



Progress Report: Community Healthcare Training, Manila, Philippines

Date: 11th to 24th January 2010

On behalf of our contacts in the Philippines, Links International would like to thank CompassionArt for their investment into Community Healthcare Training in Manila.

Project Summary

Healthcare teaching and training was carried out over four sites, more than the original two envisaged - the Tondo dump clinic, Tondo dump school, Navotas cemetery and Baguio dump. The team divided into small teaching groups, using team members to their maximum potential and enabling the trip to cover the maximum number of communities in 2 weeks.

Training Activities

The main focus of the training was with a group of mums chosen to then go and train other families on the dump. Previous training had focussed on simple infection control. The needs assessment this time showed that basic nutrition was what was needed.

Tess (head of nursing with the Philippine Community Foundation) had chosen these 6 mums because they were tough nuts! Tess had enlisted them to help her with the PCF feeding programme and asked if we could teach them some nutrition and malnutrition information. Very quickly these ladies, largely uneducated, appeared to be lapping up the teaching, drawing on flip charts and role playing what they had learned. They just blossomed, loving the opportunity to



Training the Group of Mums



Feedback Session

be listened to and to learn and couldn't wait to go and teach. They opted to begin by teaching the Mums of the children on the feeding programme, about nutrition. They were going to teach them by drawing a picture of a shanty house and demonstrating how it needs a foundation (staple food) to be able to stand up, walls to grow up tall and strong (proteins), and a roof to give shelter (vitamins and minerals).

They also drew pictures of each of the foods and we worked out how many pesos (how many hours working on the dump) you needed to buy each group of foods. They quickly latched onto this and saw how many of the malnourished children could be saved just by mum knowing which foods are needed for good nutrition.

Next time we go back they hope to show us how much improvement has happened because Tess is keeping a log of numbers of malnourished children. The training for the mums was a major breakthrough; they left the room with a new dignity and hope, and they are on the road to transformation!



Children at Baguio

After previous visits to Tondo dump school, Navotas cemetery and Baguio dump, the improvements achieved by the Mums were amazing. The ladies had changed beyond recognition; they are now clean and bright and the school kitchen is spotless. They have maintained a high level of cleanliness all around the school and they have recorded that there is far less incidence of diarrhoea, and that there has been no cases of Dengue Fever. At the cemetery areas have been cleared of rubbish for children to play. In each of the areas they were so pleased to see us and so eager to gain more knowledge that could be put into action in their community. This is such an encouragement.

Quotes

The following are some quotes from the Mums and Nurses:

"We like Links coming because you speak to us in a way that we can understand." (Nora)

"Since Links came last year and told us about rubbish and stagnant water, we have cleared the rubbish and got rid of the standing water. There has been no Dengue Fever in Navotas this year!" (Virgie)



Trained and ready to go

"Of all the volunteers that come here, we (the nurses) get really excited about Links coming because Links people care about the Mums and want to work with them." (Ana – Nurse)

Project Funding

In addition to Healthcare Training, Links also took a team to deliver micro-enterprise training for families living on the dumps. CompassionArt funding was specifically invested for healthcare training and was spent as follows:

Flights	£690
Accommodation and living expenses	£540
Travel in country	£102
Health Worker uniforms (for mums)	£150
Teaching materials and student expenses	£ 94
Balance towards building materials for shanty homes	£424

Future Visits

It is planned to return to work with PCF in Manila and those families they work with on Tondo and Baguio dumps and the Navotas cemetery.

Having spent three afternoons training the qualified nurses and social workers on their chosen topic 'Stress Management', it became obvious that we do need to build in time to work with the team as well as with the mums. Every one of this nursing team do incredible jobs, working in terrible conditions, under such harrowing circumstances and yet have such a passion to see things improve.

The couple who lead the Tondo Dump Church also came in on some of the training and they have asked us if we could spend time next year with the church team.



There is such a need for the men to come into the CHC training. Tess and the nurses will advertise this training throughout the year and we will organise some sessions with men teaching men next year.

Summary

Life on the dumps and in the cemetery is very hard, violence is rife, stabbings every week, the filth is everywhere, the pollution is terrible, poverty is so bad that there are many children with no clothes or shoes. Yet people do smile and laugh and there is hope.

The investment of CompassionArt has enabled Links to work with these communities and to teach practical healthcare skills which will help improve and save lives. Previous teaching and training has been shown to do this and we know that this visit will achieve the same improvements, particularly in nutrition for children and babies.



On behalf of PCF and the Links International Team, we offer our deepest gratitude to CompassionArt for their generous investment.

Steve West
on behalf of the **Links Team**

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