

PROMOTING THE TRANSITION FROM CONFLICT TO PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL

PILOT PROJECT IN THE PHILIPPINES

Progress Report Number Three
01 January through 31 March 2002

Community and Family Services International

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Front Cover Artwork: Peace Posters made by internally displaced children during one of the Peace Festivals organized by CFSI in cooperation with other local NGOs.

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“ . . . ang lahat ng ginagawa ng tao ay galing sa Panginoon, kaya yung kapapyapaan ay galing din sa Panginoon, kapag hindi ma-implemanta yung gusto ng Panginoon ay wala tayong kapayapaan. . . ”

(“ . . . all of mankind comes from God and peace is also from God, if we cannot implement His will, there can never be peace... ”)

*--- local Peacemaker
from Pikit, North Cotabato*



INTRODUCTION

Community and Family Services International (CFSI)—a Philippines-based social development organization—received funds from the Post Conflict Fund of the World Bank for a pilot project amongst internally displaced persons in Mindanao entitled “Promoting the Transition from Conflict to Peace and Development at the Community Level”.

This project, which began in January 2001, has two general objectives:

1. Make a difference in the lives of Filipinos displaced by armed conflict by working with the affected communities to develop enabling conditions that encourage safe return or settlement, facilitate the process of transition and stabilization, and provide a foundation for peace building and sustainable development.
2. Contribute to the existing knowledge base by developing and testing models that will inform approaches to the transition from conflict to peace.

The coverage of this project includes 6,759 families (33,550 persons) in the municipalities of Pagalungan and Pagagawan in the province of Maguindanao and Carmen, Kabacan, and Pikit in the province of North Cotabato. Maguindanao is part of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). In October 2001, 3,140 of these families (15,708 persons) were living in

thirty (30) evacuation centers covered by CFSI. The remainder had earlier returned to their communities of origin or settled in new locations.

This report summarizes project progress from 01 January through 31 March 2002.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT

The population served by CFSI continued to experience unstable security conditions, compounded by flooding, during the first quarter of 2002.

Violence owing to ethnic conflict and family feuds led to fatal results in Carmen, North Cotabato. The situation in Kabacan remained tense with partisan protests and demonstrations arising from the results of recent local elections. In Cotabato City—the base of CFSI operations in Mindanao—the kidnapping of a female physician led to temporary work stoppages as a form of protest from the medical community.

Heavy rains led to the overflow of the Liguasan Marsh resulting in flooding in Pagalungan and Pagagawan. Some of the evacuation centers were affected.

These situations—as well as bombings and other disturbances in the peace and security atmosphere—directly affected the implementation of the project. For example, releases of start-up livelihood assistance were postponed in some communities and planned visits to various barangays had to be suspended to the detriment of the IDP communities.

Policy decisions and pronouncements also had implications for the project. For example, by the end of March, some national and local authorities had declared, and were reporting, all evacuation centers in North Cotabato and Maguindanao as officially “closed”. This was reportedly due to the need and desire of the local government units (LGUs) and others to access “rehabilitation” funds. Purportedly, only “relief” funds could be accessed whilst the evacuation centers remained “open” and these funds were extremely limited.

CFSI continued to work with 1,033 displaced families (5,165 persons) still living in “closed” evacuation centers that felt they could not yet return to their communities of origin for various reasons. Reasons cited included: unstable security conditions, destroyed homes, and limited access to food as well as livelihood opportunities at home followed by greater access to resources such as food and basic education for the children from within the evacuation centers. Some of the IDPs, primarily males, travelled to their communities of origin on a daily basis to work their farmland, but returned to the evacuation center each night owing to security conditions back home. Others decided to at least temporarily remain in upgraded facilities at the evacuation center site. For example, those in tents were able to move into newly constructed core shelters.

By the end of March, 498 displaced families (2,490 persons) remained in six (6) “closed” evacuation centers in North Cotabato whilst 535 families (2,675 persons) remained in eight (8) “closed” evacuation centers in Maguindanao. The breakdown by evacuation center is attached (Appendix A).

ACHIEVEMENTS

Much of CFSI effort during the first quarter of 2002 was focused on facilitating the return and effective reintegration of internally displaced persons (IDPs) into their communities of origin. This included linking the “returnees” and others in their communities of origin to their local government units and resources available from, and through, the public and private sectors.

CFSI’s return and reintegration efforts built on earlier and ongoing enabling activities including, but not limited to: “Go and See Visits”, community information campaigns, training in psychosocial care, peace education, start-up livelihood assistance, and advocacy. CFSI also continued to provide assistance to IDPs who remained, under difficult circumstances, in evacuation centers covered by the project.

Finally, CFSI actively contributed to broader planning and development efforts in conflict-affected areas of Mindanao.

Specific achievements, by programme component, follow.

Community Organizing

Go and See Visits

By the end of March 2002, a total of 2,391 displaced families (11,495 persons) living in various evacuation centers had participated in the “Go and See Visits” organized by CFSI. They represented 76% of the 3,140 displaced families (15,708 persons) profiled by CFSI in October 2001 in the thirty (30) evacuation centers covered by the project. The breakdown by evacuation center is reflected in Appendix B.

Two (2) “Go and See Visits” scheduled to be undertaken for sitio Bulit in Pagagawan and the Malmar Dam site in Carmen had to be cancelled at the last moment as a result of the sudden deterioration in the security situation in sitio Marang of barangay Tupig and sitio Bayabas of barangay Palanaggalan, both of which are in Carmen. On that day, clashes broke out between certain elements of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). As a precautionary security measure, the Mayor of Carmen decided the “Go and See Visit” should be cancelled.

Over 400 IDPs were disappointed by the cancellation. They were already on their way, in several transport vehicles mobilized for this purpose, when the decision was taken. As is usual in a “Go and See Visit”, a lot of preparations—physical, emotional and spiritual—had been undertaken. Safety and security issues had been arranged. Food to be partaken during the trip had been cooked and prepared and the happy atmosphere that normally accompanies such events was all too apparent. The IDPs, who had prepared for this event



several weeks prior, longed for this opportunity to see their community of origin for the first time since they fled because of the conflict. Many of the IDPs expressed their surprise and disappointment. Some suggested that the Mayor did not want them to visit and eventually return to their community of origin. Others, although disappointed, had a different, more positive view.

Community Consultations

CFSI organized consultations with the officials of local government units (LGUs) in the various communities of origin in order to facilitate entry and working arrangements as well as to formulate protocols and mechanisms for cooperation. These consultations provided CFSI with the opportunity to introduce itself to a larger audience at the barangay level as well as to pave the way for the return of the IDPs. Municipal and barangay officials briefed CFSI on the situations in their communities and were, in turn, briefed on the programmes and services of CFSI. These officials responded by

“ . . . tumanda na ako, kumapal na ang mga palad ko at namatay na ang aking mga kuko sa pagsasaka, ngayon niyo lang ako nakitang magsalita sa harap nga maraming tao, dahil baka sa meeting na ito ng CFSI, ang aking mga salita ay maging daan sa ating kaginhawahan . . . ”

(“ . . . I already got old, my palms thick with blisters, and my nails blackened by years of toil being a farmer; but this is the first time you see me talk in front of a lot of people, because perhaps through this meeting with CFSI, my words will pave the way for my community’s progress. . . ”)

*--- Elder from Pikit, Cotabato
in a Safe Return Kanduli*

identifying which programme components they thought were needed and/or would be most helpful in their communities. They also cited specific examples of programme components that had made a positive impact on their communities.

The consultations also provided opportunities for CFSI to receive guidance on the “high-risk”—from a security perspective—barangays. In addition, many of the barangay officials took the occasion to suggest their communities be designated “Peace Zones” thus reflecting both their aspirations for their communities as well as their desire for peace.

The first of such consultations was conducted in Kabacan at the University of Southern Mindanao (USM). Eighty (80) barangay officials from the communities of origin participated.

Subsequent consultations were held with barangay officials in Pikit, North Cotabato. Subjects included security concerns in the communities of origin located in the interior barangays and challenges in sitios in the adjacent areas of Pikit, Pagagawan, and Pagalungan. During the consultations, some barangay officials indicated that some of the areas to be visited by CFSI were considered off-limits to non-Muslims. They suggested that only those members of the CFSI staff who were Muslim would be able to enter some of these barangays when they accompanied the IDPs to their communities of origin. CFSI discussed this access problem with the barangay officials concerned, carefully but

firmly explaining that the proposed restrictions violated international humanitarian assistance principles and could not be accepted by CFSI. As a result, CFSI community organizers and other staff were permitted to visit these high security barangays and discuss the work of CFSI with the communities.

CFSI also participated in the formulation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Office of the Governor of North Cotabato, the devolved social welfare department, CFSI, and others. This MOU helped IDPs from Carmen, North Cotabato gain access to local resources, specifically for their shelter needs, upon return to their communities of origin in that municipality. For example, IDPs who returned to sitio Tabulon in barangay General Luna in Carmen received housing assistance. A similar MOU has been proposed to the Government of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, specifically, the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

Safe Returns

Safe Return “Kanduli” ceremonies were facilitated by CFSI for IDPs who were scheduled to return or had already returned to their communities of origin. The Safe Return “Kanduli” is a farewell and thanksgiving ceremony that serves as a transition activity and return ritual. This Kanduli also prepares the IDPs emotionally as they start to deal with a new phase in their lives.

The IDPs staying at the Layog Tents evacuation center who were returning to sitio Butig in Pagalungan and to barangay Dungguan in the adjoining municipality of Pagagawan held a Kanduli. Participants included more than 100 IDPs, members of the host community, and CFSI.

Another Safe Return Kanduli was held at sitio Punol, barangay Dungguan in Pagagawan. The participants included 138 IDPs, a Municipal Board Member, and three (3) barangay “Kagawads” (Councilors). Forty-eight (48) displaced families who returned to sitio Tabulon in barangay General



Luna in Carmen also held a Kanduli. It was witnessed by the Provincial Social Welfare Department, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and CFSI.

In February, two (2) Kandulis were held separately in Carmen, North Cotabato and in Pagagawan, Maguindanao. The first was conducted in sitio Matingao, barangay Malapag, Carmen involving thirty-three (33) families whilst the other was held in barangay Talitay in Pagagawan involving 230 families.

In March, five (5) more Safe Return Kandulis were held with one each in: sitio Malugasa, barangay Liliongan in Carmen; sitio Sambolawan in barangay Nabundas and barangay Talitay in the municipality of Pagagawan; barangay Buliok in Pagalungan; and barangay Bagoinged in Pikit municipality.

As part of the Safe Return Kanduli process, CFSI worked closely with other NGOs, such as the OXFAM community team, to ensure ongoing interventions—either in the evacuation centers or in the communities of origin—continue to benefit the IDPs as well as others in exceptionally difficult circumstances (e.g., in barangay Dungguan in Pagagawan). Collaboration and inter-phasing of work in the livelihood, water, and sanitation arenas were agreed upon thus enabling the IDPs to derive maximum benefit from the different resources available.

By the end of 31 January 2002, a total of 1,096 displaced families comprised of 4,664 persons had returned to their communities of origin from the thirty (30) evacuation centers served by CFSI. This represented roughly forty percent (40%) of the IDPs profiled by CFSI in October 2001. However, by 31 March 2002, more than 2,107 families (approximately 10,535 persons)—or 67% of those profiled in October—had returned to their communities of origin or left the evacuation centers for other settlement sites.

Community Information

As the internally displaced persons left the evacuation centers, returned to their communities of origin, and began the challenging task of reintegration, a variety of issues and concerns surfaced that needed to be addressed by the local leadership and community at large. As such, community information mechanisms and processes became even more important. This led to a greater demand for the construction of “Pulungan Centers” (small, open air meeting places constructed out of locally available materials and used for community gatherings). The Pulungan Centers are the traditional venues for the exchange of information and consensus building at the community level. Both needs and resources are identified and discussed at the Pulungan Centers often leading to collaborative effort by all concerned.



By March 31, 2002, the project had funded the construction of a total of twenty-seven (27) Pulungan Centers: nineteen (19) in communities of return and eight (8) in evacuation centers as shown in Appendix C. These facilities serve 2,976 families (14,880 persons) or roughly forty-four percent (44%) of the 6,759 families (33,550 persons) profiled by CFSI in October 2001 (IDPs in evacuation centers plus residents of communities of origin).

Psychosocial Services

Psychosocial interventions provided by CFSI through the project were largely directed at addressing the impact of war and conflict on the social fabric of the community. The community-based approach—involving organizing, peace education, start up livelihood assistance, information, advocacy, and other services—contributed to the rebuilding of trust and confidence at the community levels as well as the rekindling of hope at the family and individual levels. Intensive advocacy

efforts and collaboration with other service providers helped promote social linkages even as basic needs were being addressed.

For the IDPs participating in “Go and See Visits”, a processing of their experience was conducted to better assist them in understanding themselves and what they underwent physically, mentally and emotionally. The IDPs felt good when they realized that their reactions to the stress and trauma were normal and expected. The Go and See Visits conducted by CFSI provided the IDPs and their families with the opportunities to reconnect with and understand their past experiences as well as assess the situation in their home areas.

As a result, the IDPs were able to articulate their reactions and insights regarding the devastating effects of armed conflict and the significance of individual and collective efforts in promoting a peaceful and productive community, including the awareness of how important it is to care for one another. The activity provided the IDPs, who have not seen their communities for several months, with a sense of longing and a desire to re-establish their roots. The processing activity gave the IDPs the chance to tell their stories; moreover, they felt good that people listened to them. Furthermore, the planning processes they underwent in preparing for the activity gave them the opportunity to examine their strengths and find the will to move on despite the negative experiences coming out of the conflict.

The provision of psychosocial support to the IDP communities, including direct services on a few occasions to select IDP families and individuals, was particularly helpful and relevant during Go and See Visit activities. While material needs would normally predominate in the expectations of IDPs at the start of the sessions, in time the participants began to appreciate the benefits that they get in being able to recognize stress and its effects on their persons, families and communities. They are able to understand the meaning of stress and trauma and the effects of adverse events, including the local words, terms, or phrases to describe their stressful or even traumatic experiences.

Furthermore, the IDPs have given feedback that the sessions have helped them build their capacity to cope and manage with future stresses. While the usual topics were introduced during discussions about stress, the sessions also provided opportunities for the IDPs to raise issues they considered important such as the education or lack of opportunities for the education of their children and experiences of domestic violence. A common feedback, particularly for the caregivers who were trained by CFSI, was their appreciation for the fact that CFSI had taught them to care for themselves as caregivers even before they begin to help others.

The psychosocial orientation of CFSI’s interventions resulted in capacity building and community participation activities for the IDPs, which were carried out particularly through the “Sumpats” (i.e., community volunteers whose roles were described in the previous Progress Reports). Furthermore, CFSI undertook advocacy initiatives with various government and non-government organizations that also provide psychosocial services to the IDPs with the aim of enhancing their capacities to undertake psychosocial care among victims and survivors of armed conflict.

A one-day forum on psychosocial care was organized by CFSI among the various agencies that provide psychosocial care in their programmes or recognize the role of psychosocial care in their

humanitarian aid programmes. The forum, which was attended by ten (10) representatives from different stakeholders and service providers extending psychosocial care to IDPs in Central Mindanao, was intended to come up with a consensus on how best to define and provide such services and how the different players can cooperate and support one another.

The psychosocial component of CFSI's interventions was likewise introduced to the representatives of LGUs during consultative meetings held at the various sites of return and communities of origin of the IDPs. Close cooperative efforts were pursued with the provincial DSWD offices of Maguindanao in ARMM, including participation in capacity building activities for DSWD regional staff.

Psychosocial support activities for human resource development needs were likewise extended to academic communities in Cotabato City. Exit interviews and diffusing sessions were held for the Social Work student interns of De la Vida College in Cotabato City. These student interns became actively involved in the profiling activities undertaken by CFSI in the evacuation centers and communities of return in October 2001. Furthermore, these student interns received first-hand supervised field experience working with the IDP communities.

Psychosocial education was conducted for the IDPs in their communities of origin. Women's groups were prioritized for psychosocial education since they are considered among the most vulnerable sectors during armed conflicts. The sessions provided information on stress, trauma and stress management. The psychosocial education sessions were conducted in seven (7) sitios of return. During the reporting period, a total of 238 women coming from five (5) areas of return and one (1) evacuation center attended the sessions.

Livelihood Assistance

Start-up livelihood assistance activities accelerated beginning in the month of January 2002 as the conduct of group formation, project proposal preparation, basic training for leaders of the Livelihood Assistance Upon Return (LAUR) scheme, and releases of proceeds of LAUR through Land Bank/Kabacan went into high gear.

The CFSI staff, led by the Livelihood Officer, interviewed the IDPs regarding their proposed livelihood projects. The interviews were conducted in the sitios of Tuka, Singko, Indisalong, Balugo and Langkapan, all belonging to barangay Dungguan in the municipality of Pagagawan. The interview was conducted in part as a response to tensions that arose in one of the communities of return prior to the actual conduct of group formation activities for the barangay. The barangay leaders and members of that particular community—who had returned earlier to the site—demanded that they too should be entitled to receive the assistance that was proposed for IDPs leaving the evacuation centers served by CFSI.

A compromise agreement was finally reached when the returning IDPs agreed that the total amount of livelihood assistance to be given to them would be shared among the 700 families that comprised the total population of the barangay (i.e., those who returned earlier and those then returning). As such, it became necessary to help the residents of every barangay in that municipality to prepare start-up livelihood assistance project proposals.

Most of the abovementioned sitios are located at the inner portions of Barangay Dungguan. Since access to their sitios was difficult and security was a major concern, members of the organized clusters came to be interviewed for their livelihood projects in the barangay centers. No hostilities were observed during the interviews. In fact, the members of the livelihood clusters answered questions and explained their proposed livelihood projects with confidence.



The releases of livelihood assistance proceeds for barangay Nangaan in Kabacan and sitios Kadilingilan and Butabuaya in barangay Dungguan, Pagagawan were postponed once due to prevailing weather conditions, distance (barangay Nangaan is not readily accessible but requires a long pump boat ride downstream and there is only one per day), and security concerns. These funds were finally released on January 24 and 31 respectively.

Problems in subsequent releases were also encountered due to tensions arising from the electoral protests staged by the opposing political groups in Kabacan. Since the Land Bank offices were located within the grounds of the municipal hall of Kabacan, safe entry and exit could not be assured. Scheduled livelihood releases had to be cancelled or postponed on several occasions owing to this situation. However, by 31 March 2002, twenty-one (21) LAUR groups were able to claim the proceeds of their livelihood assistance from the Land Bank without difficulty.

In the case of IDPs who returned to sitio Tabulon in barangay General Luna of Carmen, sitio leaders and their CFSI-trained “sumpat” took the initiative of inviting the municipal agriculture representative to discuss with the members the mechanics of forming a cooperative. The IDPs formed into three (3) groups with eighteen (18) members each and chose to implement irrigated rice farming as their livelihood project. In the case of the IDPs who returned to sitio Malugasa in barangay Liliongan in Carmen, the group agreed to focus on livestock raising (pigs, goats, and chickens) in view of the forecasted El Nino phenomenon in 2002.

Basic leadership training for the LAUR participants was provided by CFSI for those who returned to sitios Lakeg, Butig, Calbuan, Tuka, and Singko in barangay Dungguan in the municipality of Pagagawan. A total of thirty-four (34) group leaders from the twenty-two (22) livelihood groups attended the training sessions. Savings and capital formation as well as the importance of group

unity and participatory leadership were the topics emphasized during the training. Regrettably, only fifty percent (50%) of the LAUR participants in sitios Balugo, Langkapan and Endisalong, in barangay Dungguan of Pagagawan were able to attend. Reportedly, many did not have the money for the riverboat fare. The failure of the boat to arrive as scheduled prevented some from attending. Others cited security reasons.

“ . . . hindi kami binigyan ng isang kilo ng bigas, hindi kami binigyan ng bomba ng tubig, CR at bahay, subalit kami ay binigyan ng karunungan at kaalaman kung paano tulungan ang aming sarili at mga kasamahan dito sa aming lugar. . . ”

(“ . . . we were not given a kilo of rice, nor a water pump, not even toilets or houses, but we were given the knowledge and attitude on how we can help ourselves and others in our community. . . ”)

*--- local Psychosocial Caregiver
from Pagalungan, Maguindanao*

The training sessions were generally successful. The core messages on responsibility, accountability, hard work, trust, and self-reliance seemed to be well understood and accepted by the participants. However, major and current peace issues—such as the on-going peace talks—were raised in response to the facilitator’s questions on aspirations. Whilst efforts were carefully made to ensure that the trust established between the participants and CFSI was not compromised, the inhibitions of the participants were eventually overcome in the course of the training. All of the groups were able to submit their work plans for project implementation.

By the end of January 2002, a total of 1,108 families comprised of 5,587 family members had formed into 76 groups consisting of 230 teams and received proceeds for LAUR projects amounting to PHP389,535.00 (USD7,791.00) That works out to roughly PHP352 (USD7.00) per family. Types of projects included fishing, corn farming, duck-raising, buying and selling, small business enterprises, rice farming, monggo beans farming, and goat-raising.

As a discrete but culturally accepted way of inspecting and monitoring group projects, the “Kanduli Para Sa Kagkayagan” (Thanksgiving for Livelihood) was designed and adopted. During this Kanduli, the different groups and recipients of LAUR present their livelihood projects and report their accomplishments—including the group’s accumulated savings—before the whole community. Through this activity, the community leaders (formal, traditional, and non-traditional) get the opportunity to discuss varying issues or problems (e.g. climatic, environmental, social, security and technical) affecting the livelihood projects.

Among the issues and concerns that surfaced during the processing of LAUR projects was the anticipated El Nino phenomenon during the year that will affect crop farming- related projects. As a rule, farming projects were discouraged unless the groups could justify the success of their project in the light of the El Nino phenomenon. For example, the farmers of sitio Tabulon, General Luna, Carmen justified their proposal by noting their proximity to the water supply coming from the Malmar Dam.

A total of PHP207,993.00 (USD4,160) for 570 IDP families belonging to 38 groups was released during the month of February. Areas covered included the sitios of Calbuan, Tuka, Lakeg, Butig, Singko, Balugo, Endisalong and Langkapan—all of which are located in barangay Dungguan, Pagagawan. The amount per family was PHP365.00 (USD7.30).

Sitio Butabuaya, one of the biggest sitios of barangay Dungguan, held a Kanduli Para Sa Kagkayagan for its LAUR participants. CFSI monitoring efforts revealed most of the livelihood groups were effectively implementing their projects. Although only eight out of twelve groups were able to present their projects and report to the community, assurance was given that all groups had started their livelihood projects as agreed upon. Likewise, all groups reported that they had started their savings collections and accordingly displayed their “Can Banks”. The term “Can Bank” was used in lieu of the more commonly used term “piggy bank” since it is considered more appropriate in the Muslim communities and more sensitive to their religious and socio-cultural beliefs. The “Can Banks” were used milk cans that had been converted to serve as depositories for coins or bills representing the meager savings of the LAUR participants.

“ . . . su kinauma nu CFSI sya sa lekami nakasengaw kami a mga mama sabap sa su mga bahay na katabangan kami nilan sa kapangilay sa uyag-uyag, di kena mana su paganay na su mga bahay. . . ”

(“ . . . when CFSI arrived in our community, the men (fathers) became at ease and comfortable because now the women are able to help in making a living, unlike before when they just stay at home. . . ”)

*--- Sumpat from Sito Gantong
Pagalungan, Maguindanao*

A savings scheme was agreed upon by the groups members wherein each member puts into the group “savings bank” a weekly amount as low as ten pesos (USD0.20) to as high as fifty pesos (USD1.00). The ultimate goal is for the group to eventually match the original amount of livelihood assistance that was given them.

The purpose of the exercise is to teach the concept of capital formation and to reinforce the values formation exercises that the group participated in prior to the release of the livelihood assistance. The group’s Treasurer holds the “Team Savings” in trust. Once the total of the Team Savings reaches one hundred pesos (USD2.00), the money is then deposited in a group savings account at Land Bank. (PHP100 is the minimum balance needed to open a savings account at Land Bank.) Additional savings will also be deposited into this group savings account. The next milestone for the LAUR participants will be reached when individual members voluntarily consider opening individual savings accounts. At that point, the LAUR participants will have come closer to being considered self-reliant and “bankable”.

The training sessions for the leaders of barangays Rajamuda and Inug-ug in Pikit revealed their suspicion of strangers, particularly Christians. The participants indicated that the lectures

should be at least translated to Maguindanaon, rather than Pilipino, as one of their expectations. Another question raised concerned the size of sitio population since lack of accuracy in the figures could be used by the host IDP community to its advantage.

A serious event in the field occurred in March 2002 when the Pulungan Center in sitio Punol, Pagagawan was deliberately and partially burned. During a community leaders' meeting requested by CFSI to discuss the incident, it was confirmed that the determination of eligibility for participation in the LAUR was a controversial issue in this particular community. The list of eligible persons submitted by the community included 270 names. However, this list did not match the 200 names that were previously identified during an earlier profiling exercise. In fact, some community leaders pointed out that only 100 of those names included on the list of 270 also appeared on the list of 200 names.

When CFSI announced that those 200 names on the earlier list would be prioritised for participation in the LAUR, some of those people included on the list of 270 names reacted negatively. Anger and resentment was played out through the burning of at least part—not all—of the Pulungan Center.

CFSI took up this incident with the leadership of the community. After much discussion, it was agreed that CFSI would include as LAUR participants all those whose names appeared on either list. The mobilization of local capacities to come up with solutions to the conflict helped to eventually normalize the situation. The portion of the Pulungan Center that was burned was repaired by the community leaders—at their own cost.

Peace Education

From 22 through 24 January, eighty-two (82) CFSI-trained “Peacemakers” coming from Pagagawan, Pagalungan and Pikit municipalities participated in a “Peacemakers Consultation and Orientation” conducted separately for each municipality.

The goal of this activity was to provide a venue for the different groups of Peacemakers from CFSI-assisted evacuation centers and communities of origin to gather together and discuss, consult, and make specific plans on peace and peace-related issues as they work for their safe return and seek durable solutions to their situation of displacement. A leveling of expectations on the role of the peacemakers in their community and their proposed activities were likewise discussed. Invited as a resource person was the Executive Director of Kadtuntaya Foundation, one of CFSI's partner organizations in Central Mindanao, who gave an update on the peace process in Mindanao. This in turn served as a stimulus for the discussion of the peacemakers' role in the community, which includes conflict resolution, supporting the cause of justice, promoting a culture of peace, and engaging in peace education. Input was given on the differences between peacemaking, peace building, and peacekeeping; the Government's concept of a peace process; and the history of peace negotiations in Mindanao.

CFSI also participated in Government of the Republic of the Philippines–United Nations Multi-Donor Programme (GRP/UN-MDP) meetings, including an exploratory meeting convened to consider

a proposed peace camp activity with the Department of Education, NGOs, and partner agencies. CFSI proposed a two-phase campaign in follow up to the earlier UNDP campaign against the proliferation of illegal small firearms in support of environments of peace and development. The objective of the project is to continuously promote peace amongst elementary and high school students with the hope that these efforts will contribute to the promotion of a culture of peace in Mindanao.

During the reporting period, CFSI officers from Headquarters and the field paid a visit to Ghadzali Jafar, the MILF's Vice-Chairperson for Political Affairs. The aim was to exchange views, share



with him the list of CFSI-covered sites, and to consult on issues brought up by IDPs, especially with regard to the declaration of peace zones by the Government and other peace-related matters. CFSI was requested to formalize and present the IDPs' concerns so these could be considered in the GRP-MILF Peace Talks.

Later, the CFSI Peace Education Officer and the Project Coordinator, attended the "Civil Society Consultation on the Implementation of the Agreement on General Cessation of Hostilities between the GRP-MILF", which was convened by the Notre Dame University (NDU) Center for Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation (NDU-CJPIC) at the NDU campus in Cotabato City. One concern that was identified by the civil society groups was the delay in setting up of the Local Monitoring Team (LMT) earlier agreed upon by the parties to the Mindanao conflict. It was noted that civilians continued to be caught in the crossfire during encounters between the parties to the war of 2000. A review of the past discussions showed a

consensus among the civil society groups to: (a) monitor the implementation of the GRP-MILF agreement; (b) invoke the observance of international humanitarian law in the conduct of war between the parties; and (c) facilitate the delivery of humanitarian relief in times of crisis situations.

The Peace Education Officer and Project Coordinator—as well as others—participated in a variety of consultations with the World Bank's Consultant on Peace-Building. These consultations were part of the planning for the Social Fund for conflict-affected areas of Mindanao. The Social Fund will be implemented from January 2003 through December 2007.

Research

The Contracts for Consulting Services between CFSI and its research partners—Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT) and Notre Dame University (NDU)—were signed immediately after CFSI received word from the World Bank that all requirements for contracting had been met. Funds for the conduct of the research activities were immediately released. Contract signing capped many months of consultations and activity, including several meetings in Cotabato City and Davao City as well as a great deal of communication between the universities and CFSI offices in Cotabato City and Metro Manila.

The earlier initiated reviews of the literature as well as related research tasks were recognized and appreciated by CFSI. The researchers also updated themselves on the situation of the IDPs in Mindanao, as well as programmes dealing with return and/or settlement. They consider reports from other parts of the world that focused on “listening” to the displaced. They also continued to familiarize themselves with “models” that deal with the return/reconstruction side of displacement (e.g., Cernea’s Impoverishment Risks and Reconstruction model).

Once funding became available to the Research Teams, fieldwork began in earnest. MSU-IIT’s area of coverage includes six (6) priority evacuation centers and communities of origin/return in Pagalungan and Pagagawan, Maguindanao whilst NDU is responsible for four (4) priority evacuation centers in Carmen, North Cotabato.



The researchers started their fieldwork with interviews in the evacuation centers and will proceed to interview those who have been able to return to their communities of origin. The delay in fieldwork—owing to contractual preparation/approval processes—may have been providential as more IDPs have returned to their communities of origin or settled elsewhere and are thus able to look back at what helped and did not help.

The researchers will also try to understand why many of the displaced have not been able to return to their communities of origin or new settlement sites. They will be seeking to understand to what extent, if any, assistance efforts encourage: continued stays in the evacuation centers; returns to the communities of origin; and/or settlement in new locations.

A clear timetable for the remainder of the fieldwork, and deadlines for writing up the different sections of the report, were agreed upon and arrangements were made to facilitate this timetable. By the end of the reporting period, the research teams were moving ahead quickly to ensure a report that will help to identify “best practices” with regard to return/settlement efforts.

EVALUATION

As indicated in earlier reports, CFSI has engaged Professor Margarita Frederico from La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia to conduct a formal review and evaluation of the Mindanao Project. She continued to review CFSI documents and processes during the reporting period and also undertook a mission to CFSI field sites for the purpose of interviewing project personnel, CFSI Partners, government officials, community leaders, IDPs, and many others. CFSI personnel in both

Metro Manila and Mindanao facilitated Professor Frederico's efforts.

The data collection processes were highly participative and elicited many responses. For example, peace-related issues were brought up by the IDPs. The historical antecedents underlying conflict between the Manobos and the Maguindanaoans—two ethnic groups found primarily in Central Mindanao—were also raised by some of those interviewed.

The purpose of the evaluation is to document the findings of the project so that the knowledge developed and lessons learned can be integrated with existing knowledge of post conflict approaches and inform policy on approaches to internal displacement. The evaluation will explore what has occurred in the project that has led to positive outcomes for the IDPs and how this experience can inform post-conflict knowledge and policies. Another aim of the evaluation is to ensure that the knowledge developed from the project reaches an international audience.

Monitoring efforts during the reporting period were enhanced through a progress briefing for, and consultation with, the World Bank's Washington-based Task Team Leader. This was held in Davao City, Mindanao and was focused on CFSI responses to the situation of internal displacement in Central Mindanao. The interest exhibited and feedback provided by the Task Team Leader was well received by CFSI field personnel as well as Headquarters-based officials.



ADVOCACY

CFSI advocacy efforts continued to be focused at several levels. One example follows.

Survey of Out-of-School Children and Youth

The adult populations served by CFSI—in the evacuation centers as well as the communities of origin—have repeatedly expressed their desire to get their children into or back into school. Interviewed children and youth often listed a return to school at the top of their wish lists. Regrettably, poverty, armed conflict, violence, distance (from home to school), the need to work, non-existent facilities, lack of teachers, and other factors have resulted in this being more of a dream than a reality for most.

In mid-2001, CFSI took it upon itself to seek funds from other sources just for this purpose. By early 2002, the possibility of accessing limited resources appeared good. More detailed information was requested resulting in a CFSI decision to conduct a quick survey of out-of-school children and youth (6-17 years old) in the targeted barangay—Inug-ug, Pagalungan.

The survey was carried out by the CFSI during the first half of the reporting period. The results

suggested that 224 children and youth out of the 662 total respondents or (36%) were out-of-school. The majority of these had dropped out of school during the early years of primary education. In addition to the reasons cited above, those interviewed spoke of floods in the area virtually every year.

CFSI developed and submitted a well-received basic education proposal entitled “Arms are for Hugging”. The overall aim of this project will be to ensure 500 out-of-school children and youth are able to return to school—or enter school for the first time—and remain in school until they have completed at least a basic education. By the end of March, there was every indication that this proposal would be approved and the project at least partially funded.

LESSONS LEARNED

During the reporting period, the following lessons were learned.

1. In planning assistance to IDPs when they return to their communities of origin, close coordination for the complementation of services between and amongst national government agencies, LGUs, NGOs, and faith-based groups must be ensured. Assistance to IDPs must not only address their basic needs, but also enable them to move toward self-sufficiency as soon as possible. Assistance to IDPs in their communities of origin/return must also consider the needs of those who never felt it necessary to leave their communities of origin as well as those who returned home much earlier, generally without external assistance. Close consultations with the host communities, both in the areas of the evacuation centers as well as in the sites of return, is also required.
2. Constant consultation with the leadership structures—formal, informal, and traditional—must be observed on the community level. Recognition, respect for and coordination with local leaders and community structures, particularly the barangay officials, will gain their support and commitment and result in the more effective mobilization of resources in the communities.
3. Assistance programmes at the community level should be inclusive rather than exclusive. Livelihood assistance should be most available to those in greatest need. Community interventions should aim to promote peace and understanding as well as prevent and quickly resolve social tensions or conflict.
4. Security threats to the staff and the IDPs should not be overlooked nor under-emphasized. Security alertness and the reporting of security-related incidents in the field should be strictly observed at all times. Proper consultations on security and safety matters with elected officials should be observed and their decisions respected.
5. The right of children and youth to access to basic education and literacy must be strongly affirmed through both advocacy and action. Getting the children and the youth to school and keeping them in school must be a priority of government, particularly the ARMM government, as well as the community and various service providers.

CHALLENGES

1. Security threats arising from kidnappings, bombings, family and political feuds, and sporadic armed clashes between the Philippine Government's Armed Forces and MILF forces will continue to impact on CFSI's ability to go to the IDP communities of origin and deliver services.
2. The absence of a permanent Peace Agreement between the GRP and MILF and the possibility of resumption of hostilities will continue to contribute to an atmosphere of tension and instability that can affect the success and sustainability of the livelihood projects of the IDPs.
3. The National Government, through its local government agencies (LGAs) and the LGUs, must accelerate its assistance to returning IDPs particularly in the area of core shelters and start-up livelihood assistance. The possible effects of the anticipated El Nino phenomenon on food security, specifically on the farming communities, must be immediately attended to.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT QUARTER

1. Barangay Development Plan

As IDPs return home, most will need to be assisted to reconstruct their homes and rebuild their lives within the context of a larger community that is also challenge. CFSI will help the returnees and other residents of the communities of origin to prepare Barangay Development Plans informed by a Minimum Basic Needs Survey that will be undertaken in each community. This needs assessment activity, which will have the support of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and the ARMM Government, calls for sustained participation at the community level. CFSI will then lobby to ensure assistance will be directed towards the most needy communities.

2. Peace and Reconciliation

Through its partnership with Kadtuntaya Foundation, CFSI will accelerate and intensify peace education and reconciliation activities in the communities of origin to which the IDPs have returned. Likewise, peace education activities for those still remaining in the evacuation centers will be pursued.

3. Education for Out-of-School Children and Youth

Among the vulnerable groups most affected by war and displacement are the children and the youth. Urgent steps have to be taken immediately to get the children and youth into school. CFSI will advocate with government and the local as well as international assistance community to get the children and the youth enrolled in the school year that begins June 2002. The specific objective is to ensure that six to seventeen years old children and youth

of Inug-ug are able to attend school for at least the full academic year. Another aim is to improve the percentage of children and youth who can go beyond Grade I. A third aim is to be able to set up basic school facilities in Barangay Inug-ug that will be more accessible to its various sitios, thus allowing more children to access opportunities for basic education.

4. Research Activities

CFSI's Research Partners—Mindanao State University–Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU) and Notre Dame University (NDU)—will be conducting Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) in the evacuation centers and communities of return as well as holding consultations with other stakeholders. They will need help in accessing these populations as well as in other data gathering tasks.

5. Capacity Building for NGO Forum

The goal of strengthening the capacity of local NGOs in Central Mindanao to respond to humanitarian emergency needs while promoting the human rights of displaced populations will be vigorously pursued. CFSI shall continue to actively participate in the Philippine Network for Internally Displaced Communities and assist it in defining and implementing its humanitarian and development agenda. Likewise, CFSI shall encourage the members of the Network to undertake the legal processes necessary to formalize the legal identity of the Network.

6. Advocacy and Networking

CFSI will continue to assist the IDP population to have their voices heard in the ongoing GRP-MILF Peace Talks and to ensure their meaningful participation in the development planning processes. A weekly radio programme that will specifically carry the views and voices of the IDPs and air their needs and concerns is planned by CFSI beginning the next quarter. Secondly, opportunities for face to face interaction between IDP communities and socio-economic planners of government and donor institutions, that will allow IDPs to articulate their needs and concerns will continue to be pursued.

Contact Points

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Appendix A

Number of IDPS still in Evacuation Centers as of 31 March 2002

Evacuation Center	Barangay	Municipality	Families	Persons
1. Bulit Tents	Bulit	Pagagawan	7	35
2. Tents	Bulit	Pagagawan	23	115
Sub-total		PAGAGAWAN	30	150
3. Central Elementary School	Poblacion	Pagalungan	69	345
4. Emergency Hospital Building	Poblacion	Pagalungan	30	150
5. Mahad	Poblacion	Pagalungan	7	35
6. Old Market	Poblacion	Pagalungan	334	1,670
7. Layog Elementary School	Layog	Pagalungan	25	125
8. Malagakit Primary School	Layog	Pagalungan	40	200
Sub-Total		PAGALUNGAN	505	2,525
9. Malapag High School	Malapag	Carmen	11	55
10. Malapag Mosque	Malapag	Carmen	56	280
11. Liliongan Market Site	Liliongan	Carmen	45	225
12. Sitio Tawagon	Kibudtungan	Carmen	18	90
13. Malamar Dam Site	Kibenez	Carmen	350	1,750
14. Sitio Lanitap	General Luna	Carmen	18	90
Sub - Total		CARMEN	498	2,490
Total for North Cotabato			498	2,490
Total for Maguindanao			535	2,675
OVER-ALL TOTAL			1,033	5,165

Appendix B

List of Evacuation Centers and Number of IDPs that Participated in Go and See Visits (GSV)

A. CARMEN		
Evacuation Center	Families	Persons
1. Liliongan Market Site	173	865
2. Malapag High School and 3. Malapag Mosque	105	363
4. Malamar Dam Site	0	0
5. Sitio Lanitap	53	265
6. Sitio Tawagon	45	225
TOTAL	376	1,718
B. PAGAGAWAN		
Evacuation Center	Families	Persons
1. Bulit Tents	80	435
2. Tents	25	137
3. Bulit Elementary School	32	171
4. Madrasa Bulit	37	165
5. Pagagawan Dike	44	245
6. Pagagawan NIA	61	386
TOTAL	279	1,539
C. PAGALUNGAN		
Evacuation Center	Families	Persons
1. Bai Annie Compound	88	405
2. Bai Lana Compound	36	175
3. Batua Tents	89	423
4. Central Elem. School	255	1,140
5. Emergency Hospital	28	134
6. Layog Elem. School	184	834
7. Layog Tents	315	1,628
8. Mahad	97	517
9. Malagakit Prim. School	79	323
10. Matalam Tents	30	151
11. Old Market	214	703
12. Pendatun Bldg.	8	45
13. Pendatun Tents	75	355
14. Roadside Tents	61	257
15. Sitio Tangila	52	277
16. Virginia Camp	39	466
17. Warehouse Bldg.	0	0
18. Warehouse EC	86	405
TOTAL	1736	8,238
GRAND TOTAL	2,391	11,495

Appendix C

List and Locations of Pulungan Centers in Evacuation Centers and Sites of Return

Municipality	EVACUATION CENTER	SITE OF RETURN
CARMEN	1.Liliongan Market Site, Barangay Liliongan	1.Sitio Tabulon, Barangay Gen. Luna
	2. Malapag High School / Malapag Mosque, Barangay Malapag	2.Sitio Kumaret, Barangay Bentagan
	3 Tawagon Evacuation Center, Barangay Kibudtungan	3.Sitio Pinamintangan, Barangay Liliongan
		4. Upper Malugasa, Barangay Liliongan
		5. Sitio Spring, Barangay Liliongan
		6. Sitio Matingao, Barangay Malapag
		7. Sitio Putingbato, Barangay Malapag
PAGAGAWAN	4. Tents, Barangay Bulit,	8 Sitio.Bai Tonina, Barangay Bulit
	5. Dike, Barangay Pagagawan	9. Sitio Pedeutungan, Barangay Pagagawan
		10. Sitio Punol, Barangay Pagagawan
		11. Sitio Butabuaya, Barangay Dungguan
		12.Sitio Sambulawan, Barangay Nabundas
PAGALUNGAN	6.Central Elementary School, Barangay Poblacion	13.Sitio Butig, Barangay Inug-ug
	7. Layog Elementary School, Barangay Layog	14. Sitio Agakan, Baramgay Inug-ug
	8.Layog Tents, Barangay Layog	
PIKIT		15. Sitio Mother, Barangay Inug-ug
		16. Sitio Mother, Barangay Rajamuda
		17. Sitio Mother, Barangay Talitay
		18. Sitio Kabambanan, Barangay Gli-gli
KABACAN		19. Sitio Proper, Barangay Nangaan
TOTAL	8	19