



CFSI
Rebuilding Lives.

NewsBrief

Volume 1, Issue 6 - June 2002

PROMOTING THE TRANSITION FROM CONFLICT TO PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT

Community and Family Services International (CFSI) is assisting thousands of Filipinos displaced by armed conflict in Mindanao rebuild their lives. This effort is supported by the World Bank's Post Conflict Fund. The project period is 01 January 2001 through 30 June 2003.

There are two general objectives:

01. 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.
02. Contribute to the existing knowledge base by developing and testing models that will inform approaches to the transition from conflict to peace.

Activity is focused on 6,759 families (33,550 persons) in five municipalities in the provinces of Maguindanao and North Cotabato. The majority of the population served by CFSI is from Maguindanao, which is in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

The work involves confidence building initiatives at the community level and enhanced field-based partnerships, thereby strengthening cooperation between those most directly affected by the war and those engaged in relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction, and development. The empowerment-focused programme components include: (a) community organizing, (b) information, (c) peace education, (d) psychosocial care, (e) start up livelihood assistance, and (f) research. Networking and advocacy are other key elements of this project. Efforts to contribute to the existing knowledge base involve participatory action research in collaboration with the affected communities and two Mindanao-based academic institutions.

" . . . I already got old, my palms thick with blisters, and my nails blackened by years of toil as a farmer . . . perhaps through this meeting, my words will help pave the way for our community's progress. . . "

--- elderly man from North Cotabato

CFSI has been assisting communities affected by armed conflict in Mindanao since 2000 through support provided at various times by UNICEF, UNHCR, UNDP, and the World Bank's Post Conflict Fund. These efforts will be expanded starting June 2002 through funds provided by the Children and Youth Foundation of the Philippines (CYFP) for work with out-of-school children in Maguindanao Province. CFSI is also the Convener of the Philippine Network for Internally Displaced Communities, which is comprised of 24 NGOs working with displaced persons in Central Mindanao. CFSI envisages playing a greater role in Mindanao over the course of the next five to ten years with a particular emphasis on capacity building at the community and institutional levels.



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IDPs in Mindanao. . .



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Mindanao Project Status

- CFSI Operations Center established in Cotabato City; Five Field Sites confirmed.
- Formal partnerships with two NGOs and two academic institutions established.
- Philippine Network for Internally Displaced Communities established/strengthened.
- Links and agreements with national/regional/local government units established.
- 63 evacuation centers rapidly assessed; 30 designated as CFSI service sites.
- Social preparation processes at municipal, barangay, and sitio levels involving 148 leaders and 3,796 internally displaced persons (IDPs) completed.
- Community organizing, mobilizing, and training efforts result in: Three municipal level Peace Festivals involving thousands of participants; 204 “Peace-Makers” trained and deployed; and 203 committees organized in the evacuation centers.
- Documentary film entitled “Women Displaced by War” produced and disseminated for both community-level and policy-level information and advocacy efforts.
- 80 persons trained as “Sumpats” (i.e., links between project personnel and communities for a variety of information, education, and communication tasks).
- Intensive community profiling in the 30 evacuation centers and 14 of 28 barangays of probable return (i.e., communities of origin) completed resulting in a database of 6,759 families (33,550 persons) useful for planning, monitoring, and analysis of needs/resources.
- Forty-six (46) “Psychosocial Care-Providers” trained, deployed, and supported.
- Social preparation processes in communities of origin—at the barangay levels—initiated.
- By 31 March 2002, 2,391 displaced families (11,495 persons) had participated in 17 “Go and See Visits” that allowed the IDPs to assess requirements for return to communities of origin as well as to formulate “Site Development Plans” for implementation upon return.
- By 31 March 2002, 27 “Pulungan Centers” (i.e., Information Centers) constructed to promote informed choices were serving 5,244 families (26,220 persons).
- Many returns facilitated and multi-sector support for reintegration mobilized.
- By 30 April 2002, Start-up Livelihood Assistance options fully operationalized, including banking processes, benefiting 1,574 families (7,875 persons) at a cost of P1,090,083.
- Thirty (30) “Visioning Workshops” allowed 2,420 families (12,118 persons) to plan preliminary development efforts in the communities of origin/return.
- By 30 April 2002, 67% of the 15,708 IDPs in 30 evacuation centers as of October 2001 had returned to their communities of origin or settled elsewhere.
- “Peace-Makers Consultations” and “Peace Seminars” involving local officials, IDPs, returnees, and others carried out resulting in plans for promoting peace through various mechanisms including the tri-media.
- As of June 2002, Minimal Basic Needs (MBN) assessments carried out and Barangay Development Plans being formulated in a participative manner in 13 communities of origin/return; 15 additional communities of origin/return targeted for future effort.
- As of June 2002, research efforts nearing completion.
- As of June 2002, information and advocacy campaign utilizing research efforts initiated.
- Contributions made to the formulation and testing of the data collection tools and processes of the Mindanao Social Assessment as well as the requirements of Mindanao Watching Brief and ARMM Social Fund for Peace and Development (ASFPD).



*contributions,
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comments are
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NewsBrief, June 2002

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