



Kate and Tim Lee

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Location: Philippines



What we do: Improving the lives of families living in poverty in the Philippines by supporting Jigsaw Kids to become a sustainable organisation

Dear Jigsaw friends,

Happy Easter – Jesus has risen!

God's love is so powerful, and it's wonderful to be able to share with you news and updates of Jigsaw Ministries. Tim, Kate and family.

Tim's visit to the Philippines

It was so wonderful to be back in Manila with the Jigsaw family in February. After two days of flights, I finally arrived in the Area 4 community where Jigsaw's main centre is situated. Before I knew it, I was surrounded with hugs, tears and the joy of a family reuniting. It was such a wonderful time as we sat together, praising God, sharing food and catching up on news from the previous two and a half years.

During the three weeks I was in Manila we focused on reviewing what Jigsaw does as well as setting our eyes firmly on the next 20 years of mission. It became clear that we were being guided to both prune and develop parts of Jigsaw in order for it to move where God is leading the work. One of the most important developments of Jigsaw's 20-year journey came out of the reflection, discussion and review and is set out below.

Responding to the endemic physical and sexual abuse of children

As part of Jigsaw's review we focused on two sources of information: reports from our community ministry team leaders and a statistical review of the state of Filipino children in poverty (ECPAT, Interpol and UNICEF, 2022).

The statistical summary supported what we had found in our reports; lack of family security, neglect, malnutrition, inadequate living standards, poor health, lack of access to medical care, lack of opportunities for play and education, failure to complete schooling, child exploitation, child labour and more. Although the figures and realities were overwhelming, we were satisfied that our ministry model is able to respond to and develop children's lives in response to many of these issues. However, there were statistics that shocked us and left us numb. An estimated two million children had been sexually abused in front of webcams in the Philippines in 2022. We had systems in place to respond to child trauma but what could Jigsaw do to help stem this horrific abuse? We knew this was a huge and complex web of abuse and that it was the responsibility of the whole nation and even the whole world, but what could we do in the areas where we worked? How could we respond? We prayed and fasted and God responded.

Miraculously I had been reading the book *Let the Earth Hear Her Voice*, written by a great friend of mine, Dr Keith White, about an amazing Indian woman called Pandita Ramabai. Born in the 1880s in India,



*Celebrating Jeannette,
Jigsaw's director's birthday*

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**With Jesus
With each other
To the edges**

Pandita grew up witnessing the horrific abuse and inequality of women in India. She made it her life's goal to fight for the equal treatment of women in India. She focused on campaigning to end child marriage and suttee (widow burning), and promoting women's and girls' education. It is an incredible story of the transformation of a nation through faith and action. 120 years later God has used the life works of Pandita to guide Jigsaw in its response to the horrendous reality of online sexual abuse of millions of Filipino children.

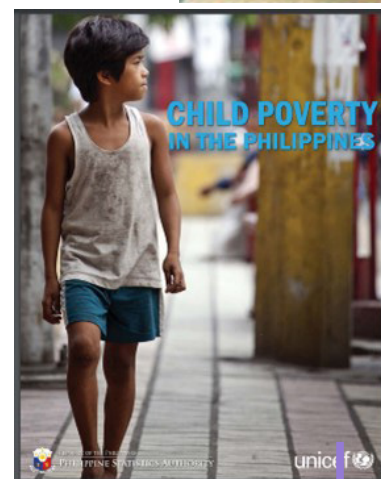
Firstly, we were encouraged that Pandita had faced a seemingly insurmountable situation in terms of the position and state of women in India, as we also are faced with a mountain in front of us in terms of child abuse. Secondly, her story gave us a way forward in terms of what we could do. Pandita had become a student of the works of Froebel, who believed that kindergartens (nursery schools) could change society. She also believed strongly that the most dynamic and main agents of change in society were women. Pandita, like Froebel, believed that it was about starting something small and sowing seeds of change. Pandita knew that teaching and empowering women and children would take time but that it would ultimately bring true and lasting change.

Wow! We were so inspired! Jeannette, Jigsaw's director, described it like a curtain being swept back. We already have women's empowerment ministries in many communities and Jigsaw kids' clubs with hundreds of children. Like Pandita, we have a vision for change through empowering women and children by starting a women's teaching programme about their responsibility and power to care and protect their children from cybersex. We also have a vision for teaching about the responsibility to love our children and each other in the kids' clubs (kindergartens of Jigsaw.) As Pandita saw in India 120 years ago, change will not be instant but over time, these seeds will begin to change the cultures and realities of the communities where the children live as people begin to understand the dangers and harm of sexual abuse. Please pray against these evils and for Jigsaw as we begin to draft our teaching plan for the women's groups and new activities for our kids' clubs. God is so real, and we thank you for all your prayers and support that empower and enable Jigsaw to carry out its significant ministry.

Prayers

- ▶ Please pray for wisdom and revelation as Jigsaw seeks Jesus' guidance to prune and develop Jigsaw. Pray that the changes will allow Jigsaw to flourish over the months and years ahead.
- ▶ Join us in praying for God to intervene and stop the terrible abuse, both physical and sexual, of thousands of children in the Philippines. Pray that God will raise up people to fight these atrocities in different ways.
- ▶ As Jigsaw restarts its community ministries, pray that we find buildings and spaces that we can rent cheaply or use for free, especially in the Visayas Avenue area for a street children's centre.

Kate and Tim



Photos from top to bottom: A truly inspiring book; approximately two million children in the Philippines were victims of online sexual abuse last year (Philippines Star)



Going further with Church Mission Society

Jesus never gives up. Neither should we. We live in a fractured, hurting world. It can be tempting to give up: on hope, on people, on the idea that things can ever change. Yet, Jesus invites us to follow him on a journey to the edges. Find out more at churchmissionsociety.org/nevergiveup

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