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Corruption in the Philippines

They reason that I wanted to participate in the World Food Prize was because after high school I plan to go into the agricultural field at Iowa State University, therefore I thought that it might benefit me to see a different area in agriculture and see if it would interest me for something that I could go into in the future. So when my teacher asked if I wanted to participate in this event I jumped on the opportunity to be more educated in a different aspect of agriculture. I believe that being educated about agriculture in different countries it will better help me with knowing why countries need our help, and what kind of help that certain country needs. Agriculture is a big deal in my life and if my talents could help other people's lives it would mean the world to me knowing that I made someone's life better doing the things I love.

The country that I chose was the Philippines this was an easy choice for me, the reason being was that my family and I are sponsoring a little girl and her family for here. I really wanted to try and make a difference for her and her family because their country is in desperate need for help in the agricultural and government aspect. I feel that I have a duty to help her out in her time of need, I know I can not give her all the money in the world, but I do know that I can help her through my research to help out her struggling government. The other reason for me choosing this country is because of the growing population of Filipinos in our town, and I would like to know more about where they came from and why they had decided to come to the United States from their home country. I also want to know why they would come here and work a job that they are very under-qualified for; what I mean by that is that they have a degree is something but they are happy to work at a fast food restaurant, and do not even think they could get a job that they are way more qualified more that will pay them much better wages.

The factor I chose is number eight which states; Engaging in diplomatic initiatives of conflict prevention and resolution and governance based on principles of democracy, accountability and transparency in the public institutions and the rules of law that are basic to reducing citizen's social and economic vulnerability. The reason that I chose this factor out of all the rest is because my family was an urban family and I wanted to find a factor that would correlate better with an urban family, and I thought that this was the one that best helped me correlate and urban family with agriculture. Also knowing a little about their government from people I talked to, I thought that this would be a good factor to research on because they needed so much help with their failing government. I wanted to find out why the government decided to make such a decision that would make your whole country suffer and the things you are doing really make no sense for the damage you are doing to the people you are supposed to be helping. I feel that doing this I can make a difference by educating people about what is going on in this very needy country and maybe in the future making these things happen for the people that are in desperate need of change in their country.

My typical family is a five person family made up of a father, mother, two girls and a boy. Right now they are living on only rice and vegetables due to the fact they can not afford to buy meat, and now that rice is so expensive they can barely afford rice now too. All three of the children in my family are attending public school. The family only lives on \$1 a day plus the \$30 a month that we send over to them (which goes directly to the family through an organization in our church). My family is an urban family, the father is employed as a street vendor, and the mother is employed as a laundry woman. They have a very poor quality of life, the walls of their

home are made of bamboo, the roof is of sheets, and their floors are only semi-concrete. They do have water and electricity but they have to share it with their neighbors, and they also have a bathroom of some sort. They sleep on only mats, and cook with firewood. Even though both parents have a job they do not have a steady income. Barriers that they are facing are that their income is not steady so they can not buy everything that is a necessity in normal life, and also that the rice prices have gone up it is even harder to just pay for food.

The factor that I chose is playing a huge part in my family earning money, if you think about it kind of like it is in the United States, we have to pay more for things that we need so we are not going to get all the stuff that we want. It is the same over there just more extreme. The father of my family works as a street vender and he does not get paid until he sells the stuff he needs to, but people are not going to buy if they can barely afford their necessities. So since people are not buying, he does not get the money he needs to sufficiently supply for his family.

The status of my factor is that the government is taking the money from the Department of Agriculture and using it to pay off different people in the political system. It is becoming very severe because the people are being less educated about the production of crops and all the prices of crops are growing; cereal prices form 54% to 92%, and in the beginning of 2007 a metric ton of wheat cost \$207(US dollars) and within the first few months of this year it was already up to \$430. Its just not food prices that are rising rapidly for example the cost of fertilizer has gone up about 30% in the last year now costing \$42 a sack. Now some farmers are starting to raise goats. Goats are a great investment for farmers because they are not very expensive to start; they produce manure (which they use for fertilizer), milk, and meat. So now because they are raising goats they have a source of meat that they otherwise could have because of the rising price of food. They are cheaper to raise than chickens because chickens live on corn and that price is also going up, but goats live on grass (which is free) and beans (which are cheap).

The trends for my factor have been really noticed in the last year or so; the food prices are really increasing now. For example; corm has gone up 33%, rice is up 50%, and vegetable oils is up 73% in the last year. The some of the reasons for this is the government and some are from the economies in the countries across the globe that are not doing so well like ours. They are measure by taking the price that you started off with and divide it by the price that it has gotten to, then multiply it my 100 to get the percent. These measurements are showing a definite change, it is showing just within a year that the prices have gone up and we do want it to go up because then the people that can not already afford food now have a horrible time trying to find a way to make it all work out. The situation is getting worse for everyone not just my urban family and not just a family farm; it is affecting everyone in the country that is struggling to make their money work. If something is not done then we could really have a big problem with these little countries that do not have a good government and can not really do anything about it by themselves. This is the time that they really need help from bigger countries that can stand up for them.

If my factor was resolved it would do great things for the farmers, because if their corrupt government was stopped then the money that the government is taking from the Department of Agriculture to sell off political figure would go back to the DA and could improve the production of crops, and increasing production means that they would decrease the price of those products. Which would help everyone in the country, and if the price was reduced then my family would be getting a better income per month. Resolving this factor would not only benefit the people in the Philippines, but any country that is having problems with their government like the Philippines are.

If the subsistence farmers would have increased production that would be a great thing for helping out my factor; if the farmers would produce more than the price of food would go down, and the people would be able to buy more food and not have to go to bed hungry due to the fact that they could not buy enough food for their family. Increased productivity would not only help with the money situation but also the rice shortage. This could really improve the livelihood of my family because if the price of everything would decrease then people would be more likely to buy things that they want on top of the things that they need instead of just the things that they need. If my family would receive more money they would be able to go to bed full, and improve their quality of life even if it was by a little bit the parents could feel better about providing for their family.

From my research there were three different things that I could do, but there was one that would really make sense. The two that do not are; putting an embargo on the country and have their government take care of it and we just do not worry about it. The big problem with that the government does not really care about the DA so they would not do anything to help out the people that really need the help in the first place. The second out that I was thinking about was that we could send money to the country and have them help the DA, but as I have said earlier the government is taking the money from the DA so doing that would not be a good idea in the aspect that they will just keep it and use it for the things that they are already using it for and that is not what we are sending the money over there for. So after much consideration I think the best idea is to assemble the best people from around the globe that know the most about soil, soil management, crops, crop production, and planting and harvesting to go down to the Philippines and help out the farmers that really do not understand what they are doing and help them produce crops that have good yields and productivity. Doing this I think it will help out the country by making food cheaper and also building up the DA funds so that if something happens they can help out.

I believe that the World Bank is doing a good job of trying to help these guys out so they are a good choice to stick with it helping my recommendation. They are trying to help out the government with public issues, and the issue that they are dealing with is the corruption of the government. Which needs to be taken care of as soon as possible due to the fact that there are between 100 million and 130 million people that are under the poverty line already. Another organization that I think could help out with this problem is the United Nations, the reason that I think this is because they can help out with getting other well in doubt countries to help out in getting the production to increase. I also think that they can help out with the corrupt government because I think that if we could get them out of there then everything could be cleared up a little easier and the funds for the DA can be replaced and they can start rebuilding the agricultural needs. The last place I think could help is the United States government; I believe that since we have researchers that know that they are doing in the crop industry that they can help out the farmers that need someone just to tell them what they are doing wrong. They can help with helping them manage their soil and help them determine what kind of crops are the best to plant in the soils that they have.

I have learned a lot about our culture compared to the Filipino, one thing is the difference in our money. When I say that I mean that our culture is so materialistic to a ridiculous extent; we complain when we do not get one little thing that in the long run means nothing and we might only use once. With the Filipinos they live one \$2 a day and do not complain when they go to bed hungry. Thinking about this makes me sick; how can people just complain about nothing and others do not even say a word about not even having enough food at night. I believe that people that have enough money to buy more than one car or house or even have enough cloths to wear a

different outfit a day for a period of a year I think that they should donate money to these kind of countries.

After researching I have really figure out that this is a country that really need our help. There are 100's of millions of people that are under the poverty line, and that is unbelievable to think about. These people are living on an average of \$2 a day which no one can even come close to imagining. I thought that I did not have very much money but wow that makes you think about how lucky you are to live I the United States of America.

The status of my factor is also an unbelievable sight. The government is even worse then I ever imagined; stealing money from the Department of Agriculture and using it to buy off political figures. People having to buy goats so they do not have to buy certain things that they need to live and farm. The government is cheating the people out of money that they deserve more then they do, because agriculture a very important thing of life. If we did not have it then we would not have anything; from wood to clothing.

The trends have grown at an extreme rate within the last year. Prices have go up so much that it is almost impossible for people to even afford the necessities anymore. This is not just happening in the Philippines, but over the entire globe. It is just impacting this country more because one; their government is hurting them, and two, this country is already poor and with the rising prices the people that were okay before are in poverty and the ones in poverty are worse then they were before.

I think resolving this governmental problem would be the best thing that could happen to the Philippines. It would give the Department of Agriculture the money they need to fund the proper things and it will help to lower prices of everything, and this could help out my typical family so they can receive more money to by the things they really need.

The best thing that could happen to this country is that the government is taken over and the farmers yield goes up. By the yield going it would help out with the shortage of different crops around the world. This is also changing the livelihood of all the people in the country because if there are more crops the price for them will go down meaning that everyone will have more money to put towards the economy.

My idea for increasing the productivity is that the United States should send down people that could help the farmers better understand how to work the land when the best time to plant and harvest is and what they should plant. These people can range from farmers to soil scientists. As long as we can get them to start making good crop decisions so that they can get them readily available.

The organizations that I think could help the country out are; World Bank, they are already doing a great job they just need to keep up what they are doing. The United Nations, they can help out with helping develop a different government and also in arranging people to send down and help the farmers that need help. Lastly the United States government can help by sending out people to help the farmers out.

After reading and finding out about this country I want to help them out more then ever, I do think that I would like to do more research on this topic and find out more. I would have never guessed how bad they are, the number of people under the poverty line is crazy. They thing that is even crazier than that is that the government is doing absolutely nothing about it, but they are stealing the funds from the DA which is why they country is failing as bad as they are. Now I

know why people are coming over here and working under their qualities. They are so used to small amounts of money that this is so much more than they are used to that they are so happy that they can actually get everything that they need plus things they want. I would do the same thing if I was in their position. I do think the people that will read this paper will definitely be shocked at what they are seeing and I hope that they will try and help out the people that they know that need help.

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