



GLOBAL INITIATIVE FOR EXCHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT INC.

# NATIONAL PROFILE

## 2024-2025

Welcome to the Pearl of the Orient Seas, Philippines!

This National Profile aims to provide you with an overview of our country. As you perhaps you already know via google, books, videos, etc. Coming to the Philippines would be a whole different experience. Your environment during your exchange is going to be contrary to the familiar one: culture, society, politics, economics, food, transport, etc.; almost everything! But this is going to be extremely interesting, exciting, and exotic. To raise your curiosity- and also to avoid you to having so big surprises - we want to give you some preview information about these topics.

Also, our national profile aims to give you the first idea about volunteerism in the Philippines. We also want to make you aware that as beautiful as the Philippines can be, it remains a poor country with a demonstration of poverty that you may not be used to. A place where some rights you may consider normal are not, or maybe less comfortable than you enjoy in your country.

We hope that you enjoy going through this profile and that you will be even more excited to come to the Philippines. We are looking forward to welcoming you.

MABUHAY!

GIED TEAM

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# BASIC INFORMATION

Official Name: Republic of the Philippines

Capital City: Manila City

Area: 301,780 square kilometers (116,518 sq mi)

Population: 109,035,343 million  
(As of 1 May 2020)

Religions:

80% Roman Catholic

10% Christian

6% Islam

4% Other



The Philippine Flag

Official Languages: Filipino and English

Time: Philippine time zone is GMT+8

Currency: Philippine Peso (PHP/₱)

Business Hours:

Banks are usually open 9 am until 3 pm from Monday to Friday.

Shopping malls and department stores open 9 am to 8 pm 7 days a week.

Private and public offices open from 8 am to 5 pm during weekdays.



# LOCATION, GEOGRAPHY, & CLIMATE



## Location and Geography

The Philippines is an archipelago that consists of 7,641 islands with a total land area of 301,780 square kilometers (116,518 sq mi). The country is bordered by two large bodies of water, the West Philippine Sea in the west, and the Pacific Ocean in the east. The 11 largest islands contain 95% of the total land area. The largest of these islands is Luzon at about 105,000 square kilometers (40,541 sq mi). The next largest island is Mindanao at about 95,000 square kilometers (36,680 sq mi). The archipelago is around 800 kilometers (500 mi) from the Asian mainland and is located between Taiwan and Borneo. The tallest peak in the country is Mt. Apo at 9,691 ft.



## Climate

Based on the average of all weather stations in the Philippines, excluding Baguio, the mean annual temperature is 26.6°C. The coolest months fall in January with a mean temperature of 25.5°C while the warmest month occurs in May with a mean temperature of 28.3°C. Latitude is an insignificant factor in the variation of temperature while altitude shows greater contrast in temperature. Thus, the mean annual temperature of Baguio with an elevation of 1,500 meters is 18.3°C. This makes the temperature of Baguio comparable with those in the temperate climate and because of this, it is known as the summer capital of the Philippines.

The difference between the mean annual temperature of the southernmost station in Zamboanga and that of the northernmost station in Laoag is insignificant. In other words, there is essentially no difference in the mean annual temperature of places in Luzon, Visayas or Mindanao measured at or near sea level.



# GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

## Government & Politics

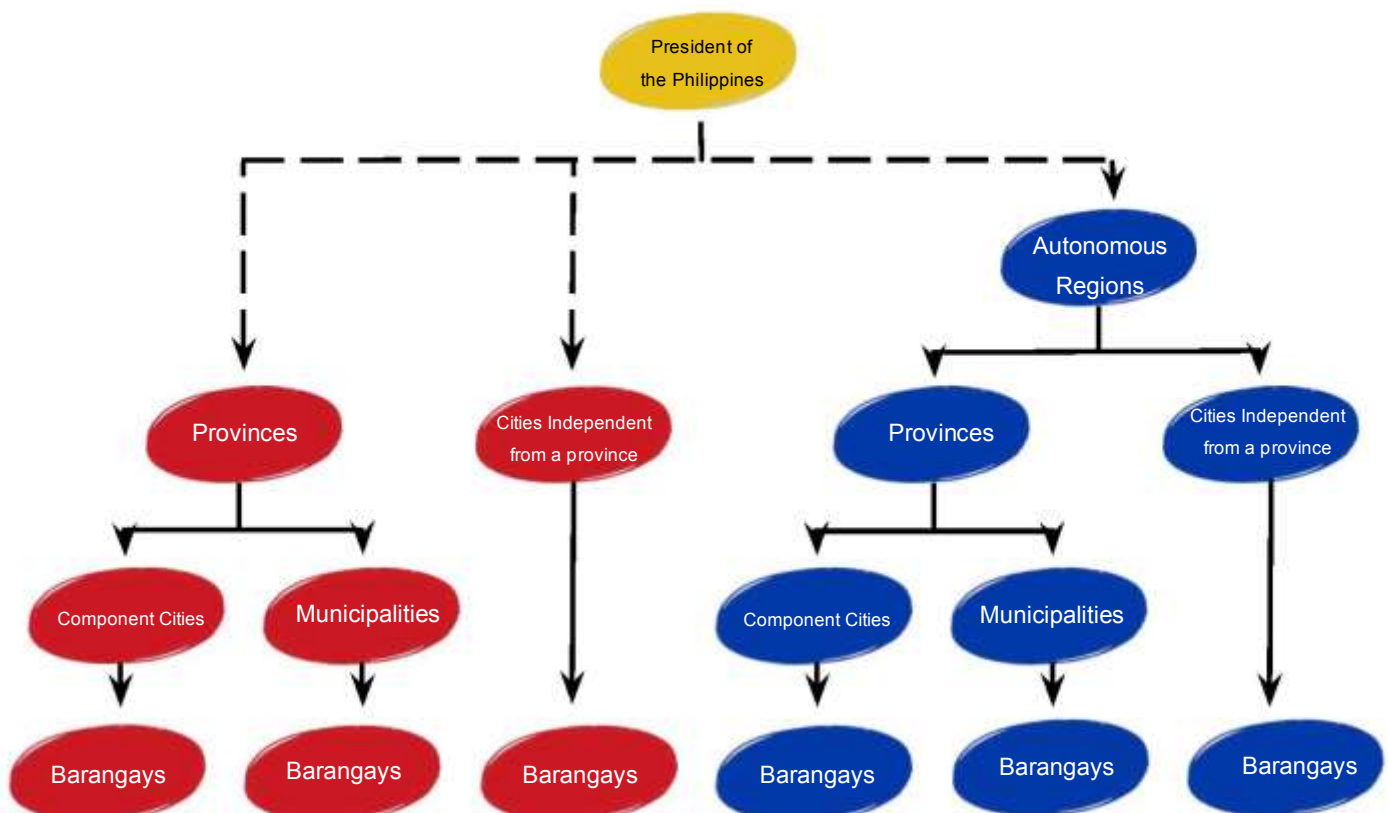
The Philippines is divided into a hierarchy of local government units (LGUs) with the 80 provinces as the primary unit. Provinces are further subdivided into cities and municipalities, which are in turn composed of barangays. The barangay is the smallest local government unit.

Most government offices establish regional offices to serve the constituent provinces. The regions themselves do not possess a separate local government, except for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.



Philippines Coat of Arms

The Politics of the Philippines take place in an organized framework of a presidential, representative, and democratic republic whereby the president is both the head of state and the head of government within a pluriform multi-party system. This system revolves around three separate and sovereign yet interdependent branches: the legislative branch, the executive branch, and the judicial branch. Executive power is exercised by the government under the leadership of the president. Legislative power is vested in both the government and the two-chamber Congress: The Senate (the upper chamber) and the House of Representatives (the lower chamber). Judicial power is vested in the courts with the Supreme Court of the Philippines as the highest judicial body.





# SOCIETY, CULTURE, & PEOPLE

## Society and Culture

The Philippines is a really beautiful country that sees a mix of diverse cultures. The culture of the Philippines has seen various influences in the past. This beautiful country consists of around 7,641 islands with a large settlement of mostly Malay people. The Filipinos, as the people over here are known, are distinctive in many ways and have preserved their rich traditions and culture. Here, we shall take a look at the finer aspects of the culture of the Philippines.



### People

With around 100 million people, the Republic of the Philippines has a mixed crowd that consists of different religions and people from various regions. One can see a mix of Christians and Muslims. The Chinese, Americans, and Spanish lot are also spotted and Christianity is widely practiced out here.

The Filipino character is a mixture of different cultures. The Bayanihan or spirit of kinship and camaraderie that Filipinos are famous for is said to be taken from Malay forefathers. Close family relations are said to have been inherited from the Chinese. The piousness comes from the Spaniards who introduced Christianity in the 16th century. Hospitality is a common denominator in the Filipino character and this is what distinguishes the Filipino.

## Philippine Food

Chicharon is a popular snack in the Philippines. This is deep-fried pork or chicken dish. Apart from this, the bibingka, a rice cake, and the ensaymada, a sweet roll, are also popular as snack items. The lechon, a whole roasted pig, is also a popular food dish in the cuisine of the Philippines. Filipinos love to gorge on Pescado – a fried fish dish, pinakbet – vegetable stew, puto - rice cakes, and pan de sal – salted rolls of bread.

Lechon is a pork dish in several regions of the world, most specifically in Spain and its former colonial possessions throughout the world. The word lechón originated from the Spanish term lechón, referring to a suckling pig that is roasted. Additionally, it is a national dish of the Philippines with Cebu being acknowledged by American chef Anthony Bourdain as having the best pig.

## Native Delicacies or Kakanin

Uniquely Filipino, these are sweet munchies or sometimes desserts made from rice, sweet rice, or root vegetables that are slow-cooked and usually made with coconut or coconut milk. It could be made from rice or sweet rice, or any of the root vegetables like ube, cassava, and





CHICHARON



PINAKBET



LECHON



PANCIT



BIBINGKA



PUTO CHEESE



ENSAYMADA



PUTO BUNGBONG

## Music and Dance

Music of the Philippines is a performance art composed of various genres and styles. The music of the Philippines is a mixture of other Asian, European, Latin American, American, and indigenous influences. Philippine gong music can be divided into two types: the flat gong commonly known as gangsa and played by the groups in the Cordillera region of the bossed gongs played among the Islam and animist groups in the Southern Philippines.

There are many dances performed in the Philippine Islands such as the popular "Tinikling", to the exoticized "Pangalay", to the skill-based interpretation of the "Banga" and Spanish-tinged "Jota". Dance categorizations range from geographic localization to societal functions, dance influences, and periods.

## Art

Throughout every region, the art of the Philippines is diverse. It includes: Painting, dancing, weaving, sculpting, pottery





## Dress

The official national costume of Filipino men is the Barong Tagalog. The upper garment of the boy in the picture is a Barong. It is worn over a Chinese collarless shirt called Camisa de Chino.

The official national costume of Filipina women is the baro't saya (baro't saya). The baro is the top blouse. The saya is the skirt.

## Fiesta (Festivals)

Exuberant celebrations are customary in the Philippines. Called “fiesta” is part and parcel of Filipino culture. It revolves around the celebration of the feast day of the patron saint of the province or an important historical date. Each city and barrio (village) has at least one local festival of its own. Days of street dancing, feasting, and parades are held to celebrate the occasion.

### Some Festivals in the Philippines



## Transportation

Public transportation in the Philippines is not as organized as in most countries and doesn't always work to schedule! A network of land/air/ferry transportation is in the early stages of development and rail travel is limited in Luzon except for between San Fernando and Legaspi. Fast ferries between islands are common in the Visayas region. Land transportation is by cheap metered taxis, buses, and/or jeepneys in and between the major cities. Out of the cities, you will travel by "banca" (motorized outrigger boat), "pedicab" or a "tricycle" (motorcycle with a side seat). They depart when full rather than to a timed itinerary and are an interesting experience!

You can ride a taxi and tell the driver where you want to go (generally they know all the routes) just ask them to switch on their meter. By the way, the plug-down rate in a taxi is ₱ 60.00

Jeepneys are also widely used in Cebu. It is an innovative, one-of-a-kind means of transportation in the Philippines. There are traditional jeepneys that are fueled with diesel or gasoline, and there are modern e- jeepneys, which are powered by electric engines. They have certain routes and you'll know their route by the signboard on the front of the windshield. The minimum fare is ₱ 13 (traditional) or ₱ 15 (e-jeeps) for the first 4km. and they usually have this fare matrix displayed inside the vehicle for reference.

We also have the tri-bike or as affectionately known in the Philippines a "tri-cycle" or "pedicab." This is a motorbike with a passenger-side car. Usually, it is used for transportation within the barangays, inside subdivisions, or in places with buildings in proximity. Two to three people can be accommodated on the trike and the usual fare is ₱ 15.00 to ₱ 20.00 each. You can access nearby places with this transportation means without walking!

Motorbike is widely used as well in the Philippines, especially in the mountainous areas where the only means of transportation are motorbikes. In the Visayas, specifically in Cebu, motorbikes for hire are called habal-habal.



# Methods of Transport in the Philippines



Roll on-roll off (Roro) vessel



Manila Metro Rail Transit (MRT)



Traditional jeepney



Electric jeepney



Habal-habal



Airplane



Motor-powered banca/bangka



Motorcycles



# AIRPORT INFORMATION



## **Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA)**

Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Filipino: Paliparang Pandaigdig ng Ninoy Aquino) or NAIA (IATA: MNL, ICAO: RPLL), also known as Manila International Airport is one of the two international airports serving the Metro Manila Area. The other international airport is the Clark International Airport, which is located in Pampanga, in Central Luzon. NAIA is the main international gateway to the Philippines. The international airport has an adequate traveler facility: duty-free and souvenir shops, tourist information and assistance counters, hotel and travel agency representatives, car rental services, bank and automated teller machines, postal service, national and international direct dial telephone booths, medical clinics and baggage deposit areas.

It is located along the border between Pasay City and Parañaque City in Metro Manila. It is about 7 kilometers south of the country's capital Manila, and southwest of Makati City's Central Business District.

It has 4 terminals:

- Terminal 1      NAIA Terminal - International flights  
(Philippine Airlines, Eva Air, Asiana Airlines)
- Terminal 2      Centennial Terminal - All Philippine Airlines flights only (North wing:  
International, South wing: Domestic)
- Terminal 3      NAIA International Terminal – International/Domestic flights  
(Turkish Airlines, Philippine Airlines, Cebu Pacific, AirAsia)
- Terminal 4      MIAA Domestic Terminal - All domestic flights  
(AirAsia, Cebu Pacific, Philippine Airlines, Royal Air)

## Mactan-Cebu International Airport (NAIA)

Mactan–Cebu International Airport (Cebuano: Tugpahanang Pangkalibutan sa Mactan–Sugbo, Filipino: Paliparang Pandaigdig ng Mactan–Cebu) (IATA: CEB, ICAO: RPVM) is the second busiest airport of the Philippines. It is located in Lapu-Lapu City on Mactan Island in Metro Cebu which belongs to the Central Visayas region of the Philippines.

Cebu is the second busiest airport in the Philippines with 52,000 flights and over 6.5M passengers. All the Philippine carriers are serving Cebu (Philippine Airlines, Air Asia, Air Swift, Seair, etc.) and it is home to Cebu Pacific Air (ATR-72, A320). Foreign carriers during the daytime are Cathay Pacific (Hongkong), Silkair (Singapore), and Tigerair (Singapore). During the nighttime, the Korean carriers are coming with Korean Air, Asiana, Air Busan, Jejuair, and Jinair. There is one Seair B737-200 still in service, leaving CEB to Clark every evening with cargo for UPS and returning the next morning around 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM from Clark – during the day, the 737 is parked on the ramp.

Mactan–Cebu International Airport was chosen as the most viable location for the world's largest aircraft, the Antonov An- 225 Mriya, to



Facilities for the physically handicapped: The airports are handicapped-friendly. Wheelchairs are available on request from the airline ground staff.

- Customs: Visitors are advised to fill in the Baggage Declaration Form before disembarking to facilitate Customs examination. The following are allowed inside the duty-free: a reasonable quantity of clothes, jewelry, and toiletries; 400 sticks of cigarettes or two tins of tobacco, and two bottles of wine or spirits of not more than one liter each.
- Porterage: Baggage carts are available for free. Porter services are also free. Tipping is traditional.
- Airport Transfers: Visitors are advised to avail of accredited fixed-rate or metered taxis in the Arrival Area. At the Manila Domestic Airport, accredited transfer services are available on pre-paid coupon basis. Other airports are served by metered taxis. All airports have counters for hotel transport and car rental services.





# ABOUT US

The Global Initiative for Exchange and Development Inc. (GIED) is a non-profit and non-government organization established on July 07, 2015, in Cebu City, Philippines. It aims to promote the participation of people through the spirit of volunteerism and empowerment of local communities for sustainable development.

GIED wants to enhance the global intercultural understanding and cooperation of people focusing on a three-point agenda to wit: (1) International Voluntary Service Exchange; (2) Global Education and Capability Building; and (3) Social Development Initiatives.

GIED's strategic agendas are designed to help address basic social issues like education, health, environment, livelihood and social entrepreneurship, employment, youth and women participation and empowerment, rights-based issues, social exclusion, language barrier, and other impact social development efforts in marginalized communities.

GIED looks forward to being among the relevant social innovators that put a premium on a dynamic community of like-minded social conscious actors who think and act alike to help sustain human and community development. GIED believes that it has every equal opportunity to powerfully shift minds and design radical positive thinking and doing approaches to contribute greatly to human and community development and bring it further to the global center stage of international development.

## MEMBERSHIPS AND AFFILIATIONS

GIED is actively engaged internationally being a full member of the Network for Voluntary Development in Asia (NVDA), a full member of the International Cultural Youth Exchange Federation (ICYE) and branch member at the Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service (CCIVS) as well as a partner organization of the Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organizations (ALLIANCE) and Mercy Ships Inc.. Through these international networks and partnerships, GIED actively promotes, cooperates and implement different programs, projects and activities to promote international voluntary service, global education and global citizenship. GIED is a recognized international leader having been elected as president of NVDA in 2018-2020, an active member of the IVS leaders core assembly since 2018 and currently as a member of the Executive Committee of the Coordinating Committee on International Voluntary Service (CCIVS).

GIED is likewise well recognized nationally given its strategic affiliation to different Philippine government agencies namely: Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA) as a Volunteer Service Organization since 2017 up to present, Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) as a Licensed Auxiliary SWDA-Resource Agency for the LGUs and community since 2016 up to present and the National Youth Commission (NYC) as a Youth Serving Organization since 2016 up to present. These national affiliations ushered opportunities for GIED to access and engage with the different programs, projects and activities of our national and local government units nationwide. It also build a strong reputation of being a reliable and well meaning partner with other stakeholders in the social development work.<sup>22</sup>



## VISION

A leader in global inter-cultural cooperation and a mentor of social development innovations for sustainable development.

## MISSION

- Promote international voluntary service and exchange
- Develop globally competitive training and learner-centered capacity-building programs
- Build linkages between and among development organizations both public and private
- Support social entrepreneurship for social progress

## GOAL

People empowerment through inter-cultural cooperation, peace, and solidarity within and across nations in the world.

## OBJECTIVES

- To promote global peace and unity through inter-cultural understanding and international cooperation
- To engage with development-based organizations, practitioners, and people to promote sustainable communities
- To encourage people to do voluntary services and contribute to social progress
- To establish an institute for social technologies





# Volunteering in the Philippines

“Volunteering has been an integral part of the lives of people and communities all over the world. Individuals and institutions benefit from the valuable assistance of volunteer workers who share their knowledge, skills, time and resources in the areas of technical assistance, social services, humanitarian support and peace-building.

The Philippines is a country which takes pride in its rich history of volunteerism through the “bayanihan”, the tradition of helping one another to promote family, community and society’s welfare. Through the years, this Filipino brand of volunteerism evolved to engage all sectors – government, NGOs, academic institutions and corporate groups to participate in volunteer service for development.”

PNVSCA about National Volunteer

Month

Highlighting the Bayanihan spirit that is inculcated in the tradition and values of the Filipinos, the state position itself to be among the premier national government that recognizes the significance of volunteerism as a strategy for development by creating “The Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA) as the government agency mandated to promote and coordinate volunteer programs and services in the Philippines.

It was created as a committee in 1964 to concretize the Philippine Government’s commitment to the agreement reached during the International Middle Level Manpower Conference held in Puerto Rico in 1962 adopting volunteerism as a tool for socio-economic development.

It became an office in 1973 and then an Agency on 12 December 1980 through Executive Order No. 635. PNVSCA is under the administrative supervision of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA).



PNVSCA closely works with other government agencies, non-government organizations, the academe, the corporate group, the media and other partners in converging and linking the different volunteering efforts and resources so that they are aligned with national priorities and assist especially the marginalized sectors and communities. PNVSCA takes the lead in advocating and recognizing the contributions of volunteers to nation-building and international cooperation.”

PNVSCA R.A. 9418

Our organization Global Initiative for Exchange and Development Inc. (GIED) having been in operation for more than seven years since its foundation in July 7, 2015, with the aims and objectives to be among the premier Non-Government Organization in the Philippines mainstreaming the advocacy on International Voluntary Service (IVS) Exchange Programs, capacity building and social entrepreneurship with our local and international partners and networks, strategically aligned with the PNVSCA having the same ideals of volunteerism for development. In 2017, GIED has been granted as the first and only Philippine NGO registered as International Volunteer Service Organization with the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA) up to present.

GIED is privileged to be recognized as one of the main actors in the country advocating for volunteerism as a strategy for our social development. With the recognition of our International voluntary Service programs, it likewise enable us to access free volunteers visa to our incoming mid and long term volunteers as well as recognition of our Filipino participants thereby securing the smooth deployment of our Filipino volunteers abroad program.





# Coming to the Philippines

## Health Information

Please check the vaccines and medicines list and visit your doctor (ideally 4-6 weeks) before your trip to get the vaccines or medicines you may need. This is also a good opportunity to discuss important travel health issues including safe food and water, accidents, sun exposure, and insect bites.

Make sure you are up-to-date on routine vaccines before your trip to the Philippines. These vaccines include the measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine, varicella (chickenpox) vaccine, polio vaccine, and your yearly flu shot. It is recommended to vaccinate against Hepatitis A, which you can get through contaminated food or water in the Philippines, regardless of where you are eating or staying.

Vaccination against typhoid is advised. You can get typhoid through contaminated food or water in the Philippines.

Yellow fever or typhus vaccination certificate is required from travelers over 1 year of age arriving within 6 days from infected areas. A certificate is also required by those arriving from smallpox or plague- infected areas.

Following WHO guidelines issued in 1973, a cholera vaccination certificate is not a condition of entry to the Philippines, unless travelers arriving from infected areas. However, cholera is a risk in this country and precautions are essential. Up-to-date advice should be sought before deciding whether these precautions should include vaccination, as medical opinion is divided over its effectiveness.

Please ask your doctor what vaccines and medicines you need. Some may advise you to vaccinate against Hepatitis B, Japanese Encephalitis, or Rabies as well.

## Cebuano Language

The Cebuano language, also known as Sinugbuanong Binisaya or Sugbuhanon, is one of the most important languages in the Republic of the Philippines, along with Tagalog and Filipino. The name “Cebuano” is derived from the island of Cebu, home to one of the largest metropolitan areas in the country. Language will help you understand better the culture and the people. Few words will help you connect to people immediately, so here are some basic Cebuano languages that are surely helpful for you.

English	Cebuano
How are you?	Kumusta ka?
How is she/he?	Kumusta siya?
I'm fine.	Maayo man ko.
Yes.	Oo.
No.	Dili.
I don't know.	Ambot lang.
Wait. (Asking people to wait)	Kadiyut.
Is it possible?	Mahimo ba?
Goodbye.	Bye. Babay
I'll see you.	Mag kita na lang ta.
Ok.	Sige
Excuse me.	Tabi....
I am sorry.	Pasaylo-a ko
Thank you.	Salamat
Thank you very much.	Daghang Salamat
You're welcome.	Walay sapayan.

Good morning	Maayong buntag
Good afternoon	Maayong hapon
Good evening	Maayong gabii
I am fine.	Maayo man ko.

## THE PEOPLE BEHIND

Global Initiative for Exchange and Development Inc. Is currently supported by the Board Members while it is still recovering from the global health and financial crisis. It also regularly receives around 5-10 interns annually from different universities in the Philippines. The interns help in planning and coordinating the activities organized by GIED Inc. for the local and international volunteers.

### The Current Board Members of GIED

Rhenelyn Queen Dadulo	President and CEO
Mark Anthony Gumera	BOD Secretary and Treasurer
Carmela Gan	Vice President
Eddie Cuaresma	Member
Norbert Francis	Member
Elnar Joey Gatus	Member
Corina Lorei Encabo	Member

### The Current STAFF:

Ann Catherine G. Plantar	Incoming Program Coordinator
Pia P. Castillo	Program Director /Outgoing Program Coordinator
Riza S. Ostia	Administration and Finance Assistant

## Contact Information

### GLOBAL INITIATIVE FOR EXCHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT INC.

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