

Health Inequity and Social Injustice for the Aytas in the Philippines: Critical Psychology in Action

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Abstract

This article presents an example of a collaborative effort involving health psychologists, NGOs, and the local government that aims to understand health, material deprivation, and social inequity in an indigenous community in Floridablanca, Philippines. It adapts a participatory action research approach and uses literacy and empowerment to address emerging issues.

Abstract = 50 words

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The United Nations (2005) estimates that more than a billion people are currently below the international poverty line – surviving with just US\$1 a day or less. It is estimated that about 2.2 billion people do not have access to safe water and adequate sanitation, more than 800 million are plagued by hunger and malnutrition, more than 115 million school-aged children are denied of education, while ten million younger ones die every year before they reach their fifth birthday (see United Nations, 2005). Clearly, the right to what the World Health Organization (1946) referred to as “the enjoyment of the highest attainable state of health” (p.100) is threatened by extreme levels of material deprivation and remains a struggle to millions of families worldwide from less affluent circumstances. This fundamental right to health is little more than an idealistic concept for a significant proportion of the earth's human population.

Critical Perspectives in Psychology

Perhaps due to the underlying individualistic and logical-positivist stance of mainstream psychology, the field has become detached from social and political issues such as this (Marks, 1996). Nonetheless, the growing number of radical thinkers both within and outside psychology has not left this tradition unchallenged (Austin & Prilleltensky, 2001). For example, *feminist* (e.g. Wilkinson, 2004), *anti-racist* (e.g. Richards, 1997), and *lesbian and gay psychologists* (e.g. Kitzinger, 1997) recognized the importance of power structures in the construction of knowledge and how it can perpetuate prejudice and discrimination. *Discursive psychologists* (e.g. Parker, 1997) highlighted the relevance of language and how it can be used to promote oppressive social, ideological, and political interests. *Latin-American liberation movements* (Martin-Baro, 1994) and *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* (Enriquez, 1975) campaigned for the reinterpretation of psychology in light of the experiences of the disadvantaged so it can be used to develop strategies that will help communities set themselves free from the bondage of repressive social relationships.

In general, *critical psychologists* are interested in developing strategies to promote the use of psychological theories and methods for the reduction of oppression and social injustice (Prilleltensky & Fox, 1997). Within the sub-discipline of health psychology, *critical health psychologists* are arguing for a repositioning of the field within the macro-social, economic, and political context of health and health care (Marks, 2002). Appeals for greater practice and action orientation are at the forefront of recent discussions, with increasing emphasis on "the structural determinants of health, the impact of poverty on human health, and ethics in the context of a just society" (Hepworth, 2006 p. 334).

In line with these "calls for action", this article presents an example of a collaborative effort that aims to understand and address inequalities in health among an indigenous group of individuals living in Floridablanca, Philippines. One of the methods of action research, participatory action research (Brydon-Miller, 2005; Marks et al, 2005), is demonstrated here. We present issues that emerged from the research concerning health, material deprivation, and social inequity and how the team plans to address these issues through community participation and literacy. Future directions for action are also discussed along with some reflections on how psychologists and the greater civil society can play a more active role in the social and political arena of health and human rights. It concludes with the recognition that the effective implementation of the recommendations raised in this research remains dependent on the active cooperation of stakeholders who are positioned higher up in the dominant social structure.

The Research Process

Participatory action research (PAR) involves collaboration between the researcher and the community with a common aim to "identify an area of concern to that community, generate knowledge about that issue, and plan and carry out actions meant to address the issue in some substantive way" (Brydon-Miller, 2005, p.188). In the process, the researcher acts as *facilitator* in setting goals and means, knowledge-generation, taking

action steps, and reconnaissance of the results of those action steps (Lewin, 1947; see Figure 1).

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Researchers engaged in PAR acknowledge that those living within the community hold the expert knowledge about their situation. This approach was inspired by Freire's (1972) revolutionary work among impoverished communities in Brazil. Freire introduced the concept of *conscientization*, or the process whereby community members develop a critical understanding of the broader social and political context that keep them oppressed. Only through this increased awareness can the community begin to take hold of it, control it, and possibly transform it.

In relation to improving the health/well-being of marginalized communities, *empowerment* – or the process of increasing people's *control* over the determinants of health - has been recognized as a key component towards health promotion (World Health Organization, 1986). The process requires the strengthening of skills and capabilities of individuals, communities, and social groups. This can be achieved by creating favorable social conditions from micro to macro levels, ensuring equal opportunities for all, and mediating between all sectors of society (Nutbeam, 1999). Within this context, addressing inequalities in health through health promotion becomes a social and political endeavor.

Collaboration with NGOs

The first author (EE), a Filipino, managed the principal operations of this project while the second author (DM) provided supervision, guidance, and support. The project has entailed collaboration with two NGOs: 1) the Popular Education for People's Empowerment (PEPE) and 2) the Development Action for Grassroots Learning (DANGLE). PEPE is a non-profit, non-governmental organization based in the Philippines that is dedicated to the promotion of popular education towards people's empowerment. It adapts a critical approach towards education and recognizes learning as a collective process that enables people to become active participants instead of passive recipients of so-called knowledge. DANGLE is a socio-civic organization of local leaders based in the municipal of Floridablanca and has been working in partnership with PEPE over the past decade. Along with the support from the local government unit, the team is currently working towards the development of an alternative learning system (ALS) with the indigenous Ayta community in Floridablanca, Philippines.

The Aytas were the earliest inhabitants of the archipelago having occupied the territory for approximately 30,000 years. Having recently experienced severe deprivation due to the devastation caused by the violent eruption of Mount Pinatubo in June 1991, the traditional Ayta culture and way of life are in danger of disintegration. These communities are also becoming increasingly marginalized due to issues related to their lack of land ownership, access to education, health care, and social services.

Recognizing the importance of social participation and literacy in health promotion especially among marginalized communities, we contacted PEPE and proposed the possibility of working in collaboration with them. As researchers in critical health psychology, we volunteered to facilitate the PAR with the community and generate knowledge with them so it can be used to 1) preserve the Ayta culture and way of life, 2) inform curriculum development, 3) provide insight for social action, and 4) help improve the health of individuals living within these communities.

The proposal was approved in principle after consultation and dialogue with all key players and was divided into seven stages: 1) establishing rapport and planning, 2) knowledge generation, 3) data validation, 4) recommendations for action, 5) planning for action, 6) implementation, and 7) evaluation and follow-up.

Stage 1

Within the Filipino context, establishing a certain level of *pakikipagkapwa* (shared identity) is necessary when individuals work together towards a common agenda. The researcher needs to make an effort to become *hindi-ibang-tao* (one-of-us) with its members when working with communities. It has been suggested that the first level of *hindi-ibang-tao* (i.e. *pakikipagpalagayang-loob* or mutual trust, understanding and rapport) should be reached in advance to ascertain good quality research especially when working in the field (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000).

To establish rapport with the community, PEPE and DANGLE organized several community visits with EE where she was introduced as a research student. On her first community visit, the Aytas gave her a warm welcome and engaged in a *kwentuhan* session with her. 'Kwentuhan' is a Filipino social activity where people gather informally to share stories with each other. Filipino psychologists have previously used 'kwentuhan' as a research technique to generate narratives within groups (e.g. Orteza, 1997). It should be noted, however, that although EE's 'kwentuhan' session with the community was documented with their permission, this method was not intended for data collection. In this context, along with *pagmamasid* (observation) and *pakikisama* (getting-along-with), 'kwentuhan' was used as a way of establishing a personal and trusting relationship with community members. EE kept a diary documenting conversations, experiences, and personal reflections. This diary remains private and is used to facilitate personal reflexivity.

Reflexivity in Action Research

Critical reflexivity is an important aspect of PAR. Following Lewin's (1947) framework, action research involves constant reflection, dialogue, and consultation between all those involved. As shown in Figure 1, the progress and direction of the project is influenced by a series of feedback loops where insights and reflections are incorporated into the original plan.

A two-day workshop was facilitated at the initial stage of the research to engage the Aytas in research design and planning. The overall vision for the PAR, based on the preliminary consultation between all stakeholders, was presented here (see Figure 2a).

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The original aim was to engage the community in the development of a sustainable educational system that would integrate indigenous culture, livelihood, and health promotion into the curriculum through action research. A lively discussion between the participants in this workshop ensued when one of the Ayta leaders amended the illustration by adding kinky hair to the stick figures (see Figure 2b).

The Aytas living in this region are commonly referred to as the *kulot* (kinky-haired) population, which is a minority group that is physically and culturally distinct from the *unat* (straight-haired) lowlanders. The social division caused by the classification between 'kulots' and 'unats' has led to discrimination against the Aytas. The Aytas are also often called *baluga*, which is a derogatory term used to mock their darker-skinned nature. The labels 'kulot' and 'baluga' are typically used as a form of insult in the lowland culture.

As part of the reflexive component of PAR, the Aytas reflected, accepted, and took pride in their identity as 'kulot' in the workshop. They also acknowledged the importance of community participation and recognized the PAR as an opportunity to "take hold of their own bow". The developmental process involved the active participation of community leaders, women and men, elders, youth and children, along with the support of community advocates, volunteers, and government officials.

The interactive exercises (e.g. poster-making and group discussions) in the Stage 1 workshop allowed the Aytas to raise their primary community concerns to the team. The discussions led to an agreement to focus the PAR on four key issues: 1) structures of trade, 2) access to government services, 3) social stratification, and 4) land issues. Participatory research techniques to be used in the next stage of the project were also discussed here (see Table 1). Several Ayta participants from the workshop volunteered to facilitate future activities for the PAR. They were given training and support by the researchers.

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Stage 2

As shown in Table 1, several participatory research strategies were used to generate knowledge with the community at this stage. For the sake of brevity, details for each workshop will be discussed extensively elsewhere (Estacio & Marks, in preparation). In

this article, we present a summary of the key themes that surfaced from the workshops and highlight some of the recommendations that emerged as a result.

The Ayta Concept of Health

The Aytas have a holistic concept of health that involves an overall sense of physical, mental and social well-being. Although this account is similar to the WHO (1946) definition, the Ayta concept of health also incorporates aspects overlooked by the WHO that includes economic, psychosocial, environmental, and spiritual attributes. For the Aytas, achieving health is a process whereby livelihood stability, good social relations, cleanliness, and spiritual wellness are viewed as essential components of a good and decent way of living. This definition is close to the definition of health described by Marks et al. (2005).

Barriers Towards Achieving Health

Unfortunately, the ideal state of health is a remote concept for the Ayta community. Social, political, and economic barriers that restrain them from achieving health were identified in the workshops.

First, *economic exploitation* due to unfair trade relations with lowlanders positioned the Aytas in a very vulnerable state. Household income among members of this community averages at approximately US\$1 to \$2 a day for a family of five. A day's wage is spent almost instantaneously to sustain their most basic human needs:

R: . . . it doesn't last . . . our income . . . we run... to the store . . . for example . . . now. . . you'll earn some money . . . for example, (p.100) . . . it wouldn't last until the night! . . . you have to spend it! . . . because you have to survive!

Income security is non-existent in this Ayta community as opportunities for trade and employment depend significantly on the lowland trader who comes intermittently to trade with them.

X: . . . sometimes (you earn) everyday . . . but not all days, you earn something . . . sometimes, we prepare our trade . . . but sometimes, the trader will not come . . .

EE: Don't they have a schedule and tell you when they will come?

X: Even if they do, if . . . for example . . . there's a problem . . . they won't come . . . like that . . .

The Aytas expressed a sense of lack of control over income and trade.

R: . . . livelihood in the mountains can't be perfect . . . some (traders) come, some don't . . . (sometimes) you get some food . . . sometimes, none . . . that's why . . . the income you worked for . . . you can't . . . you can't save it!

They toil for the day, they live for the day. Without it, they starve. Income generation is part of their daily struggle for survival.

E: If they don't come, you are obliged to go out . . . you have to look for a little money . . . it's like that . . . if you see a buyer, you can get something to buy stuff for the kitchen . . . but if you fail to find some income . . . you'll think again . . . like that . . .

Sadly, some Aytas end up trading their products at unreasonably low prices because of sheer desperation. Others find themselves engaging in unfair loan arrangements that keep them trapped in a vicious cycle of debt and deprivation. Furthermore, because of their lack of formal education, they are unable to read, write and compute, which makes them extremely vulnerable to economic exploitation.

R: . . . you can't . . . you don't know how to compute . . . here's your account (says the trader) . . . he writes and writes . . . and then . . . ah, it's not even printed! . . . like that, you can't understand...

N: You'll even end up having debt!

[...]

R: That's what's unclear to me . . .

Second, the *inaccessibility of government services* acts as a barrier that restricts the Aytas from enjoying their fundamental right to health. Secluded within the depths of the mountains, the Aytas experienced difficulties accessing services such as healthcare and education considering the distance of the facilities from the community, the lack of safe roads and adequate means of transportation. "This is how my illness got worse," said one Ayta elder. "To go to the doctor . . . we don't have money to pay for transportation to get there that's why . . . that's why we never recover from our illnesses."

Third, the persisting *culture of discrimination* is another social obstacle for the Aytas. Narratives from the interviews reflected stories where they were left unattended, inappropriately treated, or were driven away altogether despite the severity of their health condition. For example:

E: We went to the hospital . . . but the doctor said, go home, your child is fine . . . when we went home, she got even worse . . .

In terms of education, some parents said their children refuse to go to school because of the fear of being ridiculed by their non-Ayta peers.

P: . . . the child does not want to go to school . . . it could be a bit embarrassing when everyday, all he has for lunch are boiled root crops . . .

Even grown-ups were troubled by the somewhat prejudiced treatment of some non-Aytas towards them. An elder explained –

L: . . .even if I want to study . . . after a while, the straight-haired villagers will still laugh at me . . . that's why I didn't go to school anymore . . .

Finally, the *lack of security of tenure* is perhaps the most urgent and serious threat to this small Ayta community. Without written titles to prove ownership, they can be evicted from the land they currently occupy at any point in time. Everything is temporary and nothing is certain. "The Aytas in this country are still considered squatters until now," said one dismayed Ayta leader. They said that their lack of formal education is one of the main obstacles that hinder them from protecting themselves from land eviction.

D: . . .the land, even if we're there, we don't have a title . . . because of the current system . . . that . . . we can't get a land title . . . because natives don't know the process on how to register . . . that's why, there's no . . . natives have no certainty on the land they till . . .

Helpless, Worthless, Hopeless

Given these circumstances, members of this community have expressed an overall sense of helplessness over their seemingly hopeless state of deprivation. For example, one anguished member of this community expressed his deep feelings of hurt and discouragement by uttering this statement:

R: . . . we are powerless . . . from the way I look at myself . . . we are the lowest in this earth . . . you're asking why? – because we are illiterate . . . if people want to cheat us, they can – because we are illiterate . . . even our children, they have not gone to school . . .

For the Aytas, illiteracy and economic exploitation are the main forces that keep them impoverished, unhappy, and unhealthy. Within the current social structure, they recognized that they are poor and are kept poor by those in power because they are being robbed of their natural wealth, perseverance, and hard work. They are unable to protect themselves from such an injustice since they cannot read, write, or count. Furthermore, since they have been denied of their right to education, they have not been given the same opportunity to develop their fullest human potential. The Aytas are feeling hopeless because they are witnessing how poverty, discrimination, and ill health are being passed from one generation to the next – all because of the greediness, apathy, and lack of compassion of those who benefit in the dominant status quo.

The Aytas have spoken. They are crying for justice. The next stages of this project will attempt to address the issues that surfaced from this PAR by planning and implementing collaborative action that will involve the Ayta community, their partners, and the wider social network in general.

Stages 3 and 4

A data-validation and planning workshop was held at this stage with all stakeholders and was attended by local residents, visitors, traders, teachers, volunteers, Ayta leaders, and government officials. The workshop was divided into two parts. The first part focused on the research process and the knowledge generated with the community because of the PAR. The researcher facilitated an open-discussion with the participants where key themes from the research were summarized, debated, and eventually validated.

The second part of the workshop focused on planning and establishing recommendations for future courses of action. The Barangay Captain (local government chief) facilitated this session. Based on the issues that emerged from the PAR, the community's sentiment of what needs to be done revolved around three key ideas: 1) unity, 2) education, and 3) empowerment.

Unity, Consensus, and Prices

The Aytas understood that there is power in unity. They recognized for themselves the need to become united and be organized. To gain more control over the structures of trade, they need to establish a consensus amongst themselves regarding the price of their products and a format for negotiation with traders. They suggested having a common price list - a board where all their products are listed with a corresponding price that all buyers and sellers should abide to. They also recommended establishing an Ayta committee that will implement and monitor this proposition.

Education

The Aytas understood that there is power in education. They recognized for themselves the need to become literate. To protect themselves from economic exploitation, they need to learn how to read, write, count, and compute. They suggested having a literacy center – a place where they can all gather to educate and learn from each other.

Empowerment

The Aytas understood that there is power within themselves. They recognized the need to enhance their skills and capabilities. To achieve their fullest human potential, they said that they need to develop their talents, make the most of the opportunities that surround them and overcome existing barriers. They recommended planting more crops and using the land they occupy to generate sustainable livelihood and develop new skills at the same time. They also suggested having a waste segregation scheme to keep their community hygienic and promote health.

Based on these recommendations, an action matrix was produced as a result, as shown in Table 2.

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Stages 5 and 6

In terms of planning and implementation of the action recommendations, to date, the Aytas have started planting the yam seedlings donated by PEPE and DANGLE as part of the literacy-livelihood component of the ALS. The construction phase of the proposed literacy center has been completed and literacy sessions have taken place there. The Aytas have also elected their own council of leaders and held an oath-taking ceremony. Construction materials for the price list have also been gathered and discussions about how this will be implemented have begun. Furthermore, the Aytas have taken their own initiative and improved their communal areas by putting a roof over this space, which facilitated unity by making it more conducive for social gatherings.

As community advocates, we have started a fundraising campaign to help the Aytas purchase their own means of transportation, farming tools, and more seedlings to help them gain more control over income and trade. Our campaign also involved increasing social awareness and launched several music festivals and a visual arts exhibition entitled, *The Invisible Ones*, which presented issues faced by indigenous peoples worldwide. As academic researchers, we organized seminars, attended conferences, and will be publishing the research in journals such as this to spread the word. We are also trying to make this project as publicly disseminated as possible through the media to reach all sectors of society. We are strengthening our social connections by joining in the campaign of allies, like the Education Network, and calling on the national government to increase public expenditure for the education of indigenous and other marginalized groups. At the international level, we continue to support UNESCO in their campaign to promote Education for All and participate in advocacy efforts to Make Poverty History with the coalition of organizations from all over the world.

In order to forward the agendas of action research to a greater audience, social integration from micro to macro levels is necessary (Estacio, 2006). Social action means action from society. Society means us – that is, all of us – individuals, communities, organizations and institutions from all walks of life (please see Table 3 for summary of the action outcomes so far).

Stage 7

At the time of writing this article, seven months have passed since the action recommendation workshop. Unfortunately, despite all the efforts the Ayta community and their partners have invested in this project, repressive social forces have pulled the program several steps backwards with despicable violence and blatant oppression.

Recently, intruders came into the community and destroyed a number of the Aytas' homes and burned their personal belongings. The crops, almost ready for harvest, were uprooted and destroyed. The cause of this ruthless outrage was rivalry over land ownership.

One prominent family from the lowlands continues to insist the land is theirs despite their lack of legal evidence to support their claims. With complete disregard of the ongoing court trial over this land dispute, these people have opted to resort to hostility - perhaps driven by impatience and greed for power and wealth. Apparently, some foreigners are looking into buying the land that suddenly made the community a piece of prime real estate.

Some of the Aytas are now temporarily sheltered in the literacy center and the team is now seeking for further judicial support and protection for the community.

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Critical Reflections on PAR Facilitation

Facilitating participatory action research is not a simple undertaking. It is time-consuming, energy draining, and very complicated indeed. This article demonstrated an example of an initial action cycle from Lewin's (1947) model. In this project, the general plan to develop an ALS with the community through action research underwent several stages that involved setting goals, knowledge-generation and validation, planning and implementation of action, and reconnaissance of its results. Given the consultative and reflexive nature of PAR, the process was, and will never be straightforward. Decisions to be taken for the succeeding phases of the PAR's action cycle will be informed by the outcome of its initial phase and further consultation between all key players. For example, given the current security crisis caused by the land dispute within the community, dialogue between all stakeholders will be crucial as its outcome will influence future decisions concerning the program's progress and sustainability.

Participatory action research of this kind is not recommended for the faint-hearted. It requires tremendous amount of dedication, commitment, and hard work. One must be willing to take on challenges and be prepared for surprises that lay ahead. It can also be emotionally and spiritually exhausting because of the social circumstances to which the researchers are being exposed. Mainstream research traditions require the researcher to adopt a posture of detachment to promote so-called 'objectivity', yet it seems impossible for a thinking-feeling person to do so in this context since one is confronted by the devastating costs of material deprivation in the lives of those who have been oppressed and dispossessed by the dominant social structure.

Group dynamics can also present tough challenges for the team especially when individual and organizational agendas begin to collide. For example, in this project, we collaborated with the Ayta community, NGOs, volunteers, the local and national government, and other external groups. Negotiation and good inter-personal skills are necessary when dealing with a multi-level, inter-disciplinary project such as this to build effective partnerships.

Above all, faith and passion for social justice, we believe, should be rooted deeply within the ethos of individuals and communities who choose to engage in this socially and politically strenuous journey. Social obstacles are bound to arise especially when those who were once disempowered begin to resist and take action to empower themselves. In this case, naked power is reflected in acts of vandalism and social aggression has become a primary barrier. Will the community and we manage to overcome this? Only time will tell. Our work as researchers may be over, but our advocacy and activism with the Aytas have only just begun.

Conclusion

Although this particular research was facilitated within a small community of 15 households in Floridabalanca, Philippines, the plight of this group of Aytas is a microcosm of global poverty. Their situation reflects similar issues faced by hundreds of millions of families worldwide who are struggling for survival because of extreme cases of material deprivation and ill health. For these communities, the key issue is *inequity* rather than *inequality*. Kawachi, Subramanian and Almeida-Filho (2002) point to *health inequality* as "the generic term used to designate differences, variations, and disparities in the health achievements of individuals and groups (p.647)", whereas *health inequity* refers to "those inequalities in health that are deemed to be unfair or stemming from some form of injustice (p.647)." In other words, not all health inequalities are considered inequitable.

The concept of health inequality is expressed almost only at a purely descriptive or quantifiable level, whereas the social construction of health inequity requires both moral and political judgment of those involved. Because of the nature of human existence, health inequality is inevitable. However, health inequity should not be.

Health inequity is rooted within unjust power relations between individuals or groups. It is embedded within social structures that define our roles and experiences. Inequity arises when society allows unfair circumstances to restrict people's freedoms and opportunities to exercise their rights and responsibilities. The winners and losers in this context are determined (or manipulated) by those in power. Sadly, as reflected in the case of this group of Aytas, health inequalities are often to the detriment of the most disadvantaged members of society.

The truth stands clear that no matter how much effort and devotion these communities and their partners invest in projects such as this, its success will still depend on the cooperation of those who are currently in power. In this case, the successful implementation of the proposed pricing agreement in this community will depend on the willingness of traders to respect and abide by the guidelines set by the Aytas. The sustainability of their literacy sessions will rest on the support and funding from the government or other socio-civic organizations. The stability of this community relies on the security of their lands that are currently in the hands of influential title holders. Freedom from oppression is never a one-way course. Unless those in power cooperate and listen to the concerns of the oppressed, the irony of the existence of impoverished

communities within a society, which considers itself "civilized and humane," will always remain.

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Table 1. Proposed Participatory Research Strategies for the Floridablanca Project

WORKSHOP FOCUS	ACTIVITY
<p><u>Trade</u></p> <p>Structure Players Roles</p> <p>Economic/livelihood activities</p> <p>Pricing Ayta products Primary commodities</p> <p>Household income and expenditure</p>	<p>Flow diagram</p>
<p><u>Government services</u></p> <p>Clean water</p> <p>Safe roads</p> <p>Access to healthcare</p> <p>Education Rate Quality</p>	<p>Photo and video documentation</p> <p>Hut-to-hut survey</p>
<p><u>Social structure</u></p> <p>Social stratification The social structure Distribution of power and wealth</p> <p>Leadership structure Ayta Mainstream</p> <p>Socio-political organizations</p>	<p>Power and wealth ranking</p> <p>Institutional diagramming</p>
<p><u>Land issues</u></p> <p>Government policies</p>	<p>Interview</p>

Table 2. Action Matrix for the Floridablanca Project

Recommendation	Action Plan			Resources available	Barriers/ threats
	How	When	Who		
Plant crops	Plant Gabi, ginger, banana, corn and vegetables	April 2006	Ayta community	Land Seedlings	Lack of food
Construct a centre where people can hold meetings	Build the center as a community	April 2006	Barangay council	Land Materials	Outside intrusion
Establish a cooperative Organize a pool of leaders Have tools for farming/marketing	Be united Organized meetings	April 2006	Ayta community	People power	Lack of education
Construct a board listing the prices of their products	Approach local government for assistance	April 2006	Ayta leaders + DANGLE rep	Bamboo poles	Lack of cooperation
Education to protect self from exploitation	Attend the literacy sessions	April 2006	All Aytas	School supplies Teacher	Problems with livelihood and health
Waste management	Segregation	April 2006	All Aytas	Sacks	Laziness

Table 3. Outcome or Progress of the Action Recommendations

Recommendation	Outcome/progress so far
Plant crops	The Aytas have started planting yam seedlings Crops have been uprooted and destroyed by intruders Discussions for future courses of action in progress
Construct a centre where people can hold meetings	Construction completed in May 2006 The center currently provides temporary shelter to some Aytas after intruders destroyed their homes and burned their personal belongings Discussions for future courses of action in progress
Establish a cooperative Organize a pool of leaders Have tools for farming/marketing	Consultation and planning in progress <hr/> Pool of leaders elected <hr/> Fundraising for farming/marketing tools in progress
Construct a board listing the prices of their products	Construction materials gathered Discussions on implementation in progress
Education to protect self from exploitation	Literacy sessions were put on hold because of the on-going security crisis in the community Discussions for future courses of action in progress
Waste management	Discussions on implementation have begun