



# Dreikönigsaktion

## Hilfswerk der Katholischen Jungschar

**REISEBERICHT**  
**KAPINTIG**  
**2016**



GEFÖRDERT DURCH DIE  
 ÖSTERREICHISCHE  
ENTWICKLUNGS  
ZUSAMMENARBEIT

## **MARKUS HAIDER**

**Name:** Markus Haider

**Philippine name:** Mac Mac

**Age:** 20

**Job:** Civil servant

**Highlight:** MACEC day and the bath in the jungle

**Challenge:** First night in Manila with the tropical climate, the cockroaches and the jetlag.

The day with the street families (Kariton) and the meal we had afterwards at the trash area (the smell was disgusting).

**Most important item in my suitcase:** A “new fresh” shirt at any time I needed it.

Hint for prospective participants: Have some games in your hand-package to play something while waiting on the airport or somewhere else. Enough sun-screen!

**Most memorable smell:** The smell at the market hall which we visited during the contrast tour.

**Most memorable sight:** The view we had over the sea and the island when we went to Marinduque by ferry.

**Most memorable taste:** The taste of the fresh Mangos, Bananas, Avocados and Pineapples.

**Most memorable sound:** The sound of the horns of the jeepneys, everyone had a different one.



## **MATTHIAS KAPPER**

**Name:** Matthias

**Philippine name:** Mateo

**Age:** 23

**Profession:** Student of psychology

**Highlight/Challenge:** To live with the host families was on the one hand my highlight but on the other hand also the most challenging experience. For me it was the life with the host families that was the highlight of the journey, but on the other hand it was also the most challenging experience. Again and again getting used to unfamiliar living conditions. Again and again straining oneself to get into contact with the new people.

However also again and again feeling hospitality, again and again having highly interesting conversations and again and again establishing ties with humans you would not get to know somehow else.

Advice for future participants: It is worth it to get involved with the people, even though it sometimes seems to be tiring in the beginning

**Most memorable smell:** the smell of the organic mosquito protecting agent

**Most memorable sight:** The small room we were sharing with our host family at the urban experience

**Most memorable taste:** The delicious mangos

**Most memorable sound:** The low-quality sound of the karaoke-machines



## FRANZISKA MARESCH

**Name:** Franziska

**Philippine name:** Iska

**Age:** 20

**Occupation:** Biology student

**Highlight:** feeling welcomed and spending time with different families and playing with children

**Challenge:** dealing with the hostmother being ashamed and apologising for her home

**Most important thing in the suitcase:** sports clothes - comfort goes beyond style!

Tip for future participants: Be prepared for truth or dare!

**Most memorable smell:** place, where we wanted to look at the sunset in Manila

**Most memorable sight:** the landscape of the Cordilleras

**Most memorable taste:** Balut

**Most memorable sound:** the Putong in our host families community on Marinduque



## SARAH MAYER

**Name:** Sarah Mayer

**Philippine Name:** Isang / Sarah the Leader

**Age:** 31

**Occupation:** I work at the Catholic Youth Movement in Upper Austria (Katholische Jugend OÖ)

**Highlight of the Journey:** Meeting so many, especially young people

**Challenge:** Collecting Garbage in Manila

**Most important thing in your bag:** Ziploc Bags

**Tips for the next batch:** Bring a map or a Globe

**Most memorable smell:** I know how to turn my nose off

**Most memorable sight:** Dosing of in a boat and wake up to see the clearest sea I've ever seen

**Most memorable taste:** a pig which was still alive a few hours before

**Most memorable sound:** Singing „Do you wanna build a snowman“ in Manila



## **MARKUS SCHABERGER**

**Name:** Markus

**Philippine Name:** Makoy

**Age:** 27

**Profession:** Research assistant

**Highlight:** Hike to the village Liglig in cordilleras



**Challenge:** Traffic (Pollution + Driving style)

**Most important item in the luggage:** Thermo-Water bottle  
Realization I made during the Lerneinsatz: Realizing how hard money is made by street families (Kariton)

**Most memorable smell:** Fresh bananas

**Most memorable sight:** Marinduque at the village paye: standing in the sea with clear blue water surrounded by colorful starfishes and corals as well as huge

tadong (=sea urchin)

**Most memorable taste:** Chicken adobo (Philippine dish with chicken in delicious sauce)

**Most memorable sound:** Laugh of Reidel while playing together with the juggling balls

## **MARKUS FLEISCHANDERL**

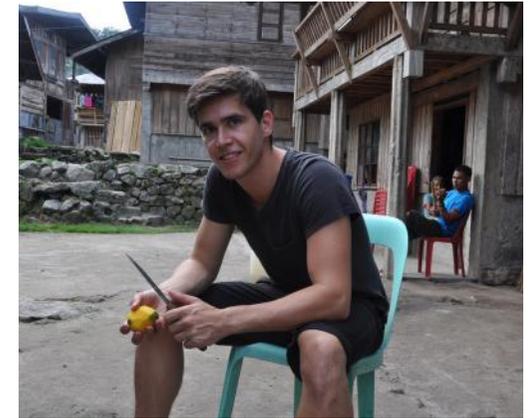
**Name:** Markus

**Philippine name:** Marco

**Age:** 24

**Occupation:** Research Assistant

**Highlight:** Farewell Party in Marinduque



**Challenge:** Eating Balut

**Most important item in luggage:** Headlamp

**Conclusion from Kapintig:** Becoming aware of the fact, that healthcare and education are not natural

**Most memorable smell:** Exhaust gases from the jeepneys in Manila

**Most memorable taste:** Balut

**Most memorable sound:** Sak Noel & Salvi ft. Sean Paul - Trumpets

## RONJA SCHACHERL

**Name:** Ronja

**Philippine name:** Oryang

**Age:** 25

**Occupation:** Student

**Highlight:**

Bathing under ice cold spring

**Challenge:** Lunch at Kariton

**Most important item in luggage:** Leukoplast

**Conclusion from Kapintig:** Chillaxe – concentrate on the really important things in life

**Most memorable smell:** Wet & dry market

**Most memorable sight:** train during rush hour in Manila

**Most memorable taste:** Mungo beans in coconut milk

**Most memorable sound:** “heal the world”



## SOPHIE WINKLMAYR

**Name:** Sophie

**Philippine name:** Pia

**Age:** 25

**Occupation:** staff member of the Katholischen Jungschar Linz

**Highlight:** playing with the children the same games we play in Austrian groups of Jungschar

**Challenge:** figuring out and surviving the traffic in Manila

**Most important item in my luggage:** cabin sleeping bag (made out of silk)

**What I realized during Kapintig:** It is important to dream big

**Most memorable smell:** Fresh air in the Cordilleras and Marinduque after spending some days in Manila

**Most memorable sight:** traditionally dressed women dancing in front of us during the putong (welcome ceremony on Marinduque)

**Most memorable taste:** everything on a banana leaf

**Most memorable sound:** children playing the games we taught them



## **SARAH TRIEFHAIDER**

**Name:** Sarah

**Philippine name:** Sassa

**Age:** 22

**Job:** Primary schoolteacher

**Highlight:** The stay in the Cordilleras

**Challenge:** To see and get along with the problems Filipinos have.

**Most important thing in the luggage:** baby powder for body, face and hair

**Some first-hand hints:**

1. You need just two kind of shoes: Slippers, who are really essential when you travel to Philippines and some sneakers.
2. Make use of mosquito's blogger and take your own Mosquito tent with you.
3. Gear yourself up for a four week adventure with less privacy and little possibility for personal care.

**Most memorable smell:** the smell of the junk in the Kariton junk shop

**Most memorable sight:** the rice fields in the Cordilleras

**Most memorable taste:** the really tasty rice cake wrapped in a banana leaf called Suman

**Most memorable sound:** the traffic in Manila



## **MADS**

**Name:** Madel Mirasol / you can call me Madz

**Age:** 20

**Highlight:** collecting junk with homeless families (kariton)

**Challenge:** trek to sitio liglig while there is a storm.

**Tip for future participants:**

1. Prepare their power point/ slideshow which content about austria.
2. „Approve to austrians“ in terms of what to upload and not to upload pictures on facebook, are they able to tag or whatever (social media thingy) :D
3. Prepare themselves to the environment, people (who propably will gonna take a selfy with them), and foods (rice everywhere)
4. Be more friendly and don't be hesitate to ask questions.

**Most memorable smell:** none. Because all the smells that we've been through are not new to me :D

**Most memorable sight:** gaspar island.

**Most memorable taste:** Austrian Drink (the one that sarah and sassa brought and out foster father like it. I forgot the name of that drink.)

**Most memorable sound:** the shout of dog during thr solidarity night with IPs.



## IVY

**Name:** Ivory Carreon / Ivy for short

**Age:** 24

**Occupation:** Bookkeeper & Youth Program Coordinator of CAJDEN

**Highlight:** Visiting to ECPAT knowing a lot of things about their programs, activities, & their stands against abuses & interacting with the Ecpat girls.

**Challenge:** 1. Mountain Trekking w/ signal #2 storm .

### **Tip for future participants:**

1. Have an advance research or glimpse of what are the things or activities that they might experience or encounter during kapintig and be prepared for it. As well as advance learning of the Philippine country their cultures, traditions, way of living & etc.
2. Try to learn in advance some Tagalog words and English as well, or have with them a book of German-English-Tagalog translation.
3. Just consistently interact, communicate, and play with the people in community especially the children because they really like it.
4. Be open to experience the cultures and way of living of Filipino and just always ask questions if there is something bothering you. Filipino are also open to answer all your queries.



**Most memorable smell:** none (it's not new for us)

**Most memorable sight:** IP's Community at Mt. Liglig

**Most memorable taste:** Schnaps (the plum & Obstler flavor.)

**Most memorable sound:** Once an Austrians went yodelling & the story of my pony.

## **MANILA CONTRAST TOUR**

### **Manila, I keep coming back to Manila \***

The first week in Manila consists mostly of getting to used to the heat, recover from the long travel and get to know a lot of new people. For some years now the IPDI Office which organises the Lerneinsatz or Kapintig, how they call it, for the Austrians, also have a programme for young local people who work or volunteer for NGOs all around the Philippines. This local Kapintig programme gives the young people the opportunity to meet each other, get to know the work of different NGOs and reflect their own work. In the month of July the two Kapintigs merge together and the Austrians and Locals get the chance to connect. One of the best things to do so is the Contrast tour. The Locals show Manila to the Austrians with some challenges. First we only got a minimum wage each to get through the day with all food and entrance fees. Then we should use as many means of transport as possible, taste a lot of different foods, visit churches and museums and all that in just one day.

So we split into smaller groups, because it's easier to move around a big city like Manila when you're not a group of 20 people, and started our tour. Some of our Filipino friends decided that they had planned the same tour anyway, so we found ourselves in a big group again mixed with Austrians and Filipin@s. Our first mean of transport was with a jeepney and it wasn't that easy to find one, where we all fit. But after accomplishing that we went to the wet and dry market, where you can buy everything from fruits and vegetables to meat, fish and clothing. For us Austrians the smell was a challenge and seeing the not so hygienic conditions where the meat was cut and stored. So after that we went off to explore other kinds of transportation. For example the LRT and the MRT, the

trains which connect the different districts and the outskirts of Metro Manila. And some more unusual ones, like the ferry along the river and the trolleys. I think the trolleys are something special in Manila. They are wooden boards on wheels which fit on the train rails and they have a big umbrella. You sit on the board and the driver pushes the whole thing by foot. They use the rails to get over the bridge between the trains and so transport passengers faster and more frequently. If a train is coming, you have to get off and the driver removes his cart and puts it on the rails again, when the train has passed. It is hard work and doesn't pay much. And the drivers have to buy a lot of slippers because they walk through them rather fast while pushing the trolleys. But for tourists it's adventurous, worth a try and gives the drivers some income.

And what else have we done? We went for a cheap lunch in a worker's canteen. We touched the feet of a statue of a saint at Quiapo church. We smelled at the medicinal herbs at Quiapo. We walked passed San Augustin Church and Manila Cathedral. We weren't allowed to go near the Mosque. We rested on the walls of Intramuros. We tasted fish balls and other street food. And we went on a horse-drawn carriage, a Kalesa, through Intramuros. One of the tour stops was also the national museum. Both of them, because there is one for paintings and one for artefacts. And guess what they have in the one with artefacts. A part of the Berlin wall! That was something I found really curious. One of the biggest challenges as a big group was crossing the streets with crazy traffic in Manila. We learned that you just have to be brave and start crossing the street while showing the cars to stop with your hand. This method of crossing was soon known by all as „The power of the hand“. As the perfect ending for a great day our local guides wanted to show us the romantic sunset at Kapintig bay.

*\*Lyrics from the song „Manila“ by the Hotdogs*

Tired and sweating we came to the sea which stank, there was rubbish everywhere and the sunset was behind a big hotel. Our guides were slightly embarrassed but it was one of the many contrasts which give the tour the name it has. And so the really last experience of the day was going by train in rush hour. We had to let 3 trains pass until we could fit in one.

To sum it up we spent the whole day running around, having lots of fun, getting to know the others and the city all at once. And we got to see the contrasts which make Manila the kind of city it is. The contrast between poor and rich, neat and dirty, narrow and wide and cheap and expensive. You can like or hate Manila but it's definitely worth a visit especially with great guides like we had!

## MARINDUQUE EXPERIENCE 10 – 14 JULY

### Day with MACEC

The first point on our list was sandbagging near a small village. The reason therefore was a river which was poisoned by an international mining company. Every time they have heavy rains they also have flooding's, and the poisoned water destroys their houses and their plants which they grow to have something to eat. To protect the village from the poisoned water, they are building a rampart with sandbags, so we were helping filling some of them.

After that hard work we had a bath in the forest near a waterfall, it was awesome! We saw beautiful butterflies, dragonflies and lots of plants which I have never seen before. Accordingly we had lunch, after that we took two jeepneys to the sea where we went by boat to a smaller island. On this island we planted some mangroves which was really funny because of the hidden holes in the mud. On our way back we stopped at a fishery where we learned how to make dried fish.

And the last point was a mining area where the soul is poisoned. The mine was filled up with rainwater, so it is a lake now (the water is poisoned) and people are swimming in it. Because of the poison in the water they get ill and so the die very young because they can't afford a medical treatment. At this place we planted some trees to reforest the infested ground and stop the erosion. After that last point on our list, we returned to the pastoral centre.



### Immersion in a rural household

After our day with MACEC the one day has come. The day we were looking forward to and the day some of us, including me were really excited about: The day we were getting to know our first host families, complete strangers we were going to live with in only a small space and share with them their everyday life.

The aim of our first stay at host families was to get to know BECs. A short trip into history: After the repression by the dictator Marcos was over, the church of the Philippines decided that they had no other choice than becoming a church of the poor. One way of establishing this church of the poor was the foundation of the so called Basic Ecclesial Communities



(BECs). The goal BECs was to found small christian communities in the villages, where usually no priest is around, so that they can take care of each other and strengthen their community life and their self-determination.

To experience the BECs our travel group was divided into three smaller groups, each consisting out of three Austrians and one Pinoy. In my group were Pia, Makoy and Helen. At first we drove to the church of our parish to attend the holy mass, and subsequently we had breakfast with some of the local citizens.

After some ice breaking and small talk a really interesting discussion, about the struggles of the Philippines, drug dealers, the new Philippine president Duterte, human rights and if human rights should apply for everyone or not, started. Then our journey continued and we had a thrilling one-hour tricycle trip over rough and smooth that ended in our host village and left a little dizziness.

Arriving at our host family's house the Estrada-family provided us a warm welcome, even though they were a little bit shy or had problems speaking English. It was our 18-year-old host brother Julius that was the first one we built a relationship to and that showed us around in the village. As soon as we were strolling through the little paths a crowd of children was following us, curious what the

strangers were doing there. However, after short time, they came closer, talked to us, showed us some dances and searched for starfishes with us. They also taught us some of their traditional games, which were much more complicated than we had expected them to be.

The next day in the morning I could not believe where I was, and with a sleepy voice I said to Makoy: "Usually you dream something unbelievable and then you wake up and everything is just normal. However, here it is the other way around". Days full of hospitality, new experiences and great food followed.

We ate dinner in the moonlight using only our hands, we went fishing, we visited the local school, we sang serenades, and we at least tried to catch some crabs. One of the activities that will definitely stay in my memory was the construction of a public toilet. This was necessary because in the part of the village where the toilet was built was no toilet beforehand. A lot of people worked together for the whole day to finish it – probably the most obvious sign for the solidarity within the community of the village and within the BEC we got to see.

In general it was really fascinating to get to know the everyday community life (that interestingly mainly took place at a basketball court in the center of the village, where everybody was just sitting next to each other) and to catch a glimpse of the dreams, challenges and the coping strategies of the people. However, although it is a simple life there and I am sure there are really hard times and also days where you do not know how things will continue and how you are going to manage the challenges before you, I guess it is a life worth living. One indication for that assumption is the fact that a lot of people, when they have earned money abroad, come back to live in the village again.

In the last evening there was a goodbye celebration where the children showed us some dances they studied using YouTube, speeches were held, food was eaten and spontaneously Pia was singing with a girl Justin Bieber's "Love Yourself". And in the end, and I swear I don't know how it happened, I was dancing with an approximately 80 year old woman with approximately 2 -3 teeth in her mouth. What an appropriate ending for days that seemed like an unbelievable dream.

## **URBAN COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE 24 JULY – 28 JULY 2016**

### **Immersion in an Urban Households - AKKMA**

During our Urban Experience our group was divided to visit two different organizations. Six of us chose to get to know AKKMA, which is located in Valenzuela, a part on Manila. AKKMA is an organization of women in an urban poor community working for the empowerment of women particularly in terms of health services, family life and livelihood opportunities. The women of AKKMA are in a very difficult position. Most of the jobs in the nearby factory are only



for men, so it is really hard for wives to contribute to the family income. On the other hand, the jobs in the factory are precarious since most of the contracts are concluded only for a few months. On top of that most of the families do not own the land on which they are living so they live with the constant fear of relocation.

Our group was accommodated in families of the members of AKKMA, one or two Austrians lived with a family. Even though the houses of the families were of limited space and most of the families had to live with a small income they took a lot of effort to host us comfortably and meet all our needs.

The women of AKKMA take matters into their own hands and showed us for three days how: We were able to visit the day care center and joined a vegetable parade for better nutrition. They showed us how they made peanut butter and also medicine which is sold to increase the salary of the families. One woman of AKKMA even showed us her own sawing and printing business.

The second day we spent Valenzuela was also the day the SONA took place, the speech of president Duterte. It gave us a chance to witness the hopes and expectations of Philippines into their new president.

Even though the immersion in the urban households was the most challenging one in terms of living conditions, space and noise we felt very safe and welcome in the families and with the members of the organization. It was inspiring how they manage to make their lives better with small steps every day.

### **Immersion in an urban household – SPCC**

The other part of the Kapintig group (Ronja, Matthias, and Markus) were invited to visit the organization of SPCC (Salvatorian Pastoral Care for Children). This organization is founded and maintained by Salvatorian Sisters and their major aim is to help partner parishes to become more women and child friendly. More specifically the approach of SPCC is to address the denial and violation of the basic human rights of women and children in partner parishes. However SPCC is not permanently located at the partner parish but only stays there for

approx. 3 years and helps the people (volunteers and parish priest) in the parish to organize themselves and to keep maintaining the save space for women and children.

### **The village**

Our travel group stayed in the Holy Trinity Parish in Novaliches/Quezon City. Our host families were in two different villages: Ronja and Matthias lived three days at the home of Ean ??Nachname?? in ??Barangy Name??, Markus and Theresa (a Solidareinsatz-volunteer from Austria working at SPCC for three months) stayed at the young family Genetiano in the village Commonwealth Upper Nawasa. Nawasa refers to the owner of the land where the village is build, the National Water and Sanitation Association. Therefore all inhabitants of Lower and Upper Nawasa do not own the ground where they built there house, which leave them with the constant fear of being relocated any day. In the case of the Genetiano family even the house is still on loan. Nevertheless the father, Joseph, who works as a mechanic at a motorcycle repairshop and the mother, Liza, who owns a Sari-Sari-store earn enough money for their every day life. They are able to send their three children, Julie-Maria, Julius and Joy, to school and can pay their mouthly bills. They even have cell phones, a freezer, a television (almost every family owns on) and a really nicely pimped motorcycle. Only when it comes to unforeseen repairments there is not enough money. Ate Liza told me that the freezer broke last year and so they where not able to pay the interest for the loan of the house. Fortunately, she said, the loaner is the boss of the motorcycle repairshop where Joseph works and he is a good guy. He reduced the monthly payment for half a year so she could afford to buy a new freezer.

### One day of Genetiano family

As far as we could experience a standard day of the Genetiano family looks like that:

The mother, ate Liza gets up already at three or four a.m to open her Sari-Sari-store. She said that she is the first to open in the village and therefore all

people go to her store. In this time she makes the most money of the whole day. During the day she is doing housework, serving costumers in her store, meeting with friends or volunteering for SPCC. Once or twice a week she meets with her husband Joseph at the supermarket in the afternoon to buy stuff for the Sari-Sari-store. She sells really a lot of different things: mainly sanitary articles like



shampoo and toothbrushes, basic foods like salt and oil and sweets for children (huge variety). All comes within tiny packages which can be afforded by the inhabitants of Upper Nawasa. Her strategy is to buy big packages in the supermarket and to sell the distributed smaller packages for double the price of the big package. This way she earns approximately 2200 PHP (= 44€) per week.

Her husband gets up at half past five to take his 6 year old son Julius and his foster child Joy (daughter of Liza's sister) with his motorcycle to primary school. Then he does not directly go to work directly but stops by the nearby Eco Park. In this green and silent park he goes jogging and does some physical exercise. Then he starts to work at approximately seven o'clock. He told me how the system at the repairshop works. A new customer directly speaks to Joseph and asks him to repair his motorbike. Then Joseph looks what has to be repaired and if he needs replacement parts he goes to his boss and buys these parts from him. Joseph on the other hand is paid directly from the customer. This means that Joseph himself is responsible for his income by calculating his expenses and adding the cost for his repairment service. He is allowed to use the shop facilities like tools and space but does not get monthly salary. If he is not able to work he does not earn money. Julie-Marie, the elder sister of Julius, is 13 years old and goes to school by feet. She is like a second mother for Julius and Joy and is also sometimes fully responsible for the Sari-Sari-store. According to a lot of certificates hanging around in the small house she is a diligent pupil. At the day of the SONA (State of the Nation Address) of the new elected president Duterte she got the homework to note the main points of the speech. During the one and a half hour speech of Duterte, which we watched in TV, she made notes on a scratch paper and afterwards she wrote a summary of two A4 papers as a clear copy – amazing for a 13 year old girl I think.

### **Book Reading**

On the first morning at Liza, Theresa, Mads (a local kapintig who lived in a hostfamily in the neighborhood) and me sit together and plan the program for the Book Reading. We separated the tasks and agreed on a time table. Before lunch we went through whole Upper Nawasa to advertise this event for the kids. We informed and invited them to come to the Holy Trinity Parish Church at 1 p.m on the same day. There we first had an opening prayer and then we separated the approximately 60 children into two groups. One group played games while the other group read out of a children book. Before we said good by to the children we again played games. All in all it was a bit chaotic and exhausting afternoon similar to a Jungscharstunde.

### **KARITON & ECPAT**

Getting up really early that day and off we went to Kariton, a Junkshop. A minimalistic breakfast in our stomachs and some dizziness since waking up - I didn't know then, that this would be the hardest, most challenging day of the whole Kapintig-programme, at least for me. Together with four street families we were collecting junk on the streets of Manila, for more than 2 ½ hours. From the beginning on the sun was burning down on us, so my group had to stop every ten to fifteen minutes for us Austrians to rest. After a while we knew what junk would bring some money and what to leave on the streets. Back in the junkshop, thinking that the physical challenge was the hardest part, we started to separate the Junk for the final weighing. The air in the junkshop was indescribable- hot, muggy and smelly; my hands were black because of the dirt and I constantly touched something yucky, undefinable. Thinking that this was the real challenge.

ge! We earned about 230Pesos (not even 5€) with our junk, to support the street families for that day. After all that junk-sorting, we had our lunch right in the junkshop –another challenge. All in all it was really hard to see in what circumstances those families live and how little money they earn with, what I think is one of the hardest jobs in the world – this was most challenging for me!

With my thoughts still with the Kariton-families, we spent the afternoon with ECPAT (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography & Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes). After a really good orientation about the NGO, we spent the rest of the afternoon with some girls who were currently living at the ECPAT-shelter. We created some awesome artwork, played a lot games and finally danced together. Even though my mind was still with the street families from the morning, it was a really touching experience with those amazing girls.

## **INDIGENOUS CULTURE EXPERIENCE 29 JULY - 3 AUGUST 2016**

Mountains, rice terraces wherever you look, landslides, typhoons, lots of natural resources, carabaos, indigenous people, giggling children, lots of coffee, a frightening bridge, a slaughtered pig, striking the gong and butterfly dancing, brown outs - only a few words to describe Liglig, our home in the Cordilleras.

Liglig is located in the mountainous part of Luzon in the Kalinga Region. Even though the area seems very calm and untouched the families had to suffer and fight a lot to be able to keep their land the way it is.

Due to the rich mineral resources, the land has to offer, foreign companies try to settle down and be the 'legitimate' owner of the land. Since the natives neither have records nor similarly recognised certificates that prove that they are the rightful owners of their ancestors land, they were denied of the ownership of this land since the Spanish colonisation.

All these settlements of foreign companies go hand in hand with extensive clearings, militarisation and building of dams. Often whole villages have to be relocated because they are either directly affected by the removal of the country or suffer indirectly due to polluted rivers and the dead fish and the infertile land coming with this problem.

Thanks to the strong women of Liglig they managed to prevent the dam in their region by standing up to the military forces with the help of NGOs. They not only told us the story, but even showed us in a way of dancing on the last night, which impressed us quite a lot.

The main source of this regions livelihood is agriculture - mainly rice plantation. They also plant other crops like root crops, vegetables and fruits, which if there is a surplus can be a source of cash income. Coffee production, even though it is only produced in small amounts, is however the main cash crop in the community. A lot of farmers also sell rice, but this doesn't mean that they have a surplus. Often they are forced to sell because they need the money for medication and educational expenses of their children. Only a few families have a regular source of income from employment such as teaching, barangay officials or also over-sea-workers.

In the Cordilleras we were exposed to a lot of different challenges. The first one being the trip there. It all started on the 29th of July at 6PM in Manila. All standing at the bus station anticipated for our 10 to 12 hour drive in the luxury Deluxe bus - which however, turned out to be a regular bus with an even cooler AC. After only a few hours of sleep, a movie and one person throwing up we survived the hideous trip to Tabuk and arrived at half past 4AM. We took a rest, had breakfast, took a dip in the pool and then had a little sightseeing of Tabuk, including the Chico river and having a look in which direction our next destination would be. In the evening we had an orientation on the Cordilleras and on what to expect of the next couple of days. It also already started to rain, which turned into a typhoon with signal number 2 - leaving us with the decision if it was even safe to hike to Liglig. The next morning we got up quite early, packed our backpacks and decided that a little rain never hurt nobody and we would take the risk.

So we got into a jeepney, which took us up the mountain, including a coffee stop. On top, where the road ended, we got off, put on our rain jackets and garbage bags and after a 1 1/2 hour slippery downwards hike and surviving the frightening bridge we finally arrived in the village. Of course we immediately felt very welcomed and were offered some coffee. Then we had some lunch and were split up into our host families, with whom we spent the rest of the afternoon getting to know them and what their life was like - all very lovely people. In the evening we had a gathering and were introduced to the rest of the village members.

We started the 1th of August with a trip to the nearby village, unfortunately the rain was quite strong by night so that the Chico river got overflowed and we had to take a detour. After about 1 hour trenched in sweat we reached a school, we got some sweet coffee and had a short rest before we started to introduce some main facts about Austria and played some games with the children in the class.

Thereupon we continued our walk to get to the rice fields. After merienda in the barangay we learned how to plant rice, produce coffee and peel mungo beans. In the afternoon we had luck and we were able to take the shortcut home to Liglig along the Chico river. The rest of the day we bonded with our host families and their neighbours and tried some new delicious food for dinner.

On Tuesday we had our second school visit in another educational institute in Kalinga region. We played some action games with the students and learned in reverse how to play with bamboo instruments for the planned evening entertainment- the Cultural night. This last night in Liglig was really impressive for all of us. We got a better understanding through the presented performances- mainly dancing and singing, what constitutes life of indigenous people in the Philippines. After the midnight snack 'Lechon' or sucking pig we hopped tired into our sleeping bags.

The next day we started early in the morning to hike back to the street where a mini van picked us up again. Then we had a three hour ride to Bontoc for lunch, sightseeing and shopping before we continued our drive for five hours to Baguio to the Ecological Centre, our accommodation for one and a half night. The 3rd of August was a full day of processing and at 2AM we took a luxury Deluxe bus back to Manila.

Summarising, the Cordilleras trip was one of the most memorable experiences we made in the 4 weeks. We had a lot of possibilities to learn about Filipinos and their culture. We saw how they live and which problems they have to face with and how they deal with them. Thank you for your openness, honesty and hospitality.



## **GSTANZL**

We travelled 14 hours to see new land,  
to speak with new compassionate people and try to understand.  
Our knowledge before was really low,  
but we soon learned „Kumusta ang puso mo?“

Ate She really likes Hello Kitty,  
and we noticed that she is really pretty.  
Uncle Vio can't eat anything,  
but he really likes yang and yin.

They gave us a malong which is really nice,  
you can use it in many ways more than twice.  
For sleeping and changing it really grooves,  
and also they told us for Ninja moves!

The local Kapintigs they joined for our trip,  
even from their energy we got a zip.  
May tatlong bibe they taught us straight away,  
and how to improvise for every pray'r.

Heal the world is our theme,  
and the dance of the local Kapintig team.  
At every orientation we heard this song,  
and after that sang it all day long.

On our first leg, the contrast tour,  
we experienced the rich and the poor.  
With the power of our hands,  
we managed traffic and even made friends.

On Marinduque they welcomed us with a Putong,  
they danced and sang songs all night long.  
They threw coins and flowers too,  
we really enjoyed it even though we had no clue.

On Marinduque it was green and calm,  
Mac-Mac wanted to see a butterfly farm.  
But the butterfly they were all dead,  
Mac-Mac said screw it and went fishing instead.

When we boarded the jeepney they said hop,  
jump on the roof you can ride on the top.  
But the tall Austrians they weren't able,  
to duck down from every tree and cable.

Mangroves and fishes, trees and sand,  
on this day we put mud on our hand.  
This day was hard but did not hurt,  
forever remain nails full of dirt.

Cockroaches, bats, mosquitos and rats,  
and even lizards were found in our beds.  
From all animals those were only five,  
but really scared us the ugliest dog alive.

With the children we played games in the sand,  
we created team starfish and threw up our hands.  
In the end team Swaki wins,  
and with that fun a friendship begins.

Beach day and beach day, ... hooray,

,... Karaoke.

In AKKMA the women were well organized,  
they made peanut butter to be energized.  
Making medicine was really fun,  
and we joined the children for a vegetable run.

For Kariton families life is really hard,  
but they collect junk which is really smart.  
With the girls from ECPAT we drew a picture,  
they can really dance that is for sure.

Bagyo Carina scared us all a bit,  
despite signal number 2 we did not quit.  
We went hiking to go to Liglig,  
the bridge was shaky and our backpacks were big.

In Liglig the children had a lot of fun,  
when we bathed naked under the sun.  
We Austrians came to the Philippines,  
to tan our skin but we got whitening cream.



Sarah the leader couldn't go to the CR,  
because there were anitos near and far.  
The last night in Liglig there was a pig,  
in front of our window bound to a stick.  
We never expected it to be killed,  
but five hours later they served it grilled.



Now it is time to say good bye,  
tomorrow is sunday and we already fly.  
We are are exhausted and very froh (happy),  
loud and clear we say „Salamat po!“.



