

Peace Corps Philippines

Youth Development Volunteer – Children, Youth and Family Sector

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Philippines



- Peace Corps Philippines is the agency's second-oldest country program.

- 87+ languages spoken in the Philippines

- Consists of 7,100 islands

According to UNICEF

- 2001-2009, Philippines is 1 of only 7 countries where HIV cases has increased by over 25%

- 36.8% of population still lives in poverty
- 47.5% living on less than \$2 U.S

- Philippines is a source and destination country for labor and sex trafficking. Causes include: poverty, lack of education, high growth of population, displaced families and individuals due to natural disasters, high unemployment and fraud job recruitments, lack official documentation, government and law enforcement corruption, etc.



Dumaguete City, Philippines

"City of Gentle People"

- Capital city of the island "Negros Oriental"
- Population of 125,000
- Centralized location for major tourist and scuba-dive destination

Host Country Agency

Silliman University Extension Program & Marina Mission Clinic: Community-based institution focused on promoting holistic health of individuals and communities through numerous initiatives:

- Health services in rural areas including reproductive health, family planning and alternative medicine, such as acupuncture
- Trainings focused on HIV/AIDS, reproductive health, income generating projects and environmental protection and development

Community Partners

Youth Advocates through Theater Arts:

Develop the creative potentials of young people and produce socially-relevant artistic products to raise people's awareness and challenge them towards action

Visayan Forum:

Innovate solutions to end modern-day slavery



Projects & Outcomes:

Special Project: Magdalena Organization

- Approximately 20 women, between the ages of 24 and 58, who work in and are survivors of prostitution.
- Conducted workshops on HIV/AIDS, reproductive health, healthy and abusive relationships, and developed an alternative livelihood project.

Livelihood Project:

- Created doormats and pot holders out of recycled shirt materials.
- Ten women were trained, four women were identified as fast learners
- Project is sustained through community partners selling the items within Silliman University.

Maternal & Child Health Grant – Health & Adolescent Reproductive Health (ARH)

- 30 youth, between the ages of 13 to 22, were trained in life skills on topics including drugs and alcohol, nutrition, relationships and goal planning.
- Youth learned communication skills, healthy ways to resolve conflicts, refusal skills and practical ways to not fall into peer pressure.
- ARH topics: Relationships, cyber predators, contraception, peer pressure, reproductive organs, puberty, STIs and HIV/AIDS.
- Activities included art and drawing, theater and role playing scenarios.

V-Day Movement & V-Girls Workshop

- Movement focused on ending violence against women and girls
- Position as the Chair of Finances: Held meetings with community partners regarding partnerships and funding. Supervised volunteers to follow-up with community partners and delegated organizational tasks.
- V-Girls workshop included 50 female participants, 16-21 years old
- Topics: Bullying, body image, reproductive health, violence against women locally and globally (sex trafficking and female genital mutilation) and being an advocate for change and ending violence.

Lessons Learned

- Embrace failure as a learning opportunity
- Networking and building relationships was important in order to gain community involvement and promote sustainability
- Learning the language allowed me to be more respected and approachable.



Advice

- Try to not have high expectations of what your experience will look like. This may be harmful to your service because it is possible your expectations will not be met
- Do not compare your service to the service of another volunteer
- Maintain a positive attitude and learn to laugh at yourself

Career Connections

- Gained practical experience working internationally alongside host country counterparts
- Developed an awareness of cultural sensitivity by integrating into Filipino culture as much as possible and challenging my privilege and identity

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Skills

- Language skills: 170 hours of formal instruction in Tagalog & Cebuano
- Facilitation and module development
- Grant writing
- Community organizing and network building
- Problem-solving