

Buyong Village



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 the warrior 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 beach and water, limiting the area they can use for boating and fishing. Families of six to ten 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, and houses near the main road have running water. 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. We built communal toilets and helped families form water cooperatives in three barangay locations, one in Buyong village.



Villagers work as boatmen, dive guides, vendors and in nearby resorts. Many adults have not completed their education. A diploma is needed for permanent work. High school and college graduates find jobs in the factories located in the Mactan Export Processing Zone, near the airport. Many of the companies on Mactan avoid paying the minimum wage (US\$4.50 per 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 per day, leaving most families in Buyong well under the poverty level.



The Buyong Sponsorship Program works directly with the Maribago Barangay Council to improve the health and standard of living for residents. We have supported the Barangay "Clean & Green Campaign", and have helped to 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. The Buyong Village Youth Group, organized by Paul, participates in the village fiesta and community planning.