

# tumulong today

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*ICM's Transform Program is Changing Lives*

## BARANGAY 30 IS GOING GREEN

*by Deanna Sutherland*

Life is a lot greener than it used to be in Barangay 30 in Bacolod. Everywhere you look, people are growing vegetables – hanging from plastic bottles and filling rice sacks on the ground. On a recent trip to Bacolod, David and I spent the afternoon visiting some of the 25 families participating in ICM's new Transform Program. Family after family proudly showed us their veggies. One woman, whose garden was sparse, explained that she had just earned 300 pesos from her harvest the week before. Many of the gardens, we were told, belonged to families not in the ICM program – they were “copy” gardens. We were thrilled. We could see that ICM was making a difference.

In one family, the mother had given birth to eight children, but two had died - one at age two and one at 17, shot in cross-fire from a street fight. Her husband now supports the family selling coconuts. The uncovered well outside their home is used for washing, but not drinking – that they must buy. Her clean laundry was drying in the sunlight, there was soap near the door, and there were several toothbrushes in a cup in the “kitchen” -- just as she'd been taught in ICM's health classes.

Another mother of six, who lived in a charcoal storage shed with a second family, shared that her husband had recently left her for his “other family” in Manila. They now survive by buying 50 pesos (HK\$8) of food each morning which she cooks and bags into small snacks. Her children sell these snacks to their schoolmates, bringing home about 110 pesos (HK\$18) each day – half used for dinner, a bit to save, and half used for the next day. We gave her an extra Php100 to increase her working capital – she plans to add bananas to her inventory.

As we left, we felt so proud of ICM and of the people we met. Each had real problems, but they were taking steps



to improve their lives. The vegetable farms are obviously having a great impact. But even in more private ways, people are changing as well -- applying health lessons, saving money, using family planning, communicating better with their spouses. Applying the lessons. Growing.

This year over 3,900 families (that's more than 19,500 adults and children) will participate in an ICM Transform program. Thank you for your gifts which have made this possible.

Who'd of thought? Worms!

# WORMS ARE TAKING ICM BY STORM

What began in December of 2008 as an isolated project in Bohol, ICM's new Vermiculture Project is creating a low capital high impact sustainable livelihood for thousands of recipients of ICM's programs. Interesting fact: if you put 1 kilo of worms in a environment that has lots of decaying organic matter, high moisture and placed in a shady spot for about 40 days, you'll have a rich supply of vermicast (organic fertilizer) and about 1 kilo of additional hungry worms. Busy little things they are.

## ORGANIC SOIL AND VEGETABLES

The new worms are harvested (gently dug out of the bin) and given to new recipients to begin their own vermiculture livelihood. The organic fertilizer is the mother-load. First, it can be sold for profit (vermicast is one of the most effective fertilizers and is all the rage now). And second, the organic fertilizer is used to create personal gardens. In the urban areas, with seeds provided by ICM, we teach our new farmers to grow their new vegetables in containers, usually litre bottles of soda (yes, this helps clean up the environment). In rural areas, we teach them how to use the organic fertilizer to prepare the ground and create a fertile environment for optimum vegetable growth. In 4 to 12 weeks, our new entrepreneurs are seeing the fruits of their labour. The tomatoes, eggplants, cucumbers, peppers and other vegetables are enjoyed by family members as well as sold at their local market. If a family is diligent in caring for their garden, they can easily make between P100-P300 per week.



## PART OF ICM'S NEW VHL CURRICULUM

ICM's vermiculture project is a part of our new VHL (L is for livelihood) curriculum being taught in all of our 150 Transform communities, 47 Preschool+ communities, and 400 Uplift communities. That's about 9775 families learning new skills to support their families and improve nutrition. Students really get their hands dirty in the course (building the vermi-bins, collecting bottles, harvesting worms and vegetables), and ICM staff work with each family at their homes to help them succeed. As a part of the curriculum, students also receive instruction in money management and basic business skills. We are extremely excited and encouraged by this new program and are optimistic about the results.

If you would like to receive regular updates about the progress of ICM's livelihood training, sign up for the Facebook group: ICM Vermiculture Project. For every twenty-five families benefiting from ICM's Values, Health and Livelihood Training, it costs ICM HK\$ 6,000 (US\$800). If you would like to invest in the lives of the poor through this great project, we'd love to hear from you. Thanks.

*A Fifth And Two Firsts*

## BANQUET NEWS

- 2009 marks **ICM's fifth Hong Kong Banquet**. Reserve your table now for this year's November 2, 2009 Hong Kong Banquet at the JW Marriott. Tables are going fast, book by October 15th for special rates. The evening will be full of exciting updates about ICM's work as well as testimonies from ICM recipients. And of course, there will be some amazing prizes. You don't want to miss this fun evening. Sign up now.
- Announcing the **ICM's first US Banquet** to be held in Washington DC on December 3, 2009. Do you know people in DC who you'd like to introduce to ICM's great work? Now's your chance. Book your table now.
- **ICM's first Manila Banquet** was held September 2nd in Makati, Manila. The successful evening introduced the work of ICM to over 450 of the Philippines' finest, who were overwhelmingly supportive and positive about ICM.

Visit [www.caremin.com](http://www.caremin.com) to view the banquet invites and photos from the Manila banquet.



*ICM is launching a new logo. The fresh new design reflects our hope and vision for the future. The heart and cross communicate the central motivation behind all of ICM's work - the love of Christ. The logo which resembles a star signifies ICM's desire to bring light to those living in darkness.*

*Knock Knock. Who's there? Kids who want to study.*

## 1175 NEW STUDENTS CAN'T WAIT TO DO THEIR HOMEWORK



How early can you predict a child's future? Preschool. A poor child in the Philippines who doesn't attend preschool is way more likely to live his adult life in poverty than one who does. For the 1175 poor young boys and girls attending one of ICM's 47 preschools, the future is looking a lot brighter. The school year started for these eager new students in June, and they are well on their way to mastering their reading, writing and math skills and changing their futures.

One of this year's new preschool students is 10 year old Eliseo. As the 8th of nine children, there just wasn't enough money for Eliseo to attend school. When his dad passed away, his mom and other family members struggled to get by, relying on older siblings for food. Eliseo is so excited to be attending an ICM preschool.

But Eliseo isn't the only one who's excited about learning. His mom, as well as all the other moms and dads of preschoolers, are excited about ICM's new adult education program. Each week ICM brings its new VHL curriculum to the parents, focusing on values education, health awareness, disease prevention, and livelihood training. Parents are now growing their own vegetables and learning new ways to support their families and manage their money.

Thank you for investing in the lives of children like Eliseo and his family, through your gifts to ICM. Each of ICM's preschools is sponsored by a single donor or donor group. 47 preschools. 47 wonderful donors. Thank you. You are making such a difference.

If you would like to make the future brighter for 25 Filipino children, please consider sponsoring a preschool for a donation of HK\$40K.

## ICM'S AMAZING VOLUNTEERS

This past year, an amazing group of ICM supporters have donated their time, talents and gifts to help ICM more efficiently deliver its programs to the poor.

### **ARTHUR LIEW and BGC PARTNERS, INC.**

Every year on September 11, BGC donates its global revenues to charity in commemoration of those lost in the World Trade Center attacks. Arthur Liew became an ICM champion by nominating ICM to be one of a pool of recipients of the 9/11 charity distribution. Thank you Arthur!

### **BETH UY**

Beth's employer adidas® paid for her cost of living while Beth took time off and volunteered for ICM in the Philippines for 10 weeks early in 2009. ICM's new programs have meant that nearly every ICM staff member has had to take on new job descriptions. Beth brought her expertise in organization and management policies to this dynamic environment of transition at ICM. She worked with ICM staff to help define job expectations and formalize procedures.

### **SHARON CHU**

While between jobs, Sharon donated her expertise as a consultant in change management. For the past few years, ICM has considered opening birthing clinics in an effort to lower maternal and infant death rates. Sharon prepared a feasibility study to determine if this was a wise use of ICM's resources. Because of her input, ICM has opted not to pursue the clinics at this time but has determined other (less costly) ways to improve existing medical programs to lower maternal death rates.

### **DIMA APELBAUM**

Dima ran a three-day ultra marathon covering 100k in Central Vietnam to raise money for an ICM preschool. [www.firstgiving.com/dimaapelbaum](http://www.firstgiving.com/dimaapelbaum)

### **STELLA SCHAPERO**

Stella raised support for an ICM preschool through an art show of her work in Manila.

Thank you to these and all our other amazing volunteers who have also donated their time and talents to make ICM's work possible.



For questions or comments, please contact:

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