

Project Highlights

The project had two parts: 1) the modification of the Katatagan Manual into a version that is appropriate for low literacy level users and 2) the intervention and training of the barangay health workers (BHWs) in the Katatagan Program. The first part of the project involved consultation meetings on October 20 and 23 among local mental health professionals and community workers. The consultation discussions focused on the principles and ways of developing educational materials that are appropriate for low literacy level persons and how to modify the Katatagan manual according to those principles. Adjustments were made in the terms, phrasing, and formatting of the manual to accomplish this purpose. The simplified version of the Katatagan manual was then translated into the Waray dialect.

The second part of the project consisted of two parts: the intervention and training of barangay health workers (BHWs) in the Katatagan program on November 19-21, 2014. Twenty eight participants (15 from Tolosa municipality and 13 from Tanauan municipality) attended the activity. The intervention part started with a quick assessment of participants' resources and difficulties using the Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Checklist, Beck Depression Inventory, Brief COPE, and Anxiety Scale. Results of the assessment revealed that most of the participants were having difficulties dealing with negative thoughts and emotions. This led the facilitators to decide on using Module 4 (Managing Thoughts and Emotions) of the Katatagan as the focus and start-off point for the intervention although it was agreed among them that materials from the other modules can be used whenever they see the need. The fourth module taught the participants important principles regarding the relationship between thoughts, emotions, and behaviour and it included developing and practicing skills to deal with negative thoughts and emotions. The other modules dealt with other concerns such as evaluating problems and possible solutions, identifying and connecting with social support and setting personal goals. In addition to going through the module/s the participants were also encouraged to make appointment with any of the facilitators for individual counselling if they felt the need for one. Some of the cases brought to individual counselling were domestic violence, personal difficulties at home, and difficulties at work.

The training required the participants to study a module that they were assigned to facilitate with their assigned group. All the participants were provided with a copy of the simplified manual in their local dialect, worksheets and materials that they might need in facilitating the module. They were also given time to read, practice, and consult with the facilitators regarding their tasks. The participants were all very cooperative and enthusiastic throughout the training. All of them recognized the value of the Katatagan program and expressed hope that they will be able to help the people in their communities with what they have learned. The facilitators' common observation was that most of participants needed more

time to study the Katatagan manual, more opportunities to develop facilitation skills, and assistance in running the modules. It is our hope and wish that there will be more funds to run training and workshops to follow up and further enhance the knowledge and skills of the first batch of BHWs and to train more batches of BHWs.