

From Displacement to Empowerment:

**working with those directly affected
by the armed conflict in Mindanao**

**An External Evaluation of
The Mindanao Social Assessment
and
The Pilot Project
*Promoting the Transition from Conflict to Peace
And Development at the Community Level***

**A World Bank Development Grant Facility/
Post Conflict Fund Grant**

by

José Andrés Sotto, Ph.D.

October 2003

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface		i
Acknowledgment		ii
Abbreviations and Acronyms		iii
Executive Summary		1
Chapter One	The Context, Evaluation Agenda and Methodology	16
	The Context of the Social Assessment and the Pilot Project	16
	Evaluation Agenda	19
	Methodology	20
	Limitations of the Study	20
Chapter Two	The Mindanao Social Assessment	22
	Social Assessment and Social Development	22
	Methodology	24
	Entry Points of Social Analysis	
	Social Diversity	25
	Institutional Analysis	28
	Stakeholder Analysis	30
	Participation	31
	Social Risk Analysis	33
	Recommendations	37
	Lessons Learned	38
Chapter Three	The Pilot Project: An Evaluation of the Overall Institutional Delivery	41
	Psychosocial Services: The Underpinning Project Component	43
	Community Organizing: The Overarching Project Process Towards Capability Building	46
	Caring for the Pilot Project Staff	48
	Timely and Accurate Information and Human Security	49
	Administrative Support Staff: Towards Institutional Accountability, Transparency and Efficiency	50
	Advocacy: From Mass Media to Networking	51
	Engaging Research Partners Towards Model Building	51
	Monitoring and Evaluation	52
Chapter Four	Evaluation of the Pilot Project: Voices Heard	53
	Key Informant Interviews: Participants	53
	Focus Group Discussions: Participants	54
	The Communities of Origin: Strengths and Weaknesses	54

	The Evacuation Center: Strengths and Weaknesses	55
	Towards Conditions of Lasting Peace and Sustainable Development: Enabling Factors	56
	The CFSI Pilot Project: Strengths and Weaknesses	56
	Voices of Internally Displaced Persons	57
	Voices of Representatives of Government	64
	Voices of NGOs, Academic Institution, and Research Partners	65
Chapter Five	Lessons Learned, Recommendations, and Conclusions	67
	Human Security: A Case for a Framework of Analysis	67
	Community Participation Leading to Empowerment	69
	Model Building Through Collaborative Research	71
	Lessons Learned	72
	Recommendations	74
	Conclusions	76
	Bibliography	78

preface

**“The Liguasan Marsh is ours.
Protect it. . .
Conserve it. . .
For our next generation”**

This sign greets travelers who are about to cross the bridge that spans the Liguasan Marsh.

a sobering appeal to humanity . . .

a loud cry for mercy . . .

a soft protest against cruelty . . .

a faint hope for the future . . .

I traversed that bridge countless times as I traveled across Central Mindanao to meet with Internally Displaced Persons, government officials, the academe, non-governmental organization staff, or anyone who claimed to have a stake in bringing peace and development in the conflict-ridden region. To me, both the sign and the bridge have become living symbols of hope, peace, and faith. They remind me that there are countless people who count on people to do just that: protect and conserve one of God’s, or Allah’s, precious gifts to Mindanao—the Liguasan Marsh.

Most unfortunately, the Liguasan Marsh has been stained with the blood of human beings. Just like much of the soil of Central Mindanao. Yet, the Liguasan Marsh, just like the rest of Central Mindanao, beckons those who still venture to dream, to pray, and to work for peace and development.

The Mindanao Social Assessment and the Pilot Project that are the twin subjects of this external evaluation are a firm and vibrant response to the call of the Liguasan Marsh and of the hundreds of thousands of residents who have come to claim it as their own.

josé andrés sotto
external evaluator

acknowledgment

to:

dr. mary judd of the world bank for her unbending commitment to the cause of peace and development in mindanao and in the universe;

dr. steven muncy, executive director of community and family services international, for his unwavering vision of the powerless being genuinely empowered;

dr. fermin adriano, dam vertido, dr. ed prantilla, arvin chua, and eric john matela for their personal friendship, intellectual integrity, and deep resolve to transform mindanao into a landscape of lasting peace and sustainable development;

miss celia v. santos, dr. fred balleza, dan eleuterio, luz riego de dios, eloisa balanhan, noraida abduallah karim, jubaira abas, benito abdulbasit, miriam acosta, roger acosta, shariffah agar, haydee balading, samrah karon, benjie laguialaot, alimudin mala, jeannette singco, teng masukat, lito de leon, julius lacson, and the rest of the cfsi operations in cotabato city, for their tireless efforts to translate esoteric words to concrete action;

benjie laguialaot, ali mala, eric espiridion, and terry dayo, for their patience in decoding and encoding information for my own understanding;

effie estanislao for guiding me through the complexities of financial accounting;

undersecretary lulu f. pablo, for facilitating my access to information on community development;

cfsi's research and ngo partners for accommodating my incessant questioning;

the staff of southern mindanao university's hostel programme, for embracing me as their own;

governor emmanuel pidol and the mayors of the municipalities included in the pilot project, for their openness to dialogue;

and

the internally displaced persons of mindanao who never failed to remind me that the universe belongs to us all . . .

i am eternally indebted.

j a sotto

abbreviations and acronyms

AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
ARMM	Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao
ASFP	ARMM Social Fund Project
BCM	Baranggay Council Member
CDP	Community Development Plan
CFSI	Community and Family Services International
CIDSS	Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services
COC	CFSI Operations in Cotabato City
COO	Community of Origin
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
DepEd	Department of Education
ECs	Evacuation Centers
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FRIEND	Foundation for Rural Institutions, Economics, and Development, Inc.
GRP	Government of the Republic of the Philippines
HHS	Household Surveys
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IP	Indigenous People
KII	Key Informant Interview
LAUR	Livelihood Assistance Upon Return
MEDCO	Mindanao Economic and Development Council
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MinLand	Mindanao Land Foundation
MinPhil	MinPhil International Consultants, Inc.
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front
MRDP	Mindanao Rural Development Programme
MSA	Mindanao Social Assessment
MTPDP	Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan
NEDA	National Economic Development Authority
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPDP	National Peace and Development Plan
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PBSP	Philippine Business for Social Progress
PCF	Post-Conflict Fund
PRIMED	Peace and Reconstruction Imperatives for Mindanao's Enhanced Development
RRA	Rapid Resource Appraisal
SZOPAD	Special Zone of Peace and Development
SUCA	Start-Up Capital Assistance
ThM	Thematic Mapping
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNV	United Nations Volunteers

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0. The Context

1.01. Mindanao is the second largest cluster of islands in the Philippines. Rich in both natural and human resources, it is home to almost eighteen million people from many different ethnic, religious, and language groups. Farming, fishing and mining are the primary economic activities in the area.

1.02. Authorities recognize the critical importance of Mindanao to the country's economic development; however, decades of recurrent armed conflict, marginalization and exploitation, poor infrastructure, weak governance, corruption and poverty have severely hampered its development. Human development scores in Mindanao are the lowest in the country.

1.03. The armed conflict in Mindanao traces its roots to Spanish colonial times, as the Muslim dwellers in the area repelled the Spaniards' conquest. Post-World War II era saw the influx of Christian dwellers from Luzon and the Visayas into Mindanao, thus exacerbating the tension between Muslims and Christians there. Land ownership became a burning issue. The martial law regime under Ferdinand Marcos resulted in open hostilities between the government and the Muslim rebels led by the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

1.04. With the restoration of democracy in the Philippines in 1986 came greater efforts on the part of the government to seek a peaceful solution to the conflict in Mindanao. The Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) was born in 1989, during the regime of Corazon Aquino, but not without dissension from the MNLF, which protested the administration's failure to involve the rebel group in crafting the legislation that had given legitimacy to the new region.

1.05. After years of negotiation, the administration of Fidel V. Ramos forged a peace agreement with the MNLF. However, by that time, a new rebel group—the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF)—had been born, rivalling the MNLF. The MILF had declared that its main goal is the creation of a separate Islamic state out of the Mindanao and Palawan islands. At any rate, the 1996 Peace Agreement opened new doors for involvement by the international donor community in develop programmes for Mindanao.

1.06. In 2000, Joseph Estrada declared an “all out war” against the MILF, resulting in the displacement of almost 900,000 people in Central, Western and Northern Mindanao. The implications of this policy on the affected areas were staggering—countless lives were lost, social relationships were sacrificed, much needed infrastructures were destroyed beyond repair, and opportunities for development were wasted. Those with the fewest resources ended up in makeshift evacuation centers, dependent—at least temporarily—on

the meager relief goods and emergency services provided by the Government and the humanitarian assistance community.

1.07. It was in this context that the World Bank (WB) approved a proposal to allocate funds for Mindanao from its Post Conflict Unit. The proposed intervention had a three-pronged approach: (a) a social assessment, (b) a pilot project for internally displaced persons (IDPs), and (c) a Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP)-led activity linked to the post-conflict situation. These were intended to be complementary and innovative interventions. The first two parts of this Post Conflict intervention are the subjects of this external evaluation.

1.08. The release of funds for this Post Conflict project was significantly delayed when Estrada was ousted from office by a popular revolt in January 2001. New rounds of negotiation had to take place and new players on the GRP side had to take part. In any event, so much hope was pinned on the administration of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who initially adopted an “all out peace” policy approach to Mindanao. The new administration’s policy was to be anchored by peace negotiations with the MILF, in tandem with a comprehensive programme of rehabilitation and development.

1.09. In February 2003, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) started a military offensive against the MILF, apparently to root out criminal elements that had been wreaking havoc in the country. The military’s offensive strategy created a rapid deterioration in the security situation in Central Mindanao—from one of relative peace and development to that of a full-blown conflict-induced humanitarian emergency. This development had tremendous impact on the activities of the pilot project, since it occurred at the peak of intensive programme intervention and just prior to the pilot project’s phase out process.

2.0. The Mindanao Social Assessment

2.01. A potent tool for the broader process of social analysis, social assessment ensures that there is broad stakeholder participation in the eventual project design and/or implementation. Furthermore, when the findings of a social assessment are seriously considered by an implementing agency, they are expected to enhance the likelihood of a social development project’s objectives being met—*inter alia*, the alleviation of poverty, the promotion of inclusiveness, and the enhancement of community ownership with regard to project monitoring and evaluation.

2.02. The World Bank prescribes five entry points of social analysis: (a) social diversity [including gender] analysis, (b) institutional analysis, (c) stakeholder analysis, (d) participatory framework, and (e) social risk analysis. These entry points, which are based on a cluster of development-oriented values, provide a coherent set of criteria that determines whether the quality of the entire social analysis—as well as that of its crucial component, social assessment—is acceptable.

2.03. The overall objective of the Mindanao Social Assessment (MSA) was to determine the needs of the conflict-affected communities—as well as the answers to those needs—from the perspective of the conflict victims themselves. The MSA was evaluated according to (a) the extent to which it met the objectives—both primary and secondary—as articulated in its Terms of Reference (TOR); and (b) the extent to which it met the five entry points of social analysis prescribed by the WB. There was a high probability that, if the MSA had fully met its primary and secondary objectives, the five entry points of social analysis would have been met as well.

2.04. The World Bank Office Manila contracted Dr. Fermin Adriano to serve as Team Leader for the conduct of the MSA. The other members of the research team—also contracted directly by the World Bank Office Manila—were Mindanao Land Foundation (MinLand), MinPhil International Consultants, Inc. (MinPhil), and the Foundation for Rural Institutions, Economics and Development, Inc. (FRIEND).

2.05. MinLand and MinPhil carried out the actual field surveys. FRIEND, on the other hand, synthesized the field survey reports and conducted a critical study of four peace and development plans for Mindanao, namely: (a) Chapter 15 of the National Economic Development Authority's (NEDA) Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP), 2001-2004, entitled "Securing Peace and Development Plan in Mindanao"; (b) the National Peace and Development Plan (NPDP), 2000, formulated by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), (c) the Philippine Business for Social Progress' (PBSP) Peace and Development Initiatives in Mindanao, 2000, and (4) the government-commissioned Peace and Reconstruction Imperatives for Mindanao's Enhanced Development (PRIMED): A Suggested Public Sector Action Agenda for 2001-2004.

2.06. The MSA research team adopted both quantitative and qualitative methods of gathering and analysing data. They used three types of instruments as primary tools for gathering data in the selected survey sites: (a) Household Surveys (HHS), (b) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and (c) Key Informant Interviews (KIIs). The HHS provided the raw data for drawing up the community profiles. The FGDs and KIIs were used to validate the HHS findings. In addition to these research tools, MinLand chose to use two additional instruments—Rapid Resource Appraisal (RRA) and Thematic Mapping (ThM) to enhance community participation in data gathering.

2.07. In compliance with the TOR of the MSA, the following sites were selected for the field surveys: (a) Cluster A [areas indirectly affected by the conflict]; (b) Cluster B [areas directly affected by the conflict; and (c) Cluster C [areas with high potential for conflict or IP communities].

2.08.0. The external evaluation found that the MSA met, with exemplary results, the primary and secondary objectives articulated in the TOR. Furthermore, the MSA satisfactorily fulfilled the requirements of the five entry points in social assessment as prescribed by the WB.

2.08.1. ***Social Diversity***. Peace and development are all about people, with their unique characteristics that distinguish them from their neighbours. Social analysis, therefore, should consider such manifestations of social diversity, since these identity constructs could be reinforced or weakened by other elements in society, such as war, peace initiatives, or development assistance.

2.08.2. The MSA targeted a wide range of social groups that were identified according to gender, ethnicity/culture, religion, and age, as well as geographic, economic and educational characteristics. Using a matrix that reflected the three broad clusters for the field surveys, the MSA lays out each group's perception of the origin and dynamics of the current conflict in Mindanao. The MSA then goes on to present its analyses of potentials and vulnerability within each cluster, disaggregating the data according to the respondents' gender, age, ethnicity, geographic distribution, and income level.

2.08.3. The MSA's treatment of social diversity is quite comprehensive. The data should prove useful for agencies that are tasked to work with these communities in designing and implementing community-driven peace and development programmes, as well as in generating indicators for project monitoring and evaluation.

2.08.4. The external evaluation found that the field research conducted in the carefully selected community clusters, as well as the analysis of the four peace and development plans for Mindanao bear out the notion that any efforts toward sustainable peace and development, conflict resolution, poverty alleviation, or social cohesion strengthening are bound to fail unless the selected interventions reveal how social diversity inherent in a particular community or region affects opportunities for development effectiveness. A common lesson learned in the conduct of the MSA was that any initiatives aimed at alleviating the conditions of the vulnerable sectors in that part of the country should seriously listen to those peoples' perspectives, hopes, aspirations and experiences. More importantly, any peace and development programme should genuinely involve these vulnerable grassroots social groups, diverse as they are, at all levels of the programme cycle—from project design and implementation to monitoring and evaluation.

2.09.0. ***Institutional Analysis***. As an entry point in social assessment, *institutional analysis* recognizes the powerful dynamics of interdependency within human society, which help determine if security, survival and empowerment are to be achieved. It is essential in that most, if not all, development interventions, whether projects or policy reforms, have to consider institutional change for their implementation.

2.09.1. Institutions are viewed as a form of *social capital*, which reflects how relationships within a given community enhance or hinder their own socio-economic development. The realm of social capital encompasses the dynamics of government institutions, financial institutions, community-based organizations, kinship, political affiliation, and membership in informal social structures.

2.09.2. Any discussion of social capital is bound to raise the issue of *social cohesion*, which refers to the tangible and intangible factors that directly or indirectly influence

how people relate to each other—*inter alia*, peoples’ values and attitudes, knowledge and skills, cultural norms, experiences with governance and membership in organizations, and group commitments.

2.09.3. In the context of armed conflict, social capital and social cohesion are easy victims. Indigenous social capital usually suffers from destruction. Inter-communal mistrust and inter-personal hatred destroy social relationships and threaten to destabilize community decision-making and action planning. Social cohesion, on the other hand, defines the capability of a social group to cope with the demands of displacement and relocation, as well as those of community re-entry and rehabilitation.

2.09.4. An extensive portion of the MSA is devoted to an analysis of social capital and social cohesion in the target communities. It clearly identifies the various institutions that impact on those communities’ social capital. With regard to economic recovery, the MSA analyses their access to financial credit, productive assets, agricultural infrastructure and support services, and non-farm income opportunities. As regards governance, the MSA also offers an in-depth discussion of the educational needs at the barangay level, scholarship programmes, reconstruction of shelters, basic health and sanitation, access to psychosocial services, and basic rural infrastructure development.

2.09.5. The MSA provides insights into the imperative of peace coexistence among community members and the prospect of sustainable human security in post-conflict Mindanao. It argues for the strengthening of local organizations, the timely access to information, and the provision of basic recreation facilities, among other measures, as keys to local community empowerment.

2.09.6. The four peace and development plans for Mindanao reviewed by the MSA all speak about social capital and social cohesion from various perspectives. PRIMED—the only document that focuses on peace and development efforts for Mindanao in a post conflict scenario—succeeds in laying out the deeply rooted and multi-faceted problems related to the chronic conflict in the region which, in turn, underlie Mindanao’s inability to sustain its growth. It specifically cites extreme poverty, social exclusion and marginalization, and indignity as the root causes of conflict in Mindanao. PRIMED advocates a new framework for addressing Mindanao’s problems, highlighting the primacy of rebuilding social relationships in achieving lasting peace.

2.10.0. **Stakeholder Analysis.** Social analysis requires that the perspectives of the various actors with legitimate interest in any given project have to be considered. The stakeholders’ desire for change could enhance the success of a given project. Conversely, their indifference to the project could hamper its forward movement.

2.10.1. A thorough stakeholder analysis frames the MSA’s discussion of the situation in Mindanao—from its review of the history of the conflict in the region to its presentation of the results of the field surveys, as well as its comparative analysis of the four peace and development plans for Mindanao.

2.10.2. The MSA underscores the critical importance for the GRP, being one of the major stakeholders in Mindanao, to develop and implement a comprehensive and sustainable peace and development plan for the region. The MSA argues for the creation of a national lead agency for Mindanao, one that has a direct channel to the Office of the President and vested with the authority to, *inter alia*, coordinate all government efforts in Mindanao.

2.10.3. The MSA also reviews the crucial role of another key stakeholder group in Mindanao—the donor community—and how their efforts towards assistance have been affected by the changing human security situation in the region.

2.10.4. The MSA devotes considerable space to the analysis of the World Bank's assistance programmes in Mindanao, particularly the Special Zone for Peace and Development (SZOPAD) Social Fund (SSF) and the Mindanao Rural Development Project (MRDP). It offers recommendations on how to enhance the effectiveness of future WB-sponsored projects in the region, based on the experiences of those two initiatives.

2.11.0. **Participation.** As an entry point in social assessment, *participation* looks at how social groups affected by a particular project participate in the opportunities created by the project and how to enhance overall stakeholder participation in the total process.

2.11.1. The MSA clearly adopted a participatory framework in its work with the cluster groups. As part of this participatory thrust, the clusters developed their own community action plans (CAP). Significantly, the communities showed their determination to work closely with the government, the donor agencies, and other organizations that were willing to help them address their needs and aspirations.

2.11.2. The CAPs are organized along four thematic concerns—security, economic recovery, governance, and social cohesion—drawn from a long list of needs and aspirations identified by the communities themselves.

2.11.3. Most of the services and programmes identified by the community clusters are basic necessities for reasonably decent human existence and, therefore, should be expected of the government to provide.

2.12.0. **Social Risk Analysis.** As an entry point in social assessment, *social risk analysis* is crucial in that it demands of decision-makers to identify a whole spectrum of risks that could determine whether a particular project has any chances of succeeding. The WB recommends five categories of social risk to frame the discussion—vulnerability risks, country and regional risks, political economy risks, institutional risks, and exogenous risks.

2.12.1. **Vulnerability Risks.** The MSA paints a picture of Mindanao as a region of glaring dichotomy: dire poverty is widespread in a land that is rich in natural resources (farm, forest, and water resources.) In addition to poverty as an index of vulnerability, the MSA

also addresses the impact of the armed conflict in Mindanao on the sense of security and the psychosocial functioning of the populations surveyed.

2.12.2. Significantly, a majority of the respondents expressed a generalized optimism that peace could still be attained in Mindanao; however, a majority of those directly affected by the armed conflict indicated their preference to remain in evacuation centers until such time that their security in their communities of origin is guaranteed.

2.12.3. The MSA also offers some data on the psychosocial functioning of the respondents. It reports that their moods and feelings about the situation in Mindanao ranged from “recovering” and “hopeful” to “depressed” and “frightened.” It also stated that a majority of the children and women who had witnessed armed violence exhibit symptoms of trauma. The external evaluator, however, finds that the MSA’s analysis of the survey results on this subject is too brief and simplistic to yield reliable information on the actual psychosocial impact of the armed conflict on the target populations.

2.12.4. **Country and Regional Risks.** The MSA cites how political instability, ethnic and religious tensions, violent conflict and militarization in Mindanao impact on the probability of success of peace and development initiatives. As a case in point, the long protracted armed conflict in the region has led to, *inter alia*, massive displacement of people, the blatant violation of human rights, the destruction of much-needed infrastructure, the deepening alienation between groups of local residents, as well as the growing mistrust of government.

2.12.5. The deteriorating security condition in Mindanao has also led to lower investments in the region. Lower investments, in turn, lead to fewer jobs and economic opportunities. Fewer jobs and economic opportunities give rise to greater incidence of poverty and deprivation. The MSA refers to this phenomenon as the cycle of “underdevelopment.”

2.12.6. In the context of Philippine society—including that of Mindanao—one of the most pronounced country risks is rampant corruption. Left unfettered, it exacerbates the country’s vulnerability.

2.12.7. **Political Economy Risks.** The MSA acknowledges that there are powerful political families that tend to undermine the goals of a project by exerting their political influence towards the end of having their own vested interests served ahead of anything else. It cites how the country’s system of division into regions is undertaken more on the basis of political consideration rather than on the demands of market or trade flows. As a result, the planning for Mindanao, including the allocation of crucial infrastructure projects, has generally been dictated by the politics of patron-client relationships.

2.12.8. The MSA concludes that the end result of this unresolved political economy risk is that Mindanao continues to be treated as an island of different regions, rather than as an island economy.

2.12.9. The politics of patron-client relationship also threatens social cohesion, in that it fosters rivalry and conflict, instead of unity.

2.12.10. ***Institutional Risks***. The MSA shows that the high level of institutional risks is pronounced in Mindanao, where weak governance, complexities arising from cultural norms, low capacity of economic performance, and inappropriate institutional arrangements intricately interplay with one another.

2.12.11. The MSA reports that poor access to basic government services, such as education, health, and other social services, has led to chronic underperformance of school children from Mindanao, particularly in the ARMM areas, compared to their counterparts in Luzon and the Visayas.

2.12.12. The MSA reveals that compared to the national average, Mindanao residents have lower access to basic services, such as health facilities, safe drinking water, day care centers, and sanitary toilets.

2.12.13. ***Exogenous Risks***. The MSA points out that Mindanao's susceptibility to endemic risks is accounted for, in part, by its relegation to the role of being the supplier of food and raw materials to the country's major urban centers, at the expense of the development of a sustainable inter-regional trade within the region. As a result, the government's infrastructure projects, such as roads and bridges, have traditionally been carried out to support this economic activity, without consideration for the need of the region to stimulate intra-regional economic cooperation.

2.13.0. **Recommendations**. The MSA recommends that any assistance to the conflict-affected areas in Mindanao should follow four guiding principles:

2.13.1. Projects must contribute to peace building and the strengthening of social capital. The authors call this criterion "peace impact assessment."

2.13.2. Projects must be based on the explicit needs and aspirations of the community. The MSA asserts that those directly affected by the conflict and who are supposed to be the direct beneficiaries of assistance programmes should be directly consulted with regard to their own felt needs.

2.13.3. Projects must be planned, implemented, monitored and evaluated with the full participation of the members of the community, since the project is supposed to meet their needs own needs and aspirations.

2.13.4. Projects must be meaningfully monitored and evaluated and their results be fed back to the community. The MSA argues that effective monitoring and evaluation are effective tools for transparent information sharing and decision-making and, therefore, are excellent tools for strengthening social capital.

2.14.0. **Lessons Learned.** The MSA yielded a number of lessons learned from the assessment process itself.

2.14.1. The high level of professional expertise that framed the entire MSA, the marked intelligence that consistently guided the analysis of data from the field surveys, and the deep insights that made the ever difficult task of integrating theory and practice possible all converge to prove that the World Bank and the rest of donor community can count on local expertise to undertake the complex process of social assessment.

2.14.2. The process of empowering the poor and the vulnerable is long, arduous, and demands appropriate allocation of funds. The most effective and enduring intervention models are likely those that are genuinely community-driven and are reflective of the actual needs and aspirations of the community that the intervention purports to serve.

2.14.3. In a multi-ethnic, multicultural, and multi-religious region like Mindanao, it is imperative that project implementers respect the layers of cultural norms and institutional protocols if they are to win the respect and support of such institutions and individuals in position of influence and/or authority.

2.14.4. In a multi-sectoral landscape of service delivery, meaningful networking will benefit everyone. The sharing and resolving of issues in an atmosphere of cooperation serve to strengthen each player's capability to work with the community effectively.

2.14.5. Professional community organizers are badly needed to help in the difficult task of social transformation in Mindanao. It might be helpful for the donor and service provider communities to spearhead the development of a common staff development programme for NGOs engaged in peace and development projects.

2.14.6. The challenges posed by the rebuilding of social capital and the strengthening of social cohesion require adequate funding which, up to now, have not been given priority by the donor community.

2.14.7. Finally, given the high quality of the MSA report, it should be disseminated broadly among relevant stakeholders. At the very least, this document should inform any attempt to design conflict management and community-based poverty reduction programmes in Mindanao.

2.14.8. The MSA has already been used to inform the Pilot Project and the ARMM Social Fund Project (ASFP). It is very encouraging to note that there has been a great demand for copies of *Social Assessment of Conflict-Affected Areas in Mindanao*, a popularised version of the MSA.

2.14.9. The MSA has been used to inform the development of the ARMM Social Fund Project and the enhancement of the Pilot Project.

3.0. The Pilot Project

3.01. The World Bank Office Manila contracted Community and Family Services International, Inc. (CFSI) to design and implement the pilot project in Central Mindanao—particularly in carefully selected barangays in the municipalities of Carmen, Kidapawan and Pikit in the Province of Cotabato; and in the municipalities of Pagagawan and Pagalungan in the ARMM Province of Maguindanao. The coverage of the project included 6,759 families (33,550 persons) in 28 barangays and 102 sitios.

3.02. The Pilot Project had two major objectives: (a) to 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; and (b) to contribute to the existing knowledge base by developing and testing models that will inform approaches to the transition from conflict to peace.

3.03.0. The Pilot Project's design envisaged activities that were to be clustered under two main headings—(a) community participation leading to empowerment, and (b) model building through collaborative action research.

3.03.1. The actual project implementation saw the application of a comprehensive range of community development activities in a virtually seamless, integrated fashion—*inter alia*, preliminary community profiling, minimum basic needs (MBN) surveys, human rights orientation, information management, leadership training, community group formation, community visioning and action planning, volunteer development, literacy training, livelihood assistance, infrastructure building, peace promotion, alternative education, cross-cultural sensitivity training, youth development, spiritual formation, and the provision of psychosocial care. What is significant is that the IDPs—their needs and aspirations—were constantly at the center of all these programme processes and activities.

3.03.2. Because of the often deteriorating security situation in Central Mindanao, the Pilot Project functioned under extremely trying and challenging human conditions.

3.03.3. The respondents to the evaluation interviews, as well as the participants in the FGDs, stated that the involvement of CFSI in their communities had always made them feel that an organization outside their community was genuinely interested in their welfare, by listening to them express their needs and by recognizing their knowledge and skills to the benefit of their communities.

3.03.4. A total psychosocial orientation defined the entire project. The underpinning philosophy is that a great number of survivors of conflict are active survivors (as opposed to passive victims)—resilient, creative, skilled, resourceful, purposeful, and capable of shaping their own future. Allowing survivors of conflict to harness their own strengths and resources is at the core of their empowerment.

3.04. At the heart of CFSI's integrated service delivery was a team of professional community organizers (COs) and programme specialists (information, livelihood, peace, and psychosocial service officers) who worked very closely with the IDPs in identifying their needs and designing ways to meet those needs. Both professional and volunteer staff cited CFSI's commitment to a comprehensive staff development programme as instrumental in their capability building.

3.05. Pilot Project staff benefited from CFSI's provision of various forms of stress management—e.g., debriefing, defusing, rest and rehabilitation activities. They stated that this special programme had made them feel that CFSI truly cared for them and their total well-being.

3.06. The IDP communities, NGO representatives, and research partners were in agreement that the Pilot Project provided opportunities for the IDPs to be directly involved in their community affairs. The representatives of Government who took part in the external evaluation were divided on this issue. Some Government officials felt that CFSI empowered the IDPs at the expense of the Government, which claimed that they were being painted as the culprits in the plight of the IDPs.

3.07. The IDPs identified the following conditions as enabling factors for the evolution of a lasting peace and sustainable development in their communities: lasting peace agreement between the GOP and the MILF; respect for, and protection of, their basic human rights; active participation of community members in all aspects of community life (including self-advocacy); partnership with government and non-governmental organizations, based on the needs and aspirations of the communities; leadership development and skills training for all sectors in the community; cultural sensitivity (including sensitivity towards Islam and the Muslim culture); and access to accurate information.

3.08. The IDPs identified the following measures of empowerment that they learned and experienced from the Pilot Project: critical leadership functions, such as presentation and public speaking skills, personal competencies, interviewing skills, proposal writing skills, consultation and negotiation skills, visioning and strategic planning; peace making skills; livelihood skills; banking (depositing and withdrawing); disaster management skills; spiritual formation; group work; stress management; tutoring, and health awareness.

3.09. The Pilot Project benefited enormously from a full range of administrative support from CFSI, foremost of which were well-established policies and procedures with regard to financial recording and personnel management. These enabled the Pilot Project to exercise transparency, accountability, and efficiency.

3.10. The Pilot Project staff benefited from a full range of professional development activities offered by CFSI, which aimed at enhancing their job-related competencies. In addition, they also benefited from a wide spectrum of psychosocial support from CFSI,

foremost of which were stress management training, critical incident stress debriefing, stress defusing, one-to-one consultation, as well as relaxation and rehabilitation activities.

3.11. The Pilot Project adopted a wide range of advocacy initiatives—*inter alia*, use of popular media to highlight the IDPs' condition in Central Mindanao, public presentations, public education, inter-agency networking, and the professional production of a monograph and audio-visual materials.

3.12. The Pilot Project's leadership in the formation, development, and maintenance of NGO networks was highly commended by partner NGOs and most government agencies.

3.13. CFSI's extensive and tireless advocacy agenda succeeded in having other donor agencies (*inter alia*, Canada Fund and the Consuelo Foundation) to provide the Pilot Project some critical complementary funding—particularly the Arms Are for Hugging component of the project.

3.14. The Pilot Project had built in a system of quarterly programme reviews, mid-term and project-end evaluation, as well as regular progress reports, process recording and detailed financial documentation; however, it failed to incorporate a clear and coherent monitoring system into the entire project. This made it difficult for staff to gauge the progress and/or success of the project and its components.

3.15. The participatory action research conducted by the Pilot Project's research partners produced high quality reports on the needs and aspirations of the IDPs in the pilot sites. The research partners investigated—and later on, validated—the IDPs' perspectives on CFSI's interventions, capping their reports with lessons learned from the intervention processes.

3.16. The research partners found that, while the armed conflict brought on many disruptions in the lives of the IDPs, the combined interventions of NGOs, including CFSI, and government agencies, have brought much hope and desire on the part of IDPs to return to their COOs.

3.17. The research partners' efforts successfully contributed to the knowledge base that should inform approaches to transition from conflict to peace. The two research partners consistently applied participatory approaches in their works.

3.18. The Pilot Project influenced the development of the MSA by facilitating the conduct of the pilot phase in one of the Pilot Project sites. The MSA, on the other hand, included selected Pilot Project personnel to attend some of its training seminars.

3.19. The external evaluator determines that the objectives set out in the Terms of Reference for the Pilot Project were met, with exceptional results.

3.20.0. **Lessons Learned.** The following lessons are extracted from the experiences of the Pilot Project:

3.20.01. Given enabling conditions, people caught in armed conflict are capable of rebounding from their initial reactions of shock, anger or even disillusionment, to become active agents of positive change.

3.20.02. The Pilot Project found that women have always played a significant role in development—whether in the context of their immediate families or in the broader community. Given enabling conditions, women are capable of assuming non-traditional roles in social and economic leadership, with remarkable success.

3.20.03. People tend to have a natural affinity to their community of origin. As articulated by the MSA, a condition of armed conflict threatens to shatter peoples’ connectedness to their land of birth, their livelihood, and each other. Nevertheless, it is not in the interest of those displaced by an armed conflict that they be forced to return to their community of origin at all cost. On the contrary, IDPs have a right to protection during displacement, as articulated in the *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*.¹

3.20.04. In a context of armed conflict, it is imperative that a programme implementing agency consistently exercise political neutrality. Part of the success of the Pilot Project was the ability of the professional staff to project CFSI’s unequivocal political impartiality. This is consistent with the guiding principle that IDPs are guaranteed the right to access humanitarian assistance, without prejudice and discrimination.²

3.20.05 An agency’s internal capability to manage grants in the millions of pesos is made manifest in its ability to implement concrete policies, procedures and guidelines relating to financial accountability and transparency. CFSI’s built-in system of regular financial monitoring and audit provides a critical means of ensuring that the entire project operation continued to be financially sound, accountable, transparent, and efficient.

3.20.06. The probability of success for a community-based project increases with the degree to which the entire implementing organization supports the project. In the experience of CFSI, members of its governing body were far willing to voluntarily lend their individual expertise to the project itself, with amazing results.

3.20.07. The Pilot Project’s incorporation of a comprehensive staff training and development component, including stress management, proved critical in nurturing an overall sense of well-being on the part of its professional and volunteer staff. People working with those directly affected by armed conflict are most vulnerable to stress and burnout. The Pilot Project has shown that an organization’s deep commitment to its

¹ Korn, D A. 2000. *Exodus within Borders. An Introduction to the Crisis of Internal Displacement, Section III: Principles Relating to Protection During Displacement.*

² Korn, 2000, *Part IV: Principles Relating to Humanitarian Assistance.*

projects should include an equally deep commitment to its personnel's sense of fulfilment on the job.

3.20.08. Access to timely and accurate information leads to empowerment. The Pilot Project has reaffirmed the long-held principle that different stakeholders need different information at different times.

3.20.09. People—regardless of age, gender, or circumstances in life—have a built-in thirst for knowledge. Furthermore, it could be argued that those who are the edge of marginalization have a more intense desire to know, to learn, and to gain skills that they could, in turn, use to change their circumstances.

3.20.10. The Pilot Project fielded Community Organizers (COs) and project officers to the project sites with an admirably high acceptance rate from the IDP communities. This could be attributed to at least two complementary factors—(a) the principle of access to humanitarian assistance emphasized by CFSI at the outset of the project, and (b) the COs' highly developed sensitivity toward the plight of the communities where they were assigned.

3.20.11 Children and youth can become active participants in the shaping of their own destiny. Provided with the right opportunities and the appropriate support systems, they are likely to choose a peaceful, harmonious life in the community over one that is rooted in violence.

3.20.12. Functional inter-agency partnerships are crucial in addressing the multi-faceted needs of communities in conflict situations and other difficult circumstances.

3.20.13. The Pilot Project affirms one of the lessons learned from the conduct of the MSA: there are local research institutions that exude intellectual integrity, research capability, and cultural sensitivity. Partnership with these institutions only serves to strengthen the credibility of a research undertaking.

3.21.0. **Recommendations.** The external evaluator respectfully submits the following recommendations for consideration of CFSI:

3.21.01 Future programmes of intervention should ensure that a viable monitoring and evaluation component is incorporated.

3.21.02 Professional staff's competencies in technical report writing should be assessed. (a) Providing extensive training on technical report writing, or (b) Offer direct assistance through another staff position whose responsibility would revolve around technical report writing only.

3.21.03 Individuals who are asked to play additional leadership roles should be given adequate training, particularly when the new role is foreign to them.

3.21.04. Programme staff should endeavour to fulfil their commitments to the IDPs. They should adopt a functional communication mechanism that would enable staff to contact IDPs on time, if cancellation of appointment is, for some reasons, necessitated.

3.21.05. Every project should recognize multiple stakeholders' unique and varying needs for information.

3.21.06. The Pilot Project has given birth to a relatively new group of community volunteers—IDPs or former IDPs—who have gained basic competencies in such areas as peacemaking, communication and information, social preparation and emergency planning. CFSI may wish to explore a programme of certification for these IDPs as community volunteers and/or paraprofessionals in disaster management or appropriate areas of involvement.

3.21.07. CFSI—or other NGOs that specialize in livelihood assistance—may wish to consider building on the new livelihood-related values, attitudes and skills that the IDPs have gained through this Pilot Project and introduce an expanded version of the Livelihood Assistance component of the project. This would include extended and sustained training programmes for the participants.

3.21.08. Build on *Arms Are For Hugging* project model. The refined version of this model could provide an opportunity for CFSI to contribute further to the knowledge base of interventions for children and youth in conflict zones. At the least, CFSI may wish to negotiate with the Department of Education a type of partnership in which the latter provides the funding while CFSI provides the programming aspect of the intervention.

3.21.09. Popularise the lessons learned, as a response to the increasing clamour for culturally sensitive educational materials for people of all ages in Mindanao, particularly among the Muslim population. The Pilot Project offers a glimpse at lasting social and spiritual values that were confirmed through its integrated programmes—*inter alia*, resilience in times of difficulty, outreach among the marginalized sectors of society, abiding faith in times of crisis, and popular participation as a key to empowerment.

CHAPTER ONE

THE CONTEXT, EVALUATION AGENDA, AND METHODOLOGY

The Context of the Social Assessment and the Pilot Project

Mindanao is considered by many as the “bread basket” of the Philippines. Rich in both natural and human resources, it is the second largest cluster of islands in the Philippines and home to almost eighteen million people from many different ethnic, religious, and language groups. Farming, fishing and mining are the primary economic activities in the area.

Authorities point out that the development of Mindanao—the “land of opportunity”—is key to the economic development of the Philippines. However, the prospect of Mindanao’s development has been severely constrained by more than thirty years of recurrent armed conflict, marginalization and exploitation, poor infrastructure, weak governance, corruption and grinding poverty. Given these recurring problems, it is no surprise that human development scores in Mindanao are the lowest in the country. For example, life expectancy for either gender is twelve to thirteen years less in Mindanao than the national average. School participation and literacy rates are the lowest, as are rates of access to basic health services.

In 2000, a declaration of “all out war” against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) by then-President Joseph Estrada of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) resulted in the displacement of almost 900,000 people in Central, Western and Northern Mindanao and the loss of lives, property and opportunity. Those with the fewest resources ended up in makeshift evacuation centers, dependent—at least temporarily—on the meager relief goods and emergency services provided by the Government and the humanitarian assistance community.

These developments have had major implications for Mindanao and for the entire nation. Precious national resources had to be diverted to the war. Tourism was badly affected and the movement of goods was severely constrained. In the conflict-affected areas, fields could not be planted and crops could not be harvested. Poor prospects for youth employment became even poorer. School children were deprived of basic education as classes could not be held because those school buildings that were still standing had become evacuation centers. The delivery of basic health and social services to the already impoverished communities was seriously hampered.

Government planners and the international community have long realized that the armed conflict had immediate, medium and long-term implications for peace and development in Mindanao. New plans would need to be formulated and different development strategies considered. It would also be necessary to enable internally displaced people to return home. Helping them rebuild their lives would require special efforts. Achieving all

of this would require greater capacities on the part of the national, regional and local governments.

It was in this context that the World Bank agreed, at the end of December 2000, to provide a Post Conflict Grant in the amount of \$950,000 for work in Mindanao. The grant made provision for three major components: (1) a social assessment; (2) a pilot project; and (3) a GRP-led activity linked to the post-conflict situation. These were intended to be complementary and innovative interventions.

The overall aim of the Social Assessment was to “...serve both as a tool and a process to ensure the relevance, acceptability, implementability and sustainability...” of the then-evolving Mindanao Plan for Sustained Peace and Development.

The **Pilot Project** was to be implemented by Community and Family Services International (CFSI), a non-profit social development agency based in Manila. CFSI has an extensive background in providing a wide range of psychosocial services to displaced individuals and communities.

There were two major objectives for the Pilot Project. The first was to 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 stabilisation, and provide a foundation for peace building and sustainable development. The second was to contribute to the existing knowledge base by developing and testing models that will inform approaches to the transition from conflict to peace.

CFSI indicated it would take two full years to complete the Pilot with Phase One running from January through December 2001 and Phase Two from January through December 2002. Although it was understood in December 2001 that the Post Conflict Grant would cover Phase One—\$400,000—CFSI noted that implementation of Phase Two would require an additional \$350,000.

Obtaining the necessary approvals from the GRP and finalizing the administrative arrangements were the priorities for January 2001. However, the political situation in the Philippines became extraordinarily complex making movement in this direction virtually impossible. By the end of the third week of January, President Estrada was ousted by a popular revolt and succeeded by Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Very soon after assuming office, President Macapagal-Arroyo declared “all out peace” as the policy of her government vis-à-vis Mindanao. More specifically, she decided on a two-pronged approach to the situation in Mindanao: peace negotiations with the MILF, simultaneous with rehabilitation and development efforts. Further, the new President made it very clear that her administration would actively promote the development of the government of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

Alternatives to the Mindanao Sustained Peace and Development Plan were formulated by elements of the new government. The most prominent of these was entitled “Peace and

Reconstruction Imperatives for Mindanao's Enhanced Development (PRIMED).” Lobbying by the proponents of the different plans resulted in tensions between key stakeholders and, at times, confusion as to strategic directions

The final aim and objectives of the Social Assessment were reflected in the Grant Agreement for the Bank-executed portion of the Grant, signed by World Bank Country Director Vinay Bhargava on 06 June 2001 and the Hon. Alberto Romulo, Executive Secretary, Office of the President of the Republic of the Philippines.

“The purpose of the grant is to assist the Recipient [the GRP] in developing socially acceptable, sustainable, and community-based interventions in Mindanao to promote peace and development. The activities for which the grant is given are as follows:

1. Carry out a social assessment with active participation of, and informed consultation with, stakeholders and communities affected by conflicts in Mindanao. The assessment will include identification, analyses, and prioritisation of the needs of the said stakeholders and communities and assessment of the local institutional capacity to implement reconstruction and reconciliation efforts in conflict-areas in Mindanao, which activities are estimated in total to cost \$200,000 equivalent.
2. Disseminate the results of the social assessment carried out under (1) above, through a public information programme, which activity is estimated in total to cost \$100,000 equivalent.
3. Provide technical and management supervision of the activities carried out under (1) and (2) above, which activity is estimated in total to cost \$150,000 equivalent.

The grant shall be used to finance consultant services required for the activities.”

Owing to the aforementioned developments and a variety of other administrative concerns, the issuance of contractual agreements was delayed. The contract between the World Bank and CFSI was signed in early June 2001, whilst the contracts for the conduct of the Social Assessment were not signed until August 2001. The negotiation of the agreement between the World Bank and the ARMM Government was deferred until mid-2002. Nonetheless, CFSI and those responsible for conducting the Social Assessment began preliminary implementation efforts earlier—January 2001 in the case of CFSI—under the retroactive financing rules of the World Bank.

Dr. Fermin Adriano was contracted by the World Bank Office Manila to serve as Team Leader for the conduct of the Social Assessment. The other members of the team—also contracted directly by the World Bank Office Manila—were Mindanao Land Foundation (MinLand), MinPhil International Consultants, Inc. (MinPhil), and the Foundation for Rural Institutions, Economics, and Development, Inc. (FRIEND).

The Social Assessment was carried out during 2001 and 2002. The draft report was formally reviewed by peers as well as a variety of World Bank officials during August and September 2002. A Manila/Washington teleconference was held in September 2002. A documentary film was produced later in the year as part of the communications strategy.

Late in 2002, the third part of the Post Conflict Grant—\$100,000—was allocated to the Mindanao Economic and Development Council (MEDCO) under the guidance of the Hon. Jesus Dureza, Presidential Assistant to the Office of the President and Co-Chair of the Mindanao Working Group (the other Co-Chair is the World Bank). Consultation and investment programming activities were scheduled to begin after this evaluation was completed.

With regard to the Pilot Project, the delay in contract signing allowed CFSI to carry out its operations through the end of June 2002. As such, Phase One of the Pilot Project lasted eighteen months—instead of twelve—at no additional cost to the World Bank.

CFSI sought a second—and last—Post Conflict grant of \$325,000³ for Phase Two of the Pilot Project. This was approved by the World Bank in mid-2002, meaning the total of the entire Pilot (i.e., Phases One and Two) would be \$700,000, expensed over thirty-one (31) months. This amount—combined with the \$550,000 allocated for the other components—resulted in a total Project cost of \$1,275,000.

Evaluation Agenda

In light of the objectives articulated in the TOR, this evaluation is divided into two general tracks. The first track relates to the Social Assessment component of the grant, as carried out by FRIEND, MinLand, and MinPhil. The evaluation will address the processes undertaken by these consultants when putting together the Mindanao Social Assessment report.

The first track seeks to answer the following questions:

- To what extent are the basic concepts of social assessment incorporated in this particular portion of the project?
- Does this particular social assessment meet the criteria pertaining to each of the five entry points of social analysis espoused by the World Bank?
- How can this social assessment inform public policy development and strategic programme planning in Mindanao?

The second track relates to the Pilot Project as carried out by CFSI. It seeks to answer the following questions:

³ This amount is inclusive of the cost for the PCF-mandated external evaluation.

- What lessons can we learn from CFSI Operations Center (COC) in Cotabato City, as a community-based organization, in general, bearing in mind that COC was specifically established for this project?
- What lessons can we learn from each of specific programme components offered by CFSI in fulfilment of its contract under the Post Conflict Fund Grant?
- What changes, if any, in the participants’ attitudes, values and practices have resulted—directly or indirectly—from their involvement in the Pilot Project?
- What improvements, if any, in the lives of the participants or the community could be attributed to their participation in the Pilot Project?

Research Methodology

To arrive at the answers to the above questions, the voices of those most directly affected by the grant, as well as those who have carried it out, have been taken into consideration. The experiences and ideas of IDPs, CFSI staff and volunteers, and stakeholders from government and civil society are all crucial elements of every aspect of this external evaluation.

The external evaluator conducted personal interviews with 104 players in the pilot project, namely, CFSI’s research partners related to the pilot project, selected IDPs, representatives of Government and non-governmental organizations, and selected CFSI staff.

In addition, focus group discussions were held for the following participating sectors: “Arms Are For Hugging” staff, Barangay Council Members (BCMs), *sumpats*, Start-Up Capital Assistance (SUCA) recipients, Livelihood Assistance Upon Return (LAUR) recipients, peacemakers, information specialists, youth, and the administrative staff of COC.

The external evaluator also conducted ocular site visits to the project sites. In addition, the external evaluator conducted a desk review of relevant literature and read the reports written for the MSA and the pilot project. He also reviewed the documents produced by the COC and scanned the media’s coverage of the pilot project and the armed conflict in Central Mindanao.

Limitations of the Study

As stated, the overall aim of this evaluation is to articulate the impact of the grant—specifically the conduct of the Social Assessment and the implementation of the Pilot Project—on the target communities and populations. It also aims to determine the extent to which the objectives—both general and specific—of the Social Assessment and the Pilot Project have been met, bearing in mind that some activities are still going on. Corollary to this, problems encountered in the conduct of the Social Assessment and the

Pilot Project will be identified and suggestions for dealing with such problems will be offered.

This evaluation does not attempt to analyse with depth the different perspectives behind the existence, or the nature, of the armed conflict in Mindanao, let alone take sides in the raging debate over ownership of the problem.

Furthermore, although this evaluation will consider the lessons learned from the overall operations of COC, it does not include an audit of the financial activities of the operations. This evaluator notes that it is CFSI policy and practice to subject its financial activities to external audit. This organizational practice should be respected.

When the World Bank approved the proposal for the Pilot Project, there seemed to be some underpinning optimism that the IDPs could return to their Communities of Origin (COO) after an approximate period of two years, at the longest. However, up to the time that this evaluation report was being written, many of the IDPs were still in evacuation centers (ECs) or have sought alternative shelters outside of their COOs. This phenomenon severely constrains this evaluation's analysis of "durable solutions" as articulated in the project's rationale.

Furthermore, at the time this report was being written, the External Evaluator had not received the consolidated project end report of the Project Coordinator and, therefore, could not use it to validate his own findings.

CHAPTER TWO

THE MINDANAO SOCIAL ASSESSMENT

Social Assessment and Social Development

The World Bank has recognized the value of conducting a social assessment in places where it makes an investment in their development. Based on the lessons learned from the many projects the Bank had underwritten in the past, social assessment is one mechanism which helps ensure that a particular (World Bank-funded) project is responsive to social development concerns. As a potent tool for the broader process of social analysis, social assessment takes into consideration the participation of relevant stakeholders in the eventual project design and/or implementation. Furthermore, when the findings of a social assessment are seriously taken into consideration by an implementing agency, they are expected to enhance the likelihood of a social development project's objectives being met—*inter alia*, the alleviation of poverty, the promotion of inclusiveness, and the enhancement of community ownership with regard to project monitoring and evaluation.⁴

Given the crucial role that social assessment plays in the entire project cycle—from conceptualisation to design, and from implementation to monitoring and evaluation—it is imperative that it be conducted with the highest possible quality, employing the most reliable tools and methodologies and grounded in unequivocally sound principles of social analysis. Toward this end, the Bank prescribes five entry points of social analysis: (a) social diversity [including gender] analysis; (b) institutional analysis; (c) stakeholder analysis; (d) participatory framework; and (e) social risk analysis.⁵

The Mindanao Social Assessment

The Bank has consistently supported the GRP's two-pronged goal of seeking a negotiated settlement of the protracted conflict with the Moro rebels and attaining sustainable peace and development in Mindanao. In this vein, the Bank has commissioned the conduct of the Mindanao Social Assessment (MSA).

Three Philippines-based research firms—FRIEND, MinLand and MinPhil—were contracted by the Bank to conduct the MSA. Two of these firms—MinLand and MinPhil—are actually based in Mindanao and were the ones tasked to carry out the actual field surveys.

FRIEND, on the other hand, synthesized the research reports of MinLand and MinPhil. It also included a critical analysis of four peace and development plans for Mindanao, namely: (a) Chapter 15 of National Economic Development Authority's (NEDA)

⁴ World Bank. 2001. *Social Assessment: Social Analysis Electronic Sourcebook*.

⁵ World Bank. 2001.

Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP), 2001-2004, entitled “Securing Peace and Development Plan in Mindanao”; (b) the National Peace and Development Plan (NPDP), 2000, formulated by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), (c) the Philippine Business for Social Progress’ (PBSP) Peace and Development Initiatives in Mindanao, 2000, and (4) the government-commissioned Peace and Reconstruction Imperatives for Mindanao’s Enhanced Development (PRIMED): A Suggested Public Sector Action Agenda for 2001-2004. The consolidated report states:

The reasons for selecting these plans from the rest are: (i) the first two are the official working documents of the GRP in pursuing the objective of peace and development in Mindanao; (ii) the third is a comprehensive and systematic plan which was formulated by a highly reputable private sector which has the resources to implement (and is now implementing) certain recommendations of their plan; and (iii) the fourth is a detailed plan that specifically takes into consideration how the conflict situation in Mindanao can be addressed in a manner that will secure sustained peace and development in the island.⁶

Consistent with the original aim of the envisioned Social Assessment, the overall objective of the MSA was to determine the needs of the conflict-affected communities—as well as the answers to those needs—from the perspective of the conflict victims themselves. More specifically, the MSA sought:⁷

- (a) to identify the needs and aspirations of the victims of the armed conflict in Mindanao;
- (b) to determine the institutions, both formal and informal, that helped them cope with the crises due to the armed conflict;
- (c) to identify projects and activities, based on interviews with conflict victims, that will address their needs and aspirations;
- (d) to identify the immediate causes of the current conflict based on the victims’ perspectives; and
- (e) to assist the conflict victims in the formulation of their community development plans.

The secondary objectives of the MSA were:

- (a) to provide inputs for various government plans and programmes in Mindanao and the provincial plans pertaining to areas directly affected by the conflict;
- (b) to inform World Bank’s existing and future investment portfolios in Mindanao and other selected donor agencies’ projects implemented in the island; and

⁶ Adriano, F. D. et. al. 2002. *Mindanao Social Assessment: Final Report*. Foundation for Rural Institutions, Economics and Development (FRIEND) Inc., p. 123.

⁷ Adriano, F. D. et. al. 2002. p. 7.

- (c) to input into the design of conflict management and community-based poverty reduction programmes in Mindanao that will be implemented by the government and supported by donor agencies.

Methodology

The research firms adopted both quantitative and qualitative methods of gathering and analysing data. Three types of instruments were used as primary tools for data-gathering in the selected research types: (a) Household Surveys (HHS), (b) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and (c) Key Informant Interviews (KIIs). The HHS provided the raw data for drawing up the community profiles, integrating the socio-economic data and information with regard to the psychosocial needs of the selected communities. The FGDs and KIIs were used to validate the HHS findings.

In addition, MinLand chose to use two additional instruments—Rapid Resource Appraisal (RRA) and Thematic Mapping (ThM). According to MinLand, “[a]s tools complementary to the required MSA tools, [RRA and ThM] are particularly important in generating the participation of the communities in gathering data that otherwise could not have been gathered for more meaningful assessment especially for use of the communities.”⁸

The Survey Sites

In compliance with the TOR of the MSA, the following sites were selected for the field surveys:

- a. Cluster A (areas indirectly affected by the conflict): Ilian and Nutungan in the Municipality of Matalam, Cotabato; and Pectad and Molao in the Municipality of Kabacan, Cotabato;⁹
- b. Cluster B (areas directly affected by the conflict): Upper and Lower D’Lag and Malangit in the Municipality of Buluan, Maguindanao; and Bayasong, Maindang, and Sisiman in the Municipality of Lutayan, Sultan Kudarat;¹⁰ and
- c. Cluster C (areas with high potential for conflict or IP communities): Datu Sundungan, in the Municipality of President Roxas, Cotabato;¹¹ Maming

⁸ Mindanao Land Foundation. 2002. *Mindanao Social Assessment: A People-Centered Needs Assessment and Community-driven Institutional Analysis in Conflict-affected Area, Final Report, Volume 1: Main Report*, p. 85.

⁹ Mindanao Land Foundation, p. 5.

¹⁰ MinPhil International Consultants, Inc. 2002. *Mindanao Social Assessment Project: A People-Centered Needs Assessment and Community-driven Institutional Analysis in Conflict-affected Areas, Volume 1: Main Report*, p. 4.

¹¹ Mindanao Land Foundation, p. 5.

and Cabidarian in the Municipality of New Corella, Davao del Norte; and Palma Gil in the Municipality of Talaingod, Davao del Norte.¹²

Results of the Field Surveys

In reviewing the processes and the outcomes of the MSA, this evaluation report is guided by the following questions:¹³

To what extent did the MSA meet the objectives—both primary and secondary—articulated in its TOR?

To what extent did the MSA meet the five entry points of social analysis prescribed by the WB?

In effect, these questions are practically two sides of the same coin. The evaluator determines that if the MSA has fully met its primary and secondary objectives, as stated in the TOR, then the probability is high that the five entry points of social analysis would have been met as well. The clear articulation of the purpose and/or objectives of a social assessment is an exercise in ensuring that the social assessment is focused. When an undertaking of this magnitude is focused, the stage is then set for the subsequent processes to take on a quality that is acceptable and laudable—from the perspective of all the stakeholders.

The five entry points of social analysis, on the other hand, provide a coherent set of criteria that determines whether the quality of the entire undertaking is acceptable. The entry points consider all the individual components—both process and product—of the social assessment and assess each of them against a cluster of development-oriented values.

Social Diversity

Peace and development are all about people. Yet people are not unidimensional. They have unique identifying characteristics that distinguish them from their neighbours—e.g., gender, sexual orientation, age, caste, ethnicity/race, language, religion, spatial location, disability, educational attainment, ideology, political affiliation, livelihood, and the like. Any attempt at social analysis, therefore, has to take into consideration the complexity of social diversity since these identity constructs could be reinforced or weakened by other elements in society, such as war, peace initiatives, or development assistance.

¹² MinPhil International Consultants, Inc., p. 4.

¹³ For the MSA's detailed findings, as well as in-depth analyses of those finding, see the individual Final Reports by Mindanao Land Foundation and MinPhil International Consultants, Inc. and the consolidated Final Report by FRIEND, Inc.

Recent literature asserts that armed conflict and political violence which had been stereotypically associated with males have actually a broader gender perspective: although women continue to be unwilling victims of armed conflict and political violence, they can also serve as actors—whether as combatants, direct participants in economic activities, peace brokers, or many other roles that defy traditionalism.¹⁴

The Department of Social Welfare and Development's (DSWD) success with its *Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (CIDSS)* is premised, in great part, on a project design that incorporated the participation of various sectors in impoverished communities.¹⁵

Various international instruments—e.g., the Convention on the Rights of the Child, The United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the Rights of Internally Displaced Persons—uphold the right of direct sectoral participation in societal decision-making. It follows then that the identity and diversity of these sectors should be taken into consideration when conducting a social assessment.

Even within the Bangsamoro community, scholars and authorities agree that there exist marked and subtle differences among the Moro groups that need to be considered when devising sustainable peace and development initiatives.¹⁶

The MSA targeted a wide range of social groups that were identified according to gender, ethnicity/culture, religion, and age, as well as geographic, economic and educational characteristics. As stated, the MSA used three broad clusters for the field surveys. The report lays out each group's perception of the origin and dynamics of the current conflict in Mindanao. The MSA then goes on to present its analyses of potentials and vulnerability within each cluster, disaggregating the data according to the respondents' gender, age, ethnicity, geographic distribution, and income level. The MSA's treatment of social diversity is quite comprehensive. The data—presented in graphs and minimal professional jargon—should prove useful for agencies that are tasked to work with these communities in designing and implementing community-driven peace and development programmes. The external evaluator determines that these data should be particularly helpful in generating indicators for project monitoring and evaluation.

In its critical analysis of the four peace and development plans for Mindanao, the MSA cited how various constructs of social diversity informed the development of the framework for intervention of the individual plans. Although the four plans differed from each other with regard to their strategic thrusts, they all affirmed the need to address the

¹⁴ Moser, C. O. N. and F. C. Clark, eds. 2001. *Victims, Perpetrators or Actors? Gender, Armed Conflict and Political Violence*. New York: Zed Books.

¹⁵ Bautista, V. A. 1999. *Combating Poverty Through the Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (CIDSS)*. University of the Philippines, Quezon City.

¹⁶ J. A. Kamlian. 1999. *Bangsamoro Society and Culture: A Book of Readings on Peace and Development in Southern Philippines*. Iligan Center for Peace Education and Research, MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology, Iligan City.

diverse social categories that impact on, and are impacted by, the armed conflict situation in Mindanao.

MinLand's use of Thematic Mapping led to the identification of more social categories, which the community clusters could use in pursuit of their development plans. Among the 26 thematic maps that the communities developed were, *inter alia*, kinship maps, location of the elderly maps, number of children maps (divided further according to gender), out-of-school youth maps (divided further according to gender). Unfortunately, it was only MinLand that used this supplementary resource, since its use was not part of the original research design; as a result, no comparison could be made with the clusters targeted by MinPhil.

In the final analysis, the field research conducted in the carefully selected community clusters and the four peace and development plans for Mindanao bear out the notion that any efforts toward sustainable peace and development, conflict resolution, poverty alleviation, or social cohesion strengthening are bound to fail unless the selected interventions reveal how social diversity inherent in a particular community or region affects opportunities for development effectiveness.

The interviews conducted by the external evaluator with representatives of the three research firms confirmed a common lesson they had learned in the conduct of the MSA—i.e., any initiatives aimed at alleviating the conditions of the vulnerable sectors in that region of the country should seriously listen to those people's perspectives, hopes, aspirations and experiences. More importantly, any peace and development programmes should genuinely involve these vulnerable social groups at the grassroots level, diverse as they are, at all levels of the programme cycle—from project design and implementation to monitoring and evaluation.

Given all this, the external evaluator finds that the MSA met, with exemplary results, the objectives in the TOR that called for it “to identify the needs and aspirations of the victims of the armed conflict in Mindanao” as well as “to identify the immediate causes of the current conflict based on the victims' perspectives.”

The external evaluator also finds that, given the MSA's critical analysis of the four peace and development plans for Mindanao, it met the secondary objectives in the TOR that asked it “to provide inputs for various government plans and programmes in Mindanao and the provincial plans pertaining to areas directly affected by the conflict” and “to inform World Bank's existing and future investment portfolios in Mindanao and other selected donor agencies' projects implemented in the island.”

Furthermore, the external evaluator determines that the MSA satisfactorily fulfilled the requirements of the first entry point in social assessment, namely, *social diversity*.

Institutional Analysis

As an entry point in social assessment, *institutional analysis* recognizes the powerful dynamics of interdependency within human society, which help determine if security, survival and empowerment are to be achieved.¹⁷ A functional social assessment demonstrates the intricate relationship between organizations and institutions, or the formal (codified) and informal (expressed through practices or behaviour) rules of the game in any given community.¹⁸ This entry point is essential in that most, if not all, development interventions, whether projects or policy reforms, have to consider institutional change for their implementation.

Institutions are viewed as a form of *social capital*. Social capital reflects how relationships within a given community enhance or hinder their own socio-economic development.¹⁹ The realm of social capital encompasses the dynamics of government institutions, financial institutions, community-based organizations, kinship, political affiliation, and membership in informal social structures.

Any reference to social capital is incomplete without dealing with *social cohesion*. This alludes to all the tangible and intangible factors that directly or indirectly influence how people relate to each other. It includes, among other things, peoples' values and attitudes, knowledge and skills, cultural norms, experiences with governance and membership in organizations, and group commitments.²⁰

In the context of armed conflict, social capital and social cohesion are easy victims. Indigenous social capital usually suffers from destruction. Inter-communal mistrust and inter-personal hatred destroy social relationships and threaten to destabilize community decision-making and action-planning. At the same time, however, social cohesion defines the capability of a social group to cope with the demands of displacement and relocation, as well as those of community re-entry and rehabilitation.²¹

An extensive portion of the MSA is devoted to an analysis of social capital and social cohesion in the target communities. The research partners identified the various institutions that impact on those communities' social capital. With regard to economic recovery, the MSA analyses the communities' access to financial credit, productive assets, agricultural infrastructure and support services, and non-farm income opportunities. As regards governance, the MSA offers an in-depth discussion of the

¹⁷ Commission on Human Security. 2003. *Human Security Now*. New York.

¹⁸ World Bank. 2001.

¹⁹ Krishnamurthy, V. 1999. *The Impact of Armed Conflict on Social Capital and Social Services of Cambodia*. Cambodia: World Bank.

²⁰ World Bank. 2001.

²¹ Colletta, N. and M. Cullen. 2000. *Violent Conflict and the Transformation of Social Capital: Lessons from Cambodia, Rwanda, Guatemala and Somalia*. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank.

educational needs at the barangay level, scholarship programmes, reconstruction of shelters, basic health and sanitation, access to psychosocial services, and basic rural infrastructure development. These particular needs strongly suggest that most of them fall within the responsibility of the government to provide.

The MSA further provides a rich historical perspective on the development of, and threats to, social cohesion among the target communities. It provides insights into the imperative of peaceful coexistence—e.g., through peace dialogues, cooperation and networking—among community members and the prospect of a sustainable human security in post-conflict Mindanao. The MSA argues for the strengthening of local organizations, through indigenous leadership development and capability-building measures, to complement government initiatives, and to facilitate delivery of social services in those communities. It underscores the critical importance of timely access to information and such measures as the provision of basic recreation facilities to promote greater camaraderie and understanding within the community.

The four peace and development plans for Mindanao reviewed by the MSA all speak about social capital and social cohesion from various perspectives. However, PRIMED is the only document that focuses on peace and development efforts for Mindanao in a post conflict scenario. PRIMED succeeds in laying out the deeply rooted and multi-faceted problems related to the chronic conflict in the region which, in turn, underlie Mindanao's inability to sustain its growth. It specifically cites extreme poverty, social exclusion and marginalization, and indignity as the root causes of conflict in Mindanao. PRIMED then advocates a new framework for addressing Mindanao's problems, using the concepts of *social capital* and *social cohesion*. It argues that “[m]ore than re-building the physical facilities damaged by the war, the notion of ‘social capital’ recognizes that in a conflict situation re-building the social relationship of people is far more important in achieving lasting peace.”²²

In light of its detailed assessment of the formal and informal institutions that have helped the target communities cope with armed conflict in Mindanao, the external evaluator finds that the MSA met, with a high degree of scholastic quality, the objective in the TOR that required it “to determine the institutions, both formal and informal, that helped them cope with the crises due to the armed conflict.”

Furthermore, given its clear identification of the formal and informal institutions that are likely to affect any peace and development initiatives—or any project for that matter—as well as the informal rules and behaviours that are imbedded in these institutions; and furthermore, in view of its success in objectively identifying institutional constraints to success and potential recourses to overcome those constraints, the external evaluator determines that the MSA has fully met the requirements of the second entry point in social assessment, namely, *institutional analysis*.

²² Adriano, F. D. et. al. 2002. p. 136.

Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholders refers to the various actors with legitimate interest in any given project. In the case at hand, it refers to every entity that either is affected by, or can affect, a prospective peace and development initiative. The stakeholders' desire for change could enhance the success of a given project. Conversely, their attachment to the status quo—particularly when they wield power and influence—could hamper a project's forward movement.²³

A thorough stakeholder analysis frames the MSA's discussion of the situation in Mindanao—from its review of the history of the conflict in the region to its presentation of the results of the field surveys, as well as its comparison of the four peace and development plans for Mindanao.

The MSA recognizes that one of the major stakeholders in Mindanao is the GRP. It is incumbent upon the GRP to develop and implement a comprehensive and sustainable peace and development plan. The MSA traces the GRP's many attempts to effect a lasting peace in Mindanao, which include the creation of the ARMM during the Aquino administration, the signing of a peace accord with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) under the presidency of Ramos, the declaration of an all-out war during the Estrada era, and the changing policies of the Arroyo regime.

The MSA emphasizes that, in order to enhance the success of the GRP's interventions in Mindanao, it should clearly identify the national agency that will play the lead role in its peace and development efforts in the region. The MSA strongly recommends that the said agency should have a direct channel to the Office of the President and should be vested with the authority to, *inter alia*, coordinate all government efforts in Mindanao.

The MSA also points out how another stakeholder group—the donor community—reacted to each administration's peace and development agenda. The MSA cites the initial conduct of a social assessment—albeit limited to the needs of selected MNLF communities—under the auspices of the United Nations Multi-Donor Programme, in response to the Ramos administration's request for assistance from the donor community to assist the government in its effort of attaining peace and development in the island. The MSA also discusses the impact of this specific social assessment on other stakeholder groups. For example, the exclusion of non-MNLF Moro communities/organizations from the social assessment exacerbated the tension among rival Moro groups and resulted, in some instances, in skirmishes among their members. Furthermore, the MNLF local commanders, who had traditionally seen themselves playing a crucial role in the control and distribution of the envisioned services and works, asserted that any form of assistance should be coursed through them. This tended to create conflict with other layers of the MNLF local leadership who felt that they were being undermined by the process.

²³ World Bank. 2001.

The MSA also reports that, under the brief Estrada regime, the peace agenda with the Moros did not receive top priority. Instead, the administration adopted an “all-out-war” policy against the MILF. This intensified armed conflict between the military and the elements of the MILF raised serious concerns among the donor community. Simply put, it was extremely difficult for the donor community to extend official development assistance (ODA) in an environment of deteriorating peace and security in Mindanao. Nevertheless, the donor community—particularly the United Nations Development Programme (through the UN Multi-donor Programme) and the World Bank (WB)—readily responded. The UNDP funded the formulation of what came to be known as the Mindanao Sustained Peace and Development Plan, while the WB approved a grant from its Post-Conflict Fund (PCF) to undertake another social assessment and to carry out a pilot project that would primarily develop community-based initiatives which, in turn, would enhance the rehabilitation and empowerment of internally displaced persons during the period of displacement and facilitate their return to their COOs.²⁴

The MSA devotes considerable space to the analysis of the WB’s assistance programmes in Mindanao, particularly the SZOPAD [Special Zone for Peace and Development] Social Fund (SSF) and the Mindanao Rural Development Project (MRDP). It offers recommendations on how to enhance the effectiveness of future WB-sponsored projects in the region, based on the experiences of the SZOPAD and the MRDP.²⁵

The MSA strongly recommends that all efforts at intervention in Mindanao—by government agencies, the donor communities, and others—function under a framework of coordination to be developed and implemented by the national coordinating body that it is advocating.

Given all this, the external evaluator finds that the MSA satisfactorily fulfilled the requirements of the third entry point in social assessment, namely, *stakeholder analysis*.

Participation

As an entry point in social assessment, *participation* “examines the degree to which social groups affected by a project can participate in the opportunities created by the project and then studies existing modes of participation to improve the effectiveness of stakeholder participation.”²⁶

As stated, the MSA has adopted a participatory framework in its work with the cluster groups. As part of this participatory thrust, the clusters developed their respective community action plans. Significantly, the communities showed their determination to

²⁴ This social assessment and pilot project are the subject of this external evaluation.

²⁵ Adriano, F. D. et. al. 2002. p. 188.

²⁶ World Bank. 2001.

work closely with the government, the donor agencies, and other organizations that were willing to help them address their needs and aspirations.

“For instance, in the provision of shelter, the communities (particularly Molao) are willing to offer their labour and supervisory skills as counterparts in the endeavour. In the peace (security) concern, they are willing to actively participate in the Peace and Development Community Council including their mobilization as peacekeepers. In agricultural (livelihood) undertakings, they have posited the innovative idea of ‘Barangay Inc.’, wherein a barangay is treated as a complete production, processing and marketing unit or an enterprise in itself. In the area of governance, they are willing to improve user charges for infrastructure they jointly-constructed with the government or donor agencies for their maintenance. Finally, they also saw the need to upgrade the capability of the community through trainings and seminars as a way of empowering their members.”²⁷

The community action plans showcase project interventions/approaches to address the needs and aspirations identified by the community clusters. They are organized according to four thematic concerns—security, economic recovery, governance, and social cohesion. These thematic concerns are drawn from the long list of needs and aspirations identified by the communities themselves. As stated, the MSA has disaggregated the data on the community’s needs and aspirations according the respondents’ gender, age, ethnicity, geographic distribution, and income level.

A close analysis of the community action plans shows that the community clusters have identified services and programmes that should reasonably be expected of the government to provide, since “they form part of the basic needs for decent human existence.”²⁸ The MSA authors find that the communities’ expectations of services and programmes from the government are reasonable and realistic.

It is recognized that in order to meet the desired results identified in the community action plans, there might be a need to review and, if necessary, update the target dates for the identified initiatives. It is strongly recommended that when the next phase of the MSA is implemented, these community action plans be revisited immediately and the target dates updated. It is also recommended that the same principles of participation be adopted during the next phase to retain the meaningfulness of the entire exercise.

Given all this, this external evaluator finds that the MSA satisfactorily fulfilled the requirements of the fourth entry point in social assessment, namely, *participation*.

²⁷ Adriano, F. D. et al. 2002. p. 112.

²⁸ Adriano, F. D. et al. 2002. p. 112.

Furthermore, this external evaluator determines that the MSA met, with exemplary results, the objective in the TOR that called for it “to assist the conflict victims in the formulation of their community development plans.”

Social Risk Analysis

Social risk analysis—the final entry point in social assessment—is crucial in that it demands of decision-makers to identify a whole gamut of risks that could determine whether a certain project has any chances of succeeding. The Mindanao Social Assessment devotes an exhaustive discussion on the social risks involved in designing and implementing post-conflict projects in the region. The external evaluator finds it useful to use the five categories of social risk identified by the World Bank as framework for discussion.

Vulnerability Risks. The MSA paints a picture of Mindanao as a region of a glaring dichotomy—dire poverty is widespread in a land that is rich in natural resources—farm, forest and water resources.

“Poverty incidence hovers to more than 51%, compared to the national average of around 37% and more starkly, to the National Capital Region’s (NCR) average of only 11.3%. ARMM, CARAGA and Western Mindanao have the worst poverty incidence as they ranked 16, 15 and 13, respectively, among the different poorest regions in the country.”²⁹

In addition to poverty as an index of vulnerability, the MSA also addresses the impact of the armed conflict in Mindanao on the sense of security and the psychosocial functioning of the populations surveyed.

A majority of the respondents expressed a generalized optimism that peace could still be attained in Mindanao; however, a majority of those directly affected by the armed conflict indicated their preference to remain in evacuation centers until such time that their security in their communities of origin is guaranteed.

The MSA also includes an assessment of the psychosocial functioning of the respondents. It reports that their moods and feelings about the situation in Mindanao ranged from “recovering” and “hopeful” to “depressed” and “frightened.” It also stated that a majority of the children and women who had witnessed armed violence exhibit symptoms of trauma.

The external evaluator, however, notes that the MSA’s treatment of the data on the subject of psychosocial impact is too brief and simplistic to yield reliable data on the actual psychosocial impact of the armed conflict on the target populations. Furthermore, the MSA’s treatment of the psychosocial impact of the armed conflict on the affected

²⁹ Adriano, F. D. et al. 2002. p. 35.

populations is limited to such phenomena as traumatization, discrimination and isolation. The external evaluator recognizes that looking at a person's, or community's, "disease" or "dysfunction" has, for years, framed the traditional approach to understanding their psychosocial functioning; however, recent years have seen a growing preference for approaching the assessment of psychosocial functioning away from the biomedical model, which features the concept of traumatization, to one that views those affected as resilient actors who can harness their own strength and the support of their environment towards a relatively healthy existence.³⁰ [This issue is addressed further in the next chapter.]

Country and Regional Risks. It has been long recognized that political instability, ethnic or religious tensions, violent conflict and the militarization of society impact on the probability of success of any given programme of intervention. As stated, the long protracted armed conflict in Mindanao has led to, *inter alia*, massive displacement of people, the blatant violation of human rights, the destruction of much-needed infrastructure, the deepening alienation between groups of local residents, as well as the growing mistrust of government.

Furthermore, the donor community—wary of the unresolved armed conflict in the region—has consistently communicated to the Philippine government that any further channelling of donor monies to the country was contingent on the implementation of a sustainable peace condition in the country, particularly in Mindanao. Simply put, prolonged conflict means lower investments. Lower investments, in turn, lead to fewer jobs and economic opportunities. Fewer jobs and economic opportunities give rise to greater incidence of poverty and deprivation. The MSA refers to this phenomenon as the cycle of "underdevelopment."³¹

The field surveys conducted for purposes of the MSA trace the history of the ethnic and religious tensions in the region and how they have led to the instability in the island. They report that, ironically, the multicultural nature of Mindanao—basically a society consisting of Christian settlers, Muslims and Lumads—has, in certain circumstances, bred conflict among its inhabitants. The MSA emphatically states that no programmatic intervention in Mindanao would succeed unless one takes into account the deep wounds that had been created by such tensions, while recognizing that the same groups that had been wounded in the past have not given up on the hope that peace and development would someday come to the island.

³⁰ Examples of this discussion may be found in Ager, A. 1996. *Tensions in the Psychosocial Discourse: Implications for the Planning of Interventions with War-Affected Populations*. Paper submitted to Development in Practice seminar, Queen Elizabeth's House, Oxford University, September 1996; Summerfield, D. 1996. *The Impact of War and Atrocity on Civilian Populations: Basic Principles for NGO Interventions and a Critique of Psychosocial Trauma Projects*. Relief and Rehabilitation Network; Boyden, J et al. 1996. *Vulnerability and Resilience: Perceptions and Responses to Psycho-Social Distress in Cambodia*. The International NGO Training and Research Centre, Oxford.

³¹ Adriano, F. D. et al. 2002. p. 38.

In the context of Philippine society—including that of Mindanao—one of the most pronounced country risks is corruption. Payoffs and bribes to obtain services that are supposed to be delivered free have become commonplace, thereby frustrating project goals and exacerbating vulnerability. In Mindanao (as in most parts of the country), where the “kinship system” remains powerful, participants in an act of corruption might justify their role as an expression of reciprocal social obligation, not corruption.

Political Economy Risks. The MSA acknowledges that there are powerful political families that tend to undermine the goals of a project by exerting their political influence towards the end of having their own vested interests served ahead of anything else. The report boldly states:³²

“The division of the country into regions is undertaken more on the basis of political consideration rather than on the logic of the market or trade flows. It is not surprising that a province or town is placed under an administrative region with which it has minimal or zero trading activities. . . . Consistent with this framework, planning of Mindanao proceeded on the basis of regional subdivision rather than planning wholistically for the entire island in an integrated fashion.

“On the part of the national leadership, particularly during the Marcos dictatorship, this regional division allowed them to fully engage in the politics of patron-client relationship wherein the loyalty of the traditional leader/family in a certain region/area could be bought in exchange for certain favours or infrastructure projects to be located in their territory. Considering that Mindanao is inhabited by natives and Christian settlers of various ethno-linguistic groups from the north, it became difficult to foster social cohesion that would allow them to advocate for resources from the national government, or for policy changes that will impact positively on the development of the island.”

The MSA goes on to conclude that the end result of this unresolved political economy risk is that Mindanao continues to be treated as an island of different regions, rather than as an island economy. Fostering unity among Mindanaoans continues to be an unfulfilled dream; instead, rivalry and conflict among the different regions persist, thus undermining the development of the island.³³

Institutional Risks. The above-cited risks logically correlate with the level of institutional risks found in an area. This is pronounced in the case of Mindanao, where weak governance, complexities arising from cultural norms, low capacity of economic

³² Adriano, F. D. et al. 2002. pp. 36-37.

³³ Adriano, F. D. et al. 2002. p. 37.

performance, and inappropriate institutional arrangements intricately interplay with one another.

The MSA analyses the issue of governance in the cluster areas from the angle of infrastructure quality, as well as from their experiences with regard to access to basic government services, such as education, health, and other social services.

The MSA reports that, in general, the participation rate of elementary school children in Mindanao lags behind the national average. The discrepancy between Mindanao and other island groups becomes more prominent when participation rate at the secondary level is considered. Field surveys show that, particularly in ARMM areas, the participation at the secondary level is significantly lower than Luzon and the Visayas, owing to the high drop out rates in the region. It is not surprising then that Mindanao students score significantly lower in performance and science scholarship examinations than their counterparts in Luzon and the Visayas.

Furthermore, the MSA reveals that compared to the national average, Mindanao residents have lower access to basic services, such as health facilities, safe drinking water, day care centers, and sanitary toilets. In addition, only about 15% of roads in Mindanao are paved, compared to the national average of 21%, or the NCR's 98%.

The situation is even worse in conflict-affected areas of Mindanao. However, it is significant to note that the visibility of NGOs and government agencies in evacuation centers, offering emergency services, has led to a high degree of satisfaction on the part of IDPs, notwithstanding the inadequacies of government/NGO interventions.

Exogenous Risks. The MSA goes on to point out that Mindanao's susceptibility to endemic risks is accounted for, in part, by its "consignment to the role of being the food and raw materials supplier to Metro Manila and other urban centers of the country," at the expense of the development of intra-regional trade within the island. The government's infrastructure projects, such as roads and bridges, have traditionally been carried out to support this economic activity, without consideration for the need of the region to stimulate intra-regional economic cooperation.

The MSA also cites the development of export produce, such as pineapple, banana, rubber, and asparagus as being contributory to the deterioration of many communities in Mindanao. Big multinational companies have gone to Mindanao primarily for the cheap labour offered by the communities that have become hosts to the plantations, without significant returns to the life of those communities. On the contrary, the conversion of vast tracts of forest lands into export-oriented plantations have led to environmental degradation, health hazards, and even human rights abuses among the local population.

As pointed out by the MSA, knowing the nature of the social risks in Mindanao should enable project implementers to more effectively reduce them. Stakeholder and institutional analyses are potent tools for identifying likely sources of social risk.

The MSA has done an outstanding social risk analysis of the situation in Mindanao, notwithstanding the external evaluator's view that its treatment of the psychosocial impact of the armed conflict on the residents of island tends to be over simplistic. Therefore, the external evaluator finds that the MSA satisfactorily fulfilled the requirements of the fifth entry point in social assessment, namely, *social risk analysis*.

Recommendations

The MSA posits that the armed conflict in Mindanao shares certain characteristics with conditions of civil war in other countries. It cites “the endemic nature of the conflict in the island, the hundreds of thousands of lives already lost in the war, the physical devastation it has wrought on the affected communities, the ethnic hatred that it has fostered, and the economic and political instability it has caused to the entire Philippines economy” among such elements. It goes on to argue that any assistance extended to the conflict area should follow these guiding principles.

1. Projects must contribute to peace-building and strengthening of social capital. The authors refer to this as the “peace impact assessment.” It forwards the notion that the re-building of social cohesion be the utmost objective of such initiatives. They believe that such a requirement would force project implementers to work towards strengthening the “horizontal linkages between communities and vertical linkages between the state and the community.”³⁴ The authors further argue that there cannot be genuine development without peace and, therefore, “any project that exacerbates tension and conflict within the community and between communities should not be pursued no matter how technically and financially sound it is.”³⁵
2. Projects must be based on the explicit needs and aspirations of the community. The MSA asserts that those directly affected by the conflict and who are supposed to be the direct beneficiaries of assistance programmes should be directly consulted with regard to their own felt needs. The authors strongly argue against the adoption of the usual mega-infrastructure projects whose beneficiaries tend not to be those at the bottom of the conflict area's social ladder—the poor, the marginalized, the victims—but rather those members of society who are well-positioned to take advantage of the presence of these facilities by virtue of their social standing, specialized knowledge/skills, and political connections.³⁶
3. Projects must be planned and implemented in meaningful tandem with the members of the community. The authors propose that, since the project is supposed to reflect the needs and aspirations of the community, the latter should

³⁴ Adriano, F. D. et al. 2002. p. 160.

³⁵ Adriano, F. D. et al. 2002. p. 160.

³⁶ Adriano, F. D. et al. 2002. p. 161.

be actually involved in the total life cycle of the project—from the planning stage to its implementation, monitoring and evaluation. They argue that the community members' meaningful participation in the very project that is meant to impact on their lives gives them a real sense of ownership and achievement and, therefore, is empowering. The authors emphasize that this concept of direct community participation is what “community-driven” projects are all about. It addresses, among other things, the issue of social inequity, which is at the root of poverty.³⁷

4. Projects must be meaningfully monitored and evaluated and their results be fed back to the community. Furthermore, the affected community should also be active participants in the monitoring and evaluation activities. The authors posit that the interlocking processes of monitoring and evaluation are, in and of themselves, an effective tool for transparent information sharing and decision-making, which, in turn, strengthens social capital. They state that a balanced programme of monitoring and evaluation, complete with a meaningful stakeholder education component, encourages responsible project management and fosters deeper understanding and appreciation of the plight of the conflict-affected communities.³⁸

Institutional Leadership

The MSA goes on to argue that the needs in the conflict areas of Mindanao are so basic that the GRP, with its resources and authority, has to play the lead role in addressing these needs—albeit in partnership with the private sector and civil society. As stated, the MSA proposes the establishment of a national coordinating body that has direct lines of communication to, and directly draws its authority from, the Office of the President.

Lessons Learned

The conduct of the Mindanao Social Assessment did not simply yield the information and results already outlined in the foregoing sections. The process itself offers additional insights, which might be helpful in guiding future social assessments in the country.

1. The external evaluator cannot help but be enormously impressed by the high level of professional expertise that framed the entire MSA, the marked intelligence that consistently guided the analysis of data from the field surveys, and the deep insights that made the ever difficult task of integrating theory and practice possible. This particular undertaking unequivocally proves that, in the very difficult process of procurement, the World Bank and the rest of the donor community have local expertise to tap. In fact, these local resources have the intellectual integrity, the research capability, and the cultural sensitivity to undertake such a demanding assignment as this MSA.

³⁷ Adriano, F. D. et al. 2002. pp. 161-162.

³⁸ Adriano, F. D. et al. 2002. p. 37

2. The authors are unanimous in asserting that the process of empowering the poor and the vulnerable is long and arduous. More intervention models are likely to come to the fore, based on lessons learned from best practices. The ones that are likely to endure the test of time are those that are genuinely community-driven and are reflective of the actual needs and aspirations of the community that the intervention purports to serve.
3. In a multi-ethnic, multicultural, and multi-religious region like Mindanao, it is imperative that project implementers respect the layers of cultural norms and institutional protocols if they are to win the respect and cooperation of such institutions and individuals in position of influence and/or authority. Social assessments could be seen by a community, or its leadership, as a threat to the status quo; therefore, it would be prudent—as in the case of MinLand and MinPhil—to spend extra time, money and energy to educate relevant stakeholders at the outset.
4. In a multiple-sectoral landscape of service delivery, all sectors, organizations, or institutions feed each other through networking, in which information and expertise are shared and, preferably, issues are resolved together. The feedback loop inherent in the networking process is a critical lifeline that needs to be strengthened as the sectors join hands in serving a common community.
5. The authors of the MSA whom this external evaluator interviewed cited the dearth of qualified professionals to carry out the very demanding tasks of community organizing in Mindanao. They emphasized that this profession requires mature, energetic, and dedicated individuals who are motivated by the community's need for social transformation. They have observed that qualified community organizers are leaving the ARMM for better opportunities elsewhere. They propose a common staff development programme for NGOs that are engaged in peace and development issues.
6. NGOs who are motivated to urgently work on social cohesion may find themselves frustrated over the inadequacy of funding. The authors bewail the current state of funding—which they characterized as “virtually non-existent”—for social preparation and social cohesion projects. In the case of MinLand, it decided to pursue the process of community organizing in some of the places to which it was assigned after it had seen the urgency of such work there, notwithstanding the fact that it had not received any firm funding commitment from any donor organization. MinLand has been using its own resources towards this commitment.
7. Finally, the MSA is only as good as its application. As stated, what exists now is a high quality document that should inform, at the very least, “the design of conflict management and community-based poverty reduction programmes in Mindanao

that will be implemented by the government and supported by donor agencies,” which also happens to be the final secondary objective of the MSA’s TOR.

The external evaluator feels compelled to echo the cry of the authors of the MSA during the round of personal interviews: “Disseminate the MSA report more broadly. Use it for the sake of Mindanao and the Philippines.” The external evaluator acknowledges that the MSA has already been used to inform the Pilot Project and the ARMM Social Fund Project (ASFP).³⁹ The external evaluator agrees with the authors of the MSA that the dissemination should cover the broadest circle of stakeholders possible—*inter alia*, governments, donor community, NGOs, POs, the academic community, and peace advocates.⁴⁰

It should also be noted that the MSA team has put together a video compact disc, entitled *The Other Mindanao*, based on the findings of the MSA. The external evaluator strongly suggests that this popular version of the MSA be used extensively for public and stakeholder education, as well as for advocacy work.

³⁹ The ARMM Social Fund Project succeeded the SZOPAD initiative.

⁴⁰ Towards the conclusion of the external evaluation, the World Bank had circulated 6,000 copies of *Social Assessment of Conflict-Affected Areas in Mindanao*, a popularized print version of the Mindanao Social Assessment.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PILOT PROJECT: AN EVALUATION OF THE OVERALL INSTITUTIONAL DELIVERY

Community and Family Services International (CFSI) is a Philippine-based non-profit social development organization that has an impressive track record of working internationally on behalf of, and with, uprooted peoples and others in exceptionally difficult circumstances. More than 20 years old, CFSI is currently an implementing partner of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in the Philippines and Myanmar. CFSI has carried out other work in cooperation with UNHCR in virtually all of the countries in South East Asia. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has, at different points in time, funded CFSI activity in the Philippines, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea.. The United Nations Volunteers (UNV), World Health Organization (WHO), and the United Nations Multi-Donor Programme (UN-MDP) have also funded CFSI activity. Governments that have provided resources to CFSI at some point during its existence include Canada, Norway, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Hong Kong, and the United States.

CFSI has been certified by the Philippine Council for NGO Certification (PCNC) and has been licensed by the Philippine Government's Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) for service throughout the country.

With regard to the Pilot Project, CFSI designated the Manila-based Director for Humanitarian Assistance to have general programmatic oversight for the CFSI Operations in Cotabato City (COC). It also designated the Manila-based Director of Finance to provide internal audit of, and guidance with regard to, COC's financial activities. Both of these personnel reported directly to the Executive Director.

The coverage of the project included 6,759 families (33,550 persons) in the municipalities of Pagalungan and Pagagawan in the province of Maguindanao and the municipalities of Carmen, Kabacan, and Pikit, in the province of North Cotabato. Maguindanao is part of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao.

The Pilot Project itself was under the direct programmatic oversight of a full-time Cotabato City Project Coordinator. She has extensive experience—locally, nationally, and internationally—in, *inter alia*, community organizing, humanitarian emergency planning, and inter-agency networking. She designed and conducted the initial training programme for the Community Organizers (COs) and other key staff members of the Pilot Project. The Project Coordinator reported directly to the Director for Humanitarian Assistance.

The initial project design called for the employment of (a) COs who would have their own team leader, (b) five project officers to oversee the delivery of services under the originally envisioned additional project components—information, psychosocial services,

livelihood assistance, research, and peace promotion, and (c) a team of administrative support staff.⁴¹

The External Evaluator notes that of the five envisioned project officers, three—Livelihood Officer, Research Officer and Peace Officer—did not complete their terms. The posts for the Livelihood Officer and the Peace Officer were filled two times. However, these posts were not filled during the last few months of the project, owing to the amount of time it would have taken to fully orient and train the new officers, as well as the impending end of the Pilot Project. The Project management then decided not to hire external expertise to replace them. Instead, the responsibilities of the Livelihood Officer and the Peace Officer were redefined and added on to the workload of two COs. Meanwhile, a full-time Database Manager and a part-time Senior Research Officer took on much of the work originally envisaged for the Research Officer post.

The Pilot Project's support staff consisted of finance personnel, an administrative officer, a property custodian, and two drivers.

Consistent with CFSI's long-held practice of offering its operations as a training ground for academic interns and community volunteers, the COC engaged 12 interns from local institutions (six social work students and six computer programming students) for the Pilot Project. (As will be shown later, the Pilot Project also featured the training and engagement of IDPs as volunteers for the various components of the Project.)

The Pilot Project: Objectives

As stated, the Pilot Project's major objectives as incorporated in its Terms of Reference are as follows:

1. to 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; and
2. to contribute to the existing knowledge base by developing and testing models that will inform approaches to the transition from conflict to peace.

⁴¹ Please refer to the following CFSI documents for a detailed treatment of the program design and the subsequent changes that the Pilot Project adopted in the course of programme implementation: Community and Family Services International, *Promoting the Transition from Conflict to Peace and Development at the Community Level: Pilot Project in the Philippines, Progress Reports 1-7*; and Federico, M. *Pathways to Peace and Development: An Integrated approach to post-conflict transition. An external evaluation of the Community and Family Services International's Pilot Project, "Promoting the Transition from Conflict to Peace and Development at the Community Level"*. [All cited documents are available on CFSI's web site, www.cfsi.ph]

Psychosocial Orientation: Underpinning the Entire Project

In its project proposal, CFSI stated that it would “adopt a *psychosocial orientation* and utilize a participatory, community based approach that contributes to the building of mutual trust and respect.”⁴² [emphasis provided] The concept of *psychosocial services* for projects in conflict-affected areas has elicited considerable debate in professional and NGO circles.

At one end of the debate is the traditional group of professionals representing the biomedical model of victimization. They tend to view people’s experiences with war as psychologically traumatizing—a concept that denotes mental injury and, therefore, require treatment.⁴³ The concept also promotes a model of intervention that is based on the therapist-client paradigm, with its images of controlled treatment settings, pre-defined categories of illness, and pre-determined treatment modalities or psychotherapies. Those who follow this paradigm emphasize “service provision, with the ‘expert’ and his or her expertise at the center of things, and the war victim relegated to the role of *consumer-patient*.”⁴⁴ [emphasis provided]

At the other end of this debate are individuals who argue against the globalisation of western concepts of well-being and dysfunction. They assert that, while it may be true that there are persons who are particularly vulnerable to traumatization and, therefore, require the intervention of skilled mental health professionals, their number is much smaller than the other camp believes and, therefore, does not fit the concept of mass traumatization. They posit that a much greater number of survivors of war are *active survivors* (as opposed to *passive victims*)—resilient, creative, skilled, resourceful, purposeful, and capable of shaping their own future. They argue that allowing survivors of conflict to harness their own strengths and resources, albeit with external support in some circumstances, is at the core of their own empowerment.⁴⁵

A careful reading of the initial briefing notes which, in turn, informed the development of the Pilot Project shows that CFSI has been cognizant of the ongoing debate with regard to the issue of psychosocial services for projects in conflict-affected areas. To CFSI’s credit, it has recognized the leading models of psychosocial intervention frequently mentioned in the literature—to wit, the medical model, the public health model, and the human rights model.

⁴² CFSI. 2001, p. 4.

⁴³ Summerfield, D. November 1995. “Assisting survivors of war and atrocity: notes on ‘psycho-social’ issues for NGO workers.” In *Development and Practice*, 5:4, p. 354.

⁴⁴ Stubbs, P. & Soroya, B. 1966. *War Trauma and Professional Dominance: Psychosocial Discourses in Croatia*. Unpublished Manuscript. Cited in Summerfield, D. 1996. “The Impact of War and Atrocity on Civilian Populations: Basic Principles for NGO Interventions and a Critique of Psychosocial Trauma Projects.” *Network Paper 14*. Relief and Rehabilitation Network, p. 17.

⁴⁵ Ager, A. 1996. *Tensions in the Psychosocial Discourse: Implications for the Planning of Interventions with War-Affected Populations*. Unpublished manuscript.

A cursory examination of CFSI's project proposal shows that it was espousing a general psychosocial orientation that was meant to reflect a healthy combination of the three models. CFSI's envisioned activities were clustered under two main headings—(a) community participation leading to empowerment, and (b) model building through collaborative research.

Under “community participation leading to empowerment,” the proposal had listed the following specific objectives:⁴⁶

- Assist the affected populations and the settlement communities to rapidly assess and prioritise their needs vis-à-vis achieving an effective and sustainable transition from conflict to peace and from displacement to durable solutions;
- build confidence in participatory processes and community empowerment amongst affected populations and settlement communities by helping them meet their most immediate needs;
- enhance, through awareness raising and training, the capacity of the affected populations and settlement communities to address psychosocial issues and basic needs at the individual, family, and community levels;
- raise awareness amongst the affected populations and settlement communities of existing socio-economic development programmes and enhance their capacity to assess these resources and services; and
- facilitate frequent peace building and community development-oriented interactions between the affected populations, settlement communities, and local government units.

Under “model building through collaborative research,” the proposal had articulated the following specific objectives:⁴⁷

- Identify and engage local universities or research institutes—as well as members of the affected populations and settlement communities—to review the experience of others in post conflict situations and, particularly, best practice models;
- utilizing participatory action research methods throughout the entire project, foster collaborative effort between the affected populations, settlement communities, and local universities/research institutions leading to widely disseminated lessons learned and model building; and

⁴⁶ CFSI. 2001, pp. 6-8.

⁴⁷ CFSI. 2001, pp. 8-10.

- ensure the affected populations and settlement communities are provided with opportunities to reflect on, and directly link, the knowledge gained to their increased capacity to take greater control of their lives.

A closer examination of the project's specific objectives and activities reveals an obvious slant for development work that emphasizes the empowerment of those affected by the armed conflict through participatory processes. The proposal had made it very clear that the populations targeted by the pilot project were not going to be passive recipients of services; rather, they were going to be capacitated for active involvement in their own empowerment; hence, a reflection of the Pilot Project's heavy emphasis on the public health model, but accommodating, at the same time, aspects of the medical and human rights models that could enhance the empowerment of the target populations.

The external evaluator finds that the third specific objective under the first heading, speaks to this emphasis on the public health model. Under this specific objective, the following activities, among other activities, are subsumed:

“Increase the capability of the caregivers in providing psychosocial interventions at the community level.”

“Identify *culturally sensitive programmes* needed to promote mental well being and prevent the development of mental illness resulting from the armed conflict situation.” [emphasis provided]

The external evaluator finds that the proposed activities under the rubric of “psychosocial services” reflect an intended balance in service delivery which recognizes, on one hand, the need to address the needs of those actually traumatized by the conflict and, on the other hand, the need to use indigenous approaches to promote healthy functioning among the project participants and enhance their chances of empowerment.

Revisiting then the statement by CFSI, to the effect that it would, through this pilot project, “adopt a psychosocial orientation,” the external evaluator finds it necessary to put that phrase back in the context used by the proponent:

“. . . the project will adopt *a psychosocial orientation* and utilize a participatory, community based approach that contributes to the building of mutual trust and respect.”

The external evaluator finds that “the building of mutual trust and respect” among the affected population is the end result of a “psychosocial orientation” that utilizes, *inter alia*, “a participatory, community based approach.”

The external evaluator's interviews with the Pilot Project's external stakeholders revealed that there was some confusion over CFSI's psychosocial orientation. For example, two external stakeholders—both of whom are professional social workers—commented that CFSI failed to promote its image as “a psychosocial service agency.” Each of them went

on to say that the first thing CFSI should have done in Central Mindanao was to open a “counselling clinic” or a “rehabilitation center” where affected people could go to be treated. They also stated that there was some resentment on the part of other social workers toward CFSI, given the organization’s authorizing non-professionals, like *sumpats*, to act as “psychosocial caregivers.” These external stakeholders stated unequivocally that *sumpats* are not competent at the level of licensed professionals and, therefore, should not usurp any of the roles reserved for social workers, psychologists, counsellors, and the like.

The external evaluator determines that the views of those two external stakeholders reflect a strictly medical model of psychosocial intervention; therefore it is not surprising that they were critical of the Pilot Project in this regard since, by design, the Pilot Project was meant to work on a model that draws from the medical, public health and human rights models.

The external evaluator wishes to point out that, in contrast, the subject of “problematic psychosocial services,” or the lack thereof, did not arise in FGDs and in the personal interviews with COs, as well as with the rest of the key informants.

Community Organizing: The Overarching Project Process Towards Capability Building

The External Evaluator recognizes that the original programme design alludes to community organizing as one of the “components” of the Pilot Project, along with information, psychosocial services, peace promotion and livelihood assistance. However, extra care should be exercised so as not to misinterpret these “components” as being so discrete that they are mutually exclusive of each other. Rather—and this is particularly true in the model implemented by the Pilot Project—these are all parts of a comprehensive spectrum of community empowerment activities offered in a virtually seamless and integrated fashion. Preliminary community profiling, minimum basic needs (MBN) surveys, human rights orientation, information management, leadership training, community group formation, community visioning and action planning, volunteer development, literacy training, livelihood assistance, infrastructure building, peace promotion, alternative education, cross-cultural sensitivity training, youth development, spiritual formation, and the provision of psychosocial care—all of these programmes were adopted by the Pilot Project to enhance the IDPs’ capability-building, through the overarching process of community organizing.⁴⁸

The Pilot Project employed eleven professional community organizers (COs) who served as the backbone of the entire undertaking. In accordance with the project design, the COs are all university graduates—most of whom are professional social workers—and all are

⁴⁸ For a detailed description of the various program components, please refer to the following documents produced by CFSI: *CFSI Mindanao Project Proposal* (December 2000); *Promoting the Transition from Conflict to Peace and Development at the Community Level: Pilot Project in the Philippines* (March 2001); *Project Components’ Terminal Reports* (September 2003). [All cited documents are available on CFSI’s web site, www.cfsi.ph]

native to Mindanao. The COs fulfilled a wide spectrum of roles and functions. For example, they were the ones tasked to visit the project sites on a regular basis, conduct community needs assessments, work with the IDPs or former IDPs on the development of their community development plans (CDPs), conduct leadership training activities, facilitate the safe return of IDPs to their COOs, liaise with government and NGOs on matters relating directly to the IDPs assigned to them, and the like. COs applied various programme approaches to motivate the IDPs toward concrete action-planning, guide them on the conduct of community activities, teach them specific group skills, and make themselves available for consultation on a wide range of project-related matters. They were expected to develop a working knowledge of all aspects of the project implementation, conduct monitoring activities, and communicate progress reports to project management.

During the FGDs, the COs articulated the processes and activities in which they were involved. When asked by the External Evaluator to identify their advocacy strategies relating to the Minimum Basic Needs assessment (MBN)—a tool that they, themselves had used at the beginning of the project, the COs were not able to do it; however, they were able to demonstrate without difficulty the processes subsumed under each of those strategies.⁴⁹ The external evaluator finds that the COs' ability to demonstrate the specific processes prescribed by the MBN assessment is consistent with the IDPs', and former IDPs', characterization of the COs—i.e., that the COs were people of action who competently carried out their tasks almost flawlessly. The external evaluator determines further that, since the process of people empowerment is unequivocally action-driven, it is not fatal if a CO is unable to provide the technical jargons related to their jobs, although admittedly, one's knowledge of the profession's theories and accompanying technical jargons helps determine one's professional competency. The external evaluator finds that, in the context of the Pilot Project, it is far more crucial to the success of the undertaking for the COs to skillfully put into practice the very strategies that the MBN assessment required.

The KII respondents and the FGD participants cited the COs' role as pivotal to the success of the Pilot Project. They characterized the COs as culturally sensitive, articulate (at least, bilingually), knowledgeable of the communities to which they were assigned and of the IDPs with whom they worked, hard-working, energetic, and open to new ideas. One high-ranking officer of the ASFP described CFSI's COs as some of the best in the field that she had ever met.

The COs cited the following areas as needing improvement:

1. There were times when they were expected to carry out duties and responsibilities in areas for which they had not had sufficient training. As stated, the departure of the Peace Officer and Livelihood Officer meant that their responsibilities had to be added to COs, without the benefit of additional training. This often resulted in inconsistent approaches in the field. That said, the COs were quick to point out,

⁴⁹ The four strategies are called convergence, focused targeting, community organizing, and total family approach.

however, that this problem of insufficient training was more of an isolated phenomenon. They underscored the fact that their evolution into competent COs were, for the most part, a function of the intensive programme of professional development that CFSI had provided them.

2. There were times when the schedule of COs were determined by COC management's priorities. This often resulted in undue cancellation of pre-arranged activities in the field, much to the consternation of the IDPs.
3. The COs were also required to carry out "process recording"—initially daily and, over time, weekly—as part of the planned capacity building efforts. As expected, this task entailed the use of technical terminology. The COs felt that they needed more training in technical writing.
4. The COs felt that they frequently found themselves at a loss with regard to what indicators they should look for when doing project monitoring.
5. The COs were fully aware of the scheduled phase out of the pilot project and that they were expected to submit their project-end reports. However, as a result of management decision to utilize all remaining grant monies to the direct benefit of the former IDPs—a decision which the COs helped to make—before project-end,⁵⁰ the COs ended undertaking more activities in the field up to the actual date of the project's end. This caused difficulties with regard to setting their priorities.

Caring for the Pilot Project Staff

The context of the prolonged armed conflict in the pilot areas rendered the entire Pilot Project personnel vulnerable to stress. As part of their jobs, the COs and project officers were constantly exposed to disasters, most of which were man-made. On many occasions, they were unwilling direct observers of the immediate traumatic effects that

⁵⁰ The resumption of armed hostilities in February 2003 significantly set back the Pilot Project's time line for the implementation of its programs. One of those severely affected by the renewed armed conflict was the implementation of the Livelihood Assistance Upon Return (LAUR) component of the project. As a result of the deteriorating state of security in the area, about 60% of former IDPs who had already returned to their COOs found themselves seeking emergency shelter in evacuation centers once again. For obvious reasons, the LAUR initiative had to be put on the back burner until the IDPs returned to their COOs. Unfortunately, this latest return did not take place until the time that the Pilot Project was about to end. After broad consultation with all program staff, particularly COs, management made the decision to pick up on the LAUR implementation as late as June, July and August, 2003, when all project staff were supposed to be consolidating their project-end reports. The alternative to such a decision was for CFSI to return all unspent project monies to the donors, which was soundly rejected by everyone consulted, in that such monies had already been earmarked for the direct benefit of, and were being expected by, the IDPs/former IDPs.

had been wrought upon the primary victims of crises or disasters. In this context, COs and project officers, would be classified as “secondary victims.”⁵¹

Even administrative support staff who would normally be left behind in the COC (headquarters) in Cotabato City were not immune from stress. Although, under normal circumstances, they would not be exposed to the “shocking immediacy” of traumatization, they were constantly feeling the threats of renewed armed skirmishes around them. Furthermore, they were always aware of the risks that their fellow workers—COs and project officers—were facing every time they went to the field. In this regard, COC’s administrative support staff would be classified “tertiary victims.”⁵²

The Pilot Project staff unanimously cited CFSI’s timely provision of stress management strategies and techniques—*inter alia*, critical incident stress debriefing (CISD), defusing, one-to-one consultation, and off-site workshops—as a clear indication that the organization cares for its employees. They said that such an all-important support from CFSI significantly contributed to their mental health maintenance.

In this regard, CFSI is gifted with the presence, on their Board of Trustees, of a person with expertise in stress management and psychosocial responses to critical events. She had volunteered her time to train the staff in stress management in humanitarian emergencies.

Timely and Accurate Information and Security

CFSI recognizes that the issue of security is critical to work in this environment. The Pilot Project invested significant resources to enhance the security of the entire operation, particularly staff. For example, all hired staff were assigned cellular phones, satellite phones were installed in the project vehicles to ensure that contact could be made at all times, and rapport with both the AFP and the MILF was established.

Inherent in the project design is the staff’s access to timely information with regard to the state of security in the pilot sites. The Information Officer succeeded in establishing rapport with both sides of the conflict; as a result, he was able to obtain critical information with regard to security alerts. Such information, in turn, enabled staff to make necessary adjustments to specific programme approaches, as needed. The Information Officer was also available 24 hours a day to brief project staff on matters concerning security.

⁵¹ Mitchell, J T et al. 1997. *Critical Incident Stress Debriefing: An Operations Manual for the Prevention of Traumatic Stress Among Emergency Services and Disaster Workers*, 2nd Ed. Revised. (Ellicott City, MD:Chevron Publishing Corporation).

⁵² Mitchell, J. T. et al.

The Information Officer trained a select group of IDPs to work as volunteer Information Specialists.⁵³ He was also responsible for organizing the information caravans, which brought information about government line agencies and NGOs directly to the communities of origin (COOs).

Administrative Support Staff: Towards Greater Institutional Accountability, Transparency and Efficiency

The direct programme staff—COs and Project Officers, along with the Project Coordinator—were undeniably the most visible personalities in the community. However, the Pilot Project's equally dedicated team of administrative support staff reinforced CFSI's built-in mechanisms for accountability, transparency and efficiency. They were the ones who helped ensure that the COC's expenditures were within budget, were completely documented, and financial reports were submitted on time.

The Pilot Project's support staff stated that they were always made to feel that they were part of the same professional team. They were always invited to attend programme briefings and were given opportunities to visit the pilot sites. Their opinions with regard to programme issues were also sought and respected.

Finance personnel, in particular, cited how they felt affirmed by the support provided by CFSI's Director of Finance who visited COC on a regular interval.

Advocacy: From Mass Media to Networking

The Pilot Project carried out a wide range of advocacy activities on behalf of the IDPs. COs were responsible for educating the *barangays*, the *Barangay Council Members* (BCMs), the municipal officials and NGOs working on the pilot sites with regard to the needs of IDPs.⁵⁴

The Project Coordinator, on the other hand, was responsible for networking with other agencies and government institutions at the provincial or regional level. NGO representatives whom the external evaluator interviewed spoke glowingly of the critical role that CFSI—through the Project Coordinator—played in facilitating the formation of NGO networks in Central Mindanao. The interviewees said that CFSI played a crucial role in facilitating the sharing of information within the networks. They also stated that CFSI was always prepared to support their own works in the region by sharing its insights in community organizing, psychosocial intervention, and information management.

The Project Coordinator also worked very closely with the Information Officer in identifying materials for possible consumption by the mass media. Meanwhile, the

⁵³ See pp. 59-60 of this report.

⁵⁴ This approach is rooted in the human rights approach to psychosocial intervention.

Information Officer used his media contacts to provide radio and television coverage of human interest events in the pilot sites.

The efforts at advocacy in Central Mindanao were constantly reinforced by CFSI's Headquarters in Manila. The Executive Director was responsible for identifying and tapping potential donors for certain aspects of the Pilot Project. Supported by an able Board Member with public relations expertise and a team of information technology specialist and internal researchers, the Executive Director presided over the professional production of a monograph⁵⁵ and a set of audio-visual materials, which highlighted the lessons learned in the Pilot Project and which were widely circulated for public education and advocacy.

Of note was the most recent broad coverage of various aspects of the Pilot Project by the national media—print, radio and television.

CFSI staff are quick to point out that they have enormously benefited from the presence of a leading and highly respected entertainment personality on their Board of Trustees, who had voluntarily taken on the plight of the IDPs as her pet project. She had made it a point to visit the project sites, interact with the IDPs and the project staff, and push the needs of the IDPs to the top of the public agenda, as much as possible.

Engaging Research Partners Towards Model Building

In fulfilment of the Pilot Project's Terms of Reference, CFSI contracted the highly respected research departments of Notre Dame University, Cotabato City, and Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology, Iligan City, to conduct participatory action research in the pilot sites, identify the lessons learned from the IDPs experiences, and provide the ground work for model building.

Both research institutions found that the existing models for intervention in conflict and/or post-conflict situations may not be applicable to the Mindanao context, given the chronicity and the cyclical nature of the armed conflict. What they accomplished, however, was to listen to the voices of the IDPs as they articulated their needs, their aspirations, their dreams, and their willingness to be full partners in their own development as a community. The research teams compiled case narratives of IDPs that highlight their struggles and their coping mechanisms. Through FGDs and personal interviews, the research teams identified the lessons learned from the IDPs' experiences. The research teams put together separate reports on transition interventions with IDPs as experienced in three of the pilot sites—Carmen, Pagagawan and Pagalungan.⁵⁶ They then returned to the three pilot sites to validate their initial work.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Community and Family Services International. 2003. "You Listen." *Internally Displaced Persons Speak about a Pilot Project in Conflict-Affected Central Mindanao*.

⁵⁶ Community and Family Services International, Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology, and Notre Dame University Research Center. 2003. *Transition Interventions with Internally Displaced Persons: From Conflict Toward Peace and Development in Southern Philippines*.

According to these research partners, the crisis facing the IDP children and youth sent a loud and clear message that the armed conflict was destroying much more than the present social structures; even more tragically, the foundations for the Mindanao society of the future—i.e., its own children and youth—are under threat of being shattered. The research institutions also concluded “that transition interventions with internally displaced persons must be sustained not only at its initial stages at the evacuation centers with the provision of the basic human necessities, but should proceed through to the return and settlement process at the communities or sites of origin.”⁵⁸

The research partners found that, while the armed conflict brought on many disruptions in the lives of the IDPs, the combined interventions of NGOs, including CFSI, and government agencies, have brought much hope and desire on the part of IDPs to return to their communities of origin.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Pilot Project engaged a research professional from La Trobe University, Australia to conduct a mid-term internal evaluation of the Pilot Project.⁵⁹ The internal evaluator conducted an extensive review of relevant literature, reviewed the project design and implementation, and identified lessons learned from the pilot project. She also submitted a number of recommendations for the Pilot Project to consider as it entered the second half of the project’s implementation.

The external evaluator finds that the mid-term internal evaluation—from the perspectives of (a) the conscious investment made by CFSI to ensure that the Pilot Project was on track, as well as to seek current wisdom that could further inform the development of the second half of the Pilot Project; (b) the clearly great degree of professionalism that characterised the internal evaluation itself; and (c) the high quality of the internal

⁵⁷ University Research Center, Notre Dame University. 2003. *Transition Interventions with Internally Displaced Persons: From Conflict Toward Peace and Development in Southern Mindanao* [sic.]. *The Case of Carmen Municipality, A Validation Report, Cotabato Province*; MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology. 2003. *A Report on Research Validation Activity of the Community and Family Services International (CFSI) and MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT) Collaborative Research entitled: Transition Interventions with the Internally Displaced Persons, Towards Peace and Development in Southern Philippines: The Cases of Pagalungan and Pagagawan, Maguindanao Province*. [These two reports have been consolidated by CFSI’s Senior Research Officer and are available on CFSI’s web site, www.cfsi.ph]

⁵⁸ Community and Family Services International, Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology, and Notre Dame University Research Center. 2003. p. iii..

⁵⁹ Frederico, M. 2002. *Pathways to Peace and Development: An integrated approach to post-conflict transition. An External* [sic.] *Evaluation of the Community and Family Services International Pilot Project, “Promoting the Transition from Conflict to Peace and Development at the Community Level,”* January 2001-June 2002.

evaluation report—speaks eloquently of CFSI’s (and, to a great extent, the World Bank’s) commitment to carrying out a cutting edge Pilot Project.

The external evaluator learned from CFSI’s Executive Director that the organisation used many of the internal evaluator’s recommendations to inform the development of the Pilot Project’s latter half. However, the external evaluator also found out that most of the Pilot Project staff—particularly those who were working directly with IDPs and former IDPs—were not cognizant of the findings and recommendations of the internal mid-term evaluation, let alone that they were used to inform their programme strategies for the second half of the project implementation. The external evaluator notes that it was incumbent upon the leadership of CFSI to ensure that project staff were educated about the findings of this mid-term evaluation report, for at least two reasons: (1) the report would have given staff a sense of satisfaction over the internal evaluation report’s acknowledgement of the many things that the Pilot Project was succeeding in doing to fulfil its objectives; and (2) the Pilot Project staff—who were at risk of suffering from external interview fatigue, given the number and frequency of interviews that they had to give various stakeholders—surely would have appreciated hearing about the concrete results of those interviews.

The Pilot Project produced seven progress reports that highlighted the accomplishments of the project, in general, and the various programme components, in particular.⁶⁰ COs and other programme staff were also required to submit programme progress reports on a regular basis. Furthermore, project records of the livelihood components show a detailed recording of disbursements per programme participant.

The external evaluator recognizes that the Pilot Project has done an admirable job of documenting its activities. However, the external evaluator finds that one major weakness of the Pilot Project was its lack of a coherent monitoring system. COs and Project Officers said that they were fully aware that they had to monitor the progress of their initiatives in the community; however, they also stated that they were always left virtually guessing what progress indicators they should be looking for. A cursory review of the COs’ and Project Officers’ progress reports shows that they are heavy on free-flowing narratives, but short on addressing clear monitoring indicators.

⁶⁰ Community and Family Services International, *Promoting the Transition from Conflict to Peace and Development at the Community Level: Pilot Project in the Philippines, Progress Reports 1-7*

CHAPTER FOUR

EVALUATION OF THE PILOT PROJECT: VOICES HEARD

This chapter will address the IDPs'—as well as other stakeholders'—perception of (a) the strengths and weaknesses of their communities of origin, (b) the strengths and weaknesses of the evacuation centers (ECs) where they stayed, (c) the enabling factors that their communities of origin would require to effect a condition of lasting peace and sustainable development, and (d) the strengths and weaknesses of the pilot project's service delivery.

Key Informant Interviews. Individual interviews were conducted with the following:

IDP Community [Total: 49]

- Captains of 16 Barangays covered in the Pilot Project [16]
- BCMs (*kagawad*) who could not attend their designated FGDs [16]
- Psycho-social caregivers [8]
- Youth who could not attend their designated FGD [4]
- Information Specialists who could not attend their designated FGD [2]
- Elderly IDPs [3]

Government [Total: 18]

- Governor of the Province of North Cotabato
- Chief Information Officer, Office of the Governor, Province of North Cotabato
- Provincial Social Welfare and Development Officer, Province of North Cotabato
- Former Regional Director, DSWD Region XII
- Acting Regional Director, DSWD Region XII
- Field Staff, DSWD Region XII [3]
- Secretary, DSWD ARMM
- Field Staff, DSWD ARMM [2]
- Mayors of the five municipalities covered in the Pilot Project [5]
- Executive Assistant to the Mayor of Pagagawan
- Municipal Social Welfare and Development Officer, Municipality of Carmen

Non-Governmental Organizations/Academic Institution [Total: 12]

- Representatives of non-governmental organizations [10]
- Leaders of *Pagkain Para sa Masa* [2]

Research Partners [Total: 8]

- Notre Dame University, Research Department [4]
- Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology [4]

Pilot Project Personnel [Total: 17]

- Executive Director, CFSI
- Director for Humanitarian Assistance, CFSI
- Project Coordinator, CFSI Pilot Project
- Project Officer, Psycho-social Services
- Community Organizers [10]
- CFSI Drivers [3]

Focus Group Discussion

In addition to conducting individual interviews, the external evaluator held focus group discussions. The following chart shows the participating sectors and the corresponding number of focus groups.

“Arms Are For Hugging” Staff	1
<i>Barangay</i> Councils	5
CFSI Operation Center in Cotabato City (COC)	
Administrative Staff	1
Information Specialists	1
Livelihood Assistance Upon Return (LAUR Recipients)	4
Peacemakers	3
Start-Up Capital Assistance (SUCA Recipients)	4
<i>Sumpats</i>	7
Youth	1
Total	27

The Communities of Origin: Strengths and Weaknesses

When asked to enumerate what they considered to be the best attributes of their COOs, the most common responses given by the IDPs were:

- It offered them a source of livelihood (basically, farming and fishing);
- It gave them a sense of stability and security (house, family and schools);
- It ensured that they could worship freely (place and regularity of worship);
- It instilled in them the importance of peace and order (carefree living, wholesome social relations, and leadership opportunities—despite the poverty).

All respondents cited the armed conflict as the main problem facing them. The strongest expression of sentiment came from the individual *Barangay* captains and the focus groups

consisting of BCMs. They said that, *inter alia*, the armed conflict had set their communities' lives back by many years, it had put their individual lives on hold, it had shattered the future of their children, and it had sowed so much mistrust—not just towards both sides of the armed conflict, but more unfortunately, among community members, themselves.

These community leaders bewailed what they perceived as a conflict created by forces outside their communities. They stated that, as leaders, they are the ones faced with the difficult process of spearheading the rebuilding of their communities, with very little help from the government.

All respondents then cited poverty and lack of/inadequate basic government services as the next main problems in their communities. The “Arms Are for Hugging” staff, SUCA recipients, LAUR recipients, information specialists and representatives of the youth sector were most outspoken in forwarding the notion that these two problems go hand-in-hand. They expressed their belief that the lack of/inadequate basic government services that their communities were experiencing were a function of their powerlessness as poor people.

There was no significant difference between the responses of the FGDs and the IDPs who were selected for the KIIs.

The Evacuation Centers: Strengths and Weaknesses

The respondents were unanimous in stating that it took them a while to think of the redeeming values of an evacuation center (EC). Many of them emphatically said that an EC is not the same as a community. They also stated that the first messages that an EC, per se, conjured up for them were:

- They did not belong.
- They were at the mercy of other people.
- They had been stripped of their own humanity.
- Their future was bleak.

However, on further reflection, the respondents said that displacement, per se, as well as the EC as a temporary living arrangement had reinforced in them a number of values and taught them certain realities. They cited the following:

- They have individual strengths that they could use to their benefit—not only as individual IDPs and their families, but also as a broader community.
- It is better to use their strengths for their own empowerment than to constantly rely on the “mercy” of outsiders (government, NGOs, and the like).
- There are many well-meaning external groups that genuinely cared for their (IDPs’) welfare; however, they believe that the most lasting assistance came from organizations (foremost of which was CFSI), which taught them to be more aware

of their potentials, helped them develop skills towards those potentials, and showed them how to organize themselves.

Women who benefited from the SUCA programme, for example, cited how the unfortunate reality of displacement led them to learn new skills in income generation. They said that, given their spouses' loss of livelihood, they ended up deviating from their traditional roles as housekeepers and child-bearers. SUCA recipients stated that, once they are resettled in their COOs, they expect to revert to their traditional roles. However, they also stated that they are now better prepared to share decision-making responsibilities with their spouses, if and when called upon to do so.

Towards Conditions of Lasting Peace and Sustainable Development: Enabling Factors

All the IDPs interviewed for the KIIs and the participants in FGDs stated unequivocally that, notwithstanding the unfortunate cycle of armed conflict that their communities experienced in the past several years, they still have an abiding hope that lasting peace and sustainable development would someday happen in their communities. They identified the following factors as necessary in facilitating the existence of lasting peace and sustainable development in their communities.

- Lasting Peace Agreement between the GRP and the MILF
- Respect for, and protection of, their basic human rights
- Active participation of community members in all aspects of community life (including self-advocacy)
- Partnership with government and non-governmental organizations, based on the needs and aspirations of the communities
- Leadership development and skills training for all sectors in the community
- Cultural sensitivity (including sensitivity towards Islam and the Muslim culture)
- Access to accurate information

The representatives of NGOs, educational institution, research partners, and CFSI staff were in general agreement with the opinions of the IDPs. On the other hand, representatives of government offered a wide range of opinions on this subject. Most of them felt that, since the government has to play the lead role in ensuring that lasting peace and sustainable development are in place in their respective jurisdictions, the local populace should recognize that there are limitations to what they (the local residents) could do in terms of self-advocacy and partnerships. A large number of government representatives also stated that the government is extremely constrained by the limited resources that they have.

The CFSI Pilot Project: Strengths and Weaknesses

This particular topic in the FGDs and the KIIs elicited the widest discrepancy in the reactions among the KII respondents and FGD participants.

A. The Internally Displaced Persons. The IDP communities felt very strongly that CFSI was greatly responsible for their transformation from being virtually passive observers into being active participants in their own affairs.

Sumpats. These community volunteers said that CFSI was instrumental in their development as community facilitators. Many of them said that it was CFSI that first raised their awareness of their basic human rights, as well as their rights as IDPs.

The FGD participants—particularly the women *sumpats*—described how they felt empowered being able to play critical leadership functions in their communities. During the plenary session, women rapporteurs stated that their ability to speak in public and before a group dominated by men is a result of the training programmes conducted by CFSI, in general, and the personal mentoring of COs, in particular.

The *sumpats* pointed out that it was through CFSI's training programmes that they were able to recognize their potentials for leadership. Through CFSI's meetings and training programmes, they gained the following skills: presentation and public speaking skills, personal competencies (dedication, self-confidence, feeling relaxed in group situations, objectivity, patience, overall credibility), interviewing skills, proposal writing skills, and consultation skills.

The *sumpats* stated that a weak link in CFSI's service delivery was the number of last minute cancellation of scheduled activities. They said that, in many cases, they did not have any information about the cancellation. Understandably, this put them in a very difficult situation as the IDPs would always demand an explanation. They suggested that allowing them to use official cell phones would have enabled them to communicate with the concerned COs in a timely manner.

Barangay Captains and BCMs. These community leaders, on the other hand, cited the many benefits that they gained from the involvement of COs in their communities. They talked about learning how to organize meetings, how to prioritise topics, and how to resolve problems by discussing them thoroughly before coming up with options. They also cited their visioning exercises as very helpful in their planning for the future. They spoke about how learning to write proposals has given them a higher level of confidence in their ability to advocate for their own needs. They also found the COs' work as a bridge in bringing different sectors, tribes, and religious denominations together for common undertakings. They said this has enhanced the prospect of lasting peace among themselves.

The *Barangay Captains* and BCMs said they recognized how the MBN informs decision-making and advocacy activities at their level. They expressed distinct pride and satisfaction in their process of putting together the Community Development Plans (CDPs), which involved (a) attending a number of intensive seminar-workshops conducted by the COs, (b) a hands-on approach to actually writing the CDPs, and (c) packaging the CDPs for submission to the Municipal Government. However, many of the participants expressed their concern over how their CDPs would be followed up on at the

levels of the municipality and the province, since the COs who had worked with them on setting their development priorities were about to leave by the end of CFSI's pilot projects. They said they did not know who would be assisting them to ensure that their communities' development priorities are addressed. Some participants stated that they had thought CFSI was going to help them access funds for their communities' priority projects.

The BCMs said that CFSI's focus on livelihood assistance programmes—SUCA and LAUR—had enhanced their communities' chances of having a fresh start. However, some of them expressed their concern that the protracted armed conflict might undermine the little gains they had made in setting up their small livelihood projects.

The respondents stated that the process of consultation with their communities had taught them to be more patient with other people. They said that the "Go and See Visits" enabled them to appreciate better the need to fully prepare IDPs for their return to their COOs. They said they had learned to heed the opinions and feelings of the IDPs, even if there were times when the *Barangay* leaders disagreed with them.

The BCMs cited the *Pulungan* Center as a symbol of CFSI's presence in their respective communities. They said they would always associate it with their newly reinforced value of community consultation. Some participants stated their wish to make the *Pulungan* Center a symbol of peace in their communities. According to them, they have accepted that peace making is one of their responsibilities as community leaders.

Just like the *sumpats*, the *Barangay* Captains and BCMs expressed their frustration over the COs' last-minute cancellation of scheduled meetings. While they acknowledged that security concerns had to take precedence, they were frustrated nonetheless over the utter lack of mechanism for informing them about such cancellations.

Information Specialists. These IDP volunteers said that the totality of their experiences with their fellow IDPs and with CFSI staff had taught them that access to accurate information is a basic human right. Specializing in information dissemination, the information specialists said that they benefited from the skills-building seminars that CFSI had conducted for them. They stated that, not only did they broaden their knowledge about information dissemination and technology, but they also learned some basic skills in reporting and improved their capabilities in the field of human relations. They said that being information specialists had changed their outlook in life and their attitudes toward people for the better. They said they are now more respectful of other people, particularly those who are marginalized.

The participants said that CFSI succeeded in impressing upon them their significance as IDPs and as community leaders in information dissemination. They cited how CFSI had (a) facilitated their participation in leadership training programmes, (b) arranged their work-related visits to places they had never been before, (c) enabled them to speak before groups of people, and (d) equipped them to participate in organizing major events, such as information caravans. They said that this particular programme opened their eyes to

how thirsty isolated communities are for first-hand information about various line agencies and NGOs and the programmes/services they offer.

The information specialists also cited the surge of excitement that the information caravans brought to the local communities. They said that, for the first time, basic information about government line agencies and some NGOs were brought right to the communities' doorsteps. They also stated that the amount of preparation that the CFSI's Information Officer and his team of information specialists had put into the staging of the information caravans made the local communities feel that they were really important.

The information specialists stated that the weekly radio programme "Tinig Ng Mga IDPs" ("The Voice of the IDPs") turned out to be a potent medium for educating the broader community about the plight of the IDPs. They said that the IDPs felt very strongly that the popular radio programme had given them a legitimate voice in the broader community.

Peacemakers. The FGD participants stated that CFSI helped them gain self-confidence, including the ability to speak in the presence of guests, government officials and NGOs. They also said that the seminars they had attended helped broaden their understanding of the challenges towards a lasting peace in Central Mindanao. They said that the Peace Officer at the time and his fellow COs enabled them to consciously view peacemaking as an incremental process ("one step at a time"). They also indicated that CFSI had consistently shown much interest in listening to their stories of peacemaking. In particular, they cited how CFSI's participation in the Mothers for Peace campaign had raised their profile as peacemakers, as well as the process of peacemaking itself.

The peacemakers identified two major problems that they encountered with CFSI: (1) the "constant" changes to the position of Peace Officer, without informing them. They said that it took much to adjust to the various personalities, particularly because they had not been properly introduced to each other; and (2) as a result of the above, they felt that their training programme suffered as well. They said that CFSI failed to deliver on the number of seminars that they had been promised at the time of their recruitment. They stated that their overall training programme was not enough to help them gain all the necessary knowledge and skills necessary to adequately fulfil their peacemaking roles.

Start-Up Capital Assistance (SUCA) Recipients. This all-women group said that the phenomenon of displacement and the stark realities of the evacuation centers have taught them many survival techniques, one of which was engaging in such a totally foreign concept as taking on a leadership role in economic activities. They bewailed the fact that, because of the armed conflict, their spouses have been unable to return to their COOs to harvest their farm products or to continue their fishing activities.

They said that, at first, they were hesitant to apply as SUCA recipients. They pointed out that the COs were very patient in explaining to them the concept and expectations of the programme. They said that no one was forced into joining the project. They also said that they joined only after thorough consultation with their spouses, families, and/or friends.

The participants stated that the COs taught them how to develop a project proposal, how to work with one or two other women, and how to save by using the bank. They said that the COs also gave them useful tips on how to market their goods—*inter alia*, fruits, vegetables, root crops, fish, and *malong*.

The SUCA participants also stated that their communities, as a whole, were very accepting and supportive of their newly found role as SUCA “merchants.” They said that, because of this new leadership role, they have developed an image of themselves as leaders, not just subservient members of the family; and as active decision makers, not just passive followers. Furthermore, they articulated their feeling that everyone, particularly the male IDPs and their children, have come to respect them more.

The participants cited three major concerns:

- (1) The current armed conflict might have destroyed the natural environment in their COOs. They said that, as a result of bombings, their fruit trees might have been decimated and the soil in their farms rendered unfit for productive agriculture. They also cited the reportedly government-authorized use of electric rods in fishing along the Liguasan marsh as a serious threat to the sustainability of the fisherfolk’s source of livelihood;
- (2) The start-up capital allocated to them, while helpful, was not sufficient to generate income which, in turn, would help them meet their basic needs in the ECs. Many of them said that they were forced to dip into their capital because food supply in ECs was not sufficient for everyone; and
- (3) The COs were extremely helpful in training them on basic SUCA skills; however, they needed more follow-up training to increase their skills—e.g., marketing, negotiation, trouble-shooting—especially if they were to replicate their SUCA activities in their COOs.

Livelihood Assistance Upon Return (LAUR) Recipients. Participants in this programme said that the LAUR initiative gave them opportunities for small scale livelihood projects. They stated that the COs informed them about the LAUR initiative and took time to clarify its objectives and processes.

The participants said that, before their LAUR involvement, most of them only knew how to cultivate the land, some were into fishing, while a small number had had some experience running a small business, such as a *sari-sari* store or selling produce in other towns during market days.

The LAUR participants stated that, as a result of their involvement in LAUR, they learned new skills, foremost of which were:

- **Banking (depositing and withdrawing).** Many of them said that simply entering a bank was a novelty for them, particularly at the beginning of the programme.

- Writing business project proposals. They stated that they were not used to putting their thoughts on the printed page, let alone specifying their projected costs and income.
- Planning. They said that LAUR made them appreciate further the need to plan their activities ahead of time, taking into consideration such factors as the weather, school calendar, farming and fishing seasons, since all these impact on the viability of their business projects.
- Group work. The LAUR process enabled them to learn to relate positively with their proposed business partners, as well as with other people. They said that they actually observed their interpersonal relationships improve.

The LAUR participants said that they now recognize how engaging in small scale business ventures could improve their living conditions. They also stated their belief that the skills and values they had learned from their LAUR participation are basic to the promotion of a lasting peace in their communities, in Central Mindanao, and beyond.

The LAUR recipients said that, while they appreciated the hard work of the Livelihood Officer and the COs in assisting them on their business ventures, they felt that the training programme, per se, was too short, particularly given the fact that this field is totally foreign to many of them. They added that the tardiness of certain COs ended up cutting shorter the already limited training timeframe. They said that they needed a more intensive training programme, spanning several days.

Some of the participants stated that the training module was “too high” for their level but they acknowledged that some parts were “a lot of fun.” They also suggested that more “follow-up” training activities could have been conducted to help the participants deal with problems that they had encountered.

The participants also expressed their wish that the COs had had more time to give them hands-on assistance during the implementation phase of their projects. They were quick to point out, however, that the COs were hard-working and had to attend to so many responsibilities. Nevertheless, they said they felt frustrated when they needed to consult with a CO but the latter was not available for several days because of other priorities.

A much lesser number of participants felt that certain COs were not fair in choosing LAUR leaders. They said that they chose those personally close to them, notwithstanding their observation that others had better qualifications.

The LAUR beneficiaries suggested that future invitations from CFSI should be delivered in a timely manner. They stated that, perhaps, better coordination and improved communication between the COs and themselves could have helped avoid some of the problems that they encountered.

The participants expressed their profound gratitude to CFSI for the LAUR initiative. They were unanimous in recognizing that CFSI was doing its best with the limited monies it had. However, they also stated their unanimous feeling that the amount allotted to each group was too meager to make a meaningful capital. They stated that, for the future, perhaps several agencies could join forces to come up with a bigger pot for a similar initiative.

Youth. The youth participants were able to recall the NGOs that either have assisted or continue to assist them. They were also able to distinguish, in general terms, the differences between the NGOs in terms of their work with the IDPs. Without denigrating the importance of direct relief assistance by other NGOs, they stated that CFSI's work had been markedly different, in that it is more interested in "preparing us to be effective leaders and members of our community."

The participants said that they had learned from CFSI the value of broad consultation as part of group decision making, the importance of discipline and self confidence in leadership, the critical role of genuine respect for each other in peace promotion, the significance of faith in sustaining individual and community morale, and the imperatives of *bayanihan* in community development. They also stated that CFSI had helped them recognize that they have vast potentials and that their own communities could benefit from their participation and leadership.

The participants expressed their wish that CFSI could stay longer "because their work is not yet done." They said that they do not know who could continue to facilitate their development as leaders and effective members of the community at the end of the pilot project. They also expressed their concern that their home communities' bureaucracy might not fully recognize the knowledge and skills that they have gained from working with CFSI.

"Arms Are For Hugging" (AAFH) Project Staff. The FGD for this school programme—consisting of the school principal, teachers, tutors, *sumpats* and *alims*⁶¹—described AAFH as the most unique initiative they have been involved in. They stated that they are fully aware that the schoolchildren whom they serve are IDPs or former IDPs who have been exposed to the armed conflict.

The AAFH staff stated that AAFH was conceived to be a creative alternative to the regular school system. It incorporates psychosocial intervention as part of its core programme. To facilitate this, it has hired 19 staff and utilizes the services of volunteers.

The AAFH staff said they believe that AAFH showcases the close working relationship between CFSI and the families of IDP children, between CFSI and the broader community, between CFSI and the Philippine Government (through the Department of Education), between CFSI and other NGOs (e.g., OXFAM), as well as between CFSI and the donor community (through the World Bank, the Canada Fund, and the Consuelo Foundation).

⁶¹ An *alim* is a certified teacher of the Arabic language and Islamic values.

At this juncture, the external evaluator wishes to emphasize that CFSI's continued campaign among the donor community has resulted in complementary funding for the Pilot Project. Additional financial support obtained by CFSI from the Canada Fund, the Consuelo Foundation, and other donor groups significantly helped the organization meet its objectives.

The FGD participants stated that the image of IDPs, former IDPs, other volunteers and staff working together to build the school building on a land area that was notorious for flooding (due to its proximity to the *Liguasan* Marsh) speaks of how special this project is. According to them, Inug-ug Elementary School⁶² has evolved to symbolize the determination of the IDP community to put the education of their children (particularly in the context of the armed conflict) on top of their priorities.

The *alims* in the FGD stated that the provision of *halal* lunch highlighted the commitment of CFSI to respond to the need of Muslim children to appreciate Islamic discipline more deeply. They also said that the *halal* lunch programme enabled Muslim parents to learn more about *halal* preparation and cooking.

The FGD participants identified other AAFH outreach programmes, which became popular among the IDP community: Islamic symposia for parents and students, monthly social value orientation sessions for parents; and livelihood project and training programmes that directly benefited the school programme (e.g., dressmaking, haircutting, carpentry, cooking).

The AAFH staff said that, as a result of their participation in CFSI's training programmes, they developed a greater appreciation for, and gained basic competencies in, the application of psychosocial intervention in a school programme designed for IDP children. More specifically, they stated that they learned basic skills in active listening—in one-to-one sessions, as well as in group settings. They said they continue to understand better that, as “facilitators” of students’ learning and “psychological growth,” they have to step out of their traditional orientation as “disciplinarians” and into the shoes of “motivators,” always bearing in mind that their students come from a context of conflict.

The participants also cited the other processes that they learned as part of the overall philosophy of educational programming in Inug-ug Elementary School—*inter alia*, human rights education and promotion, community outreach, closer collaboration/consultation with other school staff and the students’ families, being creative in following the Department of Education curriculum, and deepening one’s own spirituality. Some of them said that it was their first time to be exposed to actual community organizing, framed by the MBN survey results.

The *alims* expressed their appreciation for CFSI's recognition of their basic role in the spiritual formation of Muslim children. They said that AAFH had demonstrated that this

⁶² Inug-ug Elementary School was the venue for the AAFH project. To many local residents, it was synonymous with *Arms Are for Hugging*.

kind of multi-disciplinary approach to education can indeed work and can be an effective tool for peace promotion.

The AAFH staff expressed their need to deepen their competencies in the field of psychosocial intervention, if they were to become effective in their multi-faceted roles. They stated that they needed more grounding in the areas of, *inter alia*, crisis intervention, human rights promotion, peace education, and community coordination. They also said they needed further in-service training to polish their teaching/tutorial skills.

The participants expressed their concern that it might be too soon to turn the programme over to the Department of Education. They said that it might take a total paradigm shift for the Department of Education to fully understand the philosophical foundation of AAFH.

Psychosocial Caregivers. This group of volunteers was drawn from a cross-section of the broader community—*inter alia*, professional social workers, certified teachers, government employees, college graduates, housewives, *sumpats*, BCMs. They were required to attend a brief training programme on the psychosocial needs of IDPs.

Those who took part in the external evaluation said that they also gained basic knowledge and skills in stress management—from identifying stress indicators to applying appropriate stress management strategies and making referrals for professional help. They said that CFSI's Psychosocial Officer always made them feel that they could always seek his assistance whenever they were faced with situations involving psychosocial issues.

The psychosocial caregivers expressed their generalized confusion over what their role as psychosocial caregiver really was. They said that, while the other IDP volunteers seemed to have well-defined roles (e.g., *sumpats*, peacemakers, information specialists), theirs had remained vague. Some of them said that they ended up performing the tasks of literacy tutors and play center supervisors; however, they said they could not quite understand the connection between the two programmes (literacy training and play center) and psychosocial caregiving.

B. Representatives of Government. The External Evaluator found discrepant perceptions of the effectiveness of the Pilot Project, among the representatives of Government who took part in the KIIs.

All of the Government representatives believed that the Pilot Project's general objectives were soundly articulated. They also believed that the Pilot Project succeeded in establishing rapport with the IDP communities; however, some of them felt that such success was achieved at the expense of the Government's image. They said that the Pilot Project somehow projected a distorted image of Government as an uncaring institution. They stated that, most unfortunately, the Pilot Project's staff, advertently or

inadvertently, ended up practically characterizing Government as the enemy in the IDPs' struggles for peace and development.

Representatives of Government who felt being characterized inaccurately by the Pilot Project staff and the IDPs as the culprits in their situation expressed their wish that CFSI had opened the lines of communication more with them. They said that simple information sharing about CFSI's programme strategies in the communities could have erased much misunderstanding between CFSI and Government agencies, as well as between the IDP communities and Government agencies. These Government representatives also stated that CFSI—and all other NGOs working in Central Mindanao, for that matter—should be cognizant of the Government's own development priorities in the Region and that their (NGOs') work should complement the Government's development plans.

At the other end of the spectrum lie other Government representatives who said they fully supported everything that the Pilot Project had done in their communities. They stated that CFSI had fully coordinated with them before entering their communities, had adequately communicated with them problems that they were facing in those communities, and had respectfully sought the appropriate Government agencies' assistance in certain circumstances.

In between these two perspectives was the case of a high-ranking Government official who assumed office at the height of the Pilot Project's implementation. She criticized CFSI for its failure to advise her about the Pilot Project despite the fact that, at the time of the personal interview, she had been in office for one-and-a-half years. While she accepted CFSI's explanation that the Pilot Project staff had been coordinating with the Government official's immediate subordinate, she expressed her regret over the fact that she could have thrown her personal support behind the undertaking, and perchance could have enhanced CFSI's service delivery in the project sites covered by the municipality.

C. Representatives of NGOs, an Academic Institution, and Research Partners. NGO representatives who took part in the external evaluation characterized CFSI's work in Mindanao as “exemplary,” “very professional,” “unselfish,” “respectful of other NGOs' strengths and limitations,” “full of integrity,” “very knowledgeable of the local community,” “impressively sensitive,” and “manifesting clear expertise in community organizing.” They expressed what they called their indebtedness to COC for its leadership in coordinating the efforts of many NGOs and for facilitating their entry in the pilot communities.

The leaders of Southern Mindanao University's (SMU) *Pagkain Para Sa Masa* [“Food for the Masses”/PPM] were quick to point out that the Pilot Project's COs popularised the PPM initiative among the IDPs. They stated that, in so doing, the COs showed their resourcefulness as community-based professionals, enhanced the IDPs' capability to produce local crops for sustenance and added income, and supported SMU's thrust to develop convenient productivity programmes for the benefit of local residents. The PPM

leaders reported that the COs treated the IDPs whom they had brought to SMU for the PPM demonstration classes with utter respect and sensitivity.

The two institutional research partners—Notre Dame University Research Center and Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology—expressed their admiration and respect for the work of CFSI, in general, and of the COs, in particular, in Central Mindanao. They said that, in the personal interviews and FGDs that they had conducted with IDPs in the pilot areas, the IDPs' high respect for the organization and the COs was very apparent. They observed the COs' long hours of work in the most difficult circumstances.

One of the research partners related its difficulty in having the final part of its contract processed on time by CFSI. As a result, the release of its research validation report was unnecessarily delayed. That particular research partner suggested that CFSI may wish to revisit its procurement process, and ensure that internal mechanisms that facilitate the processing of external contracts are in place and are being implemented.

CHAPTER FIVE

LESSONS LEARNED, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

Human Security: A Case for a Framework of Analysis

Talks around the subject of human security—its meaning, its demands, and its relevance—have been raging for some time. However, it was only in the year 2000—on the occasion of the UN Millennium Summit—that an independent Commission for Human Security was launched.⁶³ This historical move came in the midst of a global clamour to find answers to the growing crises besetting the human race—hunger and disease, armed conflicts and human rights violations, global terrorism and ethnic violence, political corruption and economic downturns, and the like. It was also a response to the increasing cry to review the capability of institutions to cope with the deteriorating global situation.

Voices from around the world are one in underscoring the need for a lasting peace and sustainable development, and one of the first lessons that the Commission for Human Security had to learn is that such an agenda for peace and development has to be “centered on people, not states.”⁶⁴

The Commission for Human Security advocates the adoption of “a human security framework” as a response to the needs and aspirations of people around the world. This framework not only puts people at the center; it also proposes that every attempt at intervention adopt policies and promote practices that build on peace, human rights, democracy and social equity. It puts much emphasis on protection and empowerment, as opposed to the more limiting framework of protection and assistance. In other words, it calls for an integrated and empowering response to the current threats to human security.

The Commission for Human Security posits that, following violent conflict, governments and civil society should work together to address key human security issues—public safety, humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction, reconciliation and coexistence, governance and empowerment. It argues for, *inter alia*, the recognition of the right of every individual and community to access information, to participate broadly in decision-making processes that affect them directly, to access basic social services (including health, education, and livelihood assistance), and to live a life free from the threats of conflict and violence. It considers the vulnerability of marginalized populations, including those displaced by human conflict, and fights for their right to be delivered from their debilitating and dehumanising conditions.

Technically speaking, the Pilot Project under evaluation did not use the human security framework being espoused by the Commission for Human Security to guide its activities.

⁶³ Commission on Human Security. 2003. *Human Security Now*. New York.

⁶⁴ Commission on Human Security. 2003. p. 2.

(The Commission’s report was released at a time that CFSI was wrapping up the pilot project.) At any rate, as will be shown below, it has become very clear that the principles behind the pilot project are basically the same principles encompassed by the human security framework.

The external evaluator recognizes, at the same time, that the original proposal for this pilot project stated that it would “draw from Moser and Shrader’s work on violence reduction in which the authors developed an integrated framework for violence causality.”⁶⁵ As the project proposal states:

“This framework recognizes that violence is a multi-causal, complex social problem affecting each element of the community’s systems: the individual (personal history); interpersonal (relationships, social situation); institutional (formal/informal institutions, social networks), and structural (macro-level political/economic/social structure and policy environment incorporating opinions, beliefs, and cultural norms) There is a need to reduce violence at all levels. Whilst strategies will vary, it is important that the interventions are integrated across all levels.”⁶⁶

Moser and Shrader’s (1999) seminal work on the theory of violence causality and reduction merits much respect and consideration. Their conceptual framework is deeply grounded in political, economic, sociological and psychological principles.⁶⁷ CFSI’s pilot project attempted to integrate violence reduction principles across its intervention strategies; however, it failed to demonstrate how any of the particular intervention strategies directly validated, disproved, or drew from Moser and Shrader’s theoretical framework. But, in fairness to the staff of the pilot project, it should be emphatically stated that their failure to explicitly validate or disprove or draw from Moser and Shrader through their intervention strategies does not, in any manner, suggest that the pilot project, as well as its manifestations, was also a failure. Rather, it simply suggests that validating or drawing from a theoretical framework, such as Moser and Shrader’s, requires an entirely different project design—one with, *inter alia*, a built-in monitoring and evaluation framework which, in turn, measures the extent to which the project reflects the very principles it purports to apply in the entire project cycle.

Given the foregoing, the external evaluator finds that it would be difficult to use Moser and Shrader’s postulation on violence causality and reduction as the framework for analysis for this evaluation report. As stated, the external evaluator believes that the

⁶⁵ Community and Family Services International [CFSI]. 2001. *Promoting the Transition from Conflict to Peace and Development at the Community Level: Pilot Project in the Philippines*. (Proposal Paper)

⁶⁶ CFSI. 2001.

⁶⁷ Moser, C. and E. Shrader. 1999. “A Conceptual Framework for Violence Reduction,” Urban Peace Program Series, *Latin America and Caribbean Region Sustainable Development Working Paper No. 2*, World Bank, Washington, D.C.

human security framework being espoused by the Commission on Human Security is more useful in guiding the discussion for this evaluation report.

Community Participation Leading to Empowerment

A major feature—and strength—of the Pilot Project was its unbending determination to include the IDPs in all aspects of community life. The Pilot Project successfully put the IDPs at the core of their needs assessment, leadership development, skills enhancement, peace promotion, as well as community problem solving and mobilization. As the previous chapter has laid out, the IDPs themselves felt that they had developed into active actors in the preservation or reproduction of wholesome social values as well as societal change.

The Pilot Project also succeeded in enabling IDPs to harness their positive traits—*inter alia*, sense of spirituality, natural concern for their own families, determination to live in harmony with the rest of society, resilience in times of adversity—towards their own empowerment. All IDPs who took part in the external evaluation testified to how their active participation in the Pilot Project had imbued in them a deep sense of confidence that they could indeed help bring about much needed change in their conflict-ridden environment.

Corsaro⁶⁸ and Vygotsky⁶⁹ lead a group of sociologists and psychologists who assert that participatory processes in communities should include children and youth, for the simple reason that such processes are crucial to their mental, emotional, social and spiritual development. The testimony of the youth participants in the youth forums organized by the Pilot Project, as well as those who took part in the FGD—albeit few in numbers—echo this theory.

The Pilot Project provided a wide range of opportunities for participation on the part of the IDPs—from action committees (e.g., Disaster Response Teams) in the evacuation centers to specialized roles (e.g., *sumpats*, information specialists, peacemakers). The Pilot Project showed that, given the right information and motivation, marginalized people tend to gravitate toward empowerment opportunities, rather than nurturing their image as helpless victims.⁷⁰

The external evaluator personally witnessed a poignant, yet very telling, vignette of the IDPs' state of empowerment. It was a time when the political leadership in one of the pilot municipalities was telling the IDPs who were still in evacuation centers within the municipality's jurisdiction that it was time for them to return to their communities of origin. The political leadership had sent military trucks to transport the IDPs, but the

⁶⁸ Corsaro, W A. 1977. *The Sociology of Childhood* (New York City: Pine Forge Press).

⁶⁹ In Ratner, C. 1998) *Prologue to Vygotsky's Work* (Web site material).

⁷⁰ Bautista, V. et al. 2000. *Surviving the Odds: Finding Hope in Abused Children's Life Stories*. (Save the Children U.K.)

latter did not follow the authorities' directions. They asserted their right to remain in the evacuation centers because, according to their own assessment of the situation, it was not safe to return to their COOs. The IDPs, in that instance, felt empowered enough to speak up for their right to safety.⁷¹ The political leadership characterized the IDPs' stance as a lack of respect for people in positions of authority. In contrast, the IDPs strongly believed that they were plainly asserting their right as IDPs.

As stated, a weak aspect of the Pilot Project was its lack of a coherent monitoring system. The external evaluator finds that most unfortunate, in that, given the newly developed skills in participatory work manifested by the IDPs, they would have excelled in participatory monitoring activities.

Notwithstanding this weakness in the Pilot Project, the external evaluator determines that the Pilot Project succeeded exceptionally in promoting "community participation leading to empowerment" among the IDPs. Furthermore, the external evaluator finds that the Pilot Project has successfully met the following objectives:

- Assist the affected populations and the settlement communities to rapidly assess and prioritise their needs vis-à-vis achieving an effective and sustainable transition from conflict to peace and from displacement to durable solutions;
- build confidence in participatory processes and community empowerment amongst affected populations and settlement communities by helping them meet their most immediate needs;
- enhance, through awareness raising and training, the capacity of the affected populations and settlement communities to address psychosocial issues and basic needs at the individual, family, and community levels;
- raise awareness amongst the affected populations and settlement communities of existing socio-economic development programmes and enhance their capacity to assess these resources and services; and
- facilitate frequent peace building and community development-oriented interactions between the affected populations, settlement communities, and local government units.

Furthermore, the external evaluator determines that the Pilot Project succeeded in meeting its first major objective: "to 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."

⁷¹ United Nations Organization. 1998. *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the Rights of IDPs*, Principle 14.

Model Building Through Collaborative Research

As stated, the Pilot Project engaged two highly reputable universities in Mindanao to review the experience of other jurisdictions with regard to post conflict situations and to undertake participatory action research involving the IDPs and other relevant stakeholders. It would have been as conveniently easy for CFSI to engage mediocre institutions just to comply with this project requirement. However, one can attribute the selection of the Notre Dame University Research Center, Cotabato City, and Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology to (a) CFSI's determination to produce high quality products out of the Pilot Project, and (b) the wide reputation of these two local universities in the realm of scholarly research.

The challenge before CFSI is how to replicate its model of integrated approach to post-conflict transition in its continuing work in Mindanao, further testing principles behind the lessons learned in this project. Again, the incorporation of a viable monitoring system that is built on participatory approaches might inform CFSI, other NGOs working in conflict situations, and the donor community, of how deep the impact of the Pilot Project's interventions would have been. At the moment, it is far too early what these lasting impacts are, if any, on the lives of the IDPs.

Given the foregoing, the external evaluator determines that the Pilot Project successfully met its objectives under this heading, namely:

- Identify and engage local universities or research institutes—as well as members of the affected populations and settlement communities—to review the experience of others in post conflict situations and, particularly, best practice models;
- utilizing participatory action research methods throughout the entire project, foster collaborative effort between the affected populations, settlement communities, and local universities/research institutions leading to widely disseminated lessons learned and model building; and
- ensure the affected populations and settlement communities are provided with opportunities to reflect on, and directly link, the knowledge gained to their increased capacity to take greater control of their lives.

The external evaluator recognizes that the latter part of the second objective [“leading to widely disseminated lessons learned and model building”], is being left for CFSI to carry out. As well, even though the two research institutions had met with the IDP communities to validate their initial findings—hence, providing them with an opportunity “to reflect on, and directly link, the knowledge gained to their increased capacity to take greater control of their lives”—such a process of reflection has to continue with greater intensity and frequency.

What these participatory action research initiatives have accomplished was “to contribute to the knowledge base that will inform approaches to the transition from conflict to

peace,” which is part of the second major objective of the Pilot Project. The external evaluator determines that it is now up to CFSI—or any other concerned NGO, for that matter—to use this knowledge base towards the refinement of the integrated model that it developed for the Pilot Project.

Lessons Learned

The Pilot Project yielded a number of important lessons learned from its total operation.

1. Given enabling conditions, people caught in armed conflict are capable of rebounding from their initial reactions of shock, anger or even disillusionment, to become active agents of positive change.
2. The Pilot Project found that women have always played a significant role in development—whether in the context of their immediate families or in the broader community. Given enabling conditions, women are capable of assuming non-traditional roles of social and economic leadership, with remarkable success.
3. People tend to have a natural affinity to their community of origin. As articulated by the MSA, a condition of armed conflict threatens to shatter peoples’ connectedness to their land of birth, their livelihood, and each other. Nevertheless, it is not in the interest of those displaced by an armed conflict that they be forced to return to their community of origin at all cost. They have a right to confirm for themselves that the conditions for their return guarantee them safety and enable them to rebuild their lives. This is consistent with the *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*.⁷²
4. In a context of armed conflict, it is imperative that a programme-implementing agency consistently exercise political neutrality. Part of the success of the Pilot Project was the ability of the professional staff to project CFSI’s unequivocal political impartiality. This is consistent with the guiding principle that IDPs are guaranteed the right to access humanitarian assistance, without prejudice and discrimination.⁷³
5. An agency’s internal capability to manage grants in the millions of pesos is made manifest in its ability to implement concrete policies, procedures and guidelines relating to financial accountability and transparency. CFSI’s built-in system of financial monitoring and audit provides a critical means of ensuring that the entire project operation continued to be financially sound, accountable, transparent, and efficient.

⁷² United Nations Organization. 1998

⁷³ United Nations Organization. 1998. *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the Rights of IDPs*, Principle 13.

6. The probability of success for a community-based project increases with the degree to which the entire implementing organization supports the project. In the experience of CFSI, members of its governing body were far willing to voluntarily lend their individual expertise to the project itself, with amazing results.
7. The donor community is open to being educated on how they could enter into meaningful partnership with an NGO, such as CFSI, that has a proven track record in offering community-driven services.
8. Access to timely and accurate information leads to empowerment. The Pilot Project has reaffirmed the long-held principle that different stakeholders need different information at different times.
9. People—regardless of age, gender, or circumstances in life—have a built-in thirst for knowledge. This suggests that it is never too late or too early to provide meaningful educational opportunities for people and communities. The Pilot Project targeted a variety of sectors and age levels, with equally positive results. Furthermore, it could be argued that those who are at the edge of marginalization have a more intense desire to know, to learn, and to gain skills that they could, in turn, use to change their circumstances.
10. The Pilot Project fielded COs and project officers to the project sites with an admirably high acceptance rate from the IDP communities. It should also be noted that CFSI introduced the principle of access for humanitarian assistance and found it necessary—sometimes at great risk—to insist that this principle be respected. There is no doubt that the emphasis on this principle, coupled by the COs’ highly developed sensitivity to the plight of those communities, facilitated the acceptability of COs in the communities where they were assigned.
11. The Pilot Project’s incorporation of a comprehensive staff training and development component, including stress management, proved critical in nurturing an overall sense of well-being on the part of its professional and volunteer staff. People working with those directly affected by armed conflict are most vulnerable to stress and burnout. The Pilot Project has shown that an organization’s deep commitment to its projects should include an equally deep commitment to its personnel’s sense of fulfilment on the job.
12. Children and youth can become active participants in the shaping of their own destiny. Provided with the right opportunities and the appropriate support systems, they are likely to choose a peaceful, harmonious life in the community over one that is rooted in violence.
13. The crucial significance of functional inter-agency partnerships in addressing the multi-faceted needs of communities in conflict situations and other difficult circumstances can never be overemphasized. The Pilot Project has once again

shown that coordination and collaboration among stakeholders are imperative for the mutual fulfilment of goals, objectives and strategies. Networking provides mutual support, promotes common growth, and induces overall cost-effectiveness in the field of humanitarian assistance.

14. The Pilot Project affirms one of the lessons learned from the conduct of the MSA: there are local research institutions that exude intellectual integrity, research capability, and cultural sensitivity. Partnership with these institutions only serves to strengthen the credibility of a research undertaking.

Recommendations

1. Future programmes of intervention should ensure that a viable monitoring and evaluation component is incorporated. Particularly in situations where people participation and empowerment are guiding principles, every effort should be made, at the outset of the project to determine its success indicators, less the programme itself would end up rendering such profound concepts meaningless. As stated, this is also one of the major recommendations of the MSA.
2. While it is true that the COs and project officers possessed the basic competencies required by their own fields, this does not necessarily translate to competencies in technical report writing. CFSI may wish to consider either (a) providing extensive training on technical report writing, or (b) offering direct assistance through another staff position whose responsibility would revolve around technical report writing only.
3. IDPs have consistently shown that they are seriously committed to their development as community leaders. They have proven time and time again that they value the activities that have been organized on their behalf. In this regard, CFSI staff should endeavour to fulfil their commitments to the IDPs. Furthermore, CFSI should adopt a functional communication mechanism that would enable staff to contact IDPs on time, if cancellation of appointment is, for some reasons, necessitated.
4. Every project that involves multiple stakeholders demands a recognition of their unique needs for information. The Pilot Project committed the tactical error of failing to recognize the information needs of a Provincial Governor, vis-à-vis Municipal Mayors, vis-à-vis NGOs. The external evaluator recognizes that the Pilot Project management consistently circulated printed reports as a convenient way of informing its stakeholders; however, some of those stakeholders had preferred face-to-face meetings and consultations. This also suggests that different situations, positions, and personalities require different forms and styles of advocacy. Furthermore, as pointed out in the MSA, there are layers of cultural norms and institutional protocols that need to be respected if full cooperation and support are required of those stakeholders.

5. The Pilot Project has given birth to a relatively new group of community volunteers—IDPs or former IDPs—who have gained basic competencies in such areas as peacemaking, communication and information, social preparation and emergency planning. It would be most unfortunate if these volunteers' knowledge and skills are not recognized in their communities at the end of the Pilot Project. The external evaluator, therefore, recommends that CFSI explore a programme of certification for these IDPs as community volunteers and/or paraprofessionals in disaster management or appropriate areas of involvement.
6. The Livelihood Assistance component of the Pilot Project succeeded in inculcating non-traditional values among IDPs, particularly women. However, as recognized by virtually every one, the amount for each start-up grant was too small to make a real difference in the long term. CFSI—or other NGOs that specialize in livelihood assistance—may wish to consider building on the new livelihood-related values, attitudes and skills that the IDPs have gained through this Pilot Project and introduce an expanded version of the Livelihood Assistance component of the project. This would include extended and sustained training programmes for the participants.
7. The *Arms Are For Hugging* project has caught the imagination and interest of many people here and abroad, basically for its innovative approach to educating IDP children and youth. The external evaluator recommends that CFSI build on this particular model for alternative education and make provisions for impact monitoring and evaluation. The refined version of this model could provide an opportunity for CFSI to contribute further to the knowledge base of interventions for children and youth in conflict zones. At the least, CFSI may wish to negotiate with the Department of Education a type of partnership in which the latter provides the funding while CFSI provides the programming aspect of the intervention.
8. The Pilot Project was implemented at a time when there are increasing clamour for culturally sensitive educational materials for people of all ages in Mindanao, particularly among the Muslim population. The Pilot Project offers a glimpse at lasting social and spiritual values that were confirmed through its integrated programmes—*inter alia*, resilience in times of difficulty, outreach among the marginalized sectors of society, abiding faith in times of crisis, and popular participation as a key to empowerment. This might be a great opportunity for CFSI to popularise these lessons learned and, true to its commitment of partnership with educational institutions, disseminate them for broader use in Mindanao.

Conclusions

In one of its bold statements about the future of Mindanao, the authors of the Mindanao Social Assessment said that those caught in the interlocking forces of poverty, marginalization and armed conflict in Mindanao cling to every strand of hope that they

can reach. The Pilot Project carried out by Community and Family Services International joins the MSA in declaring that inviolable truth about the Mindanaoans. Their resilience in times of adversity, their determination to survive in the face of severe threats to their existence, and—at least in the case of many—their passion for higher joys brought on by a deep sense of spirituality are powerful attributes that can only serve to enhance their chances for a lasting peace and sustainable development.

The Mindanao Social Assessment and the community-based Pilot Project were meant to be “innovative interventions to address the Mindanao conflict.” The MSA was designed “to support the Mindanao Sustained Peace and Development Plan.” The Pilot Level, on the other hand, was developed to “promote the transition from conflict to peace and development at the community level.” Both aspects of this World Bank Post Conflict Unit-funded initiative have accomplished what the initiative had set out to do. Each of these components—the MSA and the Pilot Project—met their objectives in exemplary fashion. They fulfilled their individual terms of reference with a high degree of success. Their works—done independently of each other and utilizing different approaches—yielded lessons that should inform future development initiatives in the region.

Finally, this initiative is all about partnerships. The donor community, research institutions, social development and other non-governmental agencies, academic institutions, and the people who are affected by the armed conflict and other difficult circumstances in Mindanao all worked together to teach the world that functional partnerships help us all to rediscover trust, restore hope, and rebuild lives.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adriano, F D et al. 2002. *Mindanao Social Assessment: Final Report*. Foundation for Rural Institutions, Economics and Development (FRIEND) Inc.

Ager, A.1996. *Tensions in the Psychosocial Discourse: Implications for the Planning of Interventions with War-Affected Populations*. Unpublished Manuscript.

Batistiana, M B.1998. *Pag-oorganisa sa Kanayunan ng Pilipinas*. (Quezon City: CO-TRAIN)

Bautista,V. A.1999. *Combating Poverty Through the Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (CIDSS)*. National College of Public Administration and Governance, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City.

Bautista, V et al. 2000. *Surviving the Odds: Finding Hope in Abused Children's Life Stories*. (Save the Children U.K.)

Bohlander, G. et al. 2001. *Managing Human Resources* (Singapore:South-Western College Publishing).

Boyden, J et al. 1996. *Vulnerability and Resilience: Perceptions and Responses to Psycho-Social Distress in Cambodia*. (The International NGO and Research Centre, Oxford).

Colletta, N et al. 2000. *Violent Conflict and the Transformation of Social Capital: Lessons from Cambodia, Rwanda, Guatemala and Somalia* (Washington, D.C.: The World Bank).

Corsaro, W A. 1977. *The Sociology of Childhood* (New York City: Pine Forge Press).

Commission on Human Security. 2003. *Human Security Now* (New York).

Community and Family Services International. 2001. *Promoting the Transition from Conflict to Peace and Development on the Community Level: Pilot Project in the Philippines—a Proposal Paper* (Pasay City, Philippines).

_____ October 2001. *Promoting the Transition from Conflict to Peace and Development at the Community Level. Pilot Project in the Philippines. Progress Report, No. 1, January-September 2001* (Pasay City, Philippines).

_____ January 2002. *Promoting the Transition from Conflict to Peace and Development at the Community Level. Pilot Project in the Philippines. Progress Report, No. 2, October-December 2001* (Pasay City, Philippines).

_____ April 2002. *Promoting the Transition from Conflict to Peace and Development at the Community Level. Pilot Project in the Philippines. Progress Report, No. 3, January – March 2002* (Pasay City, Philippines).

_____ June 2002. *Promoting the Transition from Conflict to Peace and Development at the Community Level. Pilot Project in the Philippines. Progress Report, No. 4, April – June 2002* (Pasay City, Philippines).

_____ October 2002. *Promoting the Transition from Conflict to Peace and Development at the Community Level. Pilot Project in the Philippines. Progress Report, No. 5, July – October 2002* (Pasay City, Philippines).

_____ February 2003. *Promoting the Transition from Conflict to Peace and Development at the Community Level. Pilot Project in the Philippines. Progress Report, No. 6, November 2002 – February 2003* (Pasay City, Philippines).

_____ September 2003. *Promoting the Transition from Conflict to Peace and Development at the Community Level. Pilot Project in the Philippines. Progress Report, No. 7, March – June 2003* (Pasay City, Philippines).

_____ June 2002. *Profile of Minimum Basic Needs in CFSI-Assisted Sitios* (Pasay, City, Philippines).

_____ 2002. *CFSI Mindanao Project Research Report* (Pasay City, Philippines).

_____ 2003. *CFSI Consolidated Mindanao Project Updates, February-March 2003*(Pasay City, Philippines).

_____ *Peace Education in Promoting the Transition from Conflict to Peace and Development at the Community Level* (Seminar on Basic Peace Education for Peacemakers).

_____ June 2003. “*You Listen.*” *Internally Displaced Persons Speak about a Pilot Project in Conflict-Affected Central Mindanao* (Pasay City, Philippines).

Community and Family Services International , Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology, and Notre Dame University Research Center. 2002. *Transition Interventions With Internally Displaced Persons: From Conflict Toward Peace and Development in Southern Philippines.*

Cockburn, C. 2001. *The Gendered Dynamics of Armed Conflict and Political Violence.* In Moser, C & Fiona Clark. 2001. Victims, Perpetrators or Actors? Gender, Armed Conflict and Political Violence. (New York City: Zed Books).

Cordero, I. C. 2001. *Social Organizations: From Victims to Actors in Peace Building*. In Moser, C & Fiona Clark (2001). Victims, Perpetrators or Actors? Gender, Armed Conflict and Political Violence. (New York City: Zed Books).

Cruz, M T et al. 2001. *Small Steps, Great Strides: Doing Participatory Action Research with Children* (Manila)

Frederico, M. September 2002. *Pathways to Peace and Development: An integrated approach to post-conflict transition* (An external evaluation of the Community and Family Services International Pilot Project, "Promoting the Transition from Conflict to Peace and Development at the Community Level").

International Young People's Action Against Sexual Exploitation of Children. September 1999. *Standing Up for Ourselves: A Study on the Concepts and Practices of Young People's Rights to Participation* (Manila, Philippines).

Kamlan, J A. 1999. *Bangsamoro Society and Culture: A Book of Readings on Peace and Development in Southern Philippines*. (Iligan Center for Peace and Education and Research, MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology, Iligan City).

Kamlan, J A. September 2002. *The Mindanao Peace Process in the Philippines: An Update*. In Lectern (8:9).

Krishnamurthy, V. 1999. *The Impact of Armed Conflict on Social Capital and Social Services of Cambodia* (Cambodia: World Bank).

Meertens, D.1988. *The Nostalgic Future: Terror, Displacement and Gender in Colombia*. In Moser, C & Fiona Clark.1988. Victims, Perpetrators or Actors? Gender, Armed Conflict and Political Violence. (New York City: Zed Books).

Mindanao Land Foundation. 2002. *Mindanao Social Assessment: A People-Centered Needs Assessment and Community-driven Institutional Analysis in Conflict-affected Area, Final Report, Volume I: Main Report*. (Davao City, Philippines).

MinPhil International Consultants, Inc. 2002. *Mindanao Social Assessment Project: A People-centered Needs Assessment and Community-driven Institutional Analysis in Conflict-affected Areas* (Davao City, Philippines)..

Mitchell, J T et al.1997. *Critical Incident Stress Debriefing: An Operations Manual for the Prevention of Traumatic Stress Among Emergency Services and Disaster Workers* (Ellicott City, MD: Chevron Publishing Corporation).

Moser, C. 2001. *The Gendered Continuum of Violence and Conflict*. In Moser, C et al. 2001. Victims, Perpetrators or Actors? Gender, Armed Conflict and Political Violence. (New York City: Zed Books).

Moser, C et al. 1999. *A Conceptual Framework for Violence Reduction*. LCR Sustainable Development Working Paper No. 2 Urban Peace Programme Series. The World Bank, Washington.

Moser, C et al. 2001. *Victims, Perpetrators or Actors? Gender, Armed Conflict and Political Violence* (New York City: Zed Books).

MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology. 2003. *A Report on Research Validation Activity of the Community and Family Services International (CFSI) and MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT) Collaborative Research entitled: Transition Interventions with the Internally Displaced Persons, Towards Peace and Development in Southern Philippines: The Cases of Pagalungan and Pagagawan, Maguindanao Province*.

Oquist, P. 2002. *Mindanao and Beyond: Competing Policies, Protracted Peace Process and Human Security* (Multi-Donor Programme for Peace and Development in Mindanao, Fifth Assessment Mission Report).

Primer on Displacement in the Philippines and the Rights of the Internally Displaced Persons. December 2000.

Ratner, C. 1998. *Prologue to Vygotsky's Work* (Web site material).

Stubbs, P et al. 1966. *War Trauma and Professional Dominance: Psycho-social Discourses in Croatia* (Unpublished Manuscript).

Summerfield, D.1996. "The Impact of War and Atrocity on Civilian Populations: Basic Principles for NGO Interventions and a Critique of Psychosocial Trauma Projects." *Network Paper 14*. (Relief and Rehabilitation Network).

Summerfield, D.1995. "Assisting Survivors of war and atrocity: notes on 'psycho-social issues for NGO workers.'" In *Development and Practice*, 5:4.

The World Bank Website. 2003. *Social Assessment: Social Analysis Electronic Sourcebook*

The World Bank Website. 2002. *Empowerment*

UNICEF.1999. *Standing Up For Ourselves: A Study on the Concepts and Practices of the Young People's Rights to Participation* (Manila)

United Nations Organization. 1998. *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the Rights of IDPs*.

University of Southern Mindanao. *Pagkain Para Sa Masa Programme: ensuring household food and seed security in the upland and war-torn areas of Mindanao* (Kabacan, North Cotabato).

University Research Center, Notre Dame University. 2003. *Transition Interventions with Internally Displaced Persons: From Conflict Toward Peace and Development in Southern Mindanao [sic]. The Case of Carmen Municipality, A Validation Report, Cotabato Province.* (Cotabato City, Philippines).