide their children in their homework.

As a result of these interventions, the school dropout rate has reduced significantly and **95% of the children assisted were eventually able to successfully pass their grade levels in school.** The opportunity to move on to higher education and attend college increased the employability of children and enabled them to better supplement their families’ incomes upon graduation, helping the community to become financially independent.



Economic Livelihood & Food Security

Limited employment opportunities, low agricultural productivity and poor access to market information for farmers prevented many families from earning a regular income in Bohol. Unable to afford proper housing, many were forced to set up illegal squatter settlements in danger zones that were vulnerable to disasters. Households also did not have savings and thus often did not have enough to tide through emergencies.

“I didn’t have a proper source of income and couldn’t support my family. Despite trying to start a livestock business twice, I failed. Something was wrong.

With the skills we picked up at World Vision’s economic livelihood training, we managed to multiply the 20 chickens given to us to more than 100! Now, my family enjoys a stable income and I can afford my children’s school expenses.”

– Romie, 45 years old, a full-time pastor and farmer (below)



Interventions to strengthen economic livelihoods of families included



3,153 farmers

trained in sustainable agriculture and given farming tools and equipment

To increase yield, agricultural productivity and access to markets, farmers were formed into producer groups. There, they were trained to analyse markets, gain information and build relationships with buyers that will help them to increase profits. With improved yield and increased access to markets, farmers are now able to earn a higher income from growing vegetables, rice, ginger and more!



2,773 unemployed people

taught skills in carpentry, construction work, sewing, weaving and cooking



1,371 people involved in community savings groups

With opportunities to pick up employable skills, people who were previously unemployed were able to find jobs.

Community Managed Savings and Credit Associations (CoMSCA) were also formed to give people greater access to savings and credit loan services. Financial literacy and entrepreneurial skills training were provided through these groups too.

Households are now able to start small businesses, which enable them to earn higher income. Parents now have sufficient savings to provide for their children’s education and emergency needs.

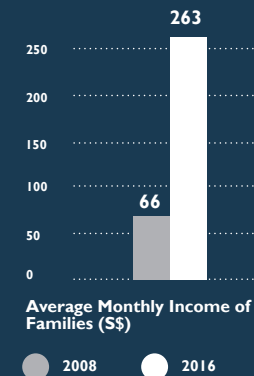
World Vision also helped to acquire necessary permits from the local government and constructed proper housing units in new and safer locations. This improved the living environments and prevented forced evictions.

As a result of these interventions,



Percentage of families living below the poverty line decreased by 40%!

Family incomes have increased more than threefold



Average Monthly Income of Families (S\$)

● 2008 ● 2016

Health and Nutrition

With families unable to meet the basic needs of their children, malnutrition was common in Bohol. **In the past, 19% of children under 5 were underweight or severely underweight.** Access to proper health services were limited, resulting in water-borne diseases among children.

To improve the community's access to health services, World Vision conducted free clinics in the community and provided medical assistance as well as vitamin supplies to those who needed it. Health centres were also expanded. To improve hygiene and sanitation standards, water systems were developed, households were assisted with toilet construction and the community was educated on the importance of hand washing to prevent the spread of diseases.

To address malnutrition among children, World Vision launched a nutrition and food security project to increase the ability of families to provide healthy meals for their children. **This programme benefitted 2,360 children.**



As a result of these interventions,



Prevalence of **underweight children below the age of six decreased by 32%**

in three target villages from 2008 to 2012



83% of the community now have access to clean water



99% of families now practice handwashing



Child Protection & Participation

In addition, World Vision advocated for the formal legislation for child protection and it was successfully developed! Now, **86% of caregivers or parents know what to do and how to respond to violence in the community.** They also recognise their role in empowering their children and supporting holistic development, so that kids can have fullness of life.

To strengthen child protection mechanisms, our interventions included



24 community watch groups

formed, where members were trained to identify, monitor and report incidences of child abuse



200 child leaders & facilitators

trained to lead activities to develop self-confidence and leadership skills in children

Community Capacity Building

When Bohol ADP first started, members of the community were highly dependent on World Vision.

In order to promote sustainable development, World Vision set up community-based organisations (CBOs) and equipped them to get resources for the community's development by advocating for financial support from the government and local organisations.

For example, after the earthquake in 2013, **CBOs were able to raise funds**, which went towards rebuilding and rehabilitation for affected families. In 2015, they were able to get government support to improve their livelihoods through better farming technology and techniques.

1,887 local leaders and members within these CBOs were also trained in project management and organisational development. After witnessing the impact of their work, they gained a sense of ownership towards poverty alleviation and development in their community. Now, they take the initiative to start new projects and they are ready to continue developing the community even as World Vision transitions out of Bohol.



Disaster Response and Rehabilitation

In response to the earthquake that struck in 2013, World Vision **provided urgent life-saving aid to 41,360 people.**

To rebuild homes that were destroyed, shelter repair kits consisting of nails, wooden boards, sacks of cement, and metal roof sheets were provided. **Food, water and hygiene packs were delivered to 7,015 families.**

16,299 children benefitted from child-friendly spaces, which were set up to give children a safe environment to learn and play in. This helped them to cope with trauma from the earthquake and bring a sense of normalcy back into their lives.

Although the physical development that took place in Bohol ADP during the earlier years was disrupted by the earthquake, the resilient attitudes that were developed remained, and have empowered families to reach full recovery.



Rising Above

Growing up, Peter was a shy boy who lived in a squatter settlement in Bohol. There, houses were only separated by thin walls and families lived in poverty. His parents struggled to make ends meet. Esmeraldo, his father, was not paid regularly for his work as a labourer and deliveryman. His mother, Lucila, only received a small cash gift each month for her services as a community health worker.

When Peter was six, his life turned around. He became a sponsored child and received education, healthcare and other forms of support for his holistic development! His family was also given a new home away from the slums.

Determined to study hard, he envisioned a better future where he could lift his family out of poverty. He saw World Vision's activities as opportunities to develop his character and joined various leadership trainings and youth forums over the years.

Now, 15 years later, Peter is a confident man who has graduated from a teaching course and is waiting to become a teacher. He also organises children's activities with World Vision and is a child facilitator.

Thanks to the support of our donors, Peter and other children like him are now full of purpose and feel strongly about paying it forward. *"I became who I am because of the influence of my mentors. The World Vision staff, fellow youth leaders and my family have moulded me to become an inspiring leader. I am thankful to everyone who believed in me,"* shares Peter, now brimming with hope and looking forward to a bright future.



Peter (centre) and his family

**We couldn't have done
it without you!
Thank you!**

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