



# Livelihood Infrastructure Food Education For Health

## Newsletter - Winter 2013

### ***Philippines Update: Rising from the Rubble***

After Typhoon Haiyan unleashed unprecedented destruction on the Philippines in November and a massive 7.2 earthquake struck the island of Bohol in October, the destruction in affected areas was crippling. Bohol was still overseeing earthquake emergency relief operations when they were hit with torrential rain and high wind first brought by tropical depression Wilma and then days later by typhoon Haiyan. The earthquake destroyed almost 15,000 homes and damaged over 70,000 homes, leaving an estimated 250,000 Boholanos homeless. Infrastructure such as roads, bridges and hospitals across the province has been destroyed. The typhoon took out the power supply leaving Bohol in the dark for a week. The lack of power also took out water supply systems. Power has now been restored to most of the island but it is limited with rolling brownouts.

With our long history of working in the province and our existing network of local agencies, our aid efforts will be focused on helping communities and families rebuild in Bohol. We have been in touch with local and international NGOs who are currently building or planning to build transition houses. The approximate cost of a basic home using coco lumber and woven bamboo walls starts at \$750 CAD. A more permanent home built with a lightweight steel frame system, concrete and bamboo slat walls and a bathroom with basic plumbing will cost around \$2,000 CAD per home.



*The Bohol earthquake destroyed many roads, bridges and hospitals in Bohol.*



*A man salvages what is left of his home after the earthquake in Bohol*



*The core shelter model house built by Habitat for Humanity in Tagbilaran City, Bohol. The approximate cost of this house is \$2000 CAD.*

Busuanga Island in Palawan was the final island to be hit by Typhoon Haiyan as it exited the Philippines. Three of our Board members visited Coron, the main municipality on the island, this past July and were very impressed with the town. It is a growing tourist destination, with stunning limestone cliff islands and some of the best wreck diving and snorkeling in the world, given the Japanese WWII shipwrecks located throughout the area. The main industries here are fishing and tourism. The typhoon damaged or destroyed most of the boats used in these industries while over 3000 homes were destroyed. We are in contact with the local government unit to assess how we can best help this community rebuild.

*continued...*

## Your Help Needed in Supporting the Victims of Recent Natural Disasters

The holidays are when many of us support others in need. This year, consider making a contribution towards these efforts. The Canadian government is still matching donations for Typhoon Haiyan aid and the deadline to qualify for matched donations has been extended to December 23, 2013! Your donation will have double the impact and will directly help the people who are suffering as a result of these recent disasters. 100% of earmarked donations received by December 23 will be directed to Haiyan relief.

## Great Holiday Gift Idea

Give a tax-deductible donation in lieu of a gift this holiday season! We have a beautiful gift card, which can be personalized, letting the recipient know the impact of your donation made on their behalf. This is available in either digital format or hard copy. Simply select "L.I.F.E. Giver" when donating on our website. Enter the gift recipient's name and mailing or email address on the final review page in Paypal, as well as any personalized message. We will send the gift card on your behalf. Alternatively, request a blank card if you would like to personalize it yourself.

You can donate on our website at:  
[www.lifeforhealth.org/donate](http://www.lifeforhealth.org/donate)

or by mailing a cheque to:  
L.I.F.E. for Health  
11 Eleventh Street  
Toronto, ON M8V 3G2.



*Our beautiful gift card can be personalized and sent to a loved one on your behalf*

## A Celebration of L.I.F.E: Maria's Story

*Then: Life-Saving Heart Surgery & Water for a Community*

On a cold November day in 2002, seven-year-old Maria Cristina Tongco arrived in Toronto with her mother from their remote barangay home in Bohol, Philippines. The beautiful young girl was blue and short of breath from the lack of oxygen caused by a congenital heart defect known as Tetralogy of Fallot. The defect was a result of her mother's inability to access enough nutritious food during her pregnancy, an unfortunate illustration of the direct connection between physical health and the determinants of health, like income and food security. Without heart surgery, Maria would die as a result of her heart condition.



*Dr. Stephenson with Maria in 2003*

Through the leadership of L.I.F.E.'s founder, Doctor Honorata Migrño Stephenson, L.I.F.E. for Health partnered with the Herbie Fund to cover the costs of Maria and her mother's travel, living expenses and surgery at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. During their stay in Toronto, Maria and her mother lived with Dr. Stephenson and her family.

At first, things did not go smoothly for Maria. Her surgery had to be delayed by several weeks in order for her to receive extensive dental surgery in advance of being treated for her heart condition. Poverty prevented the family from being able to afford dental care, and Maria's life would have been at risk should any infection from her mouth travel to her heart during surgery. A very fortunate and happy outcome of the delay, however, was that both families were able to spend the Christmas holidays together, which was a very special and deeply memorable time for all.

In early 2003, Maria was finally able to undergo her surgery. It was a success, and Maria healed completely. By the time she was ready to return home, she was rosy-cheeked and full of energy, playing vigorously like the healthy seven-year-old child she now was. It was a tear-filled good bye for everyone.

*continued...*



L.I.F.E. for Health's commitment to the long-term health of Maria, her family and her remote community would not end there. A few years later, Dr. Stephenson visited Maria and her family at their home in San Roque, Cortes, Bohol. The remote community had no access to water, having to walk miles to fetch it by hand. To address this issue, L.I.F.E. for Health constructed a system to pipe water into the kitchens of all the homes in the community.

*Now: Educational Support & Rebuilding after the Earthquake and Typhoon Haiyan*

Fast forward to today. Maria has graduated from high school. She dreams of being a nurse, and supporting her family through her vocation. To help her achieve this dream in the face of her family's ongoing struggle against poverty, Maria is one of L.I.F.E. for Health's scholarship recipients. Named the Dr. Honorata Migriño Stephenson Memorial Scholarship in honour of our late founder, the scholarship pays the post-secondary school tuition of deserving but impoverished youth in Bohol. Maria is in her first year of Nursing at Holy Name University in Tagbilaran City, Bohol.

Maria and her family had their home severely damaged as a result of the 7.2 magnitude earthquake that struck Bohol on October 15, 2013. Already struggling without a home for shelter, they survived Typhoon Haiyan as it lashed their family. L.I.F.E. for Health will rebuild Maria's home, as well as the homes of others affected by these natural disasters. We are also investigating whether the water system in Cortes is damaged, and if it is, it will be repaired.

L.I.F.E. for Health is committed to Maria, her family, and her community. Thanks to your ongoing support over the years, we continue to impact lives like Maria's. This holiday season please accept our profound gratitude. Nothing is possible without you.



*Maria Cristina is studying nursing at Holy Name University in Bohol*

## **Celebration of L.I.F.E. and Love Gala Dinner and Dance**

Saturday, February 8, 2014 marks the date of our first annual Valentine's-inspired gala dinner and dance, called "Celebration of L.I.F.E. and Love." You won't want to miss this fundraising event. The evening will include a seated supper, followed by lots of dancing, an awards ceremony recognizing outstanding achievements, a silent auction, fantastic door prizes and much more.

Tickets are available for purchase in advance only.  
 \$60 Members  
 \$65 Non-members  
 \$35 Children under 12

Buy yours today online at [www.etickets.to/buy/?e=10973](http://www.etickets.to/buy/?e=10973) or by contacting Leah Stephenson at 416-577-5249 or [info@lifeforhealth.org](mailto:info@lifeforhealth.org).

Please contact Leah for sponsorship opportunities!

**CELEBRATION OF  
L.I.F.E.  
& Love**

**Feb 08 2014**

**GALA FUNDRAISING  
DINNER AND DANCE**

Doors at 6:00 PM  
Dinner at 7:30 PM

**Silent Auction, Raffle and Door Prizes**

**St. Clement of Ohrid  
Clement Room  
76 Overlea Boulevard**

Overlea Blvd  
Donna Mills Rd  
HWY 404

**ADVANCE  
TICKET  
SALES ONLY.**

\$60 members | \$65 non-members | \$35 children under 12 |  
 \$600 sponsored table of 8 (logo or family photo & name on table)

Buy online at <http://www.etickets.to/buy/?e=10973>  
 or contact 416-577-5249 ~ [info@lifeforhealth.org](mailto:info@lifeforhealth.org)

## ***Continuing Projects in 2014***

While the majority of our resources will be going towards the typhoon and earthquake rebuilding efforts, L.I.F.E. For Health is committed to continuing our scholarship support through the Marie Claudine Mwizerwa Scholarship in Rwanda and the Dr. Honorata Migriño-Stephenson Scholarship in the Philippines.

In addition, the banana chip production facility recently completed in Dagohoy, Bohol suffered some damage from the earthquake and will need minor repairs before operations can begin.

## **Member and Volunteer Appreciation Party!**

We are starting off the New Year by giving thanks to our amazing members and volunteers!

Please join us so we can say THANK YOU for your continued support!

When: Sunday, January 5, 2014 from 1:00-5:00 pm  
Where: 22 Tarlton Road near Avenue Rd. and Eglinton Ave.

Please RSVP to [info@liferforhealth.org](mailto:info@liferforhealth.org)



***Follow us!***

*We are now on Twitter: @liferforhealth*

***Be our friend!***

*Join us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/liferforhealth](http://www.facebook.com/liferforhealth)*