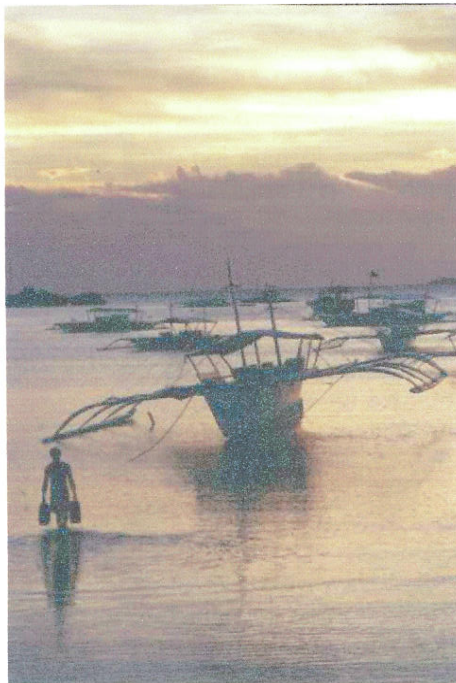


Buyong



Buyong is one of the five sitios of Barangay Maribago, which lies on the eastern side of Mactan Island. Mactan Island is adjacent to the central Philippine city of Cebu. Mactan is the place where Ferdinand Magellan met his death at the hands of Lapu-Lapu in 1521. The island is covered with coral and rocks that make farming extremely difficult. Island products are guitars, rattan and wooden furniture, and items made of native stone and shells. Mactan Cebu International Airport is on the northwestern side of the island, while the island's only city, Lapu-Lapu, is on the west side opposite Maribago and Buyong.



Buyong, like much of Maribago, is squeezed between beach resorts that claim most of the shoreline. The local people have only a narrow access to the water, limiting the area they can use for boating and fishing. Families of eight to twelve live in small homes. Pigs, goats and chickens roam freely through the village. Tuberculosis and leprosy are endemic to the village. Most houses have electricity now. Running water has been extended to some of the village homes near the main road. Some houses have toilets, but there is no sewage system. Shallow, brackish wells provide water for bathing and washing clothes. Many families still have to purchase drinking water.



Villagers work as boatmen, dive guides and vendors. Some are able to find employment in the nearby resorts. Others are able to find jobs in the factories located in the Mactan Export Processing Zone, near the airport. A high school or college diploma is needed for permanent work, yet many adults have not completed their education. Many of the companies on Mactan avoid paying the minimum wage (US\$ 4.00 / day) by offering only five-month contracts. According to the Philippine Department of Labor and Employment, the cost of supporting a family of four is approximately US\$ 10.00 / day, leaving most families in Buyong well under the poverty level.



The Buyong Sponsorship Program continues to work directly with the Maribago Barangay Council to improve the health and standard of living for residents. We continue to support the Barangay "Clean & Green" Campaign, and help organize the annual International Coastal Clean-up each September. The public toilets that we built and the water cooperatives we helped establish serve more than 100 families. Our work with the Maribago Health Center focuses on education and immunizations for mothers and young children. We also arrange for donations of much-needed medicines to the clinic.

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