



2001 - 2021



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Foreword

For the past 20 years, HLAF's advocacies have progressively grown to the wider needs in promoting the better quality of access to justice to the least and most vulnerable, especially in promoting their rights, welfare, and well-being.

During the 51st commemoration of International Human Rights Day on the 10th day of December in 2001, the Humanitarian Legal Assistance Foundation, with the help of Filipino human rights lawyers, was established in response to the worsening phenomenon of inhumane and unjust detention, aggravated by sub-human conditions in jails not only in the Philippines but in other parts of the globe as well.

Following HLAF's founder Master Choa Kok Sui's (MCKS) great Vision and Mission, HLAF is dedicated to conducting activities that will help the speedy release of Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) all over the Philippines. HLAF started when MCKS saw the needy situation of PDLs in cramped cells, congested areas, and their health condition in Philippine jails. This book also serves as a material to celebrate HLAF's history and milestones.

This annual report is dedicated to every person least represented in the community.

Thank you for inspiring us to do better over the years. We look forward to many more years of learning, growing, and working together. Cheers!

All the best,

Atty. Carolyn Mercado,
President of the Board of Trustees, HLAF

Atty. Rommel Alim Abitria,
Executive Director, HLAF



OUR VISION

HLAF aspires to help create world order founded on the universal respect for human rights and freedom against arbitrary and unjust imprisonment, in all forms

OUR MISSION

HLAF seeks to put an end to the phenomenon of unjust and inhuman detention, especially of women and children, wherever it is found, through direct legal action and policy advocacy.

20 Years of Empowering Communities





ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Since January 2021

1,638

**PDLs released
all over the Philippines**

14

**Human Rights
learning sessions**

28

**Former detainees
reintegrated**

Persons deprived of liberty or PDLs are those who are still awaiting judgment or undergoing trial.

JD

JAIL DECONGESTION PROGRAM

The program strengthened the access to justice of detainees through jail decongestion, capacity building, coordination, and knowledge sharing by promoting the detainees' right to liberty, health, and reformation. It has also established programs in legal aid clinics and enhanced the abilities of law students to conduct and facilitate the program's activities.

The Jail Decongestion (JD) program provided successful interventions to its released persons deprived of liberty (PDLs) by direct and indirect assistance through case follow-ups, consultations, and paralegal and human rights trainings.

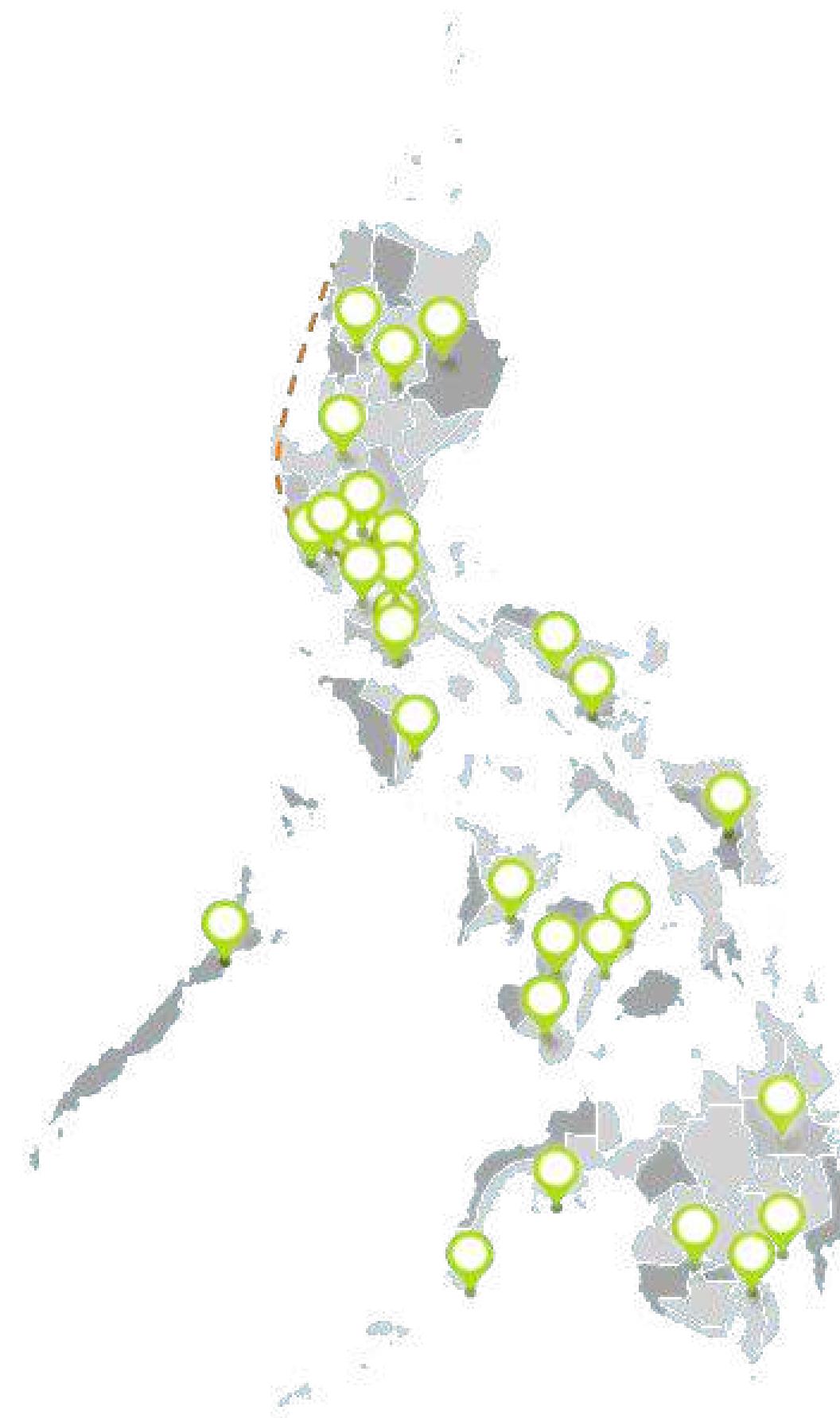
The program's case consultations to PDLs provided speedy, efficient, and successful case interventions.

The program also provided welfare missions which addressed the psychosocial needs and physical well-being of the inmates, and the corresponding dynamics in prison settings, as well as social care and assistance including early detection of mental health concerns.

PDLs, duty-bearers, and community volunteers were capacitated to exercise their rights by raising awareness and empowering them with important laws through paralegal trainings.

The program has empowered legal aid clinics as host organizations in regional areas and cities willing to convene Task Force Katarungan at Kalayaan (TFKK) activities.

HLAF's good relationships with partner jails and extending good will through initiatives has created opportunities to donate equipment and supplies from different local and international partners and stakeholders.



The Jail Decongestion Program Reach



EXCELENTE PLEA
BARGAINING ON DRUG
CASES MODELS OF



Jail Decongestion Effort

Since January 2021

1,638
pdls released
all over the Philippines

1.426
online case
consultations

7
online jail
visitations

56
paralegal
trainings

Persons deprived of liberty or PDLs are those who are still awaiting judgment or undergoing trial.



CRA

CENTER FOR RESTORATIVE ACTION PROGRAM

The program provided LGU's, law enforcement officers, social workers, legal practitioners, children's rights workers, volunteers and other stakeholders with strengthened, innovative, and leading methodologies in handing Children at Risk (CAR) and Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) cases.

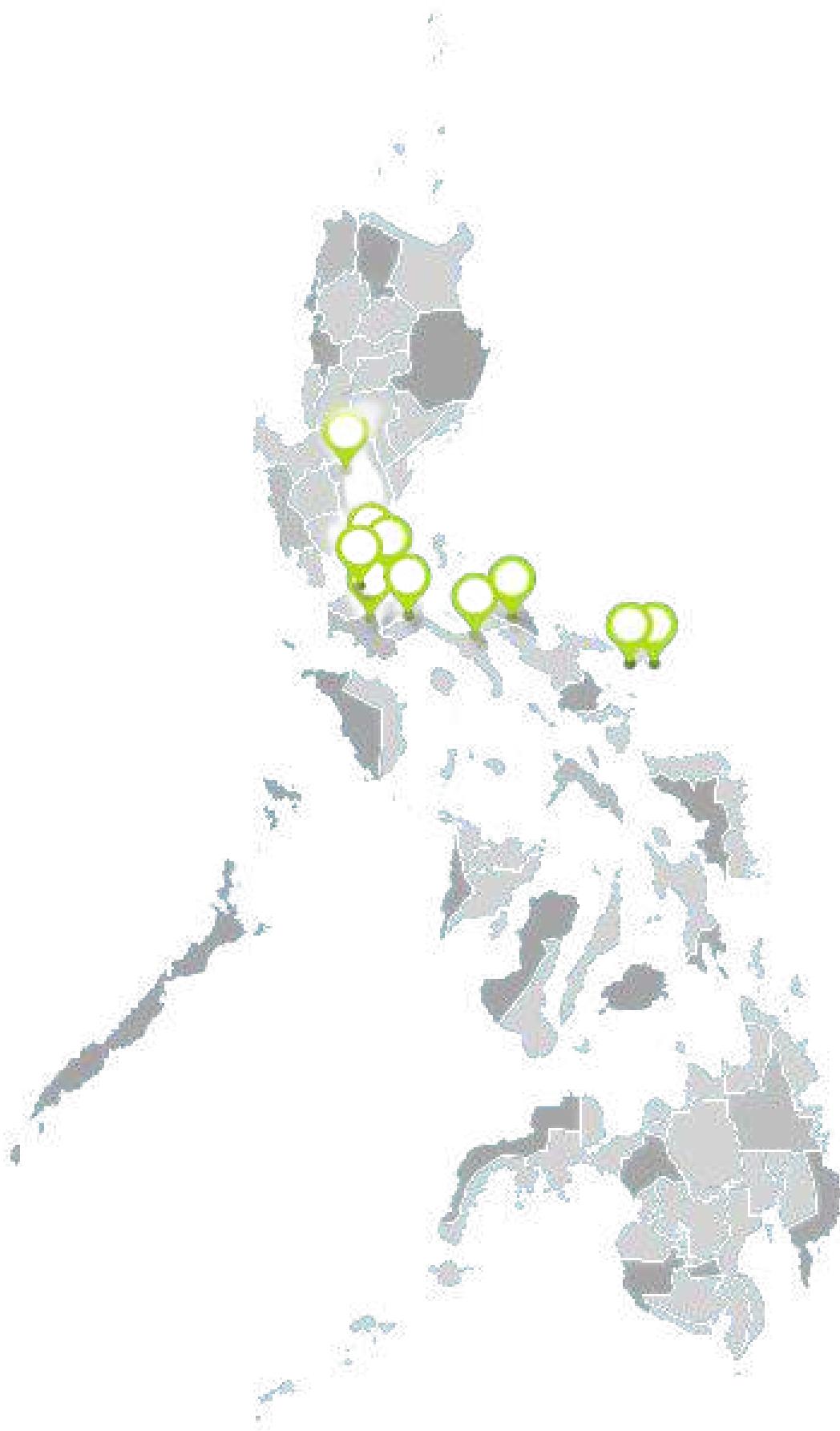
The Center for Restorative Action (CRA) program conducted Learning Sessions that increased knowledge on Human Rights, Juvenile Justice, Restorative Justice, and on Mainstreaming Children's issues.

Direct mentoring sessions were also provided by the team to assist stakeholders to properly handle cases of children in conflict with the law and children at risk. The beneficiaries mentored have accumulated significant credibility and trust among the communities that they work with that they become a significant influential force for communities to act for the benefit of the children.

The program also made local duty bearers, students, and community members realize the proper implementation of existing laws through advocacy campaigns and social engagements.

Among the crowning successes of the CRA program is that they were a significant influence to move to enshrine these ideals in key local legislations.

The CRA program has been effective to help local government units learn concepts of restorative and juvenile justice but also the legal framework in which they can legally implement provisions. As a result, many CARs and CICLs have been prevented from getting into contact with the criminal justice system which would have further made it difficult to change.



The Center for Restorative Action Program Reach





Center for Restorative Action Effort

Since January 2021

14

human rights
learning sessions

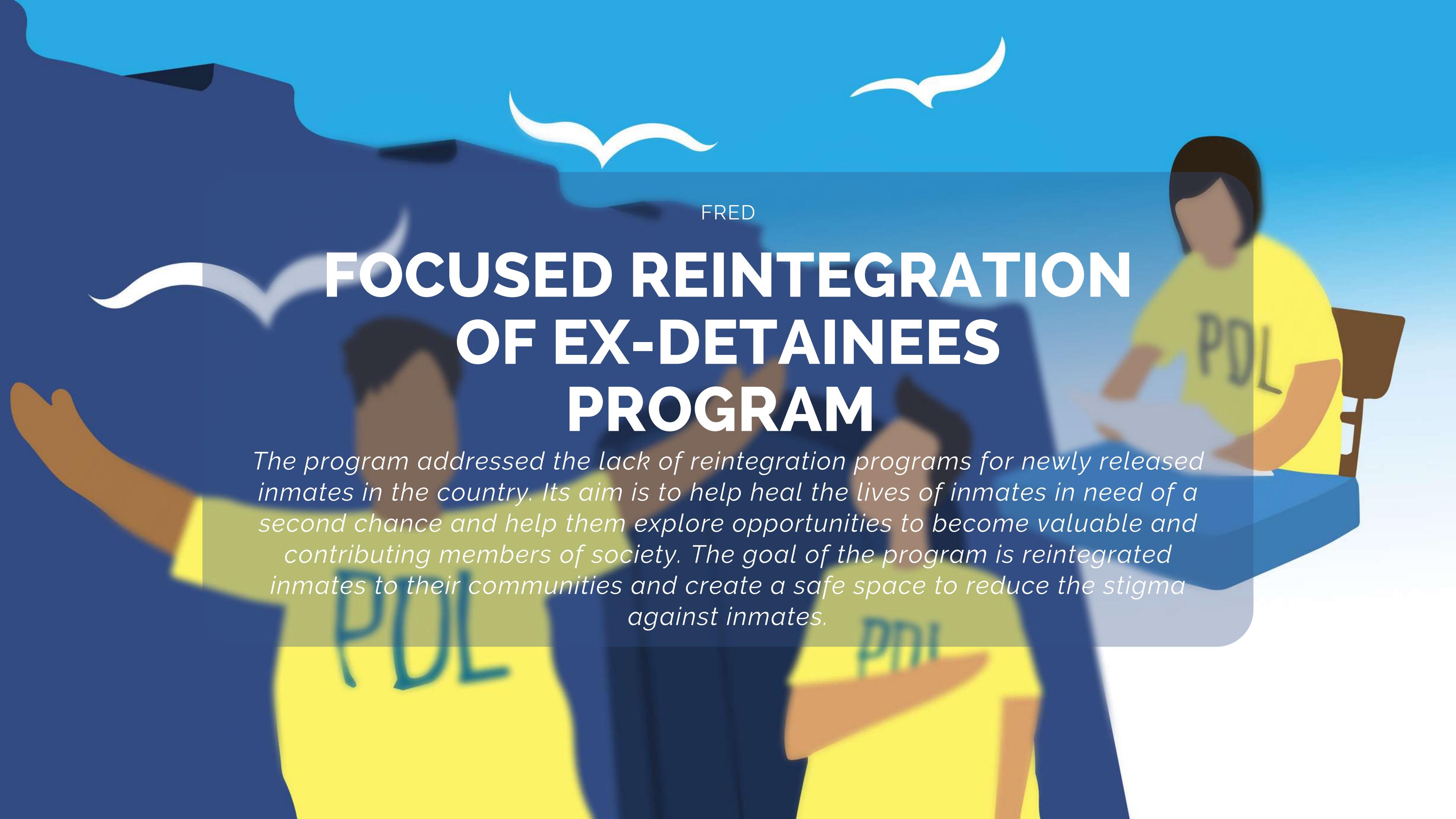
150

direct mentoring
sessions

63

awareness
campaigns

CAR refers to Children at Risk while CICL refers to Children in Conflict with the Law



FRED

FOCUSED REINTEGRATION OF EX-DETAINEES PROGRAM

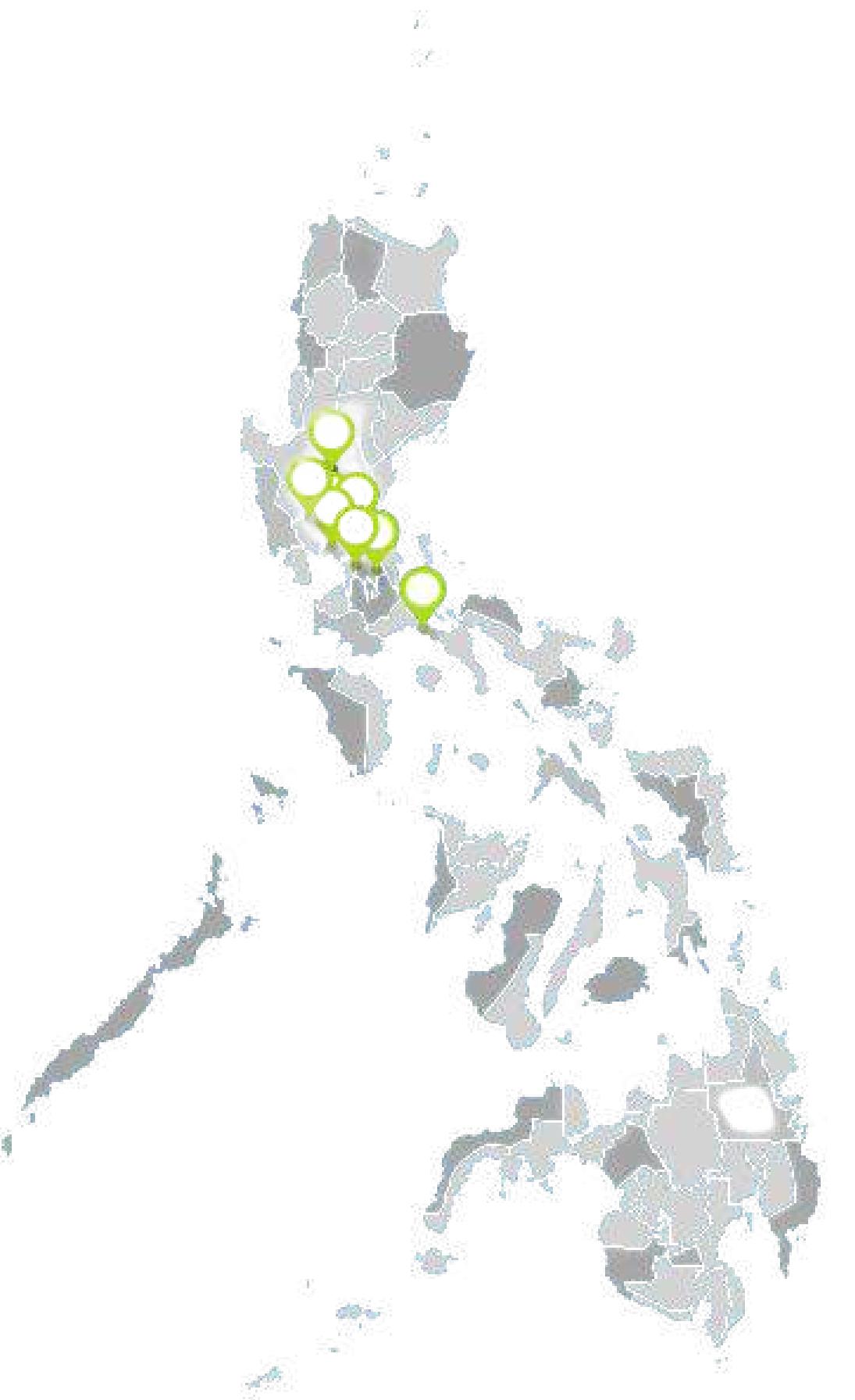
The program addressed the lack of reintegration programs for newly released inmates in the country. Its aim is to help heal the lives of inmates in need of a second chance and help them explore opportunities to become valuable and contributing members of society. The goal of the program is reintegrated inmates to their communities and create a safe space to reduce the stigma against inmates.

The Focused Reintegration of Ex-Detainees (FRED) program continued to take steps toward coordinating with local government units to help them realize the opportunities for former PDLs to contribute to their families and communities. Despite their past, HLAf recognizes the PDL's potential for change and their desire to pursue productive employment for their benefit as well as for those they care about.

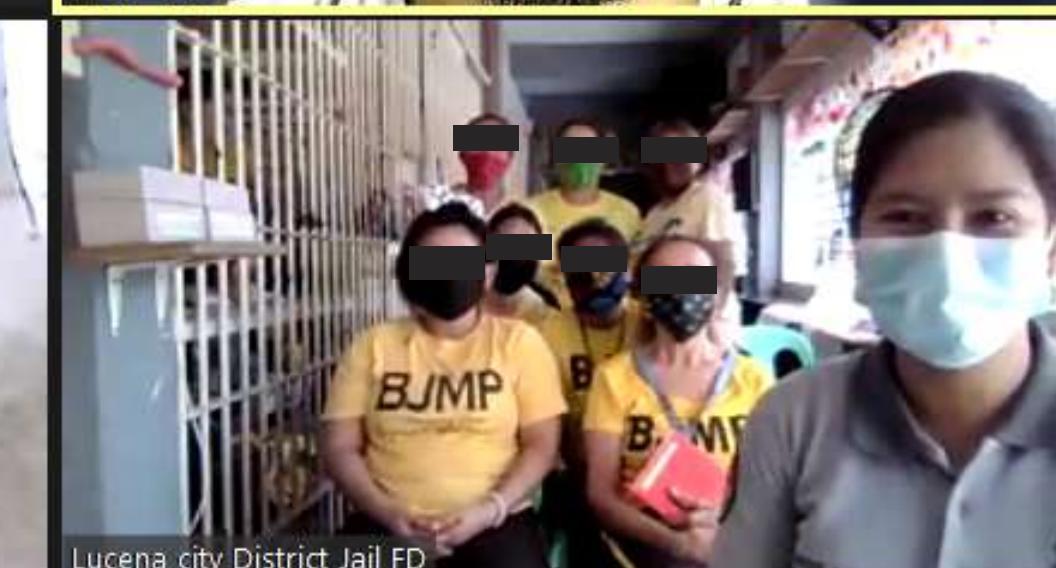
The reintegration and formation sessions for ex-detainees have prepared them with debriefing activities, values formation, and life-skill trainings.

The advocacy partnerships held meetings between schools, local government agencies, non-government organizations, and private individuals to discuss activities that may promote the welfare and well-being of ex-detainees.

The FRED team is also becoming well-known as experts on PDL aftercare and mental health. The Commission on Human Rights (CHR), Caritas, and the Department of Social Welfare and Development consulted the FRED team regarding their expertise with PDL care and reintegration of former PDLs.



The Center for Restorative Action Program Reach



Mute

Stop Video

Security

Participants 9

Chat

Share Screen

Pause/Stop Recording

Breakout Rooms

Reactions

Leave



Focused Reintegration of Ex-Detainees Effort

Since January 2021

28

**former detainees
reintegrated**

60

**advocacy
partnerships**

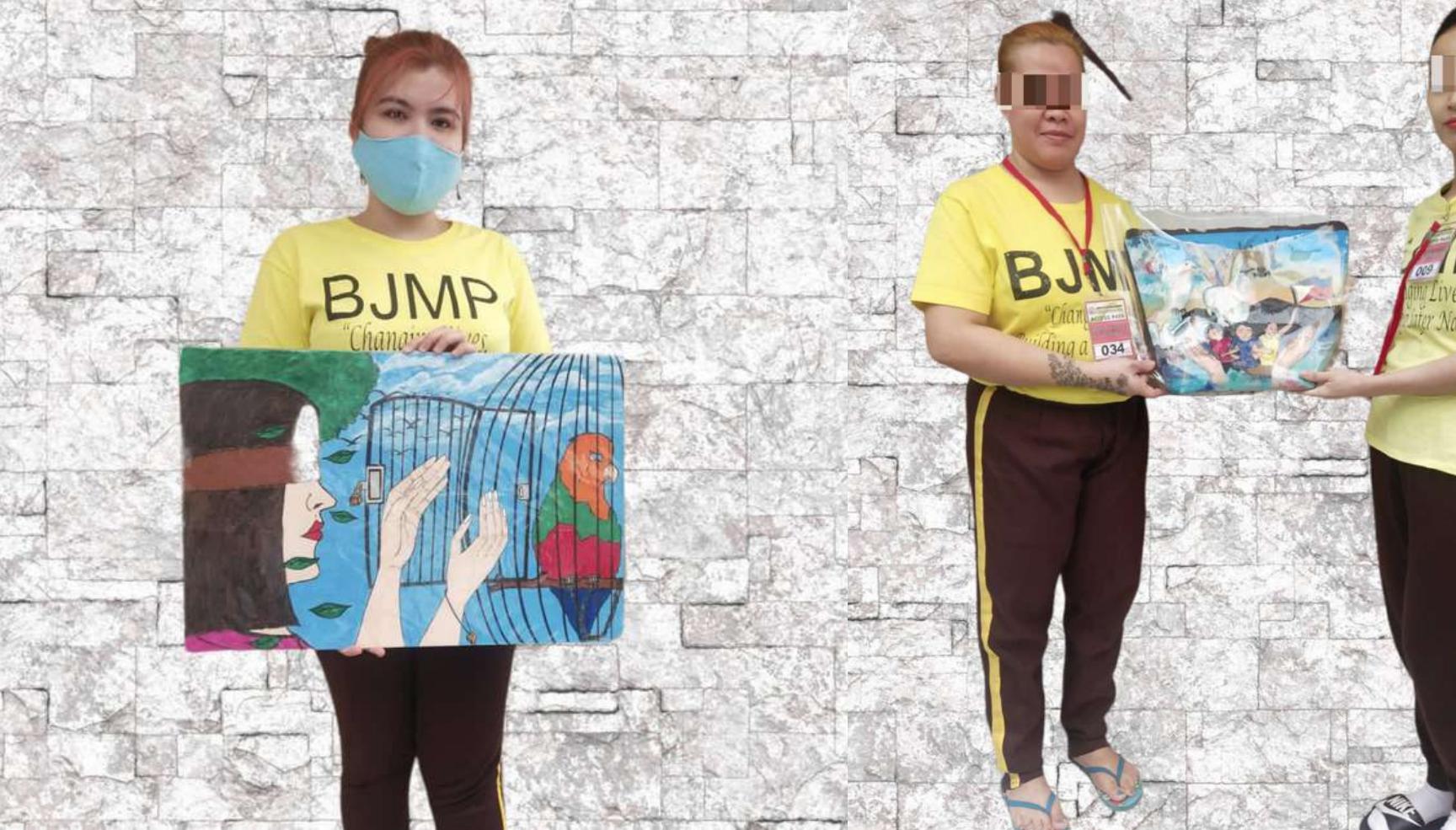
The FRED program reintegrates persons behind bars to the community

HLAF @ 20

In line with the celebration of HLAf's 20th year anniversary, we conducted a human rights art contest for persons deprived of liberty all over the Philippines where they showcased their talents on Painting, Livelihood products, and Essay writing!

Read our special 20th anniversary at hlaf.org.ph
<http://hlaf.org.ph/pdlcontest/>







OUR PARTNERS

Since January 2021



2,510,463.94

worth of funds used to protect
children and empower
local officials

In partnership with the Consuelo Foundation, HLAf implements the CAPIN project in Catanduanes to empower local officials to implement the juvenile justice and welfare act to lessen child abuse cases.



1,582,184.55

worth of jail equipment and
supplies, and empower legal
aid clinics

In partnership with the Asia Foundation, HLAf implements the project to establish Jail Decongestion Programs in Legal Aid Clinics to enhance access to justice for Persons Deprived of Liberty to empower legal aid clinics.



2,322,040.32

worth of funds used to
train pdls about their rights

In partnership with the American Bar Association, HLAf implements the project to strengthen and enhance the access to justice of persons deprived of liberty through jail decongestion, capacity building, coordination, and knowledge sharing.



404,447.42

worth of funds used for human
rights, juvenile, and restorative
justice trainings for local duty-
bearers

In partnership with the UNICEF, HLAf implements the project to establish and strengthen the capacity of Local Child Protection Mechanisms in addressing the needs of children-at-risk and children-in conflict-with the law

HLAF Finance

from Master Choa Kok Sui (MKCS) Caring Heart Foundation

Since January 2021

Jail Decongestion

P 3,121,235.90

Administrative Expenses: P 170,036.61
Program Costs: P 444,511.89
Personnel Costs: P 2,506,687.40

Center for Restorative Action

P 1,241,364.68

Administrative Expenses: P 73,839.06
Program Costs: P 113,841.41
Personnel Costs: P 1,053,683.91

Focused Reintegration of Ex-Detainees

P 980,987.92

Administrative Expenses: P 59,261.79
Program Costs: P 196,281.99
Personnel Costs: P 725,444.14

Communications

P 481,880.60

Administrative Expenses: P 24,690
Program Costs: P 70,273.41
Personnel Costs: P 386,917.19



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