



ROSEMARIE ABADINGO

Social Welfare Assistant, Philippines



“My only fulfillment is to see my clients wear that smile on their face again.”



Overview

For the past four years, Rosemarie has worked as a social welfare assistant at the Eastern Visayas Regional Medical Center, Tacloban City, Philippines under its Women and Children Protection Unit. She has a passion for social services, working with victim-survivors and advocating for children’s rights.

Typical tasks and responsibilities

As part of Women and Children Protection Unit, Rosemarie interacts with victims of violence and abuse first-hand. She says, “My only fulfillment is to see my clients wear that smile on their face again. And be freed from abuse.” While health workers attend to the victims’ medical issues, Rosemarie provides needed psychosocial services by conducting the intake interviews, performing risk assessments, and providing counseling. She also refers clients to other institutions or welfare agencies if they have basic needs that must be met such as temporary shelter or financial assistance. To monitor clients’ recovery and rehabilitation once they have been discharged from the hospital, Rosemarie coordinates with municipal social workers in the surrounding areas.

Training and skills

To prepare herself for such a challenging profession, Rosemarie graduated with a bachelor’s degree in social work and later passed the Professional Board Examination for social workers in the Philippines. She has also been trained in case management, counseling and has completed a Certificate in Child Protection Specialty Training for Social Workers through Philippine General Hospital, University of the Philippines Manila, Child Protection Unit. After the onslaught of super typhoon Yolanda,

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the number of clients increased dramatically and Rosemarie sought to develop needed disaster relief and counseling skills. She remarks, "I continually served them with compassion and commitment. I attended trainings to improve myself professionally and participated in referral pathway dialogues to improve the services of the unit."

Why she loves her job

Rosemarie's core objective in her job is to help her clients regain their self-worth, self-respect, and determination to get away from an abusive situation. She desires to communicate to each of them "the worth of their being, as a person, a woman, a child who has rights and as a creature of God." Rosemarie

believes that "respect is something earned not from others but from yourself. If you value self-respect, in return, you will be respected by others. We live with choices. If we are fully determined of being freed from abuse, we can."

The Global Social Service Workforce Alliance would like to thank the Child Protection Unit Network, Inc. for contributing this profile to the "I am a Social Service Worker" series.

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Who is the social service workforce?

While capturing any one definition of the social service workforce is challenging, it can be broadly defined to describe a variety of workers – paid and unpaid, governmental and nongovernmental – who staff the social service system and contribute to the care of vulnerable populations. The social service system is comprised of a set of interventions, programs and benefits that are provided by governmental, civil society and community actors to ensure the welfare and protection of socially or economically disadvantaged individuals and families.

What is Social Service Workforce Week?

During this week, advocates will bring attention to and build support for the social service workforce as well as raise awareness about promising workforce strengthening efforts supported by stakeholders around the world. Organized around daily themes focused on areas of practice, the week will allow Alliance members and the public to engage in a dynamic platform of information exchange and advocacy through various forms of social media.

What is the Child Protection Unit Network, Inc.?

Established in 2002, the Child Protection Unit Network, Inc. responds to the critical shortage of human resources necessary to make the child protection system in the Philippines work through training and building relationships among child protection units, specialists, and other hospital-based child protection practitioners operating in isolation from each other yet each facing the challenges of child abuse and neglect single-handedly every day. Though just one of its many mission-oriented activities, the network's 15-module Certificate in Child Protection Specialty through Blended Learning is able to reach physicians and social workers in the Philippines and other countries around the world who are committed to becoming experts in the field of child abuse but whose duties in their institutions prevent them from taking up courses that would require them to leave work for several weeks. Law enforcement is also engaged in the network through its Women and Child Protection Specialty Training for Police Officers.

Learn more

Learn more about Rosemarie and other social service workers! Join the conversation on Twitter using the hashtag #SSWWeek and online at www.socialserviceworkforce.org/SSWWeek.

"Improving the workforce. Improving lives."