

KadTabanga

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES



ACT for Peace Programme

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Kadtabanga: The Struggle Continues

2009

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The publication of *Kadtabanga: The Struggle Continues* is coordinated by Suharto A. Abas along with Area Technical Assistants Jenet D. Minanga and Abdennaser A. Jawali of the ACT for Peace Programme Area Management Office in the ARMM, who have been in close working collaboration with officers and members of the Kadtabanga Foundation of Peace and Development Advocates Incorporated (KFPDAI).

Published by the GoP-UN ACT for Peace Programme

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The ACT for Peace Programme is a Government peace-building program that is supported by the Governments of Australia, New Zealand and Spain through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the Philippines as the managing agency. The Programme is implemented by the Mindanao Economic Development Council (MEDCo) in partnership with the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) Government.

The Programme seeks to strengthen peace-building and conflict transformation efforts towards sustaining multilateral gains for peace and development programs in Southern Philippines.

Printed in Cotabato City, Philippines, 2009.

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FOREWORD

This piece of work attempts to document success stories behind the formation of Peace and Development Communities in Maguindanao.

Maguindanao has 25 organized PDCs, the province being part of the 14-province-12-city Special Zone of Peace and Development (SZOPAD) in the Final Peace Agreement of September 2, 1996.

In weeks of documenting and writing, I have had the impression that the post-conflict development interventions carried by the United Nations Multi-Donor Programme and its national and local partners have hardly missed any single opportunity in their efforts for a noble joint commitment of bringing back peace and development in the Southern Philippines, particularly in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

Community consultations and peace dialogues among residents provide and indeed enrich Peace and Development Advocates with a continuing learning experience. Residents and Community Organizers interviewed for this project say community transformation from situations of the conflict past didn't happen by accident.

The ACT for Peace Programme acknowledges this fact, as it says this in its technical presentation of PDC stages

of organizational development, thus: “It is estimated that each stage would entail a certain length of time to be successfully accomplished. (Each barrier) provides the link between the PDC stage of development and the levels of Programme Implementation Framework.”

Further, from a larger perspective of a post-conflict intervention program involving PDCs’ demographic framework that is distinct in social characteristics, efforts focused on community works in helping improve the people’s socioeconomic and socio-political life. The Kadtabanga Foundation for Peace and Development Advocates, Inc. (KFPDAI) could have provided a “one-stop-shop” venue for this research. But it did not. Instead, the KFPDAI and the ACT for Peace Programme staff gave the work a push to go through obtaining materials right from the source—the communities.

The book consists of eight chapters—from introductory chapter on the Kadtabanga PDA League to its organizational and institutional development. To paraphrase Alvin Toffler in *Future Shock* the KFPDAI has evolved from the roots of “adhocacy” as mere program and project recipients for their PDCs in the past, to being an institutional partner of local government units as well as donor organizations and international aid agencies.

The Philippine government wraps up its comprehensive peace-building efforts with the passage of Republic Act 9054, the Expanded Muslim Mindanao Autonomy Law, in the succeeding ARMM leaderships of Governors Nur Misuari, Parouk Hussin and Datu Zaldy Uy Ampatuan.

On the other hand, the continuity of the UNMDP flagship intervention program, through the ACT for Peace Programme, is partly credited to a series of dialogues that the Kadtabanga PDA League of Maguindanao has sought with concerned agencies of the national government, particularly, the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) in 2001.

Personally, I find it worthy to note that my brief engagement with KFPDAI and ACT for Peace Programme ARMM-AMO brings me back to old writing ways and forms for a single project: anecdote, biography, a little of history, and a bit of being critical as usual.

For this work, I am particularly grateful to Suharto A. Abas, ACT for Peace Programme Area Manager for the ARMM and his Area Technical Assistants Zaide M. Amil and Jenet D. Minanga; and staff-members Ma. Noriña G. Hatamosa and Rasmia A. Salik.

I am also thankful to KAFPDAI’s Bai Giobay D. Diocolano; Datu Khanapy “Sony” Ayao, Kusain Amino; Kenny Mulod and Jeric Macalapin for their cooperation and invaluable support for the completion of this work.

H. NASH B. MAULANA
Author

PROLOGUE

From the ruins of conflict, people have sown the seeds of transformation in Peace and Development Communities being the Moro National Liberation Front territories that have evolved from war zones to realms of peace and development.

The Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao is home to MNLF Peace and Development Advocates (PDAs) organized into leagues, and established the region's first 53 PDCs. These PDCs now transformed from their conflict past have variably attained the objectives of the ACT for Peace Programme goals.

PDCs, as MNLF territories are called, are sites of area-based projects delivered in previous UNMDP engagements with the Philippine Government under the framework of the GoP-UNMDP Phase I, through Phase III Programs. The 53 ARMM PDCs became the nucleus of peace-building efforts in various levels.

PDCs host to community consultations and formation of peace core groups, as well as people's peace alliance among MNLF members Civil Society Organizations and residents.

The Final Peace Agreement of Sept 2, 1996 has prompted the GoP-UNMDP institutional convergence, through the National Economic Development Authority

(NEDA) and the Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development (SPCPD). The collaboration is embodied in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals and Policy Framework, calling on societies' organizations and community components to be part of good governance's working institutions as the common thread in all conflict-prevention policies.

Succeeding the propitious engagements of the GoP-UNMPD Phase III, the Act for Conflict Transformation (ACT) for Peace Programme is supported by Australia, New Zealand and Spain. The Programme institutionalizes UN's continuing joint commitment with the Philippine Government to strengthen peace-building efforts and sustain development in the Southern Philippines.

Under this goal, the ACT for Peace Programme aims to sustain the transformation of PDCs; institutionalize their peace-building and conflict transformation capacities, and strengthen critical partnership with stakeholders in fruitful collaboration for peace and development.

The Programme's goals alongside the government's Medium-Term Development Plan (2004-2010) and Ten-Point Agenda is in line with Executive Order No. 3, defining the approach and administrative structure of the government's comprehensive peace efforts.

Its objectives are stipulated in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) which calls for the reduction of violent conflict and the promotion of human security and culture of peace. PDAs who are MNLF members or dependents constitute the core groups that help empower PDCs with conflict transformation capability, through organizing, organizational strengthening, institutional development, and obtaining partnership linkages in cooperation with the Programme.

In all of ARMM, 14 more such MNLF communities have been organized as PDCs. Though some are still at organizational strengthening stage, PDAs had looked forward to and have activated a total 78 PDCs as of 2008.

Enhanced by peace-related training and years of development work experience, PDAs have also taken active part in drawing up of BDPs, providing their LGUs with inputs generated from community consultations. Through such partnership undertakings, the ACT for Peace Programme complements community linkages with LGUs, thereby enhancing their conflict transformation capacities.

From the First Quarter through the Third Quarter of 2007, the ACT for Peace Programme ARMM Area Management had principally focused on the completion of its ongoing projects at PDC level and in ground works for 2008 projects and activities.

The last two years also saw intervening events of armed conflict in Basilan, Sulu and Maguindanao. Every effort had to switch to humanitarian works: distribution and delivery of food assistance and non-food relief packages as well as medical missions in coordination with the DOH and DSWD-ARMM, municipal and barangay LGUs as well as the provincial PDA Leagues.

SUHARTO A. ABAS
ACT for Peace Programme ARMM-AMO

CHAPTER 1

Kadtabanga PDCs: Toward Community Self-Determination

Twenty years into on-and-off peace negotiations in the auspices of the Organization of Islamic Conference, the Philippine Government and the Moro National Liberation Front finally entered into their Final Peace Agreement on September 2, 1996 .

At the core of post-war undertakings is constituting Peace and Development Advocates (PDAs) in each of the provinces and cities comprising Special Zones of Peace and Developments (SZOPAD). Community Organizers (COs) organize Peace and Development Communities (PDCs) as a basic social unit of MNLF territories first benefiting from the post-conflict institutional convergence of the Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development, the National Economic Development Authority and the United Nations-Multi-Donor Programme (SPCPD-NEDA-UNMDP).

A PDC is characterized by the following:

A basic social unit upon which the whole peace and development framework of the Government of the Philippines (GOP)-UNMDP peace-building programme is founded;

A marginalized, conflict-affected or conflict vulnerable community;

A barangay with strategic advantage, and one with multi cultural presence of Tri-people constituency;

LGU-recognized with commitment of support, and complementation (area of convergence with other donors)¹

The MNLF has its criteria of recognizing or identifying PDCs, principally those hardest affected by the armed conflict in the 70s in all 14 provinces (originally, 13 provinces and nine cities) within which Special Zones of Peace and Development were identified, as well as those that were known MNLF communities.

In the lead of grassroots working groups for PDCs are Peace and Development Advocates (PDAs) and Community Organizers (CO).

MNLF members participating in policy formulation and planning sought to limit PDA and CO membership to either: 1) members of the MNLF who had prior experience in community works for the revolutionary movement; or 2) MNLF members' immediate family members.

Soon, Peace and Development Advocates formed the PDA League (PDAL), composed of representatives from the provinces of Basilan, Lanao Sur, Lanao Norte, Maguindanao, North Cotabato, South Cotabato, Davao del Sur, Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga-Sibugay (more recently), Sultan Kudarat, Palawan, Sarangani, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi and the cities of Cotabato, Digos, Iligan, Marawi, Zamboanga, Pagadian, Puerto Princesa, Dapitan, General Santos, Tacurong Koronadal and Kidapawan are sites of Special Zones of Peace and Development (SZOPAD), the development focus of UNMDP intervention program in the Southern Philippines.

Meanwhile, PDAL members from Maguindanao had since looked forward to organizing their Kadtabanga group as program partner to

¹ PDC Stages of Development has been formulated with post-conflict program intervention of GoP-UNMDP, following the signing of the Final Peace Agreement on September 2, 1996.

GoP-UNMDP and become a service-providing organization in their own PDCs.

The PDAs from Maguindanao are now collectively carrying the name Kadtabanga Foundation for Peace and Development Advocates, Inc.²

In much the same way from the start, PDCs (160 in Mindanao's ZSOPAD-hosting provinces, including 53 in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao) have essentially geared people's participation into long-term community development endeavors and continuing engagement with the GoP-UNMDP convergent programs.

Helping One Another

The “act of helping one another” or as the Maguindanaon word “*kadtabanga*” is translated, has become the bottom line of grassroots commitment among 33 Moro Peace and Development Advocates to work for their PDCs to rise from the ruins of armed conflict that had been there



The PDC in Nuyo Village in Buldon, Maguindanao, a community of mixed Muslim and Christian residents, who were beneficiaries of vegetable-growing project which PDAs helped implement. (KFPDAI Photos)

² Working with the NEDA-SPCPD-UNMDP intervention, the non-government organization, Community Organizing (CO) Multiversity helped train PDAs initially as project beneficiaries in the program interventions, basically on peace-building, and community development works.

for years. PDCs are now the realm of community works that they say the Moro *jihad* continues.³

‘The Social Jihad’

With all 33 members under the leadership of Hadja Giobay Diocolano and Khannapi “Sony” Ayao, the Kadtabanga PDAs work along the line of what may be considered here as the social jihad of community organizing.

First, it was by having their group registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), as non-stock, non-profit, service-based foundation. “Each of us had to raise P 500.00 to come up with the needed amount for a bank deposit in paid-up capital, a prerequisite to SEC registration, recalls pioneering member Mokaledin Kido.

“The GOP-UNMDP Phase III Program first recognized our potential into partnership undertaking in implementing a project, instead of being only its beneficiaries,” recalls Kido, who is now KFPDAI board director and PDA of Barangay Lamod in South Upi.

Indeed, the formation of the Kadtabanga PDAs into what is now the Kadtabanga Foundation for Peace and Development Advocates, Inc. gave Maguindanao the edge over other provinces equally hosting SZOPAD-PDCs that have hardly taken off from being recipients, so to speak, of post-war and conflict prevention programs.

Diocolano, one of the few women MNLF combatants in the 70s, says she and many of her contemporaries broke to “glassful of tears” when the news came their way that the MNLF had accepted the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao for a political settlement—in lieu of their aim for an independent Bangsamoro state.

It has to be emphasized here that the word “jihad,” as correctly defined by the Oxford Dictionary of World Religions, means “struggle” and not ‘holy war.’ The 1996 Final Peace Agreement provided the much needed respite in armed conflict, while the phases of development intervention have bridged that essential interlude into what is now deemed the “social

³ (The Oxford Dictionary of World Religions (2000 Edition) defines ‘jihad’ “derived from the Arabic (root-word) “jahada,” (v) “to make effort;” jihad (n) “struggle” (to attain perfection, for one’s self by doing good and admonishing evil; as well as aiming for total development for and in a community of people; or any act in defense of one’s community from external compulsion.”

jihad.” In the context of the Bangsamoro people, it is a struggle for self-determination upon which efforts at attaining total peace and development are rooted.

Thus, on their own way, they opted to pursue the struggle or jihad of attaining peace and development first for their communities, hoping that all wasn’t lost; that a lot of things could still be done the other means they could.

Crafting Plans

In two small adjacent houses along G. Javier St. in Cotabato City where they now hold office as a service organization, Kadtabanga members envision plans, and goals that democratically translate to big realities for 20 PDCs in Maguindanao and five in Cotabato City. (Many of its members, however, prefer their group considered as *service institution*, instead of plain *non-government organization*).

September 17, 2002 became the birth date of the Kadtabanga PDA Maguindanao group as a service organization when the Securities and Exchange Commission approved its chosen name—Kadtabanga Foundation for Peace and Development Advocates, Inc.—as their legal identity.

With 14 regular staff-members and a board of trustees; an executive director, an office clerk; finance officer; bookkeeper; a cashier, and operations officer, together with some 30 volunteer community organizers (COs) and peace and development advocates (PDAs), the KFPDAI is finely being able to face the challenges of community development endeavors and peace-building tasks.

KFPDAI pays Moro youth volunteer PDAs—five in Cotabato City’s five PDCs and 20 in Maguindanao municipalities of Parang, Sultan Mastura, South Upi, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Talitay, Datu Unsay and Buluan, Datu Paglas, Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Matanog and Ampatuan.

Emerging Strong Partner

Institutionalizing a PDA group like Maguindanao’s Kadtabanga helped attain for the people their community goals the PDC concept and objective of organizational development: that is, *being able to articulate local conflict dynamics and peace aspirations; aware of basic human rights (meaning the PDC*

as basic social unit); aware of development gaps; aware of potential social and cultural issues, including gender-and health issues, and key leaders are becoming more aware of their peace-building role.

In a number of activities, KFPDAI generated social commitment such as people's collective declaration of peace and development communities, and each holding ground against possible sources of conflict, principally, *rido* (clan feud), the most common root of armed clashes among local Muslims.

The declaration of the PDC in Nuyo Village in Buldon, Maguindanao as Zone of Peace and Development drew massive support in a ceremonial signing up to community peace commitment in 2003. This was participated in by residents and even principal parties to the conflict—the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Armed Forces of the Philippines through representatives from their respective local commands.

Datu Zambra Saligan, the PDA of poblacion Buluan, Maguindanao, says strengthening PDCs paves the way for people's participation into the drawing boards of community development, starting from consultation and general assemblies to the formation of Barangay Development Councils and the consultative crafting of Barangay Development Plans.

The UNDP II, known as the Expanded Program for MNLF Families and Communities, worked on the following extended framework in Stage 2 of PDC organizational development: *PDC that is either organized or reactivated: The local conflict management system: citizens are better aware of indigenous conflict management practices; Local economic development structures (e.g. PMS) Local formal structures/ LSFs equipped with core values, attitude, knowledge and skills on peace and development works (e.g. MNLF and traditional leaders represented in BDC, where women's groups also take active part, more than being health workers).*

Barangay Lamud, a mountain village in South Upi had been isolated from the rest of the local population units by bad roads and poor accessibility to social services and fair market. A road rehabilitation project was provided the village by the Growth with Equity for Mindanao which is funded by the United States Aid for International Development (USAID).

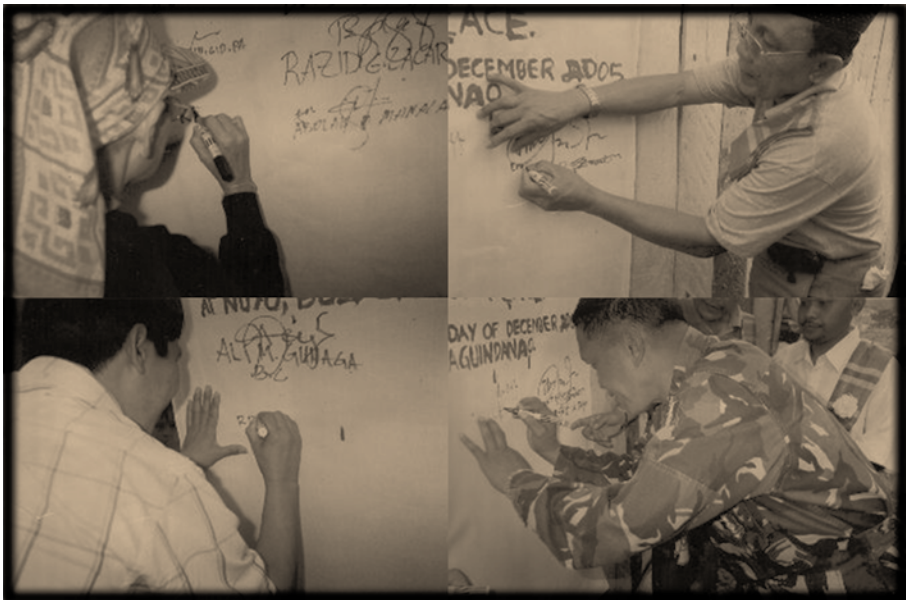
Phase III of UNMDP Program, converging national and international aid resources into a common flagship program under the Government of the Philippines-United Nations Multi-Donor Programme (GOP-

UNMDP), emerged as an institutional development intervention in 2001 toward “Strengthening Peace and Development Program in the Southern Philippines.”⁴

Sustained Partnership

Noemi Pimentel, a development worker who had been part of and saw through PDC organizing and capability upgrading in SZOPAD host-provinces, says the Kadtabanga Foundation for Peace and Development Advocates, Inc. (KFPDAI) is the first of the loose PDA groups to have evolved into the status of functional organization of the MNLF as community implementing partner of the GoP-UNMDP post-conflict convergent intervention.

Suharto Abas, the Area Manager of the ACT for Peace Programme in the ARMM, says the case of KFPDAI organizational development went through rough and tough times, too.



The PDC in Nuyo Village in Buldon, Maguindanao), a community of mixed Muslim and Christian residents, who were beneficiaries of vegetable-growing project which PDAs helped implement. (KFPDAI Photos)

⁴ GOP-UN-MDP Phase III worked on enhancing the level of community awareness and competence in terms of: 1) conflict management mechanisms; 2) local conflict analysis and mediation; 3) building community consciousness on basic human rights, including women's and children's rights; 4) peace-promoting governance by key leaders; 5) sustainable farm and non-farm enterprise development by the PMS; 6) organizational management, PCIA, GAD and RBA by the LSFs.

Going through such experiences from being the “adhocratic” PDA group to its present institutional status, the Kadtabanga group has drawn in substantial undertakings and established sustainable projects in partnership with all three consecutive Phases of the UN-Multi-Donor Programme.

But Cotabato City Mayor Muslimin Sema, MNLF Secretary-General and first executive director of the defunct SPCPD, was a bit critical of the PDC concept when first interviewed for this book in 2007.

Sema says PDC projects were bereft of more considerable pre-planning factors and determining process on the community projects’ economic feasibility; acceptability to the people, and sustainability in terms of the community’s capability to manage and maintain those projects.⁵

Recent developments, however, have started to gain support and appreciation from Sema’s leadership.

Abas says Sema’s views were the essence of issue-based community organizing and participatory program consultation being vigorously carried out by community partners of the ACT for Peace Programme. Beneficiary residents constitute a major part of community consultation, planning and of determining basic community needs.

He says sustainability is better ensured that way and feasibility and acceptability are visibly determined with functional local community organization on one side, and a group of project undertakers on the other.

The KFPDAI has implemented a number of projects in most of the 25 PDCs in Maguindanao and Cotabato City in partnership with various program donor organizations, the local government units as well as non-government organizations and people’s organizations, such as MNLF multi-purpose cooperatives.

⁵The Local Government Code provides community level, consultative-based local planning in Barangay General Assemblies. On the contrary, a similar provision is wanting in RA 6734 (the ARMM Charter) and in RA 9054 (the Expanded Autonomy Act) as principal instrument of government compliance with the 1996 Peace Agreement.

The intervention in Buldon’s Barangay Nuyo was a case of community rehabilitation within the specific timeframe of six months. As carried by the KFPDAI, the intervention best illustrates Sages 1 to 3 of PDC development. It is now gearing toward Stages 4 and 5, and eventually, Stage 6. The benefiting community also has the natural presence of Tri-Peoples befitting the PDC characteristics envisioned in the GoP-UNMP development goals.

ARMM Social Fund (Project ASFP) forms part of the World Bank-Philippine Government Loan Program Package that the administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has set aside as a grant package for ARMM social programs. Fresh fund transfusion for the ASFP also comes from the pie of international aid program through a separate funding cooperation between the national government and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

These projects include farm inputs from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); post-harvest facilities, native crafts production and even farm-to-market roads, courtesy of the Growth with Equity in Mindanao (GEM); bakery and equipment for steel fabrication from the International Labor Organization (ILO-PROCEED). With funding from the European Union Aid, the Oxford Family-Hong Kong assisted an integrative community rehabilitation program for internally displaced people (IDPs), and education programs provided in collaboration with the Australian Aid (AusAid)-funded Basic Education Assistance for Mindanao (BEAM).

Other projects include capability-building through computerization of local government operations implemented by the Local Governance Support Program in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (LGSPA), which is funded by the Canada Agency for International Development (CIDA).

Also, the ARMM Social Fund Project (ASFP) in the administrations of past Governor Farouk Hussin and incumbent Governor Datu Zaldy Uy Ampatuan, has had major part in implementing community-based projects.

Other projects like bakeshops, steel fabrication and native crafts production have, however, ceased operation for a time, due to some social or political factors, including isolated cases of armed clashes. KFPDAI is learning its lessons from previous experiences at post-conflict intervention projects: In its current engagements with the ACT for Peace Programme, it is addressing similar problems with a participatory approach, as mentioned earlier. Under Stage 4 of PDC organizational development, participatory approach pays off through: 1) revitalizing the PDCs alongside peoples organizations (POs) including multi-purpose cooperatives (MPCs) run by MNLF members in their communities; 2).enhancing community will in collaborative development efforts, principally, among POs, local government units, concerned government agencies, the Civil Society and donor organizations.

The new participatory approach provides for a people's (tri-peoples' in some cases) participation in community deliberations pertaining to rural planning, thus, more accurately determining their most pressing socioeconomic and infrastructure needs in the community.

To highlight some of these undertakings, the KFPDAI successfully established a partnership with the Oxford Family (Oxfam) in Hong Kong

in collaboration with the GOP-UNMDP- (Phase III) for an integrative community rehabilitation program for internally displaced people in Nuyo, Buldon. Oxfam-Hong Kong had allotted P 1.6 million for a multi-pronged rehabilitation project, out of its European Union Aid funding program.

It was a six-month project consisting of core-shelter construction; training program on community organizing and conflict management; community consultation on rural development and planning; project management, and livelihood program in the form of goat-raising and vegetable farming, as well as the declaration of that Tri-People community as a Zone of Peace.

Indeed, one of the project proposals crafted from the partnership inputs of KFPDAI-ACT for Peace Programme had been matched with a funding program package of the Peace with Equity Foundation (PEF) for a Level II water project in Barangays Margues and Taviran in Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao. The project, seen to benefit some 2000 residents, consists of reservoir construction and pipe installation for 81 communal faucets in the two PDCs.

Diocolano and Ayao consider both projects as two of the most important works that their group has ever contributed to recovery efforts in areas of conflict.

“It used to be that most local leaders were very specific in ensuring that their political supporters become the priority beneficiaries of community projects,” says Diocolano.

“But now, many leaders acquiesce to more popular consensus resulting from barangay assemblies, or the PDA and Community Organizers-initiated meetings at PDC (level),” a peace and development advocate points out.

Through further strengthening of capabilities and proper utilization of resources and potentials at community level, KFPDAI is reviving dormant rural projects previously implemented by convergence of international-donor programs and government and non-government organizations.

Tirelessly, it seems, the group continues to listen to rural folks on what further they could do best collectively for their communities ahead of any support program that can either come from the government, international donor organizations or from the private sectors. For the men and women of KFPDAI, it's a long way through still to go uphill their day-to-day struggle for a better Muslim community in Moroland.

CHAPTER 2

Her Story: A Struggle Empowered by Women

She was at the core of a revolutionary bloc behind the organizing of the Women's Committee of the Moro National Liberation Front, covering most of Central and Western Mindanao in the 70s.

At 13, Giobay Diocolano realized the important role of women in the underground movement.

Her committee kept funds and managed other resources generated from monthly dues that households voluntarily shared with the movement.

Ms. Diocolano's experience, dealing with people in the grassroots, first brought her to the world of community organizing, albeit unaided then by the systematic approach she would later learn in her present-day endeavors.

Physical, Emotional Wounds

Giobay's teenage years were also spent nursing gunshot wounds and counseling survivors of each war that her group fought against government forces.

She would oversee the operations of the biggest MNLF-run medical clinic at Marguez, a riverside interior village southeast of Cotabato City.

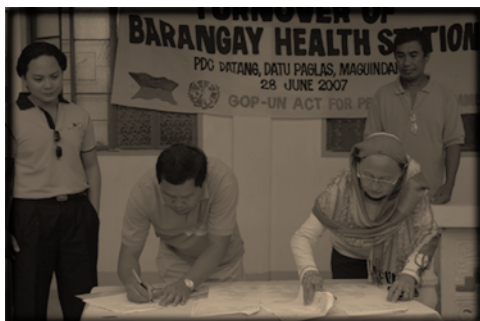
In 2002, Hadja Giobay Diocolano-Diocolano was recognized best volunteer from the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and awarded a befitting plaque of appreciation by the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency. She was also bestowed the Medal for Social Services Award by the Social Welfare and Development Office of Cotabato City for sponsoring study grant for most number of female vocational students among persons with disability (PID).

Moro Women in Transformation

Ever active in rural works, Diocolano along with award-winning community worker Hadja Bainon Karon, helped generate stronger women's participation in transforming MNLF territories into peace and development communities (PDCs); helping former combatants or their children become peace and development advocates (PDAs).



Mulling Hadja Giobay Diocolano, or so she may seem to look here, that every steep step she has taken, took her arway from home.



Hadja Giobay Diocolano signs agreement with ACT for Peace Programme ARMM-Area Manager Subarto A. Abas on the sustainability of the Barangay Health Station in Datang, PDC in Datu Paglas, Maguindanao. (Left photo); Before, she was holding fire arms, now, Giobay, the Executive Director, leads the way for the activities of KFPDAI. She takes cue from her instructions during the Provincial Consultation on Environmental Issues in Maguindanao, April 2009. (Right photo)

One of the few heads behind the organizing of the Kadtabanga Foundation for Peace and Development Advocates, Inc., Hadja Giobay confides to spending lesser time with her own family than with the communities her group is serving. Her colleagues and staff-members at the KFPDAI describe her as a strict person and yet motherly in her personal character toward them.

Motherly-like

“I am just like any mother, or an older sister to most of them. They share with me even their personal secrets,” says the 52 year-old Diocolano of her staff members and co-workers at KFPDAI.

She adds: “We are always open to each other, particularly on our works, limitations and resources.”

But with faith above all, it is her strong will in her character as a leader that drives the organization and, indeed, everyone working for it, into generally achieving for their people the transformation of the communities they serve.

Joining the armed revolutionary movement fulltime, Hadja Giobay had to quit her studies in 1969 as high school sophomore in South Upi, or subsequently, had to transfer from one school to another in each opportunity that wartime had for her to go back to school.

Royal Roots

But for a descendant of a royal union of a Maguindanao sultan and a Ternate princess, leaving school was not a matter of economic hardship, but rather a sympathetic resolve in “helping liberate the masses from oppression and neglect by the national government.”

The young Giobay underwent training on shooting, rope-bridge crossing and later, on practical wound nursing and stress debriefing intervention on wounded or war-shocked combatants.

She was with a diversionary offensive force to Lanao when the Moro National Liberation Front declared a “zero-hour” attack on Cotabato City more than thirty years ago.

The killing of a young commander became the turning point of the daring but failed mission to take the city under siege in 1974.

Combat Mission

Even as a high school student, the voluntary work for the movement would send her to covert missions—at times, transporting MNLF’s military ammunitions past Army checkpoints.

In one instance, a soldier dead-drunken pillowed on her bagful of M-79 grenades, Giobay recalls. She traveled by land on a passenger jeep from Cotabato City to Taviran where she was to take a slow boat to a camp where five male comrades (she would never meet again) waited for the things she brought. They were to take the ammunitions to a military training in a neighboring foreign territory in 1982.

Death of Great Thinkers

The five men, regarded to this day by the MNLF hierarchy as great thinkers of the organization, were killed in a speedboat explosion after they left a coastal village in Tawi-Tawi. None of whose bodies was found. An unconfirmed report said they were intercepted by a patrol boat of the Philippine Navy.

But others were cynical of the fact that the incident remained unreported officially by the government, pointing to a possibility that it may have been an offshoot of some covert military operation.

Settling Down

In 1980, Giobay was betrothed to marry her cousin Norodin Diocolano— and they have been blessed with a boy, now a third year college, and a girl, still a preschooler.

Little did the couple know each other back then, although they were cousins: “He had courted (me). Our ‘bridge’ was his mother and my mother. We barely knew each other because we grew up in two different places, although we are cousins,” she recounts.

Often identified with his past as a tough Moro guerilla leader, she says her husband Capt. Diocolano opted to avail of the government integration program for former MNLF guerrillas into the into the military or police service, pursuant to the 1996 Peace Agreement.

CHAPTER 3

His Story: A warrior's path to peace

Khannapi “Sony” Ayao left his home for a training camp where he was surprised to meet his older brother. They never told each other that one was joining the armed Moro movement then called the “Black Shirts” that was fighting Visayan militias and Constabulary troopers in the late 60s.

The ninth in the brood of 11 siblings and half-orphan at three, Ayao joined the MNLF in the Battle of Tran (now part of Sultan Kudarat), not long after he left schooling as high school freshman in 1970. (He eventually obtained a college degree in Education in 1989, but not without having to go through hard life: vending vegetables; being carwash boy; a restaurant dishwasher and working as laborer for an industrial farm in Malaysia).

Ayao’s superiors in the MNLF revolutionary movement took him to a greater task in 1973 as a Battalion Commander.

Two years later, his unit was again commissioned to a fierce combat in Libungan, North Cotabato—

where he had eventually established a strong base relationship with the community which he would later organize into Taliawid Farmers' Multi-Purpose Cooperative.

As a guerrilla leader, Sony involved his followers in crucial decisions, reversing, he says, the military principle to "obey first before you complain" into "Complain first before you obey."

To him, the subordinate's hand salute to his senior officer did not mean subservience at all cost. In many a diverse fields of endeavor in and out of the revolutionary movement, he believed that the leader's command may not always be the right decision at the right time and place.

In trying to motivate his followers and comrades in the dawn of the contemporary armed Moro struggle, he would often tell them: "Salute me today and I will salute you tomorrow." It was by example, he says, that he led his men. Following the mass surrender to the government of MNLF leaders and members in 1980, he was sent on an enhancement training mission to a foreign land on handling of artillery cannons and 81 mm. mortars.

His decision to again leave Mindanao for Malaysia that year was prompted by some pressure, a persistent convincing by superior comrades-in-arm for him to yield to Ferdinand Marcos' Policy of Attraction to Moro rebels.

He had a vision, he says, not for himself but for the people. He did not see this realized by gaining instant fortune from Marcos' rewards of logging concessions and reduced import levy privileges that some former rebel leaders sold to rich businessmen in Manila.

Sony knew his vision of social transformation couldn't happen overnight, or so he says. While in Malaysia in 1974, he would reexamine the essence of jihad to himself and to his family back home. He landed a job for "survival" as a plantation worker.

A compassionate warrior, as he is often described, Sony's personality might as well be the epitome of daring and admirable personal character.

He says he no longer had to sharpen his bolo to face his enemies, but he had to be sharper toward other things he was good at—human relations—with which he endeared himself to his employer's family of rich Malay-Chinese rubber plantation owner.

But time came for the moment of parting ways, when Nur Misuari summoned him to "revolutionary duty" in 1985 for what could be another chance at achieving peace in Mindanao.



Ayao stresses a point in this consultation meeting



Ayao takes a break with colleagues during a planning session

To Sony, bigger interests for his people had to transcend that of his own welfare. Tears rolled down the young faces of his employer's kids as he bade them goodbye.

That early, Misuari was being courted by the Philippine political opposition under Corazon Aquino to return to the negotiating table, once they won over Marcos in the Snap Presidential Elections of February 7, 1986.

Soon after Aquino was installed to the presidency by a People Power, Sony found himself in an emotional reunion with his comrades at the 1986 MNLF Congress in Maimbung, Sulu.

When the Philippine Government under President Fidel Ramos entered into a Final Peace Agreement with the MNLF on September 2, 1996, Sony had the opportunity but declined to be integrated into the Armed Forces of the Philippines as a commissioned officer. Instead, he turned to peace and development advocacy in 1997 and strengthened the farmers' cooperative he had organized in Matilac, Libungan, North Cotabato in his quest for peace—upon which “to build an Islamic ummah (community),” he says.

Recognizing its feats at grassroots undertakings, the Cooperative Development Authority adjudged his TFMPC a model farmers' cooperative in 1997. Sony saw his dreams unfold, and his new jihad started shaping up to reality as community gearing toward conflict transformation with area-based projects in place for a status of self-reliance.

After the death of his wife, a public school teacher and mother of his two children, he decided to return to his hometown in Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao. He left the TFMPC under the supervision and management of his co-organizers.

He worked with the Community Organizers' Multiversity for a program funded by the Oxford Family (Oxfam)-Hong Kong.

In 2003, he was recognized as Outstanding Volunteer for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, by the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency.

He was also awarded plaque of recognition by the UNDP representative to the Philippines for his efforts in organizing PDCs in MNLF territories.

Having seen the ruins of war, Sony fondly speaks of his dreams, plans and aspirations for the communities that he and fellow PDAs had helped organize.

“As an MNLF commander, I wanted to be instrumental in delivering to the people what they had been aspiring for from the very start when we

first organized the armed revolt. I will not forget how the people, in their generosity, would willingly give half of their last cup of rice (if only) to feed us. That is why whenever I see people experiencing hardship, I see myself in them.”

The real test, he points out, to the acceptability of the Peace Agreement is how it works in the grassroots level. The people would have to principally assess development efforts at community level where socioeconomic growth had been stalled by armed clashes. A bold step at addressing this concern was made through the organizing and fostering of peace and development communities (PDCs) as basic social units of enhanced people’s awareness and capability in a sphere of participatory democracy.

MNLF combatants or their immediate family members have taken active role in community organizing and in peace and development advocacy; project management and implementation; as well as in institutional partnership on programs and project implementation.

With Ayao joining the group, the formation of the Kadtabanga PDAs into a service institution in 2002 pushed the PDA-PDC concept (in Maguindanao) toward networking into tri-partnership among



Sonny Ayao with UNMDP officials after receiving a plaque from the SPCPD-NEDA-UNMDP, recognizing his efforts at PDC level

community residents, the civil society groups and with various peace and development post-conflict intervention programs.

UNMDP interventions have consistently anchored its undertakings on PDCs, specifically on participatory-based planning and project implementation. This has been enhanced with the support and tutelage of the GoP-UN ACT for Peace Programme and the Maguindanao PDAs who are now gaining grounds from issue-based community organizing and consultative community needs assessment.

On the basis of their output, project proposals are being matched with local and national funding program and donor international organizations.

Community Organizing

Sony finds it easier to organize people when everything is being discussed openly with them. Credibility, he says, is an important factor in the task of organizing. He has established trust by reputation among groups or people he has worked with.

“People’s needs are really very basic: potable water supply, electricity, farm animals or post-harvest facilities,” says Sony. “Meet the needs of the people and you win their heart and mind.”

The Foundation endeavors into helping communities attain strong and effective governance. Empowered and organized communities, Ayao says, are so essential for the people to be able to participate in decision-making processes that directly or indirectly affect their lives.

In July 2003, Ayao was cited for exemplary community services in the State of the Nation Address of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Sony has ever been so resourceful for his people: He left his self-rewarding employment with the CO Multiversity and joined MNLF PDA volunteers, helping them establish linkages with foreign aid organizations, including the Oxford Family, for grassroots undertakings.

Having remarried, Ayao has since settled in Tanuel, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao, where he has built a modest house for his family. Last year, the community accorded him the title of a datu in recognition of his leadership potentials.

CHAPTER 4

Peace Volunteers: Seeds of Community Transformation

Individually or in group, most of the PDAs who now constitute the Kadtabanga Foundation for Peace and Development Advocates, Inc. (KFPDAI) have had their experience working for others they did not even know—or in the process, had known them least.

Except for at least five members of its Board of Trustees concurrently performing administrative or operational functions, the KFPDAI is mainly composed of second generation MNLF members or children of former Moro combatants who are too young to recall the armed conflict in the 70s.

Shortly after EDSA II, the PDA League sent a delegation to Metro Manila to meet the Armed Forces Chief of Staff and the Secretaries of National Defense and of Interior and Local Government for a series of peace dialogues. For this, the PDAL credits the government for the continuity of the UN-Multi Donor Program, even after most other provinces and

cities constituting the SZOPAD have eventually rejected the Expanded Autonomy Law in a plebiscite held in 2000.

On February 11, 2002 war broke anew in Buliok Complex in Pagalungan, Maguindanao and Pikit, North Cotabato areas. The 33-member PDAL group in Maguindanao went on volunteer relief works for thousands of displaced residents, many of them children and women.

PDAs took part in implementing IDP- (internally displaced people) related programs for which a few other groups would risk getting into areas of armed conflict.

Foremost of KFPDAI's collective accomplishments as a service organization have been the implementation and sustainability of the integrative rehabilitation program for IDPs in Barangay Nuyo, Buldon Maguindanao. Covered by that rehabilitation program package under the partnership between the KFPDAI and the Oxfam (Hong Kong)-European Union Aid Program, are core-shelter construction; livelihood projects, and training on conflict management and project management.

As a group, the KFPDAI has completed a Level II communal water system for 500 family-residents of Barangays Margues and Taviran, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao with support from the ACT for Peace Programme on the social preparations, and the Peace with Equity Foundation (PEF) which funded the water project.

They have also implemented and helped manage projects in PDCs and non-PDC villages in Maguindanao, specifically the USAID-funded AMORE for alternative renewable energy sources in far flung areas, and in partnership with the Community Organizing Multiversity (COM), an NGO.

With support from the ACT for Peace programme, they are managing various projects such as: PDC Manungkaling Water Filtration Facilities, Child Health- and Day-Care Centers in PDC Makir (DOS), Multi-Purpose Center of PDC Limpongo (Shariff Aguak) and the rehabilitation of warehouse in Sitio Limbugen in Upi (an MNLF community).

As it was in Barangay Nuyo, Margues and Taviran, all other PDCs were trained on management and maintenance of their community projects for sustainability.

How it Works

Toward the final year of UNMDP Phase III Program (GOP-UNMDP), came the turning point of Maguindanao PDAs' collective decision to get their status elevated from being beneficiaries to partners in implementing programs and corresponding projects at PDC level.

Doing so would require them registration with the Securities and Exchange Commission for institutional legitimacy. This was realized from sheer hard work and resource-generation anywhere from individual monetary contribution to labor remuneration counterpart from the first project they had implemented under the GoP-UNMDP post-conflict development intervention.

Originally, only three among KFPDAI staff members and field workers were trained as community organizers. The group's partnership with the UN Act for Peace Programme provides a venue for more training programs and slots for other PDAs as community organizers based in Cotabato City PDCs.

And as a matter of policy, KFPDAI does not allow assignment of its COs to their respective places of residency. For instance, Kusain Amino, a PDA and resident of Maitumaig, in Datu Unsay, Maguindanao, is assigned as CO for Margues; Oting Agting, PDA and resident of Kilometer 21 in Sultan Mastura, is posted CO in Taviran, and Mokalden Kido, PDA of PDC Kabuling in Buluan, Maguindanao, is CO in charge of PDC Lamud in South Upi, Maguindanao.



*Water for Peace.
MNLF Commander Makol
Musa, drinking water
from a faucet in a Level
2 Water System Project
in PDC Mapayag, Datu
Anggal Municipality. One
of the identified needs of the
community surfaced thru
community organizing.*

Rahib Macalapen, PDA for Margues in Datu Odin Sinsuat and CO for Maitumaig, says the system casts away overconfidence in matters of obtaining data when one is assigned in areas not familiar to him or her. That way, demographic survey and essential data, other than those obtainable by use of modern technology, truly come from the people themselves.

Better off

Barangay Chairman Mama Binangon of Lamud, in South Upi, Maguindanao says it pays to be part of the KFPDAI endeavors, he being concurrently a member of the group's Board of Trustees and a former combatant of the MNLF.

Lamud is a mountain village, some 38 kilometers southwest of Cotabato City. Although it has yet to be reached by rural electricity, it has relatively better roads, water, land resource utilization for livelihood program as well as peace and order situation, than any its neighbor barangays in that high ground of some 1,500 meters above sea-level.

Binangon says road access to his barangay has been adversely affected by smaller interests of mountain truckers who make good earning out of rough sticky, slippery roads.

Its residents, organized as farmers' multi-purpose cooperative, have benefited from projects (warehouse, spring development and solar drier) implemented by the ARMM Social Fund Project (ASFP) under Governor Ampatuan. And because Barangay Lamud is a social unit under the PDC concept of convergent area for international development intervention, more aid came in the forms of: animal dispersal from the Rural Life Development Foundation; farm inputs from the UNMDP-member Food and Agriculture Office and a 3.5-kilometer main barangay road from the Growth with Equity for Mindanao (GEM), which is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The community still needs school buildings, more teachers, Health and Day-Care Centers, according to residents and local officials taking part in consultative forums periodically conducted by the KFPDAI in collaboration with the Programme.

In the national infrastructure drawing boards, it was learned from Maguindanao Rep. Simeon A. Datumanong that South Upi will benefit from the Awang-Upi-Lebak-Kalamansig Road concreting under a Philippine



PDA's distributing relief goods in PDC Manungkaling, Mamasapano during the violent conflict in 2008. Manungkaling is a host to IDPs coming from interior barangays of the municipality.

loan program with the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC), which was approved during his incumbency as secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways (2001-2003).

In sharp contrast, slow pace of development is visibly engulfing Barangay Tukamaror in Bonggo Island, Parang, Maguindanao.

USAID –funded ELAP and SWIFT gave seven units of small pump boats (with inboard engines) to the Tukamaror Fisherfolk and Seaweeds Growers Multi Purpose Cooperative, Inc., according to Taib Aragasi, a councilor of Tukamaror and PDA in that island village.

But this and a conservation project of the Mindanao Rural Development Program (MRDP) don't seem complement each other, according to Aragasi. Under the Coastal Marine Biodiversity Conservation Program of the MRDP, sea waters bounded by and 15 kilometers of shoreline have been declared marine sanctuary.⁸

⁸ A Community Report: In most community experience of failure in program undertakings, lack of consultation and consideration of the people's traditional ways of livelihood generation are a common factor.

Probably, a shortfall in program sustainability is also caused by problems arising from failure in community management due to insufficient level of management capability as well as collective community information and education on the program or project/s. Ibid

Because of this, Aragasi says, seaweeds farms and fishnet bamboos for which the pump boats were to be used had to be Uprooted. Because of this, boatmen have had to sail farther to fish. He says he was afraid that restriction on municipal fishing ground could push them farther ashore and opt for illegal fishing activity. In tactic sessions that KFPDAI held on the Tukamaror concerns, it surfaced that residents have had too little of resource utilization for means of livelihood as well as basic social services, like health and education. Aragasi says “eight hours of working could hardly produce a kilo of rice for a family.”

School children have had to cross some two nautical miles by small pump boats in going to the nearest school in Badak from neighboring villages of Kurapo, Bagoinged and Tutungasapo. Residents long for help in having their community foot bridge completed to give children easier access to school.

Residents attending consultations have recommended accessing microfinance resources for small-scale aqua-culture and agri-business activities. A project proposal on that option were being drawn up for KFPDAI, says Engineer Hadji Larry Dinas, a member of a validating technical team working for the Programme through its Area Management Office in ARMM.

Five PDCs in Cotabato City have also been recipients of similar projects from UNMDP-FAO, GEM-USAID, Oxfam, and the Government of the United Kingdom for the Bridge for Peace Program in partnership with the Presidential Bridge Program under the Department of Public Works and Highways.

Datu Zambra Saligan, Buluan Poblacion PDA, says institutional linkages among local government units, national and international intervention programs and the civil society are effectively working in his area.

Saligan credits support and cooperation from the Buluan local government units under Mayor Esmael Mangdadatu and the PDAs' village-level development initiatives in consultation with residents.

A former operations officer of the SWIFT and ELAP says PDAs are “the right focal persons to help build linkages at community level, even for other international donor institutions (meaning those that are not within the organizational framework of the UNMDP flagship of post-conflict intervention programs). “Their (PDAs) institutionalization is timely and appropriate,” he says.



PDA's leading the way to protection of environment. Signing of the CALL to Protect the Environment in Maguindanao, April 2009



A pump test on the water source down-slope PDC Marguez in DOS



Children of PDC Upper D'lag maiden use of the Children's Education Centee



KFPDAI Staff, lead by its President, Tuna K. Langalan (second from right), preparing for the Environment Consultations



With the Area Manager for ARMM, Subarto Abas, and some KFPDAI members visit to PDC Tuka in Sultan Mastura (Maguindanao) in 2008

Gains

KFPDAI is now part of the PDA Peace Parliament, an ARMM-wide forum of provincial PDALs for issue-based discussions affecting their communities and their respective provinces. PDAPP recommendations are then raised at the regional level. Parliament members meet every quarter to present quarterly accomplishments and share lessons learned with the other PDALs. The presiding officer of the Parliament is chosen among PDALs hosting the forum for a particular quarter. KFPDAI has already hosted 2 of the 7 meetings.

In preparation for bigger tasks ahead, KFPDAI has already acquired a land where they have put up an office building, funded by the Save the Children Foundation and a Knowledge and Peace Center, for which it was assisted by the ACT for Peace Programme through the Area Management Office for ARMM. They have expanded operations, reaching even to non-PDCs. This meant expanding membership and hiring more workers to complement the needs of the communities.

CHAPTER 5

Second Generation MNLF

They could have grown up in the ferocity of guns and battle as children of war or would have themselves turned to the cause of armed rebellion.

But these children of MNLF combatants now work hard for environment of peace in communities that their forebears called home.

Armed only with pen and notebook and a backpack of few pairs of clothes, they meet and talk with older people in lay language of peace and development works.

Each of them has brought home livelihood and other social programs that their elders now manage to sustain. These include post-harvest facilities (warehouse and solar dryer); livestock, farm seeds, fertilizer and water system, among others.

Their individual and collective roles delved on issue-based organizing and extensive consultation on determining the most pressing and collective needs of their communities.

KFPDAI is currently working on such projects for the PDCs of Maguindanao, Shariff Kabunsuan and Cotabato City and is gaining support in its partnership with the ACT for Peace Programme in activities related to conflict-transformation of the communities they are serving. These young individuals look forward to bringing in more package of development programs in more concrete terms.

At 29, Mama Agting of Sultan Mastura, Shariff Kabunsuan is probably the only Muslim to have gone on a volunteer disaster mission to Infanta, Quezon in 2004. Mama, the MNLF Peace and Development Advocate in his native Barangay Alamada in Kilometer 21, Sultan Mastura, Maguindanao, says he kept by himself the feeling that his non-Muslim companions somehow had certain reservation in having a Muslim fellow volunteer in the group.

This is understandable, he says, owing to the usual misimpression on Muslims in an era of terror-tag and Islamophobia. But no worry, he was with his group of Oxfam volunteers who could testify to his being peacemaker—and a confessed MNLF member—in a worse case may be that he were handcuffed and shown the next day on TV as a “terrorist.” But this scenario which, he thought could have been possible, did not happen, anyway.

Agting and his cousins Fahad, Oting and Pahima were in the tutelage of a Christian development worker, Eduardo Soldevilla, in running their people’s organization called the Krislam Muti-Purpose Cooperative, Inc.

Pahima, a computer science graduate, started being KFPDAI PDA in 2002 as a fourth year high school student. She says her community aims to establish a barangay high school, so that future secondary students need not go to neighboring Pigcawayan town or walk 9-10 kilometers going to school. Pahima notes that with youth constituting around 50 percent of community’s voting population, elected leaders have not thought of building a secondary school in her barangay.

Their PDC is a good model of a peaceful Tri-People coexistence, with Muslims constituting 90 percent of its 2,600 population—and the rest Christians and Lumads.

After graduating from high school, Rahib “Jeric” Macalapin became beneficiary of the Sandugo Non-Formal Education Program which gave him computer literacy, along with more than 200 other teenagers, at the Cotabato City Pilot Elementary School.



Oting Agting, Jubaira Bayan and Nasrudin Buisan preparing for the Provincial Consultation on Environmental Issues for Maguindanao



Kusain Amino interviews Sadat, assigned technician of the Marguez-Taviran Water System, during a project evaluation for Water System Project in 2008



PDA-COs during the Community Organizers Convention in Cagayan de Oro City, January 2009 with the programme staff (KFPDAI PDAs are also present)

Jeric, the MNLF PDA of Marguez in Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao and community organizer in Maitumaig, Datu Unsay, Maguindanao, passed the qualifying examination for a tutorial job for the outreach expansion of the same computer literacy program. He taught elderly persons in Iligan and Cagayan de Oro cities and in Bukidnon.

The only Muslim in the group of 25 Christian tutors, he earned the trust of the Sandugo program administrators and designated him the traveling fund-keeper for the group, while teaching, at the same time.

Even if he felt that the added function didn't sit well with some of his fellow tutors, he was reminded of a verse in the Holy Qur'an that says: "And you will find good friendship unto those who say 'We are Christians.'" Macalapin would soon fall ill in Iligan where he was nursed by the mother of a Christian family, who he now calls Nanay. To this family, he says, he is forever grateful.

His own family called him up with the sad news that his father was on the deathbed. With his resolve weakened by death of his father, Jeric has not pursued formal college education.

Taib Kutya, the KFPDAI finance officer, is one of the first few PDA League members who helped organize the Kadtabanga as a service institution. Kutya a second generation MNLF member being child of an old combatant, has a bachelor's degree in economics.

He helped his community PO, the Bangsamoro MNLF Ummah Multi-Purpose Cooperative, Inc., gain access to donor organizations which gave his community seeds, fertilizers and warehouse (UNMDP-FAO); hand farm tractor with trailer and plow implement from SWIFT as well as tools used in steel fabrication shop, and training program from the International Labour Organization.

Kusain Amino, PDA of his native Barangay Maitumaig in Datu Unsay Maguindanao, worked as a passenger jeep conductor while studying. He barely finished high school when an MNLF commander sought his assistance in community works, writing communication; minutes of meetings and notes in every community development training that the commander had to attend. Amino never got the chance to attain college education. But his colleagues at KFPDAI listen intently whenever he speaks and critiques on their presentation and output drawn from community consultations.

Amino's and Macalapin's areas of assignment in Barangays Marquez and Taviran will soon inaugurate a water system project to benefit some 500 family-residents—among them are transient families of soldiers in an adjacent military camp of the Philippine Army's 6th Infantry Battalion in Taviran.

To Amino and his co-workers, everyday and each tactic session and people's assembly serve as a continuing learning experience for them.

In Maitumaig, residents returned home from evacuation (due to armed conflict) on a harvest day during which farmer residents feted representatives from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (DAF-ARMM) under Sec. Sajid S. Duz Ali; Japan International Cooperation Agency and the Philippine Rice Research Institute.

Juhaira Sepi Bayan is KFPDAI's regular staff as community organizer along with Amino and Oting Agting. She obtained her Bachelor's Degree in Agriculture Major in Agronomy from the Mindanao State University-Maguindanao Campus in Datu Odin Sinsuat.

Amino, Bayan, and Oting Agting were the first three of KFPDAI's peace and development advocates to be trained as community organizers in the Phase III of the convergent Government of the Philippines (GOP) and UN-Multi-Donor Programme.

The Act for Peace Programme has trained in Davao City five more KFPDAI PDAs from Cotabato City as COs, with Amino, Agting and Bayan as training coach and providing assistance to training facilitators.

Bayan worked for the PDA League and later as Information Development Officer for the GOP-UNMDP. She subsequently transferred to Mindanao Rural Development Program (MRDP) where she advocated education and the appreciation and understanding of a multi-culture society, as key to attaining peace. She would help the community of her assignment understand cultures and tradition that, she says, were often viewed with indifference. Juhaira describes her kind of work as one that is very stressful and at times humiliating when people tend to misconstrue their intent at community visitation. And because KFPDAI does not ascribe to assigning its community organizers to where they actually live, the three of them find it difficult to be living in community among people they didn't even know

*PDA's repacking relief goods
for the IDPs in Maguindanao
during the recent violent conflict
(2008) in Central Mindanao*



“It’s hard really to earn their cooperation much less their sympathy and trust. You would experience being ignored or even insulted,” says Bayan.

But the sense of sincerity she expresses through hard work eventually overtook this reality.

Oting says they overcome this by having “enough patience; hard work, close coordination with community leaders and their followers; regular holding of tactic sessions; making constant report on community situation and evaluate and strategize plans.”

Of the 25 PDCs, Bayan’s place of assignment in Bagoinged, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao, appeared to have presented the most number of livelihood project proposals: cattle fattening; goat-raising; poultry; spring development and a farm-to-market road.

Previous donor program intervention had established into Camp Datu Ibrahim Sema in Bagoinged a health center and post-harvest facilities.

Light Moments

In light moments of socializing with workers of other partner organizations, Juhaira would stand for a KFPDAI number to sing “If we hold on together.” The same song she would sing with mostly Christian colleagues when she was with MRDP.

Sitio Kiteb, Barangay Mapayag in Talitay, Maguindanao is another MNLF community to which UNMDP-FAO was involved in rural agricultural economic program, in partnership with the Mapayag Multi-Purpose Cooperative, Inc. The MPC’s 186 members had received seeds and fertilizers and availed of a solar drier project.



*Construction of
Nuyo core shelter*



*Peace Assembly in Buluan,
Maguindanao (Act for Peace)
Photo)*



*An old woman in Barangay
Tamontaka IV in Cotabato City
shows off how precise she could
get her thread into the eye of the
needle with bare eyes. An old belief
among Muslims is that a child's
patience in recoiling a yarn of
stranded thread is a test to his/her
ability to deal with things of con-
flict management in older age—as
did PDA Saudi Kadil.*

Makol Musa, 39, Kiteb PDA and Mapayag MPC chairman, says community residents hope to establish schools so that children wouldn't be crossing the busy Cotabato-General Santos Highway in going to school; as well as a health center and water system.

Half-orphaned Kenny Mulod is the PDA for Barangay Tamontaka III. He studied Marine Engineering at the Maritime Academy in Manila.

The breadwinner of his family, Kenny quit studies in Manila, and went home on a second thought of taking up Bachelor of Science in Social Works instead—which he eventually finished.

In addition to existing projects given his community by donor agencies, Kenny says his community raised the need for common farm equipment that people's cooperatives can use in farming at their rice-producing community—the adjoining villages of Barangays Tamontaka I, II, III and IV, southeast of Cotabato City.

Mulod has recruited as community organizer his friend Fahad Abouhaifa, a young son of an Egyptian lawyer who met her mother in the Middle East. Fahad says his mother, a sister of an MNLF fighter, no longer had communications with his father.

Saudi Kadil, the PDA in Tuka in Sultan Mastura, Maguindanao had been instrumental in resolving a family feud or *rido* in his early assignment as a community worker. Kadil says he and his companions deliberately broke up their team for a well-intended plan of bridging the feuding groups with good news and mean language which his group mutually attributed to each of the feuding parties.

Finally, the two unwitting groups had amicably met in an assembly in Cotabato City, with each of them presenting reports that complemented each other's plan of implementing programs that they had earlier disputed on. They have since reconciled.

Born at the height of the Mindanao conflict on March 15, 1972 in Lutayan, Sultan Kudarat, Mokalden Kido, the community organizer of Barangay Lamud in South Upi, Maguindanao, was a student activist in the late 80s when he joined the Central Kutawato Sate Revolutionary Command as its state secretary. He was subsequently trained on community mobilization as Development Management Officer for the Special Zones of Peace and Development in Maguindanao.

CHAPTER 6

Let There Be Peace: Water System Slakes Thirst

DATU ODIN SINSUAT is a municipality some 25 kilometers southeast of Cotabato City. With its rich water resources, it provides water to Cotabato City. However, its residents hardly benefited from the potable water it is providing other areas with.

Thanks to the current issue-based community organizing and consultative development approach evolving from stages of PDC organizational development, formulated in all UNMDP intervention programs. This is now being aggressively pushed by KFPDAI in partnership with the ACT for Peace Programme and the Peace with Equity Foundation, Inc.

In program-plan matching sessions, the KFPDAI presented its proposal with the PEF for funding program on a level II water system. The project proposal consisted of construction of a reservoir in Barangay Margues, Datu Odin Sinsuat and the procurement of electric-powered water pump and



Spring water like this one is familiar site along roadsides of Maguindanao and Lanao Sur Highways (UN Act for Peace Photo)

polyvinyl hydrochloride (PVC) distribution pipes for 83 communal faucets in the PDCs of Barangays Marguez and Taviran.

Kusain Amino and Oting Agting, community organizers of Marguez and Taviran were both optimistic on the near completion of the P 4.4-million water project

It was a long way through vigorous, untiring consultation process and tactic sessions among PDAs and community organizers with residents of the two PDCs.

In more ways than expected of most volunteer works, the KFPDAI in this particular partnership, helped enhance participatory governance, peace-building and project management capabilities of the PDCs concerned.

Amino says if only to be close enough to the would-be beneficiary residents in the process, he had to spend more time in his assigned PDC than he had with his family in Datu Unsay, Maguindanao.

Firmly, community problem on water lack became the people's persisting clamor at consultation level in the two villages—where each household had to spend an average of P 40.00 daily to buy pails of water for domestic use.

In September 2005, Amino says, KFPDAI representatives presented their input from community consultation meetings to PEF project evaluators in Koronadal City. With potential water source to be siphoned from a down-slope Margues spring, PEF evaluators required a supplemental technical test on the KFPDAI project proposal to determine the quality of water and its sustainability in terms of quantity.

Also needed were engineering estimates and hydraulic analysis on a construction of reservoir and pipe-laying works as well as plan, methods and materials to be used, recalls Amino.

“We lacked the hydraulic analysis, because we didn’t have someone knowledgeable on it, an engineer perhaps, until the very day of the presentation. But we submitted our proposal, just the same,” he says in Filipino.

Despite insufficiency in requirements, feedback kept coming to KFPDAI proponents the good news that their P 4.4 million water project proposal had the assurance of a “101 percent” approval by PEF.

And soon enough, the approval came, initially with the construction of an 83,000-liter capacity reservoir in Margues. The PEF soon approved the procurement program of motorized water pump and three-inch diameter polyvinyl hydrochloride pipe lengths as well as for the construction of a pump house and distribution lines.



It used to be this way to fetch water in Margues and Tavitan PDCs



A PDC reservoir being constructed



Test-opening of the water project in Maguez and Taviran

KFPDAI Director Hadja Giobay Diocolano says she found the true essence of jihad in her struggle by which to uphold high trust over personal interests.

Diocolano briefly explained what she meant, pointing to the project cost as the meat and bone of trust that KFPDAI could have otherwise misspent if she wanted to.

Khannapi “Sony” Ayao, the Foundation’s operations officer, confides They were being offered a commission of about P 300,000 in cold cash—in exchange for a negotiated bid transaction in the procurement. KFPDAI flatly rejected the offer: The product was even substandard, and Ayao says they could “never sacrifice the safety of our people—and worse yet by selling our credibility.”

Then came another problem: The only water vendor in Taviran would refuse the main pipeline anywhere passed his premises. But the man was eventually convinced by CO and PDA to allow the pipe-laying works.

KFPDAI also paid the Maguindanao Electric Cooperative, Inc. P 150,000.00 for interior power line extension for the power supply of the project’s water pump component.

Ayao says Datu Lester Sinsuat, who was then mayor of Datu Odin Sinsuat, allowed KFPDAI the use of a backhoe hydraulic crane, owned by the municipal government, for the pipe-laying excavation works.

But later, residents negotiating for a manual labor canal digging, contracted the work in package for P 30,000.00 which roughly equals the aggregate costs of fuel, operator’s allowance and mechanical maintenance of running the heavy equipment.

KFPDAI also trained residents of the two PDCs on project management to enable them to establish a system of collection and project maintenance. Monthly billing would be fixed for each consumer-household at P 40.00 per month, the equivalent of daily water consumption cost per household, Amino says.

CHAPTER 7

Brief History: A Synopsis

The concept of Peace and Development Community as a basic social unit started with Phase I of the development intervention carried by the Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development (SPCPD), as a transitional mechanism toward the implementation of 1996 Peace Agreement, the National Economic Development Authority, as principal government planner on socioeconomic development, and the United Nations Multi-Donor Program (UNMDP), representing international donor organizations.

Development Councils are both constitutional and statutory people's right in Philippine democracy. The creation of the SPCPD came in the wake of a standoff in the GRP-MNLF peace negotiation and thus, became crucial in the months preceding the signing of the 1996 peace pact.

The MNLF wanted an interim setup established in all 14 provinces and nine cities then, without it having to go through constitutional process of a plebiscite. On the other hand, the government panel adhered on

its stand of a democratic consultation, that is to say, a plebiscite.

The SPCPD concept to break the impasse was separately introduced in Congress by Maguindanao Rep. Simeon A. Datumanong and in Malacanang by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita. The MNLF agreed to this and Nur Misuari and Government Peace Negotiator, Ambassador Manuel Yan signed the Final Peace on September 2, 1996. In a subsequent Executive Order issued by President Fidel V. Ramos, the government created the SPCPD with two components, an Executive (Administrative/Operations) and an Assembly (policy-making body), covering 14 provincial and 11 cities. The Ramos administration also named to the Assembly one representative from each of the provinces covered on recommendation of local officials, as well as of non-government organizations.

While it is true that SPCPD-NEDA-UNDP-MDP initially carried post-conflict development intervention programs, the SPCPD served the purpose of generating resources and a pool of professional development workers into the administrative and operational functions of the Council. The SPCPD executive office worked separately from the policy-making body composed of provincial assemblypersons. Among other loosely limited functions, the Assembly was mandated with formulating recommendatory measures on peace and development concerns for the provinces in which Special Zones of Peace and Development (SZPAD) were established.

Separated by preference

Indeed, Phase I of UNMDP specifically supported SPCPD in the organizing of the Peace and Development Communities, with the help of the Community Organizing (CO)-Multiversity, an NGO. But the SPCPD was too short-lived to have sustained the stages of PDC evolution in conflict-affected areas of the SZPAD-hosting provinces. In that sense, MNLF Community Organizers (COs) and Peace and Development Advocates (PDAs) had the least reason to credit the now defunct SPCPD for the transformation of their communities adversely affected by armed conflict. The leaders' aspirations of political stability on one hand, and the MNLF organizers' direct dealings with their communities on the other, thickly drew the line on matters of preference in the emerging transformation.

And the SPCPD naturally ended a brief three-year transitional lifespan with the ratification of Republic Act 9054, the Expanded Autonomy Act (authored in Congress by one of MNLF's flamboyant leaders) in 2000—

being the government's chief policy instrument in complying with the 1996 Final Peace Agreement.

Common Rejection

As earlier emphasized, the apparent organizational “crack,” though may only be in terms of political preference in time, continued even with majority of the MNLF members were in principle opposed to the group's general acceptance of the main peace package—the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. At this point, some national officials helped mobilize another political realignment in the MNLF hierarchy (then already reduced into blocs), if only to fan support for the government peace package and politically, for the MNLF (administration) gubernatorial candidate, Dr. Parouk Hussin in the 2001 ARMM elections. This took place after Nur Misuari was arrested in Malaysia on government charges of rebellion. These events gave birth to the MNLF Council of 15.

On February 11, 2002, the Armed Forces of the Philippines launched offensives on a Moro Islamic Liberation Front encampment in Buliok Complex of the inland villages of Liguasan Marsh in Pikit, North Cotabato and Pagalungan, Maguindanao.

The city government of Davao had subsequently charged MILF leaders of multiple murder in connection with the 2002 bombing at the Davao International Airport and weeks later, the Davao City Sasa Port.

The Public Attorney's Office of the Department of Justice under then Secretary Simeon Datumanong moved to quash the charges for lack of evidence, and which led to the reopening of the government peace negotiation with the MILF.

According to Cotabato City Muslimin Sema, MNLF Chair, the MNLF as an organization has since reverted status quo ante to its pre-peace agreement organizational structure, which effectively dissolves the Council of 15. The MNLF leadership, Sema says, has since been reposed to a least-known “Executive Council” which he would rather keep under wrap.

Economic Jihad

In a sense, the liberating force of economic jihad is stronger in its direct impact to MNLF communities in Maguindanao, Lanao Sur, Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

Relatively, MNLF COs and PDAs through sheer hard work—of pen and labor—make bolder steps to freedom ahead of separatists' historic rights claim over parts of Mindanao territory. However few they may be, the men and women of Kadtabanga PDAs have attained and are attaining liberation in more aspects, even as they are also helping their communities gain freedom—freedom from want; from ignorance, as well as freedom from the adverse consequences of armed conflict, and hopefully economic independence. Unfortunately or fortunately, only a handful of politically and economically weak PDAs and COs like those of the Kadtabanga group have sustained and are effectively working on the process of conflict transformation for their communities.

The group is one of few MNLF-PDA groups that has chosen the path to community strengthening of rural-based economy and the social-political structure, through helping community residents gain access to and become implementing partners in development programs.

Continuing Program Intervention

As mentioned earlier, UNMDP converges resource management as well as policy and operational representation for country-based or international donor organizations' grant programs, which constitutes post-conflict rehabilitation undertakings and intervention projects. The UNMDP endeavor of investing into peace-building and development programs continues to evolve at community level and has made some successes happen through inter-organizational coordination and its sustained generation of people's support and cooperation.

Since 2005, the later part of the UNMDP Phase III, and since the beginning of its tenure, the ACT for Peace Programme has been administratively aligned with the Mindanao Economic Development Council (MEDCo), then Chaired by Sec. Jesus G. Dureza, who also currently serves as its National Programme Director. Undersecretary Virgilio Leyretana has since replaced Dureza, who assumed the post of Press Secretary.

Operationally, it undertakes intervention projects in collaboration with PDCs, PDAs and people's organizations like multi-purpose cooperatives as beneficiary recipients.

The experience in Maguindanao illustrates a good example of PDAs working together for community conflict transformation and of winning the confidence of Multi-Donor international partners in post-conflict intervention programs, as well as project implementation.

In Sulu where there had been armed clashes of late, UNMDP program partnership is being linked up with the provincial government for the farm tractors-for-arms program.

In Marawi City, a persuasive pool of academicians has pushed for the establishing of the Mindanao State University's Institute for Peace and Development in Mindanao (IPDM) with support from ACT for Peace Programme and a congressional funded building, which is covered by a Memorandum of Agreement between the Office then Speaker Jose De Venecia then MSU President, Dr. Ricardo de Leon.

In Maguindanao, efforts delved on reactivation of existing projects delivered by various international donor organizations, mostly under the umbrella representation of the UNMDP—Phase I through Phase III—in collaboration with the national government, LGUs and local people's organizations.

Sema has pointed out that many of the PDC projects, while being laudable and timely, could fail through time's test of sustainability for lack of management and maintenance.

Planners, however visionary they may be, can overlook some essential factors in projection in terms of collective preference for the people's general welfare. And, on the part of the beneficiary communities, the people's capability and will to sustain their project.

A third factor may be attributed to the shaky peace and order situation in some beneficiary communities in which on-and-off skirmishes take place, particularly in the case of Maguindanao and Sulu.

CHAPTER 8

Where PDCs succeed, fail

Traveling on a boat westward by the Moro Gulf from Parang, Maguindanao, one sees Bonggo Island (some 20 nautical miles away) with hopes literally springing forth immensely by its blue waters, rich with marine resources, and a sunset-hosting horizon to behold in nightfall.

But a few hundred steps uphill to the village of Barangay Tukamaror (on the island's northern tip) reveal the veiled face of poverty that engulfs the island-dwelling Iranuns.

Gone were the days of smuggling blue-sealed cigarettes and dry-goods to and from Borneo into which Bonggo residents had invested much time, effort and financial resources, says one fisherman.

Not a few of them were subjected to mass deportation from the Malaysian territory where they had sought employment or lived by the underground market, says Taib Aragasi, a PDA and a village council member. The island's PDC run by the Tukamaror Agri-fishery Multi-Purpose Cooperative needs much

focus for rehabilitation or reactivation, says Suharto Abas, Area Manager of the Act for Peace Programme in the ARMM.

Aragasi showed the team infrastructure projects that were either half-finished or have been rendered practically of no use to intended beneficiaries.

These include, a 36-span foot bridge that would have been useful to children and teachers who have had to travel by boat to school in an adjacent village; a pavement solar dryer and post-harvest warehouse which have apparently but little or have no use for the island residents, due to low productivity from farming. Aragasi says many of the villagers have switched to other means of livelihood, from copra farming or municipal fishing, the island's principal sources of income. For one, coconut trees were past the age of productivity and that there was little market prospect, if any, from backyard banana planting.

Aragasi also blames contractors of the projects that he suspects to have intended to profit beyond tolerable level—to the jeopardy of the projects and worse yet, at the expense of the beneficiary residents. Even with low incidence rate of conflict, the Tukamaror PDC⁸ hardly moved forward to development stages 3 and 4 largely because implementation of community projects apparently lacked consensus, specifically on some technical considerations: Seven motorized bancas for small fishing were granted the community through the local people's organizations, by the USAID-funded Support with Fast Transition (SWIFT)-Enhanced Livelihood Access Program (Elap).

The bancas were designed for near-shore small fishing within the 15-kilometer municipal fishing limit set by the Fishery Code. Now, Tukamaror fishers go farther that limit, owing to imposition of a fishing ban in a subsequent conservation and seaweed farming program on areas bounded by shorelines and the 15-kilometer municipal fishing limit.

Apart from enhancing the community's conflict management capability, with the formation of Local Conflict Management System (LMS), Stage 2 of PDC organizational development equally focuses on socioeconomic concerns with the formation of Local Economic Development Structures (such as People's Resource Management System). Obviously, the Tukamaror PDC needs strengthened.

⁸ An essentially desired output on the level of local policy-making and village leadership, has been the barangay development council (BDC) and barangay leaders being able to allocate barangay fund for key projects based on people's reform agenda (PRA).

Some residents say they were afraid that the changes introduced by the shore resource conservation program could push small fishermen to opt for illegal fishing.

On the other hand, the bancas are too small to be used in transporting business to and from the island and Parang, the commercial center, they point out.

But like its blue waters, hopes and options seem endless for an impoverished community: Many younger residents though have settled to Metro Manila doing business the jeopardy of the projects and worse yet, at the expense of the beneficiary residents. Even with low incidence rate of conflict, the Tukamaror PDC 8 hardly moved forward to development stages 3 and 4 largely because implementation of community projects apparently lacked consensus, specifically on some technical considerations: Seven motorized bancas for small fishing were granted the community through the local people's organizations, by the USAID-funded Support with Fast Transition (SWIFT)-Enhanced Livelihood Access Program (Elap).



The Bongo Island by nightfall

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But like its blue waters, hopes and options seem endless for an impoverished community: Many younger residents though have settled to Metro Manila doing business either as middlepersons in overseas hiring of domestic help, or selling native foods in such Muslim communities in the metropolis as those in Quiapo, Manila and Tandang Sora in Quezon City. Or, themselves seeking lowly paid jobs locally and abroad.

Things are entirely different in some PDCs in Maguindanao villages which have been frequented by armed conflict, triggered mostly by territorial disputes. Harvest time in Datu Saudi Ampatuan and Datu Unsay municipalities were plentiful even with residents fresh from evacuation due to skirmishes between Moro guerillas and Philippine Army troopers backed by local paramilitary forces.

Kusain Amino, KFPDAI PDA for the Maitumaig PDC in Datu Unsay, Maguindanao, says a implementation of convergent agricultural program which is jointly supported by the local PDC, DAF-ARMM, the Philippine Rice Institute and the UN-Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), has often been interrupted by armed clashes

In a Barangay Harvest Festival in the Third Quarter of 2006, residents of Datu Unsay received representatives from Japan's International Cooperation Agency, FAO, DAF-ARMM and Philippine Rice Institute.

The visitors had the impression that the grown rice they had sown on five experimental farm plots had remained apparently untouched, despite the skirmishes the weeks before.

Clashes have remained a social factor that contributes to failure in community projects and, therefore, slows down the process of conflict

transformation Other social factors also adversely affect beneficiary communities—not the least, attitudinal change.

A labor-based project in Barangay Kayaga in Buluan, Maguindanao has generated support from the International Labor Organization through provision of training package program and complete set of equipment used in steel fabrication in the tenure of MDP3.

But Taib Kutya, KFPDAI PDA for Kayaga PDC in Buluan, Maguindanao, says the project failed because it has not established a domain of market clientele.⁹

This is probably because of a common attitude of mistrust with which locals tend to patronize services of steel work shops in other places (for instance) more than that of their own, as a matter of personal preference, explains Kutya, who now serves as its finance officer, concurrently as board of director. But while one project fails, another endeavor tends to deliver the community to certain level of success—farming In October 2002, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)- granted the community (through the Bangsamoro Ummah Multi-Purpose Cooperative) P 1.2 million worth of farm equipment; farm product storage warehouse and a solar dryer.

Kutya said these facilities have helped increase level of local agricultural production with 80 percent of arable lands planted to either rice, corn or long-term crops. But while production has achieved some heights of the community development aspiration, previous planning and undertakings have apparently overlooked some basic social needs, such as water system; health center, schools and day-care center for children. And Kutya says these have been the community's needs determined from issue-based community consultations that Kadtabanga has conducted with support from the ACT for Peace Programme ARMM-AMO.

In Barangay Lamud, Upi, Maguindanao, roads, water system and economic production were at higher level than they were in the 90s. However, the local government had to share its village council session hall

⁹ Note that Stage 3 also focuses on enabling the community establish a sustainable farm and non-farm enterprise development through people's management system as well as organizational management. The Kayaga PDC needed to review and strengthen on this aspect and give more focus on social-related reforms, probably through some spiritual avenues of community Islamic value-formation.

with health and social Workers, alternatively making it a health center or a Day-Care center for children.¹⁰

Zambra Saligan, KFPDAI PDA for Buluan, Maguindanao, says his community is now reaping the fruits of issue-based organizing and consultative planning in which the people's will is vital to participatory governance. Saligan says under Mayor Esmael Mangudadatu, Buluan has benefited from capability-building and computerization programs of the Local Governance Support Program in ARMM (LGSPA) which is funded by the Canadian Agency for International Development (CIDA); the USAID-funded Growth with Equity in Mindanao (GEM) for its public market, and that the local that the government unit and residents complement each other with community-crafted Barangay Development Plans being integrated into legislated municipal development agenda.

In this case, we see that a common focus on the part of the leadership on one hand and the followers on the other, is essential in attaining development. Other nearby PDCs in Barangays Malangit, Upper D'lag, Kayaga and Kabuling in Buluan, and Bunawan and Bagoadatu in Datu Paglas have so similarly benefited.

In Tamontaka IV, local cases of *rido* (clan feud) is bane to development efforts, says Dang Guialal, KFPDAI PDA in the area. Guialal recalls that Barangay Chair Tammy Ali was shot to death in 2003. Ali's statutory successor Coy Tahir was also killed.

As killings continued, one who assumed the barangay treasurer's post and another, a barangay secretary, were killed one after the other, Cotabato City Mayor Datu Muslimin Sema made it a point that a succeeding barangay chair would have to be one of well-entrenched influence in the community with strong backing by the people's and arms to beef-up security support. The community finds this in the person of Hadji Maguid Hassan, a pioneering MNLF member. He was succeeded by Datu Pendatun Mangelen.

¹⁰PDC Stages of Development The formation of a barangay development council (BDC) is an essentially desired output on the level of local policy-making, and village leadership being able to allocate barangay fund for key projects based on people's reform agenda (PRA) and barangay development plan (BDP). It is also aimed here that PDC plans are integrated into the municipal development plan, thereby ensuring better support access for resources in aid of production, market and information linkages.

Stages 2 and 6 of PDC organizational development were fruitfully applied in this conflict with Datu Tua Pangilan, the barangay chair of Tamontaka II, in the lead of peace persuasion along the line of indigenous approaches at conflict resolution.

Sema says soon to be implemented in these areas is the city's water system expansion to Tamontaka II, III and IV, which is funded by USAID-GEM. Usop Maguid, Tamontaka IV PDA, says a 5.6 kilometer road pavement (a section of the Pagalamatan-Kabuntalan Road) was implemented in his area through a congressional fund of then Maguindanao and Cotabato City Rep. Didagen Dilangalen and which GOP-UNMDP III helped coordinate in 2003.

The Mapayag PDC in Datu Anggal Midtimbang, Maguindanao shows improvement in agriculture economy and a relatively easier market access for its farmers' produce, the area being close to Cotabato City-General Santos City national highway.

But residents say Mapayag, home to the oldest surviving MNLF leader, 107-year old Musa Ngadtud, lack schools and health and Day-Care centers to help mold for its children a better future, Ngadtud's son, Makol Musa, a PDA who takes charge of organizing this PDC has hardly attained schooling.

But this did not prevent the MNLF Farmers Multi Purpose Cooperative (MNLF FMPC), in which he is the Chairman, from getting assistance from ELAP and LEAP for farm inputs. From the Act for Peace Programme, a Level 2 Water System is now serving the residents of the PDC and some 200 IDPs of the current violent conflict in Maguindanao between the government and MILF military forces who have chosen to stay in the PDC since mid-August 2008. They have been awarded by LEAP as one of the Best Farmers' Cooperatives because of their successful implementation of community projects.

Currently, the Act for Peace Programme also assists them for additional farming inputs, this time, not only the members but also with the participation of the IDPs as they were included by MNLF FMPC in the implementation, as part of the Early Recovery Program of the Act for Peace Programme.

As mentioned in a previous chapter, the Bagoinged PDC which hosts to a number of projects, particularly at Camp Datu Ibrahim Sema, has the longest list of livelihood-based community needs, consistently raised in community consultations conducted by the KFPDAI.

The community has a health center, post-harvest infrastructure facilities and boasts of a 100-hectare aggregate arable areas planted to corn. Its agriculture sector has received support from FAO in the form of farm inputs. Its residents want this mono-cropping complemented with livestock farming. Thus, consultation inputs also included community need for cattle-fattening; goat-raising; poultry, as well as spring development project, says Jamael Sepi, a PDA and local council member.

PDC Tambak in Datu Odin has a vast farm area planted with rice and is abundant with livestock. Led by the Ayaos in the community, it has consistently shown ideal qualities of PDC for years. It has so transformed from the height of the armed conflict in the 70s. A Level 2 Water System project now also serves residents of the upper portion of the PDC.

The PDC in Barangay Kauran, Ampatuan, Maguindanao (also with tri-people coexistence), run by an MNLF multi-purpose cooperative under the late Commander Datu Tayan Sangki, has opted to chart its own course by trying to explore economic connections with the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC).

The PDC in Kitapok, Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Maguindanao has been frequented by armed clashes between Moro guerrillas and government troops. Its members and PDA are among the busiest in peace-building activities.

Barangay Tuka, Tapayan in Sultan Mastura, Maguindanao hosts to large mass of coexistence among Christian Ilocanos and Maguindanaon and Iranun Muslims—who are mostly into rice farming as their principal means of livelihood.

Its PDC has been strengthened by organizational support from the visionary State Liner Economic Development Multi-Purpose Cooperative. It initially ventured into bagoong- making (paste fish sauce). But the MPC initially failed in a credit-union lending program out of P 100,000.00 common fund it had previously raised, says Saudi Kadil, a PDA of Tuka.

Kadil says the cooperative is giving the same venture a second try in the community, through the Integrated Economic Development Project

employing a Community Fund Scheme, which is so far the most acceptable in Islam on matters of lending and repayment as it does not bear interest. Still, assisted by the ACT for Peace Programme, the project has four (4) component sectors namely: Rice Production and Seed Growing, Post Farm Production Services, Rice Retailing and Salted Fish Production. It has also received considerable support of farm input materials from the UN-Food and Agriculture Organization.

Kadil also said the PDC has also determined in its community consultation people's clamor for a health center.

The PDC in KM. 21 which is part of Sultan Mastura is practically starting from scratch, so to speak. And though, it is one of few PDCs that has the characteristics defined in Chapters I and VIII—as having tri-people coexistence of Moros, Christians and Lumad (tribes people)—it hardly had its fair share of the fruits of development.

KM. 21 received goat-raising and poultry projects from the UN-FAO. During the term of the MDP3, some residents were trained into pancit (raw noodles)-making and ventured into small-scale production through its people's organization, the Krislam Multi-Purpose Cooperative, Inc. But the project was hardly sustained, according to Fahad Agting, KFPDAI PDA in the area. They were also given a Barangay Health Station which until now serves four (4) other adjacent barangays. The ACT for Peace Programme has also supported a local Agro Forestry Project and Bio-Intensive Gardening through the Krislam Cooperative and Women's organization respectively.

It was long way through development works and volunteerism for the Agtings, second-generation MNLF members, to realize their effective development role in their own community's progress Fahad's sister, Pahima, started being community worker as a senior high school student for which she had been given work assignments elsewhere.

Their cousin Mama Agting, left schooling to work for other communities through contractual employment with the UNMDP and twice with Oxfam, which took him to a humanitarian mission to Infanta, Quezon in 2004; then he joined a group of young people on community works in line of public health program, and later with the Spanish government-funded Accion Contra el Hambre.

Eduardo Sordevilla, their 60-year old mentor in community works, says he had spent much time serving the peace process in the company of ranking MNLF leaders, including Nur Misuari.

Sordevilla, a Visayan, has served as resource person in capability trainings designed for MNLF members under UNMDP Phase II and Phase III Programs. He has also worked for the Minsupala Development Foundation, Inc.

Epilogue

An area-wide assessment on July 27, 2007, delved on project impact or effect of activities and technical assistance on PDCs in relation to peace-building endeavors.

In a nutshell, evaluations had established the following: 1) conflict transformation through peace awareness and interfaith dialogues promote mutual understanding; 2) awareness of the dynamics of conflict improves conflict management or resolution capability equally at PDC and LGU levels; 3) activating the barangay justice system as a way through effectively handling community cases, such as those pertaining to human rights; 4) the creation of provincial technical working groups (TWGs) enhances sector- and community-based awareness on the intricacies of peace-building activities, and 5) spiritual development through interfaith dialogues enhances inter-religious links toward their common aspirations for peace and development.

Community security is enhanced with extensive community organizing to renew ties among vulnerable villages, encouraging rural entertainment and intensified community sports engagements to cushion stressful tension caused by armed conflict, coupled with capability programs to sustain community empowerment where people's involvement becomes more visible.

Enviorns at peace tend to improve income generation opportunity among PDC residents. Livelihood assistance increase income levels among beneficiaries of the 1996 Final Peace Agreement, through long- and short-term projects, such as: goat-raising; seaweed farming; water system and provision of post-harvest facilities.

More engagements into livelihood programs reduce poverty and promote economic security. Better access to basic health services in terms of health education, improved facilities and social services reduce morbidity rate through effective disease prevention. Enhanced community peace situation has also opened to commercial activities community-linking roads that were previously impassable due to various forms of security risks.

Social preparations in 67 PDCs strengthen community consultations as well as participation in various peace-building forums among PDAs, women, youth, indigenous people and other community-based sectors.

PDAs' more frequent collaboration with LGUs also hastens activation of Barangay Development Councils (BDCs). Also reactivated have been PDCs in 19 villages in Maguindanao; eight barangays in Sulu; six in Basilan and seven in Tawi-Tawi.

At least 63 Barangay Development Plans (BDPs) were updated in Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, Sulu, Basilan and Tawi-Tawi, through participatory resource appraisal of BDPs. This approach encourages community members to directly participate in forum discussions and provide inputs into community planning in determining projects that they need most. Many such democratically crafted BDPs are now in stage of policy-making or at lobbying for integration into Municipal Development Plans (MDPs). Four have already been integrated into MDPs in Maguindanao through the combined efforts of barangay LGUs and PDAs.

To date, 18 project management teams were organized in 18 PDCs Maguindanao and Sulu. Learning and developing skills at documenting activities increase resource-generation capability among 80 PDAs, mobilized as Community Organizers (COs). The PDAs have put to good

use such newly acquired skills in their regular consultations with LGUs and in dialogue with representatives of funding agencies, as well as with the academe.

PDAAs have learned essential experience from the concept and principles of issue-based community organizing, rapid-base-approach and do-no-harm attitudinal development goals. The ACT for Peace Programme ARMM Area Management also supported the conduct of community peace organizers' convention in the region in March 2007.

Peace Parliament is a PDA Leagues' convergent mechanism in peace-building endeavors wherewith to expand and elevate discussion of related issues as a matter of social and institutional concerns.

Three of the five PDA Leagues in the Peace Parliament are now linked by the internet 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

In partnership with the Mindanao State University, the ACT for Peace Programme-AMO is supporting the integration of peace education into the higher learning program of the MSU Institute for Peace and Development in Mindanao (IPDM).



APPENDIX

ARMM PDC Map





Table 2 Correlating Estimated Amount of Time per PDC Stage of Development with Programme Implementation Levels

PDC Stages of Development vis-à-vis Programme Implementation Levels		Estimated Amount of Time ¹⁸	
		Minimum	Maximum
PDC Stage 1 <i>Confidence Building</i>	Programme Implementation 1 st Level <i>Awareness</i>	6 months	1 year
PDC Stage 2 <i>Peace and Development Organizing</i>	Programme Implementation 2 nd Level <i>Agreement</i>		
PDC Stage 3 <i>Peace and Development Planning</i>	Programme Implementation 2 nd Level <i>Agreement</i>	1 year	1 year
PDC Stage 4 <i>PDC Plan Implementation</i>	Programme Implementation 3 rd Level <i>Access</i>		
PDC Stage 5 <i>PDC Strengthening</i>	Programme Implementation 4 th Level <i>Application</i>	2 years	2 years
PDC Stage 6 <i>PDC Empowerment</i>	Programme Implementation 5 th Level <i>Adaptation</i>	6 months	1 year
Total		4 years	5 years

Table 3 ACT for Peace Annual PDC Uptake and Progression along the Stages of Development¹⁹

PDC Stages	Programme Years					Total PDCs over 5 years
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	
Stage 1	3 & 40 new	60 new				263
Stage 2	5					
Stage 3	38	48	60			
Stage 4	75	38	48	60		
Stage 5	42	75	38	48	60	
Stage 6	0	42	75	38	48	
Total PDC Taken Up Per Year	203	263	221	146	108	

Projected No. of PDCs Taken Up by the Programme Annually The annual number of PDCs taken up by the Programme will be calibrated such that interaction with PDCs will be at its peak during the first three years with a marked tapering off by the final two years of the Programme. PDCs will be selected until they "graduate" (i.e., reach the more advanced stages of development as illustrated by Table 3) (UN Act for Peace Data).

Illustration 1 PDC Stages of Development

							Stage 6: PDC Empowerment
							Stage 5: PDC Strengthening
						Stage 4: PDC Plan Implementation	
				Stage 3: Peace and Development Planning			
		Stage 2: Peace and Development Organizing					
Stage 1: Confidence. Building							

It is estimated that each stage would entail a certain length of time to successfully accomplish. The table below makes the link between the PDC stage of development and the levels of the Programme Implementation Framework.

Programme Principles

Peacebuilding involves the establishment and strengthening of horizontal and vertical relationships in order to strengthen social capital. Consistent with this, Programme implementation will be guided by the following principles:

Principles for Building and Strengthening Horizontal Relationships (Binding)

Peace-oriented interventions. Refer to initiatives that are acknowledged to be consistent with generally accepted principles of peace-building ; hence, they can be described as peace-based, peace-sensitive, or peace-promoting endeavor.

Rights-based approach to local governance and development management. This means that the human rights framework and principles/concepts of rights entitlements and state obligations and the normative content of every right are applied systematically and methodically to development and governance processes at the strategic development planning, policy and legislation, administrative functions, programs and service delivery levels.

Participatory. Deliberate efforts to identify and involve and engage stakeholders that are regarded as important to the development undertaking. This suggests the desirability of engaging as many stakeholders as possible and the intentional inclusion of marginalized groups; and also suggests the need to build consensus among the engaged groups.

Demand-driven. A conscious approach of service providers to identify, design, respond to, and serve the expressed needs of target beneficiaries. This requires a supporting process that encourages their active and informed participation.

Flexible. Guided by the principles and approaches that define the Programme framework, Programme implementation shall nevertheless take off from concrete and current conditions and actual

capacities and concerns of participants and stakeholders; and shall be iterative. Programme processes such as regular monitoring, and systematic exchange of field information among implementers, the PMO and the OIA shall ensure effective and quick response to pressing developments.

Culture-sensitive. Premised on respect for local (which can be traditional or indigenous) practices, beliefs and traditions. It also refers to the ability to adapt and innovate implementation strategies and approaches that are appropriate to the local culture.

Gender-responsive. Recognizing that women and men are affected by conflict differently with the former most affected by its negative consequences, the Programme's concern for women's rights will address the gender dimensions of conflict. Ensuring improved access by women to services and resources, and increasing awareness and knowledge on women's rights not only among women but also of the larger community (e.g., LGU, judiciary, military, and police, etc.) are peace promotive and conflict preventive initiatives.

Convergence. Pooling of initiatives and resources to achieve a common set of objectives. It suggests a shared understanding of the philosophy or the framework that governs collaboration. It also indicates willingness of stakeholders to come together in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development interventions, and in the management of risks. Convergence could also contribute to the attainment of the specific mandates and objectives of the individuals/groups involved.

Principles for Establishing and Strengthening Vertical Relationships (Linking)

Mainstreaming. Purposeful efforts to bring into the “mainstream” (formal agencies/institutions, established norms, etc.) development efforts and changes that may have been initially undertaken “outside

of the mainstream or at the periphery.” This suggests bringing in the changes that have been developed outside the mainstream, and possibly, scaling them up.

Institutionalization. Deliberate efforts to “make the changes stick;” expressed in terms of regularizing and integrating the changes in policy, procedures, processes, roles and behavior of individuals and groups to enhance accountability and to optimize application/ utilization. Change needs to be “managed” to ensure that the application is sustained beyond the initial development intervention.

Towards achieving:

Sustainability. The result of the melding and aggregation of the effects of “horizontal and vertical” relationships and changes brought about by peacebuilding; suggests the improved capacity of individuals and groups to be generally “self-propelled” (not requiring major external stimuli) and to have better and more effective initiatives in responding to new and more complex challenges.

Impact at the community level. The Philippine Peace Framework recognizes the community-based nature of peace work. Promoting changes at the community level will address factors such as deprivation of group access to opportunities, political marginalization and pronounced state neglect that are regarded as roots of violent conflicts. Community-based approaches will also facilitate changes in the behavior of individuals, households and groups which are essential towards developing and promoting a culture that is oriented for peace.

In an effort to be a learning programme and to build on successes, sound practices from the GoP-UN MDP3 and other peacebuilding initiatives shall also be adapted by the new Programme provided they are appropriate to the culture, capacities and requirements of the target participants. This includes a consideration of strategies and initiatives that are being pursued in Mindanao such as those under the Mindanao Natin .

Programme delivery shall be carried out in a manner that promotes convergence and integration of the component strategies and

approaches. It is very important that those involved in the execution and management of the Programme as well as those mobilized to implement projects and assistance, to provide support and to collaborate level off on the framework (concepts, principles and strategies) that inform ACT for Peace. The Components shall systematically build on each other's gains. Programme mechanisms and processes such as regular meetings to discuss and thresh out concerns and to jointly respond to issues shall be set in place to put complementation among Components and concerned agencies into effect.

ACT for Peace shall actively collaborate, complement and partner with other peacebuilding and development-oriented programs to avoid overlaps and duplication, and to ensure the sustainability of the gains and the mainstreaming of the successes of Peace and Development Communities.

Target Participant Beneficiaries

Peacebuilding involves working with multistakeholders and promoting changes at different levels, hence the Programme's target participants and beneficiaries are: a) post-conflict, conflict-affected and conflict-vulnerable communities (Muslims, Christians, Lumads/IPs); b) local governments (barangay, municipal and provincial); c) the MNLF; and d) non-community and non-LGU peacebuilding actors and institutions (such as CSOs, peace networks, religious leaders, the media, academe, etc.). Attention shall be paid to highly vulnerable groups such as women, youth, children and the aged. A key concern of the new Programme is addressing the needs of women who were widowed and children/youth orphaned by the GRP-MNLF war.

In recognition of their roles in promoting human security and peace, LGUs will be involved in ACT for Peace in a purposeful manner by a) institutionalizing peacebuilding in LGU policies, structures, processes, functions and plans, b) strengthening their conflict transformation abilities, and c) enhancing their accountability to respond to needs of conflict-affected and post-conflict communities. ACT for Peace will further prepare LGUs to sustain Programme gains and support the peace momentum in Southern Philippines.

The Philippine government proceeds from the belief that effective peacebuilding, among others, is community-based. GoP-UN MDP3 partner PDCs need to be strengthened further and also involved in scaling up the Programme to reach new communities. The Programme shall work not only with PDCs but also with other post-conflict, conflict-affected and conflict-vulnerable communities. The ACT for Peace will work with an additional 100 PDCs and will continue to support the 163 partners of the GoP-UN MDP3 in their maturation as fully-evolved PDCs.

The Programme shall focus on post-conflict and conflict-affected areas in Southern Philippines. The Programme shall initially cover 15 provinces and 14 cities, generally corresponding with the areas originally covered by the former Special Zone of Peace and Development (SZOPAD). When warranted, the Programme shall also respond to areas in Southern Philippines that are affected by or vulnerable to conflict outside of the above areas (e.g., Caraga Region).



About ACT for Peace Programme

The ACT for Peace Programme is a successor program to the Government of the Philippines – United Nations Multi-Donor Programme (GoP-UNMDP) 3, which operated from 2001 to 2004. The Programme is the United Nations’ and the Philippine Government’s commitment to peace and development in Southern Philippines.

The Programme builds on the gains of the past three phases of the UNMDP, which were implemented in support to the peace agreement between the Philippine Government and the Moro National Liberation Front. It seeks to strengthen peace-building efforts to sustain peace and development in Southern Philippines by working with multiple stakeholders to promote peace initiatives at different levels. It will also assist Local Government Units (LGUs) and other partners to enhance their conflict transformation capacities. Implemented by the Mindanao Economic Development Council (MEDCo), the Programme covers 19 provinces and 14 cities, which correspond with the areas originally covered by the former Special Zone of Peace and Development (SZOPAD) plus the Caraga Region.

The ACT for Peace Programme is consistent with the 2004-2010 Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan and the 10-Point Agenda of the National Government. The Programme commenced in June 2005 and is expected to operate until May 2010.

Development Situation

Southern Philippines, comprising of Palawan and Mindanao, is abundant in productive resources. It is home to a population that is often described as “tri-people” referring to Christians, Muslims and indigenous peoples. The bountiful and diverse nature of Southern Philippines has unfortunately been a cause of contention among groups. Iniquitous relationships developed among peoples, between Southern Philippines and central authority, and between Filipino and external interests. Southern Philippines has been the site of intense armed conflicts between the government and other armed entities for a long period of time.

Respite came with the successful conclusion of the peace process between the government and the Moro National Liberation

Front (MNLF). The signing of the Final Peace Agreement (FPA) in September 1996 between the two parties was recognized nationally and internationally as a major milestone for peace in Southern Philippines.

However, there are still challenges to peace in Southern Philippines. Violent and destructive conflicts continue, even as peaceful negotiated settlement of the conflicts involving the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the National Democratic Front are being pursued. Other local armed conflicts exist involving disputes over power relations, property and beliefs. The proliferation of loose firearms in Southern Philippines fuels the escalation of conflict into open violence. Armed conflict has exacted great costs on the people and resources of Southern Philippines. Massive dislocation of the civilian population and economic losses occur after encounters between government troops and other armed groups. Women, children, the aged and indigenous peoples are particularly vulnerable to the effects of displacement. Respect for human rights remains a concern; there are many reported abuses of civil and political rights.

Unpeace in Southern Philippines has not gone unnoticed; there have been and continue to be many initiatives from government and non-state parties to bring about peace. The government and the MILF continue to explore the possibility for a peace settlement. Similar processes are happening between the government and the NDF. Civil society organizations such as the Bishop-Ulama Conference and peace networks also contribute to the clamor for peace with their efforts to build a constituency for peace through peace education and advocacy, to facilitate dialog, healing and reconciliation among warring parties and among community members, and to provide relief and rehabilitation support to affected communities.

The United Nations system in the Philippines has been involved in peace efforts, particularly in support of the GRP-MNLF FPA. The first two phases of the GoP-UN Multi-Donor Programme (GoP-UN MDP), which lasted from 1996 to 2001, assessed the needs of selected MNLF communities and provided assistance in the form of basic services, livelihood and enterprise development, confidence and governance leadership training. The third phase of the GoP-UNMDP, made possible through funding support from the governments of Australia, New Zealand and Spain, commenced in 2001 and concluded in June 2004. GoP-UN MDP3

accomplishments include, among others: 1) reduction of violent conflict in the areas of implementation; 2) community empowerment and personal transformation, including a shift in mindsets from a combat/defense orientation to peace and development advocacy among former combatants and their communities; 3) contribution to barangay (village-level) development, through the formulation of barangay development plans, thus bridging the Programme's Peace and Development Communities (PDCs) to legitimate institutions of governance, where they have also contributed to broader peace and development goals and processes; 4) enhanced skills and capabilities of the community in the implementation and management of development projects; and 5) increased trust and confidence in Government. The Executive Summary of the GoP-UN MDP3 Programme Report and the Technical Evaluation Mission Report are included as Annex A and Annex B, respectively. However, the experience of peace-oriented initiatives in Southern Philippines, the GoP-UN MDP3 included, point to major gaps in peacebuilding. With respect to the implementation of the GRP-MNLF Peace Agreement, socio-economic support to MNLF members and communities is still perceived to be inadequate. For many community level stakeholders, the full and successful implementation of the FPA is key to the continuation of peacebuilding efforts in Southern Philippines. Part 3-Chapter 3 (National Harmony: The Peace Process) of the 2004-2010 Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP), which calls for the full implementation of existing final peace agreements, particularly the GRP-MNLF Peace Agreement of 1996, acknowledges this need. There is need for a set of complementary actions that will, in the immediate term, sustain the relative peace and stability that has resulted from the GRP-MNLF peace agreement. It is more critical over the long term to be able to build and sustain capacities and constituencies for peace across the larger base of actors, to include local government units and civil society.

In general, it is observed that peacebuilding strategies are done in pockets, are sporadic, not comprehensive, not coordinated, and lack scale. Moreover, while many initiatives do provide services to target participants, the extent to which they effectively contribute to peace objectives cannot be ascertained due to a lack of consistency with concepts, principles and tools that are internationally acknowledged to

be attuned to peace practice. Many peacebuilding efforts do not have strategies that meaningfully involve women. Some strategies may have even actually though unwittingly resulted to more conflicts.

Further, it is recognized that peacebuilding activities are not yet mainstreamed with LGUs (barangay, municipal and provincial) and with government agencies. Local governments play a key role in delivering services that respond to the poverty situation and in dealing with conflicts and its consequences. The 2004-2010 MTPDP also recognizes that LGUs can undertake complementary measures such as peacekeeping initiatives to minimize the level of violence arising from armed conflicts.

These gaps in peacebuilding and the continuing destructive conflicts underscore the need for more effective interventions for peacebuilding and conflict transformation in Southern Philippines. The foregoing analysis but highlights the consistent clamor, expectation, and also contribute to the peaceful resolution of violent conflicts in the area when warranted.

The new Programme is a support program. It is among the interventions in support of item # 5 of the peace strategies as embedded in Part 3-Chapter 3 of the MTPDP which concerns the rehabilitation and development of conflict-affected areas. The Programme shall also respond to item #2 (Complementary measures to minimize the level of violence arising from armed conflicts); #6 (Catch-up development program for the ARMM and affirmative action agenda for Muslims); and #7 (Conduct of healing and reconciliation programs). Recognizing that there will be other initiatives that will address peace building and conflict transformation, the new Programme will purposefully coordinate with them for greater impact and for the achievement of objectives of the peace plan.

UN Policy Framework

The UN believes that inclusive government is the best guarantor against internal conflicts and that inclusiveness requires that all major groups in society participate in its major institutions. The common thread running through almost all conflict prevention policies is the need to pursue good governance, which involves the following: promoting the rule of law, tolerance of minority and opposition groups, transparent political processes, a commitment to eradicate corruption,

and independent judiciary, an impartial police force, a military subject to political control, a free press, vibrant civil society institutions, and meaningful elections. Ultimately, it means respect for human rights above all aspects.

Conflict prevention policies are in synch not only with recommendation of stakeholders for a successor programme to the GoP-UN MDP3.

National Policy Framework

The successor Programme is located within the perspective of contributing to efforts to address the causes of conflicts in Southern Philippines. The new Programme is informed by Executive Order #3 series of 2001 (Defining the Approach & Administrative Structure for the Government's Comprehensive Peace Efforts), Agenda # 9 of the Government's 10-Point Agenda ("A Just End to the Peace Process") and Chapter 14 of the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan 2004-2010. The new Programme will therefore promote peacebuilding and conflict transformation in Southern Philippines, and in the context of that, continue to support the GRP-MNLF FPA.

Cognizant of the overall thrust of Government to address the causes of conflicts, the new Programme shall

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) but more importantly, the Millennium Declaration.

The new Programme is consistent with the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) Outcome # 5, which calls for the reduction of the level of violent conflict, and the promotion of human security and the culture of peace nationwide.

Human security, which addresses individual and collective needs through non-coercive means, is at the core of peace-building. It involves both the creation of opportunity and the construction of structures and processes that decrease the likelihood of violent conflict. Beyond the absence of violent conflict, human security encompasses human rights, good governance, access to services, the protection of the vulnerable, and the creation of opportunities and choices to fulfill human potentials. This leads to the reduction of poverty, achievement of economic growth and the prevention of conflict.

Strategy

To reflect the main development challenge and response to peacebuilding in Southern Philippines, the new Programme is titled ACT for Peace. It is projected to be a 5-year program to commence January 2005 with an indicative budget of US\$16,201,360.

The ACT for Peace is a peacebuilding and conflict transformation programme. Beyond merely responding to the physical and social reconstruction of areas affected by armed conflict, it seeks to respond to the complex situation of conflict in Mindanao, which involves a range of ongoing, potential and post-conflict situations in the target areas. It thus entails interventions to support and sustain peace as well as build human security in these conflict situations, such as, among others; a) building local capacities for conflict prevention and peacebuilding in areas of potential conflict, as well as in post-conflict situations; b) basic service delivery and capacity-building for conflict prevention in conflict and post-conflict areas, and c) relief and rehabilitation of areas affected by ongoing armed conflict, and also in post conflict areas.

Development Objective and Results

The Programme aims to:

sustain transformation of peace and development communities (PDCs) and other conflict-affected and conflict-vulnerable areas; as well as to harness community efforts to develop and advance their own initiatives for peace and human security strengthen and institutionalize peace-building and conflict transformation (prevention, management and resolution) capacities of participants and institutions strengthen critical partnerships towards sustaining an environment of trust, confidence and collaboration for peace and development

To achieve the objectives, the Programme is implementing five components.

These are:

- Component 1* – Strengthening Social Capital for Peacebuilding
- Component 2* – Promoting Human Security through Improved Access to Basic Services
- Component 3* – Promoting Human Security through Community Economic Development

Component 4 – Building Stakeholders' Capacity for Conflict Transformation

Component 5 – Promoting a Culture of Peace towards Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation

Programme Outcomes

The accomplishment of the purpose will lead to the achievement of the following outcome level results:

- a. Transformation of PDCs, and other conflict-affected and conflict-vulnerable areas is sustained; and community efforts to develop and advance their own initiatives for peace and human security are harnessed;
- b. Peacebuilding and conflict transformation (prevention, management and resolution) capacities of actors and institutions are strengthened and institutionalized; and,
- c. Critical partnerships towards sustaining an environment of trust, confidence and collaboration for peace and development are strengthened.

Programme Components by Outcomes

To achieve the purpose and the planned outcomes, the new Programme shall have five components, the fifth of which will cut across the other four.

Outcome 1: Transformation of PDCs and other conflict-affected areas sustained; and community efforts to develop and advance their own initiatives for peace and human security harnessed

Component 1: Strengthening Social Capital for Peacebuilding

Component 2: Promoting Human Security through Improved Access to Basic Services.

Component 3: Promoting Human Security through Community. Economic Development

- Outcome 2: Peacebuilding and conflict transformation (prevention, management and resolution) capacities of actors and institutions strengthened and institutionalized
- Component 4: Building Stakeholders' Capacity for Conflict Transformation
- Outcome 3: Critical partnerships towards sustaining an environment of trust, confidence and collaboration for peace and development strengthened
- Component 5: (cuts across other components) Promoting and Advocating a Culture of Peace towards Peace-building and Conflict Transformation

For each component, the Programme will focus on key assistance areas that have been identified and prioritized by stakeholders. The ACT for Peace Programme will provide specific interventions ranging from provision of direct services (water systems and health infrastructure and facilities; start-up support for farm productivity and livelihood, and start-up capital for non-farm livelihood and enterprises), and technical assistance through capacity building (trainings, workshops, coaching, systems development, study tours, etc.); inputs (IEC modules and materials, medicines) and community activities (organizing, mobilization, etc.). The promotion of culture of peace, linkage-building and policy development will also be part of the range of interventions per component.

Target Participant Beneficiaries

Peacebuilding involves working with multi-stakeholders and promoting changes at different levels, hence the Programme's target participants and beneficiaries are: a) post-conflict, conflict-affected and conflict-vulnerable communities (Muslims, Christians, Lumads/IPs); b) local governments (barangay, municipal and provincial); c) the MNLF; and d) non-community and non-LGU peacebuilding actors and institutions (such as CSOs, peace networks, religious leaders, the media, academe, etc.). Attention shall be paid to highly vulnerable groups such as women, youth, children and the aged. A key concern of the new Programme is addressing the needs of women who were widowed and children/youth orphaned by the GRP-MNLF war.

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Towards achieving:

Sustainability. The result of the melding and aggregation of the effects of “horizontal and vertical” relationships and changes brought about by peacebuilding; suggests the improved capacity of individuals and groups to be generally “self-propelled” (not requiring major external stimuli) and to have better and more effective initiatives in responding to new and more complex challenges.

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ACT for Peace shall actively collaborate, complement and partner with other peace-building and development-oriented programs to avoid overlaps and duplication, and to ensure the sustainability of the gains and the mainstreaming of the successes of Peace and Development Communities.

A Programme Approach that is Peace-Sensitive and Promotive of Human Security

To be an effective peace-oriented effort, the implementation of the ACT for Peace Programme needs to spring from shared perspectives among actors and institutions and a common appreciation of peace and development work, its processes and requirements, and what can be reasonably achieved given concrete challenges and existing capacities of stakeholders. A common Programme framework can inform and guide the stakeholders in pursuing their contributions to the achievement of ACT for Peace objectives. The key concepts of the Framework are initially defined in this Programme Document but can be enhanced further in the course of Programme implementation by learning coming out of Programme and other experiences. These include key concepts such as conflict transformation, human security,

and culture of peace; analyzing through “peace lenses;” the use of peace-sensitive principles, processes and tools; and the development and installation of peace-sensitive measures of Programme performance. The concepts are defined in the Glossary of this document. It is also critical for Programme stakeholders to distinguish between development strategies at large and assistance that targets specific causes of conflict. The lack of clarity on how development efforts affect violent conflict (and hence, peace work) has hobbled many initiatives in the past. It is also an acknowledged learning around the world that not all development positively affects violent conflict.

The incorporation of human security in the ACT for Peace Programme Framework is an advantage. Understood as “the safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression, and protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily lives, whether in homes, jobs or communities,” human security as a framework element is useful for linking violent conflict (or the prevention of it or the responses to it) and human development. It is acknowledged that most of all the elements necessary for peace building already exist in the Philippines but problems hobble successful implementation. A human security policy framework will signal a move beyond the national security approach and will facilitate an integrated and holistic approach to implementing peace work in the country, particularly to peacebuilding in Southern Philippines

In 2003, Mindanao Bishops articulated their concern for human security in the document “A Human Security Agenda for Mindanao.” The five components of ACT for Peace are consistent with this Human Security Agenda, particularly with regard to protecting people in violent conflict (refugees, internally displaced persons); providing minimum living standards (work-based security, secure livelihoods, access to land, credit, training), providing access to basic health care, articulating common goals while developing multiple identities (inter-religious dialogue, culture of peace), empowering communities for good governance (engaged citizenship, social auditing, meaningful elections) and forging alliances among civil society groups, including churches, government agencies and local communities.

Addressing Gender

Conflict affects women and men differently. Invariably, it is the former, along with children and the elderly, which are more severely affected by violence. Women affiliated with the MNLF and who have been widowed by the war, and those who have been orphaned are among those identified in the GoP-UN MDP3 Stakeholders' Consultation series as deserving of support from the successor programme. Even in a post-conflict setting, they can end up being relegated to the sidelines because of stereotypes and because their roles in helping families and communities through the conflict are not understood. Studies bear out that the objectives of rebuilding communities and getting them on the road to sustainable peace and development are well served by an approach that recognizes changes in gender relations in relation to conflict and harnesses gender-sensitive perspectives.

The ACT for Peace strategies with respect to gender is two-fold: mainstreaming gender and promoting gender balance. The Programme will mainstream gender in all situational and problem analysis and in project and activity design to ensure that development initiatives incorporate roles, needs and participation of both women and men. To the extent possible, the Programme will also encourage a balance in the participation of women and men recognizing that the presence, involvement and dominance of one group in bodies that make decisions and allocate resources can have a differential impact. Constraints likely to affect involvement of women and men, particularly in light of cultural and religious considerations, will be discussed and realistic measures of addressing them identified.

These strategies will be further elaborated in each Component. The Programme shall also endeavor to have gender disaggregation as a feature of its information management system.

Responsibility for incorporating and keeping track of gender considerations and information in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development activities is shared by members of the Programme staff and implementing partners alike. To ensure that this is systematically undertaken, responsibility for gender mainstreaming will be formally lodged with the Area Manager, with advice to be provided by specialists.

Because gender equality is a concern shared by other members of the development community, the Programme is prepared to pursue collaboration with other development programs to strengthen gender rights advocacy and to improve the gender perspectives of participant groups, among others.

The ACT for Peace will provide capacity building support for gender to target participants, staff and implementing partners. Gender-aware guidelines and gender dimensions will be incorporated in processes, steps and tools with respect to project appraisal, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and in contract and TOR formulation which shall be contained in the Programme Operations Manual.

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The ACT for Peace Programme
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