



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

PHILIPPINES

SNAPSHOT

A Healthier Ride with Tricycle Drivers

Filipino Drivers as Advocates for Health



Photo by Ledesma/USAID/HealthPRO

While waiting for more passengers, a member of the Drivers for Health uses a brochure to discuss family planning with a passenger.

“For the first time in 20 years a new role for us as health advocates was recognized.”
— Hipulito Peligro,
member-driver

Tricycle, a motorcycle with a sidecar (passenger-cabin), is a popular and inexpensive form of public transportation in the Philippines, mostly plying short distances on smaller roads. Increasingly popular in South Cotabato Province in Southern Philippines are the tricycle drivers who have embarked on a new journey — the route to better health. These drivers are making a difference in their communities by contributing to a healthier, better educated population.

The initiative began in March 2009 when USAID supported South Cotabato’s Provincial Health Office in conducting a behavior change communication planning exercise. The Provincial Health Office saw the need to address myths and misconceptions on maternal and child health, family planning, HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. USAID’s Health Promotion and Communication Project (HealthPRO) assisted the local government in crafting a program for the *Drivers for Health* to deliver basic health messages to community members. Thirty members of a tricycle drivers’ association in Koronadal City joined the pioneering efforts.

The drivers received training from USAID and the Provincial Health Office on basic health message dissemination and were provided with health promotion materials. Inspired and empowered, the drivers, who were busy earning a living during the day, completed the series of evening classes spread out over a period of two months.

The drivers transformed their privately owned tricycles into “*mini IEC* (information, education and communication) *mobiles*,” placing stickers with health messages on them. Initially, the drivers were disseminating basic health information and referring their passengers to the health clinics for family planning and other services as needed. Later on, they also became free “transporters” of patients – often pregnant and postpartum women – referred by local health officials to the provincial hospital in emergency situations.

Now, the *Drivers for Health* have nearly doubled membership and are part of the provincial health referral system. In 2010 alone, they were able to disseminate health information on family planning and maternal and child health to more than 100,000 passengers, referred more than 1,000 women to health facilities, and brought hundreds of patients to the provincial hospital. Supported and recognized by the local government, the *Drivers for Health* are carrying out their duties as advocates for health, encouraging and providing inspiration to other drivers, and building trust and recognition in communities.

Telling Our Story

U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-1000
<http://stories.usaid.gov>