



PEACE CORPS IN THE PHILIPPINES

The program in the Philippines is the second oldest in the Peace Corps. It began October 1961 and more than 8,000 Volunteers have served in the Philippines with only a short suspension in 1990-92 because of communist rebel activity. The Peace Corps program operates under the coordination of the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA) which is subordinate to the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and mandated to coordinate all domestic and foreign volunteer organizations in the Philippines.

Peace Corps enjoys a strong partnership with the Embassy. Specifically, USAID provides substantial financial support to the work of PCVs in all sectors, as detailed below.

Currently there are about 131 Volunteers aged 22 - 76 serving in the Philippines working in the following three areas: Education; Children, Youth and Family (CYF); Coastal Resource Management (CRM). In addition, Peace Corps Philippines manages a Peace Corps Response Program (short-term programs of approximately six months. Our expected annual intake of Volunteers is estimated at 75.

Education

Peace Corps Philippines focuses its Education project on improving the English proficiency of students and teachers. Volunteers are assigned to secondary and tertiary public schools. They co-teach English classes with local counterparts, assists in the enhancement of the curriculum and the development of libraries and help develop critical thinking skills of the students. Volunteers also organize teacher-training programs to provide alternative teaching methodologies for Filipino teachers focusing on communicative language teaching skills.

Youth

Volunteers work in organizations serving at-risk children and youth in partnership with the Department of Social Welfare and Development, Local Government Units, and Non-Government Organizations. They serve as mentors, tutors, co-facilitators, and advisors/coaches in basic literacy, life skills training and staff development. Volunteers also give livelihood-skills training and organize youth environmental education camps.

Environment

Volunteers work with Local Government Units (LGUs), the lowest level administrative unit, and coastal communities of fisherfolk to develop, implement and manage integrated Coastal Resource Management plans, and assist with community organizing and environmental education. Volunteer projects include restoration of degraded coastal and marine habitats, conduct of environmental camps and clubs, development of educational materials, and assisting in the formulation of conservation policies and reforms.

The *Volunteers for Environmental Governance Project*, funded by United States Agency for International Development (USAID) via an inter-agency agreement, provides Peace Corps Volunteers grant funding for training and resources to promote positive environmental practices and biodiversity conservation in their communities.

Padayon Mindanao

Padayon ('continue' in the Visayan dialect) Mindanao is a USAID-funded and Peace Corps' continuing effort to promote peace building in the Philippines in Mindanao where we are unable to place Volunteers for the time being due to security issues. At the core of this education initiative is cross-cultural learning among literacy teachers and youth leaders across conflict affected areas in Mindanao and other Peace Corps sites in the Philippines. Through this project, Peace Corps Volunteers and their local counterparts will take an expanded role in improving youth literacy and life skills by means of Alternative Learning System.

Peace Corps Response

Peace Corps Response Volunteers are short-term and generally more technical advanced Volunteers. They support Peace Corps core strategic areas, including disaster preparedness, youth development, HIV/AIDS, organizational development, among others. We generally host 15-18 PC Response Volunteers each year, the largest portfolio in Peace Corps. Currently, we have one PC Response Volunteer embedded with the Millennium Challenge Corporation community development program – the first of a series of PCVs we hope to deploy under the Peace Corps/MCC partnership.