

Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends,

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who spontaneously supported us so that we could and can help after the storm disaster.

When we almost had the feeling of being forgotten by the world in the first few days without any connection to the outside world, individuals, families, parish members spontaneously started relief operations, packed their pickup and drove north to deliver water and provisions to people or to provide them with a roof over their head. The second storm people were so much afraid of did not actually come, nor did it rain. In fact, the storm ended the rainy season with a bang and 150mm of rain and since then we haven't seen a drop of water, just beautiful blue skies and cool winds from Korea, which, however, have brought colds to the homeless.

After Christmas, help came from Manila and from overseas. I am very aware that Palawan is not the only hotspot in the world right now - but after all it was one of the most destructive storms in history, 400,000 homes were completely destroyed, another million damaged and a total of eight million people affected: <https://reliefweb.int/disaster/tc-2021-000202-phl>. On that note, thank you for your donations. The help for those affected will be needed for a long time and accordingly international organizations are active here, with whom we have started to work together in a promising way. The usual way for such an organization is to look for a local supporter like us and then bear part of the costs of an operation - for example food, possibly materials - while we pay for the rest ourselves. This type of cooperation is not only interesting for the emergency aid measures that are now ongoing, but also for the longer-term realizations for a more resilient, more sustainable future, in which these organizations are actually all interested.

As suggested in my mail from 24 December, we focus on emergency pedagogy. This work, developed by Beatrice Rutishäuser Ramm in Kosovo in 1999, is now used worldwide by <https://www.freunde-waldorf.de/en/emergency-pedagogy>, <http://start-international.org> and others in or after crises to support children and young people in particular in coming to terms with traumatic experiences. Together with Bernd Ruf, we have helped establish this work in the Philippines since 2011. While friends from Manila are now working on other islands, we are on the road with our own team in Palawan. We work with artists, craftsmen and educators, most of whom we have been working with for ten years. At the same time, we have started to set up additional teams through training sessions with teachers, pedagogy students and other volunteers. This is also very necessary, because the requests increase with the assignments and we are happy about the impartiality with which our approaches are received everywhere. The children's eyes show that the interventions work.



Experiences of self-efficacy during an emergency educational event. The boys on the left take a new look at nature around them with the help of self-made stamps and paints. On the right, open-ended toys made from destroyed trees keep the little ones busy.



Within the framework of, or on the fringes of, emergency pedagogy, there are always opportunities to remedy the situation where someone has been overlooked or neglected in the aid measures of the government or other organizations. Overall, the aid measures are well organized on the basis of the political communities, but it still happens more often than you might think that someone needs extra donations, the further you get into the mountains and off the roads, the more so. Or in the case of the community of Bucana, which was completely drenched in mud and whose residents endured the fear of death because of the opening of the dam: this community is not in the recognized damage area of the typhoon and therefore no help can be expected from the government, the church or international agencies. Here we are on our own with our resources, all measures carried out are financed by us alone. In other places it could be a food subsidy, repairing a roof or helping to rebuild an entire house. Whenever possible, we make sure that the means for self-help are given and, in the best case, that know-how can be imparted through working together.

Likewise, there are always opportunities to convey basic concepts of nutrition, medicine, education or agriculture as part of or on the fringes of emergency pedagogical assignments. While the emergency rations of other contributors contain almost exclusively instant noodles with flavor enhancers and white rice, we make sure that we bring whole rice and fresh vegetables and herbs with us, a small part of which can be harvested on our land. Grace teaches how the plants in the area can be meaningfully integrated into healing processes and shows the great effect that compresses and footbaths can have. And with relatively little effort in speaking, concepts such as the open-ended toy can be understood because they become visible during our operations.

At the same time, follow-up projects from these assignments are in the air, be it in education, agriculture or the development of sensible, ecologically justifiable small businesses. The sources of income have been largely destroyed and it takes 15 years for a coconut palm or a cashew tree to grow back to full harvest. Every third house in the country already has a Sari Sari Store (a store with some „basic“ needs), but you won't be able to survive on trade alone. And for now, hundreds of thousands of people are being fed via feeding programmes. In order to secure life in the long term, sustainable sources of income must be developed.

Below: Elordi, an artist from the Tagbanua people, quickly demonstrates how objects made of clay can be fired in an emergency. Left: stamp studies.



For orientation on what happens with the donations: an emergency pedagogical intervention costs around 1,000 to 2,000 euros - depending on whether other sponsors contribute to the costs, a complete house 500 to 1,000 euros, a roof or minor damage 100 to 200 euros. We still have plenty of seeds from our own production and otherwise we shall work together with other seed initiatives in the north of the country. We also have 80 water filters worth 20 euros from previous initiatives in stock - if we have to buy more, we have to reckon with 30 to 40 euros each, with which a large family can easily be supplied with drinking water.

In conclusion, I would like to point out the particular difficulties at this time: Although the government agencies have in this case generally shown spontaneity and quick action, life in general has become increasingly difficult for small and medium-sized companies. In these weeks, some of the businesses of friends are closing down as they find new nonsensical regulations and payments during the annual renewal of their business license. The Duterte administration has, in recent years, massively increased the already inflated number of civil servants, be it in the tax office, school service, military, etc., and additionally increased their salaries by a whopping 100%. While it is well known that some of these employees only come into the office to stamp, others create new work. The victims are the citizens, who have to fill out a new form, which will change again next month without any information and will in any case cost money. The citizen is always to blame and then has to pay this and that fee, this and that fine. For example, after the storm, the Environment Agency actually went around asking people for their felling permit when sawing up an uprooted tree. In order to return home after an emergency pedagogical intervention, we need a special permit. In addition, banking has become unreliable since the storm. At first there was no money, since the banks could not work without electricity. Then it was the lack of internet connection. Today, the opening hours of the banks are limited because always some of the employees are in quarantine. It has become a lottery to get access to your money.

Finally some work that makes sense for the youth: making giant jellyfish from waste materials.



Warm regards from Puerto Princesa, Palawan,
Walter Siegfried Hahn and Grace Zozobrado Hahn

Donations can be transferred to the following accounts:

Germany: Future Foundation Development at GLS-Treuhand e.V., GLS Gemeinbank eG
Bochum
IBAN: DE05 430 609 67 0012 33 00 10, BIC: GENODEM1GLS
Intended use: Koberwitz-Palawan

Switzerland: Acacia-Verein, Basel, Freie Gemeinbank, Basel
IBAN: CH93 0839 2000 0040 0800 6, BIC: FRGGCHB1
Project note: Kulturimpuls Philippinen

Or directly to the Philippines via wise.com.

Account Name Koberwitz 1924 Inc.

Account Number 130-3-13024518-9 with Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.

Rizal Avenue, Puerto Princesa City, BIC (Swift) MBTCPHMMXXX

Here, it is necessary to state the postal code 5300, my e-mail address
waltersiegfriedhahn@gmx.de and that the addressee is a charity / non-profit company.

All pictures are from an emergency educational mission in January 2022.

