

Philippines
Country Volunteer Strategy
Review May 2007

Document Control Number

53383

Version 1.0 2007



LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABV	Australian Business Volunteers
ACM	Austraining Country Manager
APO	Australian Partner Organisation
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
AVI	Australian Volunteers International
AVP	Australian Volunteer Program
AYAD	Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development
CVS	Country Volunteer Strategy
DED	German Development Service
DFAT	Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
HO	Host Organisation
JOCV	Japanese Overseas Cooperation Volunteers
KOICA	Korean Volunteers
MTPDP	Medium Term Philippines Development Plan
NEDA	National Economic Development Authority
NGO	Non Government Organisation
Peace Corps	US Peace Corps Volunteers
PDT	Pre Departure Training
PNVSCA	Philippines National Volunteer Services Coordinating Agency
RM	Regional Manager
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
VIDA	Volunteering for International Development from Australia
VSA	Volunteer Services Abroad
VSO	Volunteer Services Overseas
VSP	Volunteer Service Provider

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1. INTRODUCTION

The VIDA Program is part of the AusAID funded Australian Volunteer Program.

The VIDA Program aims to ensure that volunteers supported by Australia's aid program contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable development in the countries where VIDA works.

The CVS will define the strategic direction of the VIDA Program in the Philippines and has been developed after an extensive literature review, and in consultation with relevant stakeholders including NGOs, HOs, other VSPs, and relevant AusAID personnel in both the Philippines and Australia.

The CVS provides direction in assignment sourcing and volunteer placement in the Philippines for the VIDA Program. By sourcing assignments that are consistent with the direction provided by this CVS, assignments will:

- Driven by the needs of HOs in the Philippines
- Reflect the direction of the Australian Aid Program as defined in the White Paper on Australian Aid, the Australia-Philippines Development Cooperation Strategy 2004-2010 and the Draft Australia-Philippines Development Cooperation Program 2007-2011 (to be launched in May 2007)
- Responsive to the needs of the Philippines as defined in the Medium Term Philippines Development Plan (MTPDP) 2004-2010

The VIDA Program is guided by the principles of the Australian Government's Volunteer Policy which specifies that at least 75% of VIDA assignments must be directly aligned with AusAID priority areas in the Philippines. The remaining 25% will be aligned to the priority areas of the Government of the Philippines, and allow the VIDA Program to be flexible enough to respond to emerging development needs.

The VIDA Program has placed 5 volunteers and has been operating in the Philippines since 2006-07.

The VIDA Program will place 5 volunteers in the Philippines in 2007-08 with governance, health, education and the environment as focus sectors.

The Program will focus on placing volunteers in specific geographic areas, to achieve a greater impact. Where possible, and especially in remote areas, the Program will cluster volunteers to maximise the level of support and security offered to volunteers. The Program will have a strong presence in Manila, Luzon and the Visayas.

The VIDA Program will liaise with the Philippines National Volunteer Sending Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA) who approve all volunteer placements in the Philippines

This paper will be reviewed and updated by May 2008.

2. PROGRAM STRATEGY

This CVS has been developed in consultation with all relevant stakeholders including AusAID Desk, AusAID Post and other VIDA stakeholders who will be fundamental to ensuring the effective delivery of the VIDA Program in the Philippines.

The Philippines Development Priorities

The MTPDP 2004-2010 defines the fight against poverty as the core element of the development vision of the Philippines Government. Through the MTPDP the Philippines government has outlined 5 key policy directions:

- Economic growth and job creation
- Energy and power sector reforms
- Social justice and the delivery of basic services
- Education and opportunities for youth
- Anti corruption and good governance

The Philippines National Volunteer Services Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA), operating under the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) has outlined strategic priorities for all VSPs. These include:

- Accelerating economic growth and job creation
 - Improved productivity in agriculture and fisheries
 - Improved quality and marketability of local products
 - Vocational-technical manpower skills development
 - Strengthening SMEs
- Improve social justice and delivery of social services
 - Improvement of quality of services to street children and the disabled
 - Capacity building of social service institutions - especially those servicing poorer areas
 - Psycho-social intervention for trauma & abuse victims
 - Peace advocacy in conflict areas in Visayas & Mindanao
- Enhance education and youth opportunity
 - Improving quality of Maths, English and IT education in public schools
- Environmental sustainability
 - Coastal resource management
 - Waste Management
 - Development & promotion of alternative energy sources

The Australian Development Co-operation Program

The Draft Australia-Philippines Development Cooperation Program 2007-11 is based around 3 pillars, each with a number of strategic objectives:

- Economic Growth
 - Government agencies better able to implement transparent and efficient budgets
 - Accountability, transparency and management of infrastructure investments improved, and more sub national infrastructure built
 - Improved income-generation opportunities for rural people through reinforcing increases in productivity, access to markets, and growth of SMEs
 - More efficient and transparent land tilling and valuation systems
- Basic Education
 - Working with the Department of Education in order for it to better manage its resources
 - Improved performance monitoring for schools and teachers by the Department of Education
 - Improved education achievements for children through better qualified teachers, a supply of appropriate teaching and learning materials, and better school management and infrastructure
- National stability and human security
 - Mindanao peace process
 - Enhanced basic services and livelihoods for people in conflict-created communities
 - Improved capability of key institutions to counter threats from terrorism
 - Filipinos better protected from high-burden and infectious diseases and natural disasters
 - Women's, children's and reproductive health services more widely disseminated

Key provinces will include North Samar, Bohol, Misamas Occidental, Agusan del Sur and Suringao de Norte. AusAID have one project being managed in Iloilo.

Other Volunteer Agency Activities

The following VSPs are operating in the Philippines

Volunteer Agency	Annual Target Numbers	Key Focus Areas	Geographic Focus
AYAD	24 Short term annually (3-12 months)	Governance, basic education, poverty reduction, transboundary issues	Luzon, Manila, the Visayas
AVI	10 + youth per annum	Short term (12 week) programs for Australian Youth	Manila, Laguna, Quezon
ABV		Growth and development of local business; Basic	Cebu and the surrounding islands;

		education, technical/vocational education; Strengthening governance of LGUs & NGOs	Manila
VSO	40 (NB VSO to withdraw from Philippines in 2010)	Natural resource management, Secure livelihoods, Small business, NGO Capacity building, Disability education and service delivery	Manila and Mindanao
Peace Corps	138	Youth education, Environment, business development	Luzon and Visayas
UNV	23	Promotion of MDGs, Youth	Manila, Mindanao
JOCV	46	Economic reform, rural development, basic health, conservation and disaster preparedness, human resource development	Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao
KOICA	63	Vocational training, Education, Health, Environment	Luzon and Visayas
DED (Germany)	36	Vocational training, Coastal Zone management, Livelihoods, Waste management, Civil conflict, Sustainable land use	Manila, Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao

The VIDA Program and Geographic Focus

The VIDA Program has identified several key areas where VIDA Volunteers can make a significant contribution to poverty reduction and sustainable development.

VIDA will place 5 volunteers in the Philippines in 2007-08 within the following framework:

Key Development Sector	Sub-Sector	Types of Organisations	Geographic Distribution
Governance	Strengthening institutions	LGUs ,NGOs, Government Departments, AusAID projects	Manila, Luzon, Visayas
	Income generation and increased employment opportunities	SMEs, NGOs, LGUs	Manila, Luzon, Visayas
Education	Curriculum Development & Teacher Training	Government Departments, LGUs, NGOs, AusAID Projects,	Manila, Luzon, Visayas
	Vocational Education and Skills training	SMEs, NGO's, LGUs	Manila, Luzon, Visayas
Health	Health services delivery to rural poor	LGUs, NGOs,	Luzon, Vasiyas
Environment	Policy development, implementation and awareness	Government Departments, LGUs, NGOs	Manila

All volunteer placements in the Philippines must be approved by the PNVSCA, who have made it clear that they would prefer to have volunteers placed in impoverished and rural areas rather than in Manila based organisations. Understanding this, the VIDA Program will concentrate its efforts on sourcing volunteer assignments in impoverished and rural areas in Luzon and the Visayas, however the Program will also have a presence in Manila

In regional and rural areas VIDA will attempt to cluster volunteers together or with volunteers from other VSPs.

Volunteers will not be placed in Mindanao due to concerns regarding safety and security.



VIDA Strategy Implementation

The VIDA Program will be managed in the Philippines by the ACM who is based in Manila. The ACM will use and develop their existing networks to source demand driven assignments and provide in country operational, welfare and network support to volunteers. The ACM is supported by the RM who is based in Vietnam who will assist in monitoring assignment progress and evaluating country and regional program outcomes against strategic implementations.

The VIDA Program will recruit, prepare and mobilise high quality volunteers for these assignments within Australia through its operational base in Adelaide.

Responding to Partners

The VIDA Program will develop and maintain strong, sustainable partnerships with organisations in the Philippines, through our ACM, and with Australian Organisations who have or wish to create links with organisations in the Philippines through the Adelaide based Partnerships Coordinator.

The ACM will support HOs by working with them to develop high quality assignments, dealing with any issues that may arise during a placement, and using HO support tools that have been developed by the VIDA Program to prepare HOs to accept and support volunteers in order to achieve the best possible outcomes in any assignment.

The Program will seek to identify opportunities to put in place a program approach, by using a planned series of inter-related assignments either consecutively or concurrently to assist a HO to meet multi-dimensional needs, build capacity over an extended time period, address a capacity building need identified as a regional concern, and improve the sustainability of volunteer assignment outcomes.

The VIDA Program may facilitate this process itself, or collaborate with other VSPs in order to deliver a program approach.

3. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Key Performance Measures

There are a number of performance measures that will be used to monitor the impact and effectiveness of the VIDA Program:

- Reporting
 - Volunteers will be required to report their progress 6 months into an assignment and again at the end of their assignment
 - HOs and APOs will also be asked to submit a report at the end of a volunteers assignment
 - Exception reporting - ACMs will report on specific events
 - Program reporting will incorporate specific information from the Philippines
- Monitoring and Evaluation visits from the RM at least once a year - to monitor the progress of volunteers on assignments, and provide support and training to ACMs
- VIDA will report to AusAID on a number of agreed qualitative and quantitative indicators which are part of an agreed performance management framework

VIDA Management Structure & Support

The VIDA Program in the Philippines will be managed by the ACM who has developed and maintained relationships with relevant stakeholders including AusAID Post, the Government of the Philippines, and Host Organisations. The ACM is responsible for the welfare of the volunteer whilst they are in country, sourcing and monitoring assignments and dealing with issues in country as they arise.

The ACM is further supported by the RM, based in Vietnam, who provides strategic direction and management to the ACM, as well as VIDA staff in Adelaide who provide logistical and operational support.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

The following risks have been identified:

RISK	MITIGATION STRATEGY
Natural Disaster or Security Threat	Volunteers will be made aware of, and understand, the Philippines Country Security Plan, VIDA Program Evacuation Guidelines, available medical facilities in the Philippines, insurance policy and procedures and associated protocols both during PDT and In Country Orientation. In the event of a natural disaster or security threat, the volunteer will follow the advice of the ACM. The ACM will follow VIDA program communication protocols and liaise with AusAID Post and RM when monitoring situations. VIDA will not place volunteers into areas which are designated “Level 5” on the DFAT Travel Advisory.
Threat to personal security.	Volunteers are mature individuals and are responsible for their own personal security. Volunteers will be made aware of and will understand the country security plan and associated protocols during PDT and in-country orientation.
Avian Influenza	Volunteers will be made aware of, and understand, the Avian Influenza Security Plan, VIDA Program Evacuation Guidelines, available medical facilities in the Philippines, insurance policy and procedures and associated protocols both during PDT and In Country Orientation. In the event of an Avian Influenza, the volunteer will follow the advice of the ACM. The ACM will follow VIDA program communication protocols and liaise with AusAID Post and RM when monitoring situations.
PNVSCA does not approve volunteer placements	The ACM and RM will continue to work closely with the PNVSCA and build a mutually beneficial relationship in order to source suitable assignments.
Remote and rural assignments provide additional challenges to volunteer.	Volunteers will be “clustered” together on remote and rural placements to provide added peer support and will be closely monitored by the ACM through the established individual monitoring plan. Where volunteers do not have adequate communication available, volunteers will be provided with a satellite phone.

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- VIDA Philippines Security Plan
- White Paper on Australians Overseas Aid Program
- AusAID Australia-Philippines Development Cooperation Strategy 2004-2010
- AusAID DRAFT Australia-Philippines Development Cooperation Program (2007-2011) - *to be launched in May 2007 - notes from desk briefing incorporated*
- Government of the Philippines Medium Term Philippines Development Plan 2004-2010