

Introduction

Background

Asmae is a French, non-religious, non-political organisation, created in 1980 by Sister Emmanuelle. Their central mission is the development of underprivileged children, helping them to choose to build their own way towards autonomy in their own environment. Asmae have been working in the Philippines since 1989 and currently has eleven partners across the Visayas and Luzon, two of whom work specifically with children with disabilities.

Objectives

To better understand disability and special education in the Philippines, Asmae appointed Anthrologica to undertake a six-month consultancy. The consultancy had three main objectives:

- To provide a general assessment of disability in the Philippines
- To provide a detailed assessment of special education in the Philippines
- To analyse potential partner organisations in compliance with Asmae's criteria for partnership

This evidence-based analysis of newly gathered data seeks to make a positive contribution to the work of Asmae in the Philippines, particularly the Visayas. In exploring disability and special education, the study enhanced the knowledge base of Asmae and the information outlined in this report will feed into the development of their programmes and in-country presence.

Methodology

The consultancy took place from September 2010 to February 2011. After an initial briefing at the Asmae head office in Paris, the Technical Advisor (Victoria Thwaites) re-located to the Iloilo. The study was divided into three two-month phases. The first phase focused on the general assessment of disability and people with disabilities; the second phase focused on the detailed assessment of special education; and the third phase on the prospection of potential partners according to Asmae's criteria for partner selection. Information was collated from a wide range of sources, both national and international, and incorporated data from extensive interviews conducted with multiple stakeholders working in the private, government and non-governmental (NGO) sectors in the Philippines.

The Technical Advisor remained in frequent contact with Dr Juliet Bedford, the Director of Anthrologica. Together they formulated the preliminary reports that were submitted to the Asmae head office at the end of each phase of the study. In addition monthly reports were submitted, recording the Technical Advisor's specific activities. The methodology and timeframe were finalised in collaboration between Anthrologica and Asmae at the start of the consultancy, and were regularly reviewed.

Report structure

This is the final report, 'Assessment of disability and special education in the Philippines' for Asmae. Prior to its completion, Asmae was given the opportunity to provide comments and feedback that were incorporated as appropriate.

The report was designed primarily to be of operation use to Asmae and therefore presents up-to-date information and analysis on the disability and special education in the Philippines, focusing on the Visayas. It is structured in three parts, reflecting the consultancy's main objectives.

Part 1 provides contextual information on disabilities in the Philippines and an analysis of the overall situation of persons with disabilities. It explores the definition and prevalence of disability in the Philippines, and presents the legal framework surrounding disability. It also introduces the key stakeholders at national, regional and local levels of government in addition to Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Disabled Persons Organisations (DPOs) that are active in the field. Services and interventions currently available are discussed with particular reference to Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) and dominant concerns of PWDs and their organisations are highlighted. Part 1 is an updated version of the preliminary report on disability that was submitted to Asmae in November 2010.

Part 2 focuses on special education and the provision of related services for children with disabilities in the Philippines. It presents various definitions of special and inclusive education used in-country, and discusses the legal framework surrounding SPED. As in the report's first part, key stakeholders are introduced. The range of SPED activities are explored (including educational, rehabilitative, social, livelihood and paramedic) and the barriers to accessing and receiving SPED are discussed in relation to the potential for Asmae to support SPED in the Philippines. The preliminary report on SPED upon which Part 2 is based, was submitted to Asmae in December 2010.

Part 3 focuses on the prospection of potential partners for Asmae working the arena of disability and special education in Visayas (Panay, Negros Occidental and Cebu) and identifies three short-listed partners. The methodology behind the prospection is outlined. Six organisations were selected for consideration and information cards on each were produced, in addition to a detailed table addressing their suitability in relation to each aspect of Asmae's partnership criteria. Data on each organisation was gathered through interviews with and observations of the potential partners. Three short-listed partners were identified for further evaluation.